

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the political transition in 1994, policies to address South Africa's poverty and inequalities have been pursued. These policies were set up in the Reconstruction and Development Programme and a variety of legislative initiatives. However, the government's ability to address social problems and particularly alleviate poverty has received much criticism. This criticism has been based on the ability of the public agencies to meet governmental objectives and the broader challenges on policy implementation. Policy failure for whatever reason is a concern of both the policy theorist and the policy practitioner, with the latter being more concerned to find ways of making policy succeed. This chapter will review literature on public policy. First, theoretical frameworks of public policy will be analyzed and assessed with a view to understand the policy making in South Africa. Second, policies that have laid the ground for the involvement and participation of societal actors in the policy process in a developmental state will be discussed. Third, policy implementation will be reviewed and lastly the role of civil society organizations will be analyzed.

3.2 UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC POLICY

3.2.1 Definition of Public Policy

In order to understand public policy it is important first to conceptualize public policy. Dye (1998:3) defines public policy as whatever government chooses to do or not to do. Basically what this means is that public policy is not just about government action but also about government inaction. On the other hand, Dunn (1981:46) defines public policy as a long series of more or less related choices including decisions not to act made by governments bodies and officials. Theodoulou (1995:2) supports this view and emphasizes that public policy should distinguish between what governments intend to do and what, in fact, they actually do; that governmental inactivity is as important as governmental activity. Theodolou (1995:2) further stresses other composite ideas to conceptualize public policy. She cites the notion that policy ideally involves all levels of government and is not

necessarily restricted to formal actors; informal actors are also extremely important. This is evident within the South African context where all three levels of government national, provincial and local levels are involved in the policy process. The Constitution spells out the functions of all the three levels of government. The involvement and participation of informal actors in policy has also become a defining factor of democracy in South Africa. The third idea as cited by Theodolou (1995:2) is that public policy is pervasive and is not solely limited to legislation, execution orders, rules, and regulations. Fourth, public policy is an intentional course of action with an accomplished end goal as its objectives. A fifth idea describes public policy as both long term and short term. It is clear that policy is an on-going process; it also involves not only the decision to enact a law but also the subsequent actions of implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

Theodoulou (1995:2) further draws a connection between politics and public policy. In this she stresses that public policy reconciles conflicting claims on scarce resources; it establishes incentives for cooperation and collective action that would be irrational without government influence; it prohibits morally unacceptable behaviour; it protects the activity of a group or an individual; promoting activities that are essential or important to government. Finally policy provides direct benefits to citizens. The implementation of policies aimed at alleviating poverty in South Africa post 1994 have not only been characterized by ensuring that those who were previously denied access to such services access them but that the role of civil society organizations became increasingly important in delivering these services in partnership with government.

3.2.2 Key Features of Public Policy

What differentiates public policy from the private sector policy is that public policy is authoritative and can be enforced through instruments of coercion. Although policy is the key process in spelling out intentions and objectives, it cannot be viewed in isolation from other administrative processes such as financing, organizing, human resources management and control (Van Niekerk; van der Walt and Jonker, 2001:90). These administrative processes become critical in ensuring that the goal

of the policy – which is aimed at resolution of a perceived problem, is achieved. The administrative processes have a role to play in the public policy process particularly in the implementation of the policies. These aspects will be reviewed later in the chapter.

Fox, Bayat and Ferreira (2006:108) identify the following functions of public policy: Public policy is policy adopted by government role players, while non-government role players such as interest groups can also influence the formulation and development of policy. Public Policy is purposive or goal oriented therefore action directed rather than randomly selected. Public policy consists of a series of decisions taken jointly by politicians and/or officials rather than the individual. Public policy is what governments do. Policy can therefore be viewed in a number of perspectives as an output, as an outcome, as a programme and as a process.

3.2.3 Types of Public Policy

Political scientists have developed several typologies to categorize public policy. Theodoulou and Cahn (1995:7) distinguish between the following types of public policy:

a) The classic Typology

According to this typology policies are classified according to whether they are regulatory, distributive or redistributive in nature. Theodoulou and Cahn (1995:7) suggest that all government policies may be considered redistributive, because in the long run some people pay in taxes more than they receive on services. Or all may be thought regulatory because in the long run, a governmental decision on the use of resources can only displace a private decision about the same resource or at least reduce private alternative about the resource. Notwithstanding this suggestion of Theodoulou and Cahn, there are times when government decisions have to be taken without regard to limited resources. Such policies are called distributive. They involve allocation of services or benefits to particular segments of the population – individuals, groups, corporations and communities. Distributive policies typically involve using public funds to assist group, communities or industries.

Redistributive policies involve deliberate efforts by the government to shift the allocation of wealth, income property or rights among broad classes or groups of the population such as haves and have nots.

b) Material or symbolic policy

Policies may also be viewed as material or symbolic. Material policies provide tangible resources or substantive power to their beneficiaries, and they may also impose costs on those who may be adversely affected. Symbolic policies on the other hand provide little material impact on individuals and no real tangible advantages or disadvantages. Rather, they appeal to the values held in common by individuals in society, values that could include social justice, equality and patriotism.

c) Substantive or procedural policy

Anderson (2003:5) argues that policies may also be classified as either substantive or procedural. Substantive policies involve what government is going to do. Substantive policies directly allocate advantages and disadvantages, benefits and costs to people. Procedural policies in contrast pertain to how something is going to be done and who is going to take action.

Within the South African context various policies fall into all the categories that have been outlined above. Of importance as indicated in the description of these categories of policies is the issue of what action the policy seeks to achieve in an environment that is confronted with a number of problems which the policy seeks to address. Given the fact that policy-making is closely associated with political paradigms, in which, as indicated by Cloete and Wissink (2000:26) political values play an important role, it is important to look at various theories of policy making in order to explain policy making processes particularly within the South African context post 1994.

3.3 THEORIES OF POLICY MAKING

Political paradigms or ideologies influence policy making. Some better-known ideologies influencing specific policy approaches and theories of public policy-making

according to Cloete, Wissink and de Coning (2000:26) include a liberal laissez-faire (or classical) approach, socialism and welfare statism. They argue that a liberal laissez-faire approach determines that the state should concern itself with the maintenance of law and order, the protection of society from attacks from outside, the protection of private property and the establishment of conditions conducive to the promotion of free enterprise, and should only interfere with the lives and activities of individuals on a limited basis. Socialism, especially the collectivistic approach, argue Cloete et al (2000:26) is an ideology according to which the state has to control the economy, through economic institutions which function as government institutions and by abolishing capitalism. Welfare statism claims that the promotion of the highest degree of material and spiritual public well-being is the task of the state which has to provide opportunities for competition so that citizens can obtain the good things in life. Authors have designed various theories to explain policy-making and these will be explained below. According to Cloete, Wissink and de Coning (2006:28-29) these theories include:

3.3.1 Classical Theory

This theory which is also known as institutional theory emphasizes that the different concerns and interests of government should be given preference. This area of focus encompasses the classical doctrine of the separation of powers in terms of legislative, executive and judicial.

3.3.2 Liberal Democratic Theory

In this theory political party assumes the position of primary force – policy making. The argument is that as the party represents the individual vote; it is thus superior to interest groups. In South Africa public policy has been influenced by the ruling party - the African National Congress – and the ideologies of a democratic developmental state.

3.3.3 Elite theory

In elite theory usually small elite groups lead a large group of followers. Anderson (2003;17) argues that the essential argument of elite theory is that public policy is

not determined by the demands and actions of the people or the 'masters' but rather by a ruling elite whose preferences are carried into effect by public officials and agencies.

3.3.4 Systems theory

Systems theory is best exemplified by the work of David Easton (1965) who views public policy as a political system's response to demands arising from the environment. Systems theory focuses on the contributions to policy making of interrelated forces. These forces include the environment as indicated which makes demands (inputs) to the political system. The political system is thus a mechanism by which popular demands and popular support for the state are combined to produce those policy outputs that best ensure the long term stability of the political system. Hence Anderson (2003:14) refers to the systems theory as the political systems theory. The inputs represent policy-relevant information such as perceptions, opinions, attitudes and demands. The inputs are then processed into outputs in the form of policies. The processing of inputs into outputs represents the consideration of decision-making of the policy input by the political system. The limitation of the system's theory is that it does not reflect the procedures and processes by which decisions are made and policy is developed. Procedures and processes particularly in a South African context are important in understanding the extent to which the public participates in the development, implementation and evaluation of policy that will benefit them.

3.3.5 Comprehensive Rationality

The widely accepted theory is the comprehensive rationality approach to policy decision-making. The main characteristics of this theory as indicated by Ijeoma (2007:823) are that, it involves reasoned choices about desirability of adopting different courses of action to resolve public problems. Yet, any form of rational comprehensive theory is difficult to realize fully in most policy-making settings. For choices to be rational and comprehensive at the same time, they would have to meet the following conditions, which are described as the rational-comprehensive theory of decision-making:

- An individual or collective decision-maker must identify a policy problem on which there is consensus among all relevant stakeholders;
- An individual or collective decision-maker must define and consistently rank all goals and objectives whose attainment would represent a resolution of the problem;
- An individual or collective decision-maker must identify policy alternatives that may contribute to the attainment of each goal and objective;
- An individual or collective decision-maker must forecast all consequences that will result from the selection of each alternative;
- An individual or collective decision-maker must compare each alternative in terms of its consequences for the attainment of each goal and objective and
- An individual or collective decision-maker must choose that alternative which maximizes the attainment of objectives.

It is clear from the above conditions that there are various options to be weighed before a decision is made to address a problem. The rational comprehensive model therefore requires detailed knowledge of all the wants, demands, problems and objectives of society as well as resources available. Hence Dye (1998:24) contends that a rational policy is one that achieves maximum social gain. The benefits must exceed the cost. This should not be viewed in a narrow rand and cents framework but should involve calculation of all social, political and economic values achieved by a public policy. It could be argued that in some contexts particularly in a democratic developmental state like South Africa decision-making in a policy process may require comprehensive rationality given the Constitution that emphasizes rights on the one hand and the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and economy. Addressing poverty also may require rational decision-making. The rational comprehensive theory, according to Dunn (1994:274) may be characterized in several ways based on the reasons for which a specific or several choices are made and the goals they are likely to achieve in the decision-making process:

- Technical rationality is the characteristics of reasoned choices that involve the comparison of alternatives according to their capacity to promote effective solutions for public problems;
- Economic rationality is a characteristic of reasons choices that involve the comparison of alternatives according to their capacity to promote efficient solutions for public problems;
- Legal rationality is a characteristic of reasoned choices that involve the comparison of alternative according to their legal conformity to established rules and precedents;
- Social rationality is a characteristic of reasoned choices that involve the comparison of alternatives according to their capacity to maintain or improve valued social institutions, that is, to promote institutionalism;
- Substantive rationality is a characteristic of reasoned choices that involves the comparison of multiple forms of rationality-technical; economic, legal and social as described above in order to make the most appropriate choice under given circumstances.

3.3.6 Incremental Theory

According to Dunn (1994:275-276), when allying the incremental theory, individual or collective decision-makers may:

- Consider only those objectives that differ incrementally, that is, by small amounts from the status quo;
- Limit the number of consequences forecast for each alternative;
- Make mutual adjustments in goals and objectives, on the one hand, and alternatives on the other;
- Continuously reformulate problems, hence goals, objectives, and alternative in the course of acquiring new information;
- Analyze and evaluate alternatives in a sequence of steps, such that choices are continuously amended over time, rather than made at a single point prior to action;
- Continuously remedying existing social problems, rather than solve problems completely at one point in time; and

- Finally, share responsibility for analysis and evaluation with many groups in society, so that the process of making policy choices is fragmented or disjointed.

The incremental theory regards public policy as the continuation of existing government activities with only small (incremental) adaptations to provide for changes that may occur.

3.3.7 Mixed Scanning theory

The theory of mixed scanning can be viewed as an alternative to both comprehensive rationality and incrementalism. Mixed scanning may seem to distinguish between the requirement of strategic choices that set out basic policy directions and operational choices and contribute to the groundwork for strategic decisions and their implementation. In effect, mixed scanning seeks to adapt strategies of choices to the nature of the problems confronted by policy-makers. Ijeoma (2007:827) cites a number of advantages of the mixed scanning theory. Firstly, it permits taking advantage of both the incrementalism and comprehensive rationality approaches in different situations. Secondly, mixed scanning permits adjustments to a rapidly changing environment by providing the flexibility necessary to adapt decision making to specific circumstances. Thirdly, mixed scanning considers the capacity of the decision-maker. This is so because decision-makers have different capacity levels. Although a number of theories are available to guide and assist the decision-making in policy making, it is evident that the environment, values and ideologies will influence decision-making processes.

3.4 THE POLICY-PARADIGM SHIFT IN SOUTH AFRICA POST DEMOCRACY

The theories outlined in the previous section provide a basis to explain policy-making processes in South Africa. It is clear that ideologies play a significant role in determining values that should not just influence what policies to be made but also what processes to be followed in policy making and who the actors should be in the policy making process. The ushering of democracy in 1994 changed the top-down

style of decision-making which characterized the policy process in the past. The impact of this paradigmatic change on the study and practice of public policy in this country is far reaching. Until 1990, successive government followed a largely traditional, Western, industrial world, colonial policy approach, consisting of incremental policy changes controlled by Western political and bureaucratic elites and aimed at preserving as much of the status quo as possible (Cloete and Wissink, 2000:90). The African National Congress (ANC) and the South African government recognized that addressing the developmental challenges facing the country – including growing the economy and reducing the high rates of poverty, inequality and unemployment as well as improving livelihoods of South Africans –requires a developmental state that is democratic and socially inclusive; a developmental state with the capacity to actively and purposefully intervene to achieve the aforementioned goals.

The adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 marked a new beginning for South Africa. Its goal was to heal the divisions of the past, and build a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights (1996:1). The Constitution's intentions were multifold – to base government on the will of the people, to ensure that every citizen was equally protected by the law, to improve the quality of life of all people, and free the potential of every individual. Chapter 2 of the Constitution (1996:6) provides for the Bill of Rights, which is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa. The Bill of Rights enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. Hence it is regarded as the most liberal Constitution in the world.

Chapters 3 and 10 of the Constitution (1996) make provision for an integrated, intersectoral, and cooperative approach to governance. These provisions commit all three spheres of government (national, provincial and local) to be transparent in policy-making and inclusive in its approach. The Constitution (1996) further emphasizes a developmental approach underpinned by principles of cooperative governance and poverty eradication as an imperative. The developmental approach

does not only characterize the democratic form of government, but also shifts the role of the state in addressing development and poverty. Fritz and Menocal (2007:533) argue that a developmental state exists when the state possesses the vision, leadership and capacity to bring about a positive transformation of society within a condensed period of time.

3.4.1 The Developmental State

At its policy conference in June 2007 the African National Congress (ANC) endorsed a proposal for South Africa to become a developmental state. The original concept of a developmental state refers to a state which is interventionist in nature and which promotes socio-economic development.

The concept of the developmental state can be traced back to Friedrich List in 1885 when he contended that the less advanced nations first required artificial means to catch up with the advanced nations (Nzwei and Kuye 2007:198). This artificial means, they argue, sees the state as an agent of development, taking up the mandate to accomplish economic development. Looking at this artificial means it can be argued that this characteristic of a developmental state reflects the traditional top-down technocratic forms of development approaches imposed on diverse local realities which often were unsustainable and resulted in failure. Croucamp and van Dijk (2007:665) on the other hand, define the developmental state as a state where politics have assured that power, autonomy and capacity is centralized in order to achieve explicit developmental goals. They argue that the focus of the developmental state is to either direct or enable economic growth. This is evident in the case of South Africa where the state introduced the macro economic Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996 with the objectives of economic growth and full employment amongst others. This strategy was introduced following the Reconstruction and Development strategy which was also an economic strategy. It is clear that the transformation and development of the democratic South Africa was premised on economic performance. Mkandawira (1998:2) argues that there is a problem in defining a developmental state simply from its economic performance - not all countries with good growth rates are

developmental states. This definition of the developmental state runs the risk of being tautological since evidence that the state is developmental is often drawn deductively from the performance of the state. Referring to Africa specifically, Mkandawire goes on to add that definition of a developmental state is one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development. Chalmers Johnson, one of the main scholars of the Asian countries where developmental states arose, such as Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea, perceived it as a state that was determined to influence the direction and pace of socio-economic development by directly intervening in the developmental process, rather than relying on the uncoordinated influence of market forces in the allocation of resources. Leftwich (1995) has identified six major components that define the developmental state:

- A determined developmental elite;
- Relative autonomy
- A powerful, competent and insulated bureaucracy;
- A weak and subordinate civil society;
- The effective management of non-state economic interest; and
- Legitimacy and performance.

Zegeye and Maxted (2002:90) argue that South Africa is a developmental state that is not the classic interventionist, centrist state of the 1960s and 1970s with total control over resources and delivery. Neither is it the minimalist state of the 1970s and the 1980s, facilitating neo-liberal global interests through a default to market regulation of societal interests and needs. Rather, the developmental state that strategically intervenes to make the society to balance policies of redress, equity and economic growth. The ANC (ANC Website – undated) in discussing State Property Relations and Social Transformation and the Developmental State provides a fundamental base and thinking on the role of a developmental state. The ANC notes that:

The 'developmental state' is charged to utilize the resources it commands to ensure redistribution of wealth in the interest of the poor and disadvantaged. It should also pursue a regulatory framework that affords the state to intervene in a proactive manner to facilitating growth and redistribution. It strives to correct the balance between state ownership of productive forces and private ownership, guided by the prerogative of the strategic interest, efficiency, technology-transfer, affordability of service and narrow cost-benefit considerations

Arguments about what the developmental state is and the role of the state in a South African context comes at a time globally when there are attempts to achieve more efficient government. This change has been characterized by reshaping the boundaries and responsibilities of the state. Modern public administration is not just about efficiency, it also involves ideas of democratic participation, accountability and empowerment. Minogue, Polidano and Hulme (1998:13) argue that there is a constant tension between two main themes: making government efficient and keeping government accountable. There is a corresponding tension between the conception of people as consumers, in the context of relations between the state and the market; and the conception of people as citizens in the context of the relationship between the state and the society. The influential model of new public management (NPM) promises to integrate these themes linking efficiency and accountability together. It is these principles of efficiency and accountability which influence to a greater extent public policy implementation.

The debate about the need to develop an appropriate development paradigm with its requisite structures and systems has been the subject of public administration scholars, policy makers, managers and the consumers of services for many decades. The central question that has always been raised, according to Agere (2000:66), is the typology of quantity and quality of the relationship between various partners in the development process. The developmental approach therefore puts more emphasis on responsiveness, decentralization, accountability and public participation. Within the context of public participation, communities are encouraged to become active participants in the public policy process. Within the context of

decentralization it means the empowerment of the poor to direct the use of government resources. Many commentators agree that something akin to a paradigm shift has taken place in the last three decades with the older welfare assumptions about the state yielding to an entrepreneurial model of government and new public management driving out the devalued of old public administration. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) summarized the entrepreneurial model in terms of the following ten principles:

1. Steer the ship, rather than row it.
2. Empower communities, rather than simply deliver services.
3. Encourage competition rather than monopoly.
4. Be mission driven rather than rule driven.
5. Fund outcomes rather than inputs.
6. Meet the needs of customers rather than the bureaucracy.
7. Concentrate on earning resources, not just spending.
8. Invest in prevention of problems rather than cure.
9. Decentralize authority.
10. Solve problems by making use of the market place rather than by creating public programmes.

It is these principles that influence the transformation of public administration in South Africa post 1994. Minogue et al (1998:33) however, indicate that the NPM model is comprehensive, but oriented more to the cost cutting, tax reducing concerns of northern states than the southern states. Clearly, it is a model which should not be inflexibly applied, but adapted to different administrative and political contexts.

The RDP, which was drawn up by the ANC-led tripartite alliance in consultation with a broad range of mass democratic organizations, can be regarded as a blueprint for post-apartheid government. The RDP is an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework with a vision that emphasizes empowerment and participation. In order to meet this vision, the RDP made explicit reference to building the capacity of

civil society through the extensive development of human resources. It provided a central role for non-profit organizations (NPOs) in all spheres of government. The empowerment of institutions of civil society is a fundamental aim of the government's approach to building national consensus; hence this study attempts to respond to the research question that says:

'To what extent has government's collaboration and partnership with the civil society organizations in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes ensured empowerment and sustainability?

3.4.2 The Policy Environment Post 1994

It is important to look at some policies introduced in South Africa post 1994 which brought a paradigm shift in the public policy process and the role of the state in the transformation process.

The period from 1994 to 1999, which marked the first five years of democracy in South Africa, was spent on significant institutional transformation while introducing new policies in line with the Constitution (1996). Of significance was the proliferation of policy White Papers during the period 1995-1997. Hence in the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (WPTPS) (1995) the government of South Africa outlined a broad policy framework for transforming the South African public service in line with the following vision: *The Government of National Unity is committed to continually improving the lives of the people of South Africa by a transformed public service which is representative, coherent, transparent, efficient, effective, accountable and responsive to the needs of all (WPTPS, paragraph 2.1).*

In pursuit of this vision, the Government developed the following mission statement: *The creation of a people centred and people driven public service which is characterized by equity, quality, timeousness and a strong code of ethics (WPTPS Para 2.1)*

The vision and the mission statements were premised on a fundamental re-definition of the role of the state. This new role of the state indicates that the state must guide and facilitate development as opposed to directly managing it. States should focus less on direct substantive support for and the organization of specific projects. They should rather organize, facilitate and support the interface between public, private and community-based developmental initiatives (De Visser 2005:19). The call of a new state is also reflected by van Dijk and Croucamp (2007: 666) who contend that modern society, and the involvement of civil society in South Africa calls for a state that is both democratic as well as developmental in both content and character. They maintain that the centrality of the state in nation-building and socio-economic development is reaffirmed, while also asserting participatory democracy and a culture of human rights as key features of the developmental state.

It can be argued therefore that the relationship between government and civil society, in a democratic South Africa is that which is premised on a partnership between them rather than the antagonistic relations that had prevailed in the past. Long term development requires multi-stakeholder approach whereby different actors work together towards a well defined goal and bring together added value and strength of the individual actors. It is therefore within this context that the role of civil society becomes important in addressing poverty

The White Paper on Transformation of Public Service Delivery (1997) brought a change in the way in which public services should be delivered. The change put the citizen as the centre of public service, emphasizing how the citizens should be treated, ensuring that citizens access services and information. The policy emphasized the accountability to the public especially if the services are not provided according to the set standards; the public must be given reasons for that. The policy further stressed that public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to ensure that it expands the base of access to services without wastage of public resources (Batho Pele Handbook, DPSA, 2003). This change in the service delivery culture is underpinned by the eight 'Batho Pele' (Putting People First) principles which are aligned to the Constitutional ideals of:

- Promoting and maintaining high standard of professional ethics;
- Providing service impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias;
- Utilising resources efficiently and effectively;
- Responding to people's needs – citizens are encouraged to participate in policy-making and rendering an accountable transparent and development-oriented public administration.

The mere existence of good policies does not automatically result in successful implementation. Problems with policies often lie in the implementation thereof thus resulting in what Brynand (2007:357) calls policy gap. Despite the development of this policy framework to transform service delivery, South Africa is still confronted with challenges of service delivery.

Another policy that brought change in the new democratic South Africa is the Non-Profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act 71 of 1997). This Act clearly defines a non-profit organization (NPO) and establishes a clear role for the non-profit sector in governance and service delivery.

The case for some form of complementarity and partnership between the state and civil society organizations in service delivery, particularly in poverty alleviation and development is widely accepted. Minogue et al (1988:95) contend that the potential for developing closer and more enduring forms of inter-institutional collaboration is founded on the creation of mutually reinforcing relationship between government and local citizens in the form of synergy. It is argued that the efficacy of public-civic collaboration in any given society depends on the extent of structural inequality, the nature of the political regime and their legal framework governing the voluntary sector in the one hand and institutional character and capacity of the civic and public realms on the other.

The NPO Act (1997) permits the registration of a whole range of NPOs established prior to the Act, including voluntary associations recognized by common law and not required to register with any authority. It provides clear accountability and

governance measures for the Non-profit sector. A study conducted by the Department of Social Development on the implementation of the NPO Act indicates that there have been gaps in the implementation of the Act particularly the noncompliance of non-profit organizations to the Act and the broader challenges on governance issues by the non-profit sector.

In 1997 The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) was introduced. This policy framework was developed with a policy approach aimed at poverty eradication and based on social development. The policy approach is indicated in the mission of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:15) whose goal is: *"To serve and build a self-reliant nation in partnerships with all stakeholders through an integrated social welfare system, which maximizes its existing potential, and which is equitable, sustainable, accessible, people-centred and developmental"*.

From this mission, it is clear that the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) emphasizes a transformation agenda of social development. This transformation agenda is based on the notion that people are the masters of their own destiny. The minister of social development advocates the development and empowerment of individuals, groups and communities. He states that this is the best way for the department and its partners to combat the socio-economic challenges facing the country (Skweyiya: 2005 foreword). The White Paper is therefore based on the following principles:

- creation of self-reliant communities as opposed to dependent communities;
- building partnerships with various stakeholders instead of a paternalistic approach in addressing the needs of the people;
- integrated system instead of a fragmented approach to development;
- equity;
- sustainability as opposed to short-term approach;
- accessibility;
- people-centeredness; and
- Developmental.

A notable feature of the White Paper on Social Welfare therefore is its shift to developmental social welfare, which, as indicated in the above principles, emphasizes helping people to help themselves and thereby becoming self-reliant in contrast to a conception of welfare as “handouts”. These principles, including the values and principles of RDP, the Constitution, as well as the commitments of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, became critical in making policy decisions and in developing programmes to pursue the government’s transformation agenda.

A major milestone in 1998 was the formation of the National Development Agency through the National Development Act No 108, 1998. The primary object of the NDA was to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil society organizations for the purposes of carrying out programmes and projects aimed at meeting development needs of poor communities, and strengthening the institutional capacity of other civil society organizations involved in direct service provision to poor communities. This was a significant step in addressing poverty at grassroots level. The creation of an institution with special focus on civil society organization during democracy in South Africa was an indication that the new democratic form of government was serious about partnerships and collaboration with the civil society in the public policy process. This further reflected transformation and change in the way in which civil society organizations were viewed during the previous regime.

It is clear that policy development in the first five years of democracy in South Africa created a basis for the transformation agenda in the delivery of services and improving the lives of the people of South Africa, particularly those who were previously denied access to such services. Bohlmann, Du Toit, Gupta and Schoeman (2007:1) assert that policy-making in South Africa has to find a new paradigm – one where employment creation and resultant poverty alleviation is not merely accepted as a by-product of economic growth, but where employment creation is viewed as a key accelerator of economic growth. Social development targeted at mobilizing and

empowering the unemployed needs to constitute the backbone of any growth, employment and redistribution policy.

The focus should be on designing and implementing policies that truly empower and mobilize this untapped potential of society towards spurring higher levels of future economic growth rather than merely awarding handouts. In reviewing the implementation of a number of policies developed including policies aimed at alleviating poverty, it seems South Africa, like other developing countries has experienced challenges.

3.5 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The challenge of delivering services to South Africa's previously disadvantaged communities in the process of poverty alleviation remains the central challenge of the post-apartheid democratic government of South Africa. In his state of the nation address (2008) the state President said: *"...the entirety of our system of governance is therefore making the commitment that in the period ahead of us, it will do its best to live up to the imperative – Business Unusual! We speak of Business Unusual, not referring to any changes in our established policies, but with regard to the speedy, efficient and effective implementation of these policies and programmes, so that the lives of our people should change for the better sooner rather than later"*.

The goal of this study is fully captured in the latter views expressed by the State President. Since 1994, the South African government introduced a series of pro-poor policies, acts and poverty alleviation programmes, directing the process of development and empowerment of previously disadvantaged communities and people. It is important therefore to understand policy implementation because it is a key feature of the policy process, and learning from implementation problems can foster learning about better ways to structure policies to ensure that they have the effects that designers of these policies seek. When applied to public policy, implementation is a process of putting into effect or carrying out an authoritarian decision of government. This decision is most often enacted by a legislative body, but it can also be a directive of the executive branch or a ruling by a judiciary. The

implementation puts the objectives of policy adopters into action in an effort to accomplish desired results. Policy implementation is therefore critical in understanding the role played by civil society organizations in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in collaboration with government, which is the purpose of this study. The intention of public policy is to provide benefits to citizens. Policy makers take decisions to improve the well-being of its citizens. These policies are not self executing but require effective implementation to ensure that policy makers' decisions are carried out successfully. Cloete and Wissink (2000:118) however, argue that no government policy over time is ever complete in terms of its outcomes or effect on society. This is mainly due to the continually developmental and changing nature of the needs of the people or the beneficiaries of public policy.

The study of policy implementation is crucial for the study of public administration and public policy. Policy implementation is the stage of policy making between the establishment of a policy and the consequences of the policy for the people whom it affects. Hill (1997:129) defines the implementation process as those actions by public or private individuals (or groups) that are directed at the achievement of objectives set forth in prior policy decisions. In a similar vein Pressman and Wildavsky say: a verb like 'implement' must have an object like policy (1973: xiv). The pioneering implementation studies therefore argue that the process of putting policy into action is deserving of study, and that it is wrong to take it for granted that this process will be smooth and straight forward. Indeed, in many ways these studies are concerned with the discovery that many things may go wrong between policy formulation and output.

Policy implementation as a step in the policy process should not be thought of in mechanistic terms such as the view that politicians make policy and that officials merely implement such policy. Policy making is a continuous and interactive process that goes hand in hand with policy implementation and that requires co-operative partnership between politicians and officials who ideally, should always bear in mind the practical implications of any policy that is implemented. Such interaction is best seen in the development and formulation of executive policy at the practical

implementation level, bearing in mind its implications for society as a whole. Policy implementation is always linked to the realities of a specific and ever-changing environment.

3.5.1 Top – Down Approaches to Policy Implementation

Some representative studies in the top –down research tradition include research by Carl Van Horn and Donald Van Meter, as well as Daniel Mazmanian and Paul Sabatier’s studies of the factors that condition successful implementation. According to Birkland (2005:182) the top-down approach is based on a set of important assumptions:

- Policies contain clearly defined goals against which performance can be measured. Top-down implementation strategies greatly depend on the capacity of policy objectives to be clearly and consistently defined.
- Policies contain clearly defined policy tools for the accomplishment of goals.
- The policy is characterized by the existence of a single statute or other authoritative statement of policy.
- There is an implementation chain that starts with a policy message at the top and sees implementation as occurring in a chain.
- Policy designers have good knowledge of the capacity and commitment of the implementers. Capacity encompasses the availability of resources for an implementing organization to carry out its tasks, including monetary and human resources, legal authority and autonomy and the knowledge needed to effectively implement policy. Commitment includes the desire of the implementer to carry out the goals of the top level policy designers; a high level of commitment means that the values and goals of the policy designers are shared by the lower-level implementers, particularly those at the “street level” such as teachers, police officers or social workers.

Brynard (2007:358) differentiates between inductive and deductive policy implementation. He regards top-down implementation as inductive and based more on predictions whilst bottom-up policy implementation is regarded as deductive and encourages a more generalized, explanatory role.

3.5.1.1 Weaknesses of the Top-Down Approach

Birkland (2005:185) cites a number of weaknesses of the top down approach. These weaknesses include the following: The emphasis on clear objectives or goals- Unless there is consensus on what program goals are it is hard to set a benchmark for program success and failure. Another problem with top down models is the assumption that there is a single rational government that structures policy implementation and provides for direct delivery of services. This may also be true where implementation process is dependent on cooperation between the three spheres of government as in the South Africa context. This assumption of a strong central government also assumes a unitary method of decision-making that ignores competing overlapping agencies and their staffs, and interest groups within South Africa, there is multiplicity of actors in the implementation of process including civil society organizations.

Indeed legislators, bureaucrats, the courts, pressure groups and community organizations are all involved in policy implementation. Thus while the focus of implementation may be on one agency several other actors will have an influence on implementation success or failure. Top down approaches often ignore the relative ease with which implementers and interest groups can work to subvert the originally established goals. On the other hand, Birkland (2005:185) rejects the inevitability of adaptive implementation in which target groups and street level bureaucrats, subvert the original program goals. He argues that top policy designers do have choices about who implements a policy and what incentives and sanctions to impose for non compliance and can influence the expectations and needs of target groups so that adaptive compliance should be unnecessary or would be counterproductive (Birkland, 2005:185). Finally, top-down approaches assume that policy is contained in a single state statute or other authoritative statement.

3.5.2 Bottom-Up Approaches to Implementation

Bottom-up approach refers to the approach to studying policy implementation in which one begins by understanding the goals, motivations, and capabilities of the lowest level implementers and then follows the policy design upward to the highest

level initiators of policy. Birkland (2005:185) calls this “backwards mapping” in which the implementation process and the relevant relationships are mapped backwards from the ultimate implementation to the top most policy designers.

The bottom-up approach recognizes that goals are ambiguous rather than explicit and may conflict not only with other goals in the same policy area, but also with the norms and motivations of the lower level implementers. Top-down models are more concerned with compliance, while bottom-up approaches value understanding how conflict can be alleviated by bargaining and sometimes compromises. The bottom-up approach does not require that there be a single defined “policy” in the form of a statute or other form. Rather, policy can be thought of as a set of laws, rules, practices, and norms that shape the ways in which government and interest groups address these problems. Thus implementation can be viewed as a continuation of the conflicts and compromises that occur throughout the policy process not just before and at the point of enactment.

3.5.2.1 Shortcomings of Bottom-Up Approach

First, Birkland (2005:186) argues that the bottom-up approach over emphasizes the ability of the street-level bureaucrats to frustrate the goals of the top policy makers. Second, bottom up models of implementation assume that groups are active participants in the implementation process. Experience and research has shown that in South Africa not all groups are active participants in the implementation of policies. Even those that are active participants they face various challenges in the implementation of policy (see Department of Social Development Annual Reports and The National Development Agency Reports).

3.5.3 Synthesis: A third Generation of Implementation Research

The strengths and weaknesses of the top-down and bottom-up approaches, has led to researchers combining the benefits of these approaches into one model or synthesis that can address both the structuring of policy from the top and the likelihood of its subversion or at least its alteration at the ultimate point of implementation. This approach characterises theoretical orientations perceiving

implementation as a process of constituting coalition, structuration, networking, learning or institutionalization within which various parties in a specific policy domain or area strive to realize a policy, programme or project. This approach allows for changing some aspects which create problems during implementation.

In looking at the three approaches of policy implementation it can be concluded that some of the problems related to policy implementation can be attributed to the weaknesses of these approaches. Brynand (2007:359-360) indicates other problems with policy implementation. The complexities of policy development could be one reason for the failure of implementation. However, in developing countries the failure of policy can largely be attributed to issues of poor implementation. This has been the biggest challenge that has affected South Africa, despite good policies developed during the first five years of its democracy. In supporting this view Brynand (2007:359) argues that the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery developed in 1997 to address the challenges of service delivery failed to achieve its purpose, hence service delivery in South Africa still remains the challenge. A myriad of policies were developed since the emergence of democracy in South Africa. A majority of these policies were aimed at addressing poverty. Poverty still remains the biggest challenge facing the South African government. Hence this study seeks to understand how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes. What challenges do they experience? What is the effect of these challenges on the realization of the objectives of the programme or goals of the policy?

Khosa (2003:49) notes that the discrepancies between policy and implementation are largely caused by unrealistic policies and a lack of managerial expertise. Another key finding Khosa contends is that policy implementation has suffered from the absence of a people driven process. Insufficient coordination of policy implementation is cited in virtually all sectors, and has significantly hampered the implementation of policies. In addition, insufficient staffing and capacity of all three spheres of government as well as the linkages between them, have largely worked against the successful implementation of policies.

Other problems associated with policy implementation include ambitious targets which fall short of their desired outcomes. The lack of reliable data often hampers policy makers' ability to devise clear policy goals with well defined implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms. Political commitment could be another problem. In this, Brynand (2007:360) contends that leadership and political commitment are critical for the success of policy.

The issues of ineffective government and corruption have also been described as major obstacles to proper policy implementation. Developing countries including South Africa have high levels of corruption. Another recurring criticism of policy implementation is the orientation towards centralization. This means that policies and plans are developed in the national sphere with little consultation with the final implementers. For this reason, policy often fails to capture the subtleties of initiatives at grassroots level, and therefore appears to be alien to the managers and the very implementers of policy (Brynand, 2007:360). Finally, financial and technical resources, along with the quality of human resources, are key factors that contribute to successful policy implementation. Of importance is the also the problem with the management of resources. The problems in implementation discussed in this section will provide the basis for analyzing how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes.

3.5.4 Critical Variables for Policy Implementation

In order to understand implementation it is important to look at critical variables that can influence implementation. Brynand (2005:13) calls these variables the '5 C protocol'. He stresses that the variables are important causal factors for a multitude of scholars adhering to otherwise divergent perspectives (top-down or bottom-up; working on differing issues (environment, education and other issues) in different political systems (federal, unitary etc.) and in countries at various levels of economic development (industrialized or developing). He describes these variables as the following:

Content

Policy content relates to what the intention of the policy is. It may either be distributory, regulatory or redistributory.

1. Context

The focus in this variable is on the institutional context which will be shaped by the larger context of social, economic, political and legal realities of the system.

2. Capacity

Capacity refers to the ability to deliver those public services aimed at raising the quality of life of citizens. It refers to availability of and access to concrete or tangible resources like human, financial, material, technological, logistical etc. It also includes intangible requirements of leadership, motivation, commitment, willingness, gut, endurance and other intangibles needed to transform rhetoric into action. It is important to note that capacity is not about what capacity is required, where but also how this capacity can be created and operationalized. Brynand (2005:20) concludes that the answer to the question what capacity is needed to achieve the policy implementation objectives for sustainable public service delivery seems therefore to be both the commitment and ability to implement in pragmatic ways these elements of accepted strategic management which are appropriate in a given context.

3. Commitment

According to Brynand (2005:13) government may have logical policy, good benefits and resources to implement but if those responsible for carrying it are not committed, unwilling or unable to do so little will happen. Political commitment is also very important for policy implementation.

4. Clients and Coalitions

It is important to identify key relevant stakeholders in the implementation process. Policy implementation in South Africa has been confronted with challenges of

fragmentation and lack of coordination. Research has indicated that coalition, collaboration and better coordination are critical in achieving policy outcomes.

The 5 C Protocol is critical in analysing the implementation of policy. In addition to the 5C Brynand (2005) adds communication which he regards as an integral part of all the 5Cs. These variables will be used to analyse the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes by civil society organizations which is the purpose of this study.

3.6 THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

The 1990s witnessed an increased interest among policy makers, scholars and advocates in expanding and deepening citizen processes, particularly in community and economic development. This growing interest in citizen participation was seen as a requisite for democracy. According to Rabin (2003:355) the interest in citizen participation has been attributed to a concerted effort worldwide to devolve government as close to the people as possible; as part of reinventing government, which was initiated by David Osborne (1992) and as the way to promote anticorruption. This has resulted in the emergence and strengthening of civil society.

The debate about the direction of civil society has its roots in the historical tradition of Western political theory and social philosophy, but ironically now finds itself at the centre stage in the writings of contemporary observers. A more general theoretical approach is required to understand the existence of civil society. This approach should be able to explain the plurality of roles performed by these organizations, shifts from one role to the other, and especially the recent shift towards more productive and entrepreneurial behaviour and the coexistence of a variety of organizations and legal forms characterized by different goals and constraints.

It has been argued that the growth of civil society in Africa can be attributed to the lack of democratic governance on the continent, and the failure of states to deliver social services. Ajulu (2005:116) argues that African governments have generally

failed to raise rural standards of living, or deal with the natural calamities. As a result, some governments have increasingly ceded some of their social responsibilities to NGOs, which have worked diligently to discharge them – particularly in terms of poverty relief and social development. Thus NGOs have been universally accepted as viable conduits for development in Third World countries.

Because of their unique combination of private structure and public purpose, their generally smaller scale, their connections to citizens, their flexibility, and their capacity to tap private initiative in support of public purposes, these organizations are being looked to increasingly to perform a number of critical functions; to help deliver vital human services such as health, education, counselling and other services to the poor, often particularly with the state and the market; to empower the disadvantaged and bring unaddressed problems to public attention; to give expression to artistic, religious, cultural, ethnic, social and recreational impulses; to build community and foster those bonds of trust and reciprocity that are necessary for political stability and economic prosperity; and generally to mobilize individual initiation in the pursuit of common good.

In geographically isolated and marginalized areas in particular, local communities often depend on NGOs for their very survival. NGOs provide education and health care, as well as food and shelter. Kenya's Northern Province is one region where NGOs compensate for the absence of government services. They provide basic services and poverty relief, help communities to provide for themselves, and help shape the destiny of local communities. As a result, local people view these NGOs as their government, and the only one they have ever known (Ajulu, 2005:116). In South Africa the Department of Social Development relies on a number of NGOs and CBOs to deliver developmental welfare services in rural areas. As a result, the Department of Social Development both at national and provincial level puts aside some funding annually to assist these NGOs in delivering such services. Various expenditure reports by the National Treasury indicate that over 60% of the Department of Social Development's budget at provincial level is allocated to funding of civil society organizations. In addition the National Development Agency created

by the democratic government of South Africa grants funds to civil society organizations with a view to contribute towards poverty eradication and build capacity of these organizations in order to effectively participate in the development process.

Ajulu (2005) utilizes the notion of state penetrator or the lack of it when he discusses the ability of the state to address the needs of the people. Basically, he argues that, for a variety of reasons, states in Africa do not reach the grassroots. Because they are not embedded in the rural areas, their centrally-directed developmental efforts have no effect on the peasants living in those areas. He believes that this is one of the root causes of Africa's development crisis – hence the need for NGOs (civil society) to complement state developmental efforts. Reddy (1996:265), contends that NGOs lend themselves to effective development programmes because they can maintain a grassroots developmental approach that effectively empowers communities in the process; coordinate the different initiatives of the democratic movement to present a coherent response to the state and other initiatives; and launch, manage and control development programmes in a variety of sectors so that they combine into a coherent national strategy.

Ajulu (2005:116) argues that NGOs have risen out of the need for new developmental strategies besides those utilized by conventional development models. Third World countries were plagued by problems of underdevelopment, and the strategies used to resolve them were not very successful, thus necessitating the development of alternative approaches. The belief grew that this could only be done by NGOs, adhering to participatory models of development. Participation is an essential element of pro-poor governance and should be sought after by creating institutional mechanisms that favour and promote it.

Civil society therefore has often been viewed as vital for democracy because of their strong support at grassroots level and their capacity for development and empowerment of the poor. It can be argued, therefore, that civil society is a crucially-important factor at every stage of the democratization process. Reddy

(1996:257), points out that the focus is not on Western democracy, but rather on the institution of checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power, channels for the articulation of views that oppose dominant interests, and the increasing capacity to represent the interests of the poor. Civil society is a crucial entity in the conceptualization of democratic society. The strengthening of a vibrant civil society may be seen as a critical component towards preventing government statism, which is characterized by the centralization of power and linked public participation (Dangor 1994:16). In South Africa a major emphasis of NGOs in particular has been on politicization and conscientisation towards realizing structural transformation. This approach contrasts with the rest of Africa, where NGOs functioned within a convention negotiated with the government, focused on basic community needs and operated with more subtle political agendas.

Thus NGOs emerged to fill a gap in the provision of social services that the state had either vacated, or never filled in the first place. Before the 1980s, African governments had not given civil society much space in which to operate. Since then, however, they have gradually eased up on restrictive or repressive measures, thus creating the space for a huge proliferation of civil society organizations.

In South Africa the emergence of political democracy based on the popular will has opened new vistas of opportunity for civil society to make a meaningful contribution to the development of South African society, particularly at a local government level. This has been evident in the emergence of a host of local development forums and community development forums, which were intended to be included in state structures for delivering development programmes. The establishment of a constitutional democracy therefore has created some necessary conditions for the emergence of a strong civil society.

Reddy (1996:264) argues that a partnership that is constructive and dynamic can be ensured through NGOs that are enabled to participate in policy formulation and planning at local government level. Community involvement tends to secure greater sustainability in development. He further stresses that the emergence of effective

civil society is essential for negotiating development. Negotiated development planning could inject public participation and accountability into development. This would enable communities to identify their needs and develop strategies and action plans.

Regarding the role of civil society in South Africa, the RDP states: *"Many social movements (and community-based organizations) will be faced with the challenge of transforming their activities from a largely oppositional mode into a more developmental one. To play their full role, these formations will require capacity-building assistance. This should be developed with democratic government facilitation and funded through a variety of sources. A set of rigorous criteria must be established to ensure that the beneficiaries deserve the assistance and use it for the designated purposes. Every effort must be made to extend organizations into marginalized communities and sectors like rural black women"* (ANC 1994:131).

If the South African government wishes to uphold its promise that the RDP will be people-driven and sustainable, it would have to strengthen the policy and legal environment in which organs of civil society participate and actively build partnerships with NGOs in the planning and implementation of development initiatives. Civil society has an important role to play in the implementation of the RDP and other government policy aimed at making a better life for all.

What makes civil society significant globally and in Africa specifically, are the multiple functions they perform. Schmitter (1991:16) cites the following functions of the civil society organizations: They seek to promote not only their socio-economic interests, but also to define the rules for settling conflicting claims and interests in ways that are beneficial to themselves and society in general. Equally important, they seek to influence public policy-making and its implementation through a variety of formal and informal channels, including lobbying. As many social scientists have observed, historical and contemporary evidence strongly suggests that transition to the pluralist type of civil society is one of the critical factors facilitating the pluralist democracy and its consolidation.

Civil society organizations play an important role in helping government carry out its social functions. It can be argued, therefore, that the relationship that emerges between the state and civil society organizations is not of inherent conflict but of widespread cooperation and mutual support. In South Africa, for example, there generally is agreement on policy choices in addressing social issues like poverty, and also continued engagement and participation of civil society in public policy formulation and implementation. This is evident in the National Economic Development and Labour Council Act of 1994 and the Local Government Municipal Systems Act of 2000, which institutionalized a decision-making process involving a wide set of economic and development policy issues at both the national and local government levels (Salamon; Sokolowski; Wojciech, 2004: 116). Bratton (1989:418) agrees that emphasizing opposition and confrontation as the defining characteristic of the relation of civil society to the state, restricts associational life to activity that is at odds with the state.

Also important is the sectors' advocacy role, its role in identifying unaddressed problems and bringing them to public attention, in protecting basic human rights and in giving voice to a wide assortment of social, political, environmental, and ethnic and community interests and concerns (Salamon et al. 2004:23). Civil society organizations facilitate community-building. They create what scholars are increasingly coming to call "social capital" - those bonds of trust and reciprocity that seem to be crucial for a democratic polity and a market economy to function effectively. Lewis (2007:7) distinguishes non-governmental development organizations, whose presence is legitimized by the existence of poverty. He argues that these organizations constitute vehicles for people to participate in development and social change in ways that would not be possible through government programmes.

Civil society in developing countries has been more robust in recent years as a result of expanding communication technologies, frustrations with state-centred approaches to development and new efforts to empower the rural poor. Lewis (2007:55), states that the growth of civil society has the potential to make an

important contribution to building more democratic governance processes, because it shifts the balance of power between state and society in favour of the latter. It can also enforce standards of morality, performance and accountability in public life, and act as a channel for the demands of organized citizen groups by creating an alternative “space” – outside formal political structures, such as political parties, for political representation and action.

Salamon et al. (2004:27) argue that organizations engaged in development work absorb a significantly higher proportion of the civil society organizations’ workforce in the developing and transitional countries than in the developed countries with 9% versus 5%. In African countries, this figure reaches 18% of the civil society organization workforce. This is significant, because these development organizations often have a distinctive empowerment orientation that differentiates them from the more assistance-oriented service agencies in the field, such as education and health. Another distinguishing feature of the civil society in developing countries is the relatively low level of government support available to it. These organizations therefore have to depend more heavily on fees and private philanthropy than their counterpart elsewhere, with much of the latter coming from international sources of civil society organization income in these countries. The limited financial support to civil society organizations in Africa impacts negatively on the scale of this sector. Salamon et al. (2004”:50) state that only 21% of civil society organizations revenue comes from government on the African countries, with South African organizations recording over 40% of their funding from public sources and Kenyan recording 5%.

There is now greater acknowledgement that policy is best seen as a “process”, referring to the actions of public institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. It is clear that civil society should be understood as a realm of activity in which citizens participate in the public affairs of the state.

3.6.1 Challenges of Civil Society

Despite the strengths in the roles performed by civil society, there are challenges and shortcomings in their functioning. These problems vary from organization to organization and context to context, some patterns emerge and there are quite predictable common problems. These challenges include organizational weaknesses, management capacity, and issues of basic visibility and legitimacy, sustainability, effectiveness, and of forging the workable partnership with other sectors that real progress on complex social and economic problems increasingly requires.

Lewis (2007:24) argues that for many NGOs management is not an explicit priority and NGOs may be preoccupied with a focus on short-term details rather than on longer-term horizons and strategy. There is often a wish for NGOs to respond immediately, with little time for learning or reflection, and NGO's responses are frequently over-committed and emotional rather than achievable. Frimpong (2003:190) refers to this as a problem of balancing long-term development needs and short-term crisis needs (financial sustainability).

The scale of the African civil society sector remains constrained by the limited financial support it has available. The challenge results from the failure to recognize that the provision of public services involves at least two very different activities: first, the generation of resources to support the service, and second, and the actual delivery of the service. An insecure funding climate inhibits planning and this ultimately impacts negatively on the achievement of objectives. Particularly notable as in other developing regions has been the limited availability of public sector funding, which has played so significant a role in the growth of civil society in the developed world. According to Salamon et al. (2004:50) only 21% of civil society organizations' revenue comes from government in the African countries, with South African organizations recording over 40% of their funding from the public sector and Kenyan organizations recording 5%. This is disappointing, particularly given that civil society helps government in carrying out its role.

The issue of funding is of crucial significance to civil society, especially in realizing not only their objectives, but, most importantly, governments' objectives of improving the lives of the people. The process by which NGOs (this includes all civil society organizations) obtain funding is complex, and has to take cognizance of the following issues:

- The question of sources (against the background of the political realities and ideological conflicts of the day;
- Institutional procedures, priorities and practices of donor agencies;
- The constraints of the short-term nature of most funding; and
- Problems of vulnerability and dependency for NGOs, whose main sources of finance are from external quarters in Reddy (1996:262).

Frimpong (2003:190) summarizes the problems identified by NGOs themselves as the following:

- Defining the organization's role within the dynamic and fluid context. This has resulted in several organizations redefining their role and niche within the current context;
- Inadequate internal organizational structures and resources to meet the new challenges and at the same time facilitate delivery;
- Inadequate systems and procedures to evaluate the organization's impact;
- Difficulties in ensuring the full participation of the client constituency in the planning process;
- Lack of dialogue with the funder around and sometimes imposition of inappropriate planning frameworks by the funder;
- The reluctance of donors to fund core expenses; and
- A failure of donors to view grants as a way of delivering financial infrastructure that will give the organization self-reliance.

It is clear that moving an organization towards greater financial sustainability is not an easy one. Hence the importance of stronger government funding of civil society

organizations, since donor funding is becoming less and less given the current global economic decline.

Ajulu (2005:120) argues that another problem among civil society, particularly in the East African Community, is a lack of networking – the forging of alliances and linkages in order to achieve common objectives, and learn from each others' experiences. This problem is attributed to rivalry between civil society organizations struggling for resources, especially funds and personal antipathies between civil society organizations leaders, reflecting a lack of vision, foresight and maturity. The lack of forging alliances to achieve common objectives is also evident in the South African context where NGOs, particularly those that operate in urban areas, tend to have more capacity in generating their own funding than the smaller community-based organizations, which tend to rely more on government funding. Experience from the Department of Social Development in South Africa has shown that unless there is much more concerted effort to support these small, emerging community-based organizations, they struggle to survive.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The public policy process has ushered a significant change in the outlook of South Africa, laying a foundation for the transformation agenda. This chapter has provided analysis and assessment of theoretical constructs of public policy. The discussion and review of various theories of public policy has revealed that political paradigms, ideologies and values influence policy making. The existence of policies however does not automatically result in successful implementation. Various approaches of policy implementation have been discussed citing variables involved with failed policy implementation. The chapter concluded by reviewing literature on the role of civil society organizations in different political paradigms and the challenges they experience. This chapter has provided the basis for analyzing the role of civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes in partnership with government.