

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The history of South Africa has been a bitter one – dominated by the imbalances of the past – which were created by the apartheid policies of the previous government. These imbalances were characterized by social and economic exclusion, which was distinguished in terms of race. Those classified as non-whites were systematically excluded from accessing land, employment, education, health and other basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity, which were enjoyed by those classified as whites. This demarcation between whites and non-whites exacerbated the plight of poverty and inequality as well as underdevelopment among non-white groups. This view is supported by Zegeye and Maxted (2002:1) who indicate that apartheid policies have left the majority of South Africans living in a highly unequal society in which poverty and social dislocation have had profound and traumatic effects on the social fabric.

The continued existence of poverty reflected not the intrinsic nature of the human condition, but the failure of the social system and the political regime. According to the World Development Report (2006:1) the legacy of apartheid's unequal opportunities and political power will remain for some time to come. It is a long road from such a (fundamental) political change to changes in economic and social conditions. It is for this reason that South Africa is considered a medium human development country and is characterized by extreme levels of inequality. Despite the state's attempts to address inequality, its prevalence is still marked and largely defined along gender, age, race and spatial dimensions. For example, in as late as 2005, poverty was still virtually non-existent among whites (Roux and Adams: 2009:1).

This chapter presents a general overview of the study. Firstly, the context for addressing poverty and underdevelopment in South Africa, post-democracy, is

provided by reviewing global, continental and regional commitments made by the South African government. At national (country) level, the legislative framework, including policy that forms the basis for addressing poverty, is reviewed. Secondly, the motivation for the study, the formulation of the problem and the hypothesis are provided. Thirdly, the purpose and objectives of the study are delineated. Fourthly, concepts pertinent to this study are defined and lastly, the outline of chapters of the study is presented.

1.2 THE CONTEXT FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The dawn of the new South Africa in 1994 brought hope to South Africans, especially those who were classified as non-whites and thus previously disadvantaged. This new hope was brought by the commitment of government to a single vision of creating a people-centred society and a better life for all as expressed in its Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The major goals of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, among others, were to eliminate poverty and inequalities generated by decades of apartheid and to raise living standards. These goals were based on six basic principles, which, among others, include an integrated and sustainable programme and a people-driven process. The integrated and sustainable programme on the one hand emphasized that the legacy of apartheid cannot be overcome with piecemeal and uncoordinated policies, but rather with coherent, purposeful and sustained strategies implemented at all three government levels, parastatals and organizations within civil society. It is for this reason that, since the adoption of the RDP, the South African government has remained firmly committed to its vision of a better life for all, with extensive involvement not only in implementing international and national policies and institutions concerned with poverty alleviation, but also in spearheading the formation of these.

A people-driven process on the other hand emphasized focus on people's most immediate needs addressed through approaches driven by people themselves. These two key principles are important in evaluating strategies implemented to address poverty in South Africa, which is the key objective of this research, particularly

analyzing the role of key actors like civil society organizations in implementing public policies.

South Africa's approach to poverty is informed by national imperatives, including constitutional guarantees on socio-economic rights and the country's commitment to being a developmental state. It is also informed by relevant international agreements and conventions such as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) of 1994, the World Summit on social development of 1995, ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), the Copenhagen Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Relevant programmes target previously disadvantaged groups and those groups whom the accumulated disadvantage renders particularly vulnerable to poverty.

The anti-poverty programme in South Africa is anchored to measures that seek to address income, human capital and asset poverty. The needs of diverse women, children, and people with disability, older persons and other historically disadvantaged groups have been given priority in the planning and implementation of the anti-poverty policies.

1.2.1 Global Context

A significant step of South Africa after it attained its democracy was its participation in the World Summit for Social Development held in March 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark, which saw various governments – including South Africa – adopting a Declaration and Programme of Action, which represented a new consensus on the need to put people at the centre of development (IISD, 2002: 3). According to the United Nations Department of Public Information (1995: vii) among the groundbreaking agreements made by the world's leaders in the declaration were ten commitments, namely to:

- eradicate absolute poverty by a target date to be set by each country;
- support full employment as a basic policy goal;
- promote social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights;
- achieve equality and equity between men and women;
- accelerate the development of Africa and the least developed countries;
- ensure that structural adjustment programmes include social development goals;
- increase resources allocated to social development;
- create an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development;
- attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care; and
- Strengthen cooperation for social development through the United Nations.

The issue of equity as cited in one of the Copenhagen commitments and later as the key principle in driving the transformation agenda of South Africa as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) is critical in addressing the challenges of development and poverty in South Africa. According to the World Development Report (2006:2) differences in life chances across nationality, race, gender and social groups are not only unfair, but also lead to missed development opportunities. By equity, the Report states, it means that individuals should have equal opportunities to pursue a life of their choosing and be spared from extreme deprivation in outcomes. The main message is that equity is complementary in some fundamental respects to the pursuance of long- term prosperity. Institutions and policies that promote a level playing field – where all members of society have similar chances of becoming socially active, politically influential, and economically productive – contribute to sustainable growth and development and are therefore undoubtedly good for poverty alleviation (2006:2). Three considerations drawn from this statement are that differences in outcomes may result due to the effects of inequity. Secondly, public action should therefore focus on aspects like the distribution of assets, economic opportunities and a political voice rather than

directly on inequality in incomes; and lastly, there may be various short-run policy-level tradeoffs between equity and efficiency.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995, put the concerns of women firmly on the international agenda, and placed gender issues at the centre of the debate on development. The conference focused on the advancement and empowerment of women in relation to human rights, women and poverty, women and decision-making, the girl child, violence against women and other areas of concern.

The Fancourt Declaration on Globalisation and People-Centred Development, which was an outcome of the Commonwealth Summit held in Durban, South Africa in 1999, reinforced the commitment to people-centred development among Commonwealth leaders and governments.

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Summit formulated the Millennium Declaration, which outlined a wide range of commitments in human rights, good governance and democracy. As a member of the UN, South Africa also adopted this declaration, which resulted in the Millennium Development Goals that have been commonly accepted as a policy framework for measuring development progress. The goals focus the efforts of the world community on achieving significant measurable improvements in people's lives. They establish yardsticks for measuring results not just for developing countries, but for the rich countries that help to fund development programmes and for the multilateral institutions that help countries implement them. South Africa has committed itself to achieving the following goals:

1. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. The targets set here are halving the numbers of people who live on less than \$1 a day as well as those who suffer from hunger between 1990 and 2015;
2. Achieving universal primary education. All children should be able to complete primary schooling by 2015;

3. Promoting gender equality and women. Gender disparities across all levels of education should be eliminated by 2015;
4. Reducing child mortality. The under-five mortality rate should be reduced by three quarters between 1990 and 2015;
5. Improving maternal health. The maternal mortality rate should be reduced by three quarters between 1990 and 2015;
6. Combating HIV and Aids, malaria and other diseases. The spread of major diseases should be halted and reversed by 2015;
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability. Targets include promoting environmentally-friendly policy, halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015, and achieving a significant improvement of at least 100 million slum dwellers' lives by 2020; and
8. Developing a global partnership for development. Targets include developing sound and equitable international trading and financial systems, addressing the needs of vulnerable countries, dealing with youth unemployment, and providing the benefits of pharmaceutical and technological advance to all.

A critical aspect of the MDGs is the recognition that governments and international development organizations share collective responsibility for their achievement. Of specific importance to Africa is Chapter VII of the Millennium Declaration, 'Meeting the Special Needs of Africa' in which the United Nations effectively responded to the call of the then President Mbeki and other African leaders to make the 21st century an African century. Achievement of the MDGs by Africa requires taking decisive action to substantially accelerate progress being made on the continent, hence the importance of continuously evaluating the progress of African countries made in meeting these goals.

The South African government has since pledged to half poverty by 2014. To this effect the South African government has undertaken a number of policy decisions and interventions to address South Africa's historical, deep-seated inequalities and poverty. Meth & Dias (2004:60), however, argue that without an official poverty line it will be difficult for South Africa to measure achievements towards this goal.

In 2002, the United Nations community met in Johannesburg, South Africa, for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). In many respects the WSSD concluded a decade of global summits and conferences, which had seen the UN system, go through an elaborate process of drawing up a global agenda for development.

Under the previous leadership of President Thabo Mbeki, South Africa has played a significant role not only in giving birth to NEPAD, but also in its promotion and achievements. The principles of NEPAD include good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and sustainable political and socio-economic development. The principles also include African ownership and leadership as well as broad and deep participation by all sectors of society, anchoring the development of Africa on its resources and resourcefulness of its people. The NEPAD mission statement also highlights the promotion of partnerships between and among African peoples, the acceleration of regional and continental integration and the increasing global competitiveness of the African continent. In pursuing its mission, the NEPAD process entails promoting an accelerated transformation of the manner in which African institutions manage development through strengthening political leadership and the revitalization of key institutions including governments and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). This is supported by the following statement:

“A vision alone will not change the lives of the African people; what will is more effective delivery through better leadership and capacitated institutions” (NEPAD,2002:36). It can therefore be argued that for Africa to address the scourge of poverty, it needs institutions including civil society and communities that are capacitated to drive the process of change in order to ensure sustainability.

The Yaoundé Declaration on Community Development (IACD, 2005), which emerged from the conference that brought together government and civil society delegates from over thirty African countries, is another critical declaration that guides community development, which is critical for poverty eradication in Africa today. Its approach to community development is guided by the following principles:

- the provision of basic needs;
- determined work towards the eradication of poverty;
- the promotion of basic human rights and responsibilities within a framework of peace and social justice;
- the celebration and nurturing of the 'soul' of communities, and respect for local cultural contexts where these do not determine basic human rights;
- support for processes that enable collective participatory decision-making at all levels of society;
- the capacity building of all relevant actors and stakeholders in the development process; and
- Respect for the integrity of the natural environment (IACD 2005).

1.2.2 Regional Context

South Africa joined SADC as a member state in 1994. This occurred at a time when South Africa not only had just attained democracy, but also two years after the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) had taken a decision to transform from a coordination conference into SADC, the community, and had redefined the basis of cooperation among member states from a loose association into a legally binding arrangement. The purpose for transformation was to promote deeper economic cooperation and integration to help address many factors that make it difficult to sustain economic growth and socio-economic development.

While SADC has recorded some remarkable achievements, difficulties and constraints have also been encountered. These include, among others, a lack of institutional reforms for effective transformation, and a lack of appropriate mechanisms capable of translating the high degree of political commitments into concrete programmes of community-building and integration (see <http://www.sadc.int/english/documents/risdpc/chapter1.php>).

In order to address these challenges, SADC restructured in 2001 to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its policies and programmes, and to implement a more coherent and better coordinated strategy to eliminate poverty in the region. It is for this reason that the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) was developed. The RISDP is guided by the vision of SADC, which charts the direction for the development of the region. It is also underpinned by the SADC mission, which states: *"To promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy."*

Based on this mission, there are three key integration and development enablers RISDP seeks to achieve. First, peace, security, democracy and good political governance need to be achieved. In this regard SADC states that unless there are peace, security, democracy and good political governance, poverty thrives, instability and conflict continue, and the result is perpetuating underdevelopment and extreme deprivation. The second enabler is economic corporate governance, which, in the context of RISDP, includes sound macro-economic management, transparent public financial management, and accountability. Within this context SADC is committed to promoting the participation of civil society in community-building at both regional and national levels. Lastly, there are other prerequisites that will facilitate the move towards deeper integration and poverty eradication. These include, among others, intensifying the fight against HIV and Aids, gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women, and the creation of an enabling institutional environment.

It is clear from these three enablers of integration and development cited above that the ultimate objective of RISDP is to deepen the integration agenda of SADC with a view to accelerating poverty eradication and the attainment of other economic and non-economic goals. It can therefore be concluded that the RISDP is an important instrument in guiding SADC towards the attainment of regional integration and development goals. It is not surprising, therefore, that the South African

government is committed to the achievement of this comprehensive development agenda, which agrees with both the global and continental development agenda South Africa seeks to achieve.

1.2.3 National Context

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 which is regarded as the most progressive Constitution in the world provided the basis for defining the role of the state in pursuing a transformation agenda. The goal of this agenda is improving the quality of life of every citizen, whilst ensuring that their rights are protected. The Constitution (1996) and the Reconstruction and Development Programme have played a critical role in defining the developmental agenda of South Africa.

The first decade of democracy epitomized tremendous strides of achievements that have been attained as indicated in the Ten Year Review (PCAS, 2003). Notwithstanding these developmental achievements, the Review, however, notes the gaps and backlogs that still exist. It argues that apart from the RDP, the government has not as yet developed a sufficiently detailed encompassing framework or broad vision for South Africa's socio-economic development objectives. South Africa is therefore still confronted with many challenges. Evidence seems to indicate that poverty is proving to be much more intractable than initially hoped (see Du Toit 2005; Van der Berg, 2005:3; UNDP, 2003; Meth & Dias, 2004; Myers, 1997; Zegeye & Maxted, 2002). Similarly, the Public Service Commission (PSC) in South Africa is of the view that the previous patterns of inequality remain largely unchanged in previously disadvantaged communities (Public Service Commission, 2003).

It can be concluded that despite the plethora of good policies developed post 1994 aimed at addressing poverty and development poverty still remains the biggest challenge facing South Africa, with rural areas being the poorest segments of society affected mostly, hence the President in his State-of-the-Nation Address in February 2004 spoke of the 'two economies' in South Africa – a phenomenon that raises

discourse. Whether the pronouncement of two economies by the President is what Szirmai (1997:24) refers to as one of the characteristics of developing countries, which include pronounced dualism in economic structure, is a discourse that needs to be pursued, but not in this study.

The continued challenge of poverty raises a number of questions on the quality of participation of various actors in the policy process, challenges in the implementation of public policy and the approaches used in particular the extent to which such approaches empower the poor. Furthermore, the continued challenge of poverty raises a question on the extent to which strategies and interventions aimed at addressing the extremity of poverty are sustainable in order to achieve long-term benefits and remove the poorest of the poor from the cycle-of-poverty trap.

The central premise of this study is that government alone cannot achieve poverty alleviation, but needs a partnership with various stakeholders like civil society organizations to ensure that strategies aimed at addressing poverty are not only sustainable, but indeed empower those who have to implement these strategies. The aim of this research therefore is to evaluate the role played by civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes and the extent to which these programmes are empowering and sustainable.

1.3. MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The Department of Social Development is most directly involved with poverty alleviation in South Africa. It provides social safety nets to the poor, vulnerable and marginalized through:

- Social grants, including the old age pension, child support grant, foster care grant and disability grant;
- Developmental welfare services in the form of prevention, treatment, care and support and counselling programmes;
- Development programmes targeting youth, families and communities in the form of sustainable livelihoods programmes and poverty relief, including food relief and community development initiatives and interventions.

Research has shown that welfare policy in the form of social grants has been proactive in the efforts to alleviate poverty. However, many poor people in South African society do not qualify for social grants, underscoring the importance of private income earning capacity for economic upliftment (Van der Berg 2005:5). The critical question, therefore, is what alternatives are there to assist the poor to improve their living conditions particularly those who do not qualify for social grants, and what could also complement income that may not be sufficient, that is received by those who access grants?

The role of the South African government and its agencies in efforts to initiate, implement, monitor and evaluate policy change is now increasingly recognized and accepted as necessary in view of the inherited social inequalities. While it is important to strengthen present-state capacity in relation to social delivery imperatives, government is also taking further steps in strengthening partnerships with various stakeholders as a way of improving delivery mechanisms. The CSOs are central to the delivery of community based services in South Africa. NGOs delivering welfare services have a long tradition of service delivery in partnership with government, dating back to the 1930s, when the first public welfare department was established in response to the “poor white problem” (Patel, Hochfeld, Graham and Selipsky: 2008:2). It is important to note that prior to 1994 the civil society saw themselves as competitors in dealing with developmental issues like poverty alleviation. They were occupying the space which the state could not occupy and were advocating for the rights of those disadvantaged by apartheid policies. However, with the emergence of a democratic government, the role of civil society has shifted enormously beyond the narrow role of social watchdog with emphasis on good governance and partnerships in achieving developmental goals. This is reflected in CIVICUS’s view that civil society is an important factor in consolidating and sustaining democracy, fostering pro-poor development policies, achieving gender equality and fighting corruption (CIVICUS, 2004:1). The role of civil society in partnership with government is therefore critical for the realization of a better life for all. It is for this reason, therefore, that the State provides financial

support to the civil society organizations. However, Patel et al. (2008:2) argue that while the new welfare policy acknowledges this collaborative partnership between the state and voluntary organizations, numerous challenges of a fiscal nature remain, including increasing governmental control and a lack of recognition of the efficacy of the voluntary initiative - hence the interest of the researcher in the present study.

Long-term success of democratic pluralism is believed to increase government accountability. Good governance is not the sole responsibility of governments. A vibrant and diverse civil society is also needed to hold governments accountable. It is for this reason that, in the South African context democratization and empowerment of civil society have been advocated as prerequisites to an effective social contract. Greater political pluralism will improve economic and social management and provide an impetus for reform where necessary. As far as social development is concerned, greater participation by non-governmental agents enriches the policy process, creates opportunities for private-public partnerships on social delivery, increases the sense of ownership over policy outcomes, and lends greater legitimacy to government decisions (CIVICUS, 2004:3).

Since the 1997/1998 to 2003/2004 financial years, the national Department of Social Development and its provincial counterparts have developed and implemented a Poverty Relief Programme for seven years. This programme has played a critical role in addressing poverty - not only for those who qualify for social grants, but also for those who do not qualify for them.

One of the key objectives of this programme was to establish local institutions that would be able to identify, own and manage the ongoing implementation of development initiatives in each community with a view to ensuring the sustainability of projects beyond the initial grant period. Critical to such a development strategy was the creation of capacity through local partnerships. Such partnerships from civil society would become the means through which communities would drive their own initiatives.

While valuable lessons have been learnt in the implementation of this programme, from the researcher's experience as the senior manager in the Department of Social Development, poverty is still the biggest challenge facing communities despite some interventions government has initiated. Within Social Development the Poverty Relief Programme initiated since 1998 indicates that some of the projects have not yielded the results as was expected, particularly not as regards their sustainability. As a result, these projects are either at the stage where they need to be terminated, or serious interventions of support are required to ensure their continuity. It is therefore important for the researcher of this study to understand how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes. How do they ensure that communities are empowered during the implementation process? What aspects are critical in ensuring sustainability of these programmes to ensure they achieve the outcomes they are intended to achieve and have lasting impact? By 2009, government was spending over R80 billion on social grants and the Minister of Finance was greatly concerned about the pressure this amount of spending, which was expected to increase, placed on the country's GDP. While social grants are critical in addressing income poverty, it is the researcher's view that if the Department of Social Development's mission is: *To ensure the provision of comprehensive, integrated, sustainable and quality social development services against vulnerability and poverty and (to) create an enabling environment for sustainable development in partnership with those committed to building a caring society.* Then it is critical to evaluate the role of civil society in poverty alleviation as important partners in building a caring society, particularly the extent of sustainability of programmes as a key indicator in ensuring long-term impact. Also important, as indicated in the mission statement, is the fact that the Department of Social Development bears primary responsibility for relationships with the civil society organizations.

The fight towards poverty alleviation requires a comprehensive, integrated, multifaceted and multidimensional approach which involves participation by all stakeholders to achieve sustainability as indicated in the mission statement of the

Department of Social Development. Experience, research and, most importantly, the poor themselves emphasize that issues such as inclusion and the environment, among others, are fundamental to lasting development and sustainable poverty alleviation. Research also suggests that where civil society organizations participate more fully, service delivery gaps are better identified. In such cases, the prioritization of service delivery needs is also more appropriate to the needs of communities (2003:14). This participation and the role of civil society also support the notion of decentralization, which is seen as a way to improve service delivery and increase popular participation in governance. Civil society organizations operate at community level and are best positioned to respond to the immediate needs of community. However, Du Toit, Van der Walt, Bayat and Cheminais (1998:266) warn that the fact that the market and the state have not succeeded in reducing poverty does not mean that NGOs will do any better. However, an assessment of NGOs' distinctive competence and role in the development process shows that because NGOs work closely with the poor, for example, they may enhance the access of the poor to public services and augment their political power through organization. The involvement of civil society in poverty alleviation therefore cannot be overemphasized given their local knowledge, which can be used as a basis for development; hence the researcher was motivated to undertake this study.

Furthermore, the researcher as a senior manager developing and monitoring the implementation of various policies aimed at alleviating poverty, has come across some deeply rooted poverty that still confront communities. These levels of poverty and misery are ethically unacceptable. The democratic government has committed itself to realize the dreams of many South Africans who have lost hope of a better life. Zegeye and Maxted (2002: IV), state:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up?

Like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore –

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over –

Like a syrup sweet?

Maybe it just sags

Like a heavy load

Or does it explode?

1.4 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to evaluate how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes within the context of Social Development.

1.4.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study are the following:

- To describe the context of addressing poverty in South Africa post-1994 within the global, regional and national frameworks;
- To review literature on theoretical constructs of public policy with a view to understand public policy process in South Africa and the challenges in policy implementation;
- To analyse and understand the capacity challenges of civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes;
- To evaluate the extent to which civil society organizations involve and empower communities in implementing programmes;
- To analyse the extent to which programmes implemented by civil society organizations are sustainable;
- To make conclusions and recommendations regarding future implementation of poverty alleviation programmes;

1.5 THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH

In light of the above objectives the hypothesis of this research is **“poverty alleviation programmes implemented by civil society organizations in collaboration and partnership with government are empowering and**

sustainable". Since 1994 the South African government as part of its transformation agenda has committed to a people-centred society and a better life for all expressed in its RDP. Subsequently, poverty alleviation in South Africa must be driven by the poor themselves who understand better their circumstances and their needs. Furthermore, poverty alleviation must be sustainable to ensure that the poor do not find themselves going back to the cycle of poverty trap. Participation of civil society in the implementation of poverty alleviation therefore provides an opportunity for the realization of the two principles of RDP – a people-driven approach and sustainable programmes. Civil society organizations are associated with the ability to control the circumstances in which individuals live and the substantive empowerment of citizens. Participation of civil society organizations therefore creates opportunities for private public partnerships on social delivery, increases the sense of ownership over policy outcomes and lends greater legitimacy to governmental decisions. The sense of ownership is a critical aspect in ensuring sustainability of programmes. Civil society organizations take responsibility for improving the collective circumstances and thus select from a range of options in bringing change to their circumstances. Hence the hypothesis of this study is **"poverty alleviation programmes implemented by civil society organizations in collaboration and partnership with government are empowering and sustainable"**

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.5.1 Poverty

Poverty is the most complex phenomenon and is not always easy to define without conveying its diverse facets, which include its nature, its causes, its geography and social groups, which are usually vulnerable to poverty. Adding to this complexity is the fact that poverty means different things to those people who are affected by it. This is evident in the following definitions, which come from various poor people from different countries:

“Poverty is like heat: you cannot see it; you can only feel it. To know poverty you have to go through it.” – A poor man, Adaboya, Ghana

“Women are beaten at the house for any reason...They may also be beaten if the husband comes home drunk or if he simply feels like it.” – A researcher from Ethiopia

“Poverty is not knowing where your next meal is going to come from and always wondering when the council is going to put your furniture out and always praying that your husband must not lose his job. To me that is poverty.” – Mrs Witbooi, Phillipstown, Karoo, South Africa

Adding to this in the South African Participatory Poverty Assessment (SA-PPA 1998), the poor characterized their poverty as including:

- isolation from family and community institutions;
- the inability to provide food in sufficient quantity or of a good quality;
- living in overcrowded or poorly maintained homes;
- lack of access to safe and efficient sources of energy;
- a lack of adequately paid or secure jobs;
- fragmentation of the family; and
- Vulnerability to shocks and stresses such as the death of a main income earner or environmental hazards such as flooding.

Given these various dimensions of poverty, it can be concluded that poverty is multidimensional and that any policies and strategies aimed at addressing poverty should take into account this multidimensional nature. This study however will focus on those dimensions of poverty which fall within the context of social development.

1.5.2 Development

According to Liebenberg and Steward (1997:89) the concept “development” has been defined in many ways over the years. Each new theory has borrowed from the

past in order to build for the future, resulting in an evolutionary development of this concept. It is therefore often argued that, to improve theory (and thus development), note must be taken of the past, so that lessons can be learnt from past mistakes and knowledge gained from past successes. As such, Szirmai's (1997) view is that Amartya Sen's work has been central to the broadening of perspective in the meaning of development and poverty alleviation. His book *Development as Freedom* (1999) embodies the key idea of development as the enhancement of individuals' abilities to shape their own lives (1997:1).

Liebenberg & Steward (1997:91) argue that on the basis of humanistic perceptions it must be stated that people create their own social reality and, within this social reality, also their specific definition of development as perceived by them. Hence they emphasize that development must be defined by those whose lives are to be improved, and their need for empowerment must be recognized. Korten (1990:67), however, succinctly describes development as ... a process by which the members of society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to reproduce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life, consistent with their own aspirations. This is the kind of approach on which the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) philosophy is built. The following RDP quotation drives home the point: "*Development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry. It is about active involvement and growing empowerment. In taking this approach we are building on the many forums, peace structures and negotiations that our people are involved in throughout the land*" (ANC 1994:5).

From the above description of development it could be concluded that development is about improving the capacity of people and their capabilities, empowerment of people to improve participation, a fairer distribution of the fruits of development. For the purpose of this study the term development will therefore be broadly used to describe the improvement of people's quality of life. The emphasis will be on the principles of participation, empowerment and sustainability.

1.5.3 Sustainability

Defining sustainability in a broader sense is not easy – but there have been many attempts. Trzyna (1995:17) states that sustainability is not a technical problem to be solved, but a vision of the future that provides us with a road map and helps us to focus our attention on a set of values and ethical and moral principles by which to guide our actions.

According to the World Development Report (2003:14) the most commonly used definition is the one provided by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission 1987): “progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Recent definitions have focused more explicitly on the three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and social. The thinking about social sustainability is not yet as advanced as for the other two pillars. Societies do, and will continue to, transform over time. But it seems clear that significant social stress – and, at the extreme, social conflict – is likely to lead to a breakdown in the accumulation or preservation of all assets, thereby jeopardizing intergenerational well-being (2003:14).

According to Liebenberg and Steward (1997:126) sustainable development deals with the continuous flow of benefits. The second dimension of sustainable development is time, and within this dimension emphasis is placed on the fact that the process of sustainable development should be viewed as long-term. Liebenberg and Steward further stress that popular participation and empowerment constitute a central component of sustainable development in that sustainable development should be based on the beneficial attainment of access to and the mobilization of resources by the poor in order to address their basic needs (1997:126). Khosa (2000:3) argues that at the heart of any infrastructure and service delivery programme there should be a deliberate effort to empower relevant beneficiaries, curtail excessive powers of global and corporate stakeholders and establish meaningful institutional arrangements and resources to ensure sustainability and service affordability. It is therefore clear that sustainability involves long-term

benefits that are responsive to the basic needs, hence emphasis on participation and empowerment.

1.5.4 Participation

Participation is defined as a process whereby stakeholders exercise influence over public policy decisions, and share control over resources and institutions that affect their lives, thereby providing a check on power of government. In the context of governance, participation is focused on the empowerment of citizens, including women, and addressing the interplay between the broad range of civil societies, actors and actions (Agere, 2000:9).

Kotze (1997:38), however, argues that the nature and content of the concept of participation cannot be reduced to a single description or definition. The concept may, therefore, according to Kotze, be discussed by referring to the following aspects:

- Participation implies involvement. In this a distinction is made between participation and involvement, where participation implies “to share in” while involvement implies that there is a feeling of belonging and that people become involved on the basis of this feeling. They therefore feel that they belong to the various projects or programmes and vice versa.
- Communication must be established. If participation is put into effect, communication is created and a situation is achieved where the local communities are in a position to identify and analyse a development problem for them.
- A new attitude on the part of government officials is required. In many Third World countries bureaucracy creates the impression of inaccessibility, while it should be geared to creating a positive relationship with the people and, at the same time, to promoting an image of professionalism and efficiency (Bryant & White, 1982:212).
- Participation must lead to reciprocal influence between development agencies and people. Participation therefore is not a passive participation in goodwill,

but an active influencing of the behaviour and output of development agencies.

Within this study, participation will refer to the voice and influence civil society and local people/communities have on public policy including programmes aimed at alleviating poverty. Notwithstanding the fact that this study focuses on policy implementation the study may reflect on the influence of CSOs in all phases of public policy-making, that is, planning and decision-making, implementation, evaluation and the phase in which benefits are derived.

1.5.5 Empowerment

Empowerment can be defined in various ways, depending on the context in which it is used. According to Liebenberg & Stewart (1997:125) empowerment can be viewed as a process that makes power available so that it can be used for the manipulation of access and the use of resources to achieve certain development goals. Within this study, empowerment therefore entails strengthening of communities or local capacities so that they can sustain development.

1.5.6 Governance

Good governance is a concept that has recently come into regular use in political science, public administration and, more particularly, development management. It appears alongside such concepts and terms as democracy, civil society, popular participation, human rights and social and sustainable development. The emerging perspectives regarding governance structures are, among others, the relationship between governments and citizens and the relationship between governments and the voluntary or private sector, hence it is important to define this concept in this study.

Better governance is a development imperative for most African countries. The following quotation states the crucial need of governance for development: *"It is ...important to establish from the outset that the conventional development models have failed miserably in Africa and that the solutions for Africa's problems must*

emphasize strategies that promote democracy, self-reliance, accountability and sustainability” (Cheru, 1989:1).

In light of this, the World Bank (2000:64) states that good governance should aim to achieve the three E’s:

- Empower citizens to hold governments accountable through participation and decentralization;
- Enable governments to respond to new demands by building capacity; and
- Enforce compliance with the rule of law and greater transparency.

1.5.7 Civil Society

Civil society is a broad term encompassing individuals and non-governmental forms of association. Its development is considered by many in the West to be a prerequisite for democracy and an expression of grassroots political pluralism. Members of civil society participate voluntarily in public or community affairs. The term “civil society” is often associated with the ability to control the circumstances in which individuals live and the substantive empowerment of citizens. Within the South African context the term “civil society” has been commonly used to exclusively denote three key actors, namely non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and faith-based organisations (FBOs). According to Du Toit et al. (1998:264) non-governmental organizations are voluntary organizations promoting development, covering a wide spectrum of development-related activities, and are responsible to their donors and to the communities for which they work. Du Toit further stresses that NGOs are not for profit and are often committed to the idea of popular participation human (resource) development and community (social) education. This study will use the term “civil society” organizations to include all three actors, otherwise, where a distinction is necessary, specific reference will be made to each actor.

1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE

1.6.1 Chapter 1: Introduction and general overview

This chapter presents a general overview of the context for poverty alleviation and addressing underdevelopment in South Africa. This is achieved by providing a brief historical perspective of the apartheid regime which resulted in poverty, inequality and underdevelopment in South Africa. This is followed by highlighting various key obligations and commitments at global, continental, regional and national levels made by South Africa - post democracy - in alleviating poverty and addressing underdevelopment. The chapter also provides the motivation for the study and formulates the hypothesis. The purpose and objectives of the study are delineated and the key concepts used in the study are defined. Finally, the chapter concludes with an outline of each chapter.

1.6.2 Chapter 2: Research Methodology

Chapter two discusses the research methodology of the study. The significance of the study including the purpose and objectives of the study are outlined. Delineations and limitations are highlighted and the research problem and the research questions are stated. Reasons for selecting qualitative research with semi-quantitative research are provided. The research design and its phases are elaborated on, focusing on various methodological approaches that will allow the research to present a coherent case. In this, focus will be on methodologies to be used to collect data and sources of these data, target population and sampling and an analysis of data.

1.6.3 Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter will explore available literature on public policy, examining theoretical frameworks of public policy. Policy agenda that has influenced the involvement of civil society organization in public policy will be reviewed. Lastly, policy implementation approaches will also be examined.

1.6.4 Chapter 4: Poverty Alleviation: Empirical Studies

This chapter will review progress in alleviating poverty worldwide, continentally and nationally. Specifically progress towards the achievement of millennium development goals will be reviewed. Cases from selected countries will be analysed to understand variables that have contributed to success in poverty alleviation. The chapter will conclude by reviewing empowerment approaches.

1.6.5 Chapter 5: Research findings and analysis

Chapter 5 represents findings emanating from data and provides analysis of the findings.

1.6.6 Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

This will be a summary of research design, summarizing findings in Chapter 5 and providing recommendations on the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes by civil society organizations. Implications for further research will be highlighted.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Methodology is the most important aspect in any research because it provides direction to be followed in addressing the research problem and the research question. The aim of this chapter is to outline the research design that will be followed in undertaking this study. Strategies or designs refer to those decisions a researcher makes in planning the study. Other authors use the term to refer to those groups of small, worked-out formulas from which prospective (quantitatively oriented) researchers can select or develop one (or more) that may be suitable to their specific research goal.

This chapter will thus focus on the significance of the study, its purpose and objectives, delineations and limitations of the study, the research problem and the research question as well as the methodology that will be used to undertake this study. The reasons for selecting qualitative research method combining it with semi-quantitative research will be discussed. Approaches to qualitative research will be explored. Various methodological approaches, specifically data collection and analysis methods, sampling and ethical considerations will be outlined.

2.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to analyse the role of civil society organizations in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in South Africa post democracy. The research will describe the importance of partnerships and collaboration between government and civil society in implementing public policy focussing on how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes and the extent to which this partnership and collaboration ensures empowerment and sustainability of programmes.

2.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are the following:

- To describe the context of addressing poverty in South Africa post-1994 within the global, regional and national frameworks;
- To review literature on theoretical constructs of public policy with a view to understand public policy process in South Africa and the challenges in policy implementation;
- To analyse and understand the capacity challenges of civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes;
- To evaluate the extent to which civil society organizations involve and empower communities in implementing poverty alleviation programmes;
- To analyse the extent to which programmes implemented by civil society organizations in partnership with government are sustainable and
- To make conclusions and recommendations regarding future implementation of poverty alleviation programmes.

2.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is as follows:

- The results of the research will contribute towards better insight on the role of civil society as key role players in implementing poverty alleviation programmes and should assist in directing policy on this aspect, particularly, in strengthening capacity for effective implementation and long lasting effect.
- This study will also assist in addressing the challenge to contemporary orthodoxy and new insight that a more critical understanding of the role of civil society in improving the quality of life is needed. The study will thus contribute to the knowledge by reviewing the issues of public accountability, empowerment and sustainability as they relate to the civil society organizations in implementing public policy in partnership with government.
- The study will highlight challenges and constraints experienced by civil society organizations in the implementation of public policy and bring about possible solutions to such challenges for effective implementation.

- The study will further contribute to the effective management of civil society organizations. The ability of the South African government in alleviating poverty lies in the effective implementation of its policies. Poverty alleviation cannot be achieved by government alone but requires effective partnerships with civil society organizations which remain closer to the people and communities. Thus government's commitment to effective partnerships is critical to address the persistence of poverty, hence the importance of this study.
- The study will also be used by administrators to guide the implementation of policies aimed at poverty alleviation.
- The study will thus contribute to the academic knowledge in the field of Public Administration and specifically in the implementation of public policies.

2.5 DELINEATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will focus on analysing the role played by civil society organizations in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes within the social development perspective post 1994. Poverty is multidimensional and therefore poverty alleviation programmes address the multidimensional aspect of poverty. However, this study will focus on poverty alleviation within the social development perspective. Social development in this context will be limited to the process of organizing human energies and activities to improve the lives of the people. It will be limited to the programmes implemented by what the South African government refers to as the 'social cluster departments' which include the departments of Social Development, Education and Health. Furthermore, within the context of Social Development there are various programmes aimed at alleviating poverty. These programmes include HIV and Aids programmes, income generation programmes, and food security. The study will therefore analyse these programmes with the view to understand issues that concern CSOs as an institutional structure, in the implementation of programmes.

In analysing the role of civil society organizations the study will evaluate the extent to which poverty alleviation programmes are empowering and sustainable. To this

effect challenges experienced by civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes will be analysed to establish the effect of the challenges in the implementation process. The study will therefore focus on the process of implementation but also capture aspects of empowerment and sustainability of programmes. The role of civil society will be analysed based on the commitment of government, as a developmental state, to effective partnerships in addressing development challenges in a democratic society. It is not the intention of the study to look at the nature and causes of poverty given the fact that extensive research on these aspects has been conducted.

2.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are limitations that could undermine the quality of this study. First, this study does not intend to cover aspects that relate to civil society organizations experienced in any study. It is intended to address the current analysis of civil society organizations working in partnership with government to address poverty alleviation in South Africa. The study is therefore a longitudinal study which could be explored beyond the current analysis.

The second limitation is that civil society organizations by their nature are a diverse population with different ideologies, sizes, visions, roles and capacities, particularly in different geographic areas. This then poses a challenge particularly in generalization of findings. Thirdly, the study focused on those civil society organizations that implement Social Development (including the social sector departments like education, health) poverty alleviation programmes, and yet there are various civil society organizations working with different government departments and donor communities in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. This limitation might have impact on the generalizations and conclusions made – which will be based on the cases studied.

Fourthly, the findings on the effectiveness (in this context empowerment and sustainability) of programmes implemented by the civil society organizations are based on the responses of the civil society organizations implementing poverty

alleviation programmes. The researcher did not have time to interview and solicit the views of the recipients of services provided by the civil society. This could affect the reliability of responses. Fifthly, poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon and therefore civil society organizations participated in various dimensions of poverty that were not the same, even within the cases that were studied. Sixthly, civil society organizations are always very cautious in providing information that could be viewed as assessing their ability to spend funds provided to them by government or to assess sources of funding. Therefore, this might compromise the quality of data collected on funding.

Finally, the researcher has chosen to use questionnaires for collecting data from CSOs. Questionnaires have limitations by their nature and therefore this data collection method is likely to impact negatively on the response rate. Furthermore, in view of the fact that this is a qualitative study aimed at understanding how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes the questionnaire by its nature does not allow engagement with the respondent in order to understand responses, although piloting of the questionnaire ensures that such weaknesses are managed. This might nevertheless be a limitation. The researcher however has deliberately used triangulation in terms of data sources. The researcher experienced challenges in receiving back all the completed questionnaires from the cases selected. Because of the time factor, other provinces did not respond or responded late.

2.7 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the political transition in 1994, policies to address South Africa's poverty and inequalities have been pursued. However, the government's ability to address social problems and in particular poverty alleviation has been questioned. This questioning has been attributed to the challenges faced by the public administration in the implementation of policies and programmes. Some of the implementation challenges relate to the approaches used during the implementation process. Bottom approaches assume that the poor are active participants in the implementation process and they have the requisite skills and capacity required to effectively

implement poverty alleviation programmes. Khosa (2003:49) notes that the discrepancies between policy and implementation are largely caused by unrealistic policies and a lack of managerial expertise. Research indicates that policy implementation has suffered from the absence of a people-driven process as well as lack of requisite capabilities and capacities to effectively implement policies and programmes.

Notwithstanding the fact that government has recognised the importance of partnerships with CSOs, in implementing public policy, such partnerships have been characterised by challenges of fiscal nature, government control and a lack of recognition of the efficacy of the voluntary initiative. Furthermore, partnerships between government and civil society organizations have been characterized by a lack of trust impacting negatively on the sustainability of the programmes hence the interest of the researcher in understanding these challenges and finding solutions to address them with a view to improve the implementation process.

The Department of Social Development implements its various policies in addressing the plight of poverty and underdevelopment in partnership with various civil society organizations. These programmes are intended to be developmental by nature. Frimpong (2000:9) states that development projects seek to combine the delivery of the project outputs with the mobilization of local people to take advantage of their own development. Projects of this nature focus on “softer” outputs, i.e. capacity building and empowerment of involved community members, and sustainability through a participative and social learning through the management of projects (Bryant & White, 1982; Brinkerhoff, 1991). Poverty is still the biggest problem facing South Africa and this problem cannot be addressed by government alone, but requires poor people and communities to participate and take ownership of the poverty alleviation process hence, the need for this study. Notwithstanding the fact that CSOs are regarded as more responsive to the poor, their efforts are often not sustainable. Despite government’s recognition of the importance of CSOs in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes, government views CSOs with suspicion which then place impediments in the implementation process. If South

Africa has to meet the MDGs by 2014, the role of CSOs in the implementation of poverty alleviation needs to be analysed with a view to find solutions to the various challenges they experience.

2.8 RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that guides this study is:

“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? ”

The challenge of poverty continues to be the biggest challenge facing the South African government. 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 public policy process and in particular the challenges in policy implementation that have characterised the South African public administration. Research indicates that there is very slow progress towards alleviating poverty and in particular meeting the MDGs targets. This slow progress is as a result of challenges in the implementation of programmes. Policy implementation is the key feature of the policy process, and learning from implementation challenges can foster learning about better ways to structure policies and programmes to ensure that they have the effects that designers of these policies and programmes seek. As guided by the principles of Reconstruction and Development Programme policy alleviation and development programmes must empower the poor and ensure sustainability for lasting effect.

Civil society has been widely recognised as an essential third sector. Its strength can have a positive influence on the state and the market. In fact governments are now increasingly viewing civil society organizations as an integral part of the institutional structure particularly for addressing the problem of rising poverty. Subsequently, post democracy, the role of civil society organizations has shifted enormously with the civil society organizations assisting government in the

implementation of poverty alleviation programmes. This shift in the role of civil society organizations has been based on the perception that civil society organizations are more flexible, targeting pockets of poverty better, participatory and responsive to local needs of the poor – all prerequisites for sustained development. This shift has also come at a time globally when there are attempts to achieve efficient government. Modern public administration is not just about efficiency, it also involves ideas of democratic participation, accountability and empowerment hence the research question of this study:

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? This research question will thus guide this study in analysing the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes by civil society organizations within the social development context. Such analysis will contribute in understanding challenges faced by civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. The analysis will thus elucidate how civil society organizations manage the implementation process. This will include analysing the planning process and whether civil society organizations integrate their programmes with other implementers/actors for maximum impact and sustainable development. Furthermore, the research question will guide the study in analysing the implementation process with a view to understand how the beneficiaries of poverty alleviation programmes are empowered and whether these programmes are sustainable. To this effect those aspects that are critical for sustainability will be identified.

2.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method will be the key method used for this study because, according to the researcher, this method will enable the researcher to understand the processes involved in implementing poverty alleviation by civil society organizations from their perspectives - particularly their challenges. It will also indicate uniqueness in the implementation of public policy by this institution of non-profit organizations. Qualitative research will thus best elucidate how civil society

organizations participate in poverty alleviation programmes, and how they ensure the programmes' sustainability, which is critical in ensuring long-lasting effects in alleviating poverty. Marshall and Rossman (1995) describe qualitative research as relying on methods that maximize possibilities for the researcher to respond to questions thoroughly and thoughtfully because it gives information that is more nuanced and textured. A semi-quantitative method will also be used during analysis to quantify the frequency and percentage of responses.

There often is a presumption among many researchers that choosing qualitative methods will enhance the potential for the participants' own voices and values to inform the research process and thus illuminate in a grounded fashion the evaluation of a project or policy. Underpinning this presumption is a view that qualitative research can provide a more informative picture of culturally-based processes, outcomes and ultimately future policy and practice (May, 2002:261). Hence the researcher of this study has adopted this design.

2.9.1 Distinction between quantitative and qualitative paradigms

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative research has had wide-spread currency in the social sciences for many years. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:3) the distinction between the qualitative paradigm and the better-known quantitative paradigm lies in the quest for understanding and for in-depth inquiry. What is significant about the growing use of the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is that each can be seen as having a distinctive cluster of concerns and preoccupations. Those associated with quantitative research can be viewed in the following terms according to Becker and Bryman (2004:89-90):

2.9.1.1 Measurement

Quantitative researchers seek to provide rigorous measures of the concepts that drive their research. Thus, there is often a great deal of concern in texts on quantitative research about how to operationalize concepts. The quantitative researcher searches for indicators to act as measures that can stand for or point towards the underlying concept. The very idea of a variable – an attribute on which

people vary – which is so central to quantitative research, is distinctive of this preoccupation with measurement. The emphasis on the measurement of prior concepts reflects a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research.

2.9.1.2 Causality

There is a concern to demonstrate causal relationships between variables, in other words, to show what factors influence people's behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. This preoccupation with causality can be seen in the widespread use of the terms "independent variable" and "dependant variable" to describe variables which, respectively, influence and are influenced by other variables. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:3) assert that in a quantitative study the focus will be on control of all the components in the actions and representations of the participants – the variables will be controlled and the study will be guided with an acute focus on how variables are related.

2.9.1.3 Generalizations

Quantitative researchers invariably seek to establish that the findings apply more widely than the confines of their specific research context. Thus, there tends to be a concern to show that the findings are representative of a wider population and this is responsible for the preoccupation in many research methods texts with sampling procedures that maximize the possibility of generating a representative sample.

2.9.1.4 Replication

One of the main ways in which the scientific orientation of quantitative research is most apparent is the frequent reference to the suggestion that the researcher should follow clearly explicated procedures so that a study is reproducible. As in the natural sciences, it is believed to be important for a study to be capable of being checked by someone else, in case it was poorly conducted or the biases of the researcher were allowed to intrude into the results of the investigation. By contrast, qualitative research is seen as distinctive in the following respects, according to Becker and Bryman (2004:92):

2.9.1.5 Focus on actors' meanings

Qualitative researchers aim to understand the behaviour, values and beliefs and so on of the people they study from the perspectives of the subjects themselves. This tendency reflects a commitment that researchers should not impose their own understandings of what is going on. This study analyses the participation of civil society organizations in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in collaboration with government, with specific emphasis on variables of empowerment and sustainability. Empowering an individual or group means to grant them the right and ability to act within a specified domain. Essama-Nssah (2004:509), discusses a conception of empowerment based on three aspects: perception of self-efficacy and control; acquisition of resources, knowledge and skills; and participation in collective action. It is these aspects that will enable the researcher of this study to focus on meanings attached by civil society organisations with regards to their participation and empowerment in implementing poverty alleviation programmes, and particularly in the sustainability of their programmes.

2.9.1.6 Description and emphasis on context

Becker and Bryman (2004:92) emphasize that if you read an article or monograph based on qualitative research, it is difficult not to be struck by the attention to detail that is often revealed. There is frequently a rich account of the people and the environment. This is not to say that the qualitative researchers are unconcerned with explanation, but that they provide detailed descriptions of the research setting. One of the chief reasons for the detailed descriptions of research settings is that behaviour and beliefs can be understood in the specific context of the research setting. The meaning of events is therefore to be sought in the prevailing value system and structures that are possibly unique to the setting being studied. Poverty alleviation programmes need to address and respond to the local needs of the communities. Understanding the context within which poverty alleviation programme is implemented becomes necessary in evaluating the lasting effect (empowerment and sustainability) of the programme.

2.9.1.7 Process

Another key aspect in qualitative research is the issue of process. There is a tendency for social life to be viewed in terms of unfolding processes so that events are depicted as interconnected over time and not as disparate. This is important in analysing whether poverty alleviation programmes implemented by civil society are sustainable. What processes are critical for sustainability? Hence the choice of qualitative research for this study.

2.9.1.8 Flexibility

Much qualitative research is relatively unstructured so that the researcher is more likely to uncover actors' meanings and interpretations rather than impose his or her own understandings. The lack of structure has the additional advantage that the general strategy is flexible, so that if the researcher encounters unexpected events that offer a promising line of enquiry, a new direction can be absorbed and pursued. This is important for the current study that is analysing civil society organizations that exist under a particular combination of ideological, political, social and economic conditions, which are, in turn, the product of unique experiences.

2.9.1.9 Emergent theory and concepts

Typically, concepts and the development of theory emerge out of the process of data collection rather than appearing at the outset of an investigation, which is what, occurs in quantitative research. This preference for an inductive approach reflects the predilection among qualitative researchers for interpretation to take in subjects' own terms. This study generalizes through induction. It looks at specific civil society organizations, showing how they have implemented poverty alleviation programmes and then draws conclusions on whether programmes implemented by civil society organizations are empowering and sustainable. McNabb (2002:267) states that qualitative research studies typically involve what have been described as inductive, theory-generating, subjective and non-positivist processes, in contrast to quantitative research, which involves deductive, theory testing, objective and positivist processes.

According to De Vos; Strydom; Fouche and Delport (2002:272) the qualitative research strategy differs inherently from the quantitative research design in that it does not usually provide the researcher with a step-by-step plan or a fixed recipe to follow. In quantitative research the design determines the researcher's choices and actions, while in qualitative research the researcher's choices and actions will determine the design or strategy. Put more simply, qualitative researchers will, during the research process, create the research strategy best suited to their research, or even design their own whole research project around the strategy selected.

Marshall and Rossman, (1995) describe qualitative research as relying on methods that maximize possibilities for the researcher to respond to questions thoroughly and thoughtfully, because it gives information that is more nuanced and textured. McNabb (2002:267) argues that qualitative research describes a set of non-statistical inquiry techniques and processes used to gather data about social phenomenon. Qualitative researchers stress the socially-constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and those whom the researcher seeks to study. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experiences are created and given meaning, and it is multi-method in focus. This makes it a strategy that adds rigour, breadth and depth to any investigation (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Strauss and Cobin (1990) support this view by indicating that qualitative methods can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively. The researcher feels strongly that this method will best elucidate how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes, and the extent to which these programmes are empowering and sustainable.

McNabb (2002:267) identifies five differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches, based on five philosophical foundations: ontology (researchers' perceptions of reality); epistemology (the role or roles taken by researchers); axiological assumptions (researchers' values); rhetorical traditions (the style of language used by researchers); and methodological approaches (approaches taken

by researchers). A key difference lies in the epistemology of the two approaches. In qualitative research designs, the researcher must often interact with individuals in the groups they are studying. In this study the researcher will interact with individual members of the civil society organizations through the questionnaire that is structured in such a way that individual CSOs elaborate on certain issues pertaining to the implementation process. Researchers record not only what they see, but also their interpretations of the meaning inherent in the interactions that take place in the groups. Understanding the role of civil society in poverty alleviation therefore requires that the researcher not only record what the individual members of these organizations say about their role, but also interpret the meaning inherent in their responses, the values that guide and inform the functions of these organizations, and their visions. Quantitative researchers, on the other hand, maintain a deliberate distance and objectivity from the study group. They are careful to avoid making judgments about attitudes, perceptions, values, interactions, or predispositions.

Qualitative research has three broad strategic classes: explanatory research studies, interpretive research studies and critical research studies. This study will follow the explanatory research class. McNabb (2002:269) defines explanatory research as studies that are conducted to develop a causal explanation for some social phenomenon. The researcher identifies a specific social event he or she wants to investigate, such as poverty and civil society in this study, and then seeks to identify the social, economic, climate, practice, or other such characteristics (variable) in the social environment that can be explained as a cause of the consequence of interest. McNabb (2002:270) states that one of the major objectives of explanatory research is to build theories that researchers can then use to explain a phenomenon and then to predict future behaviour or events in similar circumstances. The ability to predict responses allows investigators a measure of control over events. In this study the researcher is interested in evaluating the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes implemented by civil society organizations in collaboration with government. In assessing and evaluating poverty alleviation effectiveness, the concept of empowerment must be understood in relation to that of the living standard. Indeed, it is commonly accepted that maintaining and improving the living

standard of the population is the ultimate goal of public policy and a fundamental expectation of the governed. Hence it is important in this study to investigate what is unique about the participation of civil society organizations in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. Are there variables in policy implementation that contribute to the achievement of policy goals and outcomes (like the goal of alleviating poverty in this study)? What is unique about the civil society organizations as the non formal actors in the implementation process? Are there any implementation approaches that are unique to these actors? What are the challenges with approaches? Does the collaboration and partnership of civil society organizations with government in the implementation of poverty alleviation result in the empowerment of people and sustainability of programmes? What are the factors that contribute to sustainability of programmes? The answers to these questions will be used to explain civil society organizations and their role in poverty alleviation, and to predict future outcomes of poverty alleviation programmes where civil society organizations are active participants. Most importantly, the answers to these questions will indicate how non-state actors participate in policy implementation. As indicated in Chapter 1, the Constitution (1996) and the RDP both emphasize empowerment and participation and therefore the researcher of this study is interested in understanding how the civil society organizations participate in policy implementation, how do they implement poverty alleviation programmes in collaboration with government and how are they empowered and in return empower the communities they work with.

Explanatory research is also seen by many as the fastest way to produce a cumulative stream of knowledge in a field or discipline. Possibly because of this trait and the aspect of control, studies that are designed to explain a phenomenon are the most common in public administration research. The explanatory strategies fulfil much the same role in qualitative research that exploratory research does in quantitative research - they are used as a means of gathering fundamental information about the topic, its contributing factors, and the influences a phenomenon might have on various outcomes (McNabb, 2002:270).

Possibly because it is often considered the easiest of the three strategies to carry out, by far most public administration research studies follow an explanatory design. However, according to McNabb (2002:274), there is a strong movement among researchers in all the social and administrative sciences to go beyond a simple description explanation of a phenomenon to also explore whatever meaning underlies the behaviour, or event, or circumstance.

A smaller number of researchers are extending the range of research even further by designing studies that begin with a critique of a social phenomenon and end with the design and introduction of subject-sponsored new ways of addressing old problems.

2.10 APPROACHES TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

There are many different types of research approaches or strategies of inquiry that could be used to design qualitative research. In the research literature, six types of qualitative research designs are often discussed: conceptual studies, historical research, action research, ethnography, grounded theory and case study research. These designs represent broad categories that could be further refined, but they should not be seen as watertight compartments as there is a great deal of over-lap and borrowing between the research designs, hence the following: phenomenology, hermeneutics, ethno methodology, atmospherics, systems theory, chaos theory, non-linear dynamics, grounded theory, symbolic interactionism, ecological psychology, cognitive anthropology, human ethnology, and holistic ethnography (Patton 1990; Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Morse 1994; Marshall and Rossman 1999 cited in McNabb 2002:276). A brief description of various qualitative approaches will be provided to understand why the researcher chose to use the case study approach as opposed to the others.

2.10.1 Ethnography

Ethnography as a term has traditionally been associated with anthropology, and more specifically social and cultural anthropology. In the field of anthropology, ethnography has come to mean the description of a community or group that

focuses on social systems and cultural heritage (Maree, 2007:76). Ethnography assumes that all human behaviour is intentional and observable, and research should therefore be orientated towards understanding the reasoning behind people's actions. One of the key features of ethnography is naturalism, or leaving natural phenomenon alone.

2.10.2 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Struass back in 1967 as an alternative approach within the positivist tradition. Since then multiple versions of grounded theory have been documented, but it would seem that the one developed by Struass and Corbin (1990) is most commonly referenced. Strauss and Corbin (1990:23) define a grounded theory as a theory that is

...inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it presents. That is, it is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other.

The major difference between grounded theory and other research methods is its specific approach to theory development – grounded theory seeks to develop theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed (Maree,2007:77). The approach therefore inverts traditional quantitative approaches by grounding theory in accounts and observations of everyday life. The grounded theory approach therefore claims to be inductive rather than deductive.

2.10.3 Action Research

Initially, action research was viewed with caution, partly because of its lack of focus on the positivist standards for research and partly because of its limitations in the number of sites used to conduct the research. Currently, action research is accepted as a valid research method in applied fields such as organization development and education (Maree, 2007:74). Definitions of action research draw attention to its collaborative or participative dimension and to focus on a practical problem experienced by participants for which a practical solution is sought. What makes

action research a qualitative research design type is the strong focus on understanding the problem and developing an intervention with the people involved – it deals with the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ questions. Very often action research is based on the use of mixed methods.

2.10.4 Historical Research

Historical research which is sometimes called comparative research is a systemic process of describing, analysing and interpreting the past, based on information from selected sources as they relate to the topic under study. Historical research is descriptive, and attempts to construct a map of the past or the developmental trajectory of an education system, curriculum or concept.

2.10.5 Conceptual studies

The defining characteristics of a conceptual study, according to Maree (2007:70) are that it is largely based on secondary sources, that it critically engages with the understanding of concepts, and that it aims to add to our existing body of knowledge and understanding – it generates knowledge. In conceptual studies the data with which the researcher works is concepts. By and large, concepts are central to the quest for knowledge since they are the building blocks from which theories are constructed. Conceptual studies therefore tend to be abstract, philosophical and rich in their theoretical underpinning (Maree, 2007:72).

2.10.6 Case Study Approach

For this research the case study approach will be used. The term “case study” refers to research that investigates a small number of cases, possibly even just one, in considerable depth. The term “case study” is also often taken to carry implications for the kind of data that are collected, and perhaps also for how these are analyzed. According to Henning et al. (2004:41) case studies are distinguished from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analysis of a single unit or a bounded system such as an individual, a program, event, group, interventions or community. In the social and administrative sciences the case study approach focuses on the agency, organization, person, or group under study, rather

than dealing with variables. De Vos et al. (2002:275) argue that a case study can be regarded as an exploration or in-depth analysis of a bounded system (bounded by time and/or place) or a single or multiple cases over a period of time. The case being studied can refer to a process, activity, event, programme or individual or multiple individuals. It might even refer to a period of time rather than a particular group of people. The sole criterion for selecting cases for a case study should be the opportunity to learn. Becker and Bryman (2004:255) argue that the aim of case study research should be to capture cases in their uniqueness, rather than to use them as a basis for wider empirical or theoretical conclusions. This, however, does not rule out an interest in coming to general conclusions, but it does imply that these are to be reached by means of inferences from what is found in particular cases, rather than through the cases being selected in order to test a hypothesis. In line with this, it is frequently argued that a case study adopts an inductive orientation.

A case study as a format for design is thus characterized by the focus on a phenomenon that has identifiable boundaries. Data that are not applicable to the case are not utilized unless they indirectly reflect the nature of the case. Henning et al. (2004:3) state that the process is more important than the outcome. By this they mean that a description of how, where, when and why things happen in the case are noted and form an essential part of the study. The process is thus part of the outcome. The context is also more than part of the case – it is the case and the interaction between context and action that is usually the unit of analysis.

The question that arises in relation to case study concerns its objectivity. Becker and Bryman (2004:255) question whether the aim to produce an account of each case from an external or research point of view is one that may contradict the views of the people involved? Or is it solely to portray the character of each case on its own terms? They argue that this contrast is most obvious where the cases are people, so that the aim may be to “give voice” to them rather than to use them as respondents or even as informants. However, while this distinction may seem to be clear-cut, in practices it is more complicated. Where multiple participants are

involved in a case, they may have different views. And even the same person may present different views on different occasions. Furthermore, there are complexities involved in determining whether what is presented can ever capture participant views rather than presenting an external gloss on them. This assertion may be true in this study which will be analysing a number of cases selected from civil society organizations implementing poverty alleviation programmes in partnership with the Department of Social Development in various provinces of South Africa. In South Africa democracy has created a space and opened opportunities for CSOs to make meaningful contribution to poverty alleviation and development. They play an important role in helping government carry out its social functions. Lewis (2007:7) 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. Hence the research question of this study **“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?”** This research question will therefore guide this study to understand how CSOs implement poverty alleviation programmes. In particular this study will use the type of case study that is called a collective case study method. The collective case study is where a number of cases are studied in order to investigate some general phenomenon. The collective case study furthers the understanding of the researcher of a social issue or population being studied. The interest in the individual case is secondary to the researcher’s interest in a group of cases. Cases are chosen so that comparisons can be made between cases and concepts and so that theories can be extended and validated. The study will therefore indicate the uniqueness of these organizations as a collective in implementing poverty alleviation programmes.

The choice of the case study method in this study is based on the fact that the case study method allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of CSOs and the processes they follow in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. This method is therefore useful in situations where contextual conditions of the events being studied are critical. Given the qualitative

approach adopted in this research and the nature of the research question: **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?** It is believed that the case study approach is the appropriate research strategy for this research. Notwithstanding the strengths of the case study method case study research has been a subject for criticism on the grounds of non representativeness and a lack of statistical generalisation. Moreover, the values and complexity of the data collected mean that the data is often open to different interpretations and potential researcher's bias (Conford and Smithson, 1996). Furthermore, the limitation of this type of research is access and coverage of implementation sites, timing of study, particularly if implementation has already commenced, as in the case of these programmes.

2.11 DATA COLLECTION

The primary building block of all research is data. There are different ways in which data can be gathered. For this study data will be gathered in two ways – through questionnaires that will be completed by members of civil society organizations and through document study which will include secondary data from reports and other documents. This method of gathering data from different sources is called "triangulation". By this method, Erlandson et al. (1993:115) write, the researcher seeks out several different types of sources that can provide insights into the same events or relationships. Triangulation will therefore be used to increase reliability of data collected, thus increasing the chance of making a creative synthesis. Triangulation will further assist the researcher of this study in generating a deeper understanding and a holistic view of how civil society organizations implement poverty alleviation programmes. De Vos et.al (2002:342) discuss the following opportunities or advantages for using triangulation in qualitative research:

- It allows researchers to be more confident of their results. This is the overall strength of the multi-method design. Triangulation can play many other constructive roles as well. It can stimulate the creation of inventive methods

and new ways of capturing a problem to balance with conventional data collection methods.

- It may also help to uncover the deviant or off-quadrant dimension of a phenomenon. Different viewpoints are likely to produce some elements that do not fit a theory or model. Thus, old theories are refashioned or new theories developed. Moreover, divergent results from multi-methods can lead to an enriched explanation of the research problem.
- The use of multi-methods can also lead to synthesis or the integration of theories. In this sense, methodological triangulation closely parallels theoretical triangulation, i.e. efforts to bring diverse theories to bear on a common problem.

2.11.1 Questionnaires

First, a questionnaire will be developed to solicit responses from various civil society organizations working in partnership with the Department of Social Development in implementing poverty alleviation programmes. A questionnaire can be defined as a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project (Vos et. al. 2002:172). In view of the geographical location of the civil society organizations that are being studied, covering various provinces, as well as time and cost, the researcher of this study will use provincial officials of the Department of Social Development to distribute the questionnaires to the civil society organizations in their locality. Depending on the distance between the local office (known as an area office) of the Department of Social Development and the relevant civil society organization, the questionnaires will either be mailed by fax or hand-delivered. A mailed questionnaire is, according to De Vos et al. (2002:172), a questionnaire that is sent off by mail in the hope that the respondent will complete and return it. However, this does not always happen, as such a response rate of 50% is considered adequate, 60% as good and 70% as excellent. The advantages of the mailed questionnaire are that the costs are relatively low and that extension of the geographical area to be covered by the researcher does not increase the cost level. The respondent enjoys a high degree of freedom in completing the

questionnaire, and information can be obtained from a large number of respondents within a brief period of time.

De Vos et al. (2002:172) indicate that what is most important is that in mailed questionnaires the same stimuli are offered to all respondents and that the possible contaminatory influence of a fieldworker is eliminated. Given that there will be no fieldworker to assist the respondents; the researcher of this study will carefully organize the questionnaire. This will also facilitate the processing of the data.

However, the mailed questionnaire also has certain limitations. The non-response rate may be very high, especially with regard to long questionnaires and unclear or open questions. Complex questionnaires requiring in-depth thought will also show a low response rate. Some questions in mailed questionnaires are often left unanswered or are wrongly interpreted, and this is difficult to deal with. There is also no control to ensure that the right person completes the questionnaire. For example, in this study the questionnaire has been compiled in such a way that its completion has to be a person at management level. Any person at a lower level would find it difficult to deal with some questions, hence the researcher has requested the designation of the person completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be pilot-tested before it is utilized in the main investigation. This will ensure that errors of whatever nature can be rectified immediately at little cost. It should be emphasized that the researcher of this study has chosen to use a questionnaire instead of interviews and focus groups which are usually used in qualitative research. The questionnaire was chosen as a method that would assist the researcher in reaching out to as many CSOs as possible from various geographical areas in various provinces. Using other methods other than the questionnaire could have been costly for the researcher. The questionnaire, therefore, has been structured in such a way that it has open ended questions that stimulate comprehensive responses.

2.11.2 Document Study

The second data gathering method that will be used is document study. Various documents that contain information that specifically addresses the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes by civil society will be studied. These documents will include reports compiled by the Department of Social Development and the National Development Agency which is a public entity reporting to Parliament through the Minister of Social Development. The National Development Agency's primary mandate is to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes by granting funds to civil society organizations for the purpose of implementing development projects of poor communities and strengthening the institutional capacity of other civil society organizations that provide services to poor communities. A document study will be undertaken to validate primary data collected from civil society organizations through the questionnaire.

De Vos et al. (2002:322) argue that if any document is studied and analyzed for the purpose of scientific research, the method of document study as a data collection method becomes operative. Sources can be classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are seen as the original written material of the author's own experiences and observations, while secondary sources consist of material that is derived from someone else as the original source. De Vos et al. (2002:322) observe that although there may be some grey areas in the primary-secondary distinction, the differences between the two is generally clear. A primary source should therefore be more reliable than the secondary source. Given the fact that some of the documents that will be studied and analyzed in this research are secondary documents, these documents will be thoroughly scrutinized for accuracy, hence the importance of triangulation.

2.11.3 Advantages of document study

De Vos et al. (2002:325) cite some advantages of document study:

- Relatively low cost. Although the cost of document study is influenced by factors such as the dispersion and availability of documents, the type of document that is being studied and the distance that needs to be covered in

order to obtain the documents, document study is relatively more affordable than, for instance, a comprehensive survey.

- Non-reactivity. Unlike surveys or experiments where respondents are aware of the fact that they are being studied, producers of documents do not necessarily anticipate the analysis of their documents at a later stage. The contents of the documents are thus not affected by the activities of the researcher.
- Inaccessible subjects. One of the basic advantages of document study is the fact that it is the only method where the researcher does not need to make personal contact with the respondents.

2.11.4 Disadvantages of document study

As with all data collection techniques, document study also has disadvantages of which the most important, are the following:

- Incompleteness. Reports, statistical records and historical documents are often incomplete, which means that there are gaps in the database that cannot be filled in any other way.
- Bias. Since documents were not intended for research purposes, there are factors that can influence their objectivity.
- Preservation of documents. Written documents may be destroyed by elements such as fires, floods or storms, and ordinary letters, diaries or reports may become illegible over time.
- Lack of availability. In some fields of study, documents are simply not available because records were never kept. In other cases records were kept, but are classified or inaccessible for security reasons.
- Lack of linguistic skills. In a documentary study the researcher is dependent on the ability of respondents to write and to formulate clearly and meaningfully since these are the only data available to him. Lack of linguistic skill may thus negatively influence the contents of documents and their researchability.

- Lack of standard format. Documents differ quite widely as regards their format. Some documents, such as newspapers, appear in a standard format and such standardization facilitates comparison over time for the same newspaper, and comparison between different newspapers at any one point in time. However, many other documents, particularly personal documents, have no standard format. Comparison is then difficult or impossible, since valuable information contained in the document at a particular point in time may be entirely lacking in an earlier or later document.
- Origins of documents. It is often impossible to ascertain critical factors such as the origin or the date of documents.
- Bulk of documents. It often happens, especially with official documents, that they are stored in great volumes over a period of time in a particular place. Such documents are often incomplete, disorganized and in various stages of deterioration – a situation that encumbers research or even makes it impossible (De Vos et al. 2002: 325-326).

2.12 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING METHODS

According to De Vos et al. (2002:198) sampling means taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe. This definition does not say that the sample taken – or drawn, as researchers say – is in fact representative. Rather, the sample taken is considered to be representative. The concept of representativeness needs to be understood in relation to generalization of the findings. Researchers can only generalize the findings of a study when they can assume that what they observed in the sample of subjects would also be observed in any other group of subjects from the population. Sampling, therefore, is utilized in both quantitative and qualitative research, albeit less structure, less quantitative and less strictly applied in qualitative research than in the case of quantitative research (De Vos et al. 2002:333).

In the case of selecting research participants (sampling), the driving consideration is thus not the setting as in ethnographic research; the main motivation is the people. The researcher needs people who can travel with the researcher on the journey

towards more knowledge about the topic. Henning; van Rensburg and Smit (2004:71) mention three approaches to sampling:

- Theoretical sampling
- Snowball sampling
- Convenience sampling

In these three approaches mentioned above, Henning et al. (2004:71) add purposive sampling which, according to them, has elements of theoretical sampling. Both theoretical sampling and purposive sampling look towards the people who fit the criteria of desirable participants. These criteria come from the researcher's knowledge of the topic and also from the way in which the theorizing on the ground is developing during the research. De Vos et al. (2002:207) indicate that purposive sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. The need for extra sampling may also arise during the process of interviewing and preliminary theorizing. In such an instance, theoretical sampling and purposive sampling may be adjusted to accommodate snowball sampling, a technique in which the data collected thus far indicate which other interviewees are needed.

These forms of sampling are related, with one common denominator: the people most suitable to "wander with" on the research journey are selected at the time they are needed. They represent a theoretical "population" in that they are spokespersons for the topic of inquiry, hence the notion of "theoretical" sampling. They are not representative of a population and the findings from the interviews cannot be generalized to a population. In view of the fact that this is a qualitative study, non-probability sampling will be utilized. Specifically, purposive and theoretical sampling will be used. Civil society organizations that implement social development poverty alleviation programmes will be sampled through purposive and theoretical sampling based on information provided by key informants from the Department of Social Development.

2.13 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analyzing data usually involves two steps: first, reducing to manageable proportions the wealth of data that one has collected or has available; and second, identifying patterns and themes in the data. In qualitative research, the investigator usually works with a wealth of rich descriptive data, collected through methods such as participant in-depth interviewing and document analysis. The researcher in this study however will use document study and questionnaire methods for collecting data. According to Mouton (1996:168) qualitative analysis focuses on:

- understanding rather than explaining social actions and events within their particular setting and contexts;
- remaining true to the natural setting of the actors and the concepts they use to describe and understand themselves;
- constructing, with regard to the social world, stories, accounts and theories that retain the internal meaning and coherence of the social phenomenon rather than breaking it up into its constituent 'components'; and
- Contextually valid accounts of social life rather than formally generalisable explanations.

Because of this emphasis on the integrated, meaningful and contextual nature of social phenomena, qualitative researchers have developed the following approaches for analyzing and interpreting the social world:

- Grounded theory
- Analytic induction
- Discourse analysis
- Conversation analysis
- Narrative analysis

Unlike content analysis, each of these approaches to analyzing qualitative data seeks to preserve the nature of the data, albeit in different ways and degrees. That is to say, they aim for an analytic approach that is consistent with the underlying principles of qualitative research. According to Becker & Bryman (2004:299) grounded theory and analytic induction are best thought of as general strategies

that can be applied to a wide range of qualitative data. Narrative analysis is typically employed as a means of unpacking the underlying themes that run through such sources of data as interview transcripts. Discourse analysis and conversation analysis take the detailed examination of language use as their point of departure.

McNabb (2004:369) states that data analysis involves three activities, namely data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions from the data. Data reduction is almost always a crucial stage in the interpretation process. It involves selecting the most salient themes and constructs that emerge from the data. In data display, graphic displays are used to present qualitative data. Finally, drawing conclusions forces the researcher to interpret the results of the study. It is not enough simply to present the data as they appear, even if they have been effectively organized, categorized and structured. The research must explain what the data mean in relation to the study design and objectives and in terms of their contribution to theory.

2.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The fact that human beings are the objects of study in the social sciences brings unique ethical problems to the fore that would never be relevant in the natural sciences. Anyone involved in research needs to be aware of the general agreements about what is proper and improper in scientific research. This study is analysing the role of CSOs in poverty alleviation. The role of CSOs has shifted enormously since 1994. In the democratic dispensation they are regarded as the critical partners in the public policy process. They assist government in the implementation of social development programmes. Despite their importance and their role in the implementation of poverty alleviation they are only partially understood and there are preconceived biases on the ability of CSOs to implement poverty alleviation programmes. This emanates from the fact that their role had been primarily that of advocacy, holding government accountable and acting as a watchdog. They have been less in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes. The partnership between government and CSOs as a result has been confronted with lack trust, scepticism, and challenges on credibility and accountability. Given the fact that the

researcher has been a senior manager in the Department of Social Development it is important to ensure that the perceptions about the role of CSOs do not subjectively influence the outcome of the study. Ethical considerations are therefore important in showing how the researcher minimized subjectivity. De Vos et al. (2002:63) state that ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted, and offer rules and behavioural expectations of the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. Research ethics therefore refers to the application of moral standards to decisions made in planning, conducting and reporting results of research studies (McNabb, 2002:36). The following ethical issues are important in this study: voluntary participation, confidentiality, deception of respondents, actions and competence of researcher, co-operation with contributors, release or publication of the findings and the debriefing of respondents. The researcher of this study has obtained approval from the Head of Department of Social Development to undertake this study and use departmental information available and relevant to the study. Participation of CSOs in this study will be voluntary. The researcher will further obtain consent from the relevant civil society organizations to participate in the research. This request for consent will also provide detailed information on the purpose of the study, the process to be followed in collecting data and aspects of confidentiality.

2.15 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF DATA

Silverman (2005:210) contends that validity is another word for truth and that it can be interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomenon to which it refers. Reliability on the other hand refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions (Silverman 2005:210).

In view of the fact that this study will also use document study as a method of data collection, it is important that the researcher evaluates the authenticity, or validity and reliability of the documents. According to De Vos et al. (2002:324) the reason for this is that there is often a considerable time lag between the occurrence of the

event and the writing of the document, with the delay leading to lapses of memory and inaccuracies. Silverman (2005:209) maintains that deciding to do qualitative research is not a soft option. Such research demands theoretical sophistication and methodological rigour. Silverman (2005:209) identifies quality issues with what he calls "methodological awareness". As he puts it: "*Methodological awareness involves a commitment to showing as much as possible to the audience of research studies... the procedures and evidence that have led to particular conclusions, always open to the possibility that conclusions may need to be revised in the light of new evidence* (Silverman, 2005:209).

There are different ways in which the validity and reliability of documents can be tested. De Vos et al., (2002:324) recommend among others the following:

- It is sometimes possible to compare the relevant document with other written documents or data collected in other ways.
- Another technique is to verify data by interviewing other informants, persons in the same roles or persons knowledgeable on the subject, or persons who were personally involved in the event. The content of the document is thus compared with an external source.
- According to De Vos et al. (2002:325), the reliability of documents may be checked either by similar documents at two or more points in time (instrument reliability).

2.16 CONCLUSION

The overall aim of this chapter was to outline the research methodology applied in this study. The significance of the study and the research problem and the research question were highlighted. Reasons for adopting qualitative research were provided. The research design and its phases were elaborated on, focusing on various methodological approaches that allowed the researcher to present a coherent case. In this, methodologies used to collect data and sources of these data, target population and sampling and analysis of data were outlined. The chapter concluded by highlighting ethical considerations important for the study.