THE PROGRESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE: A CASE STUDY IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my independent investigation and that all sources have been acknowledged by means of complete reference.

I hereby certify that this dissertation is not submitted for any other degree.

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ABSTRACT

The progress of developmental social welfare: A case study in the Vhembe district, Limpopo

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In 1994 the new democratic South Africa called for the shift in legislation and policies. Social welfare service delivery post-1994 has to be aligned with the principles and key themes of developmental social welfare heralded by the RDP (1994), the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as well as the Copenhagen Commitments to Social Development (1995).

In the social welfare sector, the White Paper for Social Welfare of 1997 was adopted as social welfare policy for South Africa. The White Paper for Social Welfare is embedded in a developmental approach and charted a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development. Developmental social welfare is a pro poor strategy which strives to promote a welfare system that facilitates the development of human capacity and self-reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment.

The goal of this study was to determine the progress of social welfare service delivery towards a developmental social welfare approach in the Vhembe district, Limpopo. A qualitative research approach was used for this study and the research design was an instrumental case study. The sample for the study was selected purposively and included 28 social workers and four supervisors from four sub-districts in the Vhembe district. Data was collected through four focus group interviews with social workers and one-on-one interviews with the supervisors.

Research findings indicate that developmental social welfare service delivery in this district has progressed in terms of protective services to families and children. However, in terms of poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods, the social service sector still lags behind. The overall conclusion is that the progress of social welfare service delivery towards the developmental approach is slow and unsatisfactory.

The recommendations of this study are captured in strategies that social workers could use to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery, strategies suggested for supervisors to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery, and lastly strategies on the creation of an enabling environment.

KEY WORDS

Social development
Developmental social welfare
Developmental social welfare services
Developmental social work
Strategies for developmental social services in the Vhembe district

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CHAPTER 1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

It was inevitable that a shift from the Apartheid South Africa to a democracy in 1994 would require an intensive revision of existing policies and developing of new policies in all sectors (Gray, 2006; Green, 2008; Lombard, 2007). The social welfare sector was no exception and was challenged to shift from a primarily residual and institutional model to a developmental policy (Patel, 2005:100). Wilensky and Lebeaux (1969), in Hölscher (2008:115), describe a residual welfare system as based on the premise that the family and the market are the two natural channels of meeting people's needs. Eligibility is therefore based on proof of a need (Dolgoff, Feldstein & Steinik, 1993, in Hölscher, 2008:115). The White Paper for Social Welfare of 1997 was adopted with a vision to promote a welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self-reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment (Republic of South Africa (RSA), Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997a). The White Paper for Social Welfare charted a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development (RSA, 1997a:2).

The developmental social welfare policy was adopted in South Africa against the background of "...mass poverty, racially aligned income inequalities and high unemployment resulting from incompetent apartheid economic policies" (Sewpaul, 1997:2). It was inevitable that the socio-economic conditions of post democratic South Africa would call for an approach that is more proactive, responsive and appropriate to the needs of the masses of South Africans (Patel, 2005:156).The development approach is embedded in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994, which is a socio-economic policy framework "...intended to adapt programmes and services, to assist historically disadvantaged communities, to eradicate poverty and to build a democratic future for all people of South Africa" (Green, 2008:176). Furthermore, it is underpinned by human rights principles, as heralded in the Constitution of the Republic of

South Africa, 1996 with its enshrined Bill of Rights (Green, 2008:176). By adopting the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a), the social welfare sector was challenged to return to its core values of social justice by embracing principles of basic welfare rights, human rights, participation and partnerships and developing resources, while at the same time facilitating the integration of social and economic development (Midgley, 1995:22).

Various studies report on the progress made in developmental social welfare and service delivery (Lombard, 2007 & 2008a; Green, 2008; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008), however many challenges remain to shift service delivery to a developmental approach in South Africa (Lombard, 2007). Based on practice experience and observation, the researcher could not identify any tangible indication of developmental service delivery in the Vhembe district in which she operates. In addition, the researcher has found no evidence of a study conducted on the shift to developmental social welfare services delivery, not in the Vhembe district or in the broader Limpopo, neither in government nor in the non-government sector. In a telephonic interview with Senoamadi (2010) the head of social work services in Vhembe district, the researcher established that developmental social welfare has indeed been adopted in the district. This implies that social workers are required to incorporate the developmental approach in their service delivery. Furthermore, it requires a change in the way social work has been practiced in the past, namely from "...consumption based and maintenance orientated approaches to services that contribute directly to economic development" (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437).

It is within this context that the study looked at the progress made from adopting and committing to the developmental social welfare approach to actual implementation, as well as how social workers can overcome the challenges they have in implementing strategies and interventions that could fast track progress in rendering developmental social welfare services.

The key concepts adopted for the study are the following:

Social development

Social development is an approach and goal of social welfare in South Africa (Lombard, 2007:302) which Midgley (1995:25) defines "...as a process of planned change designed to promote people's welfare in conjunction with a comprehensive process of economic development".

Developmental social welfare

Developmental social welfare is a pro poor approach adopted in the welfare sector designed to meet the goals of social development (Patel, 2005:206) which emphasises social investments that promote economic and social inclusion of the poor (Midgley & Tang, 2001:247) and stresses that the poor have strengths, assets and capacities that may be mobilised for pro active participation (RSA, 1997a:4).

Developmental social welfare services

Developmental social services are integrated family centred and community based social services (Patel, 2005:208) which are rehabilitative, preventative, developmental and protective (RSA, 1997a:8) and are informed by human rights and social justice principles with an intended aim of alleviating poverty and inequalities in society (Lombard, 2007:321).

Vhembe district

Vhembe district is in the northern parts of the Limpopo province. Vhembe is one of the five districts in the Limpopo Province. It has four sub-districts, which are Makhado, Musina, Mutale and Thulamela (Vhembe District Municipality, Integrated Development Plan (IDP), 2012-2016).The district is mainly rural. Most of the employable population is unemployed, with figures of up to 46% (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2008-2011:46). The majority of people depend on the state social security programme for survival which is evident that the people are in need for developmental social welfare services.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In South Africa, social and economic issues have its roots in structural causes which lay the foundation for a developmental theoretical framework in understanding and addressing the underlying causes of poverty and inequality (Lombard, 2008a:163). The theoretical framework for this study is therefore developmental and more specifically based on empowerment and strength based approaches (Saleebey, 2000).

The strength based approaches focus on the strength of the poor and not on their malfunctions, as Zastrow (2009:59) puts it, no matter how poor people are they still have strengths and capabilities that need to be unlocked. Through the empowerment process individuals, families, groups and communities can increase their personal, interpersonal, socio-economic and political strengths (Zastrow, 2009:60). The progress made with developmental social welfare services in Vhembe district was conceptualised within the context of empowerment, which includes focusing on how service delivery accommodates the strength perspective.

1.3 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

In Vhembe district, the majority of its population remains trapped in high levels of poverty, unemployment, dependency on state social security for their survival, limited access to social services, continuing domestic violence and a general low quality of domestic life (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2008-2011:12).

The researcher is a qualified teacher who worked in a rural environment of Vhembe district for many years. During her teaching years she was confronted with the enormous demands of poverty and inequalities that rural communities and learners face. She pursued studies in social work and is now a social worker working at a school. The school is in an area characterised by high levels of poverty with the majority of people depending on state social security for survival. Most learners come to school hungry and rely on the school nutrition programme for food. The researcher's motivation to address the reality of

these rural areas made her enrol for the Masters degree in Social Work specialising in Social Development and Policy at the University of Pretoria to be orientated and trained in the field of developmental social welfare.

There was no research based evidence of how social service delivery in Limpopo, and in particular in the Vhembe district and its sub-districts, has shifted from consumption based and maintenance orientated approaches, founded in a residual welfare policy, to a developmental social welfare policy which embraces a social development approach (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437). It was therefore uncertain to what extend the social services rendered in the Vhembe district has made progress in shifting towards developmental social welfare.

To determine the research gap for this study, the researcher had a personal interview with the Chief Social Worker in Makhado sub-district, Ms Hester Lombard (2010). She indicated that social workers understand the context and principles of developmental welfare, but that they have difficulty in implementing it, due to huge caseloads and services which are delivered through a residual approach. There was thus perceived disparity between the commitment to the developmental approach to social welfare and the actual social services delivery in the district. This view was in alignment with the researcher's experience in practice that although social workers attempt to shift social services to a developmental approach, they still face huge challenges in this regard. This status quo has motivated the researcher to undertake this study to collect research based evidence in order to determine the nature of the progress made in shifting social service delivery towards developmental social welfare in the Vhembe district in Limpopo. Depending on the finding, the study further intended to identify the underlying challenges that would inform appropriate strategies that would enable social workers in the Vhembe district to make and/or promote a sustainable shift in rendering social welfare services from a developmental social welfare approach.

In the context of the qualitative nature of the study (Davies, 2007:135), the following research question guided the research:

What progress has been made in shifting social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach in the Vhembe district in Limpopo?

The research question was informed by the following sub-questions:

- To what extent do social welfare services in the Vhembe district reflect the principles and key themes of developmental social welfare?
- What are the challenges embedded in shifting to developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district?
- What strategies can enhance the shift to developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district?

1.4   GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1   Goal of the study

The goal of this study was to determine the progress of social welfare service delivery towards a developmental social welfare approach in the Vhembe district, Limpopo.

1.4.2   Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

- To conceptualise developmental social welfare services delivery within a rural development context.
- To explore the extent of the shift towards a developmental approach in accordance with the underlying principles and key themes of developmental social welfare.
- To identify challenges in the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery.
- To propose strategies that will help to speed up developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district.

1.5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research approach for this study was qualitative with an exploratory purpose (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:80). The type of research was applied in that the research findings were utilised to adopt strategies for implementing developmental social services to promote social development (Fouché, 2002:108; Babbie, 2008:28; Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:45). The study utilised a case study research design and, more specifically, the instrumental case study to explore social workers' view on how social service delivery in the Vhembe district has shifted towards a developmental approach (Mark, 1996 in Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321).

The study population comprised of all social workers who were rendering social services in the Vhembe district and their supervisors. Out of a population of 275 social workers the researcher has purposely selected seven social workers and one supervisor from each sub-district who met the selection criteria. The total sample was thus 28 social workers and four supervisors. Data was collected through the method of interviewing to get in-depth views and experiences of social workers (Greeff, 2011:339). Semi-structured interviewing schedules were utilised allowing more freedom to formulate questions as judged appropriate for a given situation (Greeff, 2011; Bless et al., 2006). The researcher conducted four focus group discussions and four individual interviews in each sub-district. No follow-up interviews were needed as saturation point has been reached (Maree, 2010:156). Data was analysed according to the spiral model of Creswell (2007). The ethical aspects of the study will be discussed in Chapter 3.

1.6   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research study focused only in the Vhembe district which forms part of the broader Limpopo province. Therefore the research findings cannot represent the Limpopo province as a whole. It could have strengthened the research findings if the study has been done in two districts in the province. However, the researcher is cognisant of the fact that this study is limited in scope.

It has been an omission that the researcher did not include a question on the qualifications and specifically the training that the participants might have received in building their capacity in developmental social work. This would have enriched the data in relation to expected performance as opposed to real performance in developmental social services.

1.7   DIVISION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1 presents the introduction and general background of the study. This includes the rationale for the study and the problem statement, the goal and objectives, a brief overview of the research methodology, the limitations of the study and the chapter division.

Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework for developmental social welfare and developmental social services delivery. It includes conceptualisation of developmental social welfare services delivery within a rural development framework and principles and key themes that are fundamental to developmental social welfare services delivery.

Chapter 3 includes the research methodology and ethical issues of the study, as well as the empirical study and research findings.

Chapter 4 discusses how the objectives of the study were achieved. The key findings of the study, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are also presented.

CHAPTER 2
DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES DELIVERY IN A RURAL CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The transition of South Africa from apartheid to democracy demanded the changing of policies to align with the new dispensation. In the social service sector the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a) was adopted as a policy guiding social welfare service delivery. This welfare policy responded to the new democratic political and socio-economic context created by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (African National Congress (ANC), 1994), the Constitution of South Africa (1996) as well as the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development (International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), 1995). The developmental welfare policy informed the transition of South Africa from approaches that were purely traditional, pathological and remedial (Patel, 2005:23) and aligned the social welfare sector with the government's social development agenda.

The focus of this chapter is on developmental social welfare service delivery within a rural development context. The chapter starts with a discussion on the rural context in which this study was done with specific reference to its bearing rural characteristics. Secondly, the mandate that informs the adoption of the developmental social welfare approach towards service delivery will be discussed. This will be followed by the conceptualisation of developmental social welfare within the rural context in which key themes and principles guiding this approach will be incorporated. Subsequently developmental social services which are relevant to the rural context of this study will be highlighted. Then the challenges identified from theory as well as strategies to accelerate the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will be concluded with a summary.

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2.2 RURAL CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICE DELIVERY

South African rural areas pre-1994 were predominantly homelands, which were characterised by underdevelopment, marginalisation and exclusion, resulting in these areas becoming poor and lacking resources (Terreblanche, 2002:4). The discussion that follows will expose the rural characteristics which inform the context of this study.

2.2.1 Rural context of the Vhembe district

The Vhembe district is situated in the north-eastern part of Limpopo province. It has four sub-districts which are: Makhado, Musina, Mutale and Thulamela (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016). This district is mainly rural and bears all the characteristics of a rural population. It is one of the least developed and most rural parts of Limpopo province (Kyei, 2011:365).

The Vhembe district, like all rural areas, has historically been socially and economically excluded with masses of people living in dire poverty, with a lack of resources, unemployment and a general low level of service delivery (Vhembe District Municipality, 2012-2016:61). Though the national percentage of people unemployed in South Africa is at 25,6%, 46% of the population in Vhembe is unemployed, especially those below 35 years, whilst 40% of households live in poverty (Statistics South Africa, Population Census, 2013).

2.2.1.1 *Conceptualising rural population*

Literature reflects many ideologies in the definition of a rural population. Some definitions are based on numbers, whereas some look at the geographical location (Farley, Smith & Boyle, 2003:288; Waltman, 2005: 238). For the purposes of this study the researcher adopted the definition by Ambrosino, Heffernan, Shuttlesworth and Ambrosino (2008:171), who define a rural population "by their way of life, the environment in which they live, their numbers and their ability to provide sustenance level for them and their families." Jennings (1990), as quoted by Ambrosino et al. (2008:171), adds to this by

identifying traits typical of a rural population, which are: resistant to change and a tendency to hold on to cultural practices and suspicions towards outsiders or newcomers. This can be a challenge to social workers when entering these communities.

The following characteristics have been identified as typical of rural areas:

- **Shortage of resources**

  Rural areas experience a dire shortage of resources. This shortage of resources is historical, as distribution of resources continues to be concentrated in white urban areas, with black rural areas having little or no resources (Terreblanche, 2002:4). The study conducted by Patel and Hochfeld (2008) indicates the continued trend of the rural urban bias where social services are concentrated in urban areas. Tribal rural areas were serviced at 37%, compared to 83% in urban areas (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195). These findings indicate that the rural urban trend continues even post-democracy, though it has been clearly highlighted in the White Paper for Social Welfare that distribution of social resources should target those who were previously marginalised (RSA, 1997a:2).

  The study conducted by Alpaslan and Schenck (2012) confirmed the trend of non-availability of resources in rural areas. These conditions make social welfare service delivery move at a slow pace and also contradict the intention of developmental social services, which is to ensure the equitable redistribution of resources based on need, priorities and historical discrepancies (Department of Social Development, 2006:16).

  A challenge the social services sector is facing is to reverse this historical bias by ensuring that there are social services in those areas; that the rural population get the same services as urban areas; and that the social service professionals servicing these areas have the ability to stretch available resources maximally (Farley et al., 2003:289).

- **Geographic isolation**

    Rural villages are sparsely located which requires service users to travel long distances to access social services. Both service users and social workers have to travel long distances to access service points (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:409). This indicates that in some cases users may have difficulty in accessing social, educational and medical services. As social workers experience a dire shortage of resources they also have, in some cases, difficulty taking social services to service users who are in these remote areas. This delays service delivery, as the fundamental principle of accessibility to social services is compromised.

- **Infrastructure**

    In most instances, rural areas have little or no infrastructure (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:408). Sometimes there are no proper roads or transport which makes access to service points difficult and in some cases impossible (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:408). This becomes even more difficult during rainy seasons, when gravel roads get severely damaged. In some service points there may be a lack of facilities, like toilets or water. This impacts social welfare service delivery negatively as social workers may fail to access service points to render social services.

In conclusion of this section, these characteristics impact the way developmental social welfare service delivery is progressing in the rural areas. Next, social problems that have been identified as challenging by these rural populations will be discussed.

2.2.1.2   *Social problems in the rural population*

Social problems are not unique to rural areas (Barker, 2003 in Landman, 2004:23), but as Farley et al. (2003:322) argue, they impact the rural population more severely than the urban counterparts as will be outlined in the following discussion.

- **Rural poverty**

Poverty is a social problem affecting the rural population of the Vhembe district. In the view of Berg-Weger (2010:194) and Green (2008:176), poverty is the contributing factor leading to many other social problems. In the observation of the researcher, poverty is widespread and deep rooted, especially in the deep rural areas of this district. Though poverty is a historical and structural problem facing developing countries (Midgley, 2010a:167), in the Vhembe district it is perpetuated by high levels of structural unemployment.

People living in rural areas experience more poverty than their urban counterparts which manifests itself in a number of ways, such as malnutrition, hunger and disease, amongst others (Rakolojane, 2000:19; Fitchen, 1998 in Riebschleger, 2005:204). They are more likely to experience lower paying jobs and have less opportunities of getting decent jobs due to lack of education (Rakolojane, 2000:19). Though some people manage to get out of poverty, others remain trapped in their poor conditions from one generation to the next due to the structural factors that entrench poverty. In this regard, Woolard and Leibbrandt (2001:54) affirm that chronic poverty is difficult to address as it is often associated with persistent intergenerational poverty.

- **Unemployment**

South Africa is perennially experiencing structural unemployment which is perpetuated by the failure of the economy to generate employment for its labour force (Terreblanche, 2002:372). The rural population always feels the sharp edge of unemployment. Unemployment involves serious problems for both the individual and society as a whole (*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 2013:13). The problem of unemployment is perpetuated by the lower levels of skills and education (RSA, 1997a:3). Those who work in the Vhembe district hold seasonal jobs which mean that in some months they may not have an income (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016:18). The jobs they do are in most cases

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unskilled and unsafe, which increases the risk of injuries and this, in turn, may result in disabilities.

Unemployment has further reaching effects than lack of income. Unemployed people lose motivation and self-confidence as their dreams of living a better life diminish (Sen, 1999:95). Some of them may leave the district to look for employment. However, this does not guarantee that they will find employment opportunities. There are cases where graduates take menial jobs to secure little income. The researcher has observed the negative impact on those who have not yet attained education or are still in the process of gaining education, as they lose motivation.

- **High level of inequality**
  The problem of inequality is historical and manifests in the distribution of income (Leahy, 2009:174; Schoeman, 2001:323). In South Africa the problem of inequality shows itself in three tiers; inequality in terms of distribution of wealth; inequality in terms of opportunities for participation in the economy; and inequality in terms of the rural/ urban divide (Schoeman, 2001:323). The problem is that even after democracy; inequality continues to be predominantly along racial lines (Terreblanche, 2002:396). The researcher has observed that in black communities a new trend has evolved where economic opportunities are in terms of political affiliation and association. In the rural areas like the Vhembe district, the impact of inequality is felt as severe poverty exists alongside wealth.

- **Disintegrated families**
  The family structures in rural areas have historically been affected by the migrant labour system of the past (RSA, 2011a:3). Even in the democratic system of the government, family dynamics remain unchanged (RSA, 2011a:3). Job opportunities are concentrated in the urban areas and rural men leave their homes to seek more opportunities in the urban areas (RSA, 2011a:29). These families are headed by women. In some cases both husband and wife work in

urban areas and families are left in the care of children or extended members of the family. This leads to instability in the home.

- **Dependence on the state social security**

  The high rate of unemployment makes many people depend on state social security, without which most families in the district will not survive (Kyei, 2011:365). This includes the meagre Child Support Grant and the Old Age Grant, which becomes the only means of survival in some families. In the Vhembe district 55% of families depend on social security for survival (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016:15). The dependence of these families on social security contradicts the people's right to work and earn a wage as heralded in the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996).

- **Substance abuse**

  The problem of substance abuse is an issue facing many communities in South Africa. The Vhembe district is no exception. In fact, substance abuse has been identified as one of the social problems that affects the youth in the district (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016:10). In the researcher's observation, the common chemical substances that are used in the Vhembe district are alcohol and dagga. Children and the youth are the population groups that are at the highest risk because of exposure to an environment that is filled with drugs and lack of stimulation.

  The challenge connected to the use of alcohol and dagga is the abuse and dependency of these substances which cause serious social problems (Berg-Weger, 2010:193). Ambrosino et al. (2008:227) argue that substance abuse is the most public health and social problem resulting in more violent deaths and disabilities. Secondly, studies have shown a correlation between substance abuse and child abuse, child neglect, domestic violence, homicide, violent crimes and serious traffic accidents (Ambrosino et al., 2008:227; Patel, 2005:188), as

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well as the fact that it overlaps in such areas as mental illness (Berg-Weger, 2010:193).

- **Crime**

  Crime is an ever increasing problem in South Africa, affecting millions of people negatively on a daily basis (Bezuidenhout, 2008:186). The level of crime continues to rise especially after 1994 (Bezuidenhout, 2008:186). This implies that most people will experience crime at one stage of their lives. The Vhembe district also is characterised by high crime levels (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016: 12). The crimes that are common include domestic violence, muti-killings and rape (Nduvheni, 2013:4). There is growing evidence of a close correlation between the incidences of crime and problems of poverty (Berg-Weger, 2010:200). The high rate of poverty, unemployment and substance abuse becomes a fertile ground for the rising crime in this area.

- **Violence against women and children**

  Women and children are at risk of violence, especially in the home environment (Bezuidenhout, 2008:209). It is estimated that one in three women is emotionally, physically or sexually abused by her partner (Bezuidenhout, 2008:210). In the rural areas of Vhembe which still uphold traditional values, violence against women is a structural problem involving broader issues of power and unequal power relations (Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray & McIntryre, 2004:420).

  Violence in families impacts the children negatively. The consequences of children witnessing one of their parents being abused are severe and are often overlooked and misunderstood (Dunkle et al., 2004:421).

This rural context as presented above is relevant for developmental social welfare service delivery as this approach targets those who are marginalised, excluded and disadvantaged, such as the rural population of the Vhembe district (RSA, 1997a:2). Though the rural context as presented poses real challenges for the implementation of

this approach, it also offers opportunities in the context of scarce resources (Farley et al., 2003:289; Sanders, 1987:381).

The next discussion addresses the mandate that informed South Africa's transition to developmental social welfare service delivery.

2.3 THE MANDATE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICE DELIVERY

The adoption of the developmental approach to social welfare service delivery has been preceded by several developments, legislation and policies in both international and national contexts. These developments have helped the South African welfare sector in the creation of a political and social climate conducive to its transition to the developmental approach. The following discussion expands on this.

2.3.1   International mandate

Though the United Nations (UN) has always been concerned about world poverty, inequality and a widening gap between the developed and the developing countries, it was in the early 1990s that these issues were prioritised on its agenda (Midgley, 2010b:10; Patel, 2005:29). This state of poverty, underdevelopment and inequality was brought on by distorted development which put too much emphasis on market-led development (Midgley, 1995 as cited by Mayadas & Elliot, 2001:7; Penna & O'Brien, 2009:116). The UN responded by convening a World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 (ICSW, 1995). The Summit was concluded by making ten declarations committing countries throughout the world to the mission and goals of social development (Nel, 2003:27). The commitment to reduce world poverty and eliminate extreme hunger was one of its principal declarations (ICSW, 1995:1). South Africa, as a new member of the United Nations after its emancipation from apartheid rule, also committed to social development as a priority to deal with challenging socio-economic issues in the country.

The intention of the Social Development Declaration was to bring about social change and protect the poor, the marginalised and the vulnerable. To bring about action on achieving declarations made, the United Nations re-emphasised its position on social development by integrating the Copenhagen Summit Declarations into eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 (Midgley, 2010b:11). In the commitment to the MDGs, the UN reprioritised reducing world poverty and hunger by half by 2015 (Midgley, 2010b:11).

The latest report of 2012 on how much progress the world governments have made in achieving the MDGs heralded the achievements of some of these goals, especially the goal of reducing extreme hunger and poverty (United Nations (UN), MDGs Report, 2012). However, in Sub Saharan Africa hunger levels remain high at 47% as is the case of HIV/ Aids infection rates in Southern Africa (UN, MDGs Report, 2012). Though the report shows challenges in achieving the MDGs, the social development commitment remains to improve the lives of poor people and enhance their functioning. This international context provided South Africa with a mandate for promoting social development.

In the African continent however, as Sewpaul (2005:112) argues, there was a growing concern among some of the African leaders that some of the objectives of the UN were not conducive to the African conditions and were therefore irrelevant and not uplifting to the standard of living of the people of Africa. The years of colonialism, globalisation and structural adjustment programmes have worsened the living conditions of the people of Africa (Aina, 2004:13). The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) intended to respond to these challenges as reflected in their statement: "...the problems of Africa can be solved by the people of Africa" (NEPAD, 2001:10). It reiterated what has been declared by the Copenhagen Summit and MDGs in relation to reducing poverty and increasing opportunities for employment and development (NEPAD, 2001:11; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 2003:4).

Though NEPAD is an effort to reduce poverty in Africa, it is however an initiative by the elite African rulers and is also widely criticised for being based on neo-liberal ideology

which places the market at the forefront of development efforts. As such "...it holds the possibility for further marginalisation of the poor, deepening inequality, and worsening the plight of the most vulnerable in our society" (Sewpaul, 2005:109). Ife (2001:142) affirms that "...the neo-liberal ideology is not conducive to the human rights perspective advocated by the developmental approach."

2.3.2   The national mandate

In the national context, the newly elected democratic government of the ANC adopted legislation and policies that would promote social development and the new human rights culture that was already created in the international context (Green, 2008:175; Patel, 2005:89).

The Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996) as the cornerstone of all legislation and policies, created a normative framework for a society built on the principles of participation, accountability, unity, non-discrimination and partnership. Green (2008:176) articulates that the Constitution heralds the alleviation of poverty as a constitutional right. As enshrined in the Constitution (RSA, 1996), human rights embrace people's right to participate actively in both their economic and social development and, in cases where they cannot participate, the right to receive the necessary social assistance.

Developmental social welfare is relevant to the new democracy as "...it recognises that social maladjustments are not the responsibilities of people only but also take into account environmental as well as broader structural factors" (Sherraden, 2009:6). As Kirst-Ashman and Hull (2011:119) put it, "People are the products of their environment".

The developmental mandate for social welfare was also informed by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994 which is a socio-economic policy adopted by the ANC prior to the Constitution of South Africa (ANC, 1994). It provided an important backdrop to the transition to developmental social welfare (Gray, 2006:S54). The RDP's focus on people centred development, its principles and ethos were central to the

processes for transforming social welfare towards a developmental approach (Binza, 2006:493; Gray, 2006:S54).

In the RDP the social welfare sector plays a key role in the reconstruction and development of the South African society as it is highlighted: "Social welfare means the right to basic needs and all those aspects that promote the physical, social and emotional well being of all people in the society while maximally considering those that cannot take care of themselves" (ANC, 1994:52).

The intentions of the original RDP base document (ANC, 1994) were contradicted by the RDP White Paper as it was orientated towards the neo-liberal economic framework (Magubane, 2004:56). In addition, the introduction of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996 as an economic policy in South Africa further alienated some of the objectives of the RDP (Gray, 2006:S56; Patel, 2005:94). Though both the RDP and GEAR were in favour of the promotion of social development, GEAR deviates from the RDP as it emphasises the need for growth first and redistribution later, and it also encourages reduction in government spending (Magubane, 2004:56; Hölscher, 2008:116; Triegaardt, 2009:2). Furthermore, some of the critics of the RDP argue that its objectives are too unrealistic (Magubane, 2004:54) and as a result unachievable. However, the RDP provided a point of reference for all policies drawn thereafter.

Since the coming of democracy almost 20 years ago the South African government has made significant progress in transforming different sectors (Green, 2008:177; Lombard, 2008a:156; Magomola, 2013:13; RSA, 2011b:1; Triegaardt, 2009:1), yet it is still faced with a challenge to roll back widespread poverty and growing inequality and unemployment which is severe in the rural context, which is the focus of this study. The National Development Plan (NDP) (RSA, 2011b) includes the vision to address these socio-economic challenges and promote social development by outlining plans to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality.

In the NDP preamble (RSA, 2011b:1), the then minister of planning in the Presidency, Trevor Manuel warns that there are threats that the social developmental mandate will fail in South Africa if positive steps are not taken to address the prevailing poverty, high rate of unemployment and growing inequality. This, however, is not to overlook the progress made in the promotion of social development, especially in the provision of social security (Samson, Macquene & Van Niekerk, 2005:3) and free housing to the indigent households, as well as access to free health care, free education, electricity and water (RSA, 2013a).

The social welfare sector is mandated by the NDP to put more emphasis on social protection of the vulnerable and the poor; and put measures in place that focus on the prevention of social problems (RSA, 2011b:186). The success of this plan will however depend on the collaboration of all government departments, the business sector, labour and civil society as well as "...strong leadership and focused implementation" (RSA, 2011b:3). This plan reiterates the South African government's commitment to the promotion of social development.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a) is a baseline policy that gives the mandate on how welfare is carried out in post-democratic South Africa (Hölscher, 2008:116; Lombard, 2008b:25; Patel, 2005:94). This policy aims to restructure social welfare in alignment to the human rights principles as heralded in the Bill of Rights and the RDP (RSA, 1997a:2). The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a) is intended to promote developmental social welfare by including social welfare programmes targeted at the prevention, alleviation and reduction of poverty and to empower people to be more self-reliant (Green, 2008:176-177). Secondly, it is intended to redress previous injustices by ensuring that welfare services are equitable and accessible and respond to the needs of the poor and the needy (RSA, 1997a:2). Lastly, it is intended for social welfare to meet the socio-economic needs of South Africans, especially the poor, marginalised and previously disadvantaged (Hölscher, 2008:116).

The direction taken by the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) is in accordance with the social development approach, the humanitarian and people centred values advocated by the United Nations World Summit on Social Development, the RDP and the Constitution of South Africa (1996) (Green, 2008:176). However, though this policy clearly outlined its objectives, it lacks guidelines on its implementation (Morifi, 2004: 26).

The Department of Social Development responded to this implementation dilemma with the adoption of the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (Department of Social Development, 2004), the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006) and the Draft on the Framework for Developmental Social Welfare Services (2011). These documents complemented the White Paper for Social Welfare by providing "guidelines on what constitute social services and how social welfare service delivery is to be implemented" (Lombard, 2007:297). The Draft on Norms and Standards for Social Welfare Services enhanced the implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare since it intends to manage, monitor and evaluate social welfare services (Department of Social Development, 2012a:2). The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a) will be under review in 2014 to 2015 to reassess the status of social welfare and ensure that the policy is still directive for the current social welfare sector (RSA, 2013b).

In summary, these international and national mandates created the platform for the social welfare sector to shift from traditional residual and institutionalised approaches to a developmental approach to social welfare. The next section will conceptualise developmental social welfare within the rural context of this study.

2.4 CONCEPTUALISATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE IN RURAL CONTEXT

The approach to social welfare service delivery prior 1994 was based on individual pathology and thus remediation, as already discussed above. Furthermore, apart from this discourse, social services were concentrated in urban areas and with rural areas having limited services. As such it was necessary for the social welfare sector to come up

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with an approach that was more appropriate, equitable and relevant to the new South Africa. Therefore the adoption of developmental social welfare responded to this new need.

Developmental social welfare is the name given to South Africa's new welfare system (Gray, 2006:S53). This approach is moulded by the social development theory which has received much attention in the early 1990s (Gray, 2006:S53). The intention of this approach is to achieve the goals of social development in the social welfare sector as outlined in the Copenhagen World Summit of Social Development (ICSW, 1995), comprehensive MDGs (United Nations (UN), MDGs Report, 2012) the RDP (ANC, 1994) as well as the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996). One of the social development goals that had received wider attention in the social welfare sector is the removal of poverty.

This approach is an intended effort to promote social change by dealing with social problems that are experienced in the context of social service users. This is done by focusing on the person and the environment, and how the person and his/her environment are interacting (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2011:109; Patel, 2005:95, Potgieter, 1998:114). In this way social pathologies are not blamed on people. This is unlike previous approaches that put the blame of social pathologies on people and disregarded the role the environment plays (Patel, 2005:99; Potgieter, 1998:114). For example, poverty is often blamed on the people being lazy (Leahy, 2009:162). Developmental social welfare recognises that people are poor because of unemployment and that people cannot find employment if there are no job opportunities in their environment.

To effect change and improve the social functioning of people means dealing with poverty which negatively compromises the quality of life of the masses. Landman and Lombard (2006:1) emphasise that the imperative of social development theory is on reducing and removing poverty as it is the major social problem impacting the majority of people. As indicated above, in the rural context of the Vhembe district, poverty is the major social problem experienced by the majority of people.

In the notion of social development, poor people should be given the opportunity to participate in the active economy to enable them to escape being trapped in their conditions (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437). However, as Midgley (2010b:22) cautions, the poor cannot get out of poverty if the environment is not conducive. Midgley (2010b:22) continues to emphasise, "...there is a need for an enabling environment to be created for poor people to participate actively in the economy". This is a real challenge in this rural context as economic opportunities are limited. Developmental social welfare should give poor people an opportunity to participate in their own development. This is to negate the dependency and deficit mentality that is prevailing in the poor people of this district. Mhiribidi (2010:126) affirms that developmental social welfare should discourage dependency and promote active, productive involvements in their own development.

This explains why social development theory favours the integration of social and economic development (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195) as it has been proven to be a potentially effective strategy to break the cycle of poverty (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437, O'Brien & Mazibuko, 1998:144). It is the reason why poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods are high on the developmental agenda in South Africa (Patel, 2005:195).

The central idea of development theory is to focus on the strengths of poor and marginalised people. As the Department of Social Development (2006:20) directs, "...the vulnerable and marginalised are approached in a manner that focuses on their strength and capacity for growth and development." In the strength based approach poor people, irrespective of their living conditions, have strengths, inner resources and capabilities (Midgley, 2010b:14; Lombard, 2007:301; Saleebey, 2000:129; Sen, 1999:87). The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a:2) acknowledges this and directs that intervention for service users should focus on their strengths and not on their malfunctions. Lombard (2007:301) sums up the importance of strengths as follows: "...the clients and communities' strengths are the point of departure".

As the poor and the vulnerable have feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy, especially those that reside in rural areas, focusing on their strengths will enhance their self-esteem (Zastrow, 2009:79). Social workers should therefore help social service users to locate and use their inner strengths, resources and capacity for their growth.

In conclusion, the developmental approach is the appropriate form of intervention for social welfare service delivery. However, this approach does not minimise other approaches but implies that social workers should incorporate development in all interventions (Lombard, 2007:301). The next section addresses developmental social work practice in the rural context.

2.4.1 Social work in the rural context

Within the social development paradigm, the social welfare sector can make a meaningful contribution to the alleviation of poverty and inequities in society, and social workers are important role players towards achieving social development goals (Patel, 2005:206; RSA, 1997a:27). As important role players they must confront the structural oppression and disadvantage that prevent many people from functioning optimally and make people live in persistent poverty (Ife, 2001:147; Midgley, 2010c:105).

In the developmental social welfare paradigm, it is appropriate to make reference to developmental social work which is the type of social work within the developmental approach framework (Gray, 2006:S54). According to Midgley (2010b:13), developmental social work is the most appropriate form in this context as it "...facilitates change in poor communities, make use of strength based, empowerment and capacity building approaches." The discussion that follows argues how developmental social work can make a contribution in the context of this study.

While traditional social work practice focuses on the individual's impaired social functioning, developmental social work focuses on the structural causes of people's malfunctioning (Midgley, 2010b:13).

Within the context of the structural theoretical framework it is questioned why, 20 years after social development has been adopted as social welfare policy, people in the Vhembe district are still poor and inequality between the rich and the poor continues to grow. More than 60% of black people still remain poor (Statistics South Africa, Population Census, 2013). This confirms Lombard's (2008a:156) argument that the structural causes of poverty and inequality still stand.

Social workers are faced with the poor and the vulnerable on a daily basis and therefore they should address inequality and poverty (Lombard, 2005:2). A paradigm shift is needed in the way social workers practice. Midgley (2010a:163) challenges the traditional view that characterises social work practice in terms of "...mobilising people, strengthening local networks and promoting participation". He argues further that "...social workers cannot continue to do things as they used to and hope that the welfare of the poor, marginalised and vulnerable will change" (Midgley, 2010a:163).

In the rural context the social worker is a generalist which is an important feature of developmental social work (Patel, 2005:152). This implies assuming multiple roles and using multiple skills in order to improve the lives of the poor. According to Kirst-Ashman and Hull (2011:132) the generalist social worker works with individuals, families and the total community and uses a variety of methods and skills. In addition the generalist social worker focuses on the empowerment of individuals, families, groups and communities and builds on the strengths of client systems (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2011:133).

However, it should be noted that social work practice in the rural context is not different from urban social work in terms of practice roles, but there is a difference in the way roles are applied (Waltman, 2005:238). Though the social worker will assume the common roles of being a guide, facilitator, enabler, advisor, mobiliser, educator, counsellor and advocate in both rural and urban practice (De Beer & Swanepoel, 2011:54-56; Patel, 2005:220-223), there are specific roles that apply to rural social work practice.

As rural areas experience a consistent lack of resources, the rural social worker is challenged to work as a resource specialist who must assist in the optimal utilisation of limited resources (Farley et al., 2003:326). This requires the rural social worker to ensure that the little resources available be stretched to service the whole population of users. This shows an important link between rural and developmental social work and confirms what has been argued by Sanders (1987:381), that in the context of scarce resources, developmental social work gives the opportunity for the optimal use of resources. Secondly, the rural social worker will in most cases find that he/she is the only social worker available (Waltman, 2005:248). In these cases the rural social worker will find herself/himself trying to coordinate all social services in the community (Farley et al., 2003:327).

In conclusion, social welfare service delivery in the rural setting is traditionally more difficult and challenging due to the chronic shortage of infrastructure and resources (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:415). Therefore the determination and mental preparation of social workers is highly essential. It has also been noted that though it is a challenging form of practice it does have many rewards associated with it, which to some bring professional fulfilment (Farley et al., 2003:328).

The next section addresses the themes and principles that characterise developmental social welfare service delivery. These themes and principles provide direction and guidelines to social workers on how social welfare service delivery should progress in the rural context of this study.

2.4.2 Themes and principles of developmental social welfare
The first section will address the themes, whereas the second section will address the principles.

2.4.2.1 Themes of developmental social welfare
Developmental social welfare is organised around five key themes which guide how developmental social welfare service delivery should be implemented in the district

(Patel, 2005:253). Firstly, it is a rights based approach which implies that developmental social welfare service delivery is based on respect for human rights, dignity and social justice (RSA, 1997a:9). Human rights also include welfare rights for all South Africans irrespective of colour, creed, race or religion (ANC, 1994:54). Therefore, human rights mean access to welfare services and social assistance when in need (RSA, 1997a:8).

This requires that social workers uphold human rights and oppose and eliminate human rights violations at all intervention levels in all their interactions with the service users (Ife, 2001:140; Lombard, 2005:254). As educators they should educate and guide these users to use and exercise those rights. Van Eeden, Ryke and De Necker (2000) in Green (2008:176) affirm "...rights alone are not enough; social workers should capacitate individuals and communities to access and exercise their rights and the right to legal representation if needed".

The second key theme central to the idea of developmental social welfare is the relationship between social policies and economic development (Patel, 2005:254). Social policies should promote the participation of poor people in the productive economy through social investments (Midgley, 2010a:184; Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437; Patel, 2005:205; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195). When poor people participate in the productive economy they will be in a position to meet their social needs and enhance their welfare (Hall & Midgley, 2004:6). This is what the proponents of this approach call "an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of social development" (Gray, 2006:S56).

The third theme guiding developmental social welfare delivery is the participation of poor people in development (Patel, 2005:254). The researcher supports Lombard's (2003:157; 2007:300) view that poor people are not passive recipients of social services, but active participants in all intervention processes. This means they can define what their problems are and also suggest ways of solving them. Therefore social workers should promote participation in all phases of interventions (Morifi, 2004:36). However, it should be highlighted that participation can be a costly and time consuming process when

considering the contextual challenges that characterise this rural setting (De Beer & Swanepoel, 2011:51).

The fourth theme of developmental social welfare service delivery is collaborative partnerships (Patel, 2005:255), which call on the state, private sector, the civic society, communities and individuals to work together to promote social development (Hall & Midgley, 2004:12; Patel, 2005:205; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195). This will require welfare policies and programmes to be developed and promoted in partnership with organisations in civil societies, the private sector and the government departments (RSA, 1997a:17). In the case of rural communities the intervention process should involve all local structures which will include chiefs, headmen, village elders and local people.

Lastly, the fifth theme is the bridging of the micro-macro divide (Patel, 2005:256). This key theme encourages the enhancement and empowerment of poor people and communities by using micro to macro level interventions and skills (Patel, 2005:205; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195).

Embedded in these five key themes are several principles which have been outlined by the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a:16-17) to guide social workers in developmental social welfare service delivery. These principles provide the foundation for the transition from past approaches to the developmental approach in the context of rural Vhembe as will be shown in the next discussion:

2.4.2.2 *Principles of developmental social welfare*
The underpinning principles of developmental social welfare which should guide social workers when rendering services to rural populations include the following:

- **Capacity building**
  The UNDP (1997:1) refers to capacity building as "a process whereby individuals, organizations, institutions and societies gain abilities to enable them not only to perform certain functions but also to become able to solve their problems". The

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poor are not poor because they have chosen to be poor, but there are structural problems entrenching poverty in people's lives (Ife, 2001:147).

In the rural context where there is intergenerational poverty and perennial unemployment, capacity building should start by confronting these structural problems (Lombard, 2008a:156). This is done by identifying constraints that the poor, marginalised and vulnerable people face (Eade, 1997:32). Secondly, capacity building will empower them to deal with these constraints so as to improve their living conditions (Ife, 2001:153). Therefore capacity building could remove the dependent and deficit mentality that poor people have and enable them to do things for themselves.

- **Empowerment**

  The principle of empowerment is closely related to the strength based approach and capacity building as it takes into account the fact that people have capabilities within themselves to function the way they want and to live the lives they want (Saleebey, 2000:129; Sen, 1999:87). As Sen (1999:87) continues to emphasise, the focus is on what people have; their capabilities and functioning.

  Social workers should then facilitate a process where the users' inner capabilities and functioning are unlocked "to increase their personal, interpersonal, socio-economic and political strengths towards improving their circumstances" (Ife, 2001:152; Zastrow, 2009:82). This is what Green and Nieman (2003:163) assert by stating that empowerment involves personal empowerment on an individual level, group empowerment on the group level, and societal empowerment on the community level. When rural people are empowered they will be responsible to take charge of their lives despite their living conditions and present solutions that work in their contexts.

  Therefore empowerment is an active process whereby individuals or groups are energised to higher levels of capabilities to make decisions to solve their

problems (Green & Nieman, 2003:162), and takes into account all aspects of people's lives. In summary, empowerment will enable social services users to move from being passive users of social services to active actors in bringing their solution (De Beer & Swanepoel, 2011:52).

- **Accessibility**

  Social welfare services are meant to impact on people and change their circumstances; therefore they should be accessible to all people. The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a:10) has made a commitment to make organisations and institutions accessible and responsive to all those in need and remove all barriers that make it impossible for some people to access social services. This takes into account physical and geographical conditions; time; language; and needs (Department of Social Development, 2004:6). This is to ensure that people that are residing in rural and remote areas also access social services and reverse the common historical trend where services were concentrated in urban areas (Schoeman, 2001:328). However, in practice the principle of accessibility remains a challenge as people in the rural context continue to experience a dire shortage of resources.

- **People centred**

  People must be the focus of intervention efforts (Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2005:18). This implies that the individual, family and community become the centre of all intervention efforts (Davids et al., 2005:17). Kirst-Ashman and Hull (2011:79) assert that people are the products of the systems in which they live. This principle further emphasises that developmental social services start with people and the systems in which they operate (Davids et al., 2005:24). This is done by promoting citizens' participation and strengthens the voice of the poor in decision making (Patel, 2005:30).

- **Sustainability**

Sustainability takes into account the political, social, environmental, economic and cultural aspects of people's lives (Davids et al., 2005:25; Lombard, 2003:155). It emanates from the notion of sustainable development which implies "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Midgley, 2010b:21; UNDP, 2003:2). As such sustainability is concerned with improving the quality of life, as well as satisfying human needs of the present while considering human needs of the future (De Beer & Swanepoel, 2011:54).

Sustainability of social services implies services that are cost-effective, affordable and equitable which will ensure a continuous flow of benefits to beneficiaries in the long-term (Department of Social Development, 2006:6). Furthermore, these services should be delivered in an integrated manner considering both social and economic development, as well as environmental protection which is fundamental to sustainable social development (UNDP, 2003:19).

- **Appropriateness**

The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997a:92) defines appropriate social welfare services and programmes as responsive to the needs and problems of people and is appropriate to social, economic and political conditions. In the case of rural populations social services should be relevant to the conditions to ensure that users get services despite the shortages in infrastructure and resources. Secondly they should be appropriate to the intended target groups while considering the social, economic, cultural and political diversities of these groups (Department of Social Development, 2006:16).

- **Social justice**

Social justice is the provision of better living conditions and life circumstances for people who are poor, vulnerable, oppressed and marginalised in society (Banerjee, 2005:9). The welfare system of the past was characterised by many

injustices and unequal distribution of resources (Patel, 2005:97). The principle of social justice is about reversing past discrepancies; responding to the needs of the marginalised and the vulnerable; and creating conditions for equitable distribution of resources and equal access to welfare resources (Barker, 1999 in Banerjee, 2005:9; Patel, 2005:27).

In this context the principle of social justice should reverse the historical rural/urban divide where social service resources were concentrated in urban areas. Evidence shows that a shortage of resources still continues to contradict this principle.

In conclusion, these themes and principles provide the frameworks to benchmark the progress of social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district, which will be fully determined in the next chapter. The previous discussion exposed social problems in the rural context. The ensuing section will present types of developmental social services to ameliorate the impact of these social problems.

These services range across all intervention levels as shown in the Integrated Service Delivery Model of 2006 and are preventative, rehabilitative, developmental and protective (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006: 216).

2.5   DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL SERVICES

Developmental social services are integrated family centred and community based social services which are "...rehabilitative, preventative, developmental and protective and are informed by human rights and social justice principles with an intended aim to alleviate poverty and inequalities in society" (Patel, 2005:208). In support, Lombard (2007:301) argues that developmental social services do not mean a "...total shift from services that were rendered traditionally but means incorporating development into welfare."

It therefore implies that social services that are delivered to the vulnerable and marginalised are approached in a manner that focuses on "...social protection, the maximisation of human potential and fostering of self-reliance and participation in decision making" (Department of Social Development, 2004:3). Lombard (2007:300) indicates that irrespective of the focus of social welfare service delivery, the service users and communities' strengths and assets are the point of departure and they are important partners in decision making on issues affecting their lives and destiny.

Within the developmental context, service delivery should be focused on poverty and specialised target areas to improve the living conditions of specialised target groups, as will be discussed in the section that follows:

2.5.1   Types of developmental social services
The types of developmental social services are as follows:

2.5.1.1   *Poverty prevention, reduction, alleviation and elimination*
In democratic South Africa, poverty is still a structural problem perpetuated by historical factors and high levels of unemployment (Lombard, 2008a:156; Schoeman, 2001:324; Terreblanche, 2002:384). As already presented, poverty is widespread in this district. The "...continuing high levels of mass poverty", as Patel and Hochfeld (2008:208) articulate, is "...a critical issue facing the nation". Though there are indications that the level of poverty is said to have declined since 1994, it still remains a major challenge (RSA, 2011b:85).

The social development approach responds to the problems of mass poverty and inequalities (Gray, 2006:S56) and hence social work can make a contribution to achieving social development goals through developmental social welfare service delivery (Lombard, 2008a:156).

The South African Government has widely articulated the fight against poverty (RSA, 2008:4) and responded with a series of poverty alleviation strategies. The social security system has been the most effective strategy in poverty alleviation by far. For more than

60% of South African households, social security is the lifeline between survival and hunger (Statistics SA, Population Census, 2013). Lombard (2008a:155) and Triegaardt (2009:4) concur that social security has played an important role in reducing poverty and promoting social development.

In addition to the social security system, the Government has proposed a number of poverty alleviation measures. The Anti-Poverty Programme (RSA, 1999-2000) and the subsequent Anti-Poverty Strategy for South Africa (RSA, 2008) are some of the documents released by government to provide guidelines in the fight against poverty.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (Department of Public Works, 2004) and Community Work Programme (Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007) are other measures used by the government in poverty alleviation and reduction. These measures have been significant in addressing poverty and inequalities as they target the unskilled, marginalised and unemployed (Lombard, 2008b:29; Triegaardt, 2009:5). However, these programmes do not provide permanent solutions, as people do unskilled labour and hence do not help in skill impartation.

Although these efforts show the commitment of the government to deal with widespread poverty, in the view of the researcher to really make an impact in poverty alleviation and elimination, the structural causes of poverty should be tackled.

2.5.1.2   *Family services*

The family is considered to be the most significant social system within which all individuals function (Ambrosino et al., 2008: 321). As Crosson-Tower (2005) state, in Ambrosino et al. (2008:374), a family is any group of individuals living together which are expected to perform specific functions, especially in reference to the children involved. The family influences the way society is structured, organised and functions (RSA, 2012:5).

In the developmental paradigm, the family forms the basic unit of society, hence social services should aim to preserve and strengthen the family when bringing about the needed change (Ambrosino et al., 2008:374, Patel, 2005:166). Furthermore, services to families should be more accessible and relevant to the basic needs of the family within the context of family and community (Patel, 2005:167). In the Vhembe district where families are disintegrated and some families headed by women and children, social services should respond to the specific needs of these families.

2.5.1.3   HIV/Aids services

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Aids) is one of the largest human development challenges that the global community has ever faced and always presents itself with an array of challenges (Johnson, 2005:311; Triegaardt, 2009:4). Since its identification, several efforts were made to bring the infection rates under control but it has continued to escalate, especially in Sub Saharan regions (De Jong, 2003:16: UN, MDGs Report, 2012:12). This escalation has been motivated by other social problems like poverty, domestic violence and substance abuse (De Jong, 2003:17). People in developing countries are more susceptible to HIV/Aids because of widespread poverty, inadequate social safety nets and social services (De Jong, 2003:17). Women in particular are at risk of contracting the virus, due to structural gender inequalities and differential power relations in sexual negotiation between men and women (De Jong, 2003:17).

HIV/Aids has brought concomitant social problems. In some instances, the infected cannot continue to work due to low health levels; feelings of fear, loss, grief, guilt, denial, anger, anxiety, low self-esteem and depression and having to depend on others (Van Dyk, 2008:266-269). However, many of the infected taking Antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) do have good health and productive lives. Though the significant impact of ARVs treatment is noted, in the Vhembe district due to the state of poverty the infected cannot strictly adhere to the treatment requirements as they need proper food intake along with their medication. As such there is still a high rate of HIV/Aids related deaths.

In the Vhembe district the impact is seen in the growing number of children without one or both parents; children having to take parental responsibility for their siblings when both their parents die; children taking care of their terminally ill parents, often dropping out of school and the elderly parents who are forced to take parental roles to their grandchildren when their parents die (Van Dyk, 2008:271). De Jong (2003:21) adds that the overall effect on families, communities and societies is "huge and catastrophic".

Developmental services should respond to the needs of the families affected by the disease by providing care and support for these users, changing cultural stereotypes through education, and mobilising and empowering these rural communities to challenge traditional beliefs that play a role in aggravating this disease. In addition, services should also respond to the needs of orphaned children (Patel, 2005:173).

2.5.1.4   *Services dealing with violence against women and children*

Developmental services for these women will include victim empowerment, where victims are empowered to take decisions that are appropriate for their contexts. If needed, abused women should be helped to apply for a protection order against the offending partners (Patel, 2005:185). In the case of children who live in abusive homes, developmental services include counselling and support in the context of family (Lewis-O'Connor, Sharps, Humphreys, Gary & Campbell, 2006:321; Dunkle et al., 2004:421; Patel, 2005:185). In a developmental paradigm, family preservation, support and strengthening take precedence.

2.5.1.5   *Substance abuse services*

Unlike the therapeutic methods used in the past that focused only on the rehabilitation of the addicted, developmental social welfare services will seek to prevent and reduce the problems of substance abuse (Patel, 2005:188). As a result social workers must have the competency to identify signs of addiction and dependency to establish linkages with other social problems (Berg-Weger, 2010:193).

To prevent and reduce the problems of substance abuse the Department of Social Development (2006-2011:17) has outlined various intervention programs targeting the youth. The first is an information and education programme where social workers conduct workshops and information sessions targeting children and youth (Department of Social Development, 2006-2011:24). *Kimoja* (a prevention programme targeting the youth) is an example of an information session by the social welfare sector in the district. This is targeted at the youth who are in secondary schools and warns them not to experiment with intoxicating substances. Secondly, there are skill based strategies where children and youth get training to enhance their social coping skills to offset the influences and the pressure to use drugs (Department of Social Development, 2006-2011:18). Lastly, there is also community based prevention where intervention programmes target the broader community like community policing forums and safe schools programme.

2.5.1.6   *Crime prevention and restorative justice*

Developmental services should facilitate programmes that focus on crime prevention. In the Vhembe district, social workers are working in collaboration with teachers and police officials to educate the youth at schools about the dangers of crime. This is intended to deter young people from engaging in criminal activities.

Furthermore, developmental services aim for restorative justice rather than sending young children and youth to correctional facilities. The National Institute for Crime-prevention and Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) in the Vhembe district specifically deal with these youth who are in trouble with the law. Developmental social services also target the victims of crime through victim empowerment programmes (Patel, 2005:183). This is to ensure that both the rights of victims and perpetrators are upheld in all interventions. The victims are offered counselling, support and empowerment programmes (Patel, 2005:183).

2.5.1.7   *Early childhood development*

Early childhood development (ECD) targets children less than six years of age and addresses the health, nutrition, psychosocial and cognitive development needs of

vulnerable children (RSA, 2008:59). Education, as mentioned earlier, is a key strategy in helping people to get out of the poverty trap. Developmental social services target these children as ECD has been proven to be one of the measures of influencing success in education later in their lives (RSA, 2008:60).

In conclusion, these social services address social problems that affect users of social services and could positively impact on their lives. The next section addresses the target beneficiaries who are the users of social welfare services.

2.5.2 Social services users in the rural context

The users who are targeted by social welfare service delivery in the rural context are not different from those in the urban settings, but their needs are different and unique. The principle of appropriateness highlights this fact. The section will discuss the beneficiaries of social services as identified in the rural context of Vhembe.

- **Children**

  Children in South Africa are deeply affected by poverty, HIV/Aids and trauma resulting from violence (Bezuidenhout, 2008:186). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2011) furthermore indicates that 24,9% of children in South Africa are impoverished, and have to deal with inadequate housing, overcrowding and hunger on a daily basis. The majority of these are black and live in rural, underdeveloped areas (Bezuidenhout, 2008:202). In Vhembe 40% of children live in poverty. The Child Support Grant, school nutrition programme, ECD and drop-in centres are valuable measures instituted to assist children in need. However, the state of poverty that many of the district children continue to live in is a matter for concern.

  In addition to the poverty that most of these children face on a daily basis, they are severely affected by the HIV/Aids pandemic. The South African Health Sector has made free provision of antiretroviral treatment to reduce the number of deaths; however HIV-related deaths are still common in South Africa (Johnson,

2005:310). In the Vhembe district alone 5% of children are orphaned (Department of Basic Education, 2011:1). However, the positive aspect of the deep rural Vhembe district is the extended family members who care for these children after they lose their parents. But there are those who are sometimes forced to take adult roles while still young and, amongst other duties, care for their siblings. Often these children suffer the stigma of HIV/Aids which leaves them isolated and difficult to reach (Van Dyk, 2008: 220).

- **The youth**

  According to the National Youth Policy (NYP) (RSA, 2009) the youth population ranges from 18 to 35 years and is grouped into different categories. There are those that are still at school, including institutions of higher learning, and those that are out of school, who are employed and unemployed (RSA, 2009:13-19). The worst challenge that faces the youth of the Vhembe district is unemployment and poverty. Unemployment is at 46% and the majority of the unemployed are the youth (Statistics SA, Population Census, 2013; Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016). The situation of unemployment among the youth of the district has alienated them which according to Sen (1999:90) causes them to be apathetic and have a general low self-esteem.

  Apart from the problem of unemployment that challenges the youth in the Vhembe district, they also face challenges of poverty, substance abuse, violence and crime, which are tied to unemployment. An employment accord was signed by the government and business sector in April 2013 in which the government committed itself to reduce tax rates for companies that employ young people (Zuma, 2013). This is a promising step for many of the young people who are unemployed. The civil society is also advocating for a youth wage to address youth poverty, however this will burden the South African social welfare system that is already under heavy strain.

The challenge for the social service sector is to facilitate alternative means of employment for these young people.

- **Women**

Women comprise about 56% of the population and they form a large sector of the population in the Vhembe district (Kyei, 2011:365). However, they are the most impoverished, disadvantaged and marginalised group. Most households in the Vhembe district are headed by women, as men are working in other provinces like Gauteng (Kyei, 2011:365).

Women, in particular are vulnerable to poverty as they do not have the skills to access decent employment. In cases where they get jobs it is usually lower paying, which continues to keep them trapped in persistent poverty. The challenge for the social welfare sector is in dealing with the poverty and unemployment that affect the lives of these rural women.

- **The aged**

The state social security is accessible and benefits the aged population of this district, yet despite this great coverage the Old Age Grant is the only means of survival for the households' unemployed, able-bodied members (RSA, 2008:7). As a result the aged population continues to live in poverty (Patel, 2005:172). There are cases where these old people have to assume parental roles when they lose their children because of HIV/Aids. Social services for older persons should respond to their specific needs, by ensuring that their right to live in dignity is not compromised and that they are given an opportunity to take decisions that affect their lives (Patel, 2005:171).

- **People with disabilities**

Disability is associated with the "difficulties of physical access, low income, high living costs, poverty and social exclusion" (RSA, 2008:48). However, according to the Constitution of South Africa, a person with a disability has the same rights as

all people in South Africa (RSA, 1996) and must access social services when they need them.

The social worker's office is the key access point to the service delivery system for a large percentage of people with disabilities (RSA, 1997b:26). As such, social services' intervention should promote a comprehensive approach towards persons with disabilities and their inclusion in the mainstream social and economic activities (Patel, 2005:169).

- **Immigrants and refugees**

  The Vhembe district, which is the research site for this study, borders on Zimbabwe and due to the social, economic and political conditions in Zimbabwe many seek refugee status in South Africa. Besides the Zimbabweans there are also refugees from other African countries who are seeking asylum and economic freedom in South Africa. Though they are refugees and immigrants, they have the same needs as all South Africans. They need food and shelter. In a country like South Africa where job opportunities are limited, they often compete with local South African nationals for opportunities (Brulliards, 2009:1). The common xenophobic attacks manifest as one such dilemma.

  The challenge for social workers is to know, firstly, how to deal with diverse populations; secondly, how to provide assistance to them; and lastly, how to deal with the burden that is brought about by a large number of refugees (Berg-Weger, 2010:190).

From the above discussions, it is evident that there are underpinning challenges in rendering developmental social welfare services. These challenges will be discussed next, together with strategies to overcome them.

2.6 CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN MAKING PROGRESS IN DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICE DELIVERY

The main focus of this study was to determine the progress of developmental social welfare in the rural context of the Vhembe district. Since the adoption of the development approach the social services sector has accepted this approach in principle, however, it is the implementation that poses several challenges. Several authors like Gray (2006), Lombard (2008) and Hölscher (2008) have analysed and evaluated how the approach is progressing. This discussion will outline the challenges identified as obstacles in the progress of developmental social welfare which in turn underpin possible strategies for fast tracking the progress of the approach.

- **Lack of political will to implement the approach**
  Developmental social welfare service delivery requires the combined effort of all role players, including the government. However, there is some serious doubt about the government's commitment to the developmental mandate (Hölscher, 2008:116). The government still spends a lot of money on consumption based programmes rather than programmess that focus on economic development of the poor (Hölscher, 2008:121).

  This lack of political will makes the government fail in creating a climate that is conducive to the transition to a developmental approach. As already indicated, there are many difficulties that social workers face which include lack of resources, lack of funds and multiple role responsibilities (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:407). These difficulties hinder their efforts to move towards developmental social welfare service delivery.

  In addition to this, it has been noted that the government places competing demands on social workers. Research evidence (cf. De Jager, 2005; Lombard, 2005, 225; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:206) shows that though the government wants social workers to deliver developmental social services; the government's

emphasis is still on remedial approaches. Social workers are frustrated because they have to comply with the demands placed on them to deliver developmental social services to social services users in an environment that is not conducive.

This requires the government to refocus its commitment to make developmental social welfare a reality in South Africa. The NDP (RSA, 2011b), as already shown, gives hope that the government is still willing to pursue the developmental agenda.

- **Lack of understanding of developmental social welfare**
  There is still a serious misunderstanding of what developmental social welfare is in the social welfare sector among managers and social workers alike. This makes the implementation of this approach difficult, as noted by Lombard (2007:298): "...without a clear understanding of what developmental social welfare entails, it is clearly difficult to implement it." Lombard (2008a:159) further stresses, "...without the knowing of what developmental social welfare is it is impossible to know how to implement it." This misunderstanding has delayed the progress of developmental social welfare delivery and in the observation of the researcher social workers are still struggling to understand the approach.

Though training on developmental social welfare service delivery has been done in the district, evidence shows that it was not sufficient and as a result more training for social workers is still required to orientate them further in this approach as well as capacitate them on how to translate policy into practice. Ife (2001:120) supports in this regard that "...theory informs practice", as it gives the social workers the ability to determine whether or not their practice aligns to the theory of developmental social welfare.

In developmental social welfare poverty reduction is of paramount importance and social workers are required to incorporate economic development in their interventions. However, if they do not know how, then it will be an insurmountable

challenge. Therefore training should also include building social workers' capacity for entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, which will enable them to facilitate economic development opportunities for service users. As Lombard and Strydom (2011:327) emphasise, "...the social workers' involvement in economic development is no longer an option." Social workers can encourage service users to establish micro-enterprises which have been proven to be useful in helping poor people create self-employment and as a result improve their living conditions (Midgley, 2008:467; Raheim, 1996:69; Mehra, 1997:147).

In some areas of the Vhembe district fruits grow liberally in the homesteads of local people and local women are already selling their fruits to passing motorists. This is an opportunity that social workers can utilise to link these women with training for business and marketing skills. Secondly, social workers can help these women to access micro-finance facilities to expand these businesses (cf. Cheston & Kuhn, 2002:204; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993:162).

In cases where people who are poor may not be in a position to establish micro-businesses, social workers could then facilitate a process where they are linked with opportunities for vocational and skills training (Midgley, 1999:11). This, in turn, will help people who are poor to gain skills which will enable them to seek meaningful employment.

The researcher has noticed two programmes in the Vhembe district which respond to the MDGs by promoting gender equality and empowering women, as well as combating diseases like malaria, HIV/Aids and others (RSA, 2011c:8). The first programme is jointly managed by the Department of Social Development and the Department of Health, where poor women are given basic health skills to render home based clinical services for chronic patients in communities. The other programme is coordinated jointly by the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education in which poor women are given early childhood development skills which enable them to establish ECD centres. These are

positive strategies for further development as they respond to MDGs which promote social development.

- **Lack of resources to enable developmental social welfare service delivery**
  Social welfare service delivery relies on the availability of resources. Findings from a study by Patel and Hochfeld (2008:206) show a serious lack of resources, including insufficient funding of social services. The implication is that social services are highly compromised in the context of perennial lack of resources. Therefore resources and infrastructure should be identified and prioritised for action.

- **Poor working conditions**
  Social workers are important role players in developmental social welfare service delivery (RSA, 1997a:9). However, they are still challenged by huge caseloads, insufficient training, poor salaries and having to complete long and time consuming reports (De Jager, 2005:73; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:206). This negatively affects the quality of services they deliver. In addition, social workers who are employed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) earn low salaries due to insufficient financing. Though NGOs render quality services they lose more social workers to other sectors due to low salaries and better working conditions (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:206). In the Vhembe district in particular, the Christellike Maatskaplike Raad (CMR) office spends months without a social worker which implies that there was no service delivery rendered for that time. There is a need for increased funds for social services as well as better working conditions for social workers so that they can concentrate on developmental social welfare service delivery (Lombard, 2005:225).

In concluding this section the above challenges have influenced the progress made in developmental social welfare service delivery, especially in the rural context which is the focus of this study. These challenges can be addressed by strategies which could accelerate developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district.

2.7 SUMMARY

Developmental social welfare service delivery is a planned attempt by the social welfare sector to provide just, appropriate and equitable services to users who are disadvantaged in various ways. In a rural context developmental service delivery intends to reverse historical discrepancies and ensure that rural beneficiaries get the quality services that will make an impact on the structural social injustices experienced in the Vhembe district. These attempts by the social welfare sector have been met with serious challenges that threaten and delay the efforts to implement developmental social services. What is needed is a serious political commitment from the local government to make tangible investments in social programmes in order to help the social welfare sector achieve the goals of social development, which will then improve the lives of people who are poor, vulnerable and marginalised.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in the study as well as the ethical aspects relevant to the study. This will be followed by the empirical findings of the study. To achieve the goal for the study, which is to explore the progress of developmental social welfare in the Vhembe district of Limpopo, the following research question directed the study:

What progress has been made in shifting social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach in the Vhembe district in Limpopo?

This research question was informed by the following sub-questions:
- To what extent do social welfare services in the Vhembe district reflect the principles and key themes of developmental social welfare?
- What are the challenges embedded in shifting to developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district?
- What strategies can enhance the shift to developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district?

The study was conducted in the Vhembe district, which is in the far northern parts of the Limpopo province. The district has four sub-districts which are largely rural, namely Makhado, Musina, Mutale and Thulamela.

3.2   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research approach; type of research and research design; the sampling procedures; the data collection instruments; the pilot study and the ethical issues relevant to the study.

3.2.1　Research approach

In this study the researcher has followed a qualitative approach with an exploratory purpose (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:80). The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth descriptions, views and understandings of the actions, events and challenges related to the progress made in shifting social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:270; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:110).

3.2.2　Type of research

The type of study was applied research as the research focused on finding a solution for a problem in practice, namely to explore strategies to fast track the implementation of developmental social welfare service delivery in the district which will promote social development (Bless et al., 2006:45).

3.2.3　Research design

The study utilised the case study research design and, more specifically, the instrumental case study since it served the purpose of helping the researcher to explore social workers' views on how social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district has shifted towards a developmental approach (Mark, 1996 in Fouché & Schurink, 2011:321). Furthermore, it has helped the researcher to execute an in-depth examination to gain knowledge about the shift to and progress of developmental social welfare in the Vhembe district in Limpopo (Babbie, 2008:326).

3.2.4　Research methods

This section outlines the study population and sampling; the data collection methods; the data analysis and the pilot study.

3.2.4.1　*Study population and sampling*

The study population included all social workers and supervisors rendering social services in the Vhembe district from the governmental and non-governmental sector. According to the statistics derived from the Vhembe district office of Social Development

(2013), there were 275 social workers in the district, including supervisors and managers, at the time of the study.

The study made use of non-probability sampling where the probability of including each element of the population is unknown (Bless et al., 2006:100), namely stratified and purposive sampling, which was applied to choose seven social workers and one supervisor in each strata, namely Makhado, Musina, Mutale and Thulamela. The choice of the sampling method allowed the researcher to make a judgement and to ensure that the sample was composed of participants with characteristics representative of their involvement in developmental social welfare service delivery (Maree, 2010:156).

The criteria that guided the selection process of social workers were as follows:
- Willingness to participate in the study.
- A minimum of three years' experience as a social worker in the district.
- Practising generic social work with all three primary social work methods.
- Male and female respondents.
- From the government and NGO sector.
- Fluent in English.

The criteria for the selection of supervisors were as follows:
- Willingness to participate in the study.
- A minimum of three years experience as a social work supervisor.
- A practising social work supervisor in the Vhembe district for at least two years.
- Supervising social workers who do generic social work and apply three primary social work methods.
- From the government and NGO sector.
- Male and female respondents.
- Fluent in English.

The researcher purposely selected four supervisors and 28 social workers, which means one supervisor and seven social work participants from each sub-district. Twenty-seven

participants were from the district Department of Social Development and one from the NGO, which was the Suid-Afrikaanse Vrouefederasie (SAVF). The other NGOs did not fit the selection criteria and the Christelike Maatskaplike Raad (CMR), which could have been included in the study, was closed down at the time of the study. All four supervisors were from the Department of Social Development. All participants signed the informed consent letters (Appendixes A (social workers) and B (supervisors) respectively).

3.2.4.2   Data collection methods

The researcher sought permission from both the provincial Department of Social Development and the SAVF to engage the participants. After permission was granted, the researcher approached the district office which then gave her access to the sub-district offices. The researcher then approached the participants and those who fitted the selection criteria were invited and included in the study.

Data collection was done through four focus group interviews with social workers and four one-on-one interviews with supervisors. Therefore, one focus group discussion and one personal interview were conducted in the Makhado, Musina, Thulamela and Mutale sub-districts respectively.

The researcher collected the data in the respective sub-districts on the same day. She started by conducting focus group interviews and later had individual interviews with supervisors in the same venue. This was pre-arranged by the researcher to make data collection easier and manageable.

A semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended questions was used to guide both the focus groups (see Appendix C) and one-on-one interviews (see Appendix D). In accordance with a semi-structured interview schedules (see Appendixes C and D), the researcher used additional probing questions during the interviews when she wanted participants to further elaborate on responses and clarify some issues. The researcher was satisfied at the end of the discussions that saturation point has been reached and hence did not have follow-up meetings.

3.2.5 Data analysis

Data analysis was done according to thematic coding as themes and categories were used and preceded in a spiral process starting after every interview (Creswell, 2007). The researcher listened to the cassettes and then labelled them. Then the researcher compared the data from the tapes with the field notes to ensure that no data was lost. The researcher made use of an independent co-coder, who is a PhD graduate and has experience in research and data analysis.

The process was followed by the transcription of data, where the researcher typed all the information in a Microsoft Word document. Thereafter the researcher managed the collected data in the following manner (Creswell, 2007):

- The researcher organised the transcribed data in folders according to focus group and participant.
- The researcher read and re-read the data intensively and wrote memoirs.
- The researcher coded the data.
- Themes, sub-themes and patterns were identified.
- To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, transcripts of data were given to the independent co-coder (Scott, 2010:43).
- Consensus with the co-coder was sought.
- Presentation of data in the research report.

For the purpose of trustworthiness, three principles were applied: credibility, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Scott, 2010:43). To ensure the credibility of the data, the researcher used semi-structured interview schedules (see Appendixes C and D) to obtain the participants' views. To ensure that the data is dependable the researcher investigated the raw data thoroughly by repeatedly reading through the transcripts and listening to the tapes. The researcher then formulated themes, sub-themes and categories supported by the exact words and actions of participants. The transcripts were also given to an independent co-coder to ensure that the data collected is confirmable and represents the exact views of participants.

3.2.6 Pilot study

The pilot study was done before the commencement of the main study to ensure that the research methodology chosen was appropriate and, most importantly, to assess whether the semi-structured interview schedules generated responses that would answer the questions posed in the study. The researcher conducted the pilot study with one supervisor and four social workers in the Makhado sub-district who were not part of the main study. The researcher invited the participants to join the study and they willingly agreed and also signed the informed consent letter.

The pilot study confirmed the relevance of the sampling procedure and that semi-structured interview schedules generated responses relevant to the questions asked by the researcher. However, the researcher picked up that there was no flow of argument from the supervisor participants and then swapped questions 4 and 6 to facilitate an easier flow.

3.3 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Research is an ethical process. Obtaining the views and experiences of people involves an intrusion on the privacy of the participants (Babbie, 2008:67). The researcher was ethically cleared by the University of Pretoria ethics committee (see Appendix E) and thereafter obtained the permission to engage the participants from both the provincial and district office of Department of Social Development.

The ethical aspects considered will be discussed below:

3.3.1 Voluntary participation

Their participation was on a voluntary basis and participants were thus not coerced to participate. As already indicated participants signed the informed consent forms which they read carefully beforehand (see Appendixes A and B). In some cases, participants withdrew their participation at the very last minute of the appointment. The researcher was respectful as it was their right to do so. Those who withdrew their participation were

then replaced with other willing participants to make up the required number per sub-district.

3.3.2   Confidentiality and anonymity

The researcher explained to the participants that she will handle the information in a confidential manner by not disclosing their names to anyone outside of the research process. Their anonymity was furthermore protected by making sure that a given response cannot be associated with a participant (Babbie, 2008:70). The members' commitment to confidentiality and anonymity in the focus groups was obtained through the signed informed consent forms (see Appendixes C and D).

3.3.3   Deception of participants

The researcher has not withheld information or offered incorrect information, in order to ensure the participation of participants when they would otherwise possibly refuse (Babbie, 2008:68). At the beginning of interviews, the researcher explained the goal of the study and what was expected of the participants before they gave their informed consent (Maree, 2010: 210).

3.3.4   Competence of the researcher

The researcher has an ethical obligation to ensure that she is competent and skilled to undertake the investigation (Strydom, 2005:89). The researcher has, in preparation for this study, done a module on research methodology. Secondly, to ensure that the research was done in an ethically correct manner, the study was undertaken under the guidance of the researcher's supervisor.

3.3.5   Release or publication of findings

The research findings are documented in this research report which has been submitted to the University of Pretoria and will be submitted to the Limpopo Department of Social Development after the examination, as it was requested as a prerogative for granting permission to conduct the study. In addition, the findings will be published in a scientific

journal. The participants have been made aware of this in the informed consent letter (see Appendixes A and B).

3.3.6   Debriefing

Debriefing sessions were planned at the end of the interview to deal with any concerns, misunderstandings and ill feelings that may have been generated by being interviewed (Babbie, 2008:73). The first question on participants' understanding of developmental social welfare made some participants feel threatened and uncertain somehow, so the researcher held debriefing sessions with participants afterwards to clarify the matter and make them feel at ease. After the debriefing sessions the researcher observed that they did not need any further guidance.

3.4   THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This section deals with the empirical findings derived from the study. The findings are categorised and discussed under two sections, namely biographical information of the participants and the emerging themes from the research data.

3.4.1   Biographical information of participants

The biographical data of the social workers is presented first, which is followed by the biographical information of supervisors.

3.4.1.1   Social workers

The information of the social workers covers gender, age, number of years of practical experience as social worker, involvement in social work methods, and target areas of organisations in which they are employed.

- *Gender*

   Table 1: Gender of social work participants

Male	Female
8	20

In accordance with the general profile of the social work profession, more females than males participated in the study.

- *Age group*

Table 2: Age groups of social work participants

24-29 yrs	30-35 yrs	36-40 yrs	41-46 yrs	47-52 yrs	53+ yrs
18	5	4	1	-	-

From Table 2 it is clear that all but one social work participant were under 40 years of age. The expectation is thus that many of them have had an opportunity to be trained formally or informally and/or practice in the developmental approach since the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare in 1997.

- *Years of practice as a social worker*

Table 3: Years of practice as social worker

3-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	11-14 yrs	15 + yrs
22	6	-	-

The years of practical experience as social worker correlates with the age of the participants and, as indicated above, with the expectation that they have been trained in the developmental approach and/or had some practical experience in the developmental approach.

- *Social work methods utilised*

When the invitation to participate in the study was made all participants indicated that they use all three social work methods. Those that did not meet the selection criteria were not included.

- ***Target areas of organisation***

  All the participants worked with children and families, the elderly, people with disability, HIV/Aids and substance abuse. In addition, one participant also works with early childhood development. This is a clear indication that all the participants do generalist social work which is a feature of the developmental approach (Patel, 2005:159). Therefore, all the social work participants could potentially do developmental social work.

3.4.1.2 Supervisors

The biographical information of the supervisors covers gender, age, number of years of practical experience as a supervisor, number of years supervising in the Vhembe district, the number of social workers in supervision, and target areas of organisations in which they are employed.

- ***Gender***

  Table 4: Gender of social work supervisors

Male	Female
1	3

  Table 4 indicates that more female supervisors than males participated in the study, which is in accordance with the general gender profile of the social work profession.

- ***Age group***

  Table 5: Age of social work supervisors

24-29 yrs	30-35 yrs	36-40 yrs	41-46 yrs	47-52 yrs	53 + yrs
-	-	1	1	1	1

  Table 5 shows that three supervisors were over 40 years of age, which indicates that they may not have had any formal undergraduate training in developmental social welfare. However, they could have continued with postgraduate studies

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and/or received informal training. In hindsight it is an omission not to have asked participants about their specific training in developmental social work.

- ***The total number of years as a social work supervisor***
  Table 6: Years as a social work supervisor

3-6 yrs	7-10 yrs	11-14 yrs	15 + yrs
1	-	-	3

  Findings indicate that three supervisors have supervising experience of more than 15 years. One supervisor has only three to six years of experience as a supervisor.

- ***The total number of years as a social work supervisor in the Vhembe district***
  Table 7: Years as a social work supervisor in the Vhembe district

2-5 yrs	6-9 yrs	10-13 yrs	14+ yrs
1	1	-	2

  The findings indicate that two supervisors have been working in the district for more than fourteen years. And the other two supervisors have less than fourteen years in the district.

- ***Total number of social workers in supervision***
  Table 8: Number of social workers in supervision

Participant 1 – Mutale	30
Participant 2 – Thulamela	8
Participant 3 – Makhado	9
Participant 4 – Musina	18

Two participants are supervising 18 and 30 social workers respectively. This poses challenges for individual supervision as opposed to group supervision, which may be more feasible as it saves time for both the supervisor and social workers (Mboniswa, 2007:34). In addition group supervision offer greater potential for

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learning as it encourages interaction and group cohesion (Mboniswa, 2007: 36). The other two supervisors supervise eight and nine social workers respectively. These small numbers offer the supervisor more opportunities to do individual supervision, which is the most intense and helpful type of supervision (Mboniswa, 2007:33).

- ***Target areas of service delivery***

  All participants worked with child and family welfare, the elderly, disability, HIV/Aids, substance abuse, and areas like early childhood development and NGO funding.

3.4.2   Themes and sub-themes

This section presents the findings of the study that explored the views and experiences of social workers and supervisors on developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district. As already indicated, the views and experiences were expressed in four focus group discussions with social workers and four personal interviews with supervisors. As there was a correlation between the themes that emerged from the research data of supervisor participants and that of the social work participants, the findings from both focus group discussions and personal interviews will be presented in an integrated manner in this discussion. The findings will be substantiated with the voices of the participants and, where applicable, integrated with literature.

The themes and sub-themes that emerged from the research data are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Themes and sub-themes

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
1. The concept developmental social welfare.	1.1 Understanding of developmental social welfare. 1.2 Social workers' experiences in working with this approach. 1.3 Social workers' perception of developmental social welfare.
2. The impact of the developmental approach on the social problems in the district.	2.1 Social problems challenging the district. 2.2 Developmental services to reduce the impact of social problems in the district.
3. Social workers and supervisors' level of competence in delivering developmental social welfare services.	3.1 High caseloads. 3.2 Lack of proper supervision. 3.3 Lack of training.
4. Challenges experienced by social workers and supervisors in developmental social welfare service delivery.	4.1 Lack of resources. 4.2 Poor working conditions.
5. Progress and strategies to fast track the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery.	

3.4.2.1 Theme 1: The concept developmental social welfare

The theme indicated that the concept of developmental social welfare is understood on different levels. Three sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely understanding of

developmental social welfare, social workers' experiences in working with this approach and social workers' perceptions of the developmental approach.

Sub-theme 1.1: Understanding of developmental social welfare

Findings have shown that the majority of participants understand the approach, whereas a few participants struggled to conceptualise the approach.

The following responses show the social workers' views with regard to their understanding of the developmental approach:

- *"Developmental approach is about getting people to do things for them in order to reduce their dependency on the government."*
- *"It means as social workers, we empower people to take charge of their lives and thus reduce dependency on social welfare."*
- *"In addition to that statement, it implies that in the facilitation process you focus on the strengths of clients."*
- *"We give people skills to solve their problems, which mean we empower them."*

Findings indicated that only two supervisors have a clear understanding of the developmental approach.

One supervisor who struggled to understand the approach expressed her view as follows:

- *"We were not trained to deliver development orientated social services, we were just called for a briefing session, and one cannot understand the whole idea of developmental approach with such a short space of time."*

She continued to express her dilemma:

- *"And here am I supposed to supervise social workers who some of them have a thorough understanding of this approach."*

In asking whether the social workers under their supervision understand the approach, one supervisor commented as follows:

- *"Social workers do understand the developmental approach, but due to challenges of huge caseloads and many focus areas they find it difficult to implement this approach."*

However one supervisor had a different view:
- *"I don`t think social workers really understand what this approach is all about, because I suppose they are doing things as they have been done in the past."*

Though the majority of social workers indicated that they do understand the developmental approach, there is still uncertainty about the approach. Their remarks show that they understand that developmental social welfare is based on shifting from consumption based approaches to the strength and empowerment approaches (Midgley, 2010b:14; Saleebey, 2000:128), however they lacked common ground which shows a gap in their understanding which may in turn affect its implementation. Lombard (2007:298) articulates that an understanding of the developmental approach is important for its successful implementation.

Sub-theme 1.2: Social workers' experiences in working with this approach

As indicated above, most of the participants have work experience of between three and six years, which implies that they have had formal training in the developmental approach, and thus have an understanding of the approach. However, their remarks show that their experience with the approach is not in accordance with what they know. They indicated that they still face a challenge in bridging the gap between the theory of developmental social welfare and the actual practice.

One social work participant articulated this experience as follows:
- *"It is like you are getting in the new environment altogether. You come from university with fresh ideas, but once you are in practice they tell you the way things are done which is different from theory. To meet the work demands you have to follow the norm. This is the way things were done in the past."*

Another social work participant added:

- *"How do you render developmental services, when you are supposed to meet your given targets? If you do proper developmental services you will not meet your given targets then the authorities will say that you are not doing your job. So we stick to the targets to be on the safe side."*

From the remarks of the participants it is clear that service delivery is still strongly aligned with the remedial approach and that the transition to the developmental approach is still coupled with uncertainties and difficulties. This finding confirms Gray's (2006:S60) statement that developmental social welfare has been adopted without a clear understanding of how it must work in practice.

Sub-theme 1.3: Social workers' perception of developmental social welfare

Despite the fact that the majority of social work participants are still new in practice, as indicated above, and have an understanding of the approach, findings have shown that they already have a negative perception and as such they are less enthusiastic about the approach. They experience a huge gap between what they have learnt at university and what they actually practice.

Their views are reflected in the following comments of social work participants:

- *"It is maybe for those that are learned up there like managers and academics, but not for us grassroots people. We understand this approach, but it is like it is not practical. There is so much political interference which I may call it. You will be busy facilitating capacity and empowering your clients. During their campaigns they tell people that the government has given free food parcels and they must collect them at the social workers office. When you come to work you will find people waiting for food parcels and you will be frustrated, because you don`t have the things they want. It is really frustrating."*
- *"This developmental thing is not for us maybe for those learned people, not for us at grassroots."*

However a participant from the NGO sector was more enthusiastic about the approach:

- *"To me it is a very excellent approach, because I have never worked with any other approach. By the way I understand, it does not mean I must neglect all other approaches but I must assist clients with a developmental focus. I think it's really working for my clients, because I see them getting empowered."*

The findings indicated that though the majority of social workers do understand the developmental approach in principle and would like to implement it, their experiences in working developmentally has led them to have a negative perception. This is a concern as it is challenging to implement the developmental approach if social workers have such negative attitude towards it (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006:227). Secondly, the negative attitude of social workers shows a misunderstanding of the developmental approach as the approach does not imply the total abandonment of traditional approaches, but the incorporation of development in interventions (Lombard, 2007:301).

In conclusion of this theme, despite the difficulties the social welfare sector has in the implementation of the approach, the recent National Development Plan (NDP) emphasises the social welfare sector as an important role player in achieving the objectives of the developmental approach and in making a meaningful contribution to the alleviation of poverty (RSA, 2011b:40). This supports what has been articulated by Lombard (2008a:163) on the social welfare sector's role in the alleviation of poverty by confronting the structural causes of poverty.

3.4.2.2 Theme 2: The impact of the developmental approach on the social problems in the district

In this theme, two sub-themes have emerged, namely the social problems challenging the district and how developmental social welfare services reduce the impact of social problems in the district.

Sub-theme 2.1: Social problems challenging the district

Participants articulated social problems that affect social service beneficiaries in the district negatively. Barker (2003), as cited in Landman (2004:23), argues that social problems violate people's values and norms and cause social and economic hardships. The following categories of social problems, as mentioned by all participants, reduce the quality of life of the communities they are servicing.

- **Poverty**

    Poverty is widely prevalent in this district. In Vhembe, poverty levels are at 40% which makes this district the second poorest in Limpopo (Department of Basic Education, 2011:1). Participants agreed that poverty is the cause of many social problems in the district. This state of poverty also creates other social problems in the district. This finding is supported by Green (2008:18), who states that poverty plays a contributing role in other social problems like crime, substance abuse and domestic violence.

    The seriousness of the situation is reflected in the following comment of a social worker:
    - *"There is widespread poverty in this area, and it makes people to have multiple relationships which put them on high risk of getting infected with diseases."*

    Participants indicated that they come across cases where clients come to their office complaining of having no means to survive. This situation is worsened by the fact that most of the people in this district are unemployed.

    One supervisor commented in support of the view:
    - *"People are poor; they are not working, and have no means to survive. In some families the Child Support Grant is the only means of survival. This often encourages women to have more children with a view of getting more Child Support Grant. And this in itself is not sustainable."*

A social worker added to this view by articulating the negative effect of poverty on the Child Support Grants as follows:

- *"The state of poverty is severe that we have cases where a husband and a wife will be fighting for the Child Support Grant. And when parents fight for child grants, do you think these grants are benefiting the children, who are the beneficiaries of those grants."*

The findings supported the view of Kyei (2011:364) that poverty is the key social problem in the district and leads to other social pathologies. Though there is evidence that poverty has been reduced since 1994, it still remains a serious problem as it transmits its effects from one generation to another (Ewhrudjakpor, 2008:520; Kyei, 2011:364). To 60% of the population of this district, social security has become a cushion to reduce the impact of poverty on their lives.

- **Unemployment**

Participants have articulated the seriousness of unemployment in the district, which is at 46% (Vhembe District Municipality, IDP, 2012-2016:19). In the participants' view, unemployment is the major contributor to the prevalence of poverty in the district.

This reality was confirmed by social workers:

- *"People are not working and this culminates into poverty that is difficult to deal with. We have cases of misuse of grants, because people have no source of income. This leaves the children with no proper means of care. And it creates other social problems that we are seeing."*
- *"Our people are not working. The majority of people in our district used to work in Nandoni dam project. Now that the project is complete it means that those people who were working there are now unemployed adding to the already high number of unemployment in the district."*

The implication of a 46% unemployment rate in the Vhembe District, as indicated above, is that nearly half of the population of the district in unemployed. Unemployment implies that many families lack the means to survive (Wield & Chataway, 2004:100).

- **HIV/Aids**

Participants indicated the prevalence of HIV/Aids in the district. Participants articulated that the majority of poor people are likely to engage in unsafe relationships for economic reasons, which puts them at a high risk of HIV infection. In addition, in poor communities like the Vhembe district, the transmission of information is always low and slow which implies that people are still misinformed about the disease which contributes to its spreading.

The following responses from two social workers confirmed the prevalence and spreading of HIV and Aids:
  - *"We have high caseloads of infected people who want social assistance."*
  - *"The widespread poverty makes people to seek money by having multiple relationships which put them at high risk."*

This finding supported what has been articulated in the MDGs Report (UN, 2012:41), namely that HIV/Aids continues to be the disease that affects the poor. The poor are likely to engage in high risk sexual behaviour which is perpetuated by a lack of correct knowledge about the disease. Though the statistical evidence has shown that the HIV infection rate is down by 10% nationally, in the district it is still at 17% (Statistics South Africa, Population Census, 2013: 12).

- **Orphanhood**

Participants indicated that they are dealing with a high number of children who are orphans in the district. According to the Department of Basic Education (2011:1), 5% of children in the district are orphans. This leads to high caseloads of children who are in need of foster care placement. Participants indicated that the placement

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of orphans has become a major activity of social welfare service delivery in the district.

The following comments from supervisors confirmed this view:

- *"We are having huge caseloads of child headed families and huge caseloads of children who are orphans and in need of placement. And this is the only major activity that we are dealing with, in our offices."*
- *"We have a high rate of children who are becoming orphans in the district. This gives us huge caseloads of children who are in need of placements. And these children become vulnerable as a result. Some end up caring for their siblings while they themselves are still in need of care. Those that are placed are brought up by people who are not their biological parents and this is not without challenges."*

The remarks indicated the huge challenge the social welfare sector is faced with to place these children in proper care to reduce their vulnerability. In the supervisors' view the placement of orphaned children poses a challenge to social welfare service delivery. Thus in a context where the need for social welfare services for children is high, it is a huge concern that the crucial poverty alleviation and reduction measures and the creation of sustainable livelihoods which are core in developmental social welfare service delivery are pushed into the background (Berry & John Langba, 2007/ 2008:9; Giese, 2007/2008:22).

- **Substance abuse**

Participants articulated the seriousness of substance abuse in the district. They were particularly concerned about the fact that substance abuse has become so common among the youth. Once youth drop out of school, they are left with nothing to do except drink alcohol and abuse other substances. This contributes to other social problems like rape, domestic violence, child abuse and child neglect (Ambrosino et al., 2008: 321; Berg-Weger, 2010:228).

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The following responses represented all participants' concerns:

- *"The rate of substance abuse is very high among the youth. It is like they say because they are not working, the only thing that they can do is to turn to alcohol. Most young people drop out of school and once they drop out of school, drinking liquor becomes the only activity they are doing. Alcohol leads to uncontrollable behaviour among the youth."*

- *"The problem of the use of heroine has recently emerged. It has surprised me because in Makhado sub-district heroine was not common. But recently I have had clients who have sought help in this area. You must also know that with marijuana, people no longer see it as a problem, it is like smoking cigarettes."*

Nduvheni (2013:12) concurs with this finding and further asserts that this challenges the social fibre of the district. In practice the researcher has observed cases where some youth are so intoxicated that they cannot do anything. In an environment of prevailing poverty and unemployment, drinking alcohol and using intoxicating substances becomes the escape route for the frustration that these young people are experiencing (Nduvheni, 2013:12).

- **Violence against women and children**

Participants indicated that violence against women and children involves sexual violence, child neglect and abandonment and that these cases are perpetuated by substance abuse. Though dealing with perpetrators in cases of domestic violence is primarily the responsibility of law enforcement agencies, social workers are dealing with clients who have been victims of rape and in their view the victims of crime are more at risk than perpetrators.

The following comments reflected the views of all participants on violence against women and children:

- *"Once these young people get drunk, they commit rape and blame the foreigners to defocus the police."*

- *"The major problem that affects victims is when perpetrators are released from custody after one or two days which makes them to live in fear of these perpetrators."*
- *"We are dealing with cases of child abandonment and child abuse. There are also cases of sexual abuse of children and in most cases the perpetrators are people known to these children."*

The findings confirm the link between substance abuse and other social problems like domestic violence, child neglect and child abuse (Ambrosino et al., 2008:321; Berg-Weger, 2010:228).

- **Problems with accessing identification documentation**
Participants highlighted the problem of lack of birth certificates and identity documents among their clients. In their opinion this happens in cases where orphaned children do not have the necessary family support to assist them when they apply for identity documents. They further indicated without identity documents and birth certificates, these people cannot access social benefits. This is reflected in the following remarks of social workers:

- *"This often happens with children who are orphaned and have no proper family support left. You'll find that members of extended family are not willing to help such a child."*

- *"You may think that it is only foreigners who lack documentation, but even our own people do not have the necessary identity documents. I don't know how the home affairs office does this, but it is like there are many requirements and if our clients fail to meet those requirements then they cannot get identification documentation. If they don`t have any identification this means they will not be able (to) access the social relief that is intended to benefit them. And this makes our work quite difficult and we don't even know how to assist these people."*

The problem with access to identification documentation shows an infringement on children's right to human identity, as identification documents imply the legal right to exist and live in a country (Sherraden, 2009:9). People who have a problem with access to identification documents are usually the poor who also need social assistance. If they do not have identification it means they cannot get this assistance as their existence is not recognised by law. This continues to emphasise how the problem of poverty negatively impacts every aspect of the poor`s lives.

In conclusion of this sub-theme, findings identified poverty, unemployment, orphanhood, substance abuse and problems with accessing identification documentation as social problems that are experienced in the district. According to the ISDM developmental social work addresses these problems by focusing on different levels of interventions in order to reduce their impact on people (Department of Social Development, 2006:30).

Sub-theme 2.2: Developmental services to reduce the impact of social problems in the district

Findings indicated different programmes and services that social workers render to alleviate and reduce the impact of these problems on the people of the district. The above mentioned social problems are going to be discussed next in relation to developmental social services.

- **Poverty**

  Findings indicated that the provision of social grants and social relief is the major service provided by social workers in assisting the poor. In participants' opinion, social grants like the Child Support Grant create problems in some families as parents fight over it. In addition, social relief is only temporarily and also limited, which makes it very hard for social workers to decide how it should be distributed amongst the distressed. This reality is confirmed in the following comments of social workers:

- *"There is social relief of people in distress, but even that alone is not sufficient because this is a permanent situation and the social relief is only a temporary solution."*
- *"There are poverty alleviation measures like food parcels, but these are not permanent they are just assisting in time of distress. And these food parcels are also not sufficient. When some people who are in distress cannot get their packages, they think we are not fair to them."*
- *"If you have 30 families that are in distress and they deliver eight food packages, how are you going to judge which ones are in serious need and which ones are not?"*

However, not only is the amount of food insufficient but the quality is also questioned by service beneficiaries, as the following remark of a social worker points out:

- *"Sometimes the food has expired and when you give them to clients being unaware, they come back and complain to you. This is a frustrating situation, because on the other hand these people are hungry, and though I understand their desperation, I cannot say they must eat food that has expired. As we are the people that are dealing with them on a regular basis they think that we are not treating them well."*

The findings indicated that the symptoms of poverty are the focus which underpins the argument of Lombard (2008a:156) that the social welfare sector is challenged to develop programmes that will alleviate and tackle the root causes of structural poverty.

- **Unemployment**

Findings showed different measures and programmes that the social welfare sector uses to deal with the problem of unemployment in the district. Participants indicated that they facilitate income generating projects with the help of the community development section in the Department of Social Development.

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However, in their opinion these projects do not do much to reduce unemployment. Participants were of the opinion that though they are trying to facilitate economic development and generate employment with the help of community development practitioners, they lack the capacity to do so and projects fail to generate money. The impact is therefore minimal.

Two supervisors commented as follows:
- *"Social workers, with the help of community development practitioners are trying to facilitate income generating projects to alleviate distress, but they are not making much impact. The issue of sustainability is a serious problem with these projects, as they cannot sustain themselves. Some projects however do succeed to get funding from the Department, but if they do not comply with financial procedures the Department cancels the funding and this will mean no means of sustenance for those people."*
- *"We try to develop income generating projects, but they are not sustainable as the majority of them do not comply with financing policies and those that are allocated funds misuse them. We cannot say we are really doing much to change the situation of these people."*

Social workers supported the views of supervisors:
- *"We do facilitate projects with the community development section. But I don't think we are really doing much impact. It is a hopeless situation when you see the way people are struggling."*
- *"There is no commitment from the government to make generating employment work. So much emphasis is still on consumption-based programmes."*

A supervisor mentioned that volunteerism is not helpful in enhancing the sustainability of income generating projects:

- *"We sometimes ask people to volunteer in certain projects, but then you cannot keep people volunteering forever without giving them money while you know that they are hungry."*

The above findings highlighted the challenges they face in dealing with unemployment and earning an income, namely difficult requirements of financial policies to finance initiatives to create employment and the government's lack of motivation to create sustainable employment opportunities. In the view of participants, the majority of these income generating projects are not sustainable as they cannot generate their own funds and collapse over a period of time. This poses serious challenges to the social welfare sector's contribution to the sustainable development vision of South Africa (RSA, 2011-2014:28). This unfortunate situation continues to keep people in poverty and results in a variety of deprivations like lack of income, inequality and poor health (Sen, 1999:20).

- **HIV/Aids**

Findings indicated that social workers respond to the HIV/Aids crisis by educating people on HIV/Aids in order to change their mindset. They also encourage the infected to manage the disease by adhering to treatment. However, though the health sector has made significant progress in the provision of Antiretroviral therapy, in the opinion of the participants challenges still remain to the social workers as some of the beneficiaries cannot fully adhere to therapy due to the lack of food. The following responses show social workers' challenge in dealing with HIV/Aids:

- *"We conduct campaigns where we educate and conscientise people about the disease and on how to live with the people infected with the disease. This information gradually helps the people to change their mindsets."*
- *"Those that are infected are encouraged to take medication, but in this case there is also a problem. These people are sometimes so poor that they don't have food to eat. When they don't have food to eat then they cannot take their medication."*

Participants furthermore indicated that their efforts to encourage service beneficiaries infected with HIV/Aids to have food gardens are not successful, as some of beneficiaries are so sick to undertake any physical activity. Their views are reflected in the following comment:

- *"Some of these people are so sick that they don't have strength to do anything for themselves. If they are staying alone then it means they seriously have difficulties in ensuring their food security. Their quality of life is really compromised."*

This finding shows that social workers have not yet managed to successfully deal with the impact of HIV/Aids in this district. This confirms the view of Kamau (2007/2008:7), who argues that the social welfare system has not yet succeeded in dealing with the devastating effects of HIV/Aids.

- **Orphanhood**

Findings indicated different programmes undertaken by social workers to deal with the problem of orphanhood in the district. In their remarks the placement of orphans in foster care has become the major activity they are dealing with. However, they are of the opinion that service delivery in this regard is an area where they think they are progressing in developmental social welfare service delivery. The following remark of one social worker confirms this view:

- *"We assist these children by placing them with people who can take care of them after assessment and the foster care grant helps them to take care of these children. And the social workers monitor and evaluate the placements. In cases where foster parents experience problems with these children, we are always available to help them."*

A supervisor supported this view in the following words:

- *"The placement of orphans is a service that we feel we are making an impact because it is easy to monitor and evaluate."*

The findings indicated that social workers are able to manage the impact of orphanhood in the district. Their views show that they are able to effectively evaluate and monitor foster care programs. This shows a positive input to the developmental approach as they ensure that children are protected, their vulnerability reduced and their rights upheld (Patel, 2005:229).

- **Substance abuse**

Participants indicated that they have a programme that they facilitate to deal with the problem of substance abuse. However, this programme is limited to school going children. Their remarks have not shown any evidence of services intended for the youth that are out of school, as captured in the following comment of one supervisor:

- *"There is a Kimoja programme which is done to remedy the situation and is done in collaboration with other stakeholders like the SAPS and the schools. The main aim is to conscientise the youth who are still at school about substance abuse. However, this programme benefits those that are still at school, but once these youth drop out of school it becomes more difficult to access them."*

While this finding indicates that social workers do make an effort to prevent the onset of substance abuse among school going children, this is clearly inadequate in view of the extent of this social problem in the district as earlier discussed.

- **Violence against women and children**

Findings indicated that the primary measure the social workers use to deal with violence against women and children is through family integration, preservation and strengthening. In their view, statutory removal of children from their biological family to places of safety is the last option. This means that their priority is helping the vulnerable in their environmental context which is a strong indication of

developmental social work, as the approach emphasises that people should be helped in the context of their environment (Potgieter, 1998:65).

The following comments of social workers confirm this service focus:
- *"Developmental social welfare demands that we focus on family integration and preservation. We only remove children once we are out of options. We strive to keep families intact and help family members to cope with challenges."*
- *"With foreigners it is not easy to facilitate a helping process, because they don't stay in one place. So when we get reports of child abandonment and fail to trace the parents, we put the child in a place of safety."*

This finding showed that there is an attempt to build the resilience of families which shows a holistic approach and a shift from micro level intervention, which is pivotal in developmental social welfare service delivery (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006:217; Potgieter, 1998: 65).

- **Problems with access to identification documentation**
  Findings indicated that problems with access to identification documentation can be attributed to some beneficiaries who lack the proper family support to assist them in obtaining these documents.

The following comment of one social work participant reveals their frustration about their inability to deal with this problem:
- *"We don't know how to assist these people.*"

In their remarks, social workers did not indicate any available intervention to deal with this problem. However, in the context of the developmental approach, problems like this give social workers an opportunity to stand up for the rights of these people. As Ife (2001:147) argues, social workers are human rights workers

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and should challenge any structure that oppresses people and denies people basic human rights (Dominelli, 2002:36).

Findings showed that despite the social services that social workers render to address these social problems, little impact is made on these problems, especially on poverty and unemployment which is central to the developmental approach (Gray, 2006:S53).

3.4.2.3   Theme 3: Social workers and supervisors' level of competence in delivering developmental social welfare services

Findings indicated that though social workers say they understand the developmental approach, in their view they are not competent to deliver developmental social welfare services. They indicated that the developmental approach has been thrown at them while they are not capacitated and the Department of Social Development is not yet prepared for its implementation. This confirms the argument of Gray (2006:S60) that South Africa has adopted the developmental approach without a comprehensive institutional framework. This has frustrated both social workers and supervisors who are supposed to implement the approach at the grassroots level. The sub-themes which emerged from this theme are high caseloads, lack of proper supervision and lack of training.

Sub-theme 3.1: High caseloads

Participants in two sub-districts indicated that they are not able to deliver effective developmental social welfare services due to high caseloads. The view of one supervisor aptly captures the views of the social workers in these two sub-districts:

- *"Though social workers are aware and understand (the) developmental approach, I don't think they are implementing it due to huge caseloads they are having, different focus areas and the extra tasks they are given. I don't say they totally don't implement it but they have lot of cases."*

However, this was not found to be the case in the other two sub-districts. Participants contradicted the above view which is reflected in the statement of one social worker:

- *"We no longer have the huge caseloads like we used to have in the past. To be honest the department tries its best to employ new social workers. Human resource[s] is no longer a problem, but other resources (e.g. like paper, cars, etc.) are a serious problem."*

The findings indicate contradicting views with regard to what enables social workers to do, or disables them from doing developmental social work. These include high caseloads, the number of social workers and resources. However, the research findings indicate that more social workers did not mean more progress, as all participants indicated that the progress in their respective districts was slow. What features in the contradicting views of participants though, is the underpinning assumption that high caseloads cannot be cited as a reason for the slow progress of developmental social welfare service delivery, as confirmed by Lombard and Kleijn (2006:224) who state that "the excuse of high caseloads cannot be condoned".

Sub-theme 3.2: Lack of proper supervision

Findings revealed that the lack of proper supervision contributes to social workers' lack of competence in delivering developmental social welfare services. This sub-theme has emerged in all discussions. Social workers indicated that they are not being supervised in a manner that helps them to deliver developmental social welfare services effectively. However, in their comments they do not blame their supervisors either as they indicated that supervisors are also frustrated because they do not know what really needs to be done. Another factor is the high number of social workers that supervisors have to supervise. As a result of not receiving guidance, social workers are of the opinion they are not competent to deliver developmental social welfare services. Their views on the lack of supervision and guidance are captured in the voice of one participant:

- *"I don`t feel competent and cannot blame my supervisor, because it is not practical for her to do so. Now more than this, they expect me to supervise other junior social workers. How am I supposed to do that when I myself still need guidance?"*

Supervisors were of the opinion that they are not competent and are challenged when they are supposed to assist social workers who may be more knowledgeable in the developmental approach than they are. The following responses reflect their views:

- *"As a supervisor I do not feel that I am equipped to provide guidance to social workers in rendering developmental social welfare service delivery. I don't think we are doing this approach justice."*

- *"I don't feel competent; I still supervise as I did in the past. I also feel I need supervision, but there is no one to do that."*

- *"Supervision has never been done effectively. The huge number of social workers to supervise makes it impossible for me to do proper supervision. Even though the government has put social workers who are on level eight to help with supervision, they are not trained to do supervision, they are not compensated and they are still expected to do production work, so it is nearly difficult to do supervision. It is nearly impossible for them to do supervision. And some of them are not even supervision material."*

- *"We have never done a proper supervision, but recently the department has come up with a supervision framework which is going to be implemented in April [2013] which may help us. At this stage we cannot say we are equipped."*

The findings clearly showed that there is no proper supervision in the district. Even in sub-districts where supervisors have a small number of social workers to supervise, their comments indicate that it is not done effectively which implies that social welfare service delivery is in a way compromised. This is highly detrimental to the rendering of services to beneficiaries, as supervision is critical to the quality of services delivered (Mboniswa, 2007:17). There is hope though that the new supervision framework instituted in April 2013 will change the way supervision in developmental social welfare service delivery is done.

Sub-theme 3.3: Lack of training
All social workers and supervisors indicated that they are not trained enough to enable them to deliver developmental social welfare services optimally. They indicated that they

do get training, but complained that it is not intensive and does not involve all social workers. They want the Department of Social Development to train all social workers in the developmental approach to enable them to be more competent in delivering developmental social welfare services.

Social workers' views are succinctly captured in the words of one participant:
- *"We know that the Department don't have money to train all of us. I think they must come up with the programme where we can all be trained. This thing of train the trainer does not work because when they come back, it will depend on them whether they can incorporate in their programme, time to train other social workers."*

Participants were concerned about the way management selects people for training. Their concerns are reflected in the following comment of a social worker:
- *"The way people are selected for training in workshops is highly questionable. You find that the same people are the ones always chosen to attend workshops, and when they return they don't even share the information with those who have not attended. So how will we be informed about what is taking place and how are you going to be effective when rendering service."*

Another social worker supported this view:
- *"Sometimes you question the criteria used to select people for training. You find that every time there is training it is being attended by the same people. We all want to have an opportunity to attend these trainings."*

However, participants did not regard training as the sole responsibility of the Department. They are of the view that they are also responsible to capacitate themselves in the approach and other new developments, as two social workers put it:
- *"As social workers we are also responsible to improve our knowledge base. The council [SACSSP] offers us the opportunity to attend different courses to capacitate us in developmental social services delivery, but we are not interested*

in attending such trainings, so how can we be competent if we are not knowledgeable?"

- *"Sometimes we are to blame for the lack of capacity on our part. If you do not attend trainings like that then you won`t be relevant. Things are changing fast, so we must also improve ourselves."*

The comments, as articulated by the participants, gave an indication that there is insufficient on-the-job training which compromise quality service delivery and delay the progress of implementing the developmental approach. Training is essential for effective job performance (Mboniswa, 2007:24). Findings indicate that social work participants question the 'train the trainer' method that the district management is using, as they think it does not really improve their capacity in delivering developmental social services. However, they acknowledge their responsibility to get training as it cannot be solely left to the Department.

In summary, both social workers and supervisors agreed that insufficient training and proper supervision contribute to their poor competence and delay the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery. Social workers furthermore indicated that if they are trained, they will be in a better position to deliver developmental social welfare services. Supervisors are of the opinion that they will be able to support and guide social workers in delivering developmental social welfare services if they are trained in guiding developmental social welfare service delivery. The role that high caseloads play in delaying or progressing developmental social work remains vague and important for further debate, in view of the contradicting comments and lack of evidence in practice.

3.4.2.4 Theme 4: Challenges experienced by social workers and supervisors in developmental social welfare service delivery

Findings showed several challenges social workers and supervisors' experience, which in their opinion is hindering the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery in the district. Two sub-themes emerged from this theme, namely lack of resources and working conditions.

Sub-theme 4.1: Lack of resources

All participants lamented over the lack of resources generally, which makes social welfare service delivery difficult and hinders their attempts to shift towards developmental social welfare service delivery. The general lack of resources and the frustration it causes has been a dominant theme in all discussions in all sub-districts.

The lack of resources, which will be discussed next, includes two categories namely, office accommodation and other infrastructure; transport and resources important for operational purposes like stationary and printers.

- **Lack of office accommodation and other infrastructure**

  Participants indicated that they don't have office accommodation for social workers. Social workers have no counselling rooms and in other cases two or three social workers share office space.

  Supervisors commented at length with regard to the lack of office space:
  - *"There is no proper office accommodation for social workers. Some of offices are really uninhabitable as you can see. They are small, hot and full of files. And we are not allowed to remove these files, so this makes our offices to be cluttered. On top of that there we are sharing offices. Sometimes it is difficult to ask other social workers to leave the office when interviewing clients and that lead to the breach of the confidentiality of clients. In some cases to honour the client's right of confidentiality other social workers will go out of the offices while another is busy with the client. The question of where will they be sitting, is seriously controversial."*
  - *"How would you feel if you are my client and there are other three social workers who are listening to you as you relate your case? So we are not doing justice to our clients. Sometimes you will find that the client is in the office and there are other clients who are queuing next to the office and they will hear*

everything that the client is saying, where is the right of the client to confidentiality?"

- *"There are cases where the social workers are accommodated in other departments' offices. When those departments have a need for an office space they will tell the social workers to evacuate."*

In support of the view of supervisors, one social worker explained as follows:

- *"In some service points there are no toilets and no water. When you go to work you must make sure that you have water in your bottles and are in good terms with neighbours, otherwise you will be in trouble. If we decide not to go it means clients will have no services."*

From the words of participants, it was clear the lack of office accommodation and other infrastructure like toilets is having a negative impact on service delivery. The researcher observed instances where social workers were squashed into very small offices that are hot and in her opinion having to work in such an environment is a huge challenge. This environment is evident of oppressive social work practice, both directed at social workers and service users (Dominelli, 2002:8). The crises of a lack of infrastructure and office space have been confirmed by research by Alpaslan and Schenck (2012:407) among rural social workers in particular. Findings also clearly indicate the abuse of users' right to privacy and a violation of social work ethics and values in this regard (International Federation for Social Workers (IFSW), 2014:1).

- **Lack of transport**

Participants articulated that general lack of transport affects social welfare service delivery. In some offices seven social workers are supposed to share one or two cars, which make social service delivery almost impossible. In one office 28 social workers are sharing six cars and in another sub-district there is no car available which makes it impossible to do home assessments.

One supervisor voiced her frustration with the lack of transport as follows:

- *"I use my car to do home assessments, because if I don't do that work will not be done. There are reports that cannot be completed, because they need home assessments, so it is really frustrating. These social workers do not have transport and as a supervisor I cannot expect them to use public transport to do home assessments, it is unethical."*

The following social worker's view reflected the frustration of the social workers:

- *"They do not even allow us to use the state vehicles. There is a lot of red tape attached for one to use the vehicles. I must go to the district to be tested even if I do have a licence. You have to book beforehand and sometimes you won't even get a testing date."*

However, the findings indicate that social workers are not just accepting the status quo. In one office they have formulated a working plan in order to take service delivery to their clients:

- *"We have a working plan of how we are doing home assessments. This day is for this social worker to do home assessment. But it becomes difficult when we have to go to district office to submit reports, because it will mean the plan for that day is totally disarrayed."*

Rendering social services is clearly a challenge due to a lack of transport. Social workers who devise plans to access their clients show their commitment to deliver social services and to not be passive onlookers to their disabling working environment. Developmental social work is practiced on micro, mezzo and macro levels (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006:217; Patel, 2005:259). If social workers are confined to their offices due to lack of resources like transport, the implication is that they will be practising only on the micro level which is a remedial form of practice (Patel, 2005:24). Accessibility to social services implies both the ability of clients to access social services and the ability of social workers to take services to their clients.

Therefore the lack of infrastructure such as office space and access to cars is an indicator that the Department is contributing to the lack of progress in developmental social welfare, as accessing these resources will enable social workers to render better social services to their beneficiaries (Department of Social Development, 2004:6). This may bring into question the leadership and commitment of the Department of Social Development, especially in rural areas, in the transition to developmental social welfare (cf. Gray, 2006:S54; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:203; De Jager, 2005:82).

- **Operational resources**

  The lack of resources, such as paper, telephones and computers, disturbs social work service delivery on an administrative level which is a critical part of social workers' work.

  The following comment described social workers' situation regarding the lack of operational resources:
  - *"We sometimes have no photocopying paper to print reports. And the bare minimum we have must be used efficiently. Sometimes there are not even envelopes for letters. One envelope will be circulating throughout the office."*

  One supervisor gave an elaborated view on the lack of operational resources:
  - *"Sometimes we have to go to local supermarket to buy photocopying paper to print reports. If the reports are needed, you cannot sit and say there is no printing paper for reports. It is really draining. In some offices there are no telephone lines. Supervisors are going to public phones to make official calls. When you report lack of telephone lines to the Department, they respond by saying they cannot install telephone lines in offices that are not theirs."*

  The following comments of four social workers supported the view of the supervisor:

- *"In this office we don't have a proper working computer. We were only having two computers. And the one is broken we are using only one which is not in the best condition."*
- *"We don't have printers. So we travel about 20 kilos just to print a document. The only thing you will never lack is the petrol. With that you can go anywhere we never run short of it."*
- *"It seems the district is not worried about the petrol that we use in order to access these facilities. Because if I have to travel every week to print documents how much petrol am I using."*
- *"As social workers servicing the rural areas we are the ones who must have resources. The poorest of the poor are in rural areas and resources should target those people who were previously disadvantaged."*

The chronic lack of operational resources is detrimental to social welfare service delivery. Resources like telephones and computers are critical for internet access which can assist in enhancing social welfare service delivery. In addition report writing and administrative work are fundamental to professional social work on all practice levels. In such an environment the work of social workers becomes difficult.

Sub-theme 4.2: Poor working conditions

Participants have articulated that their working conditions are poor. Though poor working conditions do not directly affect social welfare service delivery, it leads to low morale among social workers which indirectly compromises service delivery (Schenck, 2002: 165). This contributes to a low level of motivation (Schenck, 2002:165) which the researcher has observed amongst participants when conducting this study. Participants have indicated the issues related to their working conditions as challenges in developmental social welfare service delivery which will discussed as categories of this sub-theme.

- **Targets**

Participants indicated that the Department of Social Development is working with a system of targets in which every social worker is required to have a certain number of cases and programs in a month, as a way of ensuring productivity in their jobs. Participants lamented over the fact that if they don't reach their targets, it may give the impression that they are not doing their jobs. This makes social workers concentrate on micro level interventions without any opportunity to move towards macro level intervention, which is an important feature in developmental social welfare service delivery (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195).

The responses quoted below reflect the social workers' views on the issue of targets:

- *"We understand that in developmental social welfare there are intervention levels when delivering social services, so how are you going to follow all those levels when you are supposed to meet the targets? If you don't meet the targets the managers say you are not doing your job."*
- *"The issue of focusing on numbers when you are helping clients is not working. It makes us not to be fulfilled, because we know we are not doing quality work. We are not helping ourselves and our clients either."*

The comments of participants show their dissatisfaction and unhappiness on the issue of targets. Though it may help the Department to manage the work of social workers, quantitative numbers cannot be an indication of productivity and do not necessarily mean quality work, as shown in their opinions. In the view of the Draft Report on Norms and Standards for Social Welfare Services (Department of Social Development, 2012b:10), social workers should provide quality services which ensure optimal client satisfaction. The Draft emphasises that social welfare service delivery must emphasise developmental, preventative and restorative social service.

- **Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) and incentives**

Though this is a purely labour issue, the way it has surfaced in research findings indicate that some participants are unhappy about it. Although this is indirectly related to service delivery, the observation of the researcher is that it kills social workers' motivation, which is a vital component of effective service delivery. They are of the opinion that they are not paid well and also denied the benefits social workers are entitled to.

Social workers further complained about the failure of the OSD to improve their salaries. In their view, the OSD was meant to improve their salaries, but they are not seeing the improvement they were hoping for. Participants are of the opinion that instead of improving their salaries, the OSD disadvantages them. In addition to the failure of the OSD to meet their expectations, they also complained about the failure of the Department to pay the incentives that are due to them.

Their frustrations about the OSD and the non-payment of incentives are captured in the following responses of social workers:

- *"The whole OSD needs to be revisited, because it is not working. Presently it means I will work for 10 years on one level before I move to the next level and also depending on the availability of posts. Then if I have to work for 10 years just to proceed from one level to another then my economic conditions will not improve. This is frustrating us more and more."*
- *"We feel we are not properly compensated for the work we are doing. There are agreements that have been concluded, but the implementation of those agreements is difficult."*
- *"Our department have a difficulty of implementation. There are many agreements and policies (on improvement of salaries and incentives) that are just there (and) are not implemented."*
- *"We have been promised rural and danger allowances but have not yet received those allowances."*

- *"There is a case of a social worker who has since left the profession, because the husband of her client came to her office and shot and killed the client in front of her. She escaped through the window. On the other hand we don't feel safe and we are not even compensated for cases like this."*

These remarks highlight what has been a historical problem in the social welfare sector, namely inadequate salaries (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:409). Social workers are generally paid lower salaries than other professionals. The complaints about the OSD and non-payment of incentives have to be seen in the context of this study, which almost exclusively includes social workers from the government. This situation is even worse in the non-governmental sector, as a huge disparity exists between the salaries of social workers in the government sector and the NGOs (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006:225; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:208).

- **Administrative problems**

  Findings indicated that paperwork has become the norm for social work. Participants indicated that there is a lot of paperwork that social workers and supervisors are doing, which they find difficult to handle. Participants showed that social workers are required to report on everything they do in their offices. On top of that there are reports on clients' cases and programmes, assessment reports and reports for courts.

  One supervisor articulated the demand put on them for administration work in the following words:
  - *"We have turned to be administrators instead of doing actual social work practice. There are continuously reports to be submitted with immediate deadlines which make our work really difficult. There is no time to do the social work practice as it is done, but spend much time meeting administrative demands. As a social worker you get fulfilled when you see the growth of clients, but there is no time for that. There are always bureaucratic demands that need to be met."*

This view is supported by social workers as reflected in the voice of one participant:

- *"There are always administrative demands with immediate deadlines. If there are documents that need to be submitted, then the office is closed. Then when clients come, they will find no social worker in the office. They will have to go home without help and come back another day. And you must not forget that our clients are sometimes so poor that they will have to borrow money to access the social worker's office. And if they borrow money and find the office not working then they will have to borrow money again to come to the office."*

This finding showed that doing actual social work is quite difficult in an environment where paperwork has become the main responsibility of social workers. This corroborates the findings of De Jager (2005:73) which indicate that social workers are required to compile long, repetitive and time consuming reports. The challenge is the provision of an enabling environment, which is important for developmental social service delivery as argued by Lombard and Kleijn (2006:214).

- **Lack of open communication**

  Both supervisors and social workers emphasised that there is a lack of open communication between the managers and social workers at the grassroots level, which affects service delivery. In their views there are always last minute demands of submissions and meetings that make it difficult for them to plan their day-to-day activities.

  Their views are captured in the following comments:
  - *"You will be busy with a case and then receive a phone call which says such a report is needed in the district office. So it means you must to stop what you are doing and start to compile a report."*
  - *"It becomes difficult to plan our activities."*

This finding showed that lack of open communication makes social workers work in a haphazard manner. In their opinion this affects service delivery as they sometimes have to attend to urgent meetings at the district office. Because these meetings are on short notice in most cases, they cannot arrange for someone to assist users while they are out of office.

- **Bureaucratic issues**

Findings indicated the bureaucratic problems that characterise the Department of Social Development. There is a lot of red tape involved in the paperwork. In addition they indicated that it takes a long time to get tasks done, because documents have to move from one office to another, which implies an environment where service delivery cannot progress.

This is reflected in the view of one social work participant:

- *"Things take long to be done. A report will move from one office to the other and it may take you six months to get one thing to be done."*

The comments by the participants show challenges related to their work environment. In their opinion the Department is not supporting them and their attempts in developmental social welfare service delivery are unsuccessful.

The frustration which government social workers experience is the reason why the NGO participant indicated that she would rather continue working in the NGO despite salary disparities:

- *"Though I may get double my salary in the government sector I think I am happy here. I don't think I will be able to deal with the frustration the departmental social workers are facing. It is surprising, because when we need help and funds they gladly help us. We have a wonderful working relationship. But the conditions that the departmental social workers are working under are unpleasant."*

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In conclusion of this theme on challenges hindering the progress of developmental social welfare, findings indicated that better working conditions will enhance service delivery. This concurs with what Lombard (2005:225) stated, namely that an enabling environment is required for an effective transition towards developmental social work. An interesting pattern was observed between the social worker from the NGO as opposed to the governmental social workers with regard to their working conditions. However, this does not mean that social workers in the NGOs are satisfied with their working conditions, but rather that the working environment is more enabling. This view correlates with findings of (cf. De Jager, 2005; Green 2008; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008) of studies that were done in the working conditions in NGOs.

3.4.2.5   Theme 5: Progress and strategies to fast track the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery

Findings show that though social workers are trying to shift towards developmental social service delivery progress has been slow in relation to the number of years since the approach was adopted.

The following comments reflect the views participants' views on the progress of developmental social work:

- *"We are trying to implement the approach, but we cannot say it is fully implemented."*
- *"Though we try to shift towards developmental approach the progress is too slow. There is much that still needs to be done."*
- *"Some of us are still trying to understand it so we haven't done much to shift towards developmental approach."*
- *"We are still challenged, because as service providers we are still struggling to grasp it fully."*
- *"The progress is slow and challenges hindering the progress are big. We feel we are not progressing well in this approach. More still needs to be done to speed up the progress."*

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Participants indicated progress can be accelerated through improved budget allocation for social services and open dialogue which will be discussed in two categories.

- **Budget allocation for social services**

Participants indicated that allocation of budget to sub-district offices will enhance social service delivery.

The following comment of one supervisor captures participants' views in this regard:
- *"As a supervisor I feel that that the department must allocate budget to our offices to enable us to manage the office or else they shift the supply to the municipality, because presently everything is supplied from the district."*

- **Open dialogue**

Participants were of the opinion that open dialogue between social workers and management could inform management of the real situation in social service delivery at the grassroots level.

The following responses reflect the views of social workers in this regard:
- *"There must be forums where all stakeholders are involved, because there are lot of challenges that need to be addressed. So if we are given the opportunity to participate in those forums then we can speak about these challenges in a way that affect us."*
- *"The management must talk to us so that we raise some of the concerns we are having when we render developmental social services delivery."*

Open discussion is seen as instrumental to address the challenges that social workers face and to fast track developmental social service delivery in the district. Open discussion forums will create an opportunity for their voices to be heard and give the managers firsthand experience of the situation at the grassroots level. Patel and Hochfeld

(2008:208) concur on the importance of open dialogue between the Department of Social Development and organisations for effective social service delivery.

3.5 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings from this study indicate that social workers are attempting to shift social service delivery to the developmental approach in terms of rendering protective services to orphaned and vulnerable children. They are able to manage, evaluate and monitor placement programmes. These children are mostly placed with members of the extended family, which is a strong indication of the developmental approach as it advocates the rendering of social services within the environment of beneficiaries (Potgieter, 1998:64; Patel, 2005:229). The removal of children to places of safety is done once all other options have been exhausted.

Social workers indicated that family services include family integration, preservation and strengthening. This is evidence of developmental social work as service delivery in this paradigm is intended to prevent problems before their onset by improving the social functioning of beneficiaries through empowerment programmes (Midgley, 2010b:13, Potgieter, 1998:75). By focusing on preventative programmes they ensure that families are resilient and children are given an opportunity to grow in a safe and protective environment.

Social programmes rendered are usually done in the context of the family and community, which relates to practice from a developmental approach. Programs like *Kimoja* are run in schools, which is a familiar environment for children. Secondly, orphaned children are placed within the family in the majority of cases. Within the context of developmental social work, beneficiaries should be served and integrated to live productive and fulfilling lives in the family and the community (Midgley, 2010b:22; Patel, 2005:225).

However, though positive shifts have been noted there are still areas that are lagging behind. Social workers are still struggling to understand what the approach is all about. They all have a different understanding of the developmental approach and therefore there is no agreement on what should actually happen in the district. Lombard (2007:299) states that without knowledge of what the developmental approach entails, the 'how' will be difficult to implement.

The findings show that social workers are confused, as they think they have to abandon traditional approaches. This explains why high caseloads and lack of resources are obstacles to them. Midgley (1995), as cited in Lombard (2008a:159), clarifies this as follows: "[the] developmental approach does not negate other approaches or minimise their efforts." This misunderstanding has put social workers in this district in a vacuum and delayed the progress of developmental social welfare.

Though a number of social problems have been identified as challenges to the social welfare sector in the district, poverty and unemployment are ongoing social issues that continue to keep the people of the district trapped. The integration of social and economic development in social work interventions is still lagging. Social workers have indicated that though they facilitate the establishment of income generating projects, these projects are not sustainable and cannot generate funds on their own. The challenge of poverty reduction and creation of sustainable livelihoods still remains a high priority in the district.

The findings indicate that the social workers do not have the capacity to confront the structural poverty and unemployment in the district. This confirms Midgley's (2010a:167) argument that social work should be extensively involved in promoting community based economic development to raise the standard of living of poor people.

Findings have shown that there is no effective social work supervision in the district which has a huge influence on developmental social work. In addition, on-the-job training is also insufficient. This however, within the context of developmental social work, can also be attributed to a lack of competency among both supervisors and social workers. In any

work environment on-the-job training and proper supervision are crucial for maximum job performance (Mboniswa, 2007:24).

In summary, developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district has progressed in terms of protective services to families and children, but in terms of poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods the social service sector still lags behind.

CHAPTER 4
KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The developmental approach was adopted in the welfare sector with a "vision to promote a welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self-reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment as directed by the White Paper for Social Welfare" (RSA, 1997a:2).

The research question which guided the study was as follows:

- *What progress has been made in shifting social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach in the Vhembe district in Limpopo?*

This chapter exposes how the objectives and thus the goal of the study were achieved. The key findings of the study are presented and conclusions are drawn. Finally, recommendations are made on how service delivery can be fast tracked in the district.

4.2 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study was to determine the progress of social welfare service delivery towards a developmental social welfare approach in the Vhembe district, Limpopo. The goal has been achieved through the following objectives:

Objective 1

- To conceptualise developmental social welfare services delivery within a rural development context.

The theoretical framework of developmental social welfare and the rural context for which developmental social welfare service delivery is intended was discussed at length in Chapter 2, in particular section 2.2.1. It was concluded that the rural development context

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is characterised by a lack of resources and infrastructure, and therefore accessibility to social services remains a challenge. There is also widespread poverty, inequality and unemployment. It has been argued that developmental social welfare service delivery should target poverty by giving the rural people an opportunity to actively participate in their social and economic development. In addition it should reverse the historical urban divide by ensuring that people residing in rural areas get the same services and resources as their urban counterparts.

Objective 2

- To explore the extent of the shift towards a developmental approach in accordance with the underlying principles and key themes of developmental social welfare.

The key principles and themes of developmental social welfare have been discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.3.2. This objective was addressed in the empirical study as reported in Chapter 3, sub-section 3.4.2 and theme 5. It was indicated that though the social welfare sector is trying to shift towards the developmental approach, the approach is not yet fully implemented, especially with regard to poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods which are fundamental to this approach. The reasons for the difficulty to shift towards developmental social welfare service delivery include social workers and supervisors' lack of competence in developmental social welfare; poor supervision; insufficient training and poor working conditions.

Objective 3

- To identify challenges in the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery.

The objective was achieved in the literature study in Chapter 2, section 2.5 and the empirical findings in Chapter 3, sub-section 3.4.2 and theme 4. The challenges that hinder the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery in the district included a lack of understanding of what developmental social welfare is; a lack of clear

leadership and commitment from management towards the developmental approach; a lack of resources and infrastructure; and poor working conditions.

Objective 4

- To propose strategies that will help to speed up developmental social welfare service delivery in the Vhembe district.

The objective was addressed from a literature perspective in Chapter 2, section 2.5 and in the empirical findings in Chapter 3, sub-section 3.4.2 and theme 5. These findings informed the strategies that are proposed in this chapter in section 4.4.

4.3 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This section presents the key findings of the study from which conclusions are drawn:

- Findings indicate that participants understand that the developmental approach implies a shift from remedial based approaches to strength based and empowerment approaches. However findings show there is a lack of clear understanding of what developmental social welfare is which has created confusion and left the participants uncertain about what should be done.

  It can be concluded that the participants do not really understand what the developmental approach entails; they are not conversant with the key themes and principles that should guide the implementation of this approach. As such they do not have a sufficient knowledge base to implement the approach and thus challenge the key problem of poverty. Furthermore, limited understanding of the developmental approach implies that social welfare service delivery still struggles to shift emphasis from remedial and pathological to developmental approaches. This then correlates with Hölscher's (2008:115) argument that "...despite South Africa's commitment to the developmental approach, residual conceptions remain entrenched".

- Poverty and unemployment emerged as key social problems that continue to put the people of the Vhembe district at a disadvantage. Though social workers facilitate income generating projects, they are generally not successful in that regard.

  The researcher concludes that there is a lack of involvement among social workers in reducing poverty and unemployment by facilitating sustainable livelihoods, integrating social and economic development and social entrepreneurship. These aspects are pivotal in the developmental approach.

- Findings indicate that in addition to poverty and unemployment there are other social problems which are common in poor communities. These include HIV/Aids; orphanhood; substance abuse; violence against women and children and problems with access to identification documents. Furthermore, findings have revealed that different social services are rendered to alleviate the impact of these social problems on people. However, in the opinion of participants, the only social problem that is effectively dealt with, monitored and evaluated is prevention and protection services for orphaned and vulnerable children.

  From this finding it can be concluded that developmental social welfare service interventions, which are intended to reduce the impact of other social problems, are insufficient and minimal in making an impact on poverty. Although social workers are heralding their efforts in the placement of orphaned and vulnerable children, the indication here is that the strong emphasis on these programmes contributes to the neglect of integrated social and economic programmes.

- Findings indicate that shifting to a developmental approach is hindered by the requirement of the Department of Social Development to focus on quantitative as opposed to qualitative outputs. The unrealistic administrative demands and

statistical targets to measure performance take up most of social workers' time and hinder their efforts to render developmental social welfare services.

From this finding the researcher concludes that the district management's focus on quantitative numbers and not quality to measure social workers' performance is contradictory to the intentions of developmental social work. In developmental social work the impact goes far beyond simple quantitative indices of activity and achievements (Noyoo, 2005: 232).

- Findings indicate that social workers do render preventative and protective services by focusing more on family preservation and strengthening in order to ensure that children are brought up in a safe and protected environment. However, there is no evidence of tangible developmental social welfare service delivery to other groups of service users.

It can be concluded that though this is a positive indication of developmental social service delivery which helps to reduce risk in families and children, it is not sufficient to claim a shift to a developmental approach. In addition vulnerable groups like the youth that are out of school; women; refugees; the disabled and the elderly are not targeted for developmental social welfare services.
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- Findings indicate that supervisors fail to guide social workers in developmental social work because they are not sufficiently conversant with the approach. This contributed to the inability of social workers to render effective developmental social welfare services.

It therefore can be concluded that supervisors and managers seem to be unfamiliar with the role and importance of supervision in developmental social welfare service delivery. In addition, the new supervision framework of the Department of Social Development should already have been implemented and monitored.

- Findings indicate that high caseloads disable the social workers' efforts to shift to developmental social welfare service delivery. However, this was found to be the case in two sub-districts only.

  The researcher concludes that high caseloads cannot be cited as a valid reason for lack of progress in developmental social work as slow progress was evident in the whole district (compare 3.4.2, sub-theme 3.1). This correlates with Lombard and Kleijn's (2006:224) argument that high caseloads are not an acceptable excuse for not shifting to a developmental approach in social welfare service delivery.

- Findings reveal how the chronic lack of resources and infrastructure and poor working conditions are real obstacles that hinder social workers' attempts to shift towards developmental social welfare service delivery. This includes failure of social workers to do community interventions, due to lack of transport.

  This concludes that accessibility to social welfare service delivery is still a challenge as this implicates that social services are concentrated on micro level and not on macro level, which is important in developmental social service delivery. Furthermore, these obstacles continue to disadvantage rural clients and social workers servicing these clients and contradict the intentions of the White Paper for Social Welfare which is to address past disparities (RSA, 1997a:2). This shows that the historical rural urban divide in terms of allocation of resources continues to be entrenched in post-democratic South Africa.

- The overall finding indicates that the progress of social welfare service delivery towards the developmental approach is slow and unsatisfactory.

  The overall conclusion that the researcher comes to is that too little has been done in this district to shift social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach.

Social problems are not effectively dealt with. Poverty, inequality and unemployment are still entrenched. There are still challenges in aligning social welfare service delivery with some of the key themes and principles of developmental social work which are supposed to guide social welfare service delivery. Hence the challenge of incorporating the themes of developmental social work, namely social and economic development, partnerships, participation in development process, capacity building and empowerment, still remains.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the researcher presents the recommendations in three categories, namely:

➢ strategies that social workers could use to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery;

➢ strategies suggested for supervisors to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery, and

➢ strategies on the creation of an enabling environment to accelerate developmental social welfare service delivery.

The strategies are based on findings derived from both literature and the empirical study.

4.4.1 Strategies social workers could use to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery

The researcher suggests the following strategies for social workers to speed up the shift to developmental social service delivery in the district:

- **A change of attitude and mindset among social workers**
  Social workers should see themselves as active role players in social development and take the responsibility for speedy social welfare service delivery, especially in poverty reduction and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Social workers cannot continue to focus on the "common notion of mobilising poor people and promoting

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participation and hope that poor people will get out of poverty" (Midgley, 2010a:164).

- **Addressing structural oppression and disadvantage**

  Problems like poverty, inequality and unemployment result from structural oppression, marginalisation and exclusion. Therefore social workers must address these problems through social investment strategies such as social entrepreneurship and community economic development. In addition, social workers should get to the root causes of problems that service users are experiencing and challenge existing oppressive practices (Adams, 2002; Dominelli, 2002:8; Gray & Webb, 2009:77).

- **Orientation with existing policies and procedures**

  Social workers should enhance their services towards their users through being informed on existing policies, procedures and service specifications that guide the implementation of developmental social welfare services. In addition they should engage in continuous revision of existing policies and contribute to policy formulation to fill possible gaps.

- **Continuous professional development**

  Social problems are evolving as society changes, resulting in continuous changes of clients' needs. This demands that social workers remain updated on relevant strategies and theoretical frameworks to respond to these demands. Social workers must build their capacity in implementing developmental social welfare services through continuous professional development (CPD), including own reading and studying.

4.4.2. Strategies suggested for supervisors to promote progress in developmental social welfare service delivery

The researcher suggests the following strategies for supervisors to facilitate progress in developmental social welfare services:

- **Supervision**

  Supervisors should ensure that developmental social work forms an integral part of supervision and in-service training. They should familiarise themselves with it, implement the newly instituted supervision framework of the Department of Social Development, and ensure that supervision sessions are adhered to. This involves the educative, administrative and supportive functions of supervision (Mboniswa, 2007:34).

- **Capacity building**

  The issue of capacity building cannot be solely the responsibility of the Department of Social Development. There are in-service workshops and postgraduate studies intended to improve the knowledge base of supervisors and social workers. Supervisors should attend such workshops and engage in further studies in order to build their capacity to assist social workers in building their capacity and confidence in developmental social work.

4.4.3 Strategies on the creation of an enabling environment to accelerate developmental social welfare service delivery

The Department of Social Development management should create an enabling environment where social workers will be in a position to deliver developmental social services effectively. The researcher recommends the following strategies to be effected by the Department of Social Development to create an enabling environment:

- Provide political leadership and commitment in lobbying for improved infrastructure, allocation of resources like cars and budget for social welfare services. This will help to fast track the shift of social welfare service delivery to a developmental approach and enable the social workers to bridge micro to macro practice.

- Provide opportunities and demand that social workers who are already in practice be trained intensively in developmental social welfare and be taught how to render developmental social services.

- Formulate a stronger working relationship with institutions of higher learning so that newly qualified social workers are in a position to challenge poverty and inequality that is widespread in the communities they will have to service.

- Provide electronic equipment like computers and internet to social workers. Managers should then encourage social workers and supervisors to use e-mails and scanners for submission of reports. This will help cut costs and save time, and social workers will have more time for developmental social welfare service delivery.

- Allocate budgets to sub-district offices to enable them to procure their operational resources, such as stationary, which will enhance developmental social welfare service delivery.

- Create opportunities for dialogue between social workers at the grassroots level and management through social work forums where the focus will be on orientating one another on creating conditions conducive for progress in developmental social welfare service delivery.

- Limit and divert the amount of administrative work to social auxiliary workers to give social workers more time to render developmental social welfare services to beneficiaries.

- Improve the working conditions of social workers by improving their salaries and incentives like danger and rural allowances, which will boost their morale and motivate them to focus on developmental social welfare service delivery.

- Ensure that supervisors are familiarised with and implement the supervision framework of the Department, and that supervision sessions focus on the educative, administrative and supportive functions which will capacitate social workers to render developmental social welfare services.

- Fast track the implementation of policies such as generic norms and standards for social welfare services and social welfare service frameworks, which are meant to guide efficient developmental social welfare service delivery.

- Develop monitoring and evaluation tools to determine the impact of developmental social welfare services on people and the social problems they are experiencing.

- Collaborate with other stakeholders like the Department of Rural Development, faith based organisations, community based organisations and non-governmental organisations to promote integrated social and economic development and thus the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

4.4.4   Suggestions for further research

When the recommendations are implemented, the study could be repeated to see the impact on the social development themes and the social change it has effected in the district. A pilot project could be implemented and researched to monitor the shift to a developmental approach with a specific target group, such as the youth or the aged.

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APPENDIX A

21/10/2012
Our Ref:
Researcher: Ntjana Ngwanamontjane Eglesia
Tel: 0823866441
E-mail: ntjanap@yahoo.com

INFORMED CONSENT (SOCIAL WORKERS)

1. TITLE OF THE STUDY

The progress of developmental social welfare: A case study of service delivery in the Vhembe district, Limpopo

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine the progress of social welfare service delivery towards a developmental social welfare approach in the Vhembe district, Limpopo.

3. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

I take note that I will be invited to be part of a focus group discussion which will be approximately one hour and that I will be advised of the time and venue of the discussion group.

I understand that the focus group discussion will be audio-taped. The cassettes and transcripts will be kept in a secure place and will be used only for research purposes by the researcher and co-coder. Once the research has been completed, the cassettes and transcripts will be stored at the University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years before it will be destroyed. I take note that the research data and transcripts will not be used by the researcher or any other researcher without my informed consent.

4. RISK AND DISCOMFORTS

I take note that there are no known risks or discomforts associated with the research project.

5. BENEFITS

I understand that there are no direct benefits for me in participating in this study. However, I am aware that social workers and supervisors in Vhembe district and the broader Limpopo can benefit from the results of this study by gaining information and insight on how to improve service delivery within a developmental approach.

6. PARTICIPANT`S RIGHTS

I understand that my participation is voluntary; that I can choose not to participate in any part or the entire study and that I can withdraw my participation at any stage without penalties.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

I understand that all information shared in the focus group is confidential. I agree to my best ability not to disclose any confidential information. I will treat such information with the degree of care that it needs.

I ……………………………............. (participant`s name) understand my right as a participant in this study. I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I fully understand what the study is all about and how and why it is conducted. I understand that there is no compensation involved in my participation. Signing this form does not mean I give up my legal right and I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Participant`s signature: …………………… Date: ……………………………
Researcher`s signature:.......................... Date: ....

APPENDIX B

21/10/2012
Our Ref:

Researcher: Ntjana Ngwanamontjane Eglesia

Tel: 0823866441

E-mail: ntjanap@yahoo.com

INFORMED CONSENT (SUPERVISORS)

1. TITLE OF THE STUDY

The progress of developmental social welfare: A case study of service delivery in the Vhembe district, Limpopo

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine the progress of social welfare service delivery towards a developmental social welfare approach in the Vhembe district, Limpopo.

3. RESEARCH PROCEDURE

I take note that I will be invited to be part of a focus group discussion which will be approximately one hour and that I will be advised of the time and venue of the discussion group.

I understand that the interview will be audio-taped. The cassettes and transcripts will be kept in a secure place and will be used only for research purposes by the researcher and co-coder. Once the research has been completed, the cassettes and transcripts will be stored at the University of Pretoria archives for 15 years before it will be destroyed. I take note that the research data and transcripts will

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not be used by the researcher or any other researcher without my informed consent.

4. RISK AND DISCOMFORTS

I take note that there are no known risks or discomforts associated with the research project.

5. BENEFITS

I understand that there are no direct benefits for me in participating in this study. However, I am aware that social workers and supervisors in Vhembe district and the broader Limpopo can benefit from the results of this study by gaining information and insight on how to improve service delivery within a developmental approach.

6. PARTICIPANT`S RIGHTS

I understand that my participation is voluntary; that I can choose to not participate in any part or the entire study and that I can withdraw my participation at any stage without penalties.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

I understand that all information shared in the interview is confidential and that my identity will not be revealed by the researcher in documenting the research data and writing up of the research findings.

I …………………………....... (participant`s name) understand my right as a participant in this study. I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I fully understand what the study is all about and how and why it is conducted. I understand that there is no compensation involved in my participation. Signing this form does not mean I give up my legal right and I understand that I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Participant`s signature: ……………….………… Date: …………………………

Researcher's signature: …………………………... Date: ………………………….

APPENDIX C

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SOCIAL WORKERS)

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	

2. What is your age group?

24-29	30-35	36-40	41-46	47-52	53+

3. How long have you been practicing as a social worker?

3-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15+ years

4. Indicate the social work methods that are primarily required by your post?

Casework	
Group work	
Community work	

5. What are the main fields of service delivery/target areas of your organisation?

Child and family welfare	
Elderly	
People with disability	
HIV/ Aids	
Substance abuse	
Other, (please specify)	

SECTION B: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What is your understanding of developmental social welfare?

2. How would you describe the services that you render in relation to developmental social welfare?

3. Which social problems are common in the district and how are they influencing the people in the district?
.
4. In what way do you see developmental social welfare making an impact on the social problems in the district?

5. In your view and experience, can you say social service delivery in the district has managed to shift towards a developmental approach ? Explain.

6. What in your opinion are the challenges in delivering developmental social welfare services in the district?

7. What do you think social workers and management should do to accelerate developmental social service delivery in the district?

APPENDIX D

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SUPERVISORS)

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	

2. What is your age group?

24-29	30-35	36-40	41-46	47-52	53+

3. What is the total number of years as a social work supervisor?

3-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15+ years

4. Indicate the number of years as a social work supervisor in Vhembe district

2-5 years	6-9 years	10-13 years	14+ years

5. What is the total number of social workers under your supervision?

    ……………………

6. What are the fields of service delivery/target areas of your organisation?

Child and family welfare	
Elderly	
People with disability	
HIV/ AIDS	
Substance abuse	
Other: (Please specify)	

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your understanding of developmental social welfare?

2. In your view, to what extent do social workers under your supervision understand and deliver developmental social services?

3. Which social problems are common in the district and to what extent are they addressed through social service delivery?

4. As a supervisor do you feel equipped to provide guidance to social workers in implementing developmental social welfare?

5. What is your understanding of the challenges that social workers experience in delivering developmental social services?

6. How are social workers assisted to shift their service delivery towards developmental social welfare?

7. What do you think should be done to fast track the implementation of development social welfare services in the district?

Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Deputy Dean

6 December 2012

Dear Prof Lombard

Project:	**The progress of developmental social welfare: a case study in the Vhembe district, Limpopo**
Researcher:	**NE Ntjana**
Supervisor:	**Prof L Lombard**
Department:	**Social Work and Criminology**
Reference number:	**29473897**

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the above application was **approved** by the **Postgraduate Committee** on 13 November 2012 and by the **Research Ethics Committee** on 29 November 2012. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The committee requests that you convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Elsabé Taljard
Acting Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: elsabe.taljard@up.ac.za