

**Understanding the management of internal tensions between
mandates and mission in small and medium-sized social enterprises**

By

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Abstract

The ability to manage internal tensions arising from the need to safeguard social mission amidst multiple stakeholder mandates is an important issue for social enterprise research and practice because of the potential to de-rail social enterprises' effective functioning. This is especially so for small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) existing in resource-constrained environments. Extant social enterprise literature suggests that organisations' failure to balance tensions informed by incompatible dual social-commercial logics results in mission drift. Recent literature further acknowledges the complexities of balancing multiple tensions as organisations attempt to align multiple external mandates and core social mission, in the quest to continuously explore and exploit opportunities. Besides, the literature does not describe how practices and routine activities in SMSEs enable the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates. To bridge this gap, the study investigates how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments simultaneously align multiple mandates and mission.

Using a qualitative case study approach, the study examines five identified South African SMSEs using purposive homogenous sampling to understand how they fulfil multiple mandates while safeguarding their missions. The context was chosen due to SMSEs increasingly pursuing multiple funding arrangements. The findings highlight the significance of leveraging community embeddedness, mission agility, and the proactive use of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to balance mission and mandates. These elements anchor the 'art of practising' actions and 'dynamic artefacts' within SMSEs' activities to ensure simultaneous ambidexterity. The study contributes to the social enterprise literature by introducing a framework for simultaneous internal-external practising that enables SMSEs to align multiple mandates with their mission. It also extends ambidexterity beyond 'dual' explore-exploit decisions to the simultaneous management of competing multiple goals at a micro-level, showing how SMSEs' art of practising and dynamic artefacts facilitate this balance.

Key words: Art of practising, community embeddedness, dynamic artefacts, mission agility, monitoring and evaluation, simultaneous ambidextrous, small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs).

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction to the study

1.1 Background

The role of social enterprises is critical to supplement the achievement of developmental and social goals. Small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) operating in resource-constrained environments play a crucial role in addressing social challenges at the community level. However, they also face mounting challenges in securing funding due to global economic fluctuations, political changes, and external crises like pandemics (UN, 2020). Unlike large social enterprises, SMSEs may inherently be resource-constrained (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Malatesta & Smith, 2014), making them more vulnerable to mission drift. Furthermore, the pursuit of varied funding arrangements often comes with external mandates associated with multiple stakeholders creating potential conflicts with the organisations' internal social missions.

Mandates are defined as the requirements “imposed by external bodies, be they funders, governments, or standard-setting ... in order to receive funding” (Mair, 2020, p. 26). Social missions, however, are central to SMSEs' efforts to address societal gaps, defined by clear objectives and activities (P. Gupta et al., 2020; Klarin & Suseno, 2023). In this study, the social enterprises' core mission refers to “mission centred on pursuing social goals and achieving impact for a specific target group” (Mair, 2020, p. 26), within a community.

Attempts to balance internal social missions with external mandates can lead to internal tensions, potentially derailing the effectiveness of social enterprises' functioning. Despite these tensions, little empirical research explores how SMSEs manage this delicate balance as social enterprises attempt to align internal activities between fulfilling external funders' mandates and attending to core social mission in a simultaneous manner (Kodzi, 2015; Mair, 2020). Therefore, understanding how internal tensions between multiple mandates and social mission are managed is an important issue in social enterprise research and practice.

This scenario is further exacerbated by the impact of external events. For example, the recent COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the funding landscape have caused social enterprises to revisit the basis of inherent tensions and the boundary conditions of their social missions (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021).

The social enterprise and hybridity literatures suggest that the tensions encountered by social enterprises are a result of incompatible dual social and commercial logics (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021;

Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mair, 2020; Pache & Santos, 2013). The literature, therefore, portrays social enterprises as “battlefields of competing logics or sites of unresolvable paradox” (Mair, 2020, p. 11), especially so, as they encounter other internal “pressures that are associated with pursuing multiple goals” (Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020, p. 230). Therefore, in the wake of internal multiple tensions, blind spots emerge on how organisations make sense of the tensions and respond accordingly (Mair, 2020; Smith & Tracey, 2016).

Recent research suggests that external stakeholders’ perceptions and actions play a role in fuelling these tensions (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020; Klein et al., 2021), prompting organisations to adapt their internal processes and approaches to manage emergent tensions. However, the literature falls short of explaining how social enterprises effectively achieve this. In this case, how SMSES align multiple mandates and mission internally.

While existing literature discusses the tensions arising from dual social and commercial logics, the focus in this study is on understanding how SMSEs organise their internal activities to navigate these tensions, especially in the context of multiple external mandates. This research explores the internal dynamics that enable SMSEs to simultaneously fulfil their mission and mandates, a topic inadequately addressed in current studies (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mair, 2020; Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020).

In addressing this gap, this study focuses on the internal operational dynamics of social enterprises, exploring the role of practices and routines in achieving ambidexterity, the ability to perform competing strategic acts simultaneously (Simsek et al., 2009). Internal routines offer temporal structures, while practices illustrate how actions are carried out through human agency to achieve competing organisational goals.

To comprehend how organisations handle internal tensions, Besharov and Smith (2014) present a framework focusing on the coexistence of multiple logics, which may give rise to internal tensions. However, this framework, while a valuable starting point, lacks insights into the practical strategies used by organisations to navigate these internal tensions. The authors hint at the need for future studies, to explore the internal organisational dynamics involved in managing inherent internal multiple tensions. This includes cultivating ambidexterity, denoting an “organisation’s ability to perform differing and often competing, strategic acts at the same time” (Simsek et al., 2009, p. 865).

It is important to understand the internal operational dynamics that facilitate social enterprises’ ambidexterity to manage internal tensions. The extant literature suggests that internal dynamics

in organisations may be unpacked by investigating the internal organising of practices and routines (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Routines may explain temporal structures [akin to the ‘what’] within organisations, used to accomplish different goals (Feldman, 2000; Rerup & Feldman, 2011). Practices may explain how internal actions are enacted through human agency [akin to the ‘how’], to accomplish multiple organisational goals (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017; Schatzki, 2012).

The examination of internal practices and routines within these organisations provides valuable insights into their ability to simultaneously align social mission and external mandates’ related activities. The literature suggests that internal routines and practices may facilitate organisations’ simultaneous management of internal goal conflicts (Nosella et al., 2012; Rerup & Feldman, 2011). However, this is a complex endeavour, especially for resource-constrained SMSEs, as it demands the simultaneous execution of ambidextrous strategies (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020; O’Reilly & Tushman, 2013). How these internal routines and practices facilitate the concurrent alignment of mission and multiple mandates in these social enterprises, therefore, remains unclear.

This research investigated how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments effectively balance internal activities to meet external mandates while safeguarding their core missions. Employing the organisational ambidexterity lens, it delved into how SMSEs navigate internal tensions, especially the ones arising from the intersection of their missions and external mandates (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2013; N. Turner et al., 2013). The study focused on the internal routines and practices that enable these social enterprises to concurrently address both mission and mandate concerns.

1.2 The research problem

While current empirical evidence primarily explores how organisations respond to conflicting dual logics (Mair, 2020; Smith & Tracey, 2016), a gap remains in understanding how social enterprises organise their internal activities to manage tensions resulting from safeguarding their mission and fulfilling multiple external mandates (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mair, 2020; Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020). This is especially so in resource-challenged contexts (Littlewood et al., 2022).

To address these tensions, the concept of ambidexterity is relevant. Social enterprises must simultaneously balance mission preservation [akin to ‘exploiting’] and flexibility to meet stakeholder mandates [akin to ‘exploring’]. Internal routines and practices are suggested to facilitate the simultaneous management of internal conflicts (Nosella et al., 2012). However, research on how these internal routines and practices enable concurrent exploration and

exploitation is limited (Luger et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Tarba et al., 2020; Wilden et al., 2018), especially for resource-constrained small organisations (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020).

This study responds to the call for understanding “how organisations manage the pressures that are associated with pursuing multiple goals” (Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020, p. 230). Specifically, how social enterprises manage multiple internal mission-mandate tensions (Mair, 2020), a critical issue for SMSEs in resource-constrained environments.

1.3 Research question

To address the identified research gap, this study sought to answer the following research question: How do small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission?

Sub-questions

- a) How do internal practices in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?
- b) How do internal routine activities in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?

1.4 Research contribution

The study argues that SMSEs can simultaneously align mission and mandates by leveraging community embeddedness, mission agility, and the proactive use of monitoring and evaluation (M&E). These elements serve as the foundation for the “art of practising” actions and “dynamic artefacts” within SMSEs’ activities to ensure simultaneous ambidexterity. Through continuous internal–external practising, SMSEs leverage their embeddedness in the community to establish themselves as influential actors and champions of their social missions (Bacq et al., 2022). Mission agility, as proposed by Bacq and Lumpkin (2021), enables SMSEs to adapt their activities within the broader mission, striking a balance between mission and multiple mandates. M&E serves as a dynamic abstract artefact (Berglund & Glaser, 2022) in harmonising mission and mandates. Proactive M&E is instrumental as it links SMSE actions with the expectations and requirements of funders and stakeholders. M&E allows for real-time exploration and exploitation through tactical mimicry (Dey & Teasdale, 2016). At a micro-level, these dynamic artefacts and the art of practising enable SMSEs to navigate the interplay of simultaneous ambidexterity. This offers new evidence of how routine activities and practices facilitate the concurrent alignment of

mission and mandates, rather than these functions being managed sequentially (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

1.4.1 Academic contribution

The study contributes to the literature on social enterprises and organisational ambidexterity. First, the study responds directly to recent calls to study how social enterprises handle internal tensions arising from balancing multiple mandates and safeguarding their social missions (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Mair, 2020). While existing literature hints at the risk of misalignment between external mandates and missions in social enterprises (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Mair, 2020), this study fills a critical research gap by enhancing our understanding of how social enterprises manage these internal tensions. It sheds light on how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments navigate multiple stakeholder mandates while maintaining their mission focus, despite facing vulnerability to internal tensions (Klarin & Suseno, 2023). Through continuous internal-external practising, they leverage community embeddedness, optimise mission agility and proactively use M&E to align mission and mandates.

Second, The study addresses the existing gap in empirical evidence concerning the simultaneous balancing of competing goals in small organisations, which has primarily focused on sequential exploitation and exploration (Luger et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This research responds to the call for understanding how organisations can dynamically balance exploration and exploitation, especially in resource-constrained small organisations (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020).

The study introduces a novel concept of 'tri-dexterity,' where dual exploration and exploitation actions are synchronised and superimposed into single actions, allowing the simultaneous alignment of multiple competing and conflicting actions. This extends the understanding of ambidexterity by demonstrating how small organisations that lack resources can achieve this superimposed alignment. This research also delves into the micro-level examination of how specific routines and practices within SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates (Felício et al., 2019). The superimposed alignment is made possible through the '*art of practising*' and '*dynamic artefacts*' evinced through leveraging community embeddedness, mission agility, and M&E. In essence, the study goes beyond the traditional 'dual' exploration and exploitation decisions, shedding light on how organisations can simultaneously manage internal competing and potentially conflicting multiple goals, making a noteworthy contribution to the literature.

1.4.2 Practical contribution

Practically, this study offers valuable insights for SMSE management. It enhances their awareness of internal mission–mandates tensions and how internal–external practising can be undertaken to balance these tensions. It provides practical approaches that include involving community stakeholders in shaping social missions; promoting mission agility by adapting activities within the broader mission; and proactively utilising M&E to align strategic direction. These insights empower SMSEs to effectively implement practices and routines that safeguard their social enterprise mission while simultaneously pursuing multiple funding arrangements. As a result, they can prioritise their missions internally while remaining adaptable and successful in a rapidly changing funding environment.

1.4.3 Methodological contribution

The study utilised a case study design. The data collection methods, for example, semi-structured interviews and document review, were used to obtain descriptive and rich data from process gatekeepers in the organisations. The study used “customised software for analysing the content ... to ensure the reliability of their themes and for further mapping the themes to the extant theory” (P. Gupta et al., 2020, p. 222). This follows a recent research call that “future studies use customised software such as Atlas.ti for content analysis, thematic coding analysis, and inductive content analysis” in social enterprise research to map themes to extant theories. This is because “these techniques were rarely used in the past” (P. Gupta et al., 2020, p. 222). Documentary evidence was used to account for ‘time’ within routines and practices to illustrate a processual activity [project cycle]. Hermeneutical analysis was used to gain insight into how the organisations’ practices and routines reconcile activities that are articulated with competing meanings between mission and multiple mandates within the given context. This was achieved by triangulating documentary evidence, interviewing, and observations.

1.4.4 Scope of the study

Social enterprise research typically addresses dual tensions between social and commercial missions (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Klarin & Suseno, 2023; Mair, 2020), but this study expands beyond this. Focusing on South African SMSEs at the community level, it explores how they manage internal tensions between fulfilling their mission and multiple mandates, a more complex issue. These SMSEs, deeply embedded in their communities, exhibit mission agility and use proactive M&E to balance internal and external demands through continuous internal–external practising. They act as intermediaries between the community and funders while staying aligned with their social mission. Notably, the study uncovers how SMSEs employ ‘dynamic artefacts’,

such as annual reports, to simultaneously demonstrate goal achievement to multiple funders and mission fulfilment. The strategic use of M&E for adapting and reporting on mandates and mission emerges as a key finding.

Additionally, the study reveals that organisational actors exhibit intentionality and opportunism simultaneously. Through the ‘art of practising’, they harness their community connections to align seemingly conflicting activities related to multiple mandates and mission. Moreover, they demonstrate agility and orchestrate substantial changes in value creation and capture for funders and stakeholders to enable simultaneous ambidexterity.

1.4.5 Definitions of keywords

In this study, the keywords used are explained in the glossary of terms below:

Table 1.1: Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Art of practising	This refers to how practices, evidenced as ‘nouns’, are deliberately practised, akin to ‘verbs’ (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020), to align stakeholders across multiple projects. Examples of the art of practising in SMSEs include leveraging on relationships, the art of interpretation, the art of negotiations, and co-designing.
Dynamic artefacts	“Formal design of a routine ... such as rules, schedules, and standard operating procedures” (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012, p. 26) that facilitate simultaneous competing actions rather than disparately. Examples of dynamic artefacts in SMSEs are dynamic annual reports to address multiple stakeholders, nimble SOPs and agile M&E systems.
Internal mission–mandate tensions	Competing and sometimes contradictory demands social enterprises encounter internally between managing multiple mandates and core social mission (Mair, 2020; Minkoff & Powell, 2006).
Mandates	These are requirements “imposed by external bodies, be they funders, governments ... accreditation agencies ... a non-profit is required to observe or practise in order to receive funding” (Mair, 2020, p. 26).
Mission	Social “mission centres on pursuing social goals and achieving impact for a specific beneficiary target group” (Mair, 2020, p. 26). It is embodied internally through clear objectives on target beneficiaries and a specific range of activities (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014).
Monitoring and evaluation	A function and capability that facilitates articulation of the theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016), and enables the SMSEs to dynamically align organisational mission and multiple mandates simultaneously.
Organisation practices	This refers to “an organised constellation of different people’s activities” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13). The role of human agency is key in the facilitation and coordination of practices. An example of a practice in SMSEs is M&E to monitor project implementation and reporting (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014).
Organisation routines	“Routines are temporal structures that are often used as a way of accomplishing organisational work” (Feldman, 2000, p. 611). An example of a routine in SMSEs is reporting to account to multiple funders (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020).
Simultaneous ambidexterity	The ability to simultaneously explore and exploit (Harris & Wood, 2020; Nosella et al., 2012; Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021). Specifically, social enterprises’ internal routine activities and practices that simultaneously manage tensions between social mission and multiple mandates.
Small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs)	National non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, or faith-based organisations (DSD, 2019; Seo, 2020), pursuing different funding and earned revenue opportunities to achieve social missions with annual funding of less than ZAR50M.

1.4.6 Document contents

The document is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study, starting with the background and rationale for the problem, as well as the research question and scope of the study. **Chapter 2** highlights the context within which the organisations operate and an overview of the nature of the organisations being studied. Additionally, the chapter highlights the importance and peculiarities of the context in understanding how they navigate the ensuing internal tensions. **Chapter 3** provides an overview of the literature, the point of departure for the study, and locates the research problem within the theoretical body knowledge.

Chapter 4 outlines the selected research design and methodology. **Chapters 5 to 9** present the research study analysis on a case-by-case basis for the five cases. **Chapter 10** exhibits the across-case analysis of the findings, links to the existing literature, and synthesis of grouped themes emerging from the across-case analysis. In addition, the theoretical model for simultaneous alignment of mission and mandates within projects is presented.

Chapter 11 highlights the theoretical contributions as well as the propositions from the study. In addition, the methodological, empirical, and practical contributions are presented. **Chapter 12** summarises the conclusions of the study and recommendations for future research based on the study's limitations.

References begin thereafter, followed by **Appendix A**, which covers abbreviations and acronyms used. **Appendix B** contains the interview guide; **Appendix C** depicts the sample letters of consent to participate in the study. The originals have all been signed and filed. **Appendix D** contains the observation checklist.

CHAPTER 2: The context of the study

2.1 Small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs)

Efforts by governments in developing and emerging economies to adequately address and meet their national aspirations, goals and targets of development are often hampered by a number of constraints. These include weak economies, corruption, mismanagement, failure to provide an appropriate enabling environment for private sector participation, or poor coordination of development actors. In such a context, and because of the existing market and government inadequacies, the role of social enterprises is critical to supplement these efforts to achieve the developmental and social goals (P. Gupta et al., 2020).

There have been contestations in defining social enterprises (Choi & Majumdar, 2014; Defourny et al., 2020; Klarin & Suseno, 2023). There also has been a lack of clarity on the regulatory mechanisms that recognise social enterprises as distinct legal entities in South Africa and other sub-Saharan countries (Rivera-Santos et al., 2015). Social enterprises can comprise for-profit companies undertaking social projects, or non-profit organisations pursuing multiple funding avenues to achieve social missions. This study focuses on SMSE non-profit organisations pursuing different funding arrangements to achieve social missions (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b).

Unlike large social enterprises, SMSEs may inherently be resource-constrained (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Malatesta & Smith, 2014). With plummeting funding and poor economic outlook, these organisations are challenged to pursue multiple funding opportunities (P. Gupta et al., 2020; Maier et al., 2016; Weerawardena et al., 2010) to address resource dependencies. The multiple funding arrangements expose them to multiple external mandates. While resource providers do not intentionally steer social enterprises away from their missions, the need to adhere to the set contractual requirements can divert SMSEs' internal efforts and activities away from their social missions.

The competing demands between fulfilling external mandates and safeguarding organisations' core social missions manifest as internal tensions (Mair, 2020) and enhanced vulnerabilities. As these vulnerabilities are exacerbated by the resource constraints (Burde et al., 2017; Klarin & Suseno, 2023), they are more susceptible to the internal tensions. These are caused by the pressures of diverting efforts towards fulfilling external funders' multiple and potentially divergent mandates, at the expense of attending to mission-related activities to stay afloat (Henderson & Lambert, 2018).

Smaller organisations may, however, be more nimble in navigating internal challenges due to their size (Miller et al., 2021; Minkoff & Powell, 2006). This is especially so with regard to experimenting and reorganising themselves to respond to funder requirements while ensuring mission focus (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). Therefore, the internal dynamics in SMSEs may allow them to adapt faster to meet multiple mandates.

2.2 South Africa as a setting

Most of the research on how social enterprises and hybrids respond to mission tensions has been conducted in Europe and the US, with calls for more research stemming from other parts of the world (Klarin & Suseno, 2023; Mair, 2020). Part of the advancement in the discourse from developed countries is that social enterprises in those countries apply a range of approaches to internally organise themselves in response to conflicting dual logics; for example, community interest companies in the UK and benefit corporations in the US approach this differently (Haigh et al., 2015; Rawhouser et al., 2015). Idiosyncrasies in the sector warrant research in less researched contexts, such as in Africa (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b; Mair, 2020).

South Africa is highly regarded among emerging economies, due to its higher-than-average GDP in comparison to other sub-Saharan African countries (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b; World Bank, 2019). Despite its social grants system to address welfare gaps, pervasive challenges of poverty, high morbidity levels, inequality, low education outcomes, and high crime rates remain a reality in South Africa (Kodzi, 2015). Additionally, the looming threat of a recession and the emerging priority changes requiring funding, such as bailing out of failing state-owned enterprises, necessary higher education funding, the launch of the National Health Insurance (NHI), and the land resettlement programme, all exacerbate the situation. The COVID-19 pandemic made an already dire situation worse (Littlewood et al., 2022). With over 50% of the youth in South Africa unemployed, an underperforming economy since the 2008 global economic meltdown, and the country grappling with the possibility of the economy contracting by over 7.2%, “public finances are dangerously overstretched” (Treasury, 2020, p. 2).

All these challenges necessitate complementary efforts by partners such as social enterprises to bridge the existing social welfare gaps. SMSEs predominantly operate at the community level to fulfil these social missions. Most of these organisations are registered as non-profit organisations (NPOs). They make up about 93% of the approximately 225,000 registered NPOs (DSD, 2019). In this resource-diminishing environment, however, the vulnerability of South African SMSEs is increasing. SMSEs operating in resource-constrained environments appear to be vulnerable

because of the lack of sufficient resources and their dependencies on donors or funders. To ensure their viability in countries such as South Africa, these organisations seem to pursue multiple funding arrangements (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b) with the vital capabilities and traits needing further research (Littlewood & Holt, 2020).

To stay afloat, such organisations may be susceptible to tilt internal efforts and activities toward fulfilling the funders' mandates to appease the funders at the expense of their own core mission (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020). Empirical evidence also shows that SMSEs in South Africa experience internal tensions between fulfilling external funder mandates and safeguarding the primary social mission of the organisation (Kodzi, 2015). At the same time, social enterprises in South Africa are also increasingly pursuing multiple funding arrangements, while fulfilling their social missions (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b). This exposes them to multiple mandates instantiated in "community, religious or environmental logics" (Littlewood et al., 2022, p. 265), in addition to existing dual social and commercial logics.

The Survey of Social Enterprises in South Africa (SSESA) report indicates that most SMSEs pursue a mixed range of funding approaches (Myres et al., 2018). This is confirmed by a recent study by Jankelowitz (2020), which indicates that social enterprises in South Africa seem to pursue multiple funding arrangements with minimal mission drift. While this points to the possible social enterprises' ability to align mission and mandates, exactly how this is achieved was not clear yet.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the funding landscape, social enterprises were forced to take stock of – and adjust – how they address social needs, while pursuing various funding options (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021b). South Africa was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with about four million identified cases and an estimated 102,000 deaths reported by the virus over the last three years, the most of any other country on the African continent. Hence, the pandemic may also have exacerbated the vulnerability of SMSEs to steer efforts away from their embedded missions, but it also presented opportunities for social enterprises' mission agility amidst multiple external mandates (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021).

Based on these critical emerging issues within a South African context or setting, this study aimed to identify and offer insights into how SMSEs operate internally to manage mission–mandate tensions.

2.3 Small and medium-sized social enterprises in South Africa

2.3.1 SMSEs under non-profit registration

SMSEs can be for-profit companies undertaking social projects, but this study focused on SMSEs registered as NPOs that are pursuing multiple funding avenues to achieve their social missions (Littlewood & Holt, 2018). The South African NPO Act 71 of 1997 defines NPOs as trusts, companies, or other voluntary community-based organisations established for meeting social and public purposes, and whose income is not distributable to shareholders or members as compensation (DSD, 2017). The present study's intention was not to unpack the types of NPO registrations within the sector. However, Table 2.1 below summarises the legal entities permitted under the current legislation according to which SMSEs can be registered in South Africa.

Table 2.1: Legislative Framework for NPOs in South Africa

Registration entity	Description
Non-Profit Company (NPC)	An NPO Registration under the Companies Act for public benefit reasons, and income or profit earned should be used to fund public benefit activities, aka social mission. Legislated under the Companies Act 71 of 2008 (as amended), section 21.
Trust	An NPO registered under the High Court of South Africa to administer cash or assets on behalf of others for public benefit purposes and legislated under the Trust Property Control Act No 57 of 1998.
Voluntary Association	A membership NPO consisting of individuals whose common goal is to propagate public benefit activities and is legislated under common law.

Source: Adapted from South Africa Revenue Services (SARS) tax guide

SMSEs in South Africa predominantly operate at the community level to fulfil their social missions. Most of these organisations are registered as non-profit organisations (NPOs) and make up about 93% of the approximately 225,000 registered NPOs (DSD, 2019). Over the years, there has been a surge in the number of registered small and medium-sized NPOs in South Africa from about 3,000 to 225,000 between the years 2000 and 2019. This amounts to an average of 10,000 new small and medium-sized NPOs being registered on an annual basis (DSD, 2019).

2.3.2 Funding uncertainties

The ever-increasing funding uncertainties are forcing SMSEs in resource-constrained environments such as South Africa to identify and pursue multiple funding options. They have to simultaneously manage funders' goals, akin to multiple mandates, and still focus on their core social mission. Hence, they have to balance internal activities associated with multiple mandates

and core social missions. This results in the internal mission–mandate tensions stated earlier in this chapter (Mair, 2020).

In the resource-diminishing environment, where international crises and the demands for humanitarian aid are continuously increasing, and the South African Government is facing its own financial challenges, the dependency by South African SMSEs on funding from foreign donors and the government threatens these SMSEs' survival. While global changes of donor funding reductions are significantly risky, the double shock of the local geopolitical landscape also affects whether SMSEs will continue to be funded and survive. For example, the US Government committed funding of about \$1.1 billion in 2015 to South Africa, compared to only \$340 million in 2019 (a decline of 70% over four years), with health services taking up 92% of the allocation (USAID, 2019).

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which was rolled out by the US Government, has been operational since 2003 and is one of the largest funding sources for NPOs in the health sector. South Africa has been one of the largest recipients globally of PEPFAR funding, receiving approximately \$5 billion towards the HIV/AIDS response (USAID, 2019). PEPFAR is currently working on a handing-over/localisation strategy to end the need for foreign assistance (USAID, 2019). Therefore, SMSEs in countries such as South Africa will have to address these potential funding dependency challenges by exploring alternative or multiple funding opportunities. However, this creates the challenge of how the SMSEs in this context will be able to navigate multiple funders' demands while still ensuring the alignment with their core mission.

2.4 Conclusion

SMSEs in South Africa offer a unique context for this study. First, they operate in a challenging environment with limited donor funding and intense competition for resources, necessitating the pursuit of multiple funding opportunities with diverse requirements. This complex funding situation also requires them to address numerous community-level social needs while staying true to their core missions. Second, the ambiguity in their registration status allows them to establish different legal entities, each entailing compliance with distinct government regulations. Lastly, these SMSEs represent the majority of NPOs in a country with pressing social needs, underscoring their crucial role in advancing social missions at the community level.

CHAPTER 3: Literature review

3.1 Introduction

This section begins with reviewing the definitions of mandates, mission and internal mission–mandate tensions. A review of organisational ambidexterity is provided, followed by a discussion of how ambidextrous organisations can manage internal mission–mandate tensions and the gap based on existing literature. Thereafter, a review of the internal routines and practices in social enterprises to manage mission–mandate tensions is presented, and how SMSEs can align activities with mandates that are possibly conflicting with their core social mission. The gaps that exist in the literature on how organisations simultaneously align activities to manage possible internal mission and mandate tensions are then reviewed.

To gain an overview of internal tensions between mandates and mission, a manageable and structured literature search was conducted. A search was conducted on Scopus with the search limited to ‘mission’ and ‘mandate’ in the title, abstract, or as a keyword. The search returned a total of 1,266 articles across the fields. The search was then limited to the period from 2012 to date. This returned 403 articles, with a majority of the peer-reviewed articles appearing in the fields of peace, defence, justice, and public administration. Less than 20 articles were relevant to the present study.

Using the approach suggested by Paul and Criado (2020), a thematic approach was used with the help of the Atlas.ti software to search for information under the social entrepreneurship, hybrid and ambidexterity literature. A combination of Google Scholar search and snowballing of articles based on themes from key authors working in the social enterprise mission and mandate field led to a revised number of 143 articles that were reviewed in detail. Of these, 73 articles were excluded as they referred to mission drift or other aspects of social enterprises not relevant to this study. A total of 70 recent and relevant articles were selected and cited from this section, some covering multiple themes.

The conceptual map presented in Figure 3.1 below provides an overview of the study focus, with emphasis on the darker highlighted areas and themes. A number of influential studies on social enterprise hybrids suggest that the internal organising of activities within social enterprises is informed by harmonising the social and commercial logics (Battilana, 2018; Battilana et al., 2017; Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Battilana & Lee, 2014; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Ebrahim et al., 2014; Mair & Martí, 2006; Pache & Santos, 2013) and legitimacy (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020; Klein et al., 2021). These studies offered a point of departure for this research study. Indeed, the findings tend

to indicate that social enterprises pursue different funding pathways associated with multiple logics to achieve social missions. The pursuit of different pathways may then translate into other multiple goals (Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020), resulting in multiple mandates.

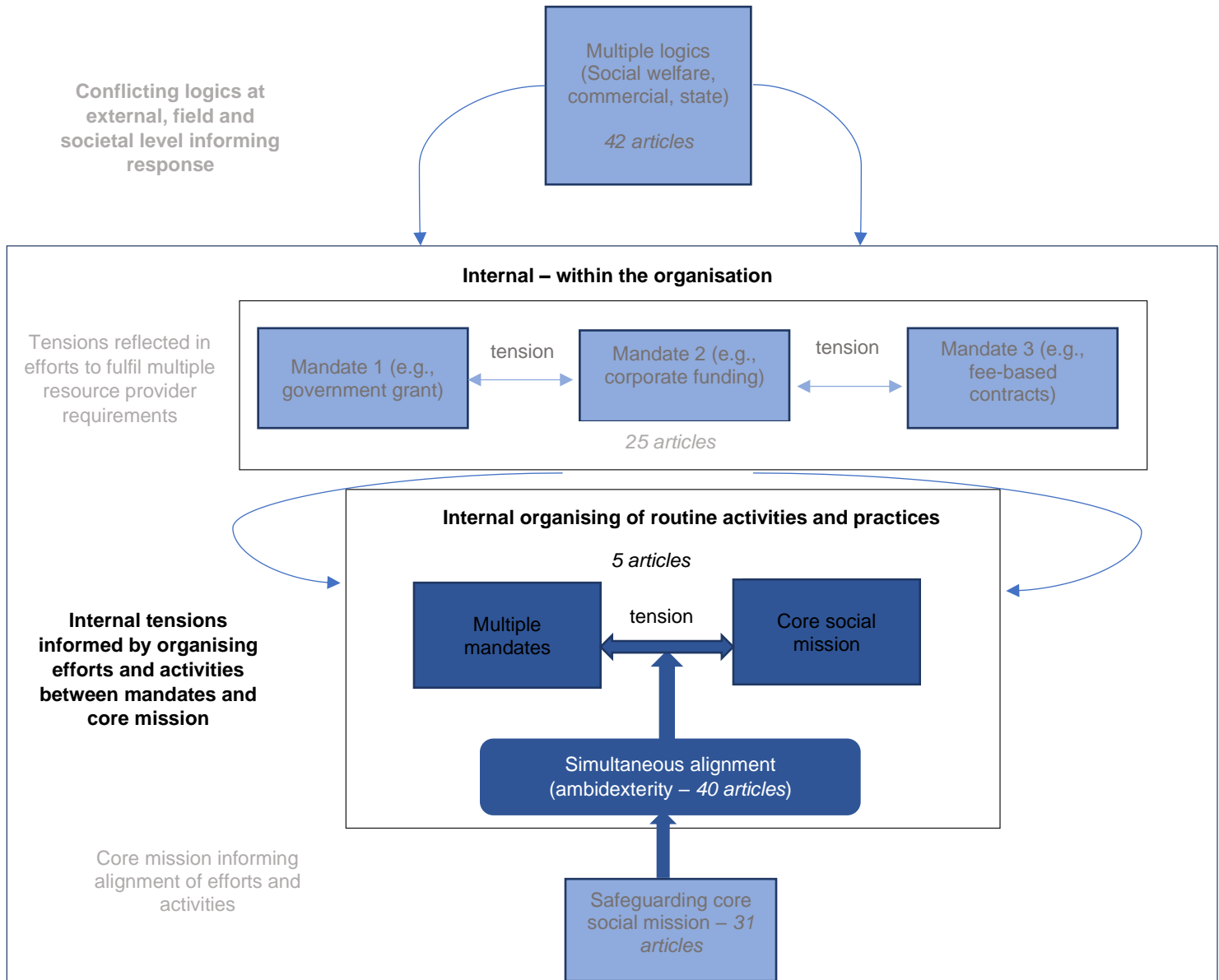


Figure 3.1: Conceptual map

Consequently, other internal tensions emerge as social enterprises attempt to manage multiple funding on the one hand, and safeguarding their core social missions on the other (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Henderson & Lambert, 2018). Mair (2020) points out that while extant literature has focused on competing dual logics in social enterprises, little research exists on how these organisations internally organise their activities to align multiple external mandates and internal

social mission. This is especially so for social enterprises in Africa that are faced with contending multiple mandates (Littlewood et al., 2022). Based on the gap in the existing literature, the following literature review sets out the study's focus on how organisations simultaneously align activities to manage possible internal tensions between mission and mandates through the ambidexterity lens.

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 Mandates

Mandates are defined as requirements “imposed by external bodies, be they funders, governments, or standard-setting or accreditation agencies ... a non-profit is required to observe or practise in order to receive funding, approval, or certification” (Mair, 2020, p. 26; Minkoff & Powell, 2006, p. 593). Consequently, the pursuit of multiple funding arrangements by social enterprises exposes them to multiple external mandates that may require organisations to internally navigate their activities to ensure they fulfil all the set funder requirements. With recent research calls on social enterprises in resource-constrained environments (Klarin & Suseno, 2023), this study focuses on how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions that may arise from fulfilling possibly conflicting mandates.

3.2.2 Core mission in social enterprises

In their nature, social enterprises are regarded as organisations that engage in the pursuit of various funding sources to fulfil their social missions (P. Gupta et al., 2020; Mongelli et al., 2019). In this study, the social enterprise's core social “mission centres on pursuing social goals and achieving impact for a specific target group” (Mair, 2020, p. 26), within a community. Social mission is embodied internally through clear objectives on targeted community beneficiaries and a specified range of activities (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). In other words, the broader social mission may be broken down into pragmatic operational mission activities (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Rangan, 2004).

3.2.3 Internal mission and mandate tensions

The distinction between mandates and mission in the non-profit sector was suggested in the novel study by Minkoff and Powell (2006). They defined mission-mandate tensions as the competing and sometimes contradictory demands social enterprises encounter internally between managing multiple external mandates and core social mission. This can be depicted by how activities are aligned between the primary social mission of social enterprises and with the possibly conflicting

mandates imposed by external funders (Mair, 2020). This study refers to the aforementioned internal tensions to mean mission–mandate tensions throughout the document.

3.3 Multiple mandates and mission tensions

As highlighted in section 3.1, the focus of this study moves away from how organisations make sense and respond to conflicting dual logics to how they deal with multiple internal tensions (Littlewood et al., 2022; Mair, 2020; Smith & Tracey, 2016). Minkoff and Powell (2006) were among the first authors to highlight the tensions that exist internally when organisations try to navigate multiple mandates arising from various funder requirements, and core mission activities. The management of multiple external mandates may divert the organisations' internal efforts and activities away from their core social missions (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). Consequently, the competing, and sometimes contradictory demands may result in internal tensions within the organisation between implementing activities related to mandates vis-à-vis the core social mission. For example, tensions on employee motivation, resource allocation, management complexities, and reduced effectiveness.

Extant social enterprise literature does not explicitly explain the internal dynamics of how organisations manage internal mission-mandate tensions (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mair, 2020). Therefore, the research is lagging behind on how social enterprises organise in novel ways internally to simultaneously implement competing mission and mandate-related activities (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Littlewood et al., 2022; Mair, 2020). This is especially so in SMSEs existing in resource-constrained contexts where social enterprises' internal efforts may be skewed to appease funders, hence demanding more innovative efforts in aligning mission and mandates.

In an attempt to understand how internal tensions manifest within organisations, Besharov and Smith (2014) propose a conceptual framework, as shown in Figure 3.2 below. The framework categorises the extent of internal conflict social enterprises may encounter. SMSEs existing in resource-constrained environments that are pursuing multiple funding arrangements could be classified as pursuing multiple mandates in order to fulfil their missions. Such organisations can therefore be categorised to fit in cell 1 due to the consideration of pursuing multiple logics with potentially contradicting sets of actions in order to fulfil their core missions and hence experience extensive internal conflict.

As the social enterprises make sense of the conflicting logics, the extensive conflict may also manifest in the form of internal tensions between fulfilling funders' mandates and social mission. For example, this occurs when such organisations tilt their internal efforts and resources towards

activities relating to the management of funder mandates instead of activities related to the core missions.

Besharov and Smith (2014) allude that the proposed framework does not fully explain how social enterprises organise their activities internally to resolve internal tensions, hence, move from cell 1 to cell 2. Mair (2020) suggests more studies in social enterprises be focused on the internal alignment of mission and mandates. One, therefore, does not know what happens internally in social enterprises to manage internal tensions. The discourse needs to go beyond conflicting dual logics and more towards understanding the internal dynamics of how organisations manage tensions arising from managing multiple mandates while safeguarding mission (Mair, 2020).

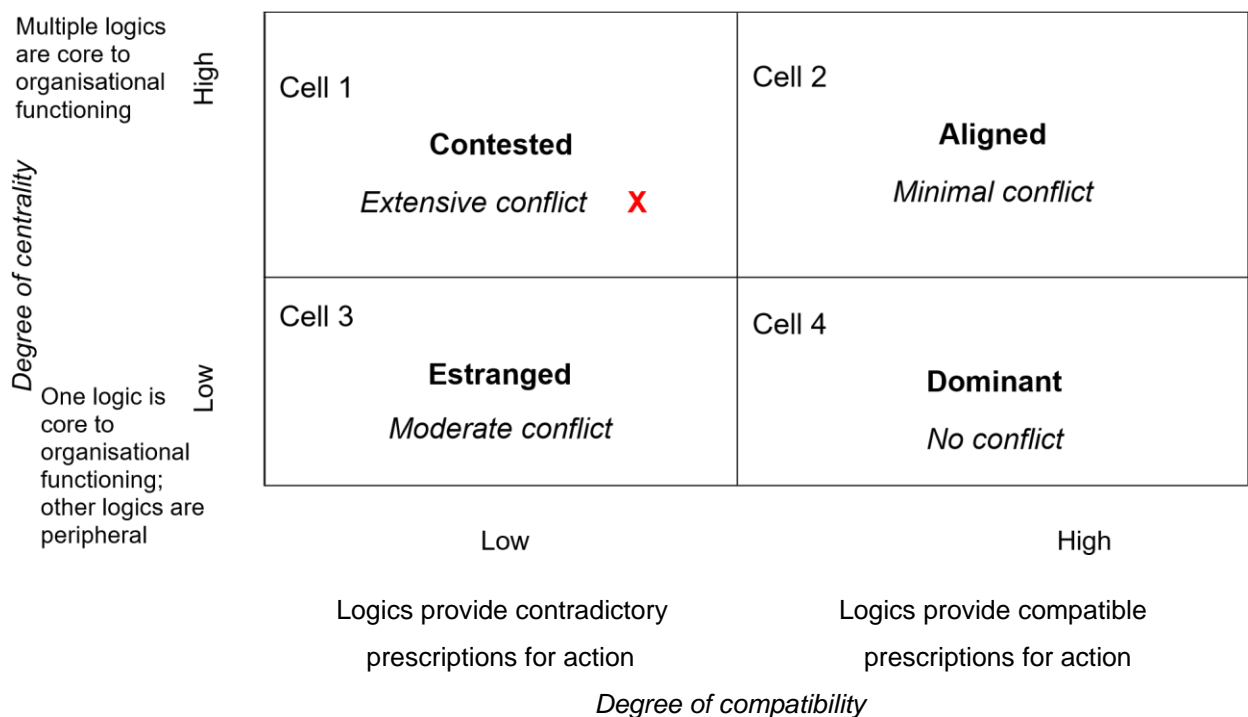


Figure 3.2: Types of logic multiplicity within organisations

Source: Besharov and Smith (2014)

The proposed framework by Besharov and Smith (2014) is a point of departure in this study to understand how social enterprises internally organise themselves to simultaneously address competing mandates and mission demands. One perspective alluded to in the social enterprise literature that can offer insight into the internal dynamics in the wake of internal tensions is organisational ambidexterity (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Smith & Tracey, 2016). To understand better how the organisations can deal with internal competing goals simultaneously, a review of organisational ambidexterity is discussed next.

3.4 Organisational ambidexterity: Balancing mission-mandate tensions

3.4.1 Organisational ambidexterity applicability

This study draws from organisational ambidexterity to understand the management of internal mission-mandate tensions. This is because SMSEs in resource-constrained environments have to simultaneously manage the tensions between activities associated with multiple mandates and core social missions. With a dearth of research on how organisations manage internal mission-mandate tensions (Mair, 2020), ambidexterity offers insight into how the tensions are managed and the internal “co-existence of competing alternatives” (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 397). Therefore organisational ambidexterity is useful to understand how organisations internally organise to deal with competing goals and tensions (Besharov & Smith, 2014).

In this study, organisational “ambidexterity refers to an organisation’s ability to perform differing and often competing, strategic acts at the same time” (Simsek et al., 2009, p. 865). This definition is adopted because it encapsulates the internal tensions that manifest when organisations’ efforts and resources are divided between two potentially opposing sets of actions, albeit in a multiple fashion. Indeed, ambidexterity is useful when there are “two opposing organisational demands that compete for resources, attention and action to design strategy, implement business operation, and deliver performance expectations in a myriad of organisational settings” (Liu et al., 2021, p. 2). In this study specifically, ambidexterity was used to explain how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between mission and mandates.

Studies in organisational ambidexterity have been shaped by the early work of Thompson, J. (1967), who argued that organisations needed a trade-off between being flexible in times of uncertainty and efficient in times of stability. Subsequently, early works by Duncan (1976) highlighted the need for separate units in organisations to harness ambidextrous structures that allow for the initiation and implementation of activities. In his seminal paper, March (1991) stated that during times of environmental changes and uncertainties, organisations need to be nimble to be able to exploit their existing core activities and explore emerging opportunities in order to survive. The distinction between exploitation and exploration activities divides attention and resources within organisations.

The antecedents of ambidexterity include environmental uncertainties and changes, competing priorities, and sufficiency of organisational resources to allow for both exploit and explore-related activities (O’Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Other notable antecedents are “culture, context, and

managers' characteristics" (Nosella et al., 2012, p. 458). The outcomes include the organisation's performance, growth, innovation capabilities, and survival (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Therefore, ambidexterity is beneficial for organisations that face internal tensions in activities depicting competing goals (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This is the position that SMSEs in resource-constrained environments currently find themselves in. They need to explore new funding opportunities amidst uncertainties, and at the same time, exploit to align the multiple funding requirements with their core social mission (Zhai et al., 2017).

The main assumptions of ambidexterity are, first, that the ability to explore and exploit exists internally in an organisation (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Second, there exist tensions between exploitation and exploration (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004). Third, successful ambidexterity requires sufficiency of resources in organisations for simultaneous execution (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; N. Turner et al., 2013), and fourth that more success is exhibited in larger organisations than smaller ones (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). However, it is not known how small organisations, in this case, SMSEs, experiencing resource constraints, are able to manage multiple conflicting goals simultaneously.

3.4.2 Small organisations and ambidexterity

Organisational ambidexterity requires adequate resources to be more beneficial. Hence, it is often more successful in larger organisations than in smaller ones (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This is especially so in cases where activities or efforts are meant to achieve simultaneous exploitation and exploration (A. Gupta et al., 2006). The implications of the third and fourth assumptions discussed in section 3.4.1 are key to this study as they pertain to theory extension. This is because they suggest that when small organisations dedicate their efforts and activities to exploiting, "fewer resources are left over for exploration, and vice versa" (A. Gupta et al., 2006, p. 695).

Exploitation in organisations is based on the need for focus and stability, while exploration is based on flexibility and the pursuit of opportunities for future survival (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This may give rise to internal tensions. Therefore, organisational ambidexterity is associated with tensions that arise within organisations, and how organisations resolve these tensions internally (Nosella et al., 2012). In other words, it refers to uncertainties that organisations face, and how they explore and exploit internally to ensure the organisation's survival (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; N. Turner et al., 2013). This would be the case for SMSEs dealing with internal competing demands between activities related to fulfilling multiple mandates and safeguarding social mission.

Research calls exist to use ambidexterity as a possible lens in understanding the internal dynamics of how social enterprises manage mission and mandate tensions (Battilana et al., 2015; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Smith & Tracey, 2016). On the one hand, the activities and efforts needed to pursue and fulfil multiple mandates embedded in multiple contracts would require adaptability. On the other hand, the activities involved in safeguarding core missions would require alignment (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; N. Turner et al., 2013).

It is argued that smaller organisations explore and exploit sequentially and not simultaneously to mitigate their lack of resources and smaller size (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Indeed, the “organisational routines needed for exploration are radically different from those needed for exploitation, making the simultaneous pursuit of both all but impossible” (A. Gupta et al., 2006, p. 695). Simultaneous exploring and exploiting occur internally within the organisation (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Hence, SMSEs would be expected to experience difficulties in undertaking routines and practices that simultaneously manage internal mission-mandate tensions. At a micro-level, there is a paucity of organisational ambidexterity studies regarding internal routine dynamics and practices that depict simultaneous exploration and exploitation (Luger et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Tarba et al., 2020; Wilden et al., 2018). This is especially so regarding studies into small organisations (Iborra et al., 2020).

Extant literature does, however, suggest that small organisations may be more agile in experimenting with different approaches internally (Jankelowitz & Myres, 2019; Miller et al., 2021; Minkoff & Powell, 2006). This is because they can reorganise themselves faster and with more flexibility compared to large organisations that have well-established systems, hierarchies, and structures. How these small organisations manage competing demands simultaneously is, however, not clear. Therefore, SMSEs pursuing multiple funding arrangements would be ideal to understand simultaneous routine activities and practices that manage competing demands of the external mandates compared to mission activities. This is because they may be required to exert efforts in fulfilling multiple requirements while striving to safeguard their core social mission concurrently.

In their quantitative empirical study of over 2,000 manufacturing small and medium enterprises in Spain, Iborra et al. (2020) highlight the positive role of simultaneous exploring and exploiting efforts that enabled them to remain resilient after the global financial crisis. However, the study does not indicate the internal dynamics of how the small organisations actually explored and exploited simultaneously. Besides, the authors call for future qualitative studies in such organisations using “how questions” (Iborra et al., 2020, p. 13) to gain insight into how small

organisations internally achieve simultaneouity. We, therefore, do not know how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission.

3.4.3 Organisational ambidexterity as a simultaneous process

The empirical studies using the ambidexterity lens are mostly based on how organisations sequentially explore and exploit (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Tushman & Benner, 2015). This study argues that the theory facilitates understanding and provides insight into the internal dynamics of how organisations simultaneously manage the tensions between multiple competing mandates and core missions.

It appears that extant research on organisational ambidexterity focuses on exploring and exploiting tensions disparately. This has led to diverting the focus away from the original definition of organisational ambidexterity as the ability to simultaneously explore and exploit (Harris & Wood, 2020; Nosella et al., 2012; Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021). While simultaneous exploring and exploiting is encouraged for organisations facing uncertainties (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008), this research area has a dearth of empirical evidence (Tushman & Benner, 2015). This is especially the case in small organisations due to the need for having routines and practices that can cut across different levels in the organisation (Zimmermann et al., 2020). For example, the study by Zimmermann et al. (2020) suggests that small organisations experience difficulties when ambidexterity is pursued simultaneously due to a lack of slack resources, and they suggest it should be executed sequentially between exploring and exploiting rather than simultaneously.

Organisations that face environmental challenges are encouraged to explore and exploit for long-term survival sequentially (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013), through structural separation of organisational units, and contextually at an individual level (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996). The discourse in organisational ambidexterity has therefore argued more for a trade-off approach between exploring and exploiting, implying a zero-sum game (A. Gupta et al., 2006), or a continuum between the two separated approaches (Luger et al., 2018). This is because "activities of exploration and exploitation compete for scarce resources" that may require substantially different internal processes (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021, p. 1), thus making simultaneity difficult.

However, there is a renaissance in the field suggesting that more studies need to be undertaken to understand how organisations simultaneously explore and exploit, as per the original construct (Liu et al., 2021; Luger et al., 2018; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2004, 2013; Simsek et al., 2009; N.

Turner et al., 2013; Tushman & Benner, 2015). Figure 3.3 below highlights a recently proposed framework that supports the benefits of organisational ambidexterity. This study is specifically interested in simultaneous ambidexterity. The study proposes that SMSEs existing in resource-constrained environments may be desirous to safeguard their missions as they explore new funding opportunities. However, they face numerous uncertainties with a higher possibility of experiencing misalignment between their mission and externally imposed funder mandates. Therefore, this framework may offer a point of departure to understand and unpack how SMSEs may be simultaneously ambidextrous to respond to potentially divergent funder requirements while safeguarding their missions.

Perceived number and uncertainty of (potential) environmental opportunities	Numerous & uncertain	Contextual Ambidexterity <i>Leverage distributed attention and knowledge of employees to deal with vast and uncertain opportunity space</i>	Simultaneous Ambidexterity <i>Leverage distributed attention and knowledge within the organisation between current and new business</i>
	Few & relatively clear	No Ambidexterity <i>Address opportunities as part of existing routines</i>	Structural Ambidexterity <i>Separate exploration and exploitation to avoid cultural clashes and quickly build new capabilities</i>
		Low	High
Perceived distance of environmental opportunities from organisational culture and capabilities			

Figure 3.3: Emerging theoretical framework describing how perceived environmental characteristics influence organisations’ ambidexterity approach
Adapted from Ossenbrink et al. (2019)

There have been recent calls for more research in organisational ambidexterity, with a focus on how organisations achieve simultaneous exploration and exploitation internally (Luger et al., 2018; Ossenbrink et al., 2019; Tushman & Benner, 2015). Building on the recent conceptual work on “ambidexterity as the ability to dynamically balance exploration and exploitation” (Luger et al.,

2018, p. 450), this study sought to understand how organisations simultaneously manage multiple internal tensions (Luger et al., 2018; Nosella et al., 2012). Specifically, the aim was to gain insight into how routine activities and practices being adopted internally at a micro-level facilitate SMSEs to simultaneously balance multiple mandates and the social mission.

3.4.4 Organisational ambidexterity in social enterprises

Emerging critics of studies on the management of tensions in social enterprises hold that mainstream institutional theories attempt to simplify organisational responses to conflicting logics. The manifestation of multiple logics in organisations is a rather complex problem as it is evidenced through multiple mandates that in turn, inform internal tensions in varied forms (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020). For example, reference is made to tensions between social and profit missions (Maier et al., 2016), stability and flexibility (Iborra et al., 2020), alignment and adaptability (Nosella et al., 2012), mission drift and mission agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021), disruptive and incremental innovation (Félicio et al., 2019), entrepreneurship and community impact (Bacq et al., 2022). Hence, they require the management of what happens between the tensions rather than focusing on the tensions themselves and requires a comprehensive investigation of internal dynamics in organisations for theoretical development (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mair, 2020; Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020).

It is important to understand the internal operational dynamics that facilitate social enterprises' ambidexterity to manage internal tensions. The extant literature suggests that internal dynamics in organisations may be unpacked by investigating the internal organising of routines and practices (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Organisational ambidexterity studies are scarce in the social enterprise field that highlight how internal routine activities and practices are utilised to align competing goals internally. Therefore, there are increased calls to look more at ambidexterity within social enterprises (Battilana et al., 2015; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Smith & Tracey, 2016).

More recently, there has been an acknowledgement for more research being needed on how social enterprises simultaneously manage internal tensions (Battilana, 2018). A recent quantitative survey study conducted on SMSEs in Portugal highlights their difficulty of being simultaneously ambidextrous to undertake disruptive and incremental innovation concurrently (Félicio et al., 2019). The study points to routines and practices that facilitate the two disparate sets of activities. This creates a gap in the understanding of how, at a micro-level, routines and practices facilitate simultaneous ambidexterity in SMSEs.

There are further calls to look into the internal workings as well as the routine activities in organisations that allow them to deal with tensions (Liu et al., 2021; Nosella et al., 2012; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Tarba et al., 2020; N. Turner et al., 2013; Wilden et al., 2018). This study answers the call on how organisations “can dynamically balance exploration and exploitation” (Luger et al., 2018, p. 466). This is especially so for small organisations that may lack sufficient resources to undertake effective balancing of exploiting and exploring when facing such tensions (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020).

With a dearth of research in this area, this study looks at extending the use of ambidexterity at a micro-level within small organisations in order to understand how SMSEs simultaneously exploit and explore to align mission and multiple mandates. The study specifically focuses on how routine activities and practices in SMSEs within resource-constrained environments facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates.

3.5 Internal organising of routine activities and practices

Understanding how SMSEs internally organise their activities at a micro-level could offer insight into their nimbleness, specifically, how they continuously and simultaneously align activities to fulfil both multiple mandates and safeguard core social missions. SMSEs in resource-constrained environments such as South Africa are characterised by involvement with different funders and stakeholders. The management of complexities in dealing with different actors requires internal organising in such organisations to deal with the ensuing mission and mandate tensions that have to be addressed concurrently (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Littlewood et al., 2022; Mair, 2020).

The literature on hybrids argues that the structuring of activities within social enterprises is informed by harmonising the social and commercial logics. This has led to research on how social enterprises organise by integrating or differentiating social and economic activities (Battilana, 2018; Battilana et al., 2017). However, other tensions, for example, administrative and reporting, may arise internally when social enterprises attempt to manage multiple funding on the one hand and the core mission on the other (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). These activities have to continuously happen internally to align with the core mission and, at the same time, happen simultaneously to manage internal tensions. Therefore, there was a research need to consider the routine activities and practices that simultaneously align multiple mandates with mission.

Routines and practices have been cited in the literature as possible avenues of understanding the internal operations of organisations and how they deal with internal tensions (Nosella et al., 2012). While it was suggested that internal routines and practices may facilitate organisations'

simultaneous management of internal goal conflicts (Rerup & Feldman, 2011), how this is achieved is not clear in the literature (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Indeed, more studies are required to understand the simultaneous capability of “ambidexterity at a more micro level, through the organisational practices and routines lens to discover the artefacts and processes underlying the development of this capability (Nosella et al., 2012, p. 459)”. This is especially so in SMSEs (Felício et al., 2019). A review of internal routines and practices is discussed next in sections 3.5.1 and 3.5.2.

3.5.1 Routine activities in managing mission-mandate tensions

As part of organisational behaviour, “routines are temporal structures that are often used as a way of accomplishing organisational work” (Feldman, 2000, p. 611) and an embodiment of internal processes (Nosella et al., 2012). Studies in routines have been based on organisational learning processes and how individual members, such as top management, in organisations make sense of actions in a repetitive fashion (Feldman, 2000; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). However, as part of organisational behaviour (Feldman, 2000), the definition suggests that routines can further be cascaded down to the continuous activity and mundane level, and that the activities can be routinely undertaken within the organisation to accomplish specific goals.

Research in routines has been evolving, with the initial view being that routines are rigid and used to accomplish specific goals in stable conditions (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011). The current debate holds that routines are agile and can be utilised to address multiple, and even possibly, conflicting goals (D’Adderio, 2014; Feldman et al., 2021; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). Despite the potential of routines to facilitate organisations’ response to internal pressures (Feldman, 2000), the use of routines in the “simultaneous pursuit of competing organisational goals” requires further research (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 34).

When faced with multiple goals that may cause internal tensions, the studies in routine activities may offer insight into how social enterprises can deal with internal multiple mandate and mission tensions. The literature refers to this as the “dynamic perspective of routines” (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012, p. 26) because of the routine’s potential ability to be undertaken in actions requiring stability and flexibility simultaneously. Studies in routine activities suggest that routines can facilitate mundane activities to be continuously and simultaneously undertaken (Feldman, 2000; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Despite the idiosyncratic nature of routines, the literature on the use of routines in actioning multiple goals simultaneously is scant. The few exceptions cited in the for-profit sectors, such as the airline industry (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017), electronics industry (D’Adderio, 2014), hotel industry (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021), point to disparate routines in

attaining multiple goals. Building on this, therefore, routines can potentially facilitate social enterprises to be ambidextrous in dealing with internal mission-mandate tensions simultaneously.

There is a dearth of studies in the social enterprise sector regarding the use of routine activities to balance multiple mandates and core mission simultaneously. “Despite this growing body of research, much still remains to be learned about how routines can be a potential source for managing opposing organisational goals” (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 33).

A deeper review suggests that the study of routines borrows from the Carnegie school approach in the decision-making and management of conflicting goals. This approach in management argues how routines provide stability of one goal over the other, akin to a zero-sum approach, and emphasises the role of management in driving these routines (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Consequently, Figure 3.4 below summarises a framework that has been used in literature to understand how routines can be used to manage competing goals in a sequential manner between consistency and change actions in waste management companies (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). The framework was adapted for use to understand how an electronic organisation developed two separate sets of routines that allowed for alignment and innovation, respectively, in the case of transferring routines from the US base to a UK site (D’Adderio, 2014).

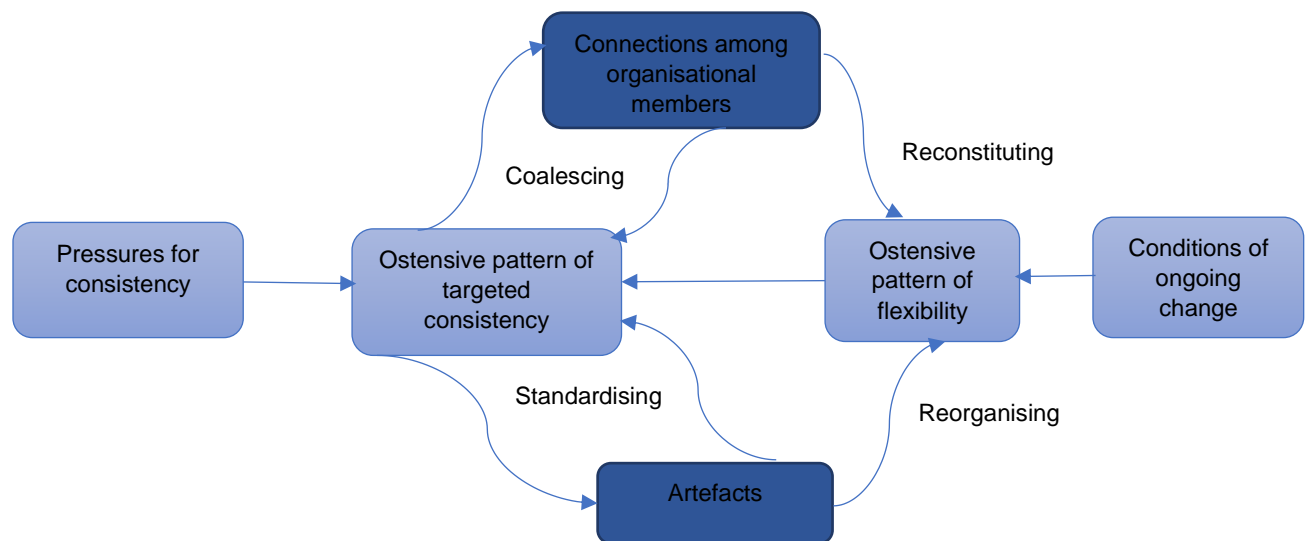


Figure 3.4: A model of balancing the pressures for consistency and for change

Source: (D’Adderio, 2014; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012)

The framework highlights the role of organisational members in making sense of internal tensions while coming up with appropriate routines, as well as the role of artefacts as an embodiment of routines (D’Adderio, 2014; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). Artefacts are defined as the “formal design of a routine ... such as rules, schedules, and standard operating procedures, and the routine

itself” (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012, p. 26), applied in order to standardise or reorganise the activities performed. Other examples of organisational artefacts may include internal procedures, monitoring tools, reporting tools, and programme audit functions (D’Adderio, 2014; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012).

While the use of artefacts and members’ actions may be useful in understanding how organisations deal with internal tensions, how this is simultaneously achieved requires further research (D’Adderio, 2014; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). In both studies that were applying the framework, disparate routines were selectively performed by actors using artefacts to manage possible tensions. Hence, how similar routines [and artefacts] can simultaneously manage internal tensions remains unclear. This is especially so in small organisations that may not have the luxury to possess advanced internal structures that house disparate complex routines or even adequate staffing to facilitate simultaneous coordination.

Consequently, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on how routine activities facilitate the simultaneous management of competing goals in small organisations (Iborra et al., 2020; Zimmermann et al., 2020). Therefore, we do not know how routine activities in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates (Felício et al., 2019). This study proposes to understand how internal routine activities in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous management of mission–mandate tensions.

3.5.2 Practices in managing mission-mandate tensions

Practices related to ensuring SMSEs fulfil funder mandates as well as achieve their social missions can offer insight into the internal dynamics that deal with mission-mandate tensions. Practices can be defined as “an organised constellation of different people’s activities” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13). This study focuses on the role of human agency in the facilitation and coordination of activities, as an embodiment of practice (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Jarzabkowski et al., 2007; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). This is especially so with the ‘practice turn’ as practice literature and the latest discourse to move away from individual [cognitive, traits, heuristics] and societal [structure and institutional] towards real-time ‘doing and sayings’ (Berglund & Glaser, 2022; Champenois et al., 2020; N. Thompson et al., 2020). In other words, it should be a move towards the relational attributes, human agency, and interactional aspects that make up the practices to connect the ‘arrows’ in Figure 3.1 [section 3.1].

The literature on practice theory highlights how internal practices facilitate the achievement of set strategic goals (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). Extant literature highlights how practices and routines

can combine internally to facilitate the achievement of set organisational goals at the mundane activity level (Nosella et al., 2012; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017; Rerup & Feldman, 2011). However, similar to the study of routines, it appears that practices facilitate the achievement of specific goals disparately and not multiple goals simultaneously.

The social enterprise literature highlights how practices have been used to handle selective coupling decisions (Pache & Santos, 2013), governance decisions (Ebrahim et al., 2014), and act as guardrails in maintaining hybridity (Smith & Besharov, 2019). However, the literature is scant on the dynamics of actually how these practices facilitate the simultaneous management of organisations' internal tensions amidst multiple goals. For example, Ometto et al. (2019) highlight how an educational social enterprise located in the state of São Paulo in Brazil experienced persistent internal tensions due to engaging in multiple funding arrangements. In an endeavour to adapt different internal practices in order to fulfil both multiple private funder mandates and social mission, the unresolved internal tensions led to the closure of the organisation.

The ability to undertake practices that enable organisations to simultaneously exploit and explore requires adequate resources (Pertusa-Ortega et al., 2021). On the one hand, balancing mission and mandate tensions may require internal practices that capture terms such as response, adaptation, flexibility and diversification, as they manage multiple funding opportunities. On the other hand, the internal practices would capture terms such as stability, continuity, and focus as they safeguard their mission. Some researchers suggest that social enterprises should pay special attention to practices that improve the stability of their core social mission in the face of uncertainties and changes (Eikenberry, 2004; Kodzi, 2015). Conversely, other researchers recommend focusing on opportunity diversification and adaptability (Austin et al., 2006; Dees, 1998; Maier et al., 2016; Weerawardena et al., 2010). We, however, do not know how internal practices can facilitate the simultaneous alignment of both mission and mandates in SMSEs.

In their quantitative empirical study of over 2,000 manufacturing small and medium enterprises in Spain, Iborra et al. (2020) highlight the positive role of simultaneous exploring and exploiting that enabled them to remain resilient after the global financial crisis. The study, however, does not indicate how the practices at the micro-level facilitate the small organisations to explore and exploit simultaneously. They further call for future qualitative studies in such organisations using 'how' questions (Iborra et al., 2020, p. 13).

Therefore, this study accepted that there was a research need to understand how practices facilitate the simultaneous alignment of multiple mandates with social mission in SMSEs. This is

especially so for those existing in resource-constrained environments with fewer resources to undertake multiple practices concurrently.

3.6 Conclusion

The literature on social enterprises demonstrates empirically that social enterprises encounter internal mission-mandate tensions as they endeavour to balance their internal efforts and activities (Ometto et al., 2019). Extant social enterprise literature suggests that responses to mission tensions are informed by institutional logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014) and legitimacy perspectives (Grimes et al., 2019). We, however, do not know what happens internally in social enterprises to manage internal tensions, and we know little about the internal dynamics of how social enterprises align their efforts and activities to simultaneously manage internal mission-mandate tensions (Mair, 2020). This is especially so for SMSEs in resource-constrained environments that are presumed to face resource challenges in simultaneously safeguarding their missions while fulfilling multiple funding mandates.

Ambidexterity offers insight into how internal organisations' tensions are managed between activities depicting competing goals (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). However, there is an acknowledgement for more research being needed into how small organisations, such as SMSEs, simultaneously manage internal tensions (Battilana, 2018).

Routines and practices can potentially facilitate social enterprises to be ambidextrous in dealing with internal mission-mandate tensions (D'Adderio, 2014; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). There is, however, a paucity of organisational ambidexterity studies regarding internal dynamics around routine and practices that depict simultaneous exploration and exploitation. This is especially so in small organisations (Iborra et al., 2020). The use of routines and practices in the "simultaneous pursuit of competing organisational goals" (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 34), requires further research.

We, therefore, do not know how routine activities and practices within SMSEs may be used to manage tensions between multiple mandates and core social mission simultaneously (Felício et al., 2019). This research investigated how SMSEs in a South African setting manage internal tensions, and specifically, how routine activities and practices in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of multiple mandates and social mission.

As described above, such social enterprises are normally established to meet a defined local social need toward targeted community beneficiaries. However, to fulfil that mission, they often seek resources from external funders who may impose multiple and potentially divergent

mandates. This research sought to understand how, in these circumstances, social enterprises navigate internal tensions, employing the organisational ambidexterity perspective. This study, therefore, argues that simultaneous ambidexterity offers insight into SMSEs' routines and practices to align their activities (Luger et al., 2018; Zimmermann et al., 2020), such as monitoring and reporting, to manage internal mission-mandate tensions (Mair, 2020). The outcome of the study, therefore, contributes to the understanding of internal mission-mandate alignment and extends social enterprise and ambidexterity literature through simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations.

Therefore, the main research question was: How do small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission?

The sub-questions were:

- a) How do internal practices in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?
- b) How do internal routine activities in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?

CHAPTER 4: Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

The study's objective was to identify and understand the approaches to the management of internal tensions between stakeholder mandates and the core mission in small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs). This chapter outlines the philosophical paradigm underpinning the research, why the selected research design was deemed most appropriate, and the methodology utilised to empirically answer the research question. The section also includes the sampling strategy adopted for data collection and the data analysis approach. The chapter concludes by indicating data assurance strategies to address the quality of the research as well as the challenges applicable to the study.

4.2 Research paradigm

The research question in this study was intended to elicit a rich understanding of how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple external mandates and the internal core social mission, which required the effective balancing of exploiting and exploring strategies when SMSEs were faced with such tensions (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020). The assumption was that there must be a process whereby the two actions are being aligned simultaneously. Therefore, this study aimed at extending the use of ambidexterity beyond the 'dual' explore and exploit decisions, and also to examine how organisations simultaneously manage internal, competing, and possibly conflicting, multiple goals. Interpretivism was adopted to define knowledge through interactions between the researcher and the participants from the SMSEs (Creswell et al., 2007; Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). The positioning of the researcher was intersubjective and part of the knowledge discovery process as he endeavoured to obtain deeper meanings while factoring in the social, political, economic and cultural worlds around him in the process of knowledge creation (Alvesson et al., 2008).

Interpretivism implies a qualitative methodology that tends to illuminate deeper insights into a phenomenon under various contexts (Johns, 2006). The research question is an exploratory one in the given context with the aim of theory advancement in organisational ambidexterity, through theory elaboration (Fisher & Aguinis, 2017). Due to the limited studies having been conducted on simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations (Iborra et al., 2020), and the context-bound nature of the management of internal mission–mandate tensions in social enterprises (Mair, 2020), induction (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Gehman et al., 2018) and phenomenon-based theorising (Fisher et al., 2021) were utilised to extend the theory.

4.3 Research design

The study examined how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple external mandates and the internal core social mission. The phenomena in this study were highly contextual. Hence, the use of a case study design, through multiple cases, allowed the exploration of the phenomenon within its natural context (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Welch et al., 2011; Yin, 2017). SMSEs in resource-constrained environments are susceptible to internal tensions caused by the pressure of having to divert efforts toward fulfilling external funders' multiple mandates. This takes place at the expense of attending to core mission-related activities. The case design allowed for a detailed review and description of the case organisations within the given context (Gehman et al., 2018; Henry & Foss, 2015), and how they manage internal tensions or how they internally align multiplicities in a simultaneous manner.

To study how the SMSEs simultaneously explore and exploit opportunities to balance internal and external priorities and their routines and practices being adopted, a “case-based analysis may also better reveal the complexity” (Nosella et al., 2012, p. 459). Recent calls for case design in small organisations undertaking simultaneous ambidexterity have been encouraged (Zimmermann et al., 2020).

The selected multiple cases were SMSEs engaged in multiple funding arrangements and navigating other stakeholder mandates, while endeavouring to fulfil social missions in a South African context. This facilitated obtaining multiple perspectives and rich insightful data (Henry & Foss, 2015). With a paucity of research on the phenomenon, an inductive multiple-case study (Yin, 2003, 2017) that describes the internal dynamics of routines and practices within five cases was used. Purposive homogenous sampling was used to select the five cases according to SMSE's size, focus, and operating multiple funding. Each case was selected to offer insight into how they manage internal mission–mandate tensions.

The emphasis of a case study design is to empirically review the cases within a specific bounded time and space (Creswell et al., 2007). Multiple cases allow for within-case and across-case comparison and contrasting of emerging themes (Yin, 2017). Participants within the cases were interviewed to elicit the rich data and insights. The exploratory and inductive nature of case design (Henry & Foss, 2015) facilitated a detailed examination of how the social enterprises' routine activities and practices aligned multiple external mandates with their primary social mission in a simultaneous manner. This was vital to facilitate the extension of theory from the identified context (Welch et al., 2011).

The use of multiple cases also allowed the researcher to analyse patterns that can be used to explain emerging relationships, themes, or concepts for theory advancement within-case and across the cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Gehman et al., 2018). The design allowed for different units of analysis (Gehman et al., 2018; Henry & Foss, 2015). In the study, social enterprise management participants were interviewed to obtain detailed and thick information based on their experience and perspectives about whether and how they foregrounded social missions amidst competing external mandates within a resource-constrained context. The design allowed for rich and descriptive reporting based on the analysed data (Henry & Foss, 2015).

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, unlike large social enterprises, SMSEs are inherently resource-constrained (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Malatesta & Smith, 2014). This study focused on SMSE non-profit organisations (NPOs) pursuing different funding arrangements to achieve their core social missions (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b). Specifically, the study sought to examine how these organisations dealt with internal tensions between activities requiring mission stability on the one hand, and flexibility to fulfil multiple funders as well as other stakeholders' mandates on the other. South Africa is in a unique position in that most of the SMSEs are registered as NPOs, making up about 93% of the approximately 225,000 registered NPOs (DSD, 2019), which predominantly operate at the community level to fulfil their social missions. Hence, the setting provided an opportunity to gain insights into how such organisations overcome their vulnerabilities to simultaneously align their core mission and the demands made by external funders or stakeholders' multiple mandates.

4.4 Research methodology

Given the exploratory nature of the research question, a qualitative methodology was adopted. A qualitative methodology facilitates answering explorative 'how' questions in a specific context (Bryman, 1984; Pratt et al., 2020) and is also appropriate for extending theories (Suddaby et al., 2015). Most previous studies were based on quantitative methods, testing the role of sequential ambidexterity, but there was a dearth of qualitative research that explores the internal dynamics of how organisations exploit and explore simultaneously when faced with specific challenges (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; N. Turner et al., 2013; Wilden et al., 2018). Specifically, there were calls for qualitative studies about this dilemma in small organisations, using 'how' questions (Iborra et al., 2020, p. 13).

Due to the nascency of studies on internal mission-mandate tensions (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020; Mair, 2020; Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020), this study adopted a qualitative case study

methodology to understand the internal alignment of mission and mandates in SMSEs. In-depth qualitative case studies at the organisational level have also been encouraged to elicit and understanding of how social enterprises deal with internal tensions (Battilana et al., 2017). A limited number of empirical studies on aligning missions and mandates in social enterprises (Mair, 2020) provided the rationale for conducting this study and thereby the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem and contextual nuances by using a qualitative methodology.

Obtaining a deeper understanding of how SMSEs concurrently stay true to their original social mission, while also addressing the needs of external funders and stakeholders, who may impose diverse and possibly conflicting mandates, may further extend theory (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007). Additionally, the chosen methodology helped the researcher uncover novel examples (Corner & Ho, 2010). “The use of more case-based [studies]...to follow and illuminate the multiple contextual” (Bruin et al., 2017, p. 582) nuances in social enterprises research was also encouraged. Qualitative methods are suited (Alvesson, 2003) for studies that aim to garner deep insights into how social enterprises are navigating internal tensions. Specifically, the purpose of the qualitative approach to this research through a multiple case study design was to gain new insights from the cases and determine whether the emergent findings are “idiosyncratic to a single case or consistently replicated by several others” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p. 27).

To better understand how the organisations align multiple mandates and core missions internally, the internal routine activities and practices that facilitate this alignment were examined to obtain insight at a micro level (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). In this study, data was collected from multiple sources within each case through semi-structured interviews (primary research), a review of documentary evidence (secondary research), and participant observations.

4.4.1 Unit of analysis

The level of analysis was the organisation. The unit of analysis refers to the actions of SMSEs navigating the dynamics around routine activities and practices that facilitate the simultaneous mission–mandate alignment. Specifically, it was concerned with the manner in which internal routine activities and practices facilitated the simultaneous alignment of multiple external mandates and the core mission at the micro level (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). In most studies on organisational behaviour and internal organising, the unit of analysis is the specific routines and practices as nouns (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). This study primarily focused on the managers’ practising role and routine dynamics as verbs, in the nuanced nexus of routines and practices to align multiple goals simultaneously. The context of the SMSEs

in the study facilitated the study to obtain a deeper insight into how the organisations navigated all the multiple demands simultaneously. The information was gathered from participants who oversee the strategic mission, programming, operations, and the reporting and funding-related processes. This included directors and senior and middle-level managers. Documentary evidence and participant observation added to the insights into the routine and practice dynamics the organisation members engaged in to manage competing pressures between fulfilling external mandates and safeguarding of social mission.

4.4.2 Study population

For purposes of parity, comparison, and exclusion of external effects, the population of this study was SMSEs directly working at the community level with social missions evidenced through supporting beneficiaries in the health and social services sectors. This was deliberately chosen because of the past prominence of donor funding in these areas (DSD, 2017), which is strongly linked with multiple donor requirements. Additionally, there is a demonstrated past of heavy dependence by SMSEs on donors in the sectors (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). Consequently, a heavy reliance on aid from donors such as the US Government, which is in decline (USAID, 2019), is triggering social enterprises to identify and pursue other funding arrangements.

The social missions for social enterprises in these sectors are usually well articulated in terms of targeted beneficiary groups and key activities because of their exposure to working under stringent funding requirements and specified mission targets. Hence, a focus on these specific social enterprise sectors in this particular environment provided a rich understanding of the phenomenon (McDonald et al., 2021).

The SMSEs were selected within a South African context or setting because they were constantly faced with tensions as a result of the multiple stakeholder requirements they were required to adhere to, while also ensuring internal alignment with their core mission-related activities. Not only do they have to balance expectations from multiple funders and the communities they work in, but they also have to manage local government dynamics and act as agents for the government in the provision of social services. They are also required to adhere to compliance requirements as dictated by the same government and still pursue income for their sustainability. The cases selected had to demonstrate how they internally navigated all these multiplicities in a concurrent, balanced manner.

The sample was initially drawn from seven social enterprises working in the Gauteng region and within the health and social services sectors, but only five cases were finally included in the study

and analysed. Gauteng Province was viewed as being representative of the country for observing the resource-constrained conditions, such as low-income settlements, high levels of inequality, and dynamic market conditions. Additionally, Gauteng was considered as a result of the inter-province travel restrictions that were in place because of the COVID-19 pandemic's lockdown to facilitate easy access by the researcher to the chosen cases.

The initial plans were to conduct face-to-face interviews. However, it was found that most of the selected SMSEs had adopted 'virtual working from home' and one SMSE utilised a hybrid approach. Therefore, the interviews were mostly conducted on an online, virtual basis, and the sample was extended to include a case from the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province.

Virtual interviews were chosen to gain a better understanding of whether there is a structured way South African SMSEs' internal dynamics facilitate the management of internal tensions arising from managing multiple funding and other stakeholder mandates, while still focusing on the core social mission.

4.4.3 Case selection

The cases were selected by the researcher using purposive sampling. The purposive sampling selection enabled the researcher to select data sources that would potentially provide more in-depth and rich insight into the phenomenon under investigation (Gentles et al., 2015; Henry & Foss, 2015), within a specific context, bounded by space and time (Yin, 2017). To select the cases, theoretical sampling was adopted to extend theory (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Theoretically, SMSEs are required to simultaneously explore and exploit opportunities to manage internally competing and possibly conflicting multiple goals (Zimmermann et al., 2020). The selected cases were SMSEs engaged in multiple funding arrangements to fulfil their core social missions. They operated at the community level, and were also pursuing income generation for the organisation's sustainability. This requirement presented the SMSEs with multiple mandates needing to be navigated and provided the study with an opportunity to understand the internal dynamics of how the SMSEs align or balance multiple mandates with their core mission in resource-constrained environments. This was based on the premise that organisations may be required to adapt internal routine activities and practices if they have to manage multiple competing organisational goals (Ometto et al., 2019; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017).

As highlighted in section 4.4.2, the study employed a homogenous purposive sampling strategy through the identification of similar (industry, size, operating budget, and focus) South African SMSEs in the health and social services sector (Creswell & Poth, 2016), to exclude sector-specific

effects in other sectors. Despite having commonalities, each case selected offered variation and insight into how they were internally organised, and how the management actions adapted their routines and practices to align activities related to multiple external mandates and the internal social mission. This sampling methodology was well suited to the case study research, especially when selecting cases that provide in-depth information (Yin, 2017).

The cases were selected based on the following factors:

- a) SMSEs having operating budgets below R50 million per annum in the health and social services sectors.
- b) SMSEs working to support beneficiaries at the community level to allow for investigation on how they maintain their mission focus.
- c) SMSEs engaged in multiple funding arrangements, for instance, through multiple contractual agreements, earned income generation, dealing with multiple stakeholders, and so forth, to gather insight into how they manage multiple mandates.

The focus of the study was, therefore, on how the SMSEs internally organise themselves to adapt their internal routine activities and practices to demonstrate their mission focus, while simultaneously fulfilling multiple external mandates. This was especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing effects on the funding landscape, which exacerbated the vulnerability of these social enterprises and increased the pressure on them to steer efforts away from their missions. However, it also presented opportunities for social enterprises' mission agility to be enhanced amidst multiple external mandates (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021).

Initially, the researcher approached eight cases and was provided with four other referral cases from the initial eight organisations, bringing the total to twelve cases. Two of the cases did not respond, one was hesitant and opted out of being included because of the sensitivity of the work they are undertaking. One organisation required the researcher to present the purpose of the study to their board before granting the researcher access. Two other organisations then opted out during the actual process, citing a potential conflict of interest. The remaining seven cases were included in the sample.

In total, the organisations availed 34 participants to be included in the research. However, the nature of cases 6 and 7 did not fit fully into the criteria as they were not going to be able to answer the research question. This reduced the final sample to 5 participating cases.

The table below describes the selected cases.

Table 4.1: Case description (all names below are pseudonyms)

Cases	SMSE registration structure	Core mission	Multiple mandates to navigate
Damco	Education and Development Trust with NPO status	Offer tailored training, social research, and health and social development interventions in the health and social services for children, youth, and young adults sector at the community level	Earned income through fully owned accredited Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) training college, social and health services provision at the community level, employment and training agent on behalf of government, municipalities, multiple funders, and family trust
S-Impact	NPO with a profit arm	Provide care and support to vulnerable children and their families in the health and social services sector at the community level	Social and health services provision at the community level, operating a fully owned for-profit social enterprise, multiple funders, employment, and SETA accredited training agent on behalf of government, municipalities, running a commercial building
Hilcorp	Trust with NPO status	Use health and other means to improve the overall well-being of the communities in the health and social services for children, youth, and young adults sector	Social and health services provision at the community level, SETA accredited training centre, running a commercial building, multiple funders, secretariate of local government, and community advisory council
H-Inc	Non-profit company with NPO status	Poverty alleviation and transforming communities through economic empowerment, focusing on youth, women, and marginalised minority communities	Social and health services provision at the community level, multiple funders, employment, and SETA accredited training agent on behalf of government municipalities, employment agent of the government
Ugo	Proprietary limited liability company (pty) with fully owned NPO arm	Enhance generation of quality data and innovative M&E interventions to generate innovative solutions for better population health and development outcomes within communities	Operating for-profit social enterprise, social and health services provision at the community level, consultancies in M&E for earned income, multiple funders, initially family-run consultancy

4.4.4 Participant selection

The most knowledgeable informants within the social enterprises, with knowledge of actions around practices related to resource seeking, tracking mission attainment, implementation, and reporting on funder requirements, were targeted for interviews to mitigate retrospective informant bias (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The participants included directors, senior, and middle-level managers who oversee the strategic mission, operations, monitoring, project management, reporting, and funding-related processes.

The participants selected were based on the following factors:

- a) Executive directors and leaders who have the necessary background information on the mission of the organisation and lead the funding solicitation process.
- b) Managers overseeing functions such as monitoring, tracking reporting of funding requirements and mission achievements, financial planning, and reporting.
- c) HR, administration and operation managers overseeing the allocation of resources.
- d) Programme managers overseeing and coordinating the implementation of multiple funder activities.

Based on the five final cases analysed, a total of 31 participants were interviewed, as detailed in Table 4.2 in section 4.4.6.

4.4.5 Document review (secondary research)

Documentary evidence was collected and reviewed to enrich other primary obtained data (Weerawardena et al., 2010). The document selection was based on the following criteria:

- a) Founding documents to review the articulated missions of the social enterprises and how they are registered as summarised in Table 4.1 in section 4.4.3.
- b) Funding or resource application documents of successful contracts and funding agreements to understand the activities proposed and stipulated requirements.
- c) Annual or funder reports, to review how activities are monitored against the funder requirements as well as the organisations' missions.
- d) Financial reports to determine how different funding sources are accounted for and reported on.
- e) Organisational structure and standard operating procedures that can assist in reviewing the internal routines and practices, and how they monitor and track set contractual activities against their stated missions.

Access to various documents was provided by the case organisations, as highlighted in Table 4.4. The documents received and reviewed totalled 199, excluding those accessed from their websites. Going through some of the strategic documents first and then carrying out the interviews enriched the discussions and provided better and richer insights into how the organisations were internally organised, and actors practised alignment of multiple competing requirements. Hence, the data generation sequence of conducting document review, speaking to the executive directors first, and then obtaining more information from the participants referred by executive directors seemed to yield more insightful and detailed information.

4.4.6 Sample size

While there is no explicit guidance on the ideal sample size in a qualitative methodology, given the rich uniqueness each case study offers, the sample size needs to ensure saturation. Saturation is the point at which no new information can be derived by adding more data (Mason, 2010), the study can be replicated, and the point at which further coding is not feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Therefore, the five cases in the study were within the suggested number of cases, which can range from four to ten.

The number of participants selected averaged six per each of the final five identified cases of social enterprises to facilitate triangulation and saturation. This is explained further in section 4.6. Although a sample size of 34 participants was chosen, 31 interviews were sufficiently responsive to answer the research question. Some of the participants did not provide detailed enough insights to answer the research question fully and when the researcher tried to follow up with more participants (in one case), no other participants had sufficient or detailed enough insight on the research subject. In terms of saturation, the responses started to have recurring themes from the 13th interview, and hence, the final 31 interviews were well within what is suggested in the literature for analysis (Mason, 2010). This is further depicted in Table 4.4, which indicates the multiple data sources from which information was obtained and analysed.

Data was collected by using both primary and secondary sources through the use of semi-structured interviews conducted with participants (Gehman et al., 2018; Roulston, 2010), which were complemented by observations, and the analysis of secondary documents (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2010; Yin, 2017). This enhanced the triangulation of the empirical study (Fusch et al., 2018; Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014). Semi-structured interviews facilitated the garnering of rich experiential information from the participants (Gehman et al., 2018). Semi-structured interviews also allowed for the framing of the discussions and provided the researcher with an opportunity to allow participants to share more detailed factual and experienced or lived information (Gehman et al., 2018). The summary data generated is presented overleaf.

Table 4.2: Cases, participants and document review

Organisation	Participant (individual interviews) Total = 29 interviews Total time 1,818 minutes or 30.3 hours	Secondary data (document review) Total = 199 documents	Observation
Damco	Executive Director (50 min); Operations & HR manager/Deputy director (55 min); Programme manager (49 min); M&E coordinator (38 min); Finance manager (38 min); IT/Admin coordinator (33 min); total approx. 263 min 6 interviews	Annual and programme reports; financial reports; sample contract agreements; strategy and policy documents 45 documents	Observation memo
S-Impact	Executive Director (1 hr 20 min); M&E manager (1 hr 15 min); Programme manager (1 hr 10 min); Finance manager (47 min); HR/Admin manager (44 min); total approx. 316 min 5 interviews	Annual and programme reports; financial reports; contract agreements; strategy and policy documents 42 documents	Memo (virtual)
Hilcorp	Executive Director (1 hr 06 min); Programme manager (1 hr 03 min); Finance and ops manager (1 hr 03 min); M&E manager (44 min); HR/Admin manager (56 min); total approx. 292 min 5 interviews	Annual and programme reports; financial reports; contract agreements; strategy and policy documents 36 documents	Memo (virtual)
H-Inc	Executive Director/CEO (1 hr 15 min); M&E manager (1 hr 11 min); Finance manager (1 hr 16 min); Programme manager (1 hr 21 min); HR/Admin manager (49 min); IT/Admin coordinator (47 min); total approx. 399 min 6 interviews	Annual and programme reports; financial reports; contract agreements; strategy and policy documents 45 documents	Observation memo
Ugo	Executive Director/CEO (1 hr 17 min); Operations Director (1 hr 10 min); M&E Director (1 hr 15 min); Program Director (1 hr); Director fundraising (55 min); Finance manager (43 min); IT/data coordinator (38 min); total approx. 418 min 7 interviews	Annual and programme reports; financial reports; contract agreements; strategy and policy documents 31 documents	Observation memo

4.4.7 Data collection

The study necessitated the researcher to collect data from multiple sources and through multiple data collection techniques to get an in-depth insight into how the organisations were internally navigating multiple, and sometimes, competing goals.

The data collection was conducted during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic's partial restrictions imposed by the government. Hence, seven of these interviews were still able to be conducted physically face-to-face, 20 were virtual face-to-face and four were virtual using the

Zoom platform without video due to bandwidth challenges. Interviews conducted by synchronous online platforms, such as Zoom, mitigate challenges that may arise in conducting face-to-face interviews (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Salmons, 2018), especially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's movement and social-distancing restrictions. The average interview time was 1.05 hours and the actual times for each interview are detailed in Table 4.2.

External effects also play a role in the funding landscape and inform how organisations make sense of internal actions. The study investigated, for example, how these organisations aligned their core missions and mandates amid the COVID-19 pandemic (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021), which could have had both positive and negative consequences on these social enterprises' mission focus. The executive directors were primarily the key participants in facilitating the researcher garnering an insight into the organisations' missions and different stakeholder expectations that had to be managed.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E), programme, and finance managers were interviewed to understand how they monitor and report on multiple requirements in a concurrent manner, as well as the internal tools, policies and procedures that act as enablers. It was important to understand how they ensured that the organisation's core activities were tracked and reported upon. Programme managers also provided insights into how they typically coordinate and implement multiple projects, while ensuring the organisation's priorities are safeguarded simultaneously. This included programme managers who oversee all the projects as opposed to individual project coordinators. The human resource, operations and IT managers were also interviewed to understand how staffing and other resources are allocated and managed, as well as the use of technology to ensure alignment. All these internal dynamics, as depicted by internal routine activities and practices (Nosella et al., 2012), shed light on how the organisations navigated various internal tensions. The study also focused on the social enterprises' actions around internal routine activities, the internal processes and structures akin to the 'what', and the practices, how they enact internal actions that facilitate the simultaneous fulfilment of multiple external mandates while safeguarding their core missions.

Interviewing the key informants also facilitated gaining a better understanding of how the SMSEs embarked on internal efforts in a manner that leveraged and foregrounded their social mission. This facilitated the generation of rich insight within the context of how social enterprises safeguard the social mission, which they were originally founded for and had to fulfil, while aligning the possibly conflicting mandates imposed by external funders and/or investors.

A pilot interview was conducted in a global social enterprise that was founded and is headquartered in South Africa. The key participant was the CEO of the organisation who considered himself as a subject matter specialist in social enterprises as he had worked in over 25 countries in the sector. The pilot interview was to test the clarity of the questions and whether they would facilitate in-depth discussions that would solicit insights to ultimately answer the research question. After the pilot, some of the questions were considered too complex and repetitive, based on the responses and had to be realigned. The pilot results and the redrafted interview schedule were submitted for supervisory review and further changes were proposed to ensure pertinent information would be included. This considered specifically simplifying complex questions on mandates to ensure the participants would understand the insight being sought. The changes were not substantive and did not require reapplication for ethical clearance.

The researcher also observed that there was better access to the chosen participants after having made several calls with the executive directors and having them understand the purpose and format of the study. This later led to them easily identifying and introducing the researcher to the appropriate participants. The researcher being a practitioner in the field of study had its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, some participants had prior information about the researcher, which made the conversation easier. However, the researcher had to avoid personal bias and stay objective during the interviews by maintaining analytical memos and fieldnotes, as well as bracketing, where necessary (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). For instance, in one case, the researcher was approached to attend a board meeting to offer advice but then had to inform them that he would only attend for observation purposes at this point in time.

The initial plan was to conduct interviews for one organisation at a time to completion, but because of the availability of participants at different times, the schedules were based on participants' availability. All field notes were documented, and reflection memos were completed at the end of each interview before moving on to the next one. This was helpful to assist in the subsequent interviews, especially when these were conducted within the same case SMSE as the researcher could then build on areas for deeper insight that had not been clarified by other participants. All the participants were comfortable with the interviews being conducted in English. The interviews were conducted between February 2022 and July 2022. During this period, the researcher obtained public access to requests for proposals (RFPs), proposals, annual reports, audit reports, programme reports, financial reports, sample contract agreements, strategy and policy documents. In addition, participant observations were conducted.

Participant observations were conducted in three cases to understand how practices that facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates were enacted internally in real-life situations. A semi-structured observation checklist (see Appendix D) was utilised to gain insight into the ways in which participants deliberated and made sense to align activities that may be conflicting in fulfilling both mandates and mission. The first observation was a management meeting in Damco, with one of the main agenda items being the management of the relationship with one funder who was asking for more data than stipulated in the prior agreement. The second observation was a board meeting in Ugo with one agenda item relating to how they had won an assignment in a different country to do data assurance work in a field and country they had not ventured into before. They discussed how to embrace the work, but still align it with their mission.

The third observation was a management meeting in H-Inc. They were discussing emerging challenges in a recently awarded job fund activity and how they would safeguard their interests. One of the main discussions was how to navigate community expectations of who to hire, as well as ensure the local government was 'happy' because the activity is an extension of the government's efforts to manage unemployment. Having participated in such meetings before, the researcher had tacit knowledge to gain fruitful insights during the observation sessions and was able to draw insights into how the routines and practices were enacted to align mission and mandates simultaneously. However, as discussed in section 4.8, at all times, the researcher had to counter potential biases by practising reflexivity and acknowledgement of inherent biases upfront, as well as maintaining analytical memos and fieldnotes (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017).

In the study conducted to understand how two units blended structural and contextual ambidexterity at the Danish William Demant Holding, the researchers utilised participant observations to examine the internal routines and practices at play (Foss & Kirkegaard, 2020). In the present study, the researcher endeavoured to identify the relevant meetings by the selected cases for observation of the phenomenon under investigation as mentioned above, by engaging with the executive directors who proposed participation in the said meetings. The researcher was unable to attend further meetings as he did not deem them as relevant observation meetings to answer the research question. However, to complement the observations, he utilised other documentary evidence, such as request for proposals (RFPs), proposal funding applications, contracts, and annual reports from all the cases. Documentary evidence also allowed for the triangulation of findings. As highlighted in section 4.5.2, a hermeneutical analysis approach

facilitated making sense of the meanings within the documentary evidence when obtaining insight into how the organisations align mission and mandates.

Documentary evidence, such as funder reports, annual reports, financial reports, audit reports, funding contractual agreements, and other strategic planning documents were reviewed to enrich and triangulate the obtained primary data (Weerawardena et al., 2010). In total, about 199 documents were reviewed. The documents were reviewed to gain insight into how the organisations present information that fulfils the funders' requirements and simultaneously, the mission. Additionally, to understand how the social enterprises monitor, track, and report on set contractual activities vis-à-vis their stated mission, documents such as the annual reports were obtained on some of the organisations' websites.

The annual reports facilitated an understanding of how the organisation communicates to stakeholders on the achievements regarding the projects being undertaken as well as their core mission activities. Funding proposals and sample contracts were reviewed to understand how the requirements are initially documented, as well as the specific mandates from the onset. The programme, financial and M&E reports were also reviewed to understand how they subsequently report and document achievements across all projects and the organisation's core activities. Audit reports were also reviewed to understand how they account for various stakeholders. In most cases, they had specific project audit reports and separate organisational audit reports, which were meant for different users and distributed to various stakeholders.

Strategy and policy documents were also reviewed to understand how procedures were set out and adapted to address different funders and stakeholders, amidst centralised policy structures. The process of gathering secondary data from multiple source documents facilitated triangulation and the enhancement of the data's trustworthiness within each case (Yin, 2017). As stated in section 4.6, triangulation is important in bolstering the validity and consistency of findings across cases (Pratt et al., 2020).

4.4.8 Interview guide

The semi-structured interview protocol was adopted and covered the relevant topics as listed below with scope for flexibility (Roulston, 2010). The semi-structured interviews allowed for similar questioning of participants, while allowing them to openly discuss the different ways they navigated the internal tensions. The interview questions followed several overarching thoughts on how social enterprises align internally to ensure mission focus amidst multiple external funder mandates, in a resource-constrained context. Semi-structured interviews facilitated senior

managers' responses and motivations to communicate their experiences and perspectives (Bryman, 1984). The intention was to understand how they aligned all the competing expectations in a concurrent manner.

As indicated in section 4.4.7, the interview guide was piloted to ensure the questions were clear and simplified to generate the necessary insight. The questions were structured the same way for all participants, but with flexibility built in, based on how the participant answered the questions. The interview guide was divided into sections that allowed for open-ended questions to facilitate detailed answers by the participants (Roulston, 2010). The questions were ideal to probe and solicit a detailed response with opportunities for the researcher to follow up, as well as keep the interview focused (Kallio et al., 2016). Specifically, the guideline's aim was to elicit insight into how the participants navigated and facilitated internal alignment to meet multiple expectations within the defined internal procedural routines and practices.

In the absence of a prior research instrument, the interview guide was developed by using ideas from the conceptual framework by Ebrahim and Rangan (2014). The main aspects of the interview guide, as detailed in Appendix A, included:

- a) A brief script by the researcher introducing himself and the purpose of the study, as well as relevant information during the interview process, such as the need for recording, confidentiality and anonymity, and no harm being done to any participant.
- b) An introduction section that included detailed information about the social enterprise, such as its registration details, legal status, scope of operations, strategic plan, annual income, organisation structure.
- c) A section on their main mission, beneficiary target group, and core activities necessary for addressing the social problem embodied in their organisational mission. Additionally, how they monitor the achievement of their mission, and how they report this.
- d) A section on the various funding contractual arrangements and how the social enterprises fulfil different contractual deliverables.
- e) A section with reflections of participants on typical routine activities and practices and how they were enacted to facilitate the alignment of the funder's contractual deliverables with their missions.

4.5 Data analysis

Answering the question entailed understanding how social enterprises align mission and mandate activities simultaneously within the selected social enterprises, based on rich first-hand

experiential information from the participants, and through participant observation, and documentary evidence (Gehman et al., 2018). The case study design adopted allowed for semi-structured interviews to be conducted with the participants within the selected case organisations. All conversations were audio recorded. All the data generated was analysed to obtain rich insights.

4.5.1 Transcription process

Transcription of interviews and field notes was completed immediately after each interview with the help of instantaneous live transcription capabilities within the Zoom virtual software. The researcher had initially tried to transcribe one interview by using Otter.ai software, but it had numerous accent-related errors and took about six hours to transcribe one interview. The researcher obtained the initial transcript from the Zoom software, and the final transcripts were edited from that draft by listening to all the interviews on a line-by-line basis. Despite the transcription capability within the software, the researcher took, on average, three hours to clean up the transcripts due to errors from inaudible words and different accents of the participants. Thereafter, the researcher verified the data by ensuring each line of the conversation was captured and transcribed by revisiting the recordings. The field notes were prepared immediately after each interview and they assisted in capturing interesting insights and anomalies during the interview and how these were reflectively documented (Montgomery & Bailey, 2007).

4.5.2 Data analysis strategy

As indicated in sections 4.2 and 4.3, the study was inductive, and hence the coding and subsequent analysis of data were driven from the obtained data as opposed to a previously envisaged analysis framework (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). All quotes were coded and content analysis utilised to sort and group the transcribed text data by using codes and categories that provided meaning in a structured fashion (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In discovering in-depth and rich information based on the chosen case study design, the codes and categories emerged from the study, and therefore the conventional content analysis was utilised in the final analysis process. Conventional content analysis allows for codes and subsequent categories to emerge from the data, rather than pre-determining them (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This facilitated the generation of themes and patterns that assisted in answering the research question.

Figure 4.1 below, as summarised by Saldana (2013), illustrates how data was inductively analysed from codes to themes with the help of Atlas.ti, as would be the case in a multi-case qualitative design. A hermeneutical approach was incorporated at the data analysis stage,

especially in the review of documentary evidence. Hermeneutics involves seeking a deeper understanding of the various meanings of statements in organisations' documents and within the context in which the statements are made (Ponterotto, 2005; Schwandt, 2000). The researcher also analysed how the organisation's participants made sense of events through interviews and participant observation conducted. This enhanced the interpretation of how the organisations navigated and made decisions amidst competing pressures between mandates and mission, for example, how procedures were adapted to fulfil different stakeholder requirements.

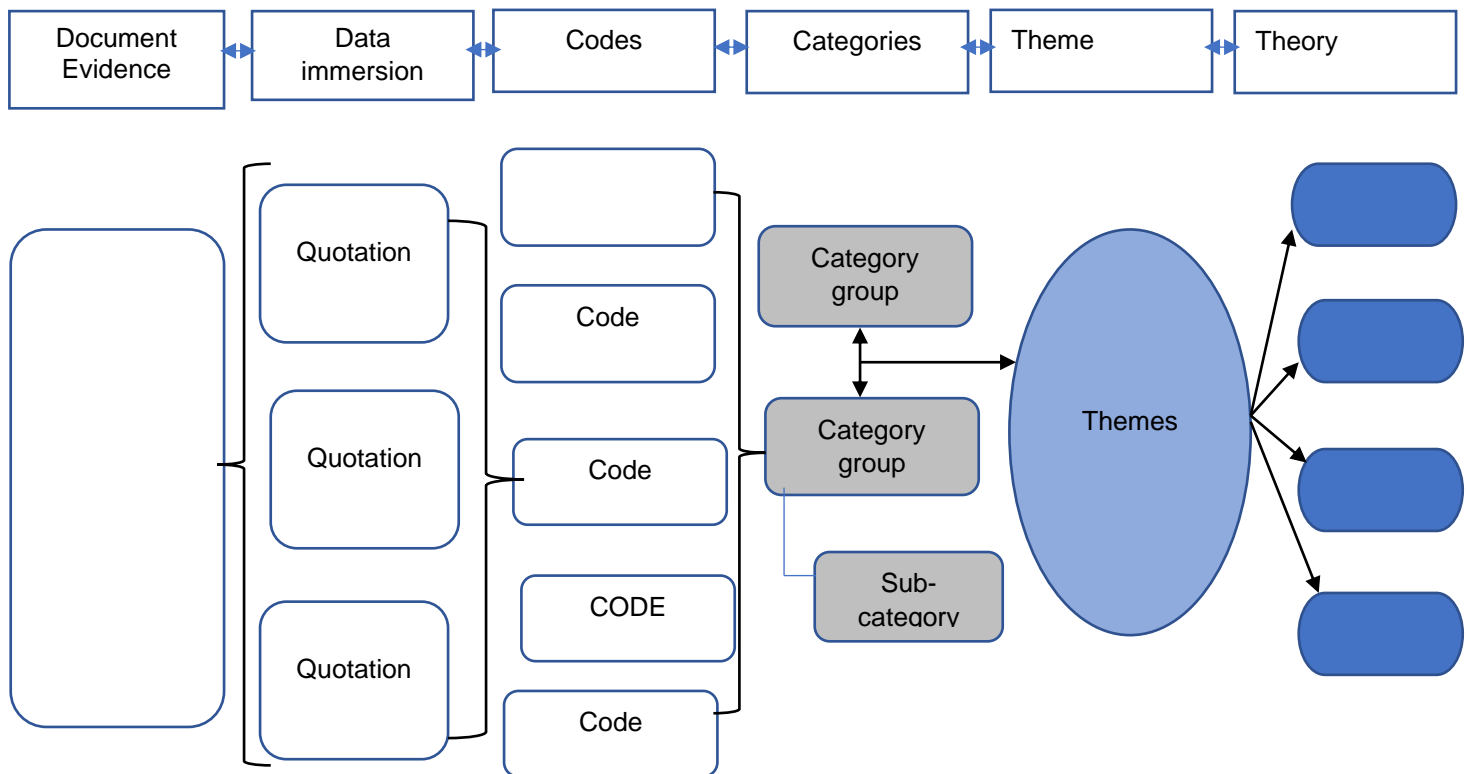


Figure 4.1: Coding to theory approach (adapted from Saldana, 2013, p. 13)

4.5.3 Coding approach

A code symbolically captures a summary of raw data to allow for ease of assigning meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldana, 2013). A coding protocol was adopted to facilitate coding through computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (Saldana, 2013), in this case, Atlas.ti. This follows a recent research call that “future studies use customised software such as Atlas.ti. for content analysis, thematic coding analysis, and inductive content analysis” (P. Gupta et al., 2020, p. 222) in social enterprise research to map themes to extant theories. A two-step cycle coding process was adopted. The first step included open coding, as well as process coding

of the interview transcripts. The second step, through axial coding, involved categorising the codes into emerging themes (Gioia et al., 2013; Saldana, 2013). Adverse quotes were carefully analysed to understand divergent views that formed rival or alternative arguments to facilitate theory extension (Yin, 2017). Saturation was reached when the coding of data did not generate new information or themes (Mason, 2010).

Coding was categorised for each transcribed interview in each case. The within-case analysis was conducted through pattern identification, matching of relationships, and identifying emerging common themes in each case until saturation was reached (Eisenhardt, 1989). Second, cross-case analysis was conducted to identify common patterns and relationships emerging across the cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017). The process involved the identification of similar patterns as well as differences and the frequencies with which they occur. The emerging codes and themes were then analysed against the existing literature to check if there were possible analytical generalisations (Yin, 2017).

Reflexivity was key in the process of moving back and forth between data and analysis (Morse, 2015) to ensure that the emerging common themes were compared to existing literature to generate novel ideas (Alvesson et al., 2008), and extend the use of simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations. Patterns and behaviours were analysed within cases and replicated across cases to analyse emerging relationships (Nieto & Pérez, 2000). To enhance the replication logic and validity of relationships (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017), each case was categorised and the findings analysed for relationships within each case and thereafter across cases (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

The field notes and analytical memos were also coded as appropriate. The relationships between the codes and categories were sorted within each case and later across the cases to identify cross-cutting themes in most or all cases to enhance the parsimony of emergent theoretical relationships (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). This was achieved by refining the first-cycle numerous codes into fewer categories that then led to even fewer themes to answer the research question (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldana, 2013).

4.6 Data quality assurance

The quality of the case study design was enhanced by increasing the reliability and validity of the data (Maxwell, 1992; Roulston, 2010). One key challenge affecting the quality of data was the potential for researcher bias (Morse, 2015). It was important to have a reflexive approach in the analysis stage so that the data collected was correctly analysed (Morse, 2015). Interviewing key-

knowledgeable informants also mitigated this bias (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The rigour and trustworthiness of the data were also addressed (Morse, 2015) by providing clarity within the study, including the resource-constrained context, the reason for the use of the selected cases, and how the analysis was done, which improved transparency and trustworthiness (Pratt et al., 2020).

Another challenge was the correct representation of the interviews to reflect what had been presented by the participants from the chosen cases. To address this, the researcher's vigilance in understanding the deeper meanings inferred by the participants by stepping out of the prejudiced views of the topic was important (Morse, 2015; Morse et al., 2002). Additionally, the researcher's debriefing and thick descriptions acted as a check and improved trustworthiness (Morse et al., 2002; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2008). Member checks were conducted for all transcripts, and only three participants came back with minor comments, mostly on the correct titles of individuals and not the content of the transcript.

Triangulation is important in bolstering the validity and consistency of findings (Pratt et al., 2020). It enhances saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015), as well as the transferability of findings where necessary (Fusch et al., 2018). For case studies, triangulation was achieved by obtaining multiple sources of data from selected participants, as well as the use of multiple data techniques (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014), including interviews, observations, and document reviews. This was achieved through the interlinking of the evidence (Yin, 2014, 2017) from across-case participant interviews, analytical memos, and archival documentation. Pattern-matching, explanation-building, and theme-identification using Atlas.ti addressed the internal validity (Maxwell, 1992; Pratt et al., 2020; Yin, 2017).

Reliability was enhanced by developing clear interview protocols, clear field notes (Eisenhardt, 1989), the creation of an audit trail through a coding system by using a codebook for generating quality codes and categories (Morse, 2015), as well as clear analytical memos. A clear case study protocol and a case study database, for example, project extraction from Atlas.ti was maintained. The maintenance of a chain of evidence, for example, through fieldnotes, as well as tabulated evidence of findings, assisted in ensuring the reliability of the data (Yin, 2017). To enhance the reliability of the data, the researcher had created field notes and analytical memos to document the insights, thoughts, ideas, contradictions, and observations that occurred during the data collection stage (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Petty et al., 2012). This was maintained during the analysis stage.

Additionally, methodological coherence within the case study design and the research questions being answered enhanced reliability (Morse et al., 2002). Confirmability was enhanced through a reflexivity approach by the researcher, alternating between the data and the analysis (Morse, 2015), referring to analytical memos and triangulation of multiple evidence sources (Yin, 2017). Providing a thick description of the cases (Morse, 2015), and the use of replication logic across the cases further assisted in facilitating transferability (Yin, 2017).

4.7 Ethical consideration

The nature of the case design involves the review of confidential documents and access to classified information from participants. Consequently, data security needed to be guaranteed throughout the process with the cases and participants being provided with ensured anonymity. The researcher undertook not to collect any data from any organisation prior to obtaining the requisite authority to consent to access the employees for interviews and other data from the concerned organisations. The objectives of the study were clearly articulated to the selected participants and the organisations. This included the researcher seeking written informed consent approval from the duly authorised officials in the organisations (see Appendix C for Informed Consent letter template) and having obtained permission as indicated in the letters of consent from the organisations [filed with the University]. This was included in the ethical approval request, in accordance with GIBS requirements. The individual participants were also given the option to participate voluntarily and allowed the right to opt out of the interviews at any time without penalty. The interview schedule was provided to all participants prior to the interview session, and this facilitated effective contribution. Additionally, all participants were provided with the final interview transcripts to review.

Please note that confidentiality was guaranteed for the participating organisations and participants, respectively. The organisations and participants were identified first by using pseudonyms for the organisations and then by using alphanumeric identifiers. For example, Damco (a pseudonym and not the actual name of the organisation) and the executive director within this case were identified as C1 and E1, respectively, as set out in Table 4.4 in section 4.4.6. The recordings were stored using the aforementioned naming convention. While some documents were reviewed physically, other documents were sent electronically, and these have been stored securely on a password-protected hard drive. As suggested by Yin (2014), a database was created for each case, containing interview recordings, transcripts, observation memos, individual consent forms, field notes, and memos, as well as all obtained documentary

evidence. In addition to storing them under lock and key, they were submitted to the University of Pretoria as per the provided storage guidelines.

4.8 Challenges: data collection and analysis

The first challenge during data collection related to obtaining access to social enterprises that were willing to be part of the research study, as well as accessing confidential information, such as financial reports and funding contractual agreements. For all the sampled case studies, the researcher used professional networks and the database from the GIBS Survey of Social Enterprises in South Africa (SSESA) report to identify case organisations that met the SMSE criteria. Some of the contacted organisations did not initially respond. One of the participants indicated they needed to be given consensus from other directors and never responded thereafter. Another participant gave initial indications for participation, and after two interactive sessions to introduce the study, the person opted out.

This resulted in utilising another strategy of relying on the professional networks of identified cases, with two of the cases being referred by members of the GIBS faculty. The participating cases indicated their interest because of the potential research findings and insight into how organisations internally foreground their missions and still adapt to and thrive in a fast-changing funding landscape. Hence, organisations in the non-profit sector were willing to participate in the study, based on the potential benefits of the findings. Second, in terms of the cost of the research, the researcher used personal savings to cater for any ancillary data collection costs, including transport to the offices of participating cases, data costs for internet usage and calling.

A challenge regarding data collection related to pre-existing personal perceptions during participant observation. For instance, the researcher was approached to attend a board meeting to offer advice but had to inform them that he would only attend for observation purposes at this point in time. Reflexivity and acknowledgement of inherent biases upfront facilitated addressing inherent biases. A reflexive approach of constantly moving between data and analysis helped in solidifying the analysis. Replication logic and application of theory were also applied to ensure external validity (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017). Triangulation of data enhanced the researcher's objectivity in interpreting the data. The use of conventional content analysis in deriving themes and keeping analytical memos also assisted in addressing this challenge (Yin, 2017). Conducting a pilot facilitated to mitigate researcher bias during data collection and subsequent analysis (Yin, 2017). In terms of time constraints, there were challenges during transcription, as the researcher utilised transcription software embedded in the Zoom platform to document the audio recordings.

Despite the transcription capability in the software, it took, on average, three hours to clean up the transcripts due to errors from inaudible words and different accents of the participants. Atlas.ti was utilised to support data management as well as storage.

The summary data experience is presented below.

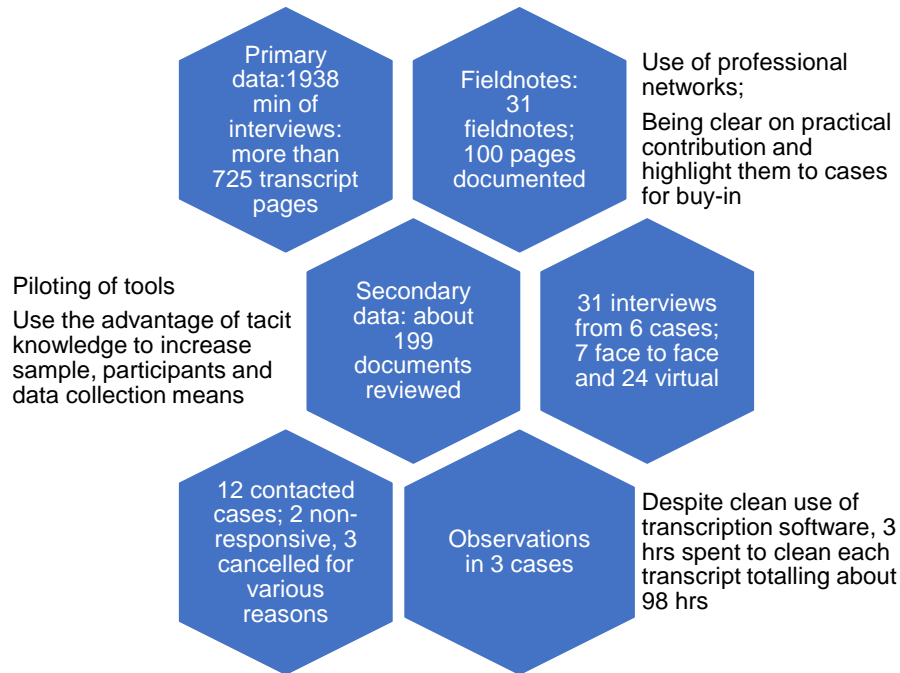


Figure 4.2: Summary of data collection experience

4.9 Conclusion

The research adopted a qualitative study, using a case study design. The semi-structured interviews were used to obtain descriptive and rich data from process gatekeepers in the organisations and were triangulated by using available documentation, as well as participant observations. The expected contribution was to provide an opportunity to extend theory by expanding the understanding of the phenomenon of how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments simultaneously align multiple funders and stakeholder mandates with their social mission. Overall, there was willingness from the cases, and all were receptive to the study as it reflected what they were currently dealing with, and consequently most indicated an interest in seeing the outcome of the research. Hence, this study extended ambidexterity beyond 'dual' explore-exploit decisions to how they manage competing, and possibly conflicting, multiple goals. Empirically, the study primarily focused on the managers' practising role, as a 'verb', in the

nuanced nexus of routines and practices to align multiple goals simultaneously rather than focusing on just the routines and specific as 'nouns'. The context of the SMSEs in the study facilitated a deeper insight into how the organisations navigated all the multiple demands simultaneously.

The study responded to recent calls on social enterprise research to use Atlas.ti for content analysis, thematic coding analysis, and inductive content analysis to map themes to extant theories. In addition, hermeneutical analysis was used to gain insight into how the organisations' routines and practices reconciled activities that are articulated with competing meanings between mission and multiple mandates within the given context. This was achieved by triangulating documentary evidence, interviewing, and observations.

CHAPTER 5: Individual within-case discussion

5.1 Introduction to the five individual cases

The selected final five cases are presented in this chapter. Despite the differences (Yin, 2017) between them, there are striking similarities in how they balanced their missions and mandates simultaneously across multiple projects at different phases. This was evidenced in the phases of conceptualisation of the project [pre-proposal stage], proposal writing, negotiations and contracting, the implementation of the project, and the reporting. Unlike social enterprises in other contexts managing only dual social–commercial tensions (Battilana, 2018; Battilana et al., 2017; Mair & Martí, 2006), a noteworthy finding emerged in how all the cases balanced multiple mandates with their mission. These organisations were agile and a pattern emerged of how cases constantly undertook internal–external scanning and mapping of community priorities, while utilising monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a canvas to internally and simultaneously navigate multiple conflicting goals. Practices and artefacts were adapted to support the balancing efforts. In addition, there were deliberate practitioner actions undertaken to specifically balance mission and mandates. The remainder of this chapter presents the findings from case 1 and the subsequent chapters offer insight from cases 2, 3, 4, and 5.

5.2 Damco (Case 1) within-case discussion

Damco (C1) was originally registered as an educational and development trust in South Africa in 1999. The organisation then obtained an NPO registration number in May 2000, qualified to be a public benefit organisation that was tax-exempt in 2004, and obtained a BB-BEE certification level 3 (Case [C] 1, annual report [ARP]1, p. 7). Damco also fully owns a community college registered as a proprietary limited liability company (Pty) to bolster enterprise activities (C1, ARP1, p. 7). The organisation considers itself an SMSE and is a fully accredited training provider with the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), through various sector education and training authorities, such as the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA), the Manufacturing, Engineering, and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) and the Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA) (C1, ARP1, p. 7). C1 has multiple funders, including the US Government, the Department of Social Development (DSD), corporate funding, contracts and earned income from activities such as consultancies (C1, ARP1). The below table depicts the projects that were running at the time of data collection and the different phases of each project depicting the different tensions that needed to be navigated simultaneously by Damco (C1).

Table 5.1: Damco's multiple projects and phases

Project	Phase	Details
Project 1	Negotiation & Contracting	Negotiations to expand target reach beyond the original proposal
Project 2	Reporting – Close-out	A 3-year youth economic empowerment ending
Project 3	Proposal	A second iteration of a proposal bid to DSD
Project 4	Implementation	Orphan and vulnerable children project in year 2
Project 5	Pre-proposal	Deliberations to pursue a new private funder
Project 6	Implementation, reporting	Training DSD/DOH community care workers
Project 7	Implementation	Various CPD and short SETA courses by enterprise college
Project 8	Reporting	Consultancy contract to provide specialised training

5.3 Pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase

The pre-proposal phase involves the conceptualisation, scoping, and all the preparation work done by the organisation as they pursue multiple funding opportunities. In this phase, Damco balances its mission efforts and those for the mandates by embedding itself in the community. It leverages its proximity to the community to be able to understand the priority social needs. The organisation also practises community branding to ensure continuous messaging and awareness creation to multiple stakeholders. In addition, Damco maps the priorities within its mission to determine whether the NPO or the Pty is the appropriate organisational entity to undertake the activities.

5.3.1 Community embeddedness to align mission and multiple mandates

Community needs are key in defining the core mission of the organisation and as a strategy, Damco embodies the social needs within its mission-related activities. This facilitates agility within the broader mission. It involves a range of practices such as community-focused development, co-designing projects during community meetings, mapping social needs within the mission, and strategic collaborations. Community-focused development incorporates key community-led programming initiatives. As stated by the founder/executive director, the focus is “community development” (C1, founder/executive director [E1], L19). For example, the executive director stated that “HIV and AIDS just popped up from about ‘96/’97, predominantly to the early 2000s. So, every organisation in the country ran to HIV/AIDS programmes” (C1, E1, L19). Therefore, the organisation “decided to have a developmental focus” (C1, E1, L23), one that was broad enough to cater for the different incoming community projects. This broad mission allowed them to apply for funds for economic strengthening within an HIV programme as it was aimed at their target group (C1, RFP1 [request for proposal]).

Co-designing projects with community beneficiaries through continuous community engagement is another important practice. In this way, the community easily identifies with the projects. Damco

is so connected to the community that if funders really want to make an impact, Damco knows what the community wants. Damco then uses its engagement with the community to manipulate the funders by acting as a 'broker' to balance between the community and funder mandates. This is achieved by the organisation's employees [actors] participating in community activities and using the meeting outcomes to advocate for what Damco is implementing and its mission. As the programme manager indicates, "We make sure that we participate in whatever is happening in the community. Whether it is the traditional leader's *imbizo*, where we have a platform to talk about Damco ... who we are" (C1, P1, L24). This is also key for deliberations to pursue new funders.

The organisation 'buckets' the different funders within priorities, based on mapping of the community's social needs. This sort of pre-proposal mapping facilitates aligning the community needs, funder activities, and Damco's mission. As stated by the founder, "We go for work in terms of our pillars ... we target funders, but we mainly look at work within our scope of practice" (C1, E1, L33). For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, they leveraged their training intervention, which fits into their core mission. The founder states, "The moment COVID came, the Department declared us as an essential service. So, we've trained on COVID management. Our training centres were opened. We've trained government. We've trained them how to prepare. We've done quite a lot of COVID-19 programmes" (C1, E1, L134).

At the time of data collection, gender-based violence (GBV) was a key issue that one of the communities had raised in one of the meetings and Damco was conceptualising a programme to respond to the community's GBV needs outside of the existing project objectives. They needed to decide how to fit it within a donor-funded economic strengthening project, which was targeting orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), or pursue the GBV work supported by a private funder separately. To manage this decision tension, the plan was to co-design the programme with the community by using GBV statistics and other baseline data from Damco and approach a private funder who had shown interest. Damco intended to utilise their past relationships with the DSD because they are part of the "National emergency response team for the National Department of Social Development [DSD] on GBV" (C1, E1, L102).

Strategic collaborations with community organisations and other stakeholders are used to augment priority activities that do not fit within the broader mission that Damco is passionate about. As stated by the operations manager, the organisation is agile in such situations and if the mission does not align, then they collaborate with other organisations. For instance, she indicates

that “We always look for what is our passion and ... perhaps then we will go and look for a partner to come in with us” (C1, O1, L92).

5.3.2 Community branding and marketing awareness in enhancing social mission alignment

Damco considers branding as one of the ways it can utilise to create awareness among the community and other stakeholders about its core mission and to communicate to a broader audience about the different projects. Branding facilitates awareness creation and raises the associated legitimacy of the organisation in the community. This aids in advocating what the organisation and its mission stand for. As stated by the operations manager, “That is how your community gets to know you ... our project offices, outside offices, always branded correctly, and make sure that the people know...making sure that the brand is always there” (C1, O1, L126).

Branding also facilitates smooth programme conceptualisation at the community level. As stated by the program coordinator, “What we try to emphasise is to brand our presence in the local communities as far as we can, and that has resulted in some of the health programmes being effectively done in our offices in the field” (C1, P1, L41).

Branding of staff apparel facilitates easy identification in the field and this manages concurrent issues. These include staff conduct in the field, visibility in the community, easy access by beneficiaries, and new programme opportunities due to the ease of community members referring needy cases to identified staff. As stated by the programme coordinator,

“The office is known by local people. It’s branded and the local people, if they need some of the services, for example, HIV testing, those who are close to the office go to the office to do testing around the office. And even the district people ... if there are other issues, then they can refer the community to Damco” (C1, P1, L38).

In reviewing the organisation’s website, it is obvious that digital branding is key to communicating to stakeholders and the general public the core mission and interventions of the organisation. The website has platforms used to push content relating to the organisation’s mission, plans, and achievements. This visibility helps the organisation pursue like-minded funders to achieve its mission amidst multiplicities (C1, fieldnote [FN], L13). The organisation also publishes newsletters that are updated on the website, covering content disaggregated by the priorities that align with its core mission. As stated by the operations manager, “We are also giving out flyers ... making sure that the brand is always there” (C1, O1, L126).

The operations manager is a communication and branding practitioner and is deliberate about the branding strategy of the organisation. She believes that by “basically seeing the name and branding” (C1, O1, L146), external stakeholders can associate the organisation with its mission. Hence, this facilitates managing stakeholders’ misconceptions about the core activities. For instance, the college, which is considered a profit arm of the organisation, is branded to fit within the core mission of the organisation. Therefore, it is easily associated with the broader organisation. As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “The designing layout and the branding of the college links it to Damco’s brand because it is the same organisation” (C1, I1, L40).

The colours within the brand also facilitate the identification of the organisation’s members by external stakeholders. This helps in associating the organisation with what they stand for and its mission, as well as enhancing legitimacy within the community. As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “I think colour is a very core thing in branding because colour is something that people remember highly about a brand. So, colours are very important” (C1, I1, L132).

Branding is also used as a defence against the potential branding abuse by funders that might push for mission drift. Therefore, funders are able to fund the organisation with an understanding of what the organisation is about. Specifically, it enhances the communication of different activities the organisation is engaged in and also crowds in on its core mission because “branding is basically part of your corporate communication strategies and approach to your organisation” (C1, O1, L65).

Branding also acts as an awareness medium for the organisation through various marketing channels. This facilitates imprinting the core mission within stakeholders’ minds. For instance, the IT and admin coordinator states, “I’ll give them some marketing material, then if you go out and hand out these pamphlets... and those pamphlets will then have information ... and kind of just a short description” (C1, I1, L114).

5.3.3 Regulatory context to align mission and multiple mandates

Damco’s agility allows the organisation to adapt its business models to balance different mandates’ requirements as necessary. The uncertainties in the funding environment and ensuing resource constraints have led Damco to innovate its business model and register multiple entities to facilitate the pursuit of multiple funding sources. The lack of clear registration legislation on social enterprise facilitates flexibility on different funding proposals because “currently, you don’t have to be registered as NPO to be a social enterprise” (C1, O1, L290). The organisation is “registered as Educational Development Trust, but with a focus on the business component to it

to make it possible for self-sustainability” (C1, E1, L19). As a registered trust, Damco can flexibly undertake different activities. As the operations manager indicates, “Our trust allows us ... because it is in the development sector space, to go into more of these others [programmes] that our passion is in” (C1, O1, L104).

The organisation operates an umbrella NPO organisation due to the flexible regulatory context. The finance manager alludes that “Damco is the umbrella ... that we are different little units underneath the umbrella” (C1, F1, L94). The organisation established a community college in 2012, registered as a proprietary limited liability company (Pty) to bolster the enterprise activities and these are fully owned by the trust (C1, ARP1, p. 7). However, all the work is coordinated under the umbrella NPO-registered entity to coordinate the college and the trust. The founder states, “We had to then establish the college; it was registered and accredited. And then we also had to get accreditations through different SETAs to do accredited programmes” (C1, E1, L23).

The funding is pursued to advance Damco’s mission, but activities are implemented through the appropriate registered entities. For instance, training activities can be implemented at a fee and still fit within the mission of offering tailored training, social research, and health and social development interventions (C1, ARP1). Specifically, this can be achieved by contributing to the development of Southern African individuals, communities, organisations, and government through SAQA-accredited training, community development, government support programmes and social research.

5.4 Proposal development and writing phase

The proposal development phase includes activities undertaken during the technical and cost proposal document writing for funding. In this phase within Damco, the balance between mission and mandate is achieved by the organisation articulating how core project activities fit within the request for proposals (RFP). The use of M&E approaches, tools and lingo assists in this balance. Damco also infuses earned income [unrestricted income] in cost proposals to defray cost deficits of priority activities and demonstrate sustainability.

5.4.1 Articulating funders’ objectives within the core priorities by using M&E lingo and tools

Damco identifies and articulates core project priorities to match RFP requirements. Damco leverages existing M&E prowess and lingo to identify and balance its mission with funders’ expectations. Specifically, most funder proposals require Damco to present the M&E plan. The document is used to translate and communicate to multiple stakeholders by using key common

words such as project objectives, activities, outputs, and outcomes. The details can then be adapted to internally organise these elements and align them with the funders' RFP requirements. The operations manager states, "We use the M&E system that USAID ... helped us build" (C1, O1, L190). Additionally, she states that they received support from the funder on "M&E systems and they really built a lot of capacity within our organisation on that level" (C1, O1, L199).

Mapping of activities is a common practice to counterbalance the effects of multiple competing activities. In a recently submitted proposal iteration to DSD work, it was observed how they undertook a mapping of activities that are core to their mission within funders' activities when documenting the proposal. The funder required the use of a specific training curriculum for youth to enhance their economic participation, but it had to have more focus on health (C1, RFP1). On the other hand, the organisation wanted to utilise its tried and tested life-skills curriculum (C1, annual report [2021]). They wittingly infused their approach within the funder curriculum through the use of an overarching internal M&E plan to map activities within both models.

Through the practice of shadowing the RFP, they responded to the proposal by submitting a generic profile of their core competencies (C1, proposal sample A [PR1A, p.9]), and maintained another internal document translating the core mission-related activities with the funder required activities (C1, programme description bridge). The document [M&E log-frame] identified the inputs, activities, outcomes, and expected impact of the project activities. Activities around all these programme priorities would then be converging towards the organisations' core mission to contribute to the development of Southern African individuals, communities, organisations and government through "SAQA-accredited training, community development, government support programmes and social research" (C1, PR1A, p. 9).

Existing tools are used dynamically to bridge organisational, community and funder priorities. Damco utilises specific language within the proposals to connect the organisation's mission and community needs. For example, as articulated in a summary of one of the proposals, "Damco designs, develops and executes projects in response to the social needs of society and communities" (C1, PR1A, P9). The sampled summary profile document indicates how Damco magnifies the nexus of the community's priorities, the funder's required achievements, and the organisation's mission-related priority activities (C1, PR1A, p. 16-18).

5.4.2 Incorporation of unrestricted income to align

The proposal development includes a costing pitching practice that highlights the funding requirement details. While funders may fund certain common priorities, other core activities that

are considered a priority by communities are sometimes not donor-funded. However, Damco views activities as a portfolio within the broader mission, and the organisation uses earned unrestricted income to bridge the funding gaps to ensure the portfolio of activities is well covered. As indicated by the finance manager, some of these core activities “we have to pay them from our own budget” (C1, F1, L97).

Additionally, using their business portfolio approach, Damco fully owns a community college, registered as a proprietary limited liability company (Pty) to bolster enterprise activities and augment the NPO's overarching mission (C1, ARP1, p.7). The college generates earned income and acts “as a feeder programme” (C1, E1, 23).

Business practices and tools are used innovatively to manage multiple needs. This was observed during a management meeting discussion where the use of unrestricted funding was proposed to assist in bridging additional requirements by a funder, with the aim of cementing a relationship with the funder for future funding to support mission-related activities (C1, OBM1, L28).

Revenue-generating practices are used for sustainability and to bridge new projects. Damco includes some of the core activities funded from unrestricted funds in some proposals as part of cost-share or match funds, for instance, the use of contract management fees from consultancies to bridge social mission-related activities. As indicated by the operations manager, “Those fixed-term contracts help a lot with extra funds from fees” (C1, O1, L284) and “you can have a saving” (C1, O1, L278).

Damco presents a portfolio of capabilities as part of the value proposition in proposals. Damco endeavours to include SETA-accredited courses as part of its service offering, where applicable. Hence, the reason why C1 is “registered as an educational development trust, but with focus on the business component to it to make it possible for self-sustainability” (C1, E1, L19). This necessitates Damco having to ensure its accreditation status is always current. As stated by the finance manager, “The child and youth care programme is key. We've tried to keep it going, to keep our certification open with SETA” (C1, F1, L319).

Damco also has a practice of viewing costs as a portfolio by ensuring costs are fully loaded. They innovatively optimise deliverables-based contract proposals by applying a pre-calculated percentage management fee charge to generate earned income (C1, shared cost allocation). In the sampled proposal, the RFP indicated that the organisation should not include a profit in the budget. However, Damco's business model is to include a historical management fee in proposals. The budget was crafted to include detailed internal costs with a management fee

loaded onto the costs and then translated into deliverables that align with the funder templates (C1, supportive referral initiative budget). The M&E coordinator explains how this is achieved, “You separate the management costs and then add to your facilitation fees, then you consolidate again” (C1, M1, L219). Another sampled proposal for a contract that allows a profit charge had a budget that caters for overhead and management fees separately (C1, contract agreement [CA1]).

5.5 Negotiation and contracting phase

In the negotiation and contracting phase, the organisation receives preliminary feedback from funders and is required to address aspects of the proposal before being contracted. In this phase, Damco also uses M&E lingo and tools to infuse and address funder feedback. The founder and leaders also practise relationship management by optimising their past relationships and the art of negotiations to reach compromises with funders and community beneficiaries.

5.5.1 Active use of M&E to negotiate and address multiple requirements

Damco uses M&E proactively in directing actions to convince funders to support intended projects. While M&E is used to reactively monitor and report on projects, its use by Damco in negotiating is active rather than passive. Specifically, Damco maps the community’s needs with its priorities and uses these to negotiate with the funders to support these, based on specific RFPs. This is accomplished through both verbal and written submissions on how the activities will contribute to the impact on the community. Intended beneficiaries are used to advocate with donors and the government. In some instances, Damco conducts joint visits with the funders or government officials to conduct needs assessments or baseline visits. The programme lead indicates, “For example, in KZN we are working in the Amajuba district. The deputy minister went there for site visits. So, we sent our Department of Health teams [to negotiate]” (C1, P1, L205).

The art of negotiations brings to life the active rather than passive M&E role to align funders’ expectations with proposed activities. From the document review, Damco presented a programme description for funding in 2016 and by highlighting the achievements from this contract [articulated by M&E], they used it to negotiate for additional modifications of the contract to include other aspects of funding. For instance, the initial contract was within their stronghold districts in Gauteng Province, but the new requirement was to expand it to districts in another province (Free State). Since the activities were aligned with their core mission (C1, proposal sample B [PR1B], L 383), they adapted the original proposal. The M&E team ensured these changes were articulated through the implementation plan and Gantt charts, which were used as artefacts to capture

additions and changes, as well as how they are operationalised or implemented (C1, PR1B, L 383-804).

In other cases, the organisation adapted the proposal language to accommodate funders' feedback, but the actual objectives remained intact. To facilitate proposal adaptations, Damco has agile programme and M&E tools that can be customised during negotiations to meet multiple funders that "have different requirements. So, at the end of the day, the management system is over-engineered" (C1, F1, L346). As the operations manager indicates, "There are two monitoring systems ... the one that monitors projects ... but then there is ... the monitoring ... the entire projects that are set up separately" (C1, O1, L178).

The organisation has also adopted and incorporated some M&E and reporting systems from the funders to meet other additional data flow demands. For instance, it took up the M&E systems set up by a previous funder and adopted them internally to fulfil other funders' requirements. This kind of experiential interpretation and system manipulation is used to fulfil multiple tasks simultaneously. The operations manager indicates, "[Funder A] gave us the opportunity to really understand how things are working, monetary wise, but also M&E systems" (C1, O1, L199). She further states that "We used the M&E system from funder A on funder B" (C1, O1, L190).

Damco utilises teaming agreements to co-create and articulate the activities, and the role of each organisation. Damco negotiates with other organisations when utilising collaborations with them to undertake non-core activities.

5.5.2 Leaders' relationship management and negotiation skills

Through a portfolio of relationships, the leaders consolidate and leverage past relationships to negotiate with funders on organisational core mission activities. For instance, the founder utilised past contacts to negotiate with DSD. He states that "Fortunately, I have been able to meet with a fairly high level within the department. And I had to sit with them to explain ... Eventually, that was signed, and they were happy [DSD agreement]" (C1, E1, L19).

Community buy-in and support are used as a negotiating tactic to ensure that funders' mandates do not drift too far away from the core mission. The leadership's proximity to the community enables the organisation to approach funders with suggestions from the community and with the community's backing. Funders will generally be willing to negotiate to facilitate acceptance of the project interventions within the community. Subsequently, through funder education, "Damco designs, develops and executes projects in response to the social needs of society and communities" (C1, PR1A, P9).

The founder is a full-time employee and acts as the resource connector during negotiations and contracting to ensure incoming funding activities are infused within the existing core work. Damco is governed by a board of trustees who are all employees and are involved in the daily internal operations to ensure multiple objectives align. As the founder states, “My role is the one of synchronising the programmes” (C1, E1, L41). He further facilitates resource alignment and “allocates the resources, and allocates staff to the programmes” (C1, E1, L41).

The art of negotiations by Damco leaders facilitates the meeting of minds between the funders and the organisation’s [and, by extension, the community’s] priority activities. Damco leaders will go out of their way to formally and informally negotiate with funders. They are ‘shrewd negotiators’, and as the programme leader states, “Some of the clients are so difficult ... in such a way that they don't have time to meet with you. But you avail yourself that ... okay, even after hours, we can meet 10 minutes, 15 minutes ... I'll come to you at your offices ... in the parking lot, then I can tell you exactly what I'm going to do here. That's how we win it” (C1, P1, L110).

The leadership’s practice of imprinting the organisation’s core mission also on the staff emboldens them to negotiate with funders. The leadership’s imprinting was evidenced through observation in a management meeting to discuss a conflict between allocating resources to activities in a proposal under negotiation at the expense of the organisation’s resource allocation plans. It was observed that the founder was constantly reminding the meeting’s participants to be vigilant in how they ensure the organisation is not harmed by their actions of appeasing the funder. He was insistent on using the relationship the operations lead had built over time with the funder to negotiate favourably on behalf of Damco (C1, observation memo [OBM1], L51).

The organisation optimises its small size for quick decision-making and swift adaptations. This is important during negotiations with funders, such as hiring field staff within new communities and co-creation of activities with the communities for buy-in. The operations manager and founder indicate that small size facilitates agility and nimbleness to allow “the ability to change swiftly” (C1, O1, L83), and “the decision-making is quick” (C1, E1, L122).

5.6 Implementation phase

Implementation is a dynamic phase that requires alignment to deliver on multiple projects. During the data collection phase, there were at least three projects at the implementation stage. To facilitate the implementation of multiple projects and balance the core mission and multiple mandates, Damco has overarching agile functions, policies and tools that govern finance, HR and operations across all projects’ activities being implemented. The policies are sometimes

standardised and replicated as necessary to facilitate seamless implementation across multiple funded projects. This is important not only for internal stakeholders, but also when aiming to meet other requirements. Internal procedures and tools are adapted [and adopted] as necessary to manage multiple requirements. There is a cadre of core-shared staff who ensure coordination across projects. Existing HR practices, as well as deliberate employee actions, are key to balancing expectations.

5.6.1 Agile centralised policies, tools and functions to align

Damco uses a portfolio of policies and tools to enhance multitasking and simultaneous project management. The founder highlights, “For our accreditation purposes and due diligence, we have to have quite neat policies, about 32 policies, that have been developed” (C1, E1,107).

Damco practises standardisation and replication of overarching policies to facilitate adherence to the government's statutory requirements, funder requirements, and internal planning needs. The researcher reviewed the central financial and operational policies on-site to confirm this. “All the financials are centralised” (C1, Finance manager [F1], L400). “Financial systems have to be uniform because the organisation has to be audited at the end of the year” (C1, E1, L37).

Overarching tools are tweaked and superimposed across projects to manage different requirements. They also have implementation plan templates, budget templates and report templates that are utilised to facilitate the implementation and reporting of the various projects running concurrently. The organisation has centralised tools such as centralised M&E plans that are superimposed onto multiple projects and customised, as well as adapted for purpose (C1, central M&E plan). M&E is centralised to ensure the alignment of project-funded achievements and core mission activities. Specifically, this applies to the tasks when tracking indicators that are core to the Damco model versus fulfilling funders' targets and indicators.

Another practice is the use of business tools as artefacts to balance mission and mandates. Damco maintains one main accounting system and has different projects identified by using different codes. As indicated by the finance manager, “You can do 999 entries under one company. So, we allocate one number to a specific funder or project and then we capture it altogether according to budget lines” (C1, F1, L193). This enables them to charge their time for the level of effort on different projects and also in monthly billing of different projects. While it may be a requirement to use the funder-prescribed formats, they achieve alignment by translating them from their centralised financial systems, as governed in their central finance policy. They also maintain “finances...in the central office” (C1, F1, L415).

A core-shared staff cadre is used to coordinate and concurrently implement multiple projects. The “project managers really jump around between programmes” (C1, E1, L45). As the founder states, “In our case, there are staff working in multiple projects ... so it's really reaction on demand or the acting to the demand” (C1, E1, L111). The employees’ level of effort is captured and split between different funders by completing timesheets, which are then used to allocate costs to all funders accordingly (C1, policy document [PD1A]). The timesheet is an example of a dynamic tool utilised to fulfil multiple needs simultaneously. For example, allocating costs across multiple funding agreements during monthly payroll routine, managing multiple funder activities, fulfilling funder compliance, and the use in internal project management.

5.6.2 Adapting and adopting internal procedures and tools to align

Damco easily adapts and adopts procedures to fulfil multiple mandates. The small size of the organisation facilitates its agility and nimbleness in decision-making to manage multiple complexities swiftly, as opposed to the focus and discipline required from strongly centralised control systems. The operations manager indicated how the small to medium nature allows them “the ability to change swiftly” internally (C1, O1, L83), compared to larger organisations. “The advantage of it is the decision-making is quick. It’s rapid. If you are in a very structured system, it takes longer to make a decision” (C1, E1, L122).

Project management and multitasking skills are practised to navigate different funding types. This enables Damco to adapt some procedures to fit within the funders’ requirements and, in some other cases, adopt them internally to ensure projects are delivered on time, within budget, and of the required quality. The operations manager states, “We have project management skills, and we know the sector” (C1, O1, L92). This is important right from the implementation onset, as stated by the finance manager. “I think your main starting point would be if, once the proposal has been done and approved, that you get to know the programme ... you need to understand the programme you’re working with. You know, the activity plan ... and the cost, money-wise, and the activity together” (C1, F1, L79).

The organisation co-implements tasks to manage tensions with funders because the monitoring requirements can vary as prescribed by the funders. In one observation session, the operations manager suggested in the meeting that they would invite the funder’s programme officials for a joint site visit. She cited previous success in appraising funders and aligning them with how Damco implements in the field and bringing them up to speed on the challenges on the ground with this approach (C1, OBM1, L28).

Damco has very detailed policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) at a micro-level, so they can push back at “ludicrous” funder policies. The founder indicates that “Our policies are over-engineered because ... they [funders] would come with stupid policies that they want” (C1, E1, L346). Sometimes, they adapt SOPs to manage various funders “like your HR ... your disciplinary ... the operational policies” (C1, E1, L107).

Where there are clashes between current policies and procedures with those of the funder’s requirements, Damco opts for a more conservative approach of adopting the stricter procedures and adapting existing SOPs to align. For example, the finance manager states, “Eventually, we got the stipends more or less on the same level. Because, one of the things we did is we reduced ... [funder C]’s budget ... so, it could come in line” (C1, F1, L130).

The staff bring disciplines from other domains to creatively manage complex requirements. Most funders have their monitoring and data tools, and the M&E coordinator mentions how he adapts and simplifies them to become understandable tools that are easy to use by lower-level staff. He states, “I learned from Salesforce, developed a similar tracking system with the same outputs as Salesforce, but did that in Excel ... and it was filtered in the same way, you know, simple inputs” (C1, M1, L113).

Employee contracts are adapted appropriately for use in different projects. The finance manager states that they have “Basic contracts that we use and then we, sort of, just adjust the scope of work and the level of effort that needs to be put in. So, for each one, there is a ... different job description” (C1, F1, L160). Besides, to manage expectations at a community level, they hire staff “from the community” (C1, P1, L32).

5.6.3 The role of core-shared staff in coordination

Damco has a cadre of core-shared staff who facilitate the coordination and accomplishment of multiple functions concurrently. The staff cadre multitask across projects and are central to the alignment and concurrent coordination of activities and requirements from different funders. This staff cadre acts as a link and oversees the operations of the for-profit Pty and college within the ambit of the NPO umbrella organisation. As the operations manager states, “That is really the core team ... that's really on the ground ... that is very important” (C1, O1, 126).

The core staff have a long tenure in the organisation, which aids in maintaining the organisational institutional knowledge and facilitates commitment to the organisation. They understand how the organisation has evolved and is internally organised, and pass this information on to incoming employees. For instance, the operations manager states, “Me and [F1] have been working now

together for long ... so, there's a lot of knowledge, organisational knowledge, organisational memory, and I think that is very critical" (C1, O1, L121).

The core-shared staff also help to train and mentor other staff in how Damco operates and step in to cover each other in various actions. The founder states, "It's basically myself, and it's currently the finance manager ... the procurement manager, then [programme manager] who is also a trustee and with us for a long time, she sort of steps in, if [operations manager] and myself are not here" (C1, E1, L94).

The core-shared staff bridge projects and provide coverage across projects that may not afford full-time employees. For instance, "the project managers really jump around between programmes ... so where there are certain people that you can't put 100% LOE [level of effort]. Those [core staff] are the ones that we can use between projects" (C1, E1, L45). During the observation of one of the management meetings, two staff members who are usually shared among different projects were requested to assist in data collection, while they also worked on other proposal work (C1, OBM1, L57).

5.6.4 HR practice to manage multiple complexities

Damco practises HR routines in a manner that facilitates the navigation of competing mandates. One way is through employment strategies. The organisation hires staff from the community they come from and, in some cases, from previous programme beneficiaries. As the programme manager indicates, "We get them [staff] from the community" (C1, P1, L32). These employees easily identify with the social needs and core priorities. They feel obliged to serve their communities and are also committed to the organisation. Hence, the programme manager indicates that the hired "pool of people locally would be our link and the local people" (C1, P1, L24).

The organisation also prefers to provide an internal career path to existing staff, instead of hiring externally. This facilitates the motivation of employees and enhances commitment to the organisation's mission. The founder states, "We do pride ourselves in ... our people, you will find a bookkeeper who started as a cleaner ... we've had drivers who became project managers, and so we really in-build. It is a process of building them from a young stage" (C1, E1, L49).

They utilise employment contracts creatively to manage multiple activities. This provides room for staff to work on different projects and also attend to the organisation's core activities at the same time. The founder emphasises that "Our policy says in your contract, this will be your main thrust of work or any other tasks given to you by the management" (C1, E1, L111).

Once hired, the organisation invests in training and hands-on mentoring of staff in the organisation's way of doing things, enabling them to be seamlessly deployed into various of the organisation's core activities. As the programme manager indicates, "The first entry is to train them. We send the team here, we train them, and then after training, we mentor them" (C1, P1, L32).

They use central HR meetings and management meetings to address multiple demands, including resource allocation, performance appraisals, team-building sessions, and morale-boosting events. For instance, the finance manager indicates, "When we have most of the meetings ... we take them [staff] out for lunch. And then you simply ... be social and you engage with them in a social context ... even when there's some training" (C1, F1, L589).

The founder allocates and sometimes reallocates staff across projects. Staff may be hired for specific projects, but they can be reallocated to ensure other core interventions of the organisation do not suffer. As he states, "I allocate the resources, allocate staff to the programmes, and sometimes, I have to move staff around but within programmes, depending on what type of work you're getting ... I could use one manager to co-manage two or three smaller programmes" (C1, E1, L41).

Staff become exposed to multiple projects as well as the organisational core activities. This enables them to be generalists instead of specialists. Employees are allowed to multitask, and they find that "wearing different hats is interesting, it's enjoyable" (C1, M1, L276). The founder alludes, "I say to people, you come here, your job description is about us" (C1, E1, L102).

The exposure of staff to different funders and stakeholder requirements also equips them with project management skills to manage the different projects concurrently. In that way, they are able to simultaneously work with different stakeholders and align with other internal priorities. The founder states that "The advantage of this is that we multi-skill them. The only way you can survive in our organisation is to be multi-skilled" (C1, E1, L73). For example, as the M&E coordinator states, "One of the things that draws me here and it keeps pulling me back is that you get exposed to a variety of disciplines" (C1, M1, L41).

Damco proactively instils a sense of ownership of the organisation among its staff. This internal socialisation enhances the staff's commitment, maintains the organisation's reputation, and focuses staff. The programme manager indicates that "We've got that culture of protecting each other and everybody as far as it possibly can" (C1, P1, L119), and employees understand that "They are the owners of the project. They understand that this is my project" (C1, P1, L122).

The individual staff member's loyalty to the mission facilitates collective accountability that cannot easily be swayed by funders' mandates. The employees have a deep sense of belonging and keep each other accountable for upholding the organisation's mission. All the staff members, from management to lower level, feel connected to the organisation and there is a sense of a family bond or social connection. There is also a sense of "organisational loyalty well-being, not individual well-being, and they've managed to build in the field and on the ground" (C1, P1, L179). In other words, employees feel that "We are family. If you want to damage your brothers and sisters by doing something wrong, the family is going to act" (C1, P1, L185). The founder further supports this notion that "Some of our staff, especially the middle-level staff, are very supportive in promoting to their junior staff and saying 'this is our company. It's not *the founder's* company. So, we must work together to make this thing survive'" (C1, E1, L139). This further explains why the organisation's "retention rate of staff is very high. We hardly lose staff" (C1, E1, L65).

The management has encouraged a culture of open internal communication and transparency. This enables seamless information flow within the organisation and manages potential strife. As the programme manager states, "I think we also, if you ask me, try as hard as possible ... where even the most junior staff can come to you directly [to management]" (C1, P1, L229). The finance manager adds that when she is stressed, and she feels "Uh-uh 'nee' this is enough, I cannot take anymore ... you come to the boss and he will assist you ... either give you guidance on how to handle or he will step in" (C1, F1, L517).

The staff also do not mind working overtime to ensure they address funders' and Damco-related work. They are motivated by being given time off in lieu of overtime. As the founder highlights, "Our staff work a lot of overtime, you know, especially our national projects" (C1, E1, L86). He further states, "When it's Easter, we have a rule that some or half of the staff take a week before Easter. Other staff take a week after Easter. It's compulsory, but it doesn't come off the annual leave ... and the ones who do a lot of overtime will sometimes come, and they ask for leave, then we give them leave in lieu of the overtime" (C1, E1, L90).

5.7 Reporting: Output/outcome measurement phase

Reporting is important to demonstrate to different stakeholders on key outputs and outcomes relating to the projects, as well as how the organisation is fairing in achieving its mission. During this phase within Damco, the balance between mission and mandate is achieved by using concurrent M&E and financial reporting systems, as well as utilising community meetings to

disseminate success stories to multiple stakeholders. Damco also leverages digitisation and information technology to reach multiple funders simultaneously.

5.7.1 Concurrent disaggregated and integrated dynamic programme and financial reporting

Damco has M&E staff who coordinate and customise programme reports for various funders, as well as annual reporting to concurrently communicate the organisation's core achievements. Therefore, they disaggregate and consolidate the reports concurrently to address different stakeholders' needs. As the M&E coordinator highlights, "The reporting requirements differ. So, it's just the principles of 'what do we want'? Then work backwards. What do I want to say on this piece of paper 123? Okay, for that to happen, we need to go boom boom boom" (C1, M1, L124). The finance manager alludes that "For all the projects, we do a project report. We are doing it on a monthly basis. And then we do another management report, where you have a report on each project and then combine it" (C1, F1, L199). The IT and admin coordinator alludes to the fact that this is made possible "because we created a repository on our server" (C1, I1, L59). He indicates that he has to "read through the actual quarterly reports or the full reports that we're going to summarise" (C1, I1, L59).

The M&E also coordinates the preparation of the consolidated annual report that spotlights the organisational achievements toward their mission, in other words, the ability to report on various projects and infuse the overall organisational core mission activities within that simultaneously. The annual report reviewed laid out how the organisation's mission has been foregrounded and, subsequently, how the projects have complemented the mission activities (C1, AP1 [annual report]). When consolidating the annual report, they "use a lot of the project reports, whether it be a closeout, quarterly or annual, that would then feed into the annual reporting" (C1, M1, L136). The IT and admin coordinator states that "Most of these projects ... actually speak to each other and then speak to the role that the organisation plays in the sector itself ... it's about keeping that overall storyline and just kind of showing the different fields that we work in and also how they all work together" (C1, I1, L74).

The organisation's summary profile and 20-year story report further illustrate how it packages the achievements towards its mission, while infusing information on how it fulfilled the multiple funders' requirements over the years. It summarises or infuses the achievement of the core mission-related activities, while disaggregating the attainment of other multiple funding agreements, which are not necessarily core to the mission activities (C1, PR1A, p. 16-18). It is "a

massive document to compile” (C1, I1, L78) and requires the team to “pulling reports together and quality control” (C1, M1, L). The report indicates that they have dealt with over 53 funders (C1, PR1A, p. 19-23). As the IT and administration coordinator highlights, “When the annual report comes, then I would sit with the operation manager, then I'd also sit with the finance manager as well on the HR side ... at the same time with the project managers just to kind of get their input ... of the project and the outcomes and everything” (C1, I1, L59).

Damco publishes newsletters and success stories that are updated on the website, covering content disaggregated by priorities that align with its core mission. They also use community meetings to disseminate success stories to multiple stakeholders. The operations manager states, “We are also giving out flyers, making sure that the brand is always there” (C1, O1, L126).

The organisation also implements a ‘shadow’ reporting system. Some of the reports have been adopted or adapted to manage conflicting requirements. The M&E staff disaggregates programme reporting information from multiple achievement tables or tasks and then simplifies and disseminates the information to the relevant funders, respectively. At the same time, they use the same information to aggregate it centrally for dissemination per their core activities. As indicated by the M&E coordinator, “We developed a similar tracking system [as the donors’] with the same outputs as Salesforce, but we did that in Excel” (C1, M1, L113).

While the organisation’s financial reporting functions are centralised for all funding streams, they use an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to disaggregate different funders by using unique codes. The reviewed resulting sample monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to the funders are customised for each funder, despite being centrally prepared and originating from a central repository system. The financial system allows for “nine hundred and ninety-nine (999) entries under one company” (C1, F1, L193).

The finance manager points out that each funder’s project has different reporting requirements and templates, so they adapt the dates and include them in the financial system in such a manner that each can have its own income statement. “We allocate one number to a specific funder or project and then we capture it altogether according to budget lines. It makes referring back also easy (C1, F1, L193). She further states, “It’s a question of discipline that you need to keep yourself organised in the system ... that you keep each project on its own. Look at each funder and each project on its own and handle it on its own” (C1, F1, L73).

The ability to disaggregate and integrate finance reports in a fashion that fulfils multiple needs simultaneously is key. The finance manager points out how they internally align between multiple

projects and consolidated organisational summary reporting by using regular budget-to-actual reviews. “For all the projects, we do a project report. We are doing it on a monthly basis ... where you have a report on each project and then combine it into, sort of, a consolidated cash flow programme, where you put all your incomes, all your expenses and compare or generate all the expenses” (C1, F1, L199).

The organisation utilises audit reports creatively to fulfil different funder requirements and other stakeholders. Each funder has a preference for how financial accountability should be attained. However, Damco uses the same data and audit firm efficiently to prepare separate audits for multiple funders, and concurrently, a generic audit for purposes of the organisational needs. The reviewed audit reports for the past three years (C1, Audit reports 1, 2, 3) “integrate on an organisational level when preparing for audits” (C1, E1, L37) and “make sure that the different reporting formats get filled in and at the end of that, make sure there is a consolidated audit (C1, F1, L61). The consolidated audit report is then utilised by multiple stakeholders. For instance, “The audits are for projects, but also the bank wants it. And the banks insist on having the audits and management systems” (C1, F1, L229), “so that they can extend your overdraft” (C1, F1, L394).

Reports are branded appropriately to speak to multiple stakeholders. They also use stories in pictures, photo galleries, and video galleries to report on successes in multiple projects as well as on mission attainment. All the sample reports to stakeholders bear logos of the organisation, in addition to those of the respective funders (C1, Reports [AP1, AP2, AP3]). Where the work involves other funders, branding is key in highlighting the organisation’s contribution to the work, as stated by the IT and admin officer. “Our branding, and their branding, need to kind of come together ... we kind of mesh it together so that they speak to each other. So, it looks like a combined effort as well” (C1, I1, L54).

5.7.2 Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple activities

The organisation leverages digital means and information technology (IT), especially during the implementation and reporting stages. This is so in the dissemination of information, facilitation of financial and programme monitoring, as well as concurrently reporting on different projects and various organisation’s activities. This is evidenced by how they use digital means to “push content” about their core activities amidst the other funder-related work. As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “The crux of the message stays the same ... we don’t change who we are, we

just change how we say it” (C1, I1, L108). He further states, “I think our messaging is congruent. Our messaging is kind of the same throughout. We're not saying this on this platform and then saying something completely else on another platform” (C1, I1, L102).

The organisation has ways of modifying the digital content to report to multiple stakeholders at the same time. Hence, the IT capabilities within the organisation facilitate consistent messaging of the organisation’s interventions to ensure alignment with broader audiences. As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “Our message that’s said on Facebook, it’s still the same message to the core, but it’s just said differently on Twitter because on Twitter, it’s consumed in a different manner. On Instagram, it’s consumed in a different manner ... but it’s still going to be the same messaging; it’s still about our child and youth care work” (C1, I1, L102).

Social media plays a key role in disseminating information about the organisation and aligning external stakeholders. This is especially so, given that “social media kind of goes hand in hand with IT” (C1, I1, L30). The organisation “appointed a person specifically looking at social media, a new website and making sure that it’s more interactive” (C1, O1, L126). As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “Social media, obviously, is one of our channels, another channel ... is search engine optimisation, that’s got to do with putting us on different websites” (C1, I1, L46).

Social media is also used as a dynamic artefact and as a tool to facilitate project monitoring, reporting, performance of staff, and to address different stakeholders’ needs simultaneously. They have adopted the use of social media, specifically WhatsApp groups, to get reports and monitor how people are doing. As stated by the programme manager, “Managing the team is through group WhatsApp” (C1, P1, L71). Additionally, they report daily through social media by sending out photos. The programme manager states, “They send me pictures, and, on the pictures, they will write details, like okay, it was the event at this venue, at this place, on this date, so many people came” (C1, P1, L50).

The digital systems also facilitate concurrently managing complex projects, resource planning of finances and employees, and effective management of activities. For instance, as the M&E coordinator states, “We have a Google sheet that we’ve created and shared amongst the team ... so everyone can contribute there, and it’s live” (C1, M1, L157). As stated by the IT and admin coordinator, “For social media branding, we’ll have templates for the videos, we’ll have templates for the pictures, and we’ll have templates for the pamphlets and whatever we were promoting at a specific stage, whatever project you’re working with” (C1, I1, L46).

5.8 Conclusion

Damco is over 18 years old and has managed to navigate the complexities of balancing its mission and multiple mandates. From the onset, Damco incorporated the community during the conceptualisation and design of the project to acquire a better understanding and be able to manage community stakeholders' expectations, while ensuring the activities aligned with Damco's mission. The organisation maps community needs with its priorities and uses these to negotiate with the funders. The organisation uses M&E proactively in interpreting needs, translating requirements, monitoring, and reporting to multiple funders.

Damco is agile, with multiple registered entities at its disposal, to on-board new funders and “the ability to change swiftly” (C1, O1, L83). They are entrepreneurial and use business tools innovatively to balance their mission and funders' mandates. They manage different internal demands by ensuring they hire correctly, especially “from the community” (C1, P1, L32), while investing in employees by “building them from a young stage” (C1, E1, L49). Hence, employees are trained how to multitask, and they find that “wearing different hats is interesting; it's enjoyable” (C1, M1, L276). The employee morale, therefore, is high, with very high retention rates and commitment to the organisation's core mission, despite the multiplicity of demands.

The organisation has “project management skills” (C1, O1, L92), as well as the ability to adopt and adapt internal processes to meet different stakeholders' requirements. The founder indicates that having been one of the pioneers that were “asked to pilot the concept of social enterprises in the health and social sector” (C1, E1, L19), they have leverage when approached by different stakeholders to partner with them. In that way, they are able to implement activities to their advantage and act as a broker for the community. They disaggregate and integrate reports to fulfil mandates and their mission in a concurrent manner. The digital and IT capabilities also facilitate the ability to fulfil multiple requirements simultaneously. Table 5.2 summarises the primary code document table, showing how Damco navigates multiple projects as they balance their mission and mandates at different phases.

Table 5.2: Summary examples of practices and routines to balance mission and mandates at micro-level

Phase	Practices, routines and practitioner actions to balance mission and mandates
Pre-proposal – Conceptualising and design	Community-focused programming, co-designing projects, community entry meetings, use of baseline data from the existing projects, mapping of community’s social needs, branding of offices and workers’ attire within the community for visibility, strategic collaborations, umbrella registration to coordinate college and the trust, adapting business models
Proposal development	Use of an overarching internal M&E plan/log-frame to map activities, mapping of activities to balance, shadow the RFP, business tools used dynamically to bridge, cost-pitching practice, business portfolio thinking, revenue-generating practices, costs are fully loaded, use of an internal budget template that loads % on gross costs and then translates it to the funder’s template
Negotiation and contracting phase	M&E proactive use in negotiating, beneficiaries used as advocates, the art of negotiations, adapt proposal language, adopt/adapt some M&E and reporting requirements, leverage portfolio of relationships to negotiate, use of DSD references to negotiate, imprinting the organisation’s core mission to staff, community buy-in as a negotiating tactic, funder education, activities are infused with existing core work, quick decision-making and swift adaptations, tweaking existing implementation plan, co-creation with funders/communities, use of earned fee for strategic expansion, nimble decision making
Implementation	Portfolio of policies, SOPs and tools to enhance multitasking, use of centralised M&E data flow system, standardisation and replication of overarching policies, tools are tweaked and superimposed, business tools as artefacts to balance, adapt and adopt procedures, project management skills, co-implementing, joint funder site visit monitoring, core-shared staff to coordinate, staff multitasking, training and hands-on mentoring, hire staff from the community, internal career path to existing staff, employment contracts to manage, HR meetings, staff exposed to multiple projects, instil a sense of ownership, individual staff loyalty, open internal communication, use of social media and digital media for concurrent performance management, meetings and socialisation
Reporting - Output/outcome measurement	M&E staff who coordinate and customise programme reports, consolidate annual reporting to demonstrate achievements to multiple stakeholders, package achievements, publish newsletters and success stories, shadow reporting system, use of enterprise resource planning system to disaggregate/integrate, adapt reporting systems, budget-to-actual reviews, leverage digital means and information technology, tweaking the digital content, use of social media to report, use of clean audit reports to demonstrate sound management

CHAPTER 6: S-Impact (Case 2) within-case discussion

S-Impact (C2) started in 1990 as a Foster Care programme for abandoned HIV-positive babies and in 2001, the organisation expanded its target beneficiaries to include entire affected families. The organisation was officially registered as a South African NPO on October 1, 2010 (C2, founding documents [FD2]). The organisation has an NPO registration number and is qualified to be a public benefit organisation (PBO) that is tax-exempt (C2, FD2). In 2015, they formed a proprietary limited liability company (Pty) as another for-profit social enterprise arm to bolster their enterprise activities. S-Impact also owns a commercial building under another for-profit entity. The mission of the organisation is the provision of care and support to vulnerable children and their families, be they infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, refugees, or have experienced sexual and gender-based violence. This is to ensure that children have a safe environment in which they can reach their full potential (C2, PR2A [proposal sample A]). S-Impact has multiple funders, financiers, and earned income from activities such as consultancies (C2, ARP2 [annual report]). The below table depicts the projects that were running at the time of data collection and the different phases of each project depicting the different tensions that needed to be navigated simultaneously by S-Impact.

Table 6.1: S-Impact's multiple projects and phases

Project	Phase	Details
Project 1	Pre-proposal	Deliberations on a social impact bond project proposal
Project 2	Reporting - Close-out	A 3-year youth economic empowerment ending
Project 3	Proposal	Consultancy to train youth on behalf of the government
Project 4	Proposal	Economic strengthening in marginalised communities
Project 5	Implementation	Orphan and vulnerable children project under the UN
Project 6	Negotiation & contracting	DSD contribution to existing five private-funded projects
Project 7	Implementation, reporting	Various trainings under the social enterprise entity
Project 8	Implementation	Renting new offices for profit

6.1 Pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase

The pre-proposal phase involves the conceptualisation and design of projects. In this phase, S-Impact balances its mission and mandates by understanding and leveraging the community's needs and priorities. The organisation has sub-offices that are branded in the communities they work in and they are well-known. S-Impact maps the priorities within its mission to determine whether the NPO or Pty is the appropriate organisational entity to undertake the activities.

6.1.1 Community embeddedness to align mission and multiple mandates

The executive director [founder] believes that being embedded in the communities is a distinct advantage. The organisation has been approached by funders to implement activities because of its presence in these communities. The founder indicates that the organisation has an established presence in the communities within “Polokwane, Zanini, and Messina, in very underserved areas ... I think strategically it is a good decision” (C2, E2, L57).

From the onset, S-Impact co-designed projects together with the communities. They attend community functions [*imbizos*] and identify the communities’ needs that are infused into the mission, specifically, within their core mission, which is targeting orphaned, vulnerable children (OVC) and their welfare.

As S-Impact targets funders to be pursued, it acts as a middle-man between the community and funders. S-Impact has developed relationships with community leaders because they usually “have to navigate the community through the different political and ... traditional” (C2, P2, L115) structures.

S-Impact leverages its experience at the community level to conduct funder education on priority activities. Most funders roll out proposals based on some baseline information on target groups, activities, and geographical coverage. The organisation capitalises on this process. As the M&E manager states, “You find that when we go on the ground and start to establish relationships ... things start to be different. We give them [funders] feedback ... because sometimes, you find that’s how they thought, or how they planned initially from their proposal” (C2, M2, L102). In some cases, they get the funders to meet the beneficiaries and this acts as an advocacy strategy. For instance, “In January, the Deputy High Commissioner for UNHCR from Geneva was here and they wanted to meet with the beneficiaries” (C2, E2, L206).

Community leaders also act as mission advocates at the community level when funders come “knocking on their door”. This sort of leverage accords S-Impact with the necessary legitimacy required to fulfil its own mandate and goals. For instance, they were aiming to respond to a request for a proposal (RFP) by a funder to add an economic strengthening support aspect to complement existing core community projects that were based on identified needs by the community leaders (C2, RFP2A; RFP2B).

The broad mission mirrors the communities’ priorities and allows S-Impact to undertake various community mandates. As the programme manager indicates, “From the onset, as we get into the different programmes or apply for different programmes, it’s also to look first at the funding

opportunity, does it talk to the mission, and if talks to the mission, then we apply for it” (C2, P2, L39).

S-Impact values innovation and during data collection, the founder indicated they were deliberating on venturing into a “social impact bond as a trial” (C2, E2, L). This required focusing on its current implementation model, target group, and geography, but also embracing the new innovative programme mechanism.

The organisation also co-designs proposals with like-minded collaborating organisations to ensure alignment with its core mission, while leveraging on others' strengths. As the programme manager indicates, “When, in terms of the partnership, also with other institutions, we work closely with UP [university], we also work closely with other training centres” (C2, P2, L109). This was exemplified in their proposal development of a social impact bond proposal.

6.1.2 Community branding and marketing awareness in enhancing social mission alignment

The organisation has invested in branding and awareness at the community level so that all stakeholders understand what the organisation’s social mission is. This helps to articulate the different activities the organisation is engaged in and crowds in on its core mission. Therefore, funders are also able to fund the organisation with an understanding of what the organisation is all about. As the programme manager states, branding enhances “communication with the different funders” (C2, P2, L27).

The organisation leverages its identity in the community to influence the direction of the prospective funder’s projects. Hence, the funders have come to understand the mission of the organisation and have been supporting them to further S-Impact’s core mission in the communities where they are located. As the M&E manager states, “We are in the community and the community halls, we talk to the community leaders, they know us, all we have to do is just to tell them [funders] ‘there's something new’, and normally they'll just embrace it. So, I think that is our strength in terms of getting that attraction of the donors” (C2, M2, L94).

In reviewing the organisation’s website and interviewing the executive director, the role of digital branding of the organisation has been key to communicating to stakeholders and the general public the core mission and interventions of the organisation. The website has platforms used to ‘push’ content relating to the organisation’s mission, plans, achievements, and other pertinent news. The organisation also publishes newsletters that are updated on the website, covering content disaggregated by the interventions that align with its core mission.

Co-branding is utilised to balance their mission and the mandates. Some of the funders require their brand also to appear on reports, but the organisation ensures they also include their own branding logos and one-line mission tags to facilitate effective communication (C2, CA2A [contract agreement]). All reviewed annual reports and sample programme reports had S-Impact and sponsoring funders' branding. All the reviewed reports to stakeholders had logos of the organisation, in addition to that of the respective funder (C2, [annual programme report] AP2).

6.1.3 Regulatory context to align mission and multiple mandates

The uncertainties in the funding environment and ensuing resource constraints led S-Impact to adapt and innovate its business models to pursue multiple funding arrangements. S-Impact has a for-profit “social enterprise arm” (C2, E2, L71). For instance, this entailed the conceptualisation of the social impact bond project, which requires S-Impact to decide whether to continue implementation within the NPO arm or diversify to use the for-profit enterprise to implement. To manage this tension, S-Impact intends to utilise the for-profit enterprise to facilitate the implementation model of contractual deliverables-based programming, but manage it centrally through the core staff under the NPO-registered umbrella organisation.

S-Impact utilises the umbrella NPO entity to oversee the other registered entities. The NPO and PBO status of the umbrella entity accords various privileges, such as tax exemptions. During project conceptualisation, the dual registration facilitates the allocation of for-profit and non-profit activities as appropriate.

With minimal requirements on how social enterprises can collaborate, S-Impact optimises strategic collaborations to venture into other priority projects. For instance, S-Impact was in the process of negotiating a collaboration agreement to co-design a project with various collaborators from the community, an underwriting bank, DSD, and a research organisation. S-Impact also leverages its past collaboration with one of the leading universities in South Africa as a source of interns and fieldwork support.

6.2 Proposal development and writing phase

In the proposal development phase within S-Impact, the balance between focusing on its mission and the mandates is achieved by the organisation's emphasis on M&E and theory of change to articulate how core project activities fit within the request for proposals (RFP). The use of M&E approaches, tools and lingo assists in this balance. S-Impact proposals include unrestricted income from its rented building and other earned income from the enterprise arm as matching or cost share. This is also utilised to facilitate other un-funded priority activities.

6.2.1 Articulating funders' objectives within the core priorities using M&E lingo and tools

The organisation organises the different priority activities by target group and geographical split for easy subsequent project integration. S-Impact then foregrounds this approach during the proposal development to funders, while ensuring the core mission on healthcare, economic empowerment, gender-based violence, environmental/agriculture projects, and social assistance for refugees and asylum seekers is intact (C2, PR2A). In a recent proposal to DSD for an outreach project on youth, S-Impact wanted to emphasise the inclusion of refugees as a target group per the mission. However, DSD required the proposal to address the local pre-selected target group in the community, given the negative sentiments toward foreign nationals in the communities. S-Impact navigated this and achieved success through the use of the overarching theory of change language and M&E to map beneficiaries to fit both criteria and focus more on economic strengthening as a pillar.

S-Impact explicitly uses the theory of change lingo to interpret and map requirements. Specifically, they articulate this language in proposals using words such as “Case 2’s theory of change for positively influencing the health and economic resilience of vulnerable youth and their associated families, as required by funder A, is based on following assumptions” (C2, PR2A, p. 7). The first part of the statement covers their broader mission, and the second part provides assumptions that have to be considered within this specific donor funding proposal to fit in within the organisation’s theory of change.

S-Impact creatively infuses the funders’ priorities within the beneficiaries at the centre of their mission: orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), rather than only the funder’s priorities. For example, in the proposal, the funder's emphasis was on social assistance and economic strengthening activities, but S-Impact foregrounded social assistance of targeting OVC families. This wittingly included a core S-Impact target group, which the funder did not consider as a priority, of “refugees and asylum seekers hidden in rural communities” (C2, PR2A [proposal sample A], p. 8). They were able also to include HIV/AIDS prevention activities as per S-Impact mission (C2, PR2A, p.7).

S-Impact pre-empts its *modus operandi* in funding proposals by merging the core leadership structure with the project management one. This avoids duplicating efforts and promotes efficiencies. A further review of the proposal shows how they present the project structure in a diagram, indicating how both the NPO and Pty units complement each other in project

implementation (C2, PR2A [proposal], p. 6). This pre-empts to the funders how they are structured and ensures they deliver on their mission.

Through work-load analysis, S-Impact links the funding opportunities to the existing internal capacity and competencies at the proposal stage. This approach allows them to retain core skills, ensure internal staff morale, and facilitate easy linkages of the funder's needs to existing other priorities. For instance, they "look at the staffing, whether it is good to require new personnel together or whether they have the capacity for somebody else to do the work" (C2, F2, L57).

S-Impact superimposes the organisation's business and operation model and blends its service delivery model with the funder's deliverables requirements of RFPs. Therefore, they make it look as if they are meeting the funder's needs, but they are also foregrounding their service delivery models (C2, PR2A, p. 11).

S-Impact has a portfolio of past successful project models and delivery approaches within their core mission that they tweak or adapt within new proposals. This facilitates agility [within the mission] through value creation and value delivery adaptations across projects. Besides, when writing the proposals, the organisation also endeavours to align incoming activities to the existing overarching mission by using their integrated "knowledge management platform" (C2, PR2B, pg. 15). The founder states, "So, we'd really be looking at how does it [new project] fit with what we're already doing" (C2, E2, L93).

When writing proposals, S-Impact uses an overarching M&E plan or log-frame to facilitate alignment of the organisation's activities, outputs and outcomes to those of the funder. This log-frame can be adapted to other funders' proposals. The M&E manager indicates, "I develop an M&E plan based on, for example, when we do the proposals ... I develop a plan based on that [main log-frame]" (C2, M2, L192).

6.2.2 Incorporating unrestricted income and enterprise activities to align

S-Impact innovatively captures value through unrestricted funding to fund internal mission-related activities. They articulate in cost proposals how the rental income from their commercial building and earned income from the enterprise activities, such as consultancies, achieve this. They also present this as part of the cost share or matching funds in proposals. This enables cost efficiencies [a common funder requirement] of their proposals, while ensuring core activities are funded. Besides, most RFPs require organisations to demonstrate in their proposals the ability to match funding and sustainability of projects after the funding ends. The founder states, "We also were able to use that money [unrestricted] to do things, like buy our own building ... so, it was for our

long-term sustainability” (C2, E2, L60). The finance manager adds, “We were working on a programme where we were paid a management fee. So, we built up a bit of reserves. So, we have got money ... and we use that, if necessary” (C2, F2, L219).

The earned unrestricted income is used as bridge funds to facilitate activities that communities view to be a priority, even in instances where the organisation has overlooked such activities. For instance, the programme manager indicates that “Even if maybe USAID says we cannot provide food parcels. But we know that our community also has very needy beneficiaries who require food parcels ... you find that S-Impact on its own through its funds can actually carry on some activities that don't really talk to the funder (C2, P2, L118).

S-Impact converges its business portfolio of commercial building proceeds and other earned income towards social impact. The fully owned “social enterprise arm” (C2, E2, L71) is a for-profit registered proprietary limited liability company (Pty) to bolster enterprise activities. The enterprise provides training at a fee on entrepreneurship, youth job-readiness, and consultancies in areas such as M&E, data analysis, GIS, and research and ventures in micro-small businesses (C2, PR2B).

The fully owned profit arm is managed by a central core functional management team within the umbrella NPO to ensure coordination and convergence portfolio thinking. In one RFP that S-Impact responded to, the organisation had to deal with conflicting requirements. Specifically, they could not budget the full level of effort of the entire core management; yet, having the core shared team is a central feature to ensure its mission is foregrounded. However, S-Impact wittingly managed this tension by including an internal costing model that worked out actual costs and the chargeable costs to the funders with an embedded percentage mark-up on each salary cost (C2, Contract budget). The margin between the charge out and actual rates would then be recognised internally as unrestricted income and fund the core-shared team.

S-Impact has pre-determined margin formulae incorporated in budget proposals to allow flexibility. Some of the sampled proposals had budgets that cater for overhead costs and also a management fee component that is recognised as earned income. Besides, S-Impact adjusts budgets to fit within the prescribed budget because “Some of the funders actually say that is the amount, and you have got to try and make it work” (C2, F2, L63). Hence, if “The funder says you can only have three million, and the budget and our figures are ten million, we either then adjust the programme completely and try and work within the parameters of the budget” (C2, F2, L75).

6.3 Negotiation and contracting phase

The negotiation and contracting phase is key in clarifying the final agreements' deliverables and modalities between the organisation and funders before implementation. In this phase, S-Impact also uses M&E lingo and tools to address the funder's feedback. The founder and leaders optimise a portfolio of relationships, such as community and past relationships, as well as the art of negotiations to reach compromises with funders and community beneficiaries.

6.3.1 Active use of M&E to negotiate and infuse multiple requirements

S-Impact is explicit in the use of the theory of change and other M&E lingo to demonstrate adherence to funder terms. In some instances, this facilitates adaptations to resolve areas of contention. For instance, during negotiations, S-Impact customises the M&E plans to accommodate changes proposed by funders while leaving the core message intact. As the M&E manager states, "we need to always go back, update that M&E plan" (C2, M2, L192).

S-Impact also uses current M&E data from communities to facilitate funder education and negotiations, especially when the funder baseline data is outdated. In one project being negotiated by DSD, S-Impact preferred to maintain work in townships within Gauteng, focusing on the youth as per their mission rather than expanding to include caregivers in other targeted communities within the province [DSD mandate]. As the M&E manager puts it, "sometimes you find that's how they [funders] thought, or how they planned initially, then from their proposal, or from how they would want the program to run, but when we go on the ground, it's different" (C2, M2, L102).

S-Impact uses visuals to demonstrate its theory of change and to negotiate. It uses diagrams to nuance the core organisation's goal of empowering families to create their future while depicting the key contractual outputs within the same framework (C2, PR2, p. 8). It also highlights how they leverage donated hub space from another private funder to cater for the expansion while keeping their core work substantively the same. As the programme manager highlights, "it also takes that planning and also negotiating to see where you can actually achieve more in terms of your [core] activities" (C2, P2, L84).

S-Impact optimises co-creation during the negotiation window to incorporate or adapt tools and mechanisms within proposal iterations before implementation. As part of negotiations, S-Impact is nimble and adapts project-specific SOPs to document the changes and strategies specific to a funding arrangement (C2, policy document [PD]). The reviewed successful proposal samples had several versions of iterations submitted and each submission had adaptations in the structure of

staffing, strategies of implementation, tweaking of tools such as M&E and data quality assessments. This demonstrated the ensuing negotiations that funders were amenable to. All these adaptations were made to incorporate core activities within the funder's requirements, while infusing the core activities.

S-Impact leverages its existing project management capabilities to showcase its capacity to manage multiple projects during negotiations. Specifically, this is done to demonstrate capabilities during "risk assessments" (C2, finance manager [F2], L303) conducted by funders during this phase. The founder points out, "It sounds crazy ... It's almost like the more funders you have, the more funding you will get ... the fact that you could meet [one funder's] expectations and requirements gives comfort to other donors" (C2, E2, L46).

S-Impact also leverages its reputation in the community as a bargaining chip with funders, which attracts many other funders. S-Impact has found that funders value organisations that are recognised in the communities. As the founder reiterates, "It's almost an unfair advantage because maybe some other NPOs would be as good as us. But if you haven't got the track record, you've got no chance. So that has really been a bonus" (C2, E2, L47).

S-Impact also uses its community proximity to undercut competition during RFP rebids. In one of the contracts, some aspects of service delivery, geographical reach, and target numbers had changed compared to the RFP rebid based on negotiations. These changes, [aka modifications], present opportunities for the organisation to propose changes and/or adapt various aspects of the activities being implemented within the confines of its core mission, based on existing experience within the community. This comes with proposed changes that are favourable to the organisation (C2, Contract budget).

6.3.2 Leaders' relationship management and negotiation skills

Relationship management by the leader and other managers is an important aspect of successful negotiations. This enables S-Impact to champion the core interests at the leadership level. The founder usually targets the key decision-makers, and because of past built relationships, she is not afraid to approach them. As the founder states, "Because I've been on the job now for so long, I'm not afraid to go to them [funders] with a problem" (C2, E2, L258).

When they face resistance from funders, S-Impact pairs their technical staff with those from the funders to negotiate and find solutions, and usually, they are successful. The M&E manager indicates "It's important to understand each funder and sometimes, the person that you deal with.

For example, I'm an M&E person, I need to understand who's their M&E person also. Now and again, have our one-on-one, not just waiting for a bigger platform" (C2, M2, L200).

The proximity of the leader and management to community beneficiaries has been instrumental in articulating priorities to funders during negotiations because the management is in touch with stakeholder priorities. As the executive director states, "A lot of people say it's my leadership style ... so, you will find me at least one day a week in a community somewhere. And I think that has made a difference" (C2, E2, L194). The programme manager adds that it is important, "Being in the community" (C2, P2, L63), and "visiting some of the activities on the ground, which might talk to maybe evidence-based interventions, also visiting facilities" (C2, P2, L72). He further states that it helps to "be on top in terms of also getting feedback" (C2, P2, L84), using the opportunity for current and future negotiations with funders on the core priorities.

Some negotiations require flexibility and the small size of S-Impact enables them to be nimble in decision-making to ensure alignment. In one province, S-Impact was faced with a decision to maintain DSD as the core funder due to the complexities in that community, or diversify to include a private funder without facing community resistance. To manage the tension, the M&E manager recalls, "We had to restructure or redefine our mission and our objectives ... so that our mission had to touch a bit of each and every programme" (C2, M2, L82). The finance manager further states, "We try our best and accommodate where we can" (C2, F2, L267).

The art of negotiations by leaders and managers is an asset to foreground S-Impact's way of 'doing things' with funders. The leaders have innate confidence built over time due to their understanding of the context that funders do not necessarily have insight into. The M&E manager illustrates, "The funder will tell you that 'we expect you to reach this number of people' ... We can always go back to the funder and say, we think this number of people is not going to be enough if you want us to reach this ... so, we justify" (C2, M2, L176).

6.4 Implementation phase

To ensure the successful implementation of multiple projects, S-Impact navigates multiple mandates and its mission in several ways. S-Impact has centralised policies, tools and functions, such as M&E and finance, to manage all NPO and Pty activities. S-impact adapts and adopts internal procedures as necessary by using SOPs to manage multiple requirements. There is a cadre of core-shared staff who ensure the coordination across projects, while field-based staff implement. Existing HR practices and the family-like social connections among core staff facilitate individual and collective commitment to the organisation's core mission.

6.4.1 Agile centralised functions, policies and tools to align

S-Impact has centralised internal functions and its structure to facilitate coordination of the NPO and Pty activities to ensure the unity of purpose. The founder states that the core shared staff structure is made up of the “founder, programme manager, M&E manager, finance manager and HR manager” (C2, E2, L97). These coordination functions cut across the NPO and for-profit activities “in terms of the level of effort” (C2, P2, L78).

The organisation has a centralised level-of-effort management system to manage multiple employees and their activities. Specifically, the “timesheets” (C2, F2, L213) are used to track the level of effort by employees across different projects and act as a source document that facilitates seamless and concurrent monthly billing of different projects. This is articulated in S-Impact’s overarching finance policies and procedures manual (C2, PD2 [policy document]).

S-Impact has elevated the M&E function and systems to be central in facilitating the concurrent monitoring of multiple project requirements as well as internal core activities. Therefore, S-Impact can utilise the same information from M&E to fulfil multiple mandates and the core mission. For instance, during implementation, funders require monthly and quarterly programme reports, which are mostly prescribed by the funders. To align and navigate this, the organisation uses centralised databases and templates. This is made possible by using their centralised M&E function that “has an understanding of all the programmes” (C2, M2, L90). The M&E manager states, “Normally, we have your weekly target that mounts to your monthly and quarterly targets. So, we look at your performance. We monitor; are you reaching your weekly targets? If not, why are you not reaching a weekly target?” (C2, M2, L142).

The M&E function facilitates the internal translation of the funder’s tools for internal use and efficiency. They ensure the tools incorporate language that encompasses the core activities within the funder’s activities. The M&E team then disseminates these tools internally to other staff cadre for use. As the M&E manager explains, “We populate it on a very simple tool that helps the programme understand ... You try as much as possible to simplify it for the people who are going to implement because they need to understand where the gap is” (C2, M2, L154). The finance manager adds, “... to try our best and accommodate where we can” (C2, F2, L267).

S-Impact generally simplifies complex tools to facilitate effective implementation among staff and ease the burden of employees attending to different funders’ demands. For instance, to assist in reporting to different stakeholders, the finance manager indicates, “We have an Excel spreadsheet where we then reconcile” (C2, F2, L105). The M&E manager further indicates, “We

generate different reports. We populate it on a very simple tool that helps the programme understand because when you do these things, you don't complicate programmes" (C2, M2, L154).

The organisation has its own overarching tools that also can be adapted for use. The tools afford the organisation the opportunity to effectively monitor different activities being implemented for the different funder activities, as well as activities that link to the core mission. For example, the M&E plans cover broad activities under different programmes, as well as mission-centric activities that the organisation focuses on [orphans and vulnerable children]. This was articulated in reviewed implementation plans within the sample proposal (C2, PR2A) and the M&E process (C2, SOP, M&E). The plans have a results framework table that aligns the responsible actors with activities, outputs or deliverables, and outcomes. These are further linked to different funder objectives and they are used to monitor the embedded organisation's core activities. The M&E manager further states, "The funders give you the tools already to say that these are indicators ... but we have got another tool that they [field officers] populate" (C2, M2, L146).

S-Impact has overarching policies that cut across the organisation's registered entities. This ensures uniformity and focus on the core ways of 'doing things' under the NPO umbrella organisation. For example, the organisation has an overarching accounting policy and system cutting across different projects. The projects are identified by using different codes to ensure "tracking according to the budget ... according to whatever donors want" (C2, H2, L170). They "Use Pastel evolution, so that they can link every single account to a funder ... Each has been allocated a funder prefix, and then they can extract the information from the ledger and then put that into the reports of the funders" (C2, F2, L81).

6.4.2 Adapting and adopting internal procedures and tools to align

S-Impact utilises SOPs to nuance funders' requirements and incorporate exceptions to existing policies. This allows them to adapt the necessary procedures, while they remain within the main policies' framework. These SOPs form part of the contract agreements, as was evident in two contract agreements (C2, CR2A, CR2B [contract agreements]). These adaptable SOPs and tools act as artefacts that also facilitate the organisation to fulfil its core mission and concurrently meet different funders' requirements. As the programme manager indicates, "Within ... our M&E systems, we've got also different actual SOPs, and we have standard SOPs; I think if we look at the SOPs, which we have between M&E and programmes, it's quite a lot. But then that talks also in terms of us being compliant and actually talking to quality reporting" (C2, P2, L69).

S-Impact also adopts or emulates some of the funders' procedures if they deem them relevant and essential to fulfil the mandates and mission because some funders' requirements are unique and require to be adopted internally. Some of these adopted procedures actually strengthen the existing ones. The examples reviewed that mirror funders' procedures included SOP on internal M&E data quality assessments, activity tracking, and economic strengthening implementation.

S-Impact opts for a more conservative approach of adopting the most stringent procedures and subject other projects to these stringent requirements as a foundational base. This is because they “do not like to do something for one funder, and a different thing for another funder” (C2, F2, L117), and “it is probably good to keep the strict policies anyway” (C2, F2, L129). For instance, “The UN specifies a per diem rate, and none of the other funders do. So, we then use the UN rate for our other funders ... and we will then be doing an addendum to another funder who has different requirements” (C2, F2, L117).

S-Impact has a practice of constantly reviewing its internal procedures. This allows the needed flexibility of working with multiple funders who constantly come up with requirements and it allows S-Impact to “adapt to the funder's requirements” (C2, F2, L93). However, this is a cautious approach to ensure the organisation is not a site of myriad procedures that are irrelevant to attaining the mission. The programme manager indicates that “Adapting and understanding our role, we still need to provide services to our beneficiaries. And also, we still need to make sure that those services are of quality” (C2, P2, L103).

S-Impact also mirrors funders' requirements and ensures the internal functioning embodies the funders' requirements. This sometimes involves translating and interpreting information to align mandates and mission-related activities. Therefore, they can utilise the same information to fulfil multiple needs simultaneously. The M&E manager states, “We pull the data from CIBIMS [funder database] and migrate it to our own database, then we start analysing, based on what we want as S-Impact. It informs us better” (C2, M2, L158). The founder further indicates, “Like the UN, for example, have very little knowledge and experience on monitoring and evaluation. So, we can take that knowledge and make use of S-Impact system ... under the UN programme” (C2, E2, L89).

Most of the adaptations are facilitated by the organisation being nimble or agile in decision-making. An example of their nimbleness was demonstrated during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. The founder recalls, “We changed completely the way we work ... we did it all on cell phones. We would do an online screening or telephonic screening. They [community care

workers] would photograph the documents and send everything to us over the phone” (C2, E2, L54). Unlike in the past, they “had to offer services remotely” (C2, P2, L103). This kind of agility within the context of their work enables the organisation to shift activities within their broad mission and it enhances their ability to work with multiple stakeholders and quickly change internally to address external changes.

6.4.3 The role of shared staff in coordination

S-Impact has central [core-shared] staff who cut across and ensure activities of different funders, the NPO and Pty entities are coordinated to meet the organisation’s mission and at the same time the other requirements. The staff functions cut across the NPO and for-profit activities and the programme manager states, “It is our senior management ... I have to play different roles between the different programmes; the founder also has to play different roles between the different programmes. Our M&E Manager also has to support different programmes. Also finance, HR cut across the different programmes” (C2, P2, L78).

The core-shared staff multitask as necessary to manage multiple projects simultaneously. The programme manager explains, “The roles are really interchangeable. It’s really in terms of ... on a needs basis, what needs to be done” (C2, P2, L27). The M&E manager indicates, “I was appointed as an M&E manager, but I am managing the economic strengthening programme, and DSD, and yeah, PHPP [additional project]” (C2, M2, L78).

The core staff also collaborate very closely with each other and with the field staff to ensure there is seamless implementation and that the different project deliverables are delivered as agreed with funders. The core staff supports other field staff to ensure the fulfilment of different requirements in the field. As the M&E manager explains, “How we support is we plan; we help them [other field staff] plan” (C2, M2, L180). The programme and M&E managers also conduct “site visits to really check if the people on the ground have the same understanding” (C2, M2, L138).

The shared central staff act as bridging staff when project-specific staff departs or there is no adequate budgeted time. This maintains consistency among the staff, ensuring staff commitment, meeting funders’ needs, and maintaining mission clarity. In reality, these staff members may be budgeted under key projects or funded using earned income, but S-Impact has found a way to practically split their level of effort across the budget sections. As the programme manager indicates, “Different programmes require you to be actually providing 100% effort. But you find that between the different programmes, you end up having that on paper, but it’s different

percentages ... this programme 40% ... this other programme 30% ... another 40%" (C2, P2, L39). Besides, "Some of the funders actually say that is the amount, and you have got to try and make it work ... Do you need dedicated staff? Will you be able to share the staff who we currently have?" (C2, F2, L63).

The core staff use their historical institutional knowledge and understanding of how the organisation has evolved to organise internally. They have been with the organisations over a long tenure, and this has solidified their commitment to the organisation and provided them with an understanding of how to navigate multiple mandates. For example, the HR manager started at S-Impact when the founder was also a social worker.

The core staff has social ties with each other beyond the professional connections, and this has created a real sense of comradery among the team to work towards a joint mission. The founder indicates, "The finance manager and I go back to when our sons were in Grade 1; that's when I met her, and our son is 34 this year" (C2, E2, L242). The finance manager "was consulting for the founder's husband's business ... then moved over to S-Impact ... as the finance manager, and has been with them ever since" (C2, F2, L33).

6.4.4 HR practised to manage multiple complexities

S-Impact's employment strategy is to recruit field staff from the communities and beneficiaries. The field staff are able to identify with community needs and are more altruistic. Hiring from beneficiaries, communities, and other stakeholders facilitates their commitment and easier buy-in of employees to organisational priorities and other expectations. As the executive director indicates, "I mean, the number of people in our organisation who were beneficiaries, who were HIV positive in the early days, and that's how they came to us, who are now social auxiliary workers or data capturers ... And I think that's the secret to our success" (C2, E2, L193).

The programme manager explains,

"So, it's really a cadre who grew up in that community, someone who really has a love for that community, and goes beyond just a monthly pay check in terms of how they want to actually impact and leave a sort of positive mark in their communities ... in that sense, we get staff who are really motivated in terms of what they do, and also [have] a good understanding in terms of how they want to support their communities" (C2, P2, L97).

S-Impact's culture promotes internal career progression, which is key to the staff being committed to the organisation's mission. The HR manager states, "There are always opportunities here, and

you get the opportunity here to grow” (C2, H2, L164). For instance, “The M&E manager ... started off as a social auxiliary worker and ended up managing our M&E” (C2, F2, L249). The programme manager added, “It’s really S-Impact’s culture to grow from within, so it grows its staff from within. So, you’ll find that we have someone who started as a care worker when they joined, then now you’ll find that they are a social worker” (C2, P2, L109).

As a result of staff longevity, there is a general sense of belonging and the staff, from management to lower-level, feel connected to the organisation. The programme manager confirms that “I think, in essence ... it talks to a very strong team, which has sort of grown through challenges together” (C2, P2, L109). This facilitates high employee engagement toward fulfilling multiple goals, as well as the reduction of internal tensions. The founder sums it up as, “It’s because they feel like it’s family” (C2, E2, L237). She further states, “I think that’s the secret to our success. It’s ... they [staff] really do feel like family” (C2, E2, L193). The HR manager confirms that “It is a very nice environment to be in ... I have a fantastic time here” (C2, H2, L164). The finance manager adds, “We talked about that the other day ... this is family here, we’re family ... generally, we’re all working for the same purpose, and it is like a family” (C2, F2, L249).

S-Impact uses meetings dynamically to motivate staff, disseminate information, celebrate, and manage performance. Staff meetings are used for formal updates, as well as staff welfare and motivation purposes. As the HR manager indicates, “We have team buildings incorporated with our staff meetings, where we have lots of fun and just relax, people enjoy that” (C2, H2, L140). The programme manager adds, “Also, we have, like our AGM and end of the year functions where also staff just relax and just enjoy themselves outside” (C2, P2, L84). The founder adds, “Our AGMs are very different to everybody else’s. The business side of the AGM ... we do before the AGM ... And then the main AGM is almost a stakeholder staff celebration ... Nothing like a boring, old AGM” (C2, E2, L262).

The organisation practices a culture of transparency and open communication among its employees. Clear communication is cascaded to all field-level staff to ensure common understanding. As the programme manager states, “Open communication channels in terms of where they’re issues ... The channels are there in terms of where they need assistance” (C2, P2, L85). He adds, “Our HR processes actually also allow you to actually skip your immediate manager ... we find that half the time, care workers are actually sending the founder WhatsApps or emails for concerns” (C2, P2, L91).

The other employee motivator is depicted by empathetic leadership and supervisors showing interest in the employees' personal lives by offering social support. This bolsters employees' commitment to the organisation. This was evidenced especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the founder states, "We would do anything to stop someone being retrenched. We will make a plan, take a salary cut here, combine this over there, make a little plan over there. And so, there is enormous buy-in from the staff. It's remarkable" (C2, E2, L194).

S-Impact also collaborates with universities for upskilling and internal skills assimilation. Therefore, the organisation can leverage other skills, while ensuring internal staff fit. As the founder indicates, "We are also quite closely aligned with the University of Pretoria. So, we take students from social studies, final year social work students to do practical work with ... if they then apply for a job, we kind of have inside intel on what they're like" (C2, E2, L225). The reason, she indicates, is, "I want the culture where you are committed, and we are committed to you" (C2, E2, L220).

6.5 Reporting: Output/outcome measurement phase

To demonstrate the attainment of outputs and outcomes, S-Impact ensures focused concurrent reporting that foregrounds their core mission activities, while also reporting on additional funders' requirements, which are not core to their mission. S-Impact deliberately uses M&E approaches to demonstrate the theory of change and impact. They utilise AGMs and community meetings to disseminate success stories to multiple stakeholders. S-Impact also leverages digitisation and information technology to reach multiple stakeholders simultaneously.

6.5.1 Concurrent disaggregated and integrated dynamic programme and financial reporting

The organisation has an overarching internal reporting approach and templates. This facilitates the concurrent disaggregation and integration of programme and financial reports. This enables S-Impact to report to multiple stakeholders from the same data repository in a simultaneous fashion. As the M&E manager points out, reporting "Information is actually disaggregated from the database, and then you find that certain information that is not really useful for the funder, it might be useful for us, then we still use that information" (C2, M2, L150). The finance manager further states, "Obviously, each funder has the report. And then we have the management accounts, which gives us all the funders together" (C2, F2, L195).

Having managed multiple funders, there is experiential practising that facilitates disaggregated and integrated reporting simultaneously. The process starts by ensuring all field employees

“understand what activities are we doing and also what that means in terms of reporting as an individual, reporting as an office, also reporting as an overall programme” (C2, P2, L72). The M&E manager adds, “Using the same tool, then we present it to the director in our executive meetings, but we might change it slightly just for her understanding ... we then just sort of do a report that gives her a very good understanding of where we are in terms of the things for S-Impact” (C2, M2, L154).

S-Impact has an actual M&E function to ultimately facilitate multiple reporting to multiple funders and internal management. The M&E staff use their experience and insight to interpret programme outputs and how they fulfil multiple mandates concurrently. The M&E manager states, “We do different reports, and then we pull different reports for different purposes” (C2, M2, L154), as well as “reporting as an overall programme” (C2, P2, L72). The programme manager adds that when reporting, they [M&E] ensure “the objectives of the project will really link in terms of the mission and also link with the goals which S-Impact strives to uphold” (C2, P2, L51).

S-Impact uses an internal ‘master template’ to map different funders’ requirements and customises it for each funder’s template to manage different requirements simultaneously. The M&E manager states, “We developed a tool. A tool that sorts of consolidates different aspects of the main indicators ... so, we generate different reports, and we populate it on a very simple tool that helps the programme understand (C2, M2, L154). The programme manager further indicates, “For the different programmes, we’ve got clear indicators in terms of what are the requirements in terms of reporting, and we have to ensure that we meet those and we track” (C2, P2, L69).

The reporting culminates into the annual report, which is an example of an artefact utilised to demonstrate the attainment of goals to multiple stakeholders simultaneously. Therefore, the annual report is a key dynamic tool to balance mission and multiple mandates. The reviewed annual report attempts to map project achievements to the organisation’s mission and existing projects (C2, ARP [annual report]).

S-Impact utilises AGMs and community meetings to disseminate success stories to multiple stakeholders. It also uses stories in pictures, photo galleries and video galleries to communicate the successes in their interventions and mission attainment. For instance, during the annual general meeting, the M&E manager indicates that the founder “requested that M&E do a presentation ... in the AGM for ... different stakeholders who attended” (C2, M2, L196).

S-Impact’s enterprise resource planning system allows each funder to have their own income statement, as well as S-Impact’s overall organisational financial system. Different funders are

identified by using different codes. Therefore, reports can be disaggregated and integrated to meet various stakeholders' needs concurrently. As the finance manager states, "Each funder has a report, and then we have the management accounts, which gives us all the funders together" (C2, F2, L195).

Additionally, while different funders have different audit reports, S-Impact has negotiated to have "one audit to cover all three [major funders]" (C2, F2, L237). The centralised "statutory audit" (C2, F2, L237) report is disseminated to multiple stakeholders and used to serve multiple needs, such as access to bank facilities, government compliance, and tax purposes. The audit reports for the past three years were reviewed, and while each funder has a preference on how financial accountability would be attained, the organisation has managed to amalgamate this to be done by using one audit exercise.

6.5.2 Digitisation and Information technology enhance simultaneous reporting

To meet different funders' requirements and also fulfil their internal needs, the organisation utilises a data information warehouse that is easy to mine and manipulate data as appropriate. Funders have their tools and databases, but S-Impact adapts and exports data into their internal database and conducts the analysis for multiple reporting purposes. As the M&E manager indicates, "We are given the database ... from the funder, but we also have our own ... so, what we do, we pull the data ... and migrate it to our own database, then we start analysing, based on what we want as S-Impact. It informs us better" (C2, M2, L158).

S-Impact customises off-shelf applications and utilises them to navigate reporting to multiple stakeholders simultaneously. S-Impact also has innovative applications and systems that have greatly assisted them in meeting several requirements. They believe that within the SMSE sector; they were "one of the first partners to come with the Google classrooms ... with the WhatsApp platforms in terms ... of feedback" and reporting (C2, P2, L100).

The organisation has automated the financial and programme monitoring systems for seamless and multiple reporting to different funders and the organisation's activities. S-Impact can monitor, report and align multiple projects simultaneously, while using the same digital media forums. The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated the use of technology by the organisation. The programme manager points out, "I also think that came through COVID ... the remote platforms, that has come as a sort of quite a good advancement in terms of how to utilise technology ... in terms of some of the priorities that align" (C2, P2, L63).

The management information systems act as dynamic artefacts that allow the achievement of multiple requirements that take place simultaneously. For instance, the centralised IT system facilitates the preparation of different types of multiple financial and programme reports to multiple funders. The system facilitates managing complex projects, resource planning of finances and employees, effective management between the activities relating to profit activities, and community project activities. As the finance manager indicates, “We use Pastel Evolution so that we can link every single account to a funder ... Each has been allocated a funder prefix, and then we can extract the information from the ledger and then put that into the reports of the funders” (C2, F2, L81).

S-Impact has taken advantage of virtual staff meetings to address multiple needs. These were increased, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ease of holding staff meetings more regularly facilitates more frequent meetings, wider participation, and cost-effectiveness. In addition, this eases the management of multiple and simultaneous projects in an efficient manner. As the executive director highlights, they now have “... weekly tracking meetings, to track every programme on its targets, how's it going? Which is not something we used to do because it always used to be difficult to get everybody into the office. Now we just do a [an online] Team meeting to catch up” (C2, E2, L177).

S-Impact has formalised the use of social media in dynamic ways to fulfil multiple internal needs beyond social interactions. For instance, they currently have internal engagements using WhatsApp for managing staff, reporting, checking in on their well-being, as well as managing funders' expectations. The founder highlights that “We can meet with everybody once a week, quick, quick touch base. And so those things have made a difference” (C2, E2, L254). She adds, “We have WhatsApp groups that we also learned through COVID. I'm on 1000s of WhatsApp groups that I see ... we run groups over weekends [training sessions] ... So, if USAID says so, how do you know? Well, because I get a report on a Saturday night, and they'll send a photograph” (C2, E2, L254).

S-Impact intentionally uses digital media to connect and collaborate with funders on a real-time basis. The M&E manager indicates that “For all the funders who I've worked with, I have the M&E person on WhatsApp. Now and again, I just send them a WhatsApp to say, this is what I'm struggling with, support me in this” (C2, M2, L200).

6.6 Conclusion

S-Impact is about 12 years old, and as an organisation that is embedded in the community, it has experience in dealing with multiple stakeholders. Project conceptualisation and identification are done in conjunction with community leaders [indunas]. S-Impact has leveraged its presence within the community as a broker to advocate for programmes that are mutually beneficial to them and the funders and hence, a “strength in terms of getting that attraction of the donors” (C2, M2, L94).

The organisation is deliberate about using M&E to interpret and map activities that align with the funders, with the communities’ social needs, and its mission focus when developing and writing proposals. Due to a flexible regulatory context, S-Impact is agile and uses necessary business models and tools to fit within the appropriate registered entity. The leaders use a portfolio of relationships with stakeholders to negotiate favourably and articulate verbally and in writing their theory of change. The organisation is agile and this enables it to balance multiple mandates as well as its mission. S-Impact is nimble in its decision-making and the “mission had to touch a bit of each and every programme” (C2, M2, L82).

The monitoring and evaluation function is a fundamental function in conceptualising programmes, monitoring, implementing and reporting. This is not only with regard to funders’ projects, but also the organisation’s core mission-related activities. They use project management skills to implement and multitask. S-Impact has experience in utilising all available tools and procedures dynamically to project–manage multiple stakeholders simultaneously. The organisation is adept at adapting SOPs to manage multiplicities.

S-Impact has long-serving senior management staff who share their level of effort across projects. They assist the founder in coordinating functions that ensure the organisation is fulfilling the multiple funders’ mandates, and they ensure that the central organisation’s core mission activities are attended to. The organisation recruits staff from the communities “...who are really motivated in terms of what they do, and also a good understanding in terms of how they want to support their communities” (C2, P2, L97). They prefer to promote from within rather than hiring outside. The staff “feel like S-Impact is family” (C2, E2, L237). There is a deep sense of family ownership and belonging, as well as a commitment to fulfilling the organisation’s mission. S-Impact leverages technology and digital media to ensure concurrent reporting. AGMs and community meetings are avenues utilised to disseminate successes and the impact of the organisation’s projects to multiple stakeholders in a simultaneous manner. Table 6.2 summarises the primary code document, showing how S-Impact navigates multiple projects as they balance the mission and multiple mandates at different phases.

Table 6.2: Summary examples of practices and routines to balance mission and mandates at micro-level

Phase	Practices, routines and practitioner actions to balance mission and mandates
Pre-proposal - conceptualising and design	Embedded in the communities, attend community functions [imbizos], relationships with community leaders, funder education, co-design proposals, branding and awareness at the community, leverage its identity, digital branding, co-branding, innovate its business models, umbrella NPO entity to oversee and coordinate, strategic collaborations to leverage
Proposal development	Organise priority activities by target group and geography, use the theory of change lingo to interpret and map, infuse the funder priorities within the mission, merging the core leadership structure with the project management, work-load analysis, superimpose business and operation model, tweak or adapt old proposals within new proposals, use an overarching M&E plan/log-frame, capture value through unrestricted funding to fund internal mission-related activities, bridge-funding, converge its business portfolio, pre-determined margin formulae incorporated in budget proposals, use of internal budget template that pre-loads % on gross costs then translated to funder template
Negotiation and contracting phase	Leverage reputation in the community to negotiate, relationship management, pair their technical staff with funders' staff, adapt tools and mechanisms within proposal iterations, leverage the existing project management capabilities, nimble in decision-making, art of negotiations by leaders and managers, funder education; co-creation with the funder
Implementation	Centralised internal functions and structure that facilitate coordination, centralised level-of-effort management system, M&E function and systems facilitating the monitoring of multiple projects, M&E function facilitates the internal translation of funder tools, simplifies complex tools, overarching tools that also can be adapted, SOPs to nuance funder requirements, adopt more conservative approach and most stringent procedures, mirror funders' requirements, nimble or agile in decision-making, core-shared staff to coordinate and multitask, bridging staff, comradery among the team, recruit field staff from communities and beneficiaries, internal career progression, sense of belonging, use meetings dynamically, transparency and open communication, empathetic leadership, upskilling and internal skills assimilation, use of timesheets to track multiple tasks
Reporting - Output/outcome measurement	Overarching internal reporting approach and templates, experiential practising to disaggregate and integrate reports, tweak reports from the main report M&E function to ultimately facilitate multiple reporting, M&E prowess to communicate theories of change and impact to multiple stakeholders, internal 'master template' to map, annual reports to demonstrate achievements to multiple stakeholders, AGMs and community meetings to disseminate success stories, enterprise resource planning system, one audit for multiple stakeholders, utilise a data information warehouse to mine and manipulate data, customise off-shelf applications, automated financial and programme monitoring systems, dynamic management information systems, virtual staff meetings to address multiple needs, formalised the use social media, digital media to connect and collaborate with funders

CHAPTER 7: Hilcorp (Case 3) within-case discussion

Hilcorp (C3) was registered as a trust in South Africa in 1999 and obtained an NPO registration number the same year. It was also registered as a public benefit organisation that is tax-exempt (C3, FD3 [founding documents]). It has income-earning activities, such as a commercial building for rental, a guest house, and farming activities. The mission of the organisation is broad and revolves around the use of health and other means to improve the overall well-being of the communities within their geographical reach, while continuing to be an example of sustainable and holistic community development (C3, BM3 [board minutes]). To date, the funding portfolio has consisted of a mix of funding from USAID, foundations, trusts, and corporate social investments from over 17 different funder arrangements (C3, ARP3 [annual report]). The below table depicts the projects that were running at the time of data collection and the different phases of each project, depicting the different tensions that needed to be navigated simultaneously by Hilcorp.

Table 7. 1: Multiple projects and phases

Project	Phase	Details
Project 1	Implementation	Flagship early childhood project – unrestricted funded
Project 2	Reporting – Close-out	A 3-year youth economic empowerment project ending
Project 3	Negotiation & contracting	New health project with collaborators
Project 4	Implementation; Reporting	Various trainings through the Youth Opportunity Centre
Project 5	Implementation	Renting current offices for profit
Project 6	Pre-proposal	Discussions with the community on a national programme
Project 7	Proposal	Within a consortium for a USAID proposal

7.1 Pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase

The pre-proposal micro-phase involves the conceptual, scoping, and all pre-work done by the organisation as they pursue funding opportunities. In this phase, Hilcorp balances between mission and mandates by incorporating a community advisory committee as part of the governance structure to easily align the priority social needs within the mission. The organisation also practises community branding for continuous messaging and awareness creation to multiple stakeholders. Hilcorp maps the various entrepreneurial activities within its mission.

7.1.1 Community embeddedness to align mission and multiple mandates

The organisation's mission is centred on serving the communities within one of the rural parts of the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province, and they have a community advisory committee (CAC) that helps to link the communities' needs with the organisation's mission. The committee understands Hilcorp's mission and is useful for endorsing activities within the community when funders 'come knocking' with requests for proposals. Hilcorp has been successful in aligning funders with its

core mission-related activities because of having community-led interventions that funders then buy into. As the M&E manager highlights, “We have a community advisory committee, which is very active in those communities, which helps a lot because those are the people that are advocates for Hilcorp within the community” (C3, M3, L89). The executive director adds, “They speak on our behalf in the community. So, we've just found, there's been a lot of value added by having this committee, and we believe that it gives truth to our mission statement” (C3, E3, L202).

Hilcorp has a strategy practice of community entry for each project. Traditional leaders are key stakeholders in this context. Therefore, in addition to the use of the CAC, Hilcorp engages the traditional leaders for wider community buy-in. The M&E manager reports, “It's a matter of going to the community ... doing the community entry ... The process is just going to the traditional leader and going to the political leader, introducing yourself, and also getting their views on how they feel the project can be implemented” (C3, M3, L89). The programme manager adds, “Another structure that we work closely with, in developing projects is ‘amakosi’ the traditional leaders. They play an important role in the rural communities that we work with. So, if you have their buy-in and their support, you are always safe. You are always relevant. Because they are always there with the community, so, they know what matters” (C3, P3, L195).

Hilcorp values co-designing projects with the community stakeholders. This helps them in designing relevant projects and facilitates buy-in. The executive director states, “When we write to donors or stakeholders, and we say that we interact with the community, and we consult the community in a meaningful way, that we actually mean it” (C3, E3, L202). For instance, they responded to a request for a proposal (RFP) by a funder on a national programme to add an economic strengthening support aspect to their early childhood signature project, based on deliberations with the community advisory committee (C3, RFP3). The activities were new, but they were still targeted at the existing orphaned children under a previous project.

The organisation uses baseline data from previous projects to inform its pursuit of funders and projects. It specifically takes advantage of successful past projects that align well with the core mission. This facilitates foregrounding the mission from the onset when pursuing new funding, while also demonstrating past impact to the funders. The M&E manager states, “We look at the opportunities that will be aligned with the vision of Hilcorp” (C3, M3, L38).

S-Impact co-creates projects with other organisations and forms collaborations. This is especially so where activities are not within their core competencies. Therefore, they “work in partnership with other people” (C3, M3, L196). For instance, as the HR lead indicates, “One of our proposals

... we need some people to do testing, which we don't have at the moment. So, we ask, 'should we get this' then we would employ somebody [another partner organisation] ... to expedite" (C3, H3, L86). The M&E manager further elaborates, "Where the funder will ask us to move completely away from our strategic objectives and do something different, like we had an opportunity once to do ... emergency relief, but what we do with it is that we work with other organisations within the area to do that" (C3, M3, L65).

7.1.2 Community branding and marketing awareness in enhancing social mission alignment

Hilcorp becomes involved in community stakeholder forums to facilitate the visibility of its core activities. The forums, which are attended by district officials, provincial officials, funder representatives, community leaders and beneficiaries, provide an opportunity for Hilcorp to create awareness of its activities. The executive director highlights, "We do try to stay mindful of the need to involve our stakeholders in a meaningful way ... we participate in government forums, the provincial AIDS Council, and the district AIDS Council, you know, and structures like where we can make an input into province-wide or district-wide issues" (C3, E3, L226).

Hilcorp leverages its organisational community events to create awareness and align various stakeholders on their core mission. As the HR lead adds, "We have ... two or three times a year, graduation ceremonies ... and we invite parents, and we invite community leaders, and it is through that, that we communicate, we are not only showcasing the results, but we communicate what the project is about, and show them the results of the work" (C3, E3, L226).

The organisation also uses past beneficiary success stories within the community to create awareness and market its successes to stakeholders. This communication medium facilitates the recognition of different activities the organisation is engaged in and also crowds in on its core mission. Therefore, funders are also able to fund the organisation with an understanding of what the organisation is about. The HR manager elaborates, "We've got videos ... that we show ... we are helping the people in the community ... to try and show them [stakeholders] what we have done in the community ... and that we can continue to help them further if funders can come in to help in that respect" (C3, H3, L61).

Hilcorp deliberately brands its field offices and staff attires to ensure they are known within the community. For instance, the field staff has branded t-shirts, and the branded field offices have the organisation's mission statement visible at the community level. This enables Hilcorp to not only be known, but also to create mission loyalty within the community with the activities being

implemented. This is further elaborated by the board as evidenced in one of their meeting's minutes that emphasises the importance of deliberate branding in the community (C3, BM3).

Digital branding is also key, and all the media products are branded appropriately with mission tag-line messages that crowd in on the organisation's core mission. In reviewing the organisation's website and interviewing the executive director, the role of branding and awareness creation of the organisation is key in communicating the core mission and interventions of the organisation to communities and other stakeholders. The organisation uses digital media to allow stakeholders and the general public to subscribe to their news. This platform is then used to 'push' content relating to the organisation's mission, plans, achievements, donation options, and other pertinent news (C3, AP3 [Annual year-end report]).

7.1.3 Regulatory context to align mission and multiple mandates

Hilcorp utilises its NPO umbrella registration to undertake expanded activity scopes. The registration as a trust has facilitated the needed flexibility and allowed Hilcorp the ease of incorporation of profit and for-profit goals. The organisation owns an accommodation and office facility situated in a scenic location, promoting a green environment. Hilcorp offers accommodation for short stays at a cost and has rented excess capacity space out as offices to other organisations (C3, ARP3). The space is also famous in the area and is hired out for weddings and corporate events. The organisation uses this as a value proposition to prospective funders by indicating that all the generated income is reinvested back into running and facilitating the core activities, as well as sustainability efforts of the organisation.

The uncertainties in the funding environment and ensuing resource constraints led Hilcorp to innovate its business model in 2012 to pursue multiple funding arrangements (C3, BM3 [board meetings]). As part of being an example of sustainability, the organisation registered a youth opportunity centre, offering accredited Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority (MICT SETA) courses in basic computer skills (C3, BM3). In 2019 the centre started collaborating with universities to offer a course in software application development as this was not part of the core activities by C3.

7.2 Proposal development and writing phase

The proposal development includes activities undertaken in the actual writing of the technical and cost proposal document for funding. In this phase, Hilcorp balances its mission and the mandates by using M&E approaches, tools, and lingo to translate how core project activities fit within the request for proposals (RFP). Hilcorp demonstrates financial sustainability by infusing earned

unrestricted income in cost proposals to defray cost deficits and funding priority activities, where necessary.

7.2.1 Articulating funder objectives within core priorities by using M&E lingo and tools

Hilcorp translates out how the funding can fit into its core activities at the proposal stage. In the reviewed proposal documents, Hilcorp articulates proposals by highlighting summary expectations of the funders in a 'programme description for funding'. Hilcorp then prepares an internal document that maps the same description to its core competencies aligned to its core mission (C3, PR3 [proposal]). This document, referred to as the M&E log-frame, links the input activities to outputs, outcomes, and eventual impact. As the finance manager states, "When we present to a corporate, we present our profile, and we let them know about our activities and our mission and values" (C3, F3, L59). This was further evidenced in the proposal they wrote for an economic strengthening project which they had to infuse into their existing orphan programme. Regarding the aforementioned RFP, Hilcorp developed the log-frame, which was an internal memo, to justify how the activities of the added portion align with the existing mission (C3, PR3 [proposal document], RFP3).

In addition, the employees utilise their programming and M&E experience to interpret multiple RFP requirements and align them to internal competencies as appropriate. In a way, this is like an art more than a scientific way of interpreting the community's needs, reflecting them in the mission, and presenting that to funders. The programme manager alludes, "The things that are key to us, we always find a way of prioritising, even if they are not a priority to the donor because most of the time, people that are key to us matter to our communities and matter to ourselves" (C3, P3, L118).

Hilcorp customises existing implementation, and M&E plans that have generic mission-related activities and embeds them in proposals, while ensuring the activities contribute to the larger mission and community priorities. For instance, the programme manager illustrates, "When COVID came, it was a health issue, but it had a lot of socio-economic implications that needed an immediate response. For instance, when people were locked down and they had no food. We had to make a decision to say we were going to do what we do not like to do, which is providing food parcels. So, we had to do that because it was an emergency" (C3, P3, L199). The M&E manager further corroborates that they got "involved in additional activities, like supporting our households with food parcels and things like that" (C3, M3, L71).

Hilcorp practises the art of presentation to balance mission and multiple mandates. For example, it presents internal structures in proposals that can be adapted as necessary to align activities. The structure usually includes a fixed core team, a flexible programme team, or both options, depending on RFP requirements. Hilcorp presents its robust management model spearheaded by the core-shared management staff team to funders in its proposals. While on the front face of the proposal, the core team is meant to manage the project, the other inherent role is to ensure they coordinate and facilitate the alignment of activities with core mission activities.

As per the founding documents [FD3], the organisation has identified broad themes that facilitate them in the categorisation or bucketing of activities across the multiple funding received. As indicated in board minutes [BM3], the organisation reviews its mission and vision with input from staff, stakeholders, and funders and adapts them to match activities to relevant 'buckets'. Specifically, the promotion of child health and development, early childhood stimulation programmes, enterprise opportunity centres, and community response programmes (C3, FD3).

Hilcorp is agile and expands activities within its overarching core mission. This facilitates the ability to fulfil the mission, while allowing flexibility to pursue multiple proposals. Hilcorp then articulates how the activities around all these programme themes converge in the proposals toward the organisation's core mission. For example, the mission is broad around using health and other means to improve the overall well-being of the communities within their geographical reach, while continuing to be an example of sustainable and holistic community development. The recent activity additions included educating the community on living healthily and ensuring access to public health care; interventions aimed at strengthening household food security; creating or strengthening community networks and support structures; and facilitating access to income generation and economic development opportunities (C3, BM3).

7.2.2 Incorporating unrestricted income and enterprise activities to align

Hilcorp generates unrestricted income to facilitate gaps in bridging funding for activities that are core to its mission and not funded by other funders. All the generated income is reinvested back into running and facilitating the sustainability efforts of the organisation, for instance, the paid accommodation for short stays and rented excess capacity space as offices to other organisations (C3, ARP3). As the finance manager declares, "The income that we get from the property and accommodation helps ... So, what we get from the property also contributes in making sure that we do implement fully to the community-related activities core to Hilcorp" (C3, F3, L77). The HR

manager adds, “We have fund reserves ... to support our core programme, which is the child programme” (C3, H3, L52).

Additionally, unrestricted funding is used as matching funding or cost-share to funders. Increasingly, proposals require matching of costs [aka cost share], to demonstrate programme ownership and sustainability requirements in RFPs. Therefore, Hilcorp proposes the use of unrestricted income to funders as a cost share towards the entire programme. For instance, the small-scale vegetable gardens are proposed both as a means to train youth in the economic strengthening project, as well as generate earned income for cost share (C3, ARP3).

The unrestricted funding also caters to remunerating the core staff. As the M&E manager highlights, they “have a team that is funded by the [C3] reserves that continue to do the core mandate of the Khula Kahle programme [core project], while the others continue with the objectives that [funders] have given to us” (C3, M3, L65).

Hilcorp utilises a predetermined cost allocation MS-Excel template at every proposal stage to allocate core costs to various projects, as well as include a percentage of unrestricted earned income (C3, Budget cost allocation). This sort of internal mapping at the proposal stage is driven by the desire to align incoming activities with existing mission-related activities. The M&E manager sums it up by stating, “We need to be very careful of not being dragged out of our core mandate just because the donor demands that we do so. So, we want to align with donor’s demands, but we need to make sure that still stays in line with our core” (C3, M3, L38).

In some cases, they include community volunteers as a cost-share model in the proposal to facilitate activities that may not be fully funded. The field staff are hired from the communities they come from; hence, they are committed to serving their communities. Some of this volunteer work provides programme continuity and has generated interest from funders who want to support those specific communities, as was evidenced by one of the contracts that had several extensions signed (C3, contract modifications). The funder was drawn to the nature of the project and value delivery by C3 as a means of sustainability.

7.3 Negotiation and contracting phase

The negotiation and contracting phase is depicted when Hilcorp receives preliminary feedback from funders and is required to address aspects of the proposal before being contracted. Hilcorp uses M&E lingo and tools to address funder feedback and negotiate favourably. They leverage a portfolio of relationships with community and government leaders, and apply the art of negotiations using beneficiaries as advocates.

7.3.1 Active use of M&E to negotiate and address multiple requirements

Hilcorp optimises the negotiation phase to co-create with funders as part of reaching compromises. Most funders are willing to negotiate with pre-qualified organisations. The M&E function is important during the co-creation aspects of the negotiation and contracting phase to ensure the changes being proposed do not result in a final document that is misaligned with the organisation's core activities. They propose and employ agile programmes and M&E tools that can be customised to multiple funders' needs.

Hilcorp also practises layering of services as a package as a way of compromise when funder activities are not fully meeting the community's priorities. "Like during the time of COVID, we felt people were defaulting on their medication, we needed to get people back on the medication, but people felt they were hungry, they needed food ... So as a person working within that community, we have to try and find the balance and make people [funders] see the importance of taking the medication, while you are trying to get food for them" (C3, M3, L196).

Hilcorp 'buckets' the different funders within core priorities around the mission, and this facilitates negotiations to align the funders' activities with their mission. As the funder mandates change between the proposal and contracting, the organisation is nimble enough to adapt the activities to align with the changes. As the programme manager indicates, "The mission of Hilcorp is to use health and other means to improve the overall well-being of communities ... So, whatever we are doing needs to align with health promotion" (C3, P3, L70). The M&E manager adds that sometimes, "The programme starts one way, and then the donor will say, okay, now this is a new requirement. So, you need to be very careful not to be dragged out of our core mandate just because the donor demands that we do so. So, we want to align with donors' demands, but we need to make sure that still stays in line with our core" (C3, M3, L38).

During negotiations, Hilcorp's practice is to prepare and present periodic implementation plans and log-frames that can later be amended. This is done for the entire project by breaking it into annual plans, which they can easily negotiate and monitor to manage any potential tensions. As the M&E manager indicates, "We develop implementation at the start of the programme. But we also do it for the sake of monitoring and tracking. We also do annual implementation plans. So, if it's a three-year project, will always do an annual implementation plan to say, by this year, by this time we need to be here, which helps the tracking and the monitoring" (C3, M3, L125). The implementation plan "needs to align directly to the strategic objectives of Hilcorp" (C3, M3, L119).

One of the proposals being negotiated involved Hilcorp's desire to maintain work within their core early childhood stimulation project, but the funder wanted them to expand it to include health outcomes. The resulting implementation plan revealed how Hilcorp tweaked the original implementation plan to incorporate the funder's request, but also emphasise community-integrated programming aspects that cover their core activities.

Hilcorp utilises past M&E data and experience to be able to hold favourable negotiations. The ability to interpret funder proposed changes, adapt implementation plans, and appraise funders is an important project management and balancing skill. As the M&E lead asserts, "I have oversight of all the databases that we're using." (C3, M3, L119). For example, using existing M&E community data as a point of reference to convince funders, the implementation plan reviewed at the proposal stage had been adapted to take into account the changes proposed during negotiations.

Hilcorp optimises this phase to adapt proposal language due to iterations and include key outputs that align with the core mission. As the finance manager states, some proposals involve negotiations and are "a process of going back and forth to iron out if indeed what you are proposing for will work" (C3, F3, L105). The M&E manager indicates this is where Hilcorp attempts to fit the activities "within the five strategic [Hilcorp] objectives" (C3, M3, L38).

7.3.2 Relationship management by experienced leadership and board to align

Hilcorp leadership and its board leverage the relationships and proximity with community leadership to negotiate with funders. Specifically, the use of community advisory committees is key to managing potential tensions with stakeholders. As the executive director elaborates,

"We established a structure that is in addition to our board of trustees, a structure we call the Community Action and advisory committee ... we talk to them, and they tell us you can't do that activity here, for this reason, you should do it there ... So, they are kind of our advocates, and our guides" (C3, E3, L202).

The incorporation of stakeholders in governance expands Hilcorp's relationship horizons. They then act as advocates for Hilcorp and assist in the balancing of different mandates. This gives the organisation impetus to negotiate with funders because the voice of the stakeholders is also key to funders. The HR manager states, "One of our board members is a councillor ... so, he actually helped in the way that he could liaise with the community ... also advise what the community would like or what they expect" (C3, H3, L196).

Bifurcation of relationships is also an important practice to minimise conflicts among stakeholders. Therefore, where necessary, Hilcorp deals with each funder exclusively. For instance, the executive director states how one funder “refused to support our agricultural activities, which were a key component of our nutritional initiative ... we also knew that we were being deviated. We were being taken away from our core mandate. And so, we maintained [funder B], and then we used our resources, our reserves to still fund our core activities” (C3, E3, L55). Hence, they manage to innovatively keep the funder happy, while fulfilling their core mission concurrently.

During negotiations, Hilcorp is agile with funders and employs quick decision-making, which is important in their negotiations. The organisation’s small size facilitates nimbleness to change and adapt to various demands as well as decision-making in consultation with community stakeholders. Funders love that decisions are quickly arrived at during this process due to the lack of bureaucratic decision-making structures. As the programme manager highlights, “I spend a lot of time with the field staff, so I don't need to have a formal conversation about what they need to do ... I think everybody is clear about that [mission]” (C3, P3, L74).

The art of negotiating with funders is important at this stage because Hilcorp uses its knowledge of the community and their priority needs that align with the mission to negotiate where necessary. Negotiating by using their community influence gives the organisation leverage to advance its mission. The M&E manager states, “You do get those conflicting voices where the funder feels ... the research tells the funder that this is the problem in the community currently, but then the community says that, no, this is the urgent situation in the community right now” (C3, M3, L196).

In some cases, Hilcorp staff also offer funder education in this phase to orient funders towards organisational core activities. This facilitates alignment in cases of conflicting activities. The M&E manager points out an example during COVID-19, “We were able to speak to the donors to reallocate funds ... that we're using for transport to use them for data” (C3, M3, L190).

7.4 Implementation phase

Implementation is a dynamic phase that requires alignment to deliver on multiple projects. In this phase, Hilcorp balances its mission and mandates in several ways. Hilcorp co-implements with stakeholders. It has centralised functions, policies and tools to manage all NPO and enterprise activities. A core-shared staff coordinates all the activities. Hilcorp adapts and adopts internal procedures as necessary, using SOPs to manage multiple requirements. Existing HR practices facilitate commitment and staff morale.

7.4.1 Agile centralised functions, policies and tools to align

The key functions are centralised to facilitate the direction and coordination of all projects to balance Hilcorp's mission and mandates. For example, the M&E function is centralised to ensure the simultaneous monitoring of all projects. As the executive director indicates, "We've got our monitoring and evaluation unit, which monitors the key deliverables, the key indicators of any of our projects and all of our core projects" (C3, E3, L182). The M&E manager further highlights, "I have oversight of all the databases that we're using as an organisation, and I'm able to track where we are as an organisation (C3, M3, L119).

The M&E team also facilitates the simplification of tools and processes from different funders for ease of tracking. The simplification and sort of value delivery adaptation allow them to easily ascribe project activities with core mission activities. The M&E manager states, "The one thing I know about the project people is they hate Excel spreadsheets ... So, you need to simplify it for them as much as you can ... and ensure that information gets to you in the way that you want it" (C3, M3, L131). The programme manager adds, "In the field, we always try to use manual tools and our tools specifically. It's only when we are capturing it to systems that we start to try and follow what the donor is asking" (C3, P3, L155).

They have overarching tools, such as generic M&E plans, that cover broad activities under different programmes as well as the mission-centric orphan activities that the organisation focuses on. As the programme manager highlights, "The use of the generic one [plan] helps everybody to understand because you don't want to talk a different language" (C3, P3, L147). This was also articulated in their data quality assurance (DQA) system SOP that facilitates their ability to monitor the quality of the activities implemented for the different funder activities and align these to the core mission (C3, DQA SOP).

Hilcorp has a central finance policies and procedures manual covering all projects (C3, PD3 [central policy document manual]). Besides, the central financial system and centralised policies facilitate the concurrent management of different organisational aspects. Another example is a generic timesheet template used to track time by staff on all projects as well as on core activities (C3, timesheet), and it is utilised to simultaneously allocate costs to different projects.

The core systems are centralised but malleable to manage funder projects and core enterprise activities concurrently. They maintain one main accounting system and have different projects identified by using different codes. The finance manager elaborates, "We have one accounting system, we use ACPAC, but each donor has a separate code for tracking purposes. So, whether

it is income or an expense, it goes to the separate code for each donor” (C3, F3, L89). The system is used to manage core for-profit activities, such as the “property part, where there are different codes for accommodation, for venues and rentals” (C3, F3, L89).

Hilcorp uses implementation plans to manage multiple requirements. The M&E manager highlights, “During the monitoring, we follow the implementation plan to the ‘T’. So, by doing that, we are automatically aligned with the strategic objectives of [C3]. So, the planning and ensuring the monitoring also helps us stay true to our objectives as well” (C3, M3, L119). She adds, “I’ve drawn up dashboards for all the projects that I’m currently monitoring, so that I know exactly where we are and what gaps are there, and what we need to do to move forward” (C3, M3, L119).

7.4.2 Adapting and adopting internal procedures and tools to align

Hilcorp adapts and utilises SOPs as addendums to the main policies to nuance the specific requirements of funders, while maintaining the core policies, especially if there are conflicting requirements between funders and internal processes. For example, the M&E manager states, “We have a reporting SOP, we have a submission SOP, we have data collection SOP. So, we have a number of SOPs” (C3, M3, L137). This is to ensure “each and every business unit has SOPs to make sure we do not go off track from our goals” (C3, F3, L135).

Hilcorp also adopts the most stringent funder requirements internally and applies these to other funders. This facilitates the seamless implementation and manages ensuing tensions. An example is where there are conflicting reporting deadlines; the finance manager points out that they “prioritise the one with the closest date to avoid missing a deadline and pick that as the date when all reports should be prepared to meet also the other deadlines” (C3, F3, L208). In this way, they can meet multiple deadlines at the same time.

They also adopt the funders' tools where necessary and utilise them to avoid “re-inventing the wheel” and to reduce possible tensions. The finance manager indicates most funders “normally come with their own templates, and then we just need to populate our data in those. Then we ensure ours talks to their reporting” (C3, F3, L159).

During implementation, project changes are articulated through updated implementation plan Gantt charts, which are used as artefacts that capture adaptations within the contracts and how they are implemented (C3, PR3 [proposal]). The disparate plans are mapped to the overarching plan of action and centralised database that is monitored to ensure core activities are infused and implemented. The M&E manager states, “We try and tweak our database to be able to pull all the

information we want from the same database, the templates to report to the donors are different. But we try to ensure that we're able to pull the information from the same source" (C3, M3, L160).

Hilcorp practises project management skills in a manner that manages multiple goals simultaneously. For instance, the finance manager shares an example,

"We presented what Hilcorp is about [to a funder] and what we do, and then it was all in line, but I think it was a year or two after that we realised that there some sort of disconnect with some of the activities and our vision. We, therefore, had to break the project into two. We had one team set up to support funder-related activities with what we do not specialise in and another team to undertake the main [C3] mission-related activities that we specialised in (C3, F3, L71).

7.4.3 The role of shared staff in coordination

Hilcorp has a central core management team to ensure the implementation of multiple projects and concurrent coordination of mandates and mission. The core staff collaborate very closely to ensure different project deliverables are met as agreed with funders, while ensuring the mission is attained. As the finance manager indicates, "There is some staff we try to maintain because whether or not we have external donors, there are some core projects or core work that we run as Hilcorp" (C3, F3, L117). The team is made up of the executive director, programme manager, the monitoring, evaluation and reporting manager, and the finance manager "responsible for specific business units within the organisation" (C3, M3, L32).

The core staff act as bridge staff across projects. This staff cadre cuts across different funder projects, manages core projects and is "responsible for specific business units within the organisation" (C3, M3, L32). As the programme manager highlights, these employees centrally manage the projects and are "staff who are senior because we need their skills in different places" (C3, P3, L131).

The core-shared management team is exposed and multi-skilled to balance mission and mandates. Implementing multiple projects increases their skills to manage multiple requirements concurrently. This requires the employees "having to try and learn different things and apply a whole lot of different things ... having to learn to be nimble and to change" (C3, E3, L106). However, the core team is "set up to support funder-related activities ... and undertake the main Hilcorp mission-related activities that we specialised in are core" (C3, F3, L71).

They keep the core team lean for efficiency and easy attribution of responsibilities. The small team is also committed to the organisation's core mission and delivering on all other mandates. The executive director states that the core team is "quite lean on the management front ... and we've had to build leadership amongst that supervisory level ... so that they do more than just oversee implementation, but get to where they can internalise the vision and they can have the capacity to make some decisions" (C3, E3, L118). He adds, "We've structured ourselves in a strategic way to be able to cater for the leanness" (C3, E3, L130).

These staff members have been with the organisation for a long tenure and hence, they understand how the organisation has evolved and is internally organised. The long tenure of this employee cadre facilitates their commitment to maintaining the core mission amidst the myriad of multiple goals required to be fulfilled. The executive director sums it up by stating, "If you go to the market, you can buy the skills, but you can't buy commitment, you can't buy belonging. And these are some of the important things to us as an organisation" (C3, E3, L130). As the HR coordinator puts it, "For the best part, I think, most people if they settle initially, then they tend to stay, they don't leave" (C3, H3, L117). Hence, "They've all been here a long time, and they're like part of the family, as much as they're staff" (C3, H3, L113). For instance, the executive director "joined the organisation in 2012" (C3, E3, L37), the finance manager has "been with [C3] for almost 18 years now" (C3, F3, L46), the programme manager has "been with Hilcorp for 12 years" (C3, P3, L45) and the HR lead has "been with Hilcorp since 2006" (C3, H3, L40).

7.4.4 HR practised to manage multiple complexities

Hilcorp recruits staff predominantly from beneficiaries and communities in which they reside. This facilitates the commitment of the employees towards the achievement of the social mission in their communities. The executive director highlights, "It's been about saying, picking people who live in the communities where they work, because then they have greater buy-in and they have a greater emotional involvement with the project, plus, they're not likely to go anywhere, you know, they're here, it's their home" (C3, E3, L145). Additionally, when hiring, Hilcorp looks at "things like a track record of community involvement" (C3, E3, L142).

Hilcorp involves community leaders in the recruitment panel to minimise tensions, such as nepotism, within communities. This dynamic practice in the hiring routine also facilitates the achievement of the social mission, the management of stakeholders' expectations and internal alignment concurrently. Hence, "Someone from that community who's in leadership or a prominent position in that community is involved in the decision to select" (C3, E3, L202). M3 adds, "With our approach, we always want to employ people from the community, and with these

communities ... you use the available structures” (C3, M3, L89). As H3 sums it up, “If you get the right people who are in the right mindset and are dedicated, I do think that you can get through, irrespective of whatever you're up against” (C3, H3, L205).

Hilcorp focuses more on the internal career growth of staff. They have found that this nurtures staff commitment to the mission. The executive director repeats, “We don't desire to always go to the market to buy skills, we would much rather build those skills internally. Because if you go to the market, you can buy the skill, but you can't buy commitment, you can't buy belonging. And these are some of the important things to us as an organisation” (C3, E3, L130). Hilcorp has, therefore, “chosen the road less travelled and opted for building capacity in-house or focusing on building existing capacity rather than always looking to the market” (C3, E3, L136). This includes “upskilling the supervisory level so that they do more than just oversee implementation, but get to where they can internalise the vision” (C3, E3, L118).

Performance management is practised in a way that allows both formal and informal feedback. This is relevant to ensure continuous support to manage multiple projects. The executive director indicates, “We also have annual performance appraisals, which are the more formal ones for appraisers, but we view performance as something that is monitored throughout the year, not just at one particular time ... to ensure that we keep our staff motivated (C3, E3, L182). There is constant internal mentoring and “not just leaving staff to work on their own” (C3, E3, L163).

Additionally, staff meetings are used to facilitate multiple needs simultaneously. While staff meetings are a normal routine, they are utilised in a dynamic way to monitor, motivate, and manage performance. The executive director states, “Our management meetings are the broader team meetings ... what that does is it cuts the lines of communication ... but at the same time, it picks up their skills level, so that they start to think like management, and they start to think and see themselves as leadership as opposed to just implementers” (C3, E3, L124). In addition, the meetings are avenues to “reward the achievement of the targets regarding the achievement” (C3, E3, L163). He adds, “We meet with our field staff, at least once a week. You know, those are update meetings, review meetings, planning, meetings teams, but also opportunities to grow ... we also use these weekly meetings as opportunities for upskilling” (C3, E3, L148H3). The HR manager states, “We have all staff meetings every month. And everybody's expected to attend and try and have some form of informative information. Sometimes it's a fun thing, sometimes it's a serious thing, but, you know, get everybody motivated” (C3, H3, L113).

Hilcorp ensures that staff and stakeholders are genuinely socially connected at all levels. This social bond acts as an accountability mechanism and as a motivator for staff. For instance, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, management had “check-ins to see how everybody was ... just to keep morale going among the staff ... by WhatsApp” (C3, H3, L180). The HR manager indicates, “The ED has been very conscious of that ... to let everybody know, irrespective of if you’re in the field or the office, you all play an important part in Hilcorp, and just because you only earn a small amount, you’re not less worthy to the company than if you are earning a big salary” (C3, H3, L113). The HR coordinator states, “For the best part, I think, most people ... if they settle initially, then they tend to stay, you know, they don’t leave” (C3, H3, L117).

Hilcorp endeavours to foster transparent internal communication, which facilitates timely management of internal issues. M3 believes that “The main thing is on communication ... and information flows through us to the director” (C3, M3, L113). She further indicates, “Transparency has played a role in staff staying motivated because they always knew where we stand as an organisation and what we can do and what we cannot do” (C3, M3, L184).

Hilcorp is deliberate in the use of experts and consultants to support employees in managing the dynamics of balancing mission and multiple mandates. For example, the executive director states, “The most difficult skills to impart are the soft skills around how do you stay motivated ... constantly ... engaged” (C3, E3, L112). He adds, “We’ve had an organisation that’s been coaching [C3] and mentoring us ... they’ve been working with us to try and help us stay focused on the direction of the organisation, that’s the one thing, but secondly, also build our capacity to manage change” (C3, E3, L112).

7.5 Reporting: Output/outcome measurement phase

Reporting is key to demonstrating the achievement of the mission and fulfilment of mandates to multiple stakeholders. To align the mission and mandates, Hilcorp utilises annual reports and community meetings to proactively ensure focused concurrent reporting. They articulate the achievement of their core mission and the funders’ requirements simultaneously. Hilcorp also actively uses M&E approaches to facilitate this process and leverages digitisation and information technology to reach multiple stakeholders simultaneously.

7.5.1 Concurrent disaggregated and integrated dynamic programme and financial reporting

Hilcorp uses annual reports to address multiple stakeholder requirements, while ensuring their core activities are articulated. This may seem an obvious practice, but Hilcorp undertakes it with

tact to ensure they balance the mission and multiple mandates. Hence, the annual report acts as an artefact that is used to report to multiple stakeholders in a simultaneous manner. For instance, the annual year-end report excerpt below illustrates how they foreground their core project and align activities with other subsequent funder projects.

“In our Khula Kahle Mntwana Project [core project], we served more than 2,700 beneficiaries from 1,500 households. The majority of these beneficiaries were children under six years of age [core target group] ... New funding received from PEPFAR (President’s Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief) and from the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund enabled us to enhance our service offering” (C3, APR3 [Annual year-end report]).

The annual report is shared during community stakeholder meetings. The meeting is structured in a manner that first, highlights achievements regarding the core mission-related activities and subsequently, details the various funded projects and how they contribute to the organisation achieving the goals of the core mission (C3, ARP3 [Annual year-end report]). In this way, they are able to demonstrate to different stakeholders the respective achievements.

Hilcorp presents data to align with funders’ requests, while adapting the same data for annual reporting purposes (C3, AP3). The M&E function is pivotal in this process of ensuring project reporting is concurrently addressing the funders’ requests and internal organisational deliverables. As the M&E manager highlights, “I’ve drawn up dashboards for all the projects that I’m currently monitoring, so that I know exactly where we are, what gaps are there, and what we need to do to move forward. I have oversight of all the databases that we’re using as an organisation, and I’m able to track where we are as an organisation”. (C3, M3, L119). The M&E appraises the funders through periodic quarterly reports (C3, funder quarterly report sample) and develops reports to track the mission achievement (C3, BM3).

Even though none of their current funders require monthly programme reports, Hilcorp has an internal process of preparing monthly reports to allow for regular monitoring and ensuring the core mission is closely tracked and reported on to internal management (C3, AP3 [report]). As the M&E manager highlights, “We do monthly reports. Monthly reports are only internal because we don’t submit to any funders on a monthly basis ... And if I need to put together a short report on writing on specific projects, I’m able to do so” (C3, M3, L154). When funder reports are due, “It is fairly easy to do the quarterly reports because all the information has been collated together and it’s just a matter of compiling a quarterly report and submitting it to the funder” (C3, M3, L154).

Hilcorp has a central database that is used to collect, analyse and disseminate findings to various stakeholders in a concurrent manner. The database can, however, also be adapted for use. The M&E manager highlights, “We try and tweak our database to be able to pull all the information we want from the same database ... the templates to report to the donor are different. But we try to ensure that we’re able to pull the information from the same source, even if it's going to the different donors in different tools” (C3, M3, L160).

Hilcorp identifies multiple funders and projects by using different codes, and this facilitates the disaggregation and integration of reports. Financial and programme reporting functions are managed centrally to assist in reporting and decision-making. As the HR lead indicates, “For the board, we give management accounts, so they can see that ... what's been spent and what hasn't been spent in the budget, you know, against the budget, so the board can monitor that” (C3, H3, L154).

While the audit report is a common report, it is used actively to communicate with different stakeholders, such as the internal board, government bodies, tax authorities, and banks. The ability to produce different kinds of audit reports and a centralised one allows the organisation to fulfil different requirements simultaneously. This is also facilitated by utilising a single audit firm with a flexible engagement contract (C3, FR3 [financial report]).

7.5.2 Digitisation and Information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple activities

Hilcorp uses IT, as well as digital capabilities, in the programme and financial monitoring, and the reporting of different funders’ and organisational activities. Within the M&E, the manager states, “We've created shared drives for most documents where I can see the information in real-time” (C3, M3, L131). She states this enables them to “tweak our database to be able to pull all the information we want from the same database” (C3, M3, L160).

Hilcorp has a management information system that is used to facilitate disaggregation and aggregation functions. This allows Hilcorp to fulfil multiple requirements simultaneously. As the finance manager reports, “We have one accounting system, we use ACPAC, but each donor has its separate code for tracking purposes ... That includes the property part; there are different codes for accommodation ... when we populate the data at the end, is it easy ... and all expenses are aligned (C3, F3, L89). The HR manager further alludes, “In the accounting system ... that each project or programme has its code ... and you can see what's been spent and what hasn't

been spent against the budget, so the board can monitor that” (C3, H3, L154). Hence, this allows for concurrent digitalised “reporting either externally to the donor or internally” (C3, F3, L153).

The finance system is automated for real-time reporting. The digital capabilities of the financial system facilitate managing and reporting on multiple projects, resource planning of financials and employees, and effective management between the activities relating to enterprise activities. The finance manager states, “We have one accounting system, we use ACPAC, but each donor has its separate code for tracking purposes. So, whether it is income or an expense, it goes to the separate code for each donor” (C3, F3, L89).

Digitisation has also facilitated innovative ways of working, such as virtual working, to manage multiple projects. For instance, “With COVID, it was easier for most of the staff to continue working from home” (C3, F3, L171). The executive director sums it up:

“The one thing that COVID proved was that it is possible to do stuff, a lot of things remotely that we might have previously thought we couldn’t. So, it was ensuring that just using tools like WhatsApp for regular updates, and our M&E team still had the normal tools that they would complete even under in-person conditions, but just getting the raw data from the staff via, say, WhatsApp or Facebook or whatever” (C3, E3, L188).

Social media is utilised innovatively not only as an informal communication tool, but also as a formal reporting mechanism. The ease and continuous communication are key to fulfil competing priorities. Hence, social media has been used dynamically to address HR staff morale issues, monitor projects, and simplify management processes. For example, the finance manager states,

“For the community facilitators, we ended [up] using the social media like WhatsApp groups, because it’s easy to track what’s happening and when somebody has done something they scan or take a photo and send it through, so that even though they cannot come to the office, we are able to see the work they are doing” (C3, F3, L171).

The HR manager adds, “We used to have a check-in on Zoom starting up every Monday morning, just to check in to see how everybody was, just to keep morale going between the staff. And, also by WhatsApp ... it was very important that people needed not to think they’re being left out” (C3, H3, L180). Additionally, the programme manager highlights, “Interestingly, we found a way of monitoring telephonically ... we have community fieldworkers, engaging beneficiaries telephonically and we also had to engage telephonically with them to validate if the services are being given to them [beneficiaries]” (C3, P3, L199).

7.6 Conclusion

Hilcorp has experience in how to organise themselves internally amidst multiple mandates from pre-proposal as they pursue funders, through to proposals development, negotiating with funders, implementing, and finally, reporting on achievements. The organisation has innovatively incorporated community leaders and stakeholders within the advisory board to ensure there is buy-in and legitimacy in the communities as it conceptualises the project and which “speak on Hilcorp’s behalf in the community” (C3, E3, L202). Their community-led approach to implementation is pivotal in facilitating the alignment of multiple conflicting goals. Thereafter, they have to translate the mandates internally in ways that fulfil the concurrent multiple requirements. Hilcorp embodies an organisation that invests in co-designing with the community during proposal development. The context that the organisation operates under as an SMSE in a resource-constrained environment requires them to be nimble. Hilcorp tries to “learn different things and apply a whole lot of different things ... sometimes at the same time, or change at the drop of a hat” (C3, E3, L106).

The management and employees are experienced in relationship management and in assessing externally and interpreting different stakeholders’ needs as they negotiate for contracts. M&E plays a key role in ensuring that the alignment, monitoring and reporting to multiple funders, as well as internal mission tracking, is achieved. Hilcorp utilises central policies and procedures that anchor their ‘modus operandi’ with nuanced SOPs that can be adapted during implementation. They have a core-shared management team that is “responsible for specific business units within the organisation” (C3, M3, L32). Field staff are mostly recruited from “the communities where they work, because then they have greater buy-in and they have a greater emotional involvement with the project, plus, they’re not likely to go anywhere ... it’s their home” (C3, E3, L145).

At the reporting stage, the systems and tools allow for both, simultaneous disaggregation and integration of information, such as annual reports. Hence, this offers Hilcorp the ability to “report either externally to the donors or internally” (C3, F3, L153). This facilitates balancing the mission and multiple mandates. Table 7.2 summarises how Hilcorp navigates multiple projects as they balance mission and mandates at different phases.

Table 7.2: Summary examples of practices and routines to balance mission–mandates at micro-level

Phase	Practices, routines and practitioner actions to balance mission and mandates
Pre-proposal – conceptualising process and design	Community advisory committee as a link, community entry strategies, co-designing projects with the community, baseline data from the previous projects, co-create projects, community stakeholder forums, past beneficiary success stories, brands of field offices and staff attires, media branding, NPO umbrella registration, innovative business models
Proposal writing	Translates requirements, M&E experience to interpret, customise implementation and M&E plans, art of presentation, categorisation or bucketing of activities, agile to expand activities, unrestricted income to bridge core mission, matching funding or cost-share, predetermined cost allocation, community volunteers
Negotiation and contracting phase	Co-create with funders, layering of services as a package, bucketing the different funders, adaptable implementation plans and log frames, M&E data and experience to negotiate, adapt proposal language due to iterations, leverage relationships, proximity with community, incorporation of stakeholders in governance, bifurcation of relationships, agility, art of negotiating, funder education, collaborate with health partners
Implementation	Centralised function for direction and coordination, simplification of tools and processes, overarching tools, central finance policies and procedures, centralised but malleable policies, adapts and utilises SOPs as addendums, adopts the most stringent procedures, updated implementation plan Gantt charts, core management team, core-shared management team exposed and multi-skilled, lean core team, long tenure, recruit staff from the community, internal career growth of staff, formal/informal performance management, formal and informal feedback, staff meetings are used to facilitate multiple needs, socially connected, transparent internal communication, experts and consultants to support
Reporting - Output/outcome measurement	Annual reports to address multiple stakeholders, community stakeholder meetings, adapting the same data, preparing monthly reports, central database, different codes, audit report using flexible engagements, IT digital capabilities, management information system, automated for real-time reporting, innovative ways of working, social media is utilised innovatively formally and informally, use of centralised M&E data flow system and disaggregate results, M&E simplifying tools, digitised automated financial system coded per project, utilise the M&E team to disaggregate and report from the same database.

CHAPTER 8: H-Inc (Case 4) within-case discussion

H-Inc (C4) was registered in 2008 as a non-profit company in South Africa (C4, FD4-CIPC). It is also registered as a public benefit organisation that accords its tax exemption status in South Africa per the South Africa Revenue Services (C4, FD4-tax exemption). The organisation has an enterprise incubation fund (EIF) to benefit member groups requiring minimal start-up credit and capital at a minimal cost (C4, FD4). Its mission is poverty alleviation and transforming communities through job creation, centred on work in regional livelihood projects, economic strengthening, and consumer education projects (C4, FD4). H-Inc has multiple funders and for-profit projects. The table below depicts the projects that were running at the time of the data collection and the different phases of each project depicting the different tensions that needed to be navigated simultaneously by H-Inc.

Table 8. 1: Multiple projects and phases

Project	Phase	Details
Project 1	Pre-proposal	Discussions with potential collaborators regarding an economic strengthening RFP
Project 2	Reporting – Close-out	A training youth financial literacy project close-out under a private funder
Project 3	Negotiation & Contracting	Youth job fund contract with the government
Project 4	Implementation, Reporting	Consultancy on employment readiness programme with private funder in the mining sector
Project 5	Proposal	Follow-on consumer education training with a past private funder in the banking sector
Project 6	Implementation	Livelihoods project under the UN
Project 7	Negotiation & Contracting	Microfinance for-profit lending project

8.1 Pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase

In the pre-proposal and conceptualisation of projects, H-Inc balances its mission and mandates by involving the communities in the project design to manage the beneficiaries' expectations and achieve community buy-in. The organisation also practises community branding to ensure continuous messaging and awareness creation to multiple stakeholders. H-Inc also utilises the founder, a former senior banker, to co-design projects with private funders and conduct consultancy work. In addition, H-Inc maps the priorities within its mission.

8.1.1 Community embeddedness to align mission and multiple mandates

H-Inc engages with 'indunas' [community leaders] as a community entry strategy for new districts and new projects. Since H-Inc operates centrally from Johannesburg, working through the indunas smoothens the entry path into the communities and gives them the social licence to operate. During one of the observation sessions of a management meeting, it was noted how the CEO in a management meeting listened intently to the project design discussion and then, in a reassuring voice, offered a way forward. He highlighted the need to ensure that H-Inc engages

community leaders, especially in the provinces where the civil society and local government prefer being involved in decisions. This was an important point to consider to protect the organisation's reputation and for buy-in (C4, OBM4, L38).

H-Inc also uses a beneficiary-led approach to identify their priorities. Beneficiaries act as emissaries within the community and as advocates with other stakeholders. As the programme manager highlights, "We put in front the beneficiaries ... one of the ways is to engage them earlier in the planning session, so that you don't make the top-down approach; rather, we engage with them and then also do the stakeholder engagement, so we can understand what is needed on the ground. That is helpful for buy-in" (C4, P4, L238).

H-Inc endeavours to co-design projects with existing community stakeholders. H-Inc then leverages this to engage relevant funders, thus, matching the community's needs and those of the funders. One of the main provinces of operations has a strong civil society secretariat that oversees social impact projects. All funders in that province engage through the secretariat as an oversight body. To avoid the liability of being seen as outsiders, H-Inc co-designs projects with the community civil society secretariat to leverage this existing network.

H-Inc's brokerage practice puts them in the nexus of the community's needs, its own mission, and funders' mandates. This opportunistic behaviour was depicted during the COVID pandemic when H-Inc acted as a middleman between the government and the beneficiaries, even though they were not typical medical service providers that qualified for an essential service permit. For instance, the CEO recalls, "There were these new activities that came up when funders wanted to do more to support the people on the ground, giving them COVID materials ... So, we were getting funding, like that distribution of food to relief and all these other things. So, actually, we really never suffered from COVID. We benefited more actually" (C4, E4, L251).

H-Inc's practice of activity shifting allows it to pursue projects with activities that can be linked to its mission. As long as some of the activities can link to the mission, then H-Inc justifies pursuing the funding. H-Inc achieves this by accommodating RFPs through activity shifts within the core mission. As the CEO states, "Our mission has remained poverty alleviation through job creation ... we have expanded the services that we do for us to deliver on our mission" (C4, E4, L82). Therefore, H-Inc has pursued RFPs on training in entrepreneurship, enterprise development, vocational skills programmes, digital literacy, and other economic empowerment programmes for youth, women and marginalised minority communities (C4, FD4). In one of the RFPs that they

recently responded to, the project was to benefit local youth as they trained them on economic strengthening activities while incorporating earned fees (C4, RFP4).

H-Inc optimises the use of references from the government, community stakeholders, and past funders to advocate for funding in priority areas (C4, government referral). H-Inc has developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the province, which gives them legitimacy with the government and the community. This was evidenced when they were making decisions to respond to an RFP on economic strengthening. The RFP required applicants to diversify into a new district, and the provincial MOU came in handy in the pursuit.

8.1.2 The role of branding and marketing awareness in enhancing social mission alignment

Branding in the community creates awareness about H-Inc and its social work. Branding has enhanced communication, and the communication medium facilitates awareness of different activities the organisation is engaged in as it crowds in on its core mission. At the community level, the organisation's site offices, vehicles and staff apparel are distinctly branded. This not only creates awareness in the community, but also facilitates the propagation of the organisation's mission as imprinted in the different outlets.

H-Inc is deliberate with the use of colour schemes in branding because it communicates to stakeholders about the organisation's mission. Therefore, H-Inc can easily manage projects centrally from the Gauteng Province while still maintaining its presence in the community. Colours can easily be recognised, and this creates awareness of H-Inc and its social work at the community level. The IT and admin coordinator states, "There is that strict level of like how H-Inc wants ... align to the company branding, like the branding colours or identity" (C4, I4, L99).

Digital branding is key to creating awareness. In reviewing the organisation's website, it was noted how the role of digital branding creates awareness of the organisation and is key to communicating to stakeholders about the core mission of the organisation. The website has platforms used to push content relating to the organisation's mission, plans, achievements and other pertinent news. The IT and admin coordinator elaborates, "First, my role, when they are proposing, can be just organising graphic content, maybe just updating, or editing our company profile, our annual reports, or whatever attachments that require graphic work" (C4, I4, L93).

H-Inc also uses success stories in picture form, photo galleries and video galleries to communicate the successes in their projects and mission attainment. It provides them with the option to donate towards these activities (C4, AP4). The organisation also publishes newsletters

that are updated on the website, covering content disaggregated by the priorities that align with its core mission. These are available both digitally and via paper-based pamphlets, fliers, profiles, and reports to stakeholders with logos and tag lines of the H-Inc mission (C4, AP4A; AP4). Therefore, funders are able to fund the organisation with an understanding of what the organisation is about.

8.1.3 Regulatory context to align mission and multiple mandates

H-Inc optimises the registration flexibilities to navigate competing goals. This allows the organisation to be agile in foregrounding its social mission as NPO, but also to engage in multiple funding arrangements simultaneously. The CEO indicates,

“We are a non-profit company and are registered with CIPC [Companies and Intellectual Property Commission] ... and then, we’re also registered with the Department of Social Development. So, we have a PBO [Public Benefit Organisation] number from the Department of Social Development. And then we’re also registered by under SARS [South Africa Revenue services] under section 18 A, exempted NPOs ... so we don’t pay tax on income or surplus” (C4, E4, L70).

H-Inc uses the tax regime and loopholes to pursue multiple funders. H-Inc’s registration status under section 18 (A) of the South Africa Revenue Services (SARS) exempts it from tax, meaning that all funders contributing to them can claim the donations back from SARS as tax deductibles (C4, FD4-CIPC). They use this as a value proposition to access multiple funding from donors, corporate investors, and earned income for the achievement of their social mission.

In some instances, H-Inc collaborates with other organisations to navigate conflicting goals. The organisation is usually deliberate and sometimes opportunistic in this. For instance, as the IT and data coordinator indicates, “For example, the funder will release an advert ... you might find that the requirements don’t link with our operations or our pillars and objectives. So that’s when now, in that sense, it’s easier to propose partnerships” (C4, I4, L87).

8.2 Proposal development and writing phase

In H-Inc’s proposal development phase, the balance between mission and mandates is achieved by using M&E approaches, tools, and lingo to translate how core project activities fit within the RFP. H-Inc demonstrates financial sustainability by infusing earned unrestricted income in cost proposals to defray cost deficits and funding priority activities, where necessary. H-Inc’s proposals

include unrestricted earned income from the enterprise consultancies as matching or cost share. This is also utilised to facilitate other un-funded priority activities.

8.2.1 Articulating funder objectives within core priorities by using M&E lingo and tools

When writing proposals, H-Inc clusters funder activities along the categories that match the overarching mission. Essentially, the overarching mission is broken down into potential core priority activities that are matched to the RFP objectives of multiple funders. Specifically, this refers to regional livelihood, economic strengthening, and consumer education priority areas (C4, FD4). Activities around all funder priorities would then converge towards the organisation's core mission of poverty alleviation and transforming communities through job creation. For instance, they have a training model that they infuse into the proposals. It includes group and savings mobilisation of potential self-help groups, business training, enterprise development of the groups, financial management and access to credit, and linking entrepreneurs to markets (C4, FD4).

H-Inc then maps the RFP requirements from funders internally to align with the internal organising. This connotes the 'how' and is important to ensure the subsequent seamless implementation of multiple projects. The programme manager states, "There's a package of support areas that we cover at H-Inc ... However, when it comes to proposal writing, we would 'offer' the donors different packages [within the core package]" (C4, P4, L76).

H-Inc is, therefore, able to utilise its programming and M&E experience to present to funders what they want, while maintaining the core aspects of their activities. For example, H-Inc was able to adapt a proposal to nuance activities within their core curriculum in a way that still demonstrates their addressing the funder's approach, specifically, being able to fit the funder's activities into H-Inc's main training curriculum. As the IT and admin coordinator alludes, "For each objective or activity from each project or donor requirements, there are [H-Inc's] pillars that align with them ... there are some projects that align with all those pillars, and there are some that align with just some of the pillars" (C4, I4, L82).

H-Inc leverages its existing core competencies to demonstrate to funders the ability to manage multiple projects. They document similar competencies to address different RFP foci. For example, this is done by demonstrating experience in economic strengthening or livelihoods using core competencies in consumer education. The programme manager states, "As long as the funder is talking about enhancing the beneficiaries' livelihoods, we are there ... We then check how it is going to be done, and we try to understand how they [funder] view job creation" (C4, P4,

L88). She adds, “To tell you the truth ... because of the experience of our staff, most of the time, you find that with their [funders] material, it is just a different way of approaching, but it’s still all the same” (C4, P4, 94).

H-Inc incorporates teaming agreements with collaborators to bolster proposals, especially in cases where the work may not be compatible with its competencies but is closely related to its mission. “For example, the funder will release an advert looking for certain organisations that they can partner with ... in helping them with implementing a certain project ... so that’s when now, in that sense, it’s easier to propose the partnership to them” (C4, I4, L87).

H-Inc’s art of interpreting by using M&E terminologies is key to demonstrating an understanding of various RFP requirements. They endeavour to understand the activity inputs, outputs, and outcomes and demonstrate this in their proposals to funders. This experiential interpretation of programme outputs is key to fulfilling multiple needs that also align with their mission; hence, it allows them to manage potential tensions. The CEO states, “So, the funder comes in with their own conditions and terms ... to say this is what we want you to achieve. So, what we do is then map it” (C4, E4, L88).

8.2.2 Incorporating unrestricted income and enterprise activities to align

All the generated unrestricted income from the enterprise incubation fund and other for-profit services are used to match the funders’ resources. As a value proposition, this demonstrates H-Inc’s commitment to the funder and to the beneficiaries and that all unrestricted income is reinvested back to facilitate the mission attainment and sustainability efforts of the organisation.

H-Inc endeavours to achieve this value proposition through its documented business model and core staff structure presented in all proposals (C4, proposal [PR4], staff structure). H-Inc has developed a business model of how its mission-related costs can be absorbed. Essentially, the unrestricted income facilitates innovative value capture to fund internal mission-related activities. H-Inc’s business model relates to interventions and capacity development initiatives, which are conducted in a manner that aligns with their mission. The programme manager illustrates, “There’s a package of support areas that we cover at H-Inc ... From our end, we’ll just look at the bucket that we have and can offer from what we have” (C4, P4, L76).

H-Inc creatively charges a mark-up in offering funders what they require, while still maintaining the organisation’s core mission. For instance, H-Inc often has to make decisions on whether to utilise the core staff or hire additional staff for proposals. However, they innovatively cost the level of effort at a higher rate, while paying lower nominal rates to staff. This mark-up is then realised

as unrestricted funding. The finance manager illustrates this, “For example, De Beers will be charged maybe [for] shared services, which is R100, but you will only realise out of the R100 maybe, R60 goes to salaries and leaving R40 with H-Inc. So, it has kind of helped us to have some kind of liquidity” (C4, F4, L70). This was also observed in a management meeting where there was a long discussion on how H-Inc could efficiently deliver one of their projects without spending excessively. In that meeting, the finance manager shared calculations to guide their budgeting (C4, OBM4, L28).

H-Inc also has a budget template that is useful in allocating costs internally, but still presents the costs externally per the funder's requirements. The internal version details the actual staff costs, while the external version that goes to the funders is based on notional hourly rates embedded with fee margins and presented per the prescribed funder templates (C4, Budget template).

The finance manager's private sector experience facilitates that he is able to innovatively build income reserves into proposal budgets to facilitate the organisation's mission-related activities not funded by other funders. Additionally, he uses this to finance their needs during funding gaps. The finance manager reports, “When we negotiate the budget before we get the project, I and the CEO try to find out how it can work” (C4, F4, L139).

8.3 Negotiation and contracting phase

H-Inc optimises the negotiation and contracting micro-phase to negotiate to their advantage and align it accordingly before implementation. In this phase, H-Inc also uses M&E prowess and tools to infuse and address funder feedback. The CEO and leaders practise relationship management by optimising their past experiences, networks and relationships, and the art of negotiations to reach compromises with funders and community beneficiaries.

8.3.1 Active use of M&E to negotiate and address multiple requirements

Once proposal feedback is received, H-Inc's M&E adapts aspects of the original proposal to address the funders' feedback without moving away from the core mission. Also at this point, H-Inc amends the core management structure and implementation model as necessary (C4, IP4 [implementation plan]). The M&E manager points out, “As M&E, we are also involved in the decision-making ... you give your input back to management, so that they can make the decisions that they might be required to do” (C4, M4, L66).

When negotiating, H-Inc is deliberate in how it employs information gathered from past “baselines, mid-year surveys and end-line surveys” (C4, P4, L172) to negotiate to its advantage. Such M&E

information is used by H-Inc opportunistically to demonstrate the understanding of the project context, past social impact from beneficiaries' perspectives, and how it relates to the project under negotiation. The M&E manager states, "We have evaluations that we do at some point, and whatever findings that I have, we have to give them back to management, so that it can inform their decisions" (C4, M4, L66).

Based on the surveys, the organisation conducts funder education to align them with organisational internal workings, routines and processes. For instance, the M&E manager states, "Sometimes, if the funder has their own systems put in place ... You just have to show them reason and say, look, this is more efficient, then you find a way to work through how to integrate the two and remove any inefficiencies that might be there in the project" (C4, M4, L194). The M&E manager shared an example of how negotiations have led to funders utilising H-Inc's way of doing things and "adopt it for the other countries" (C4, M4, L194).

During negotiations, the organisation utilises M&E tools to respond to funders' concerns. For example, while M&E plans are prepared at the proposal stage (C4, PR4), they can tweak the plans and Gantt charts at the negotiations phase (C4, IP4 [implementation plan]). The M&E plans can be customised to fit multiple projects. The M&E manager states, "Because the projects are different, each project has an M&E plan, so we develop it for each project" (C4, M4, L46).

During negotiations, H-Inc promotes their agile M&E systems that can be standardised and replicated, as well as the skilled M&E staff who can interpret outcomes. Therefore, they can demonstrate adherence to multiple funders using similar systems. As the M&E manager further states, "We have the guidelines on what everyone is supposed to do, how we're going to monitor the activities, how we're going to do the reporting, develop the report templates ... the functions are more or less the same among the different projects" (C4, M4, L33).

8.3.2 Leaders' relationship management and negotiation skills

The CEO indicates how they leverage their knowledge of the community context to negotiate favourably with funders. They are able to demonstrate to funders the link between the negotiated activities and social impact within the community. From their experience, funders are willing to accommodate such discussions. The CEO states, "One of the things that I've learned over time is that as long as people are talking, and there's room to negotiate things, you'll be able to shift ... the funder, in most cases, is willing to shift and accommodate the changes that you are proposing" (C4, E4, L100).

The leadership's proximity to the community and field staff facilitates a deep understanding of the priorities that are core to the community. This is then used as a catapult to champion the key activities with funders. This facilitates an understanding of the priorities that are key to H-Inc and the community, and enables H-Inc to negotiate with funders to align with the core priorities. The programme manager indicates, "I don't spend most of the time in the office; we are always in the field" (C4, P4, L220).

H-Inc's leaders co-create with funders to ensure the funder accommodates the organisation's priorities. They take advantage of their proximity to negotiate favourably. As the CEO indicates, "The funders, when they come to us, they say we want to do this project, this is how we want to do it, can you support us? ... so, then we'll say, okay, we can support you; it's not very far from whatever we're doing. It's just different in terms of the approach" (C4, E4, L65). In one proposal under negotiation to set up a youth fund, H-Inc was conflicted about how to recover the costs of the microfinance project by charging interest to community lenders. To reduce the burden on community lenders, they were discussing with funders a co-creation approach of infusing a percentage of default fees on defaulters.

The leaders foreground H-Inc's priorities by using 'witty' practices. For example, H-Inc factors in earned income through a percentage formula. The finance manager states, "When we negotiate the budget before we get the project, I and the CEO try to find out how it can work" (C4, F4, L139). During the observation of a management meeting to discuss a proposal that was being negotiated, the finance manager was trying to find out how they could generate some savings in the process and provided ideas on how to 'fix' the stipends lower than the approved budget to ensure they would have some surplus for internal priority items (C4, OB4, L23). He illustrates, "We have gone into the market, bought cars, and we charge them [funders] for each kilometre that they travel. This has helped us to have reserves" (C4, F4, L70).

H-Inc management's art of negotiation involves persistent 'push-back' to minimise taking on conflicting activities. They have learnt that funders are amenable to negotiating at this phase. Therefore, they 'push' as much as possible for their agenda. The CEO states that they sometimes "keep on pushing and pushing and pushing and pushing, and after a few months, they [funders] budge" (C4, E4, L100). The finance manager adds, "We try not to be pushed into a corner. Push back if needs to ... so sometimes, you have to fight back" (C4, F4, L188).

H-Inc leaders practise funder education by taking advantage of the funders' limited knowledge of the community's priorities.

The CEO explains,

“Most of the funders have an idea of what they want to do ... outcomes they want to achieve. But the specific path to achieving those, the models to deliver those outcomes ... it’s a bit hazy on the funders’ side. So ... we try to get our experience to count by trying to guide the funders to understand that, yes, you want to achieve this kind of outcome. But we believe that if you do it this way, it’s going to work (C4, E4, L118).

The CEO’s participatory leadership approach in decision-making facilitates a collective understanding of the organisation’s core mission. The other members of the management team are then able to clearly negotiate with the funders on H-Inc’s priorities. The small size of the organisation allows the CEO to liaise closely with the other management staff in decision-making. The M&E manager points out that “He [CEO] does involve us from the beginning to also help to make informed decisions ... he briefs us on what the proposal requires” (C4, M4, L41).

Management’s closeness to employees’ social needs facilitates a sense of empathy and enhances staff performance. The staff feel connected to the leadership. The HR manager states, “That’s where now motivation comes in; When it comes from the top management” (C4, H4, L280). The programme manager adds, “The best way is to be a people’s manager than to be the operations manager ... I have learned that some of the things that will make your project achieve the goal set are to focus more on making people happy in a way” (C4, P4, L124).

The employees also leverage local legal requirements or norms to negotiate, especially with international funders. As the programme manager illustrates, “Let’s say it’s an international donor ... we then try to show them how we do it, and for legal compliance, this is how things are done in South Africa” (C4, P4, L106). She adds, “As much as they are giving us the money to be implementers, they also need to understand what is on the ground, so that we can manage the requirements and expectations” (C4, P4, L238).

The communication protocol between the organisation and funders is clear and entails that they manage any source of misalignment during negotiations. When dealing with funders, they “minimise communication between the lower-level employees and the funders, and make sure that only the top management reports to the funder” (C4, H4, L220). During a management meeting, it was observed how the CEO indicated that he would be hands-on in the project to ensure all stakeholders were happy and that he would be checking in on them, since the proposals won were as a result of previous referrals and good work they had done before” (C4, OBM4, L61).

8.4 Implementation phase

During implementation, H-Inc employs different approaches to balance its mission and the mandates. H-Inc has agile centralised policies, tools, and functions, such as M&E and finance, to navigate competing priorities. H-Inc adapts and adopts internal procedures as necessary by using SOPs to manage multiple requirements. The core management ensures coordination across projects. Existing HR practices and the social connections among core staff facilitate individual and collective commitments to the organisation's core mission.

8.4.1 Agile centralised functions, policies and tools to align

H-Inc coordinates activities from its Johannesburg office and has centralised key functions housed under their "shared services" (C4, H4, L237). These functions are made up of M&E, finance, programme management, HR, and IT to ensure internal coordination of all projects and to ensure that funders' and organisational priorities complement each other. The CEO highlights that they have a central implementation strategy.

A culture of M&E has been instilled to enable staff to appreciate the monitoring of multiple outputs and outcomes as well as tracking mission-related activities. The CEO indicates that H-Inc has "got strong M&E systems to track and measure and validate the information" (C4, E4, L179). The M&E manager sums up the importance of M&E by indicating, "M&E requires the CEO to understand the importance of M&E ... It requires the project managers to understand M&E ... the field ... need to understand the role of M&E" (C4, M4, L190). "M&E support also comes in, in terms of data collection, development of the data collection instruments, analysing some of the baseline information, and doing some of the quality assurance checks that are required as we are implementing the project" (C4, E4, L179).

Project management essentials are practised dynamically in a manner that allows H-Inc to manage and coordinate multiple priorities simultaneously. They harness human resources and other internal resources to facilitate multitasking across projects. The HR manager indicates that "With new projects, we start by looking at what we have. What is it that we can offer with the existing staff? ... if we have a person who could be or who can do all the projects at once" (C4, H4, L105). She further illustrates, "We use the Google Calendar to make sure we record everything ... and to make sure you have all the project calendars and have their information. You have the information of what each project needs and at what time" (C4, H4, L196). The programme manager adds, "The other element is the one of budget. For all the projects ... I always say is to check how far you are in the implementation, so that your operations are aligned

with the budget” (C4, P4, L124). In some instances, they “look at the critical path and try to compress the critical path as well of the project ... Where you are supposed to take a month, you remove some sub-activities and remain with the main activity to continue to get to the output that is desired” (C4, F4, L163).

The organisation has overarching policies, such as a finance policy that governs financial operations across all projects and activities being implemented (C4, PD4 [policy document]). This limits having multiple policies for each funder. As articulated in the H-Inc finance policies and procedures manual, they maintain one main accounting system and have different projects identified by using different codes (C4, PD4). This enables them to allocate and bill their time to different projects in a concurrent manner. They then also use the information to populate funder-prescribed formats; hence, this aids them to fulfil multiple funding requirements simultaneously.

H-Inc has centralised tools and templates that can be adapted to fulfil multiple requirements. This facilitates managing multiple funders concurrently. The CEO indicates, “We have some templates that we use ... some basic documents that must be almost alike. They don’t change with many projects” (C4, E4, L136). For instance, timesheets are examples of artefact tools utilised to facilitate the monthly payroll routine to allocate costs across multiple funding agreements. Employees’ level of effort is captured, and costs are allocated to different funders accordingly. H-Inc “use timesheets to report what they [staff] are doing on each and every project” (C4, H4, L127). Sample timesheets, as exemplified in their financial policy document, were reviewed (C4, PD4; timesheet sample). Sampled M&E templates reviewed were found to be overarching and could cover broad activities under different programmes, as well as mission-centric activities that the organisation focuses on (C4, ARP4).

8.4.2 Adapting and adopting internal procedures and tools to align

H-Inc has standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are adapted to different projects to cater for nuanced needs. The finance manager highlights, “We do have SOPs ... to manage certain issues” (C4, F4, L155). The M&E manager notes, “We have the M&E plan that has all the guidelines. We have a part that’s in there called guidelines, and they are standard operating procedures ... we will develop that for each and every project” (C4, M4, L134). As E4 highlights, “It’s project-specific ... each new project that comes in must have its own implementation guidelines. So, we may take some of the templates and adjust them to suit that project” (C4, E4, L130).

H-Inc has a portfolio of internal tools that they adapt to fulfil funders' requirements as appropriate. The tools and templates have been developed over time as they implemented projects from multiple funders. The programme manager indicates, "At the beginning of the project, we discuss and create the tools we want to use, depending on the deliverables and the kind of requirements that are there" (C4, P4, L184).

The organisation also has an in-house software application to facilitate the monitoring work. "The people in the field enter the data into the App and then M&E just goes and reviews and approves the entries ... and the App can also export reports in Excel workbook" (C4, I4, L128).

M&E plays a role in simplifying tools that come from funders to allow easy implementation and monitoring of multiple projects by the same staff using existing organisational approaches. For example, simplified data collection tools in the form of "an Excel document that has those indicators that you need to indicate" (C4, I4, L218). The M&E manager notes, "From the funder, some of them give us reporting templates to say, 'I want you to submit quarterly statistics reports; these are the indicators that you're supposed to submit, the targets' ... So, when you're designing the reporting templates for your staff ... you narrow it down to their level, but you make sure that they are talking to each other" (C4, M4, L86).

During implementation, M&E acts as the custodians of the projects' quality assurance. This centralises the function of managing multiple mandates, while having an eye on the organisation's mission. For instance, the M&E team "make regular visits...to different implementing sites and ad-hoc and unannounced, to check on the work that is being done, and ... triangulate information to make sure that the quality is what is expected" (C4, E4, L179).

H-Inc sometimes integrates specific funder requirements internally for effective implementation. This is especially so if they deem the requirements to be beneficial for managing other projects. Hence, H-Inc adopts the most stringent requirements as part of its internal procedures to avoid multiple amendments. The CEO states, "We work with the highest constraints that we have received from different funders ... we take the strictest funder" (C4, E4, L155). For instance, "You may find one funder that says the maximum you can claim on this item is basically x, but another funder that says the maximum you can claim on this one is x plus five. So now in our policies, we say ... the maximum you can claim is x minus one" (C4, E4, L149).

H-Inc harmonises employment contracts to project tenure to reduce the complexities of having staff without coverage and facilitates managing internal HR-related tensions. In addition, this assists in avoiding flouting the labour laws and committing field staff for longer periods than

necessary. The CEO states some project-specific employees “are tied to specific projects. So, they rise with the project, and they also leave with the project.” (C4, E4, L141). The finance manager further illustrates, “One of the things that we managed to do was to link job profiles. Employment contracts to a funder ... If that project ends, they go” (C4, F4, L70).

The organisation’s small size facilitates nimbleness and allows it to adapt to various demands as well as decision-making in a timely fashion. When pursuing multiple funders, they can easily change internally to suit different arrangements. In some instances, they are required to re-programme during implementation. As the M&E manager highlights, “You would have made a plan to say ‘we are going to do these activities’ ... you’re forced to re-programme, change the activities and do what works” (C4, M4, L182). The finance manager further illustrates, “It was noticed when we’re doing this economic strengthening and training, it dawned on us that there were attrition ratios [of beneficiaries] ... That’s how the strategy changed along the way” (C4, F4, L86). The CEO states, “We had to re-strategise and reorient ourselves [during the COVID-19 pandemic], so that we can remain relevant and continue supporting our clients” (C4, E4, L257).

8.4.3 The role of shared staff in coordination and alignment

H-Inc has core staff who work across projects and are central to the concurrent coordination of funders, as well as internal core activities. The CEO notes, “In terms of how we structure ourselves, we have shared services that are shared across all projects, HR, M&E, and finance and IT” (C4, E4, L141). Every new project is allocated among the core staff for oversight “across all the projects” (C4, H4, L105). The IT and admin coordinator states, “There are those who are just project-based employees, and there are shared services” (C4, I4, L272). The HR manager further corroborates, “We have shared services. That’s one other thing that helps us that one person can be doing a number of jobs at the same time” (C4, H4, L237).

The projects are “managed by a shared service manager. In other words, the manager is responsible for two or three projects” (C4, E4, L141). The central management is geared towards “enhancing operational efficiencies and reducing overheads” (C4, PR4 [proposal], p. 3), and improving internal coordination of multiple activities. The structure of each project can also be tweaked, based on the project delivery of the funder's requirements. However, the core team handles “finance, human resources, M&E, and fundraising” (C4, PR4, p. 3).

The long tenure of the core staff facilitates an understanding of internal organising, and the staff are central to concurrently balancing multiple funders and the mission. All the shared staff have worked in the organisation for at least seven years. For instance, the programme manager “joined

[C4] back in November 2015” (C4, P4, L58), the HR manager “joined [C4] in 2014” (C4, H4, L68), the IT and admin coordinator “started working at [C4] in 2015 as data capture” (C4, I4, L55).

The core staff is a lean team for efficient linkages between multiple funder requirements and the organisation's core mission. The CEO notes that the lean shared staff structure at the management level provides overall oversight and alignment. He states, “We have learned from experience that we need to carry very few overheads to ride through the lean periods in our life. So, what we do is that we have shared services” (C4, E4, L141). The main policy document indicates that, “The organisation maintains a lean, flexible management structure geared towards enhancing operational efficiencies and reducing overheads” (C4, PD4, L74).

Interestingly, they recover costs for the use of shared staff innovatively from all funders. The finance manager elaborates on this by stating, “We do what we call performance-based payments on employees, which has helped us with our savings. For example, the shared service ... we have managed to bill the projects, to have agreements with the funders to bill the projects, but that does not necessarily mean that the money will go to the person” (C4, F4, L70). Hence, with the savings they can “re-strategise and use the money for other interventions or put it aside for future use” (C4, P4, L190).

The shared staff can be used as a type of cost-share contribution to other projects that do not have adequate salary cost contributions. The CEO explains how this is practised, “Many other funders request for match funding ... we use shared services ... whatever is paid for by another project can also be used as match funding for another project” (C4, E4, L239).

8.4.4 HR practised to manage multiple complexities

H-Inc recruitment strategies involve hiring from stakeholders, such as hiring from the community or from “the pool of current and previous beneficiaries” (C4, P4, L154). This facilitates the management of expectations internally as well as among the stakeholders. Internally, it is easy to manage staff operating in their community of residence, and externally, there is a sense of community involvement. As the programme manager points out, they also hire past employees, and she indicates, “We have those databases, and we maintain contact with them” (C4, P4, L154).

The organisation prefers inward or internal career progression growth, which acts as a motivation for staff to commit to the organisation's mission. This contributes to the long tenure of staff who understand the mission of the organisation and are committed to serving the communities. For instance, the HR manager was formerly “an intern, then data capturing, then moved to the human resource department” (C4, H4, L56). The IT and admin manager “started as a data capturer” (C4,

l4, L55). The finance manager notes, “It’s only that I have a certain understanding of a certain relationship [with the CEO]. I don’t think I’d have stayed at H-Inc for long” (C4, F4, L96).

Additionally, some social bond or connection exists among staff, and this drives their commitment to others and the organisation, as well as the motivation of staff to manage multiplicities. The connection is also at personal and friendship levels, making it easier for staff to work towards the organisational core priorities. The HR manager states, “I think helping each other, making sure that you work as a team, if anyone needs help, not leaving everything to one person, but also offering the help, even when they need the help” (C4, H4, L85). The programme manager adds, “As long as you’re checking on the people, and the people feel okay that you’re checking on them on a regular basis and they’re happy” (C4, P4, L124). The HR manager indicates, “There is counselling and helping each other with ideas, then you realise that over that conversation, actually, someone has been motivated” (C4, H4, L268). For instance, as the finance manager illustrates, “The CEO, whom I know from church ... We go to the same church and we always hang around together” (C4, F4, L70).

Socialisation within the teams is key not only to infusing the organisational culture, but also to improving employees’ performance. The socialisation of staff starts immediately after they are hired and it smoothens internal working and organising among employees across multiple projects. As the programme manager highlights, “We structure and align them [staff] once they’ve come on board, across the different activities ... It is from planning earlier on the process” (C4, P4, L154). The executive director supports this by stating, “The induction, and that’s all deployment of the people ... there are things that they [staff] must understand” (C4, E4, L149). The HR manager further illustrates, “If a person is not able to handle all the tasks ... we pair them, so that they go together and assist each other” (C4, H4, L140).

Staff training is used dynamically to upskill and equip them to be able to manage different roles and responsibilities. As the HR manager indicates, “If they [staff] lack some skills, we can also send a senior person to work with them maybe a week or two, that’s how we assist each other” (C4, H4, L144). She adds, “We try to train them and help them to maintain their professionalism” (C4, H4, L226). The M&E manager underscores, “The induction part is important for them to understand what they’re [new staff] supposed to do.” (C4, M4, L226).

The resource constraints necessitate that employees have to be able to multitask and manage multiple funders concurrently as they implement programmes, and the training received earlier adequately prepares them for this because “you can wear different hats at different times” (C4,

H4, L260). Multiple roles also expose the staff to different aspects of mandates; hence, they can fulfil different expectations, and as “new projects come in, then roles and responsibilities shift” (C4, E4, L239). Therefore, staff exposure to different internal functions allows them to appreciate and manage multiplicities, and it facilitates alignment. The finance manager further highlights that “You have to understand what is happening. You must have an understanding of the M&E. You must have an understanding of the project cycle” (C4, F4, 139). The project manager believes that staff and management have “to be hands-on ... to understand the operations ... be on the loop of what is happening on the ground. So that you understand how far the project is, what are some of the gaps ... that are still there to close, and the issues of risks” (C4, P4, L124). She further notes, “Where the resources are not enough ... you give people more responsibility than before because of the understaffing. So that’s what we do to deal with constraints” (C4, P4, L226).

Multitasking sometimes leads to employees having to work overtime to manage multiple projects simultaneously. To stay motivated working overtime, H-Inc creatively compensates the staff with time off in lieu of pay. As the CEO points out, “When there is not enough to bring enough heads on to the project, it means to achieve what is required, people must do a lot of extra time to compensate” (C4, E4, L227). The HR manager elaborates, “We don’t do overtime pay ... we actually compensate that with maybe a leave day” (C4, H4, L249). The CEO indicates, “Unless they [staff] are very ... extremely motivated, they may not last” (C4, E4, L227). The finance manager elaborates further, “If they do work on overtime, you can also take a day off. Just talk to a project manager to ask to take a day off ... it’s like a gentleman’s agreement” (C4, F4, L159).

Workload analysis is practised in ways that manage staff constraints and other internal tensions arising due to competing priorities. The CEO elaborates, “One of the things that I’ve been pushing within the organisation is that it’s important for us to do workload analysis” (C4, E4, L227). “As new projects come in, then roles and responsibilities shift. So, some people who are working on a project, but they’re not full-time there, then you’ll be able to re-allocate the extra time they have on other projects” (C4, E4, L239). The programme manager indicates, “We then look at the type of activities and then align according to that ... to produce the kind of results we are aiming for” (C4, P4, L154).

Transparent and open communication among the team facilitates easy and faster information flow. This is key to ensuring that multiple deliverables are met. Additionally, they use the meetings to discuss not only the project deliverables but organisation-centric priorities. The M&E manager confirms this, “We do management meetings, where we bring in the management from the different projects. We bring in HR, we bring in the finance and all other departments, and, in those

meetings everyone comes in with feedback from their project. We reflect if there are any organisational things to discuss” (C4, M4, L138). As the HR manager states, “I think communication is the most important thing ... when they come for review meetings, we communicate and actually when ... in the meetings we do appreciate them” (C4, H4, L85).

8.5 Reporting: Output/outcome measurement phase

Reporting demonstrates how H-Inc fulfils multiple requirements. To balance its mission and the mandates, H-Inc uses annual reports to ensure simultaneous reporting. They articulate the achievement of their core mission and the funders’ requirements. H-Inc also actively uses M&E approaches to facilitate this process and leverages digitisation and information technology to reach multiple stakeholders simultaneously.

8.5.1 Concurrent disaggregated and integrated dynamic programme and financial reporting

H-Inc uses annual reports as dynamic artefacts to articulate multiple achievements to different stakeholders. The process involves aggregating information from various projects for internal consumption and decision-making as well as indicating to funders the key achievements under their projects. The M&E facilitates how H-Inc disaggregates information and disseminates the information to the relevant funders (C4, ARP4 [annual report]). The M&E manager indicates, “We prepare and we report to the board. We prepare board meeting reports that actually cover most of the implemented activities in different projects ... Then we do your annual reports ... and those are published” (C4, M4, L146).

The M&E function coordinates the programme reporting to ensure H-Inc adheres to specific funder requirements and reports internally on priority activities. The M&E function disaggregates programme reporting information from multiple sources into the achievement tables and disseminates the information to the relevant funders. While the organisation’s reporting functions are managed centrally for all funding streams, the programme and financial reporting for different funders have to be adapted in the system to suit the different funders’ needs. The process is centralised and requires a coordinating function, and as the M&E manager highlights, “We use the M&E plan that has all the guidelines” (C4, M4, L134). She adds, “... for reporting purposes, it depends on the reporting structure of the project” (C4, M4, L82). “We have our own internal reporting structures ... we design our own templates to use ... and we use the strategic one” (C4, M4, L86). The resulting monthly, quarterly and annual reports to the funders that were reviewed

were customised for each funder, despite being centrally prepared and originating from a central repository system (C4, AP4; AP4A).

H-Inc visually distinguishes achievements that relate to the organisation vis-à-vis those that relate to other funders. This allows H-Inc to utilise information from the same projects to report to funders on the multiple mandated activities, as well as to the board, on the achievement of the internal mission. For instance, the programme manager states, “Normally, we colour our achievements in red, for example, and others are green. After those analyses ... we determine whether we are reporting to the CEO or the board members or funders for that particular report and time” (C4, P4, L232).

The role of M&E in reporting is key in the manipulation of the data for various uses and reports, both internally and for external use. Therefore, M&E not only plays a role in monitoring multiple projects, but it is key in interpreting, ‘manipulating,’ and reporting to account for priority mission-related activities. On the other hand, it facilitates reporting to various stakeholders in accordance with the requirements in a simultaneous fashion. This was further corroborated during the observation session at a management meeting. They were discussing emerging challenges in a recently awarded activity and how they would safeguard their interests. The M&E manager indicated how she would ‘tweak’ current data collection tools to ensure the outputs would, later on, reflect H-Inc’s achievement in the core economic development space (C4, OBM4, L48).

H-Inc manages the reporting routine dynamically by re-wording reports in ways that foreground their priority activities, while also addressing multiple requirements. The M&E manager states, “It’s not the same for the different projects. The internal templates are different for the different projects ... so, I have to design that reporting template that captures all the stories ... on the indicators, lessons learned, challenges, key achievements, and then that’s it” (C4, M4, L90). However, to ensure alignment with the mission, the reporting has to be consolidated and integrated to address key organisational outputs and outcomes. Therefore, report outputs are both centralised and disaggregated simultaneously, as necessary. The finance manager indicates, “Basically, it is just an aggregation of funders at the main level. Then from there, that’s how you have your reports that you send to the board. So we just combine and just pull the reports” (C4, F4, 103).

H-Inc’s financial system’s ability to integrate and differentiate reporting facilitates concurrent fulfilment of different funder requirements and mission-related activities. Hence, the system is able to disaggregate and integrate project reports at the project and organisational levels

simultaneously. The finance manager states, “When you pull these reports at the main account, you are now consolidating everything” (C4, F4, L103). The CEO adds, “There are things that we need from the finance system as H-Inc ... our management accounts ... that they must come not at project-specific ... but for the whole organisation ... But also, there are specific donor reports that are required in certain contracted periods” (C4, E4, L191). The finance manager further notes, “Our system ... we have ... is customised in a way that you just go into this system and then pull budget versus actual ... to whatever template that they want it to be reported” (C4, F4, L151).

Audit reports are used proactively to fulfil multiple requirements simultaneously. For instance, when seeking funding, prospective funders look at whether “you have ever been audited before, and you passed the audit” (C4, M4, L106). Another reason for the provision of these reports is to keep receiving funding from current funders. Clean audits and data assurance exercises are practised in a way that facilitates the fulfilment of multiple requirements. As the CEO states, “We’ve been able to get clean audits in every project over the years, and that has given confidence to some of the funders to continue trusting and working with us over the years” (C4, E4, L118).

8.5.2 Digitisation and Information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple activities

The organisation has a digital application that facilitates data collection and reporting on different funders and the organisation’s activities in a seamless manner. They have leveraged technology to ease reporting challenges from the field. The M&E manager indicates they are “using an App to collect the data. It is an Android App, they go to the field with their tablets, and they collect data on the phone. They submit it even if it’s offline or online” (C4, M4, L70). She further points out, “The challenge of capturing the data is, it’s time-consuming. So that one is now eliminated because we’re now using this App. So, you can download the App, and you can monitor it as well. You can pull out reports using those Apps” (C4, M4, L70). The finance manager corroborates, “We use M&E software ... created and databases are used to analyse” (C4, F4, L147).

H-Inc has a real-time data reporting system. The software application facilitates the review of “staff performance and also gives you just a minor analysis of the data that they [programme staff] are collecting” (C4, M4, L74). For “example [displays on screen], this is for the enterprise visit that they’re currently doing now. So, you’re able to see this is what they’ve done in the past seven days” (C4, M4, L228).

H-Inc uses an application within the website to actively interact with funders, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. Therefore, they can conduct needs assessments, obtain beneficiary

feedback, and communicate success stories and their impact simultaneously. The reviewed organisation's website verified the comments by the IT and admin coordinator who ensures they are "organising graphic content ... updating, or editing the company profile, H-Inc's annual reports, or whatever attachments that require graphic work" (C4, I4, L93).

Additionally, the automated IT system facilitates the preparation of different types of multiple financial and programme reports to multiple funders. The system also facilitates managing complex projects, resource planning of finances and employees, and effective management between the activities relating to profit activities and community project activities. They have an automated financial system to disaggregate and manage multiple funders by concurrent monitoring and reporting. As the CEO reports, the system is automated "so that whatever our reporting is, they just pull it out of the system" (C4, E4, L167).

The system can be customised for various purposes, allowing for concurrent analysis of multiple data. This is important to fulfil different requirements simultaneously. The finance manager indicates, "We have customised in a way ... to whatever template that they [funders] want it to be reported" (C4, F4, L151). "What Sage Evolution does is segment projects or funders in an accounting system ... in the end, you can aggregate the main account when you pull your GLs and your reports that are segmented by the funder" (C4, F4, L70). They also have digitised the programme reporting and "the App can also export reports in Excel workbook" (C4, I4, L128). "They have been using it for different programmes" (C4, I4, L158).

H-Inc has automated tracking staff level of effort, especially in the field. This enables them to address multiple employees' performance, monitoring, and funder-related requirements. As the programme manager indicates, "One of the tools we are trying to use is our timesheets ... they can use their fingerprints, and they can also use their cell phones, so that we can monitor and see who clocked in for work, and when you have exited for work" (C4, P4, L172). The HR manager adds, "The timesheets help us to know what people are doing, each and every person" (C4, H4, L122).

H-Inc has also leverages the use of social media platforms to facilitate both formal and informal interactions. They "have a WhatsApp group for the management team where they also give updates ... and use to review organisational progress" (C4, M4, L138). In addition, the M&E manager highlights, "Instead of maybe doing monitoring visits physically ... they now send evidence ... they take a picture and send it on WhatsApp ... You create WhatsApp groups, and

you send them communications on WhatsApp voice notes, training on WhatsApp, and so forth” (C4, M4, L174).

8.6 Conclusion

H-Inc demonstrated how they balance different mandates and the mission. The organisation leverages community-led programming to negotiate to its advantage, while also educating funders on how to implement programmes. The strong use of M&E to interpret different requirements and internal mapping of requirements is important to ensure alignment is happening. They take advantage of the amorphous registration context of social enterprises in ensuring their registration status facilitates internal agility to engage with different for-profit and non-profit funders, as well as investors, but they do not “pay tax on income or surplus” (C4, E4, L70). Leaders’ experiential negotiation and deliberate M&E practising of what would be mundane routines are key to managing funders.

However, sometimes it involves adapting internal procedures by incorporating requirements from “the strictest funder” (C4, E4, L155). The organisation’s small size facilitates nimbleness and allows them to adapt to various demands as well as decision-making and still be able to “change the activities and do what works” (C4, N4, L182). All this is done with a clear sight of their core “vision that has remained poverty alleviation through job creation” (C4, E4, L82). The organisation has shared staff, central overarching policies, and systems that act as dynamic artefacts to facilitate the simultaneous management of multiple requirements. For instance, “HR policy, your finance policy, your supply chain policies” (C4, F4, L155). HR is practised innovatively to manage internal complexities. There is a sense of comradery among staff due to internal social connectedness. Hence, it is easy for staff to work as a team in attending to different funder priorities and also still be able to ‘pull in one direction’ as an organisation.

The ability to disaggregate and centralise the financial, as well as the project reports at the same time is key in the management of competing and conflicting requirements. This “makes it easy to report at the project level or to report per organisational level” (C4, E4, L197) simultaneously. They have also leveraged technology in implementing automated financial and programmed systems that are agile, using in-house software applications. Table 8.2 summarises how H-Inc navigates multiple projects as they balance the organisation’s mission and the mandates at different phases.

Table 8.2: Summary examples of practices and routines to balance mission–mandates at micro-level

Phase	Practices, routines and practitioner actions to balance mission and mandates
Pre-proposal – conceptualising process and design	Engage “indunas” (community leaders) as entry strategy, enter into a collaboration with the existing network of community civil society secretariat to leverage, co-design, use success stories from existing projects, leverage existing collaborators' infrastructure, have core staff in Gauteng and hire fieldworkers from the community, branding at the community level for visibility
Proposal writing	Tweak proposals to add activities within core curriculum, use of existing data to map activities to fit within current curriculum, existing staff to multitask, cost the level of effort, but utilise overtime compensation mechanisms
Negotiation and contracting phase	Infuse % earned income on defaulters, co-design with financiers, nimble in activity shifts, utilise past beneficiary database maintained by M&E as the potential customer base for flexibility
Implementation	Utilise automated real-time central M&E system that can be adapted, adopt most stringent tools as the standard tools across, use of centralised M&E staff, SOPs as an addendum to existing central policy & tools, utilise the organisation's owned assets and charge usage as earned income, adopt the most stringent thresholds and apply across funders, utilise core shared staff and charge projects accordingly, use digital web-based M&E and financial systems across
Reporting – Output/outcome measurement	Digitised automated financial system coded per project and overall reporting capabilities, use same audit firm to conduct one audit and produce several reports, as well as overarching organisational audit, use of annual reports to demonstrate achievements to multiple stakeholders, utilise M&E prowess & automated database to utilise data across project reporting, concurrent disaggregated and integrated reporting

CHAPTER 9: Ugo (Case 5) within-case discussion

Ugo is registered as a South African proprietary limited liability company (Pty) and fully owns a non-profit arm that implements community-based projects (C5, FD5 [founding documents]). The two organisations identify themselves as an SMSE that provides a range of services in public health and M&E areas (C5, FD5). The aim is to have the Pty make profits that can be used to fund the social mission of the NPO. The organisation's mission is to enhance the generation of quality data and innovative M&E interventions to generate innovative solutions for better population health and development outcomes (C5, FD5). The below table depicts the projects that were running at the time of the data collection and the different phases of each project, depicting the different tensions that needed to be navigated simultaneously by Ugo.

Table 9.1: Multiple projects and phases

Project	Phase	Details
Project 1	Implementation	M&E consultancy with UNICEF
Project 2	Reporting - Close-out	A 3-year OVC project with Global Fund
Project 3	Negotiation & contracting	Adoption of M&E tool by DSD and DOH
Project 4	Negotiation & contracting	Co-design and co-creation with European funder on a survey tool
Project 5	Implementation/Reporting	M&E Consultancy services with various funders/financiers
Project 6	Pre-proposal	Scoping for agricultural technical advisory work in Malawi
Project 7	Pre-proposal	Deliberations with community stakeholders on Global Fund RFP
Project 8	Proposal	Study on effects of COVID on implementation by DSD/UNICEF

9.1 Pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase

In the pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase, Ugo balances the mission and mandates by having the NPO pursue community projects and the Pty raise earned income. Ugo also utilises the founder's portfolio of relationships as a career NPO practitioner and co-designs projects with the government and funders. It also conducts consultancy work with the aim of mapping the priorities within its mission.

9.1.1 Community embeddedness to align mission and multiple mandates

Ugo (C5) believes being embedded in the community is key at the pre-proposal and conceptualisation phase to understanding the community's priorities. The NPO arm of the organisation emphasises community-led programming in the designing of projects. Therefore, proximity to the community is a point of reference for Ugo in such decisions. Ugo then leverages the identified social needs by articulating the community's needs well in its mission and advocating for appropriate interventions. As the CEO indicates, "It is walking the journey with people being there on the ground, understanding the challenges, and then presenting and being an advocate

for change” (C5, E5, L132). Therefore, Ugo recognises the importance of having “to understand the expected stakeholders’ expectations” (C5, B5 [board member], L35). That way, Ugo reflects the community’s priorities within its mission, while ensuring funders are brought on board with this understanding.

Ugo takes advantage of its understanding of the community’s needs to co-design projects with the community’s priorities in mind and subsequently advocates with funders. This enables Ugo to address the community’s priorities, the organisation’s priorities and the funders’ priorities simultaneously. This legitimises its work and opens doors to deal with multiple funders. As the IT & data analyst states, “For the projects we’re doing ... the community is powerful ... that if you forget to talk to the community, even if the government has said do this, forget [it], it’s not going to work” (C5, I5 [IT & data analyst], L70).

Ugo endeavours to engage other gatekeepers, including the “national government, the provincial government, the district government, the community leaders” (C5, I5, L88), to ensure alignment. With a current RFP in focus, this tactic is key in their decision-making as they deliberate to bid for a follow-on Global Fund project for which they are contemplating whether to continue implementation with current collaborators or incorporating other new community collaborators. The programme director indicates, “It’s important to understand the clients, their needs, and also the dynamics, the political dynamics, as well as the dynamics within the different sectors of work” (C5, P5, L107). She further indicates, “When you work in a district, you need to understand and be in touch with what they do. What are their priorities as a district? And how you can align your work with what they need because the district is very important?” (C5, P5, L107).

Ugo also participates in community activities to ensure the organisational activities are visible at the community level and receive support from the core beneficiaries. That way, it is easier to be accepted by other stakeholders. This does not only facilitate beneficiary buy-in, but it is also an opportunity to showcase the organisation’s priorities.

Ugo gets involved in task force meetings at the community and local government levels, and also works with community leaders. This facilitates relationship building, advocacy, and the co-designing of projects. The organisation also takes part in these meetings “to present what they’re doing on a monthly basis” (C5, P5, L114).

9.1.2 The role of branding and marketing awareness in enhancing social mission alignment

The organisation's website has platforms used to 'push' content relating to the organisation's mission, plans, achievements and other pertinent news for marketing and awareness creation. In reviewing the organisation's website and interviewing the CEO, the role of branding and marketing awareness has been key to communicating to stakeholders and the general public the core mission and interventions of the organisation. The organisation also uses its insight section as a dissemination tool on the website, covering content disaggregated by the interventions that align with its core mission.

The offices in the community are branded and well-known, and this helps to convey the organisation's mission, while at the same time apprising external stakeholders about the organisation. As the project director indicates, "Everybody knows about the programme, and we get such positive support" (C5, P5, L121).

They use community feedback avenues as a means of engagement and awareness creation at the community level and with the beneficiaries. This approach to programming forces Ugo to be self-aware of how they are perceived at the community level and hence, cognisant that their brand remains in the minds of the community. This enhances community loyalty to the organisation. As the project director indicates, "We also have open communication with the beneficiaries where they can come to the safe space, anytime and they raise issues. We have a suggestion box that we've kept there. So, we got a lot of positive feedback on how the team helped them" (C5, P5, L114).

They also use the multi-sectoral forums at the community level where there are "multiple stakeholders, and every stakeholder has to present what they're doing on a monthly basis" (C5, P5, L114). Such opportunities are great for aligning multiple stakeholders on the organisation's projects, mission, vision and strategies. This goes a long way toward managing potential tensions at the field level. As the CEO reports, "You have to be present at the table with policymakers at the highest level of government. And so, you have the responsibility to present those facts to people who make decisions, so that they understand what is going on and continuously lobby" (C5, E5, L132).

Ugo also uses branded visuals, photos and video galleries to communicate the successes in their interventions and mission attainment. Branding enhances communication, and the communication medium facilitates the awareness of different activities the organisation is

engaged in, as well as crowding in on its core mission. Some of the innovative tools they have developed are patented with their brand, so that they can also gain some commercial value. They have a “lawyer who, for example, helped ... the actual documentation of the IP [intellectual property] (C5, M5, L153).

9.1.3 Regulatory context to align mission and multiple mandates

Ugo optimises the absence of a robust social enterprise regulatory framework to pursue multiple projects and funders. Despite Ugo’s multiple registrations, they have managed to balance the mission and mandates by using the different entities appropriately. This was evident as they pursued a project in Malawi and were contemplating whether to implement it as the NPO or use the for-profit arm. However, as the CEO states, “The mission is the same. You are one organisation, one leadership, and one board of directors, and you are trying to pursue this mission” (C5, E5, L51).

While an overarching mission exists, the organisation is able to opportunistically match funding within appropriate internal entities to fulfil multiple needs. As the CEO alludes, “So, the Pty has been used, mostly with the contracts ... UNICEF and other UN agencies are not very keen to work or work with a Pty ... we set up the non-profit to expand the opportunity to work with people [funders] who might have a stricter definition of who they work with ... but it is the same people, same team” (C5, E5, L54).

The multiple registration status accords Ugo flexibility, and “depending on the funding opportunities that exist, one can use a different way, you can use the entity that makes sense” (C5, E5, L51). The implementation of “some of the requirements for certain projects may favour a non-profit, vis-à-vis a profit” (C5, B5, L27). For instance, “All the grants come under the NPO, and all the contracts come under the Pty” (C5, E5, L54). Two RFPs were reviewed whereby the NPO was used to pursue a Global Fund project in one of the provinces, and another one was an M&E consultancy contract pursued under the profit arm (C5, RFP5A; RFP5B).

9.2 Proposal development and writing phase

The balance between mission and mandates during the proposal development phase is achieved by the organisation’s use of its robust M&E approaches, tools, and lingo to translate and fit RFP requirements within the existing mission. Ugo also infuses earned unrestricted income in cost proposals as cost-share and funding of priority activities, where necessary.

9.2.1 Articulating funder objectives within core priorities using M&E lingo and tools

During proposal writing, Ugo categorises activities per identified priorities and core mission, specifically public health interventions, information technology solutions, monitoring & evaluation, consulting & capacity-building support (C5, FD5). Activities around all these priorities would then converge toward the organisation's core mission. The CEO indicates, "It is not easy to make sure you are getting funding in line with your mission if you are not proactively going out and seeking funders who will support your mission ... align mission with your funders, then that gives you a little bit of higher success" (C5, E5, L120).

Ugo's art of interpreting RFP requirements facilitates the categorisation process to document proposals in a manner that incorporates both, the different mandates and the mission simultaneously. The mission achievement is always at the heart of their multiple projects. As the board member indicates, "We go out ... we look for business, and whatever income that comes, whether we were receiving 10 million rands, or we are receiving half a million rands ... we allocate to projects" (C5, P5, L87). The M&E director adds, "You know, you must deliver as per the expectations that have been set out ... but on the profit arm, you're saying, okay, we still need to deliver, but we need to manage the costs, we need to see how much margin we get" (C5, M5, L40).

Ugo endeavours to map funders' requirements to align with its mission. The mapping exercise involves translating the RFP requirements by using the funder's perspective, but keeping an eye on Ugo's internal organisation. This was evident in the manner in which they presented the structure of the projects, implementation plan, and budget (C5, PR5A). As the project director explains, "What we do is ... we have our own organisation, strategy, we know where we are going or where we want to go. When there's a business opportunity, we first look at ... is this in line with us, what we stand for as an organisation" (C5, P5, L50). Ugo has an internal budget template that maps the internal cost structure, which recognises earned income innovatively, with the external funder's template (C5, budget template).

Sometimes they map the work to the appropriate entity to fit into the funder's definition, but internally they know it is practically the same implementers; hence, the organisation is able to align resources internally as appropriate. The CEO illustrates this by stating, "UNICEF and other UN agencies are not very keen to work or work with a Pty ... they are happier to work with an NPO. For us it is the same people, same team, same board, same everything" (C5, E5, L51).

Ugo's value proposition is demonstrated by how it articulates its theory of change within proposals (C5, PR5A). Hence, they make it look as if they are meeting the funders' needs, but at the same time, they are also foregrounding their theory of change. Besides, they wittingly write into proposals their core approaches that also fulfil their mission (C5, PR5A). A review of one of their proposals (C5, PR5A) and contract agreement (C5, CA5A) underscores the effective merging of interventions, data generation, use of strategic information and M&E (C5, PR5A). In reviewing another successful proposal (C5, PR5A), it was evident how they responded to the RFP (C5, RFP5A) in a witty fashion as they foregrounded their internal approach in a way that fulfils the stipulated requirements (C5, PR5A), based on the RFP, the funder criteria for funding related to past performance, service delivery methodology, staffing skills and cost efficiency. Ugo populated an existing overarching proposal template, but tailor-made it to meet these requirements.

Additionally, Ugo highlights in proposals the core competencies and service delivery models of M&E data quality assessment (DQA) tools, which are tweaked for different proposals. The organisation uses its M&E competencies to develop tools and initiatives, and proposes them to funders for scaling up. For instance, the CEO shares an example,

“We developed a tool for assessing child well-being tracking and then implemented it as a rapid assessment for child well-being across the country, but it has progressed into becoming a nationally recognised tool for the Department of Social Development. So, they are incorporating it into their systems, and it will become a national tool going forward” (C5, E5, L45).

Co-creation and co-designing are also utilised to bring together multiple stakeholders in developing winning proposals. As the board member illustrates, “Like [funder X] ... we could co-design the project with them ... Then, when it comes to their formalities, they just advertise, you get it. But they advertise in such a way that because you were involved in their co-designing, no one else would have that understanding better than you” (C5, B5, L94).

9.2.2 Incorporating unrestricted income and enterprise activities to align

Ugo's for-profit arm generates earned income fees that are used to demonstrate in proposals the supplementary income used to finance overheads not covered by certain funders. For example, some funders, such as the UN, have caps on overheads (C5, FD5). Essentially, all the generated income from consultancies, training, and other income from the for-profit company are reinvested back into running and facilitating the sustainability efforts of the organisation's main NPO social

mission. However, “some of the requirements for certain projects may favour ... a profit” (C5, B5, L27).

Ugo predetermines a markup and works around that to incorporate it in proposals. The context forces the organisation to focus on how first to capture the profit in proposals, akin to value capture, and then align with the mission-related activities later. As the board member notes, unlike in for-profit organisations,

“Usually, the profit comes at the end, you know, when you finish everything, and then you say, Okay, how much did we spend? Here, it should be at the beginning ... you already make a projection, to say, based on our profit equation, we should aim at this target profit of so much, and manage our costs within this limit” (C5, B5, L107).

Ugo incorporates a profit equation built within the set proposal budget templates for each project to align and “manage your resources better” (C5, B5, L107). This ensures the projects are well financed and that there is an additional unrestricted fee income to maintain key core staff and funding for other core activities. As the board member alludes, “We’ve had what we call a profit formula” (C5, B5, L99).

With most proposals requiring innovation, Ugo also incorporates in-house developed tools with an eye on efficiencies, commercial benefit to them, and fulfilling the mission. As the CEO indicates, “Down the road, you might make some profit, but the profit is not the motive” (C5, E5, L54).

Ugo’s practice of balancing activities between the Pty and the NPO arm facilitates the management of conflicting requirements. The proposals reviewed for community-based projects by the NPO arm had budgets catering to overhead cost recovery, and in one of the consultancy proposals, Ugo not only charged the overheads, but also a management fee that is recognised as earned income (C5, PR5). In response to two RFPs, the two respective (NPO and Pty) entities were optimally utilised. The NPO was used in the proposal to the Global Fund, addressing the health outcomes as part of the service provision. The Pty was used to respond to the data quality assessment RFP for M&E consultancy (C5, CA5A; CA5B).

9.3 Negotiation and contracting phase

Ugo uses its core competencies and tools in M&E as a value proposition to be able to negotiate favourably. They leverage past funder relationships and past project successes as the art of negotiations by using beneficiaries as advocates.

9.3.1 Active use of M&E to negotiate and address multiple requirements

The organisation uses its niche in demonstrating the use of M&E in integrated service provision to negotiate with funders, and the organisation emphasises its mission while addressing funder concerns. As the CEO indicates, “I think M&E has to be integrated, and you have to provide data at the right times of the organisation to the right people to make the right decisions with that information and present it in a format that is helpful for them [funders]” (C5, E5, L120).

The M&E competency is used by the organisation as a value proposition to funders during negotiations, which they sell as a service. Ugo has found that funders value strong M&E expertise in organisations and they optimise this as a bargaining chip. For instance, the CEO states, “Because of our strong M&E expertise ... they then pulled us out to do M&E TA [technical assistance] for all of the Global Fund partners at the time that we were focusing on those activities” (C5, E5, L21).

The organisation utilises M&E tools, such as log-frames, to facilitate negotiations. The M&E planning templates are overarching and cover broad activities under different projects, as well as mission-centric activities that the organisation focuses on. Ugo was in negotiations with a funder and wanted to foreground the M&E service provision aspects as part of the response to the funder's broader RFP needs, which included other broader activities. During an observation of a management session, the meeting focused quite a lot on how Ugo should emphasise the M&E prowess and present a repository of tools and previous experience as a means to deliver on a new project.

They innovatively co-create with funders to develop cutting-edge M&E tools, which can later be used to Ugo's advantage. In a management meeting observation session, they discussed in great detail the use of an M&E software application developed to negotiate delivery on a project, but also as a positioning tool for Ugo's future work (C5, OBM5, L48). The IT and data administrator states that they have honed skills internally, “to develop the tools that say exactly what we're doing” (C5, I5, L64). As the CEO highlights, “We are always innovating and trying to create new things. So, we created tools that we use ... which we thought down the road ... these tools will become handy ... to recover the investment that we have put into those tools” (C5, E5, L78).

Ugo uses collaboration as a strategy practice during negotiations to bridge the gaps that are not within its competencies, but in an effort to broadly align with the mission. Specifically, they target collaborations with perceived ‘friendly’ partners in the eyes of funders. The CEO supports this assertion and states, “Let us face it also that it is not just their name, sometimes it is their race as

well that helps you, especially with some of these organisations. So, we would strategically make sure that the Umhlungu [white race] is coming with us, and somehow the balungus [white funders] will be quite excited, and they will give us the work” (C5, E5, L45).

Ugo has also leveraged its small size and nimbleness to fast-track decision-making during negotiation discussions while remaining true to its mission. This was evident in the way that Ugo had to quickly tweak a proposal that was focusing on one funder to infuse expectations by another co-funder [DSD] that showed late interest. The operations director indicates, “We streamlined our activities, in line with what each expected. I think a benefit to us as an organisation is being a small organisation” (C5, O5, L155).

9.3.2 Leaders’ relationship management and negotiation skills

Ugo’s leadership uses past relationships to persuade current funders during negotiations. Specifically, they use the art of persuasion to demonstrate their past success in delivering on funder requirements. The leaders also ensure that relationship management dynamics are managed from the onset and that they are able to manage multiple goals. This has facilitated co-designing and co-creation with funders, and securing various M&E consultancy services with various funders. As the CEO illustrates, “You create some relationships, so people know you, so you have a higher chance of winning” (C5, E5, L120).

The small size of the organisation and efficient leadership fosters faster personalised relationship connections with funders. The directors – who form the board – are all in executive management, and the “CEO is quite hands-on” (C5, I5, L136). Ugo leverages the close-knit management to negotiate more efficiently. As the fund-raising director indicates, “The advantage that small businesses have other than bigger businesses ... with bigger businesses, it is difficult to build relationships ... here, you deal with me, it’s a one-stop centre” (C5, B5, L94).

The leaders’ experience in Ugo is key in how they experientially negotiate with the different funders as they review scenarios that are depicted in the application documents. They brainstorm on how to optimise RFP loopholes during negotiations. In one observation session of a management meeting, they discussed how to negotiate a potential new project in agriculture. They discussed how to foreground their past M&E data assurance work in other sectors and how to demonstrate similarities in the agricultural sector. They discussed how to embrace the work and, during the management meeting with the funder, sell their M&E competencies and negotiate for a bigger scope that aligns with their core competencies. The discussion also focused on how they could pivot their data assurance work and mission into a myriad of sectors for sustainability

(C5, OBM5, L23). The core outcome of the discussion was how the organisation leverages its M&E expertise to deliver on the other funders' requirements simultaneously.

Ugo's experienced leadership also practises proactive funder education to negotiate. As the CEO reflects, "I have learned that I do not sit down and wait for donors to tell me what they want, we approach them, and we say, look, this is what we are doing, and we think this might be of interest to you" (C5, E5, L120). The finance manager states, "You must negotiate, you must tell [funders], you to have to say, I don't need the money here, we need it here" (C5, F5, L70).

The leadership's proximity to communities and field staff facilitates successful negotiations because they have first-hand information on beneficiaries' priorities. Ugo is governed by a board who are primarily employees; hence, it is closely involved in the leadership of the organisation. The project director confirms this and states, "Our own team is very hands-on." (C5, P5, L68).

Ugo practises effective information gathering from beneficiaries and sharing with funders when negotiating and has found this to be useful to win over funders. The finance manager states, "In communicating and information sharing ... you get people to understand the situation, and you're transparent with them, and you get a much better response" (C5, F5, L163).

Ugo utilises project management leadership practices to negotiate. This includes value propositions on activity budgeting, monitoring the performance, ensuring that cost recovery happens, and that there is an alignment to its core priorities. As the CEO indicates, funders get to understand, "Each project gets a project lead ... takes responsibility for that project, and they manage the budget for that project ... then, at the end of the day, we can then be able to account and say ... did this project achieve the objectives?" (C5, E5, L126). During an observation of a management meeting session, the leaders sought clarity on resource allocation ways across multiple activities as they negotiated with a new funder. The CEO and operations director agreed to be team leads, and the operations director subsequently delegated some of his admin work to the finance manager to ensure he was able to manage the new workload.

9.4 Implementation phase

During this phase, Ugo balances multiple mandates and its mission in several ways. Ugo has centralised leadership and functions policies, as well as tools to manage all NPO and Pty activities. Ugo's strengths in M&E service provision facilitate adapting and adopting internal procedures as necessary by using SOPs to manage multiple requirements. The core-shared leaders coordinate all projects, while field-based staff implement them. Existing HR practices and

the social connections among core staff facilitate individual and collective commitment to the organisation's core mission.

9.4.1 Agile centralised functions, policies and tools to align

Ugo has a centralised leadership function at the “head office structure, which supports all the different kinds of funding or projects as they come along” (C5, O5, 107). Both the NPO and the Pty entities have centralised policies, and “everybody is governed by Ugo's policies and procedures. It applies across the board” (C5, F5, L83). The central overarching policies facilitate the simultaneous management of multiple requirements in a similar fashion. In situations involving a potential conflict of policies with funders, management negotiates to align with central policies. As the project director indicates, “Sometimes, if the funder policies are too different from ours ... you give them your own organisation's policies and procedures ... They accept because they just want to see that there's a standardised way of doing things” (C5, P5, L81).

Both, financial and programme reporting are centralised to ensure quality control and consistency across the projects in the NPO and Pty commercial work stream. This also facilitates the consolidation of reports at the organisational level, as further explained in section 9.5. The finance manager highlights that from “the software, you can pull out reports, you can pull out these individual reports, or you can pull out [C5] general report” (C5, F5, L146).

Ugo has a customised central IT system to assist in managing complex projects, resource planning of finances and employees, as well as effective management between the activities relating to profit activities [consultancy income] and the NPO's community-related project activities. To enable Ugo to track indicators that are both core to its mission and the multiple funder indicators, they “have like an online system that people can track their progress” (C5, I5, L70). The IT and data quality manager adds, “One of the things that I do pretty well in almost all the projects is to do all these project tracking tools ... we prefer to custom-make these tools” (C5, I5, L70).

Ugo maintains one main accounting system and has different projects identified by using different codes as articulated in the Ugo finance policies and procedures manual (C5, PD5). This enables them to charge their time for the level of effort on different projects and also the monthly billing of different projects. In addition, the financial system is able to facilitate different reporting requirements across the Pty and the NPO. As the finance manager indicates, “With Sage Evolution, it's a quite sophisticated system. So, whether you have one donor or you have 100

donors, everything is assigned a specific code. So whatever expenditure that's incurred for that donor, it's specifically specified" (C5, F5, L142).

Project management skills are centralised and practised in a dynamic fashion to manage multiple projects [multitasking] simultaneously as they "just use a normal project management plan, and allocate the tasks" (C5, P5, L56). As one of the directors indicates, "What we have had to do was to strengthen the project management" (C5, B5, L56). Each director is assigned a project to ensure alignment. He states, "When you win a project like this, immediately we decide to say this is your project ... So, you're not only responsible for the operational part, but you're also responsible for the final deliverables, quality, and timelines" (C5, B5, L103).

9.4.2 Adapting and adopting internal procedures and tools to align

Ugo adapts aspects of their procedures as appropriate by using SOPs, but this must still fit within central policies. Ugo adapts internally by incorporating aspects where policies clash with funders' policies or where initial aspects were not considered, for instance, the data quality assessment SOP (C5, PD_DQA SOP). The board director emphatically states, "Adapt! Adapt! Yes, we have had to adapt. We have had to adapt some of the policies to incorporate those other specific aspects" (C5, B5, L61). He further states, "That is why I was using the word adapt. You then must adapt your policies to incorporate some of those elements that your donors are very particular about" (C5, B5, L66).

Ugo has mastered the art of tweaking tools internally that can be utilised across different projects. This minimises duplication of effort. As the IT and data quality manager states, "We need to align the tools versus the deliverables of what we need" (C5, I5, L100). During an observation session of a management meeting, they were discussing how to use previously developed templates from previous work to report to the current funder (C5, OBM5, L29).

Ugo has real-time monitoring tools that can be customised to fulfil multiple funders' requirements. They achieve this by simplifying the funder's tools for internal use and alignment. The IT and data quality manager indicates, "We have been able to custom-make tools that give us information in real-time. And that only doesn't support the funder, it also supports our internal planning" (C5, I5, L70). They are also "agile, in a very fast way" (C5, I5, L70) and sometimes have "to align the tools versus the deliverables" (C5, I5, L100).

Ugo uses M&E plans to disaggregate information from their achievement tables and disseminate the information to the relevant funders, as highlighted in the final reports to stakeholders (C5, ARP5A). This is articulated in their data quality assurance system SOP (C5, PD5_DQA). This

artefact facilitates their ability to monitor the quality of the activities implemented for the different funder activities and tie these to the core mission; hence, it enables them to align multiple requirements simultaneously.

Sometimes, Ugo voluntarily adapts internal practices marginally around the funder's procedures without substantively changing the main policies. The programme director indicates, "If a funder comes and they say, no, for every purchase that is above R1,000, we need three quotations. Say this is [funder's] policy, so for that one, we will make sure that we get three quotations for that [funder] project, but it does not change our own organisation's policies" (C5, P5, L81).

In cases where some SOPs can be applied to other funders, Ugo adopts the most stringent funder requirements internally and aligns the other funders or investors with them. The organisation is nimble enough to re-organise internally and incorporate funders' requirements that they then apply to others; hence, it allows them to fulfil multiple funder-related requirements in the process. For instance, one director states, "We had in our travel policy ... we had a certain amount that we used to pay ... so, the amount was higher. But then now the other donors pay less. So now you must then adjust and bring it down" (C5, B5, L56).

Ugo also complements and updates existing procedures, based on developments and learnings from funders within the sector. Therefore, Ugo internally adopts some funders' SOPs and policies that they deem beneficial to Ugo. This helps them to fulfil funders' mandates, while bolstering internal organisational aspects. For example, "Certain donors, like UNICEF and so on, want to see policies that have provisions like child safeguarding policy, maybe the whistle-blower policy, the anti-fraud and corruption policy, and so on"(C5, B5, L66).

9.4.3 The role of shared staff in coordination and alignment

Ugo has a core management team that is central to ensuring the organisation delivers on its core mission, as well as the linking of multiple funder requirements and the organisation's core mission. They facilitate the balancing of activities internally and are "not only responsible for the operational part, but also responsible for the final deliverables, quality, timelines, and all their compliance issues" (C5, B5, L103). The core management team is made up of the CEO, the project management director, the M&E director, the operations director, the finance manager, and the HR officer (C5, PR5A).

The core team acts as a bridge when the organisation takes on new projects. This is helpful when new staff are yet to be engaged. Besides, this facilitates setting up new projects with clarity on how they fit in from the onset. During an observation of a management meeting, the CEO and

operations director were assigned to take the lead on a new project in the agricultural sector they were embarking on in a neighbouring country to ensure alignment, despite the organisation venturing into a new sector (C5, OBM5, L61).

The core staff also multitask to manage the core activities that cut across the Pty and the NPO because “there are lots of cross-cutting responsibilities” (C5, F5, L129). While they run each project as a profit and cost centre, they [core staff] also facilitate the management of tensions in running both the profit arm as well as the NPO arm concurrently. Therefore, they “support all the different kinds of funding or projects as they come along” (C5, O5, L107). However, the core staff roles are still to “make sure that they deliver on all projects equally, and not compromise any project” (C5, P5, L87).

Ugo’s approach is to have the core team act as project leaders for each project. This facilitates efficiencies for funders as they do not fully absorb the staff costs. There is also better accountability for Ugo because the team is easy to assign and track responsibilities. For example, the operation director states, “We have a financial manager who oversees both the commercial, the overall organisation, while at the same time, this finance manager is also assigned as a paid resource within a programme” (C5, O5, L107).

Cost sharing of the core team across funders is practised in a dynamic way that meets multiple mandates, but it also simultaneously attains internal objectives. Due to the small size of the organisation, the costs of the lean team are easily and effectively shared across projects. In other words, the staff cuts across both arms of the organisation, but has the level of effort leveraged on particular projects. To achieve this, the project director highlights, “We just use a normal project management plan, and we allocate the tasks” (C5, P5, L56).

The long tenure of the core staff facilitates an understanding of internal organising and can manage potential tensions. It also facilitates the needed internal commitment to maintaining the organisation’s core mission. As the project director indicates, “Our staff is quite committed. They love the work that we do” (C5, P5, L101). The operation director adds, “I think having bought into the vision, into the longer-term vision and opportunity presented by the organisation ... is probably what also helps maintain the staffing complements” (C5, O5, L149).

9.4.4 HR practised to manage multiple complexities

The organisation recruits most of the field staff from previous beneficiaries within the communities. This facilitates staff commitment, allows for easy performance management, and the community stakeholders to feel part of the organisation, enhancing the organisation’s legitimacy of purpose.

This recruitment practice also helps to demonstrate Ugo's commitment to employment creation opportunities in the community. The M&E director alludes that it helps to "get people on board, who would be of like minds" (C5, M5, L50). As the two founders indicate, "I [CEO] and the M&E director are so hands-on in, for example, recruiting people on the ground" (C5, M5, L183). During an observation of a management meeting session, the leaders sought clarity on resource allocation ways across multiple activities as they ventured into new activities in a new country. They planned to hire data assistants in the community where they will be working to manage costs, but also for easy entry and data collection (C5, OBM5).

Ugo involves external stakeholders as part of the selection panel for recruitment. This acts as a way of managing expectations, validating the employees' reference process, ensuring committed staff are hired, and at the same time, protecting the organisation's reputation. As the M&E director illustrates, "We need somebody from the DOH to help us when we are recruiting. Also, when we are doing the interview, we request somebody from their regional training centre" (C5, M5, L183).

In some cases, Ugo incorporates well-known experts to be part of their staff consortium to gain extra credibility for their funders. This facilitates both internal up-skilling as well as meeting the funders' expectations. As the CEO indicates, "To create a reputation, we would go to the universities and hire those professors, so that we use their names ... if a professor so and so is part of the report, then when they [funders] just sit to review on it, they say okay" (C5, E5, L126).

Where possible, the organisation prefers to re-hire or promote from within. Familiar staff understand the core mission better and can also be effectively deployed, which is beneficial to funders. As the project director indicates, "The short-term projects, if we have a specific project, maybe we are doing data quality assessments in specific provinces or districts, we first allocate districts for our team in-house" (C5, P5, L68). The finance manager further illustrates, "We had a data capturer who was capturing on Sage ... and then Ugo ended up employing her as a finance officer because of her Sage experience" (C5, F5, L157).

There is a social connection among staff, and they regard Ugo as a family because of the good care shown by the organisation towards them. The staff are dedicated and loyal to the organisation as the organisation was able to assist staff in various ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project director states, "Our staff is quite committed. They love the work that we do ... from the feedback that I've got. They love working for us" (C5, P5, L101). The CEO demonstrates empathy by stating, "I pay people first before I pay myself; I get paid last, you know.

So, it is people first, it is my team first, and they have to be, you know, fulfilled, they have to be remunerated ... it is difficult for me to let people go” (C5, E5, L90).

Employees easily multitask and can be deployed to different functions to manage resource tensions. For instance, the operations director states, “As the overall finance director, I too would also double over the HR” (C5, O5, L107). The finance manager states, “That's how Ugo operates ... you must be hands-on, there's no such thing as that you're a boss ... everybody has to be hands-on” (C5, F5, 78).

Based on the staff's loyalty to the organisation, employees willingly put in overtime hours to fulfil multiple competing requirements. As the finance manager puts it, “I mean, nobody runs out of the office at five o'clock ... the willingness to work until late, or to pick up something on the weekend, and especially when it's crunch time ...” (C5, F5, L157). Overtime work is treated as a cost share across funders for time spent, but staff are not compensated for it in monetary ways. To compensate staff, time off in lieu of overtime is used as motivation, but also to ensure adherence to labour laws. Essentially, Ugo “don't pay overtime; they [staff] get time off” (C5, F5, L163).

Open internal communication and transparency are essential for nimble information flow. The organisation uses forums, meetings, and social media to address multiple employee-related issues. Hence, they are able to manage emerging staff tensions timeously. For instance, they “communicate on WhatsApp” (C5, P5, L56).

9.5 Reporting: Output/outcome measurement phase

Reporting demonstrates how Ugo fulfils multiple requirements. As an M&E service provider, the balance between its own mission and the mandates is achieved by using M&E reporting systems, as well as utilising community meetings to disseminate success stories to multiple stakeholders. Ugo also leverages digitisation and information technology to report to multiple funders simultaneously.

9.5.1 Concurrent disaggregated and integrated dynamic programme and financial reporting

Ugo's practice of internal M&E function as a reporting hub enables reporting to multiple stakeholders simultaneously and balances its mission and mandates. For internal mission tracking, the information is presented in the board briefs, and for funders, the information is incorporated in project reports. Using M&E competencies, they consolidate the information from a central repository. This allows effective internal use by the board to track mission attainment

and at the same time fulfil multiple requirements. This is achieved by using M&E log-frame tools that disaggregate and integrate multiple inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact of projects. These tools act as dashboards to track mission-related activities and detailed project deliverables (C5, ARP board alignment brief). The CEO states, “This report [board brief] ... is a practical way of utilising M&E skills” (C5, E5, L120).

The art of interpretation is also a key skill used so that different outputs can be communicated from the same data sources. The IT and data manager indicates, “We are involved in interpreting the data ... and then we have got an internal staff [member] who does the crafting of the report” (C5, I5, L136). During an observation session of the management meetings, they discussed how they would navigate reporting on both funder-related activities and the core mission (C5, OBM5, L33). Similarly, from the document review, similar data was used to report to three funders concurrently by using annual activity-based work plans and implementation plan Gantt charts. They also tweaked the annual work plans to align them with their core mission (C5, APR5A).

The annual report is used to fulfil multiple stakeholders' needs. It includes data comparatives that link the projects to the achievement of the organisation's goals, while highlighting individual project achievements. The sampled annual board report foregrounded achievements per the set mission objectives as core, and the funders' achievements were also infused into the report (C5, APR5_board alignment brief). As the CEO indicates, the report tries “to show you, where did we begin? Where are we at? What are the key parameters that are of interest to the board? ... this is all M&E ... presenting the data back to decision-makers, to policymakers, to people who can make a judgement of how we are doing” (C5, E5, L114).

Ugo also has a financial reporting function that is centralised, but it is able to produce multiple reports for all funding streams simultaneously. The ability to be able to produce multiple reports in this manner is key in managing competing and sometimes conflicting requirements. As indicated by the finance manager, “If you need donor reporting, those are pulled out individually. If you need management reports, it just depends on what they require, and then you get it consolidated. And it's pulled out directly from the software system” (C5, F5, L146).

To achieve the competing reporting requirements, Ugo creatively practises shadow reporting to address multiple expectations. This is attained by the swift adaptation practices discussed in section 9.4.2. As one director highlights, “Usually they [funders] would have particular reporting requirements, in terms of what you report on, how often, and what formats or templates ... so, our role is then again to adapt! Adapt!” (C5, O5, L70). For instance, the adaptations may include

innovative ways of tweaking reports to serve multiple purposes, such as “toning down the report to a high level” (C5, I5, L142). This may involve “crafting of the report and making it sexy” (C5, O5, L136).

Ugo uses their clean audit reports actively to fulfil multiple funders’ requirements and other stakeholders. In the reviewed audit reports, it was observed that they are important artefacts in giving assurance to multiple stakeholders. As indicated by the finance manager, with a “clean audit report ... we still maintained the integrity of the organisation” (C5, F5, L152). Specifically, it has helped them secure funding. As the operations director states, “The financial audit was such an eye opener in terms of what we need to be compliant with in terms of organisational strategy ... management responsibilities and duties.” (C5, O5, L173).

9.5.2 Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple activities

The centralised IT system facilitates the preparation of different types of multiple financial and programme reports to multiple funders. The use of digital means facilitates Ugo to slice and dice data for specific use and appraise funders in real time. As the IT and data quality manager states, “You need to have ... like an online system that people can track their progress, and they can also report at least at the very top-level ... high-level information” (C5, I5, L70).

Ugo develops customised digital solutions, and the resulting applications act as dynamic artefacts that can be tweaked to meet different funders’ requirements, as well as those for the organisation’s core activities. The ability to internally customise digital tools affords them the opportunity to use them to address multiple needs swiftly and simultaneously. The IT and data quality manager states, “We do a lot of customised systems that we change. We write internal codes for Excel, for web interfaces where we customise them” (C5, I5, L148).

They have internal IT capabilities to prepare “data visualisations and use indicators that are meaningful and trying to present information” (C5, E5, L120). Most of Ugo's projects involve creating internal digital solutions that are used to demonstrate mission attainment and fulfil other multiple reporting needs simultaneously. One director indicates, “Most of the work we do, we use a lot of technology, we use a lot of Apps” (C5, B5, L94). The IT and data quality manager adds, “We have been able to custom-make tools that give us information in real-time, and that only doesn't support the funder; it also supports our internal planning” (C5, I5, L70). This is needed to ensure that “at the end of the day, you are looking at tracking each project performance, based

on those initial agreed plans and parameters that you are going to use to measure success on the project” (C5, E5, L126).

The concurrent disaggregation and integration of reporting described in section 9.5.1 are also facilitated by IT solutions. For example, the M&E director highlights, “We're using our technical [skills] in developing apps ... so the quality of reports ... when it comes to evaluation reports, they are up to scratch, in terms of the standard” (C5, M5, L190).

Some actions, such as the use of automated timesheets, are deliberately practised in ways that address multiple needs or goals simultaneously. For instance, to manage performance, the organisation monitors the fulfilment of the funder’s objectives, and aligns the level of effort of staff across multiple projects. Additionally, they are able to attach a cost to the utilised time to determine the actual man-hours spent vis-à-vis the amount funded and if there is a surplus. One director states, “So, at the end of the day, when they [field staff] are claiming their money, they also submit those logs ... the project manager will then compute your hourly rate, and ... in that way, you don't have to pay the person the full amount when they did not deserve it” (C5, B5, L99).

9.6 Conclusion

Ugo is deliberate and opportunistic in how it foregrounds the social mission when responding to RFPs to ensure alignment of the multiple mandates and their core mission. This is achieved by the management’s M&E astuteness in interpreting requirements, mapping them internally, and aligning activities to ensure multiple goals are achieved simultaneously. From the pre-proposal stage, Ugo has learned that “the community is powerful” (C5, I5, L70), and it leverages this to advocate for projects. Ugo buckets the social needs within its overall social mission. Ugo leverages its emphasis on proximity to communities and beneficiaries to enhance the education of funders and the support for priority activities during the negotiations and contracting phases. This also provides them with the opportunity to co-design projects with stakeholders, which allows them to infuse this into their core priorities as they work around the other competing external priorities.

Due to the flexible registration requirements of SMSEs in the South African context, Ugo is registered as a Pty, with a fully owned NPO arm, and “depending on the funding opportunities that exist, one ... can use the entity that makes sense” (C5, E5, L51). This offers Ugo the agility to pursue multiple funding mechanisms, but still maintain “one leadership and one board of directors” (C5, E5, L51), which ensures coordination. For them, this is an “advantage that small businesses have over bigger businesses” (C5, O5, L155).

Ugo has centralised functions, policies, and procedures that “apply across the board” (C5, F5, L83) during implementation. This facilitates the harmonisation of inconsistent requirements, and where necessary, they “adapt! adapt to ... specific aspects” (C5, B5, L61). In some cases, this involves adopting some of the funder’s requirements internally to manage tensions by using SOPs. The role of human resource skills and the ability of shared staff to ‘juggle’ across different projects is key to ensuring an effective mission–mandates balance. Part of this is attributed to hiring practices whereby they “get people on board, who would be of like minds” (C5, M5, L50) and who are selected from the previous beneficiaries within the communities where they work. Hence, these employees are committed and dedicated to working in the organisation to further the mission, and they are also willing to manage multiple functions.

The organisation has learned the art of interpretation and adapts deliverables, such as annual reports, to differentiate and integrate outputs for multiple stakeholders. They “have the expertise in M&E” (C5, M5, L132), and this is key in ensuring that they are able to monitor and report to multiple funders, and that core-organisation priorities are attended to in a simultaneous fashion. Table 9.2 summarises the primary code document table, showing how Ugo navigates multiple projects as they balance mission and mandates at different phases.

Table 9.2: Summary examples of practices and routines to balance mission–mandates at micro-level

Phase	Practices, routines and practitioner actions to balance mission and mandates
Pre-proposal – conceptualising and design	Embedded in the community, co-design projects with the community, engage government, participate in community activities, involved in task meetings, platforms to push content, branded offices, community feedback, multi-sectoral forums, branded visuals, optimise regulatory loopholes, match funding, multiple registrations, umbrella NPO registration to coordinate the enterprise work; board involvement in alignment
Proposal writing	Categorises activities, interpreting RFP requirements, mapping funder requirements, value proposition using theory of change, selling core competencies, co-creation and co-designing, generating earned income, finance overheads, predetermine a markup, first capture the profit in proposals, profit equation, overarching M&E approaches articulated to map and fit both funders’ expectations
Negotiation and contracting	M&E use in integrated service provision, M&E competency as a value proposition, M&E tools to negotiate, innovative co-creation, collaboration strategies, leverage small size for faster decisions, leverage past relationships to persuade, personalised relationship connections, leaders experientially negotiate, proactive funder education, effective information gathering from beneficiaries, project management leadership practices
Implementation	Centralised leadership functions, centralised policies, customised central IT systems, project management skills to multitask, adapts using SOPs, art of tweaking tools, real-time monitoring, dashboards; use of centralised skilled M&E & statistical staff, agile M&E tools, simplifying funder tools, M&E plans to disaggregate, voluntarily adapt internal practices, adopt the most stringent requirements, core management as the link and bridge, cost sharing, long tenure of the core team, recruit from previous beneficiaries in communities, re-hire or promote from within, social connection, staff work overtime, open internal communication and transparency
Reporting - Output/outcome measurement	M&E function as a reporting hub, art of interpretation, dynamic use of annual reports, creatively practises shadow reporting, use of clean audit reports, centralised IT system, customised digital solutions, internal IT capabilities, automated timesheets, use of dashboards, real-time reports and an annual board brief to demonstrate achievements to multiple stakeholders; concurrent disaggregated and integrated reporting

9.7 Within-case conclusion

The description of the five SMSE cases has attempted to provide insights into how these organisations balance multiple mandates and their mission across different phases. Specifically, this exercise examined how they seem to be in control of their income stream and not at the mercy of the funders, financiers and other stakeholders within the South African context. They seem to optimise their context to align multiplicities. An important finding across the cases was how these SMSEs leverage the communities as a resource to legitimise their social mission. The cases endeavour to identify and understand the social needs at the community level and align those with their internal mission by using a portfolio of priority activities. Subsequently, they leverage this knowledge to approach funders and financiers from the pre-proposal phase. Therefore, they act as brokers who link the different stakeholders.

They practise an internal–external iterative outlook to facilitate their interpretation of needs. Their small size facilitates flexibility, and the flexibility gives them agility and the ability to manage funders' expectations, while adapting internally to align their core priorities. They optimise the regulatory loopholes and act as brokers between the communities and the other stakeholders by using their adaptable portfolio of capabilities, relationships, and of business models. These are all mixed and matched to suit multiple stakeholders. This is evidenced by how they register different organisational forms for convenience and optimal use.

Another important finding is the art of practising M&E proactively, both as an approach to align with their core mission, and as a capability to manage the different funders' requirements. The SMSEs are managed according to portfolio thinking. This starts with the conceptualisation of project proposals, through the proposal negotiations, and ends with implementation and reporting. They translate and map requirements while articulating the theory of change. The theory of change is articulated from proposal development to reporting, where concurrent reporting is used to fulfil the funders' or financiers' mandates, and to demonstrate to internal governance structures' core mission attainment. In most instances, they negotiate in their favour, and in a few cases, they adapt internally to align multiple funders. They collaborate with other organisations to implement 'non-core' activities. They have core-shared staff who ensure that overall management, coordination, internal organising, and alignment are all seamlessly executed through the phases. The project staff are mostly hired from the communities and are closely knit as well as committed to the organisation's mission. For effective implementation, the cases practise project management by enacting multiple projects through their multitasking prowess. The cases utilise centralised systems, as well as customised SOPs that can be adapted to the

different funders and their reporting requirements. The use of IT and digital media, such as social media, is an important tool in how they align multiple goals and achieve effective communication. Finally, another great insight is how concurrent reporting, for instance, through annual reports, is actively practised to demonstrate the achievement of organisational mission-related activities and those in the funders' mandates. Table 9.3 summarises the findings from each phase and the navigating mechanisms facilitating the balance of mission and mandates.

Table 9.3: Within case summary balance of mission-mandates at micro-level across phases

Phase	Simultaneous interplay – explore/exploit alignment	Alignment theme
Pre-proposal – conceptualising process prior to engaging funders/stakeholders <i>External sourcing based on internal-external outlook</i>	Understand and leverage communities' priorities and reflect within mission-related activities through community/locally-led programming and development, community entry meetings, participation in 'induna' meetings, incorporating stakeholders in mapping social needs, co-design with government and communities, collaborations for 'non-core' activities; use of past beneficiary success stories, brand awareness at the community, optimise regulatory loopholes to utilise appropriately registered entities, use of M&E for baseline data from existing projects <i>Data evidence includes RFP, criteria, district recommendation letters, teaming agreements; interviews with key participants and observations.</i>	Community logic Regulatory context M&E role Leader & employee facilitation Art of relationship management
Proposal writing <i>internal-external outlook and internal planning/organising</i>	Art of continuous interpretation to articulate activities aligning multiple mandates, co-designing, M&E lingo to balance mission–mandates, value proposition using the theory of change, mapping activities to fit within the mission, sell core competencies, business tools used dynamically to bridge, cost-pitching practice, business portfolio thinking, infuse existing structures, customised implementation plans, M&E plans and log-frames, an internal budget template that links funders and mission activities, profit formulae, incorporation of unrestricted income as cost share, collaborations for 'non-core' activities <i>Data evidence includes proposal documents, budget, profit formulae, criteria, district recommendations, M&E plans, implementation plans and interviews with key participants.</i>	M&E role Business model innovation (BMI); Agility art of interpreting Community logic Regulatory context Dynamic artefacts
Negotiation and contracting phase <i>Internal-external outlook</i>	M&E competency and tools to negotiate, M&E's role in articulating the theory of change, the art of negotiations, leverage community knowledge to translate priorities when negotiating and co-creating, leverage portfolio of relationships to negotiate, funder education, flexibility and nimble decision-making, incorporate community leaders to advocate, pre-agreed % margins applied to budgets <i>Data evidence includes contract agreements, project structures, minutes, M&E versions/IP versions, Gantt charts, modifications and interviews with key participants.</i>	Agility art of negotiations Regulatory context M&E role Community logic Leader & employee facilitation Dynamic artefacts
Implementation <i>Internal-external and internal organising</i>	Project management capabilities to multitask, business tools as artefacts to balance, portfolio of policies & centralised systems to manage multiplicities [enterprise resource planning finance systems, M&E systems, use of shared staff], procedures and tools adapted and superimposed, digitisation/IT role [applications, social media, automated systems], HR dynamics [core staff, use of project field staff, community hiring, internal promotions, meetings, socialisation, timesheets], co-implement, joint site visits, adapting value creation and delivery, adapt M&E and implementation plans, adopt the most stringent requirements <i>Data evidence includes policies, SOPs, monthly/quarterly reports, timesheets, regular monitoring, IP/M&E plans, modifications, email correspondences; interviews with key participants; observations.</i>	Dynamics artefacts; Agility- Art of implementation; Adapt/adopt; M&E role; BMI; IT & Digitisation; Concurrent reporting
Reporting - Output/outcome measurement <i>Internal-external and internal organising</i>	M&E function as a reporting hub, art of interpretation to report, dynamic use of annual report [funders, community, board & management reporting], creative practice of shadow reporting, dashboards, concurrent integrated & disaggregated reports, real-time reports, report adaptations & adoptions, packaging achievements, AGMs, active use of audit reports, community dissemination meetings, debriefs with community leaders, beneficiary feedback and success stories, digitisation/IT role <i>Data evidence includes annual reports, project reports, financial and audit reports, board & management reports; interviews with key participants; observations.</i>	Adapt/adopt Agility concurrent reporting M&E role Community logic IT & digitisation Leader & employee facilitation Dynamic artefacts

The next chapter compares these cases and presents commonalities and differences across the cases. It presents a model of how SMSEs in this context align multiple mandates and mission simultaneously across the phases. In addition, propositions for future research will be shared.

CHAPTER 10: Across-case analysis and discussion

10.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the themes that emerged across the cases. This includes the categories, codes and sample data making up each theme. The similarities and differences between the five SMSEs are also highlighted. Additionally, details of the coding process are provided to facilitate the validity and credibility of the research findings.

The ambidexterity lens is applied in this study to understand how SMSEs manage internal tensions between mandates and mission, and especially, competing activities that require mission stabilisation, akin to exploiting, vis-à-vis flexibility to fulfil multiple external mandates, akin to exploring simultaneously. The data collected provides insight into how practices and routines facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates, specifically, balancing external mandates and mission through internal-external brokerage practising to leverage community embeddedness and proximity. Additionally, the findings show how mission agility allows deliberate and opportunistic flexibility, whereas the proactive use of M&E, as a dynamic [abstract] artefact, internally aligns competing actions.

Two overarching and interlinking sets of themes emerge during the study. First, the research finds that *the art of practising* facilitates SMSEs to navigate and align multiple mandates and mission simultaneously. The SMSEs' community embeddedness allows them to continuously undertake an internal-external assessment to understand and leverage communities' social needs within the social mission. Subsequently, mission agility allows the SMSEs to flexibly interpret and map funders' mandates to fit within the social mission. This is especially so as actors practise the arts of relationship management, interpretation, negotiation, and implementation of multiple project mandates to align social needs and mission, thus emphasising SMSEs' brokerage role.

Second, there is the theme of how *dynamic artefacts* [within routines] facilitate the mapping, enactment of multitasking project management, and concurrent measurement to align activities across projects' phases simultaneously for effective internal functioning, specifically through M&E abstract artefacts [theory of change] and M&E material artefacts such as log-frames to facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates. Therefore, this means that they are opportunistically translating requirements to their advantage. The dynamism of the artefacts, internal adaptations, optimisation of technology, and the ability to concurrently disaggregate and integrate reports allows the balancing of mission and mandates.

10.2 Development of themes

The generation of themes was drawn from data through induction and involved an iterative process between analysing the data and extant literature (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Grodal et al., 2021). This involved reflexivity on the part of the researcher, as well as being intentional in bolstering the rigour of how codes translated to categories (Grodal et al., 2021). First, the researcher examined how individual actors (both leadership and employees) undertook routines and practices that facilitated the fulfilment of the various mandates from multiple funders while foregrounding activities related to the core social mission simultaneously. Second, he examined how existing artefacts within routines, and routines themselves, dynamically facilitated the simultaneous alignment of mission and mandated activities. This was based on the insight into how they navigated the multiple conflicting activities concurrently from the interviews, interpretation of documentary evidence as well as observing them.

The themes emerged as SMSEs navigated the pre-proposal, proposal writing, negotiation and contracting, implementation, and reporting phases while ensuring alignment across projects with the missions. The semi-structured interviews provided insight into how the actors undertook the practices and the emerging themes from this. The documentary evidence was used to corroborate how they interpreted, mapped, and reported to internal and external users using hermeneutic analysis (Ponterotto, 2005; Schwandt, 2000), and how sampled documents acted as *dynamic artefacts*. Multiple documentary evidence covered the different stages, specifically, the request for proposal (RFP), proposal [technical, M&E and budget], contract agreement, policy documents, and reports were reviewed to understand how the SMSEs navigated the different phases. It was also examined how that information is interpreted to meet multiple internal and external stakeholder needs. An example during the pre-proposal stage in Hilcorp depicted how they co-design interventions with the community leadership, and how they interpret the different mandates laid out in RFPs, to align different activities across the projects.

The proposal indicated how the cases responded to RFP funders' requirements and articulated approaches through M&E, budget, and implementation plans that address core priorities. The contract stipulated the funders' requirements. The organisation's policies and standard operating procedures reviewed indicated how all processes are geared towards managing different funders' requirements concurrently during implementation and reporting. Additionally, the reports reviewed indicated how each organisation was able to customise the reporting to demonstrate mission attainment and fulfil the funders' mandates simultaneously. The process was repeated in all cases

to gain insight into how the multiple, and sometimes conflicting goals, were simultaneously managed.

Furthermore, the researcher spent time observing how the individual employees deliberated decisions regarding proposal funding, implementation, and reporting to ascertain how they align activity requirements from funders and activities core to their social mission, specifically, the way they reconfigured practices and routines in dealing with multiplicities as they practised their 'doings' (Schatzki, 2012). Additionally, this included how actors enacted multiple projects simultaneously (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010). In all the cases, practices were enacted, akin to practised, through relationships, negotiations, judgement calls, interpreting requirements by M&E, mapping, and socialisation by actors to facilitate alignment of multiple mandates and mission.

In addition, within all five organisations, activities were seemingly adapted to navigate tensions, with an innovative ability that appeared seamless, leading to adaptable value creation strategies such as the co-creation of activities with funders and tweaking of reports. For instance, this refers to how Ugo utilises M&E capabilities to propose and implement activities through a log-frame that they developed and advocated for use with the funders. That way, they are able to address potential conflicting activities that align with their mission vis-à-vis funders' required activities.

10.2.1 Coding cycle

Through a reflexive approach, the data was collected from various sources to minimise researcher bias as well as allow for the triangulation of data (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). The reconfigurations of routines and practices (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010) in dealing with multiplicities were recorded in the interview transcripts, analytical memos, and observation field notes. In addition, to gain insight into how the organisations presented information that fulfils funder requirements and mission attainment simultaneously, internal documentary evidence was obtained. Documentary evidence and artefacts, such as founding documents, RFPs, proposals, contractual agreements, policy documents, funder reports, financial reports, and annual reports, were reviewed to enrich and triangulate primary obtained data (Weerawardena et al., 2010). Triangulation is important in bolstering the validity and consistency of findings (Pratt et al., 2020). It enhances saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015), and allows for the transferability of findings, where necessary (Fusch et al., 2018).

Obtaining data from multiple sources enhanced the researcher's ability to compare information as common themes were identified. Information that provided insight into how internal organising

and reconfiguration happened to align activities between multiple mandates and social mission concurrently was used to substantiate, augment, and contradict participants' responses (Yin, 2012, 2017). Additionally, the review of internal documents and artefacts, such as RFPs, proposals, contracts, M&E plans, Gantt charts, policies, and reports, provided a longitudinal view and accounted for time regarding the routines and practices at play (Salvato & Rerup, 2018). For example, annual reports, past project reports, M&E reports, and financial reports were reviewed to gain insight into the mechanisms the organisations were able to essentially capture activities that ascribe to funder-mandated requirements and core social mission in a given time.

Hermeneutical analysis facilitated making sense of the meanings within the documentary evidence when obtaining insight into how the organisations align mission and mandates. Hermeneutics involves seeking a deeper understanding of the various meanings of statements in organisations' documents, as well as within the context in which the statements are made (Ponterotto, 2005; Schwandt, 2000). This was achieved by tracing the requirements in the RFP, how the cases responded to the RFP within the proposal document, and how the contract articulated requirements using their theory of change. In addition, it included how M&E and implementation plans were adapted, SOPs were documented, and ultimately how reports were adapted to fulfil the mission and multiple mandates concurrently. The researcher also analysed how the organisations' participants made sense of events through interviews and participant observation. This enhanced the interpretation of how the organisations navigated and made decisions amidst competing pressures between mandates and mission.

Research credibility was enhanced through member checking (Creswell, 2013), where participants were allowed to review the accuracy of their responses by assessing the interview transcripts and, where appropriate, provide additional information or dispute their transcribed responses (Yin, 2012, 2014, 2017). While no participants modified their responses, a second interview with the respective executive directors of cases 2, 3, and 5 was offered to obtain additional information.

A coding protocol was adopted to facilitate coding through computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (Saldana, 2013), in this case, Atlas.ti. A two-step cycle coding process was adopted. The first step included open coding as well as process coding of the interview transcripts and documents. The second step was through axial coding to categorise the codes into emerging themes (Gioia et al., 2013; Saldana, 2013). Adverse quotes were carefully analysed to understand divergent views to form rival or alternative arguments and facilitate theory extension (Yin, 2017).

A code symbolically captures a summary of raw data to allow ease of assigning meaning (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldana, 2013).

The initial open coding was based on first impressions of the meanings collected from each case. Thereafter, these early codes were disaggregated by descriptive codes. The initial or first-order coding cycle generated over 446 codes. These codes were then refined into short, concise descriptors to come up with second-order codes (Saldana, 2013). This refining process resulted in 208 codes and involved taking the code from a high-level concept to lower-level pieces of how activities are aligned amidst a multiplicity of goals. The codes were also refined to depict “repetitive patterns of action” (Saldana, 2013, p. 5), highlighting specific ways in which routines and practices were reconfigured by actors to align multiple activities depicting tensions. Finally, 208 codes contained within 19 categories were generated after splitting, merging, and dropping codes and categories (Grodal et al., 2021). This resulted in nine themes to answer the research question and sub-questions and 17 propositions to guide recommendations for future research.

10.2.2 The impact of the researcher's filters on the data

While my background and experience could not be avoided, I had to bring several personal and academic filters into the data collection and analysis process (Mason, 2002; Saldana, 2013). My academic filters were expressed through the theoretical framework selected for the study, namely the ambidexterity theory, specifically how the explore and exploit constructs would be instantiated simultaneously in multiple stages and with multiple stakeholders.

While I am a practitioner in fund management in the development sector, I applied reflexivity and stepped out of the data. However, in some cases, the data gathering required me to allow the participants to express areas they still needed to align and, in the process, even solicit professional advice from me. For example, one of the directors in Ugo indicated, “We would like to draw upon your services or time to be able to help us kind of structure or guide our thinking” (C5, O5, L119). I, however, used this invitation in an ethical manner by being invited as an observer in a board meeting. I also ensured objectivity by highlighting to the cases of the need to get objective data and addressing any resultant support outside of the study. This led to a methodological contribution from the point of view of gathering data as a practitioner and how it opened doors to other insightful data collection means.

10.2.3 Codes to categories and themes

Reflexivity was key in the process of moving back and forth between data and analysis (Morse, 2015), to ensure that the emerging common themes were compared to existing literature and

thereby generate novel ideas (Alvesson et al., 2008), and extend the use of simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations. The coding process facilitated this multiple back and forth because the codes symbolically captured the data. The codes were then connected and linked back to the data and later on, to categories (Grodal et al., 2021). This iterative process happened in about three cycles and in other instances, in four or five cycles to derive at a group of related categories (Grodal et al., 2021; Saldana, 2013). This process evolved through the coding saturation process, where new codes created declined as the analysis process progressed. For example, in S-Impact, codes started to become similar from different participants, such as 'community'. The codes were therefore grouped into similar categories. Common categories would then be aggregated into themes. This process went back and forth from the identified themes back to categories and the codes that encapsulated the data to ensure the confirmability of data (Grodal et al., 2021).

The inclusion of codes within a category or group of categories was facilitated by creating guidelines on how codes are included in a category. This initial analysis process led to the creation of propositional statements with outcomes for each category. The statements were then compared across categories and identified commonalities, discrepancies and relationships. This led to the merging of code groups into families of themes that embodied the codes and data. The progressive process from data-identified codes, and aggregation of codes to categories and themes (Saldana, 2013) is depicted in Figure 10.1 below.

This is based on an example of Hilcorp.

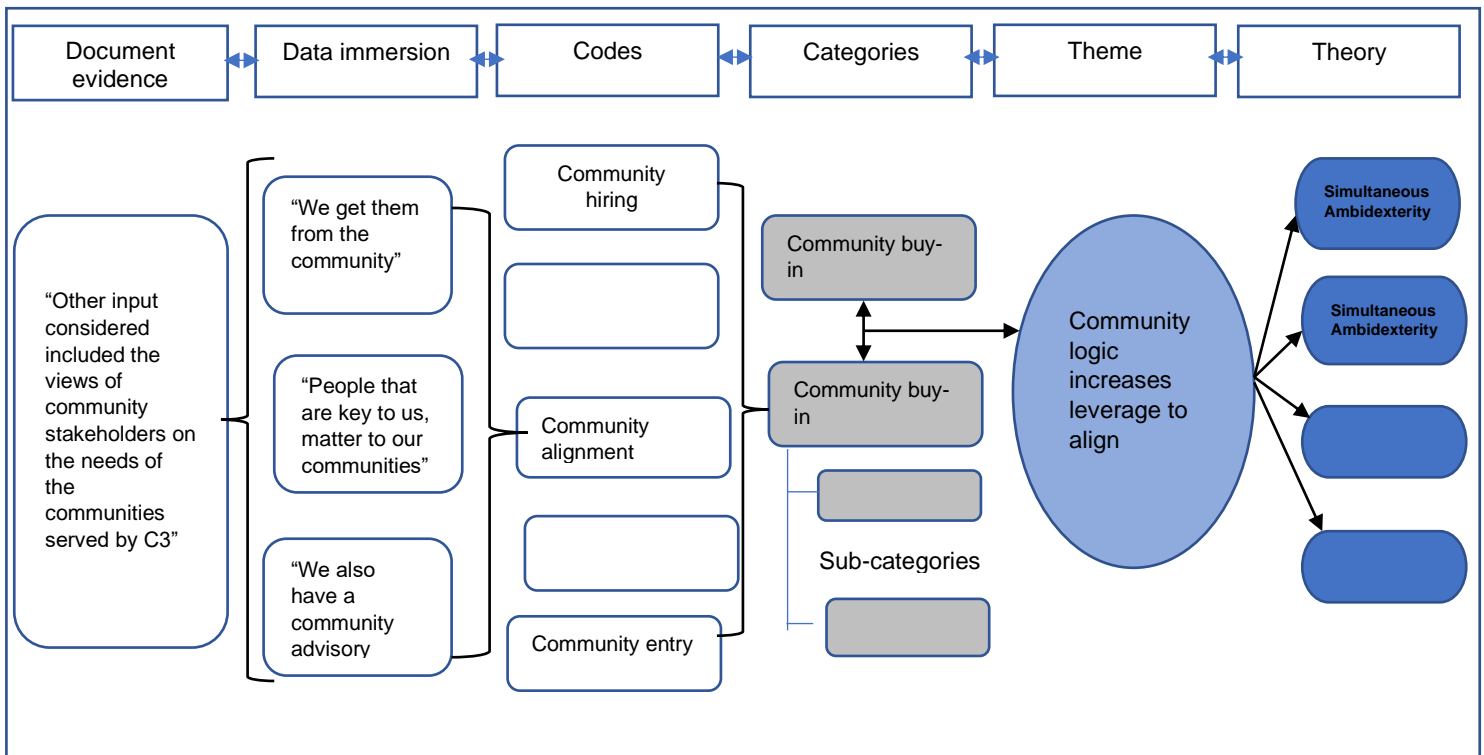


Figure 10.1: Process of codes to categories, themes and theory

The first and second columns indicate how respective information from documentary evidence and interviews were linked to the subsequent columns derived from the direct quotes that made up the codes. The following column is made up of the codes that aggregate to define categories and sub-categories, forming category families. This process was replicated within all cases and later on across all cases. It, therefore, was a complex exercise requiring reflexivity by moving from data to theory and vice-versa for each case and later on across all cases. Themes were then generated from the category families as well as by comparing with the extant literature to analyse how the themes contributed to the extension of ambidexterity.

10.2.4 Study themes

Ten overarching interlinking themes emerged from categories within this study, as indicated in Table 10.1 below. The process evolved as categories were dropped, merged, split, and sequenced, based on how they gained theoretical traction (Grodal et al., 2021) to answer the research question. A composite score was developed from the analysis of the interviews, document review, and observations. Five (5) was the determined parameter level for the highest facilitative role to simultaneously align multiple projects with the mission across the phases, and

one (1) was the lowest of the parameters to align. This could be a subjective process, but it was necessary to ascertain the relative ability of themes to facilitate simultaneous ambidexterity across projects at different phases. Besides, “the creation of categories cannot be decoupled from the person(s) who created them or the context in which they were created” (Grodal et al., 2021, p. 595).

Table 10.1: A composite score of themes facilitating alignment of multiple mandates and mission across phases

Alignment theme	Facilitative score				
	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Art of practising</i>					
1. Leveraging community logic: community embeddedness and proximity					X
2. Optimise the regulatory context to catalyse the balancing of mission and mandates			X		
3. Agility: mission, small size and activity shifts to balance mission and mandates					X
4. Experienced leadership and employee practices: relationship management & internal alignment				X	
5. Value capture changes leading to value creation changes [BMI]			X		
<i>Routines dynamics and dynamic artefacts</i>					
6. Use of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an abstract artefact proactively					X
7. Centralised dynamic artefacts and nimble functions to facilitate alignment				X	
8. Adapting and adopting routines internally to balance mission and mandates			X		
9. Information technology (IT) and digitisation facilitate simultaneous alignment of tasks and routines			X		
10. Concurrent disaggregated and integrated reporting				X	

The first set of five themes underscores the internal-external art of practising, and the remaining five themes emphasise more the dynamic artefacts facilitating the simultaneous alignment at a micro-level. The first theme provides insight into how community embeddedness and proximity give legitimacy to the SMSEs to validate the social mission, and power to advocate with funders; hence, they are facilitating alignment of the mission and multiple mandates. The second theme underscores how the SMSEs optimise the regulatory context to manage multiple goals simultaneously. The third theme emphasises the mission agility of the SMSEs and how they map activities as they co-design and co-create. Additionally, it shows how the small size allows nimbleness and quick decision-making.

The fourth theme highlights the roles of experienced leadership and employees in internal mission–mandates alignment. For example, this is achieved through relationship management, where vertical and horizontal socialisation align potentially conflicting activities between mandates and social mission. Theme five calls to the attention of business model innovation (BMI) in navigating multiple mandates, highlighting BMI elements of value capture changes leading to value creation adaptations. For instance, predetermined margins are used to capture unrestricted

funding and how this informs adaptations in activity implementation [akin to value creation changes].

Theme six provides insight into how M&E is used actively to balance multiple mandates and mission simultaneously across project phases, for example, experiential interpretation using theory of change and project management. Theme seven emphasises the role of centralised dynamic artefacts such as M&E and reporting tools to facilitate the alignment of disparate routines. Theme eight spotlights how adapting and adopting routines internally facilitates alignment. Theme nine highlights the role of IT and digitisation to enhance the simultaneous alignment of multiple tasks and routines. The final theme underscores how multiple mandates and mission are simultaneously reported through concurrent disaggregated and integrated reporting mechanisms.

10.3 Internal–external brokerage art of practising and dynamic artefacts

When multiple mandates are juxtaposed with the core social mission, the SMSEs undertake iterative internal–external practising and internal organising by leveraging community embeddedness, optimising mission agility, and the proactive use of M&E as anchors to manage internal tensions. The radial Venn diagram overleaf depicts the multiple mandates that the SMSEs have to navigate as they interact with different stakeholders. In other words, it depicts how the SMSEs in resource-constrained contexts act as melting pots in which multiple logics manifest different mandates (Mair, 2020). This includes the community leaders, the beneficiaries they serve, and the government departments that they have to account to, on one hand, as well as partner with on the other. Additionally, it includes the funders providing resources restricted to specific activity implementation, fee-based unrestricted contracts, and/or commercial activities they are involved in. The literature holds that social enterprises can remain mission-focused (Grimes et al., 2020; Jankelowitz & Myres, 2019).

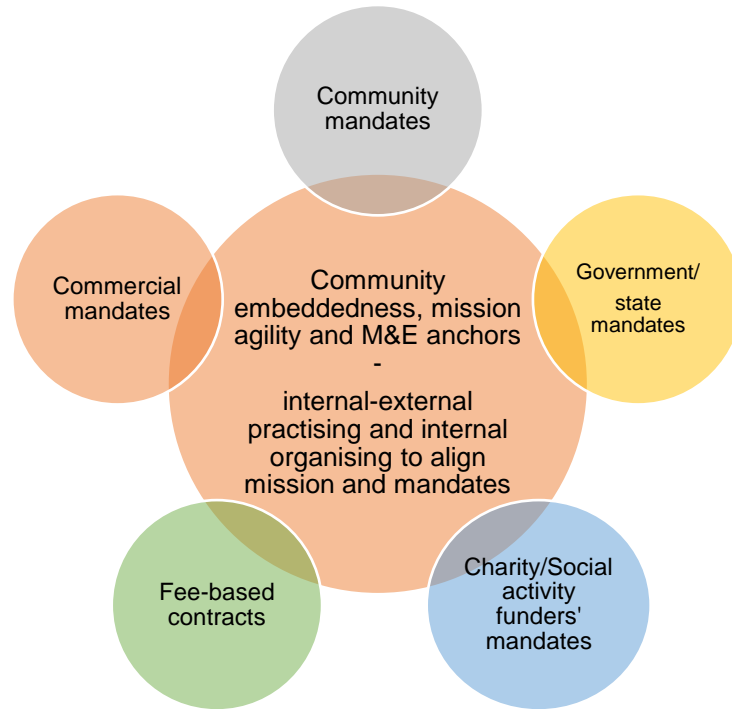


Figure 10.2: Concurrent alignment with multiple stakeholders

Figure 10.3 overleaf summarises the iterative internal–external and internal organising practice in SMSEs to simultaneously align mandates and mission across projects in different phases. This is an extension of Figure 3.3 in section 3.4.3, adapted from Ossenbrink et al. (2019). The empirical evidence suggests that when the perceived distance of stakeholders’ mandates from the organisation's mission is high with projects in a few phases, the SMSEs leverage more on their *art of practising*, highlighted in Table 10.1 (section 10.2.4), to ensure alignment with external stakeholders. This is because “practising catalyses sensing” (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020, p. 267). Thus, SMSE actors make sense of external mandates [understanding and leveraging], build relationships, interpret, and map mandates to bridge multiple expectations. Therefore, the SMSEs depict a type of ‘brokerage’ role to evidence social missions relevant to the community’s beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

Perceived Tensions Across projects	Projects at varied phases	<i>Internal organising</i> Leverage Dynamic artefacts to align	<i>Internal-external alignment and internal organising</i> Leverage both the art of practising (e.g., M&E art of interpreting, negotiations, reporting) and dynamic artefacts (e.g., concurrent annual reports)
	Projects in fewer phases	<i>Status quo – No ambidexterity</i> (Normal practices and differentiated artefacts)	<i>Internal - external alignment</i> Leverage the art of practising to align
	Low	High	
	Perceived distance of stakeholder mandates from organisation mission		

Figure 10.3: Internal organising to simultaneously align mandates and mission tensions across projects Source: Adapted from Ossenbrink et al. (2019)

When projects are at multiple varied phases, but the perceived distance of stakeholder mandates from the organisation's mission is low, the SMSEs leverage more on their *dynamic artefacts* to internally organise, mostly by enacting multitasking project management and concurrent measurement for internal alignment. Mission agility allows the SMSEs to navigate multiple projects at varied phases in a deliberate as well as an opportunistic manner to align projects to suit their optimal internal policies, procedures, and capabilities. When the perceived distance of stakeholders' mandates from the organisation's mission is high, and projects are at varied multiple phases, the SMSEs combine the *art of practising and dynamic artefacts* to ensure simultaneous alignment. Specifically, they make sense of external mandates, conduct continuous internal-external interpretation, and map multiple requirements internally. Additionally, they enact multitasking project management prowess and concurrently measure.

The organisations review the multiple external mandates to ensure they fulfil them and then organise internally to meet those requirements or expectations while ensuring they still foreground their internal core expectations simultaneously. The process is not so much a linear one, but rather an iterative one requiring micro-foundations made up of practices, routines and individual actions to connect the arrows (Vallaster et al., 2021) as further unpacked and depicted in Chapter 11.1.

Therefore, the first aspect of the theoretical model in Chapter 11.1 summarises micro-foundational aspects of how the SMSEs leverage *the art of practising* to align multiplicities. The role of human agency (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020), pronounced through the art of practising, acts as a glue in the relationships between routines and practices to facilitate managing tensions and producing simultaneous outcomes (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). This refers specifically to community embeddedness, which fosters the art of relationship management and negotiations with communities. It also facilitates co-designing as well as co-creation with communities. Mission agility allows SMSEs the flexibility to interpret, map and implement projects that are a priority.

The second aspect of the theoretical model summarises the micro-foundational aspects of SMSEs' adaptable internal routine dynamics, and specifically, how *dynamic artefacts* facilitate internal alignment of competing and conflicting projects' goals across different phases while ensuring the core mission is intact. This entails internal organising based on the organisations' existing internal capabilities to fulfil multiple projects' requirements across the phases simultaneously, while facilitating internal alignment of competing mandates and the central core social mission, like a well 'seamless symphony'. Mission agility and M&E facilitate internal routine activities that would otherwise seem mundane in a dynamic fashion through deliberate and opportunistic approaches to align different conflicting goals while ensuring a clear theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). For instance, this includes how M&E routines, such as data quality assessments, facilitate the achievement of funders' and organisations' goals simultaneously through material and ideation bricolage (Molecke & Pinkse, 2017).

Dynamic artefacts such as M&E plans [aka log-frames] are utilised through the various stages to align multiple requirements. For instance, S-Impact has an overarching M&E plan that is used to facilitate proposal writing. The M&E manager indicates, "I develop an M&E plan based on, for example, what we do ... I develop a plan based on that" (C2, M2, L192). Damco uses the M&E function in "pulling reports together and quality control" (C1, M1, L83), as well as "routine data quality assessments" (C1, M1, L83). In H-Inc, "M&E is the one [function to help in tracking] ... For example, if there are any areas where there haven't been any reports, they will alert you" (C4, P4, L178). The CEO of Hilcorp indicates, "We've got our monitoring and evaluation unit, which monitors the key deliverables, the key indicators of any of our projects and all of our projects" (C3, E3, L182).

The SMSEs may not have valuable or rare resources, as argued under dynamic capabilities (Vallaster et al., 2021). However, the empirical evidence points to how the SMSEs' art of practising, internal routines, and artefacts dynamically facilitate sensing opportunities, seizing, and performing optimally (Teece, 2018). They utilise dynamic artefacts such as annual and audit reports for concurrent reporting to manage different expectations simultaneously from funders, financiers, government, and beneficiaries.

These findings are useful in understanding how small organisations are agile and able to achieve simultaneous alignment beyond the dual exploration and exploitation (Luger et al., 2018; Ossenbrink et al., 2019) to manage multiple conflicting goals. The literature holds that organisations are required to have adequate resources that enable them to internally structure and allow simultaneous ambidexterity (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; N. Turner et al., 2013). On the contrary, the findings in the study point to how the SMSEs within a resource-constrained context manage internal tensions by aligning multiple mandates and mission simultaneously. Therefore, this extends the use of ambidexterity at a micro-level in small organisations, specifically focusing on how routine activities and practices in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates.

While the study findings argue that organisational ambidexterity facilitates the simultaneous management of activities between mandates and mission, it is not as easy as the simplistic illustration depicted in Figure 10.4 overleaf. The balancing of mission and mandate tensions requires the orchestration of practices, routines, and how they are practised to be inclusive of response, adaptation, flexibility, agility and diversification, as they pursue multiple funding opportunities. On the other hand, they have to include stability, continuity, and focus as they safeguard their mission.

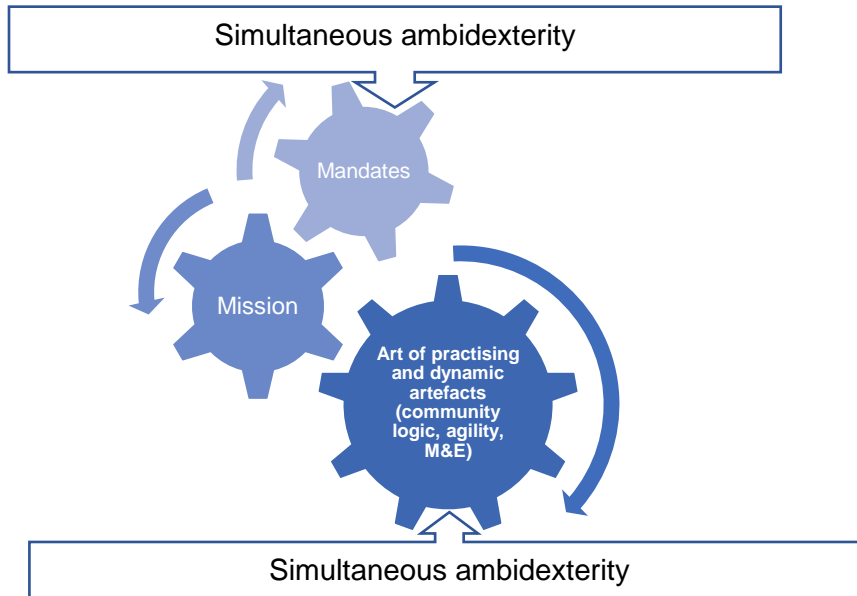


Figure 10.4: Simplified social mission–mandate alignment: Simultaneous ambidexterity

This study demonstrates how the SMSEs optimise their embeddedness within the community, are agile and proactively use M&E to simultaneously align multiple mandates and mission.

10.4 Community embeddedness, mission agility and monitoring and evaluation as anchors to facilitate alignment

Ultimately, this study argues that community embeddedness, mission agility, and M&E are the anchors that allow multi-level disciplined focus for SMSEs to align multiple mandates and mission simultaneously at a micro-level.

The other themes are affiliated with the three core themes. The anchors are dynamic in themselves and are empirically seen through ‘verbs’ that emphasise the how, akin to practices needing to be explained (N. Thompson et al., 2020). Specifically, they allow “zooming in to examine and explain the enactment of practices ... and zooming out to grasp the nexus of practices that constitute large social phenomena” (N. Thompson et al., 2020, p. 252). The anchors are not mutually exclusive and sometimes overlap with the other themes.

The ‘how’ aspects of balancing mission and mandates in the study findings are key. First, this refers to how SMSEs understand and leverage the social needs within the internal social mission and priorities. Second, it includes how they interpret the situation with an internal–external iterative outlook. Third, it refers to their ability to translate and map funder requirements while articulating their [SMSE] theory of change. Fourth, it includes the SMSEs’ enactment of multitasking project management prowess. Finally, it reflects how the measurement validates the

multiple funder requirements and mission simultaneously, specifically, through concurrent output reporting.

10.4.1 Understanding and leveraging social needs within social mission

The empirical evidence highlights how the SMSEs' experiential practising allows them to make sense of external mandates by first understanding social needs in the community and aligning with their social mission. Furthermore, the SMSEs leverage the community's social needs within internal priority activities to negotiate with funders. Hence, they gain legitimacy (Grimes et al., 2020) to act as 'power' brokers and social mission 'champions' on behalf of the communities they serve.

Community buy-in plays an important role in validating the SMSE work. There is a nexus between the expectations of the community on how they deem the social mission should be implemented and how the organisations adopt this as their core mission. Through the art of practising, for instance, relationship management and negotiations, the SMSEs obtain social licence to operate (Demuijnck & FASTERLING, 2016), and this gives them leverage over conflicting funder-related mandates (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). This was well captured by Ugo's CEO narration, "We make sure we connect those communities and individuals to those resources and not leave them hanging ... Then you hand it over to the person who is supposed to carry it and whose mandate it is to do the work or to make things happen for those clients" (C5, E5, L132).

Further insights point to how mission agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021) allows SMSEs to conceptualise the kind of funders they would approach, the required internal shifts, and how they start the alignment process at the pre-proposal phase using different registration entities. The ambiguity in the legislative and regulatory context allows the SMSEs to take advantage of the legislative loopholes (Littlewood & Holt, 2018a, 2018b). This is demonstrated by how they leverage the appropriate entities to manage tensions from the onset by using the art of portfolio thinking.

Leaders' and employees' experiences also facilitate the sense-making practising (Johannisson, 2011), understanding of communities' social needs, and leveraging these to align funder mandates and mission. For instance, this happens through relationship management with community leaders, funders and other stakeholders. This facilitates the 'pitching practice' (Teague et al., 2020) of the SMSEs to ground their mission amidst multiple stakeholders.

10.4.2 Interpretation: Internal-external iterative practising

Mission agility allows the SMSEs to flexibly interpret and align organisational mission and mandates through iterative internal-external practising. This was evident through how they interpreted community needs and RFP requirements while presenting them in a fashion that simultaneously fulfils the funders' requirements and mission.

In addition, the art of interpretation highlights the role of human agency within the community in facilitating practices dynamically (Schmidt & Santamaria-Alvarez, 2021) and balancing multiple goals through proactive M&E. The roles of leaders, managers and employees in SMSEs in facilitating the management of tensions at different levels are key. Administrative leaders or CEOs' previous background (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Klein et al., 2021; Mongelli et al., 2019; Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019) and experience (Battilana et al., 2015; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Mongelli et al., 2019; Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019) facilitate this iterative internal-external practising to manage tensions.

The role of the practitioners or actors' ability to alter practice for multiple goals (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010) can also be seen empirically. The study argues that how actors interpret multiple conflicting activities to align them simultaneously is an art, for instance, how they interpret RFP requirements and co-design to align core-competencies. The study moves away from the traditional notion of practice in organisational science literature that points to practitioner/actors' actions being subjugated by the nature and character of the organisational practice being performed. This literature depicts the practitioners to be confined to the practice and not necessarily use judgement calls to deal with tensions (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010).

The SMSEs are agile and also decipher value capture and value creation adaptations, akin to business model innovation (BMI) (Klein et al., 2021; Kwong et al., 2017) to navigate the tensions. The evidence from the cases provides useful insight into the way they are able to orchestrate non-trivial changes in how they capture value, for instance, having pre-determined profit percentages and adapting proposal budgets around these rates. Thereafter, they adapt value creation and delivery means through the art of negotiations, based on social work experience with funders. This also includes how they interpret and adapt the value creation activities that encapsulate the requirements of funders to align with value creation activities that align with the social mission of the organisation.

10.4.3 Translate and map funder requirements while articulating theory of change

The SMSEs' proactive M&E prowess assists them in being able to translate funders' requirements and map them internally to align with their internal mission-related priorities. This is especially so through how they present their theory of change (ToC). ToC as a practice denotes the “construction of a model that specifies – usually visually – the underlying logic, assumptions, influences, causal linkages and expected outcomes of a development programme or project” (Jackson, 2013, p. 100). The SMSEs use practices such as co-creation to ensure the community's needs are infused within the mission. They are then able to negotiate and demonstrate their agility in how they juggle the multiple funder requirements without compromising their mission. This also calls for experienced leadership and core employees to facilitate negotiations, funder education, and actual mapping of activities.

While M&E is a common practice in social enterprises in defining the theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016), it has not received much attention in the literature (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). Sample proposals reviewed in all cases indicate how the SMSEs articulate the theory of change in varied interventions to foreground the mission using M&E approaches. Hence, using tactical mimicry (Dey & Teasdale, 2016), they employ the art of language infusion to make it look as if they are meeting the funders' needs but also foregrounding their theory of change opportunistically.

For instance, a review of one of S-Impact's successful proposals evidently shows how they present the entire organisation's business and operation visually, indicating how both units complement each other in project implementation (C2, PR2 [proposal], p. 6). This pre-empts to the funders how S-Impact is structured and ensures it delivers on its mission. Additionally, S-Impact articulates its theory of change explicitly and how it is applied to the proposal at hand by using words such as “S-Impact's theory of change for positively influencing the health and economic resilience of vulnerable youth and their associated families, as required by funder A, is based on the following assumptions” (C2, PR2, p. 7). From hermeneutical analysis, the first part of the statement covers their broader mission, and the second part provides a point of departure on assumptions that have to be considered within this specific donor funding proposal to fit in within the organisation's theory of change. Hence, they make it look as if they are meeting the funder's needs but also foregrounding their theory of change.

The agility also allows SMSEs to optimise, map and shift activities within the requisite registered entity. The study findings demonstrate that the regulatory context acts as a catalyst for the SMSEs

to innovatively utilise aspects, such as their registration status to balance multiple mandates and mission. Therefore, the cases take advantage of the regulatory ambiguity in the social enterprise sector to map [and shift] different activities to the appropriate entity and ensure the core social mission-related activities are foregrounded amidst the multiple mandates. Through activity embeddedness practising, they also superimpose their mission-related activities within the funder's activities. Additionally, they overlay the funder's requirements on core central policies to minimise internal tensions. In some cases, they form mutually beneficial collaborations. As Ugo's CEO indicates, "Depending on the funding opportunities that exist, one can use a different way. You can use the entity that makes sense" (C5, E5, L51).

10.4.4 Enactment of multitasking project management prowess

The SMSEs' art of multitasking to manage multiple projects while ensuring alignment of mission and mandates occurring was evident and showed their ability to utilise dynamic, centralised tools that are nimble and allows flexibility. The use of business tools to deliberately enact multiple projects simultaneously is not commonly discussed in social enterprise literature. The study depicts how these tools, policies and procedures facilitate the mission-mandate balancing. Additionally, the SMSEs utilise the core-shared staff as key project managers across projects. Since they understand the organisations' mission, they act as the glue that aligns multiple activities with the key organisational priorities.

Furthermore, the M&E canvas facilitates project management to ensure multiple projects achieve key objectives while ensuring the mission focus concurrently. As empirically seen within the cases, M&E is set up with the view of tracking how mandates are fulfilled (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014), as well as attaining the core mission. This is through multitasking and project management prowess. To emphasise the role of project management skills H-Inc illustrates, "We have to look at the critical path and try to compress the critical path as well of the project ... Where you are supposed to take a month, you remove some sub-activities and remain with the main activity to continue to get to the output that is desired" (C4, F4 [finance manager], L163). Ugo further states that "The project management that we utilise helps us a lot to be agile, and be to meet our targets and be able to change if we need to" (C5, I5 [IT lead], L70).

The SMSEs' size allows them to be nimble. The internal activities are shifted as necessary to ensure alignment with the core mission. Furthermore, "the advantage of it is the decision making is quick. It's rapid" (C1 [Damco], E1 [CEO], L122). Hence, "the ability to change swiftly" internally (C1, O1 [operations lead], L83). They experientially adapt the conceptualisation of resource seeking across funders, managing tensions with funders at the proposal stage and subsequently

at implementation, as well as aligning outputs and/or outcomes. As Ugo's fundraising board director emphatically puts it, "Adapt! Adapt! Yes, we have had to adapt ... some of the policies to incorporate those other specific aspects" (C5, B [board] 5, L61).

In addition, employees' socialisation with each other and commitment to the SMSE mission facilitates an enabling work environment for the SMSEs to navigate the myriad of challenges. The SMSEs' ingenious HR practices dynamically ensure employees are committed and also deliver on multiple requirements. For instance, they have a cadre of shared or core staff who ensure coordination, but at the same time, they utilise field staff aligned to project tenures to manage ensuing tensions. Most of the field staff are hired from the beneficiaries and communities they came from, and this enhances commitment by the staff.

Additionally, the cases adapt and adopt internal aspects that would manage multiple stakeholders simultaneously, such as developing SOPs as addenda to central policies. In some cases, they adopt SOPs based on "the strictest funder" (C [H-Inc] 4, E4 [CEO], L155) and apply them to other funders. The SMSEs also utilise IT and digital means to simultaneously align multiple tasks. For instance, the establishment and optimisation of functions such as M&E and agile financial systems.

10.4.5 Concurrent measurement validation

Finally, the SMSEs utilise concurrent measurement approaches to validate the achievement of mandates and mission simultaneously. They innovatively and simultaneously report on achievements to multiple funders and financiers as well as other stakeholders on the achievement of their core social mission. For instance, they use annual reports to demonstrate the fulfilment of both mandates and mission (Mair, 2020).

M&E, as a function, is key in tracking and reporting on funders' mandates as well as mission attainment, as signalled in literature (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). During implementation and reporting, H-Inc indicates that they've "got strong M&E systems to track and measure and validate the information that is coming from the field" (C4, E4, L179). In S-Impact, "the M&E plan is the bigger document, then there's a small operational plan on-site" (C2, M2, L192) to facilitate the reporting of multiple projects. How M&E is implemented is summed up by the H-Inc M&E manager, who indicates, "M&E requires the CEO to understand the importance of M&E ... It requires the project managers to understand their role, the importance and they also play a part in M&E ... the field ... needs to understand the role of M&E; they need to know the importance of submitting their reports and what it is going to fit into" (C4, M4, L190).

The SMSEs utilise centralised agile IT systems to disaggregate as well as integrate reports to fulfil multiple stakeholders' requirements. They optimise digitisation and advanced IT capabilities to facilitate real-time reporting. The SMSEs also align the community stakeholders on project outcomes to ensure ownership and continued legitimacy within the communities. The SMSEs utilise different avenues to align multiple stakeholders on project outputs and outcomes.

Figure 10.5 below summarises the theoretical model encapsulating SMSEs dynamic artefacts and the art of practising at a micro-level. Community embeddedness, mission agility, and M&E strongly feature in aligning multiple funders' mandates and mission simultaneously across projects in different phases.

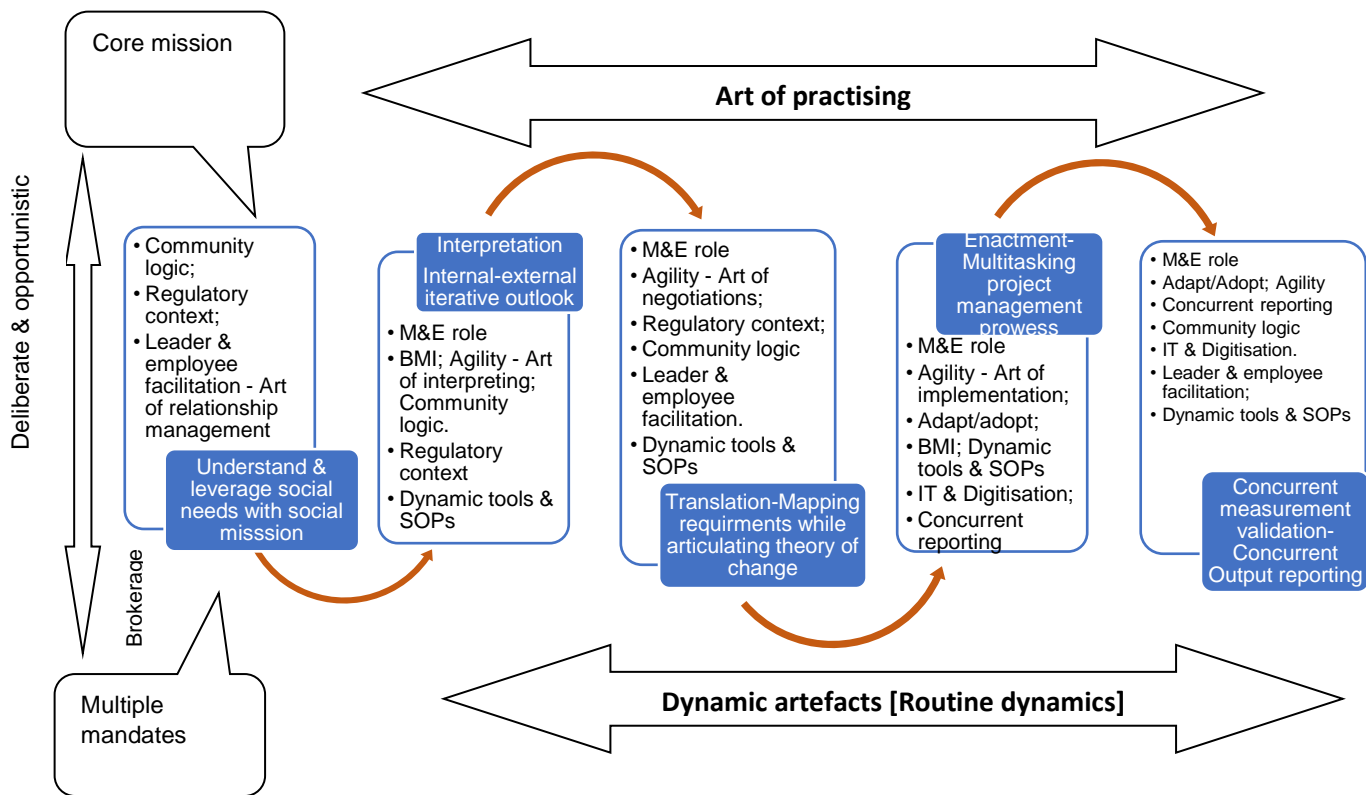


Figure 10.5: Theoretical model: Art of practising and use of dynamic artefacts to simultaneously align mission and mandates: leveraging community logic, mission agility, and M&E role

10.5 Human actors' art of practising actions experientially

The emphasis on the art of practising in this study emerges from how practices, evidenced as 'nouns', are deliberately practised, akin to 'verbs', to align stakeholders across multiple projects. Practising "reflects the capability to act beyond the confines that existing routines, standard operating procedures or ventures may otherwise permit" (Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020, p. 266).

The actors facilitate the alignment of multiple mandates and mission internally through actions such as leveraging the community, navigating the regulatory context, being agile, relationship management, experienced interpretation, and negotiations.

The study findings focus on how practices are enacted, as rooted in organisational behaviour literature, emphasising human agency and hence moving “from the what of practice to the how and why of practice” (Gehman, 2021, p. 113). In this study, practices refer to an “organised constellation of different people’s activities” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13) and are nuanced by the human agency to navigate dynamics (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Schatzki, 2012). Studies in organisation practices are divergent in organisational theory and strategic management. Although practices have been defined in various ways, they are generally conceptualised as “sets of hierarchically organised doings/sayings, tasks and projects” (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13).

Furthermore, the study aligns with the current discourse on the ‘practice turn’ “directing attention not to individuals or structures, but to the dynamic unfolding of constellations of everyday activities or practices” (Sklaveniti & Steyaert, 2020, p. 315). Through reflexivity, the study connects the practice theory and practicality [akin to the art of practising] of it (Sklaveniti & Steyaert, 2020). The evidence suggests that the practices facilitate the management of internal tensions, based on how actors practise them to align activities related to multiple mandates and mission simultaneously.

The as-practice literature can be adapted within existing theories to interrogate phenomena (Sklaveniti & Steyaert, 2020), in this case, within ambidexterity. The study findings describe the “how” of practices that involve the achievement of multiple conflicting goals and not necessarily of disparate goals that the as-practice literature would allude to. The study notes that while some of the practices exist within the organisation, they are not organised to manage multiple goals but rather specific goals and tasks. However, as the actors experientially implement the practices, they find ways of applying them to simultaneously address multiple different goals. This leads to nuancing practice [noun] and practising [verb], which allows dynamism to attain multiple goals. Hence, this highlights the role of human agency as practice carriers (Champenois et al., 2020) to turn repetitive routines as part of ordinary capabilities into dynamic capabilities (Schmidt & Santamaria-Alvarez, 2021).

Furthermore, the role of practitioners or actors’ ability to alter practice for multiple goals (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010) is empirically seen, for instance, how they interpret requirements to align multiple competing goals. The study moves away from the traditional notion

of practice in organisational science literature that points to practitioner/actors' actions being subjugated by the nature and character of the organisational practice being performed. This literature depicts the practitioners to be confined to the practice and not allowed to use judgement calls to deal with tensions (Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010). Hence, the study suggests how practitioners and actors enact multiple conflicting activities simultaneously as an art.

The study does not focus on the as-practice literature understanding of practice as situated in its nature of action, which takes up given actions and institutionalises them (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010). Rather, the study looks more at the enactment aspects by actors to dynamically undertake different actions repetitively or in emergent ways to achieve multiple goals. Thus, the following themes, one to five, are elaborated as depicted in Table 10.1 in section 10.2.4.

10.6 Theme 1: Leveraging community logic: community embeddedness and proximity

Theme 1 was developed from the data indicating how the SMSEs leverage their embeddedness within communities and proximity to beneficiaries to superimpose social needs within their mission. Using a portfolio of relationships, the SMSEs leverage the inherent 'power' due to community buy-in, which funders ordinarily don't have, to negotiate with funders and advocate the activities requiring funding. This puts them at a vantage point to map activities within the mission, while being the conduit of the funding to implement priority community projects. For instance, cases 1, 2 and 3 have mechanisms of community entry, branding, and obtaining feedback from beneficiaries. This enriches the internal interpretation and mapping of the SMSE's social mission with mandates from the onset. The table below provides excerpts of data that depict how the theme was developed.

Table 10.2: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 1

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>"S-Impact found ways to increase its visibility in the communities by having support care workers directly on the ground" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"the good relationship with community stakeholders gave S-Impact easy access ... when conducting group sessions" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"We get them from the community."</p>	Community-based hiring	Community embeddedness	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align
<p>"Other input considered included the views of community stakeholders on the needs of the communities served by Hilcorp, the role that the stakeholders felt Hilcorp could play, and national priorities" (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p> <p>"Our general approach to project roll-out after sign-off involves extensive community mobilisation and stakeholder engagements" (<i>proposal</i>).</p>	<p>"You realise that the community is powerful, that if you forget to talk to the community, even if the government has said do this, forget, it's not going to work."</p> <p>"The things that are key to us, we always find a way of prioritising, even if they are not a priority to the donor because most of the time, people that are key to us ... are our communities."</p>	Community proximity and entry	Community buy-in	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align
<p>"Another structure that is crucial to how we function is the Community Action and Advisory Committee, which is made up of community members and helps guide the delivery of Hilcorp programmes" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"Sustained links and forums to facilitate Hilcorp consultation with the community" (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p>	<p>"We also have a community advisory committee, which is very active in those communities, which helps a lot, because those are the people that are advocates, Hilcorp advocates within the community."</p>	Collaborating/incorporating community leaders in decisions	Community buy-in	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align
<p>"S-Impact partnered with community leaders collaborated in reaching different nationals for participatory assessments" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"Our actions influence whether we will be successful and meaningful to both our beneficiaries and our funders" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"We try to get our experience to count by trying to guide the funders to understand that, yes, you want to achieve this kind of outcome. But we believe that if you do it this way, it's going to work, and you'll be able to leverage on efficiencies in doing them."</p> <p>"If the donor doesn't know and just mandates us to help, we tell them that there are two ways we can do that."</p>	Experiential negotiation with community needs in mind	Art of interpreting and mapping needs with mission	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align
<p>"Considering the inputs of the community and national priorities, the Board identified the strategic priorities for Hilcorp" (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p>	<p>"All our different sites, we have suggestion boxes, whereby they've set up in places where... beneficiaries utilise those platforms, then they can report anything they want, they anonymously or confidentially, they can do that."</p>	Infusing Beneficiary/community feedback	Art of interpreting and mapping needs with mission	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align
<p>"Our project offices, outside offices, are always branded correctly to make sure that the people know" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"That is how your community gets to know you. And then our project offices, outside offices, always branded correctly, and make sure that the people know. We are also giving out flyers, making sure that the brand is always there".</p> <p>"What we try to emphasise is to brand our presence in the local communities as far as we can. And that has resulted in some of the health programmes being effectively done in our offices in the field."</p>	Creating awareness in the community	Community branding	Community logic and embeddedness increase leverage to align

The art of interpretation and negotiation is depicted in how SMSEs utilise their knowledge of the community needs to advocate for activities, and how they are implemented, in ways that align with the core competencies and mission. The specific practices employed to engage with the communities vary. For example, they use the traditional ['induna'] community leaders as advocates, participate in community stakeholder advisory committees, and incorporate the community leaders in the governance and hiring process of field workers.

Practices such as being part of the community advisory committee act as a gateway for SMSEs to the community. Therefore, when responding to specific funder RFPs, they are able to incorporate key aspects based on deliberations with the community advisory committees.

To leverage community needs and map activities appropriately, the SMSEs practise co-designing and co-creation with the community. The value proposition is entrenched within the community priorities, which are then aligned to the organisation's mission and subsequently proposed to resource owners to fund. This enhances the legitimacy of the projects and also acts as an advocacy channel to funders, as well as the government, on what needs to be prioritised and funded.

The M&E function and capabilities would then facilitate the co-designing and co-creation to align the multiple requirements with the mission internally. Co-designing also signals to funders key community priorities that pre-empt how RFPs are structured and, in a way, puts the SMSEs in an advantageous position to obtain the funding. For instance, some funders use the findings of co-design outputs to inform their RFPs and consequently, the SMSEs involved in the process would be the most probable ones that can best implement the activities.

To demonstrate economic benefits to the communities, the SMSEs deliberately incorporate community leaders within the governance structures. They also use HR practices at the community level to manage various tensions. All cases indicate that they hire field staff from the community with the help of community leaders. This helps to gain legitimacy as well as ensure staff commitment to serving their communities and, by extension, the SMSEs' core missions.

Field staff are also hired from the community they hail from. This is an advantage to both the community and the organisation. There is a sense of ownership by the community and a higher level of commitment from the staff coming from the vicinity. The staff live in the communities where they work and thus, they have greater buy-in and greater emotional involvement with the project because they identify well with the community's priorities being pursued by the SMSEs.

The cases also optimise community branding as a practice to communicate the organisations' activities while ensuring multiple stakeholders are aligned with the core mission concurrently. The cases demonstrated the importance of getting the SMSEs' brand in the communities and other stakeholders in ways that they are able to associate given activities with the cases and consequently manage possible tensions. This facilitates the key beneficiaries' and communities' buy-in of the organisation's mission. As Damco and S-Impact highlight, this enhances the connection of the SMSEs with the communities and other stakeholders.

10.6.1 Comparison with literature

The study findings indicate that SMSEs are predisposed to a myriad of logics, such as “family, community, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation” (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 366). However, the present study's data provides interesting new insight into the manner in which SMSEs accumulate power and knowledge from their relationships with the beneficiaries and other community stakeholders. The study findings in this theme extend the importance of the community as an important stakeholder (Mair, 2020; Waardenburg, 2021) for SMSEs and the SMSEs' brokerage and boundary-spanning role (Fleming & Waguespack, 2007). The beneficiaries and community in general, being the highest supporters of SMSEs (Mair, 2020), have their powerful position give impetus to SMSEs to ensure the social mission trumps the funders' mandates. Hence, the SMSEs' community embeddedness enriches the social mission within the organisations, which in turn, allows the SMSEs to act as community advocates to align with multiple stakeholders.

The study findings respond to a call by Mair (2020) to bring “renewed attention to power as a crucial factor in theorising about social enterprises” (p. 27) ability to foreground mission. The SMSEs are able to obtain subtle power by practising freedom through nuancing “what they are supposed to do and who they are supposed to be” (Dey & Steyaert, 2016, p. 637). Contrary to the notion under Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) that resource owners have power over the resource recipients (AbouAssi & Tschirhart, 2018; Mair, 2020; Malatesta & Smith, 2014), the theme extends the notion of power through how SMSEs leverage community embeddedness as a resource. The beneficiaries and community legitimise the SMSEs' powerful position as a resource. The deliberate inclusion of beneficiaries and community leaders in the governance structures gives them a voice in decision-making. Importantly, the SMSEs prioritise the community needs within the social mission, which is akin to community logic (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). This is achieved through aspects such as co-designing and co-creation of

projects with community stakeholders in a manner that offers a value proposition that speaks to the community's needs, organisational mission, and funder priorities simultaneously.

Previous research has also argued that SMSEs are usually in power-disadvantaged positions vis-à-vis resource owners in the environment (Oukes et al., 2019). However, the findings in this study indicate that the extant literature provides an incomplete understanding of SMSEs' 'brokerage' power or agency to champion communities' social needs because literature typically focuses on SMSEs' dependency and funding constraints. The community embeddedness of the SMSEs allows them to ground the relationship between the SMSE and the community [art of practising]. This accords them a different kind of resource and power that the SMSEs use as a 'bargaining chip' with funders. With the evolution of social impact and the triple bottom line, recent literature indicates how resource providers rely on outputs and outcomes of the interventions "for, in, with, enabled by, and driven by communities" (Bacq et al., 2022, p. 2). This underscores the role of feedback from the beneficiaries at the community level for these interventions and hence, in a way, hands the power back to the recipients on how funding flows. Within the context of the SMSEs, the activities that need to be funded would mostly need buy-in from the communities where the interventions are implemented. The SMSEs optimise community embeddedness (Littlewood & Holt, 2020) by aligning and being attuned with the communities' priorities, while using community leaders and/or beneficiaries as advocates to win over resource providers.

Branding falls within the marketing literature, but is still nascent in social enterprise research due to the difficulty of marketing the hybrid nature of the organisations, as well as how best to articulate "service-oriented" branding (M. Powell & Osborne, 2020, p. 75). In SMSEs, branding has been linked to the organisation's communication strategy and related to the identity and image created and upheld towards stakeholders (Le Roux, 2013). While this is still nascent in literature, the findings agree with the role of corporate branding for the SMSEs as is depicted in the for-profit sector (Maon et al., 2021), whereby the identity and image created by the organisation reflect their values, mission, vision, and culture (Kulshrestha et al., 2022; Le Roux, 2013). The SMSEs are cognisant of multiple stakeholders in their branding efforts. Corporate branding involves communicating "the organisation's character attributes to diverse audiences" (Maon et al., 2021, p. 64). The findings indicate how the SMSEs endeavour to brand their work within the communities and also communicate this with and to other stakeholders. The co-designing and co-creation efforts complement the branding efforts of the SMSEs' corporate identity and reputation. In this way, the study extends corporate branding from being corporate-led to a network-inclusive exercise; hence, attempting to start answering recent calls to incorporate

multiple stakeholders in corporate branding and not only a company-led initiative (Maon et al., 2021).

The inclusive branding and communication efforts by the SMSEs ensure they have a social licence to operate (Demuijnck & Festerling, 2016; Maon et al., 2021). From the marketing and communication literature, branding revolves around the organisation's communication activities to communicate its mission (Le Roux, 2013; M. Powell & Osborne, 2020). In marketing, branding is supposed to enhance the consumer connection with the product to enhance product loyalty in the consumer's mind or perception (M. Powell & Osborne, 2020). Besides, in communication, branding as a strategy is meant to communicate to internal and external stakeholders regarding the strategic focus of an organisation. Hence, this study's findings extend the role of communicating the mission statement as a tool to foreground the mission in SMSEs (Berbegal-mirabent et al., 2021; Kulshrestha et al., 2022; Lewis et al., 2021). The SMSEs' missions are able to resonate with the community because they are well-known among the communities and the stakeholders as they have invested in clear branding initiatives. Branding, communication, and marketing also facilitate the alignment of competing messages. This is because branding facilitates communication on the value proposition and value creation the organisation intends to convey.

10.6.2 Theme 1 conclusion

The theme highlights how the role of the community is emerging as an impetus toward the nexus of entrepreneurship and societal impact (Bacq et al., 2022). The findings in this theme extend this notion by arguing that instantiation of the community logic and SMSEs' community embeddedness leverage the SMSEs' brokerage role to ensure the social mission and multiple mandates are aligned. Furthermore, the SMSEs' social mission is legitimised by the community (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020). The SMSEs leverage this and use it in a deliberate, as well as opportunistic fashion to align multiple stakeholders. The theme highlights how SMSEs' quest to be embedded within the community through practices such as the use of community leadership structures, and beneficiary feedback offer leverage. Inherently, they obtain power over funders in how funding is to be allocated and how the SMSEs' role in the implementation will be ensured. The study theme further highlights the role of branding in facilitating how the social mission is foregrounded at the community level within the mission (Kulshrestha et al., 2022).

10.7 Theme 2: The regulatory context catalyses the balancing of mission and mandates

Theme 2 emerged from data as the organisations seem to be thriving in ambiguous regulatory and registration frameworks. The heads of the organisations and core management highlighted the way they take advantage of the existing loopholes in the registration of SMSEs and other regulatory contexts to balance different mandates and missions within their organisations. This was corroborated as noted in their broad founding documents and other documented evidence. The table below provides excerpts of data that depict how the theme was developed.

Table 10.3: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 2

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>"Damco Trust is registered as: An Educational and Development Trust ... Non-profit Organisation ... Public Benefit Organisation ... Accredited Skills development Provider" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"We're registered as an NPO with the Department of Social Development (DSD), an Educational Trust with the Master of the High Court, a SAQA-accredited Training Provider, a PBO, and has BBBEE level 1 certification" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"You are one organisation, one leadership, and one board of directors, and you are trying to pursue this mission"</p> <p>"Some of the requirements for certain projects may favour a non-profit, vis-à-vis a profit"</p> <p>"Organisations like Damco have to maintain various accreditations"</p> <p>"All the grants come under the NPO, and all the contracts come under the Pty"</p>	Registration context allows multiple entities within one umbrella entity	Mapping appropriately based on registration context	Regulatory context catalyses the alignment
Two RFPs in Ugo were reviewed, whereby one was to implement a Global Fund project in one of the provinces implemented under the NPO and another one was an M&E consultancy contract conducted by the profit arm	"Depending on the funding opportunities that exist, one can use a different way; you can use the entity that makes sense"	Deliberate mapping activities to multiple entities	Mapping appropriately based on registration context	Regulatory context catalyses the alignment
"The organisation is exempt from taxes and duties" (<i>founding document</i>)	<p>"We are a non-profit company and are registered with CIPC ... and then, we're also registered with the Department of Social Development. So, we have a PBO number from the Department of Social Development. And then we're also registered by under SARS under section 18 A, exempted NPO ... so we don't pay tax on income or surplus"</p> <p>"We had to then establish the college; it was registered and accredited. And then we also had to get accreditations through different SETAS, to do accredited programmes"</p>	Optimise NPO tax regime	Converging towards social mission	Regulatory context catalyses the alignment
"Ugo is a premier South African public health and evaluation organisation that provides a range of services, both as a direct implementor	<p>"Our mission had to touch a bit of each and every programme"</p> <p>"We are now expanding and exploring. How do you profitably utilise the Pty if there are</p>	Mission clarity and activity agility within the same NPO organisation	Converging towards social mission	Regulatory context catalyses the alignment

and through capacity building support" (<i>proposal</i>)	opportunities to do that? And while you are utilising the NPO to do all this non-profit work"			
"We partner with the following South African universities to source specialist expertise and fieldwork support" (<i>proposal</i>)	"So we started with partnering with people like the University of Stellenbosch ... we are bringing these partners on board and so we kind of riding on their names. We would strategically make sure that the Umhlungu [white race] is coming with us and somehow the balungus [white people] will be quite excited and they will give us the work"	Strategic partnerships	Deliberate/opportunistic Collaborations	Regulatory context catalyses the alignment

All the cases evidently thrive and take advantage of the unclear registration regime of SMSEs in South Africa to ensure they have registered entities that can be utilised to manage different funders and financiers to the organisation's advantage. They accomplish this by understanding the social needs, and through the internal-external outlook, they map projects within the appropriate organisation entity.

The SMSEs have umbrella NPOs or for-profit registered organisations housing the core social mission, and all the other for-profit and not-for-profit activities are coordinated through the umbrella entity. Some of the cases have multiple registered for-profit entities, such as commercial premises and training entities in pursuit of earned income. However, they ensure the governance and leadership are centralised at the NPO level for ease of coordination. This allows the SMSEs to be agile in foregrounding their social missions, while ensuring the various mandates are fulfilled.

The SMSEs' agility enhances their mapping practices to fit activities within the appropriate registered entity while ensuring oversight from the umbrella entity. Sometimes, they shift or expand activities as long as the broader mission stays intact. This allows them the latitude to ensure there is a proper internal alignment of potential incoming activities. Some cases map profit-related activities within their registered Pty company profit arms to bolster their enterprise activities, while mapping social-related activities within the NPO-registered entities to take advantage of accruing benefits such as tax-exempt income.

The cases have subsidiary entities that are fit for purpose of managing different funders and, therefore, they use the entity that makes the most sense. Where registering a subsidiary entity is not advantageous, the organisations seek to register semi-autonomous organisations or utilise co-opted staff, and make it look as if they are collaborating while essentially, it is one and the

same organisation. They can then leverage these 'strategic partnerships' for projects that may not be core to the social mission.

Where necessary, they adapt business models to ensure the core activities are aligning with the funders' activities. Sometimes, this involves co-opting external practitioners such as legal and HR experts to manage potential risks of non-compliance with regulatory requirements. Besides, this facilitates and safeguards the management against possible conflicting or contentious matters that may expose the organisations.

10.7.1 Comparison with literature

The social enterprise literature highlights the nature of social enterprises in other contexts. For instance, community interest companies in the UK and Benefit corporations in the US (Haigh et al., 2015; Rawhouser et al., 2015), that are distinctly registered and internally organised as social enterprises. However, there has been a dearth of research on social enterprises' internal organisation in resource-constrained contexts (Klarin & Suseno, 2023) or those lacking streamlined regulatory structures with potentially multiple possible entities, such as in Africa (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b; Mair, 2020). The present findings indicate that the regulatory and registration framework does not necessitate mandates-mission trade-offs as alluded to in the literature (Battilana et al., 2022), nor does it have a bearing on mission misalignment in SMSEs within settings such as South Africa (Jankelowitz, 2020; Jankelowitz & Myres, 2019). In fact, the evidence in these findings within this theme suggests that ambiguity acts as a catalyst to enable these organisations to internally organise to deal with multiple priorities simultaneously.

From a social enterprise setting, these findings on this theme agree with recent literature, highlighting that before theorising about mission drift, there is a need to understand how the mission is foregrounded amidst multiple mandates beyond dual goals (Varendh-Manson et al., 2020). The social enterprise literature points to how the consideration of context can spur learning and creativity, as well as flexibility and adaptability, to manage internal conflicting dual tensions (Battilana et al., 2017; Klarin & Suseno, 2023). Furthermore, it shows how context shapes SMSEs' response to requirements, such as financial and programmatic reporting (Battilana et al., 2022; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; White, 2018). These findings extend this discourse by how SMSEs' multiple registrations are harnessed within the core mission but are organised to fit multiple mandates.

Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) depicts the dependence of these organisations as an undesirable concept within the environment, requiring them to manage through RDT-identified

tactics (Ozturk, 2020). However, while the SMSEs in the study inherently remain highly dependent on the environment for resources, they do not try to change the dependence-oriented status but seek to optimise and internally organise to align multiple mandates. The SMSEs, therefore, take advantage of the regulatory loopholes (Littlewood & Holt, 2018a, 2018b, 2020) to navigate the complex dynamics of managing multiple mandates.

10.7.2 Theme 2 conclusion

This theme highlights how the SMSEs' actions and practices are deliberate and opportunistic in nature to take advantage of the regulatory and registration loopholes (Littlewood & Holt, 2020). They leverage the community's social needs within the social mission and, using this social licence to operate, undertake an internal-external outlook to map activities to fit within existing entities with some level of flexibility. They specifically register appropriate entities to facilitate this kind of agility. In other instances, they enter into quasi-strategic collaborations that allow them to navigate competing and conflicting priorities. This is despite the lack of distinct social enterprise registrations in this context that can be found in community interest companies in the UK and benefit corporations in the US (Haigh et al., 2015; Rawhouser et al., 2015). The evidence in this theme suggests how the context and regulatory ambiguity act as a catalyst rather than an impediment, enabling these organisations to internally organise to deal with multiple priorities concurrently.

10.8 Theme 3: Agility in balancing multiple mandates and mission

The cases demonstrated how they practise agility to balance multiple mandates and mission. The agility was reflected in how they manage their external stakeholders with a view of foregrounding their mission amidst multiple mandates. They navigate tensions by shifting or expanding activities in ways that allow them to fulfil different mandates without compromising the accomplishment of the broader mission in a concurrent fashion.

The small size of the cases allows them to be agile in undertaking multiple activities simultaneously. The small to medium organisational size also allows them to be able to change swiftly and multitask better compared to large organisations. Furthermore, the SMSEs' can quickly adjust once the funder's requirements change or new funders come on board, in a manner that does not clash with their internal core actions. The table below provides excerpts of data that depict how the theme was developed.

Table 10.4: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 3

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>“The processes we follow allow us to use our knowledge and skills, creativity and opportunities to develop state of the art services, using our own bespoke apps” (<i>Annual report</i>).</p> <p>“Mapping and assessment of community-based workers who support the Government of South Africa” (<i>Proposal sample</i>)</p>	<p>“If you look at our broad kind of vision and mission statements, you can see that they are very data-oriented. It is about data for decision making; it is about helping organisations use data in strategic ways, access it, and analyse ... But of course, part of that for me was always the other mission ... which was I want to get out there, design projects, and implement HIV AIDS programmes or other health programmes, you know, be an implementer, and that’s how we got into the Global Fund”.</p>	Interpreting needs to allow activity shifts	Mandate-mission agility within activities	Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission
<p>“The training should cover self-starting behaviour innovation, coping strategies for resilience to setbacks, planning and feedback [internal competencies]. Modules approved by [funder] will also be used for the training” (<i>Proposal sample</i>).</p> <p>“Ugo is a sub-recipient under the Global Fund ... Ugo also provides contractual technical assistance on monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning” (<i>Proposal sample</i>)</p>	<p>“There are different pillars in the organisation ... Those pillars are all of them at the end of the day; although the objective from the funder may be different, but all of them at some point align. Because at the end of the day, all the activities now join into the main job creation”</p> <p>“When COVID came, it was a health issue, but it had a lot of socio-economic implications that needed an immediate response”</p>	Mapping activities within mission	Mandate-mission agility within activities	Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission
<p>“Work with government and non-governmental organisations to collaboratively generate insights to transform ... developmental outcomes” (<i>Proposal sample</i>)</p> <p>“2021 was a difficult year considering the effects of COVID-19. Despite all these challenges, S-Impact found ways to increase its visibility in the communities” (<i>annual report</i>).</p>	<p>“Our vision has not shifted much. It has remained basically the same. But ... we have expanded the services that we do for us to deliver on our vision. So, the number of services that we used to offer, there’s an expansion”</p> <p>“Also, we have supported households during COVID. ... though that is not what we do”</p> <p>“Additional services coming in to ensure that they’re able to also get access to additional funding that the government was putting in place, and the corporate world was putting in place. So we had to re-strategise and reorient ourselves so that we can remain relevant and continue supporting our clients”</p>	Activity expansion	Deliberate activity expansion and shift within mission confines	Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission
<p>“The ECHS project will be built on an already existing similar programme that promotes Child Health and Development that has been implemented since 2013” (<i>Proposal sample</i>)</p> <p>“One of Damco’s key strengths is our expertise in customising learning programmes. We design programmes to meet clients’ specific requirements and target audiences’ needs” (<i>Proposal sample</i>)</p>	<p>“It was very streamlined in terms of the mission, the goals, the objective; everything was very streamlined. It was very small, like narrow, very narrow ... we had to restructure so that it incorporates every programme. So our mission had to touch a bit of each and every programme”</p> <p>“Under COVID, it necessitated that our supported beneficiaries needed to be compliant, which funders were not interested in funding. So, the moment that became necessary for them to access government funding, relief funding, and then we started supporting”</p>	Activity shifts	Deliberate activity expansion and shift within mission confines	Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission
<p>“The processes we follow allow us to use our knowledge and skills, creativity and opportunities to develop state of the art services, using our own bespoke apps” (<i>annual report</i>).</p> <p>“We specialise in the management of projects in various fields and on different scales” (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>“The project managers really jump around between programmes...so where there are certain people that you can’t put 100% LOE. Those are the ones that we can use between projects”</p> <p>“So even now, our programming targets as much as possible, building the capacity of the individual so that they have access to opportunities for self-actualisation. And I’m speaking in broad terms, but you know, the programme then gets down to the specifics”</p>	Project management skills to multitask	Art of implementation and multitasking	Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission

<p>"The organisation maintains a lean, flexible management structure geared towards enhancing operational efficiencies and reducing overheads" (<i>Proposal sample</i>).</p>	<p>"I think it's the beauty of the organisation is that, because we are small to medium, it's a very close relationship ... the ability to change swiftly, and that is one of the other cool barriers, I would say, for nonprofits to move over in transition into social enterprises. That they are so used to 'this is the way we work,' and we cannot change immediately"</p>	<p>Small-sized nimble structures</p>	<p>Art of implementation and multitasking</p>	<p>Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission</p>
<p>"S-Impact has been flexible and motivated to move to places where the needs are the greatest (<i>annual report</i>).</p>	<p>"You see, the advantage of it is the decision-making is quick. It's rapid. If you are in a very structured system, it takes longer to make a decision, or it takes longer to make decisions than if you are fluid or flexible"</p> <p>"The roles are really interchangeable. It's really in terms of on a needs basis what needs to be done"</p>	<p>Quick decision-making</p>	<p>Art of implementation and multitasking</p>	<p>Agility facilitates balancing multiple mandates and mission</p>

The cases' practice of interpreting funders' requirements and mapping them appropriately internally enables them to enact varied activities in an agile manner [art of implementation]. The mission is spelled out with a wide scope of coverage. While mission statements are broad, deliberate activity shifts and expansion allow the cases to be agile but still fit within their broader mission. In this way, the mission is intact while ensuring other stakeholder requirements are met.

Agility is also depicted by how SMSEs understand the funders' requirements, interpret them in a manner that allows them to translate, and action them to meet the funder's needs but still remain within their mission. In this way, funders' and other stakeholders' mandates are met – but not at the expense of the organisations' mission.

The practice of an internal–external outlook to align funders' or stakeholders' mandates and the core mission-related activities requires agility. A case in point was the COVID-19 pandemic that necessitated adaptations of activities within the organisations and this required nimbleness. This was exemplified in how the organisations included the use of blended face-to-face and virtual working simultaneously.

Additionally, the cases undertake quick decision-making to ensure alignment across various mandates. The swift decision-making facilitates interpreting what the mandates are and how they can be aligned internally with the mission. The organisations then make the necessary adjustments swiftly, for example, how to restructure internally so as to fulfil multiple mandates within the confines of a broader mission.

The SMSEs employ structures and project management prowess to back the nimbleness. For instance, all cases have a cadre of employees referred to as shared core staff, made up of a small management team that multitasks to ensure alignment of multiple goals is achieved. They manage multiple tasks, while ensuring appropriate socialisation is happening internally to safeguard the SMSEs' core priorities and ways of working among other staff. Interestingly, this

staff cadre has been with the organisations the longest and hence, they understand the SMSEs' core missions and are also experienced within the sector to deal with multiple funders concurrently.

The SMSEs' agility allows them to validate output measurement to multiple stakeholders. They are able to map mission-related outputs and the required external outputs while remaining within their core mission. They look at the broader outcomes and work around them by breaking activities down by using business tools such as Gantt charts that articulate the funders' activities and mission-related ones. For example, they undertake to make shifts in geographical or target-group reach to suit funders' reporting requirements but still remain in areas they strategically want to venture into, and hence foster alignment.

10.8.1 Comparison with literature

Recent literature has called for more studies to understand the role of mission agility in how organisations, such as SMSEs, navigate multiple tensions because “an organisation’s mission may reflect a variety of approaches to balancing and integrating different pursuits” (Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020, p. 230). Bacq and Lumpkin (2021) point to a possibility of agility as these organisations grapple with these internal tensions while foregrounding their mission. The present study’s findings within this theme extend the discourse from mission drift to mission agility. Specifically, the findings highlight how the SMSEs rally all their funding pursuit decisions around their mission and how they practise agility internally in a manner that can fulfil multiple mandates at the same time. They are able to leverage their strengths, interpret, and translate multiple requirements swiftly. In some cases, they make adaptations in activity expansion or shifts to emphasise certain aspects more, without necessarily deviating from their core mission. The study, therefore, joins the discourse to “expose the boundary conditions of mission drift and reveal the need for mission agility instead” (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021, p. 287).

The study’s findings also spotlight how small size is crucial for SMSEs to swiftly and efficiently organise internally, to manage competing multiple priorities without being held up by bureaucratic processes. Specifically, the study findings contribute to social enterprise mission literature regarding agility and how it links to flexibility, especially in small organisations (Miller et al., 2021). Therefore, the study extends the findings by Ramus et al. (2018) and Henderson and Lambert (2018) regarding how organisational competencies and innovative orientation in SMSEs allow them to be nimble in managing multiple tensions, for instance, how they reorganise their reporting to address multiple stakeholders’ needs simultaneously.

The uncertainties resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated the current uncertainties and were “forcing NPO researchers to look beyond organisational conflicts and tensions, and to consider the bigger picture” (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021, p. 287). Therefore, the study attempts to extend extant literature regarding the role of external mandates and turbulence as a source of opportunity for SMSEs in dealing with not only dual social–commercial tensions (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021; Mongelli et al., 2019; Ramus & Vaccaro, 2017), but also other multiple internal tensions. This is especially so due to their nimble nature and ability to make decisions quickly. This flexibility is, therefore, a strength that SMSEs can take advantage of.

The SMSEs seem to have found ways to innovatively negotiate with and portray to external stakeholders their core social mission. Hence, in a way, the SMSEs are not victims to external resources, but they have the upper hand even when faced with a myriad of requirements from multiple contractual arrangements. This is in line with the argument by Cloutier and Ravasi (2020) on how SMSEs can navigate internal tensions through an ‘end’ not ‘means’ approach. An example is that the SMSEs, through their M&E prowess, seem to have found a way to innovatively communicate both their mission achievements and fulfilment of donor requirements through proposals and annual reports, akin to adapting their value creation. This finding is also in agreement with literature in social accounting on how to manage stakeholders’ perceptions concerning the SMSEs’ social mission (Ometto et al., 2019; Ramus & Vaccaro, 2017)

10.8.2 Theme 3 conclusion

This study theme contributes to emerging studies that “expose the boundary conditions of mission drift and reveal the need for mission agility instead” (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021, p. 287). Extant literature argues that mission misalignment can manifest itself in social enterprises that pursue dual social and commercial goals (Jankelowitz, 2020; Klein et al., 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021). How the internal alignment is achieved amidst a myriad of multiple mandates has not been clear (Mair, 2020), and this study’s findings extend this discourse by emphasising how the SMSEs are able to navigate these tensions by being agile internally as they pursue and negotiate with funders and financiers.

SMSEs’ M&E prowess in interpreting, mapping, and expanding activity scope, geographical coverage, or target reach, is a hallmark of their agility. They practise their freedom through subtle power (Dey & Steyaert, 2016), and have found ways to innovatively adapt practices and processes to measure different multiple mandates’ outputs concurrently. The small size facilitates quick decision-making, and even during the COVID-19 pandemic, they took advantage of their agility and were quick to adjust activities within the broader core mission.

10.9 Theme 4: Experienced leadership and employee practices facilitating internal alignment

The findings give insight into the leaders' and employees' navigation of practices and actions to facilitate the management of internal tensions. To understand and leverage social needs within the social mission, the managers of all cases optimise a portfolio of relationships with funders, the community, and other stakeholders to ensure the alignment of goals. From the SMSEs' leadership experience, building relationships facilitates the ease of balancing multiple needs concurrently. Relationship management acts as a bedrock for practices such as community engagement, skilful negotiating, and funder education. For example, SMSEs' pursuit of non-competitive unsolicited funding is more successful when there is a prior relationship with funders.

The proximity to the community allows the practising of meaningful relationships with beneficiaries. This is beneficial in aligning the social needs and mission. Furthermore, relationships with funders are key for repeat business and funding. Additionally, other employee practices facilitate the balancing of the mission and mandates. The table below provides excerpts of data that depict how the theme was developed.

Table 10.5: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 4

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>"Considering the inputs of the community and national priorities, the Board identified the strategic priorities for Hilcorp" (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p> <p>"The good relationship with community stakeholders gave S-Impact easy access" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"S-Impact partnered with community leaders collaborated in reaching different nationals for participatory assessments" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"The relationships are very key, as I say to have gotten a lot of repeat businesses. So, you create that relationship with your client. In that relationship, once you've created it, you find that the client asks you first if you want to do this, do you think you can do it before they even, you know, put it out there"</p> <p>"You also proactively seek and network and try to discover where people are at so that you can focus on some of the things, align missions with your funders, then that gives you a little bit of higher success"</p>	Relationships with the community, funders and stakeholders	Experiential relationship management	SMSE leaders' and employees' experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>"Other input considered included the views of community stakeholders on the needs of the communities served by Hilcorp, the role that the stakeholders felt Hilcorp could play, and national priorities" (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p>	<p>"It is walking the journey with people being there on the ground, understanding the challenges, and then presenting and being an advocate for change ... You understand what people's sufferings are and what their difficulties are"</p>	Leader proximity to the community	Experiential relationship management	SMSE leaders' and employees' experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>"We expect and hope to conclude discussions on funding mechanisms and finalise partnership arrangements before the end of the year" (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>"S-Impact has had experience in using social media platforms to reach out to young people and therefore approached [funder] and had discussions on their program" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"When we present to a corporate, we present our profile, and we let them know about our activities and our mission and values"</p> <p>"A process of going back and forth to iron out if indeed what you are proposing for will work"</p>	Experienced art of negotiation	Experiential relationship management	SMSE leaders' and employees' experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>"A Board of Trustees oversees the strategic planning, policy development, financial management and day-to-day running of the organisation" (<i>founding documents; proposal</i>).</p>	<p>"Need to understand different funders and what is their requirement. Then you find that in most cases, they all have something in common ..."</p>	Exposure to funders' requirements	Leader/employee art of project multitasking	SMSE leaders' and employees' experienced actions

<p>“Our project teams work collaboratively and never in silos. We believe that team members should not only be technical experts but also have a sincere passion for the projects they are involved in”. (<i>company profile</i>).</p>	<p>and you must be able to present their feedback in such a way that they understand it”</p> <p>“One of my biggest financial learning curves was working with [funder] projects. The department [DSD and DOH] it’s much more funding-based, while with USAID, it’s all invoice-based, you know, and you must make sure you know your systems are right, and your people are on top of it, and they meet the deadlines”</p>			and practices facilitate alignment
<p>“The Ugo team presented in this proposal has over 100 years of combined professional work experience in Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Learning (MERL) capacity development, including Routine Data Quality Audits (RDQA) gained from working with multiple projects through which a wide variety of organisations” (<i>proposal</i>)</p> <p>“The variety of training I have acquired at Hilcorp has changed my perspective (<i>annual report</i>).</p>	<p>“While we’re working on one programme, and that’s what we teach everyone, is let us look for another programme; when this one is finished, you can walk over to that programme”</p> <p>“But if you go over that programme, you must be skilled and multi-skilled. So, we invest a lot in training our staff during programmes”</p> <p>“But the advantage of this is that we multi-skill them. The only way you can survive in our organisation is to be multi-skilled”</p>	Practising multiskilling	Leader/employee art of project multitasking	SMSE leaders’ and employees’ experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>“I got hired at Hilcorp and enrolled in Higher Education and Training pursuing my studies to become a teacher. I am about to complete my course” (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“The first entry is to train them. We send the team here, we train them, and then after training, we mentor them [new staff]”</p> <p>“You have to create a culture of work right from the beginning, and you need to insist”</p>	Training staff on internal workings	Human resource dynamic practice to align	SMSE leaders’ and employees’ experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>“S-Impact found ways to increase its visibility in the communities by having support care workers directly on the ground” (C2, ARP2, p. 14)</p>	<p>“We structure and align them now once they’ve come on board, across the different activities. We don’t align them after onboarding”</p> <p>“You have to sort of educate your staff as well, your - your project staff to understand that they are working on a specific budget and a specific funded programme”</p>	Orientation of staff	Human resource dynamic practice to align	SMSE leaders’ and employees’ experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>“We are the people of S-Impact. Without its staff and Board, we would be nothing...It is the commitment and creativity of our teams that ensure we can meet demanding targets (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>“Our staff arrive, implement groups, accompany beneficiaries to clinics, support families to cope. That’s who we are” (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>“Dedicated, competent and skilled personnel” (<i>Board meeting minutes</i>)</p>	<p>“Yes, we say we are family. If you want to damage your brothers and sisters by doing something wrong, the family is going to act”</p> <p>“To me, this is family here; we’re family, you know there obviously is the odd chink in the armour, but generally, we’re all working for the same purpose, and it is like a family”</p> <p>“If you get the right people who are in the right mindset and are dedicated, I do think that you can get through, irrespective of whatever you’re up against”</p>	Family/social connection of staff	Human resource dynamic practice to align	SMSE leaders’ and employees’ experienced actions and practices facilitate alignment
<p>“The meeting considered the input of Hilcorp staff that had been made during a discussion on organisational direction led by an external facilitator” (<i>board meeting minutes</i>)</p>	<p>“If a person is not able to handle all the tasks ... we pair them so that they go together and assist each other”</p> <p>“Employees understand that they are the owners of the project. They understand that this is my project”</p>	Socialisation	Human resource dynamic practice to align	SMSE leaders’ and employees’ experience facilitates alignment

The leaders’ exposure and experience enhance their ability to interpret requirements and map them accordingly. This is evident in their experience in negotiations before and after obtaining funding and appraising the communities. The leadership in all the cases has been exposed to multiple funders’ ways of working within the sector, and this increases the requisite skills to

translate and enact multiple requirements concurrently. Furthermore, they are able to be nimble in practising different leadership styles as appropriate to manage different stakeholders.

The management leads the charge on project management prowess and multitasking. The leaders are hands-on in project management. For example, they manage a portfolio of funders and other stakeholders with a view of ensuring there is coordination. In that way, they implement and deliver on multiple funders' requirements seamlessly and with minimal tensions.

The core shared staff also act as roving project leads for all projects to ensure alignment. They ensure mapping of requirements with internal priorities is done from the funds' proposal stage, through to contract negotiations, and implementation. In addition, employee practices such as workload analysis and segregation of duties are actioned in a manner that allocates tasks and resources appropriately to minimise tensions.

Deliberate training and socialisation happen in the SMSEs to ensure a shared vision and that the staff are not only able to manage multiple funders but also understand the organisation's core activities. The deliberate training and socialisation also facilitate easy deployment of employees and their juggling across multiple projects, as well as conflicting demands. Ultimately, this enhances a sense of belonging and builds a culture of trust.

The leaders and management also practise and encourage comradeship, as well as social cohesion among the teams internally. Besides, leadership proximity to staff permits easy practising of transparent internal communication. This facilitates information flow, an important aspect in aligning multiple stakeholders as necessary. In all the cases, the staff are socially connected in various ways, and this helps in bolstering teamwork and alignment. There is a general sense that employees are family. This sort of family and social connection facilitates commitment and motivation among staff internally towards delivering on the multiple mandates. The staff go out of their way to deliver funders' mandates and ensure the organisations' missions are fulfilled.

10.9.1 Comparison with literature

The findings in this theme align with extant literature on the roles of leaders, managers and employees in SMSEs in facilitating the management of tensions at different levels. The study findings confirm that administrative leaders' or CEOs' previous background (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Klein et al., 2021; Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019; Ramus et al., 2018) and experience (Battilana et al., 2015; Besharov & Smith, 2014; Muñoz & Kimmitt, 2019; Ramus et al., 2018) facilitate the fulfilment of multiple outputs through ambidextrous means (Jay, 2013; Ramus et al., 2018).

Although social entrepreneurial identity has been suggested to explain the SE founders' ability to manage dual social-entrepreneurial tensions (Žur, 2021), the assumption that the alignment is only for dual tensions presents blind spots when multiple mandate tensions exist. Besides, the findings by Ramus et al. (2018) indicate that administrative leaders' proficiency in social, commercial, or both fields do not necessarily correlate with how social enterprises successfully manage dual social and commercial internal tensions. The present study's findings contradict those findings and show that the leaders' experience in managing multiple types of challenges and scenarios in the past facilitates their ability to juggle the SMSE functioning and deliver on different funder requirements. Furthermore, the examples in extant literature are based on leaders and employees navigating dual social and commercial mission tensions internally (Battilana, 2018; Battilana et al., 2017). This study's findings, however, expand the confines of the internal tensions managed by the leaders to other multiple internal tensions as they attempt to fulfil multiple funder mandates while foregrounding their mission.

Examples include how the SMSE staff cultivate relationships with communities, funders and other stakeholders with a view of managing tensions. The theme highlights that organisations do not do business with the organisations; rather, people do business with people, so individual relationship management experiences and practising are key. Additionally, the SMSE engagement with funders involves not so much the skills of the staff but their relationships with the funders and other stakeholders, especially the community. Besides, the actors' art of interpretation, negotiations, project management, and socialisation facilitates SMSEs in navigating conflicting requirements.

The study findings also extend the works of Ramus et al. (2018) and Battilana (2018), which highlight the role of leadership in SEs. Specifically, the current findings emphasise how vertical socialisation facilitates the balance of mission and mandates. The literature on ambidexterity highlights how organisational practices are practised through the socialisation process (March, 1991). With respect to social enterprise and hybrid organisation literature, vertical socialisation involves practices that "routinise organisational values" (Battilana, 2018, p. 1293) through formal means, such as intensive training and informal methods (Jankelowitz, 2020). The role of vertical socialisation, akin to top-down, is also empirically demonstrated in how SMSE policies, codes of conduct, norms, and core values are disseminated.

Additionally, the present findings highlight horizontal socialisation in how shared core staff members act as "value carriers, sustaining the values of the organisation and transmitting them" (Cornforth, 2014, p. 13) among other staff, the communities, and the funders. Horizontal

socialisation across the SMSEs' employees is also empirically demonstrated in staff pairing, training, mentoring, and proactive social connections. The socialisation process facilitates the grounding of routines within the organisations and the management of various multiple tensions. For instance, this takes place through building trust and relationships with funders in the solicitation and fund-raising routine processes, training staff in the course of managing multiple funding agreements, and leadership role in coordinating the reporting of multiple goals.

The study also extends the role of employees' actions in facilitating the management of multiple internal tensions beyond dual tensions. Previous research has looked more at the role of employees' motivation (Battilana & Dorado, 2010), values (Besharov & Smith, 2014), and identities (Battilana et al., 2017) when managing dual social and commercial tensions internally. This study extends these findings when there are multiple internal tensions rather than the dual tensions covered in the literature. This process is enhanced through portfolio rationale approaches. Employees view all projects through the lens of ensuring alignment across projects.

10.9.2 Theme 4 conclusion

The role of leaders in relationship management to ensure alignment and how that cascades to lower-level staff is demonstrated and empirically seen. The role of the leaders and staff is important in leveraging community relationships, internal-external assessment, mapping, enactment, and measuring outputs. Furthermore, they demonstrate to funders, financiers, and other stakeholders that the organisation has fulfilled its multiple mandates as well as delivered on its mission. The leaders' proximity to staff and the community is key to ensuring the delivery of quality projects, while also ensuring internal structures are in place to manage ensuing tensions. This also emphasises the important role of up-skilling and training. This study's findings extend the work of Ramus et al. (2018) by highlighting the role of leaders and employees in training and socialising among the staff. This assists in ensuring the organisation's way of working, organising, and alignment are uniformly undertaken internally. Additionally, the role of employees and HR practices in the socialisation process to facilitate orientation and mentoring of other employees is empirically seen. This is facilitated by "careful recruitment, induction and mentoring as a way of reproducing values" (Cornforth, 2014, p. 13).

10.10 Theme 5: Value capture changes leading to value creation changes

The SMSEs practise innovative ways of retaining income [value capture] from multiple sources to fund internal core activities [value creation]. This is through the use of unrestricted funding to fund

or align the core activities as necessary. For instance, some of the cases utilise the income they receive from commercial ventures and earned income to supplement financing activities deemed core to the mission.

Therefore, the cases demonstrate the adaptations they make at the value capture stage and how these decisions subsequently influence how they adapt the value creation, as well as delivery mechanisms from the onset of programme planning. Consequently, the proposal-seeking and writing processes take into account all these ‘pre-meditated’ measures. The M&E function and capabilities facilitate ensuring the value capture, creation, and delivery adaptations align the multiple requirements with the mission. The table below provides excerpts of data that depict how the theme was developed.

Table 10.6: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 5

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>“This year saw us take a giant step towards self-sustainability by purchasing our own head office building ... it is ours, and we are proud to have a great asset” (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“We managed to find assets that we could rent to the projects. For example, many projects don’t want to buy cars. So, we have gone into the market and bought cars, and we charge them for each kilometre that they travel. This has helped us to have reserves”.</p> <p>“In most cases, if the funder doesn’t pay on time, we struggle to pay our operational expenses, which necessitates us to build with some reserves. So now we have some kind of reserves</p>	Deliberate earned income generation	Adapting Value capture and then adapting value creation	BMI to align multiple goals
<p>“As a National Credit Regulator (NCR) accredited development finance provider, embedded in our interventions is access to funding through a revolving loan fund ring-fenced for each project, where applicable” (<i>proposal</i>).</p> <p>“These gardens act as a promising strategy to decrease food insecurity because of their ability to provide our lower-income beneficiary households with access to nutritious food, resulting in better health and financial savings” (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“For example, De Beers will be charged may be shared services which are R100, but you will only realise out of the R100 maybe, R60 goes to salaries and leaving R40 with [C4]. So, it has kind of helped us to have some kind of liquidity”</p> <p>“Those fixed term contracts help a lot with extra funds from fees ... they gave us some start-up” (C1, O1, L284)</p>	Innovative unrestricted funding generation	Adapting value capture and then adapting value creation	BMI to align multiple goals
<p>“Increasing the capacity...to earn an income and ... social enterprises” (<i>board meeting minutes</i>)</p> <p>“Damco is further registered as a Private College with the Department of Higher Education” (<i>proposal</i>)</p> <p>“Several colleges sub-contracted C1to present the training to 263 learners on their behalf” (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>“We were working on a programme where we were paid a management fee. So, we built up a bit of reserves. So, we have got, we have money. And we use that, if necessary”</p> <p>“We started as a consulting company of a group of consultants. So, we started with that model where we are consultants”</p>	unrestricted funding facilitates flexibility	Adapting Value capture and then adapting value creation	BMI to align multiple goals

<p>“The purchase of our own place – our new offices that add to our self-sustainability” (<i>annual report</i>).</p> <p>“There is backpacker-style group accommodation for up to 30 guests” (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“To remain sustainable is really our procurement and fundraising department; it’s to continuously apply for work ... Is to try to secure our sustainability by getting sufficient work in money to cover salaries and cover expenses”</p>	<p>Funding pursuit funding uncertainties</p>	<p>Adapting value creation for sustainability</p>	<p>BMI to align multiple goals</p>
<p>“S-Impact has developed a social enterprise model to address their long-term needs for sustainability. The social enterprise is Pty Ltd that conducts profit-driven activities; the profit is then used to fund C2 NPO work” (<i>proposal</i>).</p>	<p>“The donor space has shifted...Now, what tends to happen is that they will come to you and say, this is our model. Can you help us to implement it”</p> <p>“They issue out, let’s say, call for proposal and open. But they’ve already decided budget how much it is; they’ve already decided what outcomes they want to see”</p>	<p>Value co- creation with funders to manage tensions</p>	<p>Value creation and delivery adaptations to manage multiplicities</p>	<p>BMI to align multiple goals</p>
<p>“Cost-share plan has been developed ... with related documentation proving all cost shared by the organisation and it is kept on a separate file” (<i>policy document</i>)</p>	<p>“Many other funders request for match funding. So now we use shared services, the salaries, that the components that are being paid for by other projects, can be used as match funding for the projects that require them ... that’s how we manage the budget”</p>	<p>Cost sharing to demonstrate ownership</p>	<p>Value creation and delivery adaptations to manage multiplicities</p>	<p>BMI to align multiple goals</p>
<p>“GIZ is currently engaging DSD on this project as they see value in a co-implementation strategy” (<i>annual report brief</i>)</p>	<p>“We made the proposal in the first stage, and we were chosen. So, going forward to the next stages...it was like we were writing this together...it’s like we are a team with these people, and all of us want our proposal to win or our project to win at the end of the day”</p> <p>“In terms of implementation ... this RTMT is more of implementation with DSD and UNICEF where we developed a tool for assessing child wellbeing tracking and then implemented it as of rapid assessment for child wellbeing across the country”</p> <p>“We find that if it’s not working, us, [funder A], and [financier B] will sit down and replan. So, we must be prepared to change direction. So, it’s music to our ears”</p>	<p>Co-designing and co-creation adaptations to align stakeholders</p>	<p>Value creation and delivery adaptations to manage multiplicities</p>	<p>BMI to align multiple goals</p>
<p>“We have recently started looking at possibilities of financing through partnership development (PPP) and crowd-funding our Research and Development of innovative digital solutions” (<i>annual report brief</i>)</p>	<p>“We would partner with some professors to write reports...And then we’ll say, okay, for this specific report or assignment, how much of this money came to us”</p> <p>“So we started with partnering with people like the University of Stellenbosch ... we are bringing these partners on board and so we kind of riding on their names. We would strategically make sure that the Umhlungu [white race] is coming with us and somehow the balungus [white people] will be quite excited and they will give us the work”</p>	<p>Opportunistic collaborations to implement and deliver</p>	<p>Value creation and delivery adaptations to manage multiplicities</p>	<p>BMI to align multiple goals</p>

This theme illuminates how in this sector, the practice is to adapt value capture first, then value creation adaptations take place to balance the mission and mandates. The SMSEs use premeditated cost measures to ensure core activities are incorporated and funded to fit within the various budgets availed by funders and financiers. This is unlike traditional for-profits that create value and then capture the value through profit. Additionally, when writing the proposals, the cases use business concepts and tools innovatively to balance mandates and mission. For example, they use business concepts such as having a pre-determined profit formula [margin], which they incorporate in each contract agreement from the onset and then align the required staff costs, travel, other costs, and delivery mode. Similarly, budgeting includes a predetermined cost allocation process that ensures multiple needs are fulfilled concurrently.

In other instances, the organisations utilise previously earned unrestricted income in the gap-filling of activities they consider a priority and which funders have not fully funded. Additionally, they sometimes use some mundane ways to raise unrestricted funding, such as selling waste paper to finance core priority activities. They also build reserves by charging a management fee for some project assignments. The reserves are then used, where necessary, to complement the financing of core activities, pay for core staff salaries and ensure financial sustainability.

In some proposals, they leverage funding from other existing projects innovatively whereby whatever is paid for by another project can also be used as match funding for another project during proposal development. This practice commonly referred to as cost-sharing enables them to have a portfolio project management approach that they present as a value proposition to funders due to the inherent economies of scale.

The cases also adapt co-designing, co-creation, and co-delivering projects with stakeholders as appropriate. Through leveraging the co-designing of projects, they gain the advantage when the proposal bids come out. When RFPs are issued, funders incorporate some of the baseline and co-designed community priorities. Consequently, the SMSEs involved in the co-design phase would be the preferred implementers to obtain the funding for these activities. Tactically, co-designing facilitates the SMSEs to work backwards in anticipation of being granted new funding and how they subsequently alter the programme implementation, akin to value creation adaptations.

During contract negotiations, SMSEs employ the art of negotiations with funders, and in a way optimise this 'co-creation' phase, to interpret and map activities to their advantage. The use of mapping tools, such as Gantt charts, facilitates the alignment of core activities as they break down

the project into smaller manageable chunks that the funders relate to. The SMSEs also prepare initial implementation and M&E plans but adapt them to align the activities. The plans sampled at the proposal stage were adapted after the projects were awarded, demonstrating how the cases adapt the activities appropriately, akin to value creation adaptations, to align multiple stakeholders.

During project enactment, the organisations adapt project implementation strategies, akin to value delivery adaptations. Strategies such as co-delivery practices are used to manage potential tensions with funders, for example, flexibilities in joint implementation, such as joint-site visits with funders. Incorporating such co-implementation strategies allows funders and other stakeholders to be part of the projects and address potential misunderstandings from the onset, while ensuring the activities remain within the auspices of the overall organisation's mission.

10.10.1 Comparison with literature

The study's findings extend recent social enterprise literature pointing to SMSEs adapting their funding arrangements and contracts [value capture changes], to drive their central mission (Klein et al., 2021). The literature has been scant on how these organisations actually achieve this internally. The findings in this study theme give insight into how they navigate the value capture and subsequent value creation adaptations. Specifically, they highlight SMSEs using Entrepreneurship-as-Practice approaches (Champenois et al., 2020), while an important finding is how value capture adaptations are essential to fund core activities in the SMSEs. This is through unrestricted funding, which essentially is not restricted by the funders' requirements (Reficco et al., 2021). Consequently, unrestricted funding is used to fund and align core activities, fundraising initiatives, and to manage costs during 'rough times', such as payment of staff costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SMSEs develop cost recovery models, such as profit formulae and cost-plus fixed fee income contracts at the proposal and contracting stages.

From a practice perspective, business models are a form of abstract artefacts (Berglund & Glaser, 2022). The study findings highlight that the stability of the core mission in SMSEs plays a role in how they adapt their value capture and, subsequently, value creation. Recent social enterprise literature suggests the external funding environment uncertainties behave SMSEs to adapt their business models in order to accomplish their social missions (McDonald et al., 2021). However, these adaptations may be a complex process. While in for-profits value creation leads to value capture through profit recognitions (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Foss & Saebi, 2018), this study points to an important nuanced finding in how SMSEs adapt business model artefacts internally. They first secure unrestricted earned income, akin to value capture, and subsequently, adapt their

value creation as evidenced through mission achievement and fulfilment of multiple funder mandates. In other words, value-capture adaptations precede value-creation adaptations. Additionally, the value capture adaptations are predetermined and applied from the proposal stages and not conducted as an afterthought.

Literature holds that the subsequent 'tinkering' of value creation and delivery efforts [BMI], may come at the expense of SMSEs directing efforts away from their core missions and hence, drifting from the originally stated social mission (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Klein et al., 2021; Kwong et al., 2017). However, this study's findings point to a sequence where the SMSEs' value capture adaptations are founded on their need to fund core mission-related activities at the beginning of the proposal stages. Specifically, the study identifies how SMSEs adjust the funding regimes and 'profit formulae' and subsequently demonstrate to the multiple funders how they create value for them through the manner in which proposals and annual reports are presented. This is done in a concurrent fashion while creating value relating to their core mission activities.

Extant literature argues that mission alignment is being observed in SEs that pursue dual social and commercial goals with alterations of their business models (Jankelowitz, 2020; Klein et al., 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021a). The study findings attempt to extend these findings indicating how the SMSEs actually align multiple mandates by shifting their activities internally, adapting earned income strategies, adapting internal procedures, and nimbleness in decision-making at the proposal stage. This sets the stage for subsequent alignment during implementation.

Therefore, the theme points to value capture and creation changes as part of BMI micro foundations' role in aligning multiple mandates from project planning to report stages. Indeed McDonald et al. (2021) argues that "understanding the mission's role and stability in BMI is an important topic for discovery." (pg. 9). In answering this call, this study evidences that the SMSEs mission is the central factor that enables proactive successful BMI. Even though none of the SMSEs actually used the words business model innovation, yet all had sophisticated agile ways of altering value capture and value creation, defined as BMI (Foss & Saebi, 2018), to manage multiple mandates.

The study findings also contribute to a seminal study on social enterprises innovating models to address tensions (Yunus et al., 2010). Specifically, the study extends the current discourse on how BMI assists SMSEs in navigating dual tensions (Klein et al., 2021; McDonald et al., 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021) and social innovation (Littlewood et al., 2022). BMI could be observed through adaptations in the current business model elements of how the SMSEs beneficiaries

change over time (value creation changes); their cost structure and revenue models change over time (value capture changes); their project delivery mechanisms change over time (value delivery changes); and in some cases, changes in funder and customer base occur (value proposition changes).

10.10.2 Theme 5 conclusion

This theme highlights how the value capture changes are utilised innovatively to fund value creation changes from the initial proposal design and writing. Studies in BMI point to how organisations, especially for-profits, have previously adapted their value creation and delivery to ultimately lead to value capture changes at the bottom line (Foss & Saebi, 2018; Saebi et al., 2019). Those studies assume the organisations to have the ability to create value that, in turn, captures value. The SMSE cases in this study, however, being in resource-constrained contexts, are considered to lack resources, accentuating their resource dependency. Therefore, the SMSE cases in this context navigate uncertainties to obtain multiple funding resources that enable them to achieve their missions. The findings point to how they 'pre-meditate' the generation and subsequent utilisation of unrestricted income to finance activities that are core to their mission, and how this shapes the other subsequent proposals with other funders. They also have innovative adaptations in value creation and value delivery that facilitate the alignment of their mission and the multiple mandates. All this is navigated while ensuring these organisations are foregrounding their mission in a simultaneous fashion.

10.11 Dynamic artefacts (routine dynamics) to simultaneously manage multiple conflicting goals

The literature on routines is still fragmented (Schmidt & Santamaria-Alvarez, 2021). The definitions in this study are nuanced, with routines rooted in the organisational economics literature that depicts routines as capabilities (Nosella et al., 2012). In other words, routines as recipes (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017) to achieve given goals. The as-practice literature sometimes combines routines and practices (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017), and other times nuances routines from a long-term repetitive perspective (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017).

Therefore, in as-practice literature and the Carnegie School of Management, time is an essential component of routines, and practices can be repetitive over time or as patterns employed repetitively (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017). However, from the evidence, the study did not focus on whether routines are stable over time but on how they can be dynamic to facilitate the

alignment of multiple goals even in short time spaces [as recipes]; hence, magnifying them from a capability perspective (Feldman et al., 2021). In other words, this is extending the notion of routines being depicted as entities (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011), allowing simultaneous management of multiple goals in short time spans, and not only being seen as processual over time with the formation of patterns as is argued in routine literature (Feldman et al., 2016).

The study's findings highlight the role of dynamic artefacts within routines in facilitating the alignment of multiple goals and tensions (D'Adderio, 2014). As part of routines, the cases utilise artefacts dynamically in ways that facilitate disparate actions concurrently. Artefacts are defined as the "formal design of a routine ... such as rules, schedules, and standard operating procedures, and the routine itself" (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012, p. 26), in order to standardise or reorganise the activities performed. While the use of artefacts may be useful in understanding how organisations deal with internal tensions disparately, how this is simultaneously achieved has not been clear in the literature (D'Adderio, 2014; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017). This is because artefacts are presented as the foundations or points of departure for undertaking disparate activities (Costa Júnior et al., 2022). The study thus attempts to extend the recent discourse on the use of artefacts beyond for-profit contexts as embodied in as-practice literature (Berglund & Glaser, 2022).

Artefacts are instantiated within routines (S. Turner & Rindova, 2012), and within practices as abstracts, materials, and narratives (Berglund & Glaser, 2022). In the study, the dynamic artefacts act as "boundary objects of sorts" (Berglund & Glaser, 2022, p. 172) to balance mission and mandates. Interestingly, the organisations have centralised artefacts that are adaptive at the same time. Dynamic artefacts facilitate the SMSEs to leverage social needs within the mission, interpret, map, enact and measure mandates and mission simultaneously. For example, all the cases have centralised tools, templates, and documents that facilitate the management of all projects and can be customised as SOP addendums to address nuances in requirements across the phases. All these artefacts are important in facilitating the fulfilment of multiple requirements concurrently and they offer dynamic capabilities to the organisations to simultaneously manage multiple requirements.

The study's findings also give insight into how routine activities are utilised innovatively to address multiple concurrent goals, for example, how M&E routine activities are undertaken to manage multiple competing priorities across project phases. Another example is how HR routines are leveraged to manage various tensions internally. In all cases, the recruitment of staff, a common HR routine, is practised in a dynamic fashion to manage stakeholders and internal staff tensions concurrently. They recruit field staff from beneficiaries and the communities they come from. This

facilitates employees' commitment, allows easy performance management, and eases the management of multiple mandates and the core mission as aligned with the community. Additionally, they incorporate community leaders in employee selection routine processes. This gives the community a sense of involvement and assists the organisation in managing community tensions, such as biased recruitments at the community level. Ultimately, this facilitates the legitimacy of the organisation's social mission.

Promotion and performance management are other routines that are adapted to fulfil multiple purposes. All cases prefer promoting "from within" rather than hiring outside because they believe this is how the staff understands to navigate the multiple internal demands simultaneously.

The cases adapt and adopt routines as they deem fit to manage tensions. The use of IT and digitisation facilitates the orchestration of routines and artefacts to manage multiple mandates and the mission. Furthermore, while reporting can be viewed as a common routine in project management (Mair, 2020), the SMSEs use it to explore and exploit simultaneously. Therefore, reporting acts as a dynamic routine to balance mission and multiple mandates. The findings in themes 6 to 10 demonstrate how routines as capabilities and dynamic artefacts facilitate SMSEs to align multiple goals within organisations, specifically, how dynamic artefacts in SMSEs facilitate the alignment of mission and mandates across the projects' phases.

10.12 Theme 6: The use of monitoring and evaluation proactively to balance mission and mandate

While M&E is a common retroactive routine in monitoring projects, this study's findings point to its proactive use as instrumental to balancing the SMSEs' mission-centric actions with the expectations and requirements of the funders and other stakeholders. The importance of M&E as a function and capability enables the SMSEs to dynamically align organisational mission and multiple mandates from the pre-proposal, proposal, contract negotiation, implementation, and reporting phases, as evident across projects. On the one hand, M&E is an approach that is instrumental in how the SMSEs manage multiple mandates while articulating their mission simultaneously. On the other hand, M&E tools, procedures, and templates act as dynamic artefacts to translate and map multiple mandates and mission. The table below provides excerpts of data that depicts how the theme was developed.

Table 10.7: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 6

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>"The results from the MER system are also used by S-Impact management to improve service delivery to OVC and their families and the management of all social work activities" (<i>proposal</i>).</p> <p>"Ugo also provides contractual technical assistance on monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"For me, this is M&E. So, I am trying to show you, where did we begin? Where are we at? What are the key parameters that are of interest to the board? ... So, this is data, it is presenting the data back to decision-makers, to policymakers, to people who can make a judgement of how we are doing, this is all M&E"</p> <p>"When we present to a corporate, we present our profile, and we let them know about our activities and our mission and values"</p>	M&E used to align funders	M&E as a dynamic routine	M&E proactive use to align multiple requirements
<p>"S-Impact theory of change for positively influencing the health and economic resilience of vulnerable youth and their associated families" (<i>proposal</i>)</p> <p>"Our actions influence whether we will be successful and meaningful to both our beneficiaries and our funders" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"The funders, they come to us, they say we want to do this project, this is how we want to do it, can you support us? So, we know that it's something that we have done, but we have done it in a different way. So, then we'll say, okay, we can support you; it's not very far from whatever we're doing. It's just different in terms of the approach"</p> <p>"We populate it on a very simple tool that helps the programme understand because when you do these things, you don't complicate programmes. You try as much as possible to simplify it for the people that are going to implement because they need to understand where the gap is"</p>	Art of interpretation using theory of change	M&E as a dynamic routine	M&E proactive use to align multiple requirements
<p>"We specialise in the management of projects in various fields and on different scales" (<i>proposal</i>)</p> <p>"Damco has the capacity and the logistical know-how to roll out national projects rapidly, reaching targets within budget and on time" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"Project management that we utilise helps us a lot to be agile, and be to meet our targets and be able to change if we need to"</p> <p>"The project managers really jump around between programmes ... so where there are certain people that you can't put 100% LOE. Those are the ones that we can use between projects"</p> <p>"The roles are really interchangeable. It's really in terms of on a needs basis what needs to be done"</p>	Project management multitasking	Active use of M&E function to multitask	M&E proactive use to align multiple requirements
<p>"However, as the program proceeds, things change ... So, we need to go back, update that M&E plan and we also have like an operational plan on site"</p> <p>"Ugo also provides contractual technical assistance on monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"within also our M&E systems we've got also different actual SOPs... for instance, M&E processes, M&E functions, data flow in general, DQA...,data ethics"</p> <p>"We have been able to custom-make tools that give us information in real-time. And that only doesn't support the funder. It supports also our internal planning"</p> <p>"We pull the data from CIBIMS [funder database] and migrate it to our own database, then we start analysing based on what we want as S-Impact. It informs us better"</p>	Dynamic M&E tools	M&E dynamic artefacts	M&E proactive use to align multiple requirements

<p>"The Ugo team presented in this proposal has over 100 years of combined professional work experience in Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Learning (MERL) capacity development, including Routine Data Quality Audits (RDQA) gained from working with multiple projects through which a wide variety of organisations" (proposal)</p>	<p>"M&E is used in pulling reports together and quality control"</p> <p>"This report [annual report]...is a practical way of utilising M&E skills as well"</p> <p>"We do different reports and then we pull different reports for different purposes. Also, for the funders, we still pull those reports"</p>	<p>M& use to demonstrate report and impact</p>	<p>M&E use to enhance concurrent reporting</p>	<p>M&E proactive use to align multiple requirements</p>
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Through the theory of change (ToC), the SMSEs start with the end goal [social mission] and work backwards as the mechanism or bridge for the alignment between mission and mandates. Specifically, the SMSEs ensure the underlying community needs are infused within the mission and proposed activities. They also use ToC to demonstrate to funders as well as other stakeholders how the impact would be achieved. This is attained by SMSEs shadowing proposals to demonstrate their intention to fulfil multiple requirements but still retain key aspects of their mission activities. For instance, a review of some successful proposals evidently shows how they present the entire organisation's business and operation model, visually indicating how units complement each other in project implementation while shadowing mission attainment. This pre-empted to the funders of how the SMSEs are structured but also demonstrates the art of translating existing resources to deliver on their mission.

M&E routines are undertaken in ways that manage multiple priorities simultaneously and ensure alignment. The importance of M&E as a function and capability to align organisational mission and mandates from the proposal stage, contract negotiation, implementation, and reporting phases was evident across projects. Through 'piggy-back' practising, they interpret requirements, such as target beneficiaries, as highlighted in RFPs, and present them in a fashion that fulfils funders' requirements while ensuring core activities remain intact. Sample proposals reviewed in all cases indicate how the SMSEs articulate the theory of change in varied interventions to foreground the mission by using M&E approaches. Hence, they make it look as if they are meeting the funder's needs but they are also foregrounding their theory of change.

Additionally, the use of language in proposals, M&E plans, Gantt charts, and reports is used to articulate the core theory of change explicitly and how it is applied to the various funders' documents. Therefore, SMSEs make it look as if they are structured merely towards meeting the funder's needs but they are also foregrounding their theory of change. Sometimes, the language is explicit on the theory of change as relates to the alignment of funders' mandates and the mission. In other instances, the language is implicit and broad to accommodate different

mandates and the mission simultaneously. Hence, similar language may be used to signal their broader mission and, at the same time, infuse specific requirements made by the funder.

For effective translation and mapping, overarching M&E tools such as M&E plans are used to facilitate proposal writing while incorporating nuanced funder plans. M&E artefacts such as data quality assessment tools and M&E online applications are also utilised to multitask and project manage multiple projects at various phases. The different M&E tools and templates are also key in concurrent measurement validation and reporting.

The SMSE employees appreciate the importance of M&E and apply these capabilities to facilitate project management and ensure multiple projects achieve key objectives while ensuring a concurrent mission focus. The staff employ project management practices such as the use of critical path analysis to isolate core activities that need to be fulfilled irrespective of other 'ancillary' activities by the funder. Additionally, the staff act as real project managers for projects by ensuring activities across multiple mandates are aligned with the core mission.

The importance of M&E is summed up by H-Inc's M&E manager, who indicates, "M&E requires the CEO to understand the importance of M&E ... It requires the project managers to understand their role, the importance and they also play a part in M&E ... the field ... needs to understand the role of M&E; they need to know the importance of submitting their reports and what it is going to fit into" (C4, M4, L190).

10.12.1 Comparison with literature

Despite the potential use of M&E in facilitating the fulfilment of both funder mandates and mission achievement retroactively, there is a dearth of literature on how M&E facilitates continuous and simultaneous proactive internal alignment of multiple mandates and mission (Battilana, 2018). In their seminal paper on monitoring social impact, Ebrahim and Rangan (2014) highlight the importance of M&E in social enterprises to track their mission-related activities and targeted beneficiaries retrospectively. M&E routines are usually set up once social enterprises have received funding with the view of tracking how mandates are fulfilled (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). How M&E is proactively used to balance mission and mandates is a hallmark finding in this study's theme. M&E is used to proactively direct how the SMSE maps the priorities internally and not only to reactively monitor and measure – the way M&E is traditionally depicted in the literature (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). The present findings extend the use of M&E to not only track and report on existing and past projects (Mueller-Hirth, 2012), but also emphasise how to use M&E in pre-empting to funders' core mission focus that aligns with communities.

While M&E is a common routine in the social enterprise and non-profit sector in defining the theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016), it has not received much attention in the literature (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014), specifically on its potential to act as a dynamic abstract artefact (Berglund & Glaser, 2022) in balancing mission and mandates. Besides, blind spots exist on how M&E works, what it actually does, and why it is important. The present empirical findings demonstrate how the SMSEs use M&E across project phases to demonstrate the theory of change from different perspectives simultaneously, while they ensure project management from the proposal stages, contract negotiations, implementation, and reporting phases. M&E also facilitates the organisations' tracking of outputs and outcomes that relate to the target beneficiaries and set activities embodied in the social enterprise's core social mission. The SMSEs develop clear outputs and outcomes related to their missions from the onset and superimpose them over the mandates' requirements. They attain this by nuancing the mission scale [for example, target beneficiaries] and mission scope [specific activities] (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014).

The findings in this theme argue that M&E is an abstract dynamic artefact that is a central part of SMSEs to facilitate the alignment of multiple mandates and the core social mission. The table below depicts the instantiation of M&E from abstract, material, and narrative artefacts as adapted from the typology by Berglund and Galser (2022).

Table 10.8: M&E as an abstract artefact adapted from Berglund and Glaser (2022)

	Definition	Examples
Abstract	Conceptual devices that help SMSEs develop theories of change, which in turn, help them navigate multiple stakeholders and simultaneously align mission-mandates tensions	M&E theory of change articulation Business models aligning multiplicities SMSE hybridity identity
Material	'Things' and material substance processes, procedures, and tools central to the alignment of mission-mandates	Enterprise resource planning systems Financial and M&E systems Digital applications
Narrative	Sensemaking enablers defined by their ability to facilitate the synchronisation and alignment of multiple conflicting goals across individuals and stakeholders in meaningful ways	M&E plans and log-frames Annual reports Timesheets Audit report

Using the as-practice theorising, these findings argue that M&E, as an abstract artefact, helps SMSEs define the theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014) and hence, facilitates the management of mission–mandates tensions. This is similar to how business models support for-

profits in the entrepreneurial process (Berglund & Glaser, 2022). Through tactical mimicry (Dey & Teasdale, 2016), SMSEs use M&E to fulfil mandates with an eye on the core mission. This is through the relevant business models that allow the balancing of multiple mandates (Littlewood et al., 2022), while ensuring the legitimisation of the SMSE identity and core mission (Grimes et al., 2019).

M&E also facilitates the instantiation of material and narrative artefacts, as defined by Berglund and Glaser (2022). The requisite M&E systems, digital applications, DQA tools, and reporting applications act as material artefacts to facilitate fulfilling multiple mandates and mission simultaneously. M&E facilitates sense-making practising (Johannisson, 2011) within documents to articulate relevant information to varied stakeholders simultaneously. The use of language within documents such as M&E plans, M&E log-frames, and annual reports illustrates the use of M&E lingo as a narrative artefact to articulate achievements to multiple stakeholders simultaneously. Therefore, M&E acts as a 'canvas' (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014), and an abstract artefact (Berglund & Glaser, 2022) to facilitate SMSEs developing their theory of change to balance mission and mandates.

10.12.2 Theme 6 conclusion

The evidence suggests that ToC is an important aspect of M&E from the outset. ToC is not project-specific as depicted in literature (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016), rather it is viewed holistically as long-term starting with the end goal [social mission] and working backward as the bridge for the alignment between the mission and mandates. The study findings also extend the use of the M&E as an abstract dynamic artefact to enhance the organisational ability to simultaneously balance mandate and mission tensions. Furthermore, the evidence suggests the role of M&E and its proactive use to manage multiple mandates while foregrounding the organisation's mission. M&E is actively used as a dynamic routine to balance multiple requirements. M&E is utilised to interpret requirements and articulate the theory of change that foregrounds SMSEs' mission while highlighting the attainment of other mandates.

Similar to how Berglund and Glaser (2022) unpack business models as abstract dynamic artefacts, the theme also highlights how M&E manifests as abstract, material, and narrative artefacts in dealing with multiple goals. Therefore, the theme zooms in on the important role of M&E in undertaking multiple goals [as a dynamic artefact] and managing multiplicities concurrently (Feldman et al., 2021).

10.13 Theme 7: Centralised dynamic artefacts and nimble functions to facilitate alignment

Centralised dynamic artefacts facilitate the SMSEs to leverage social needs within the mission, interpret, map, enact and measure mandates and mission simultaneously. The cases have centralised artefacts and nimble capabilities that are key in facilitating the proposal development, monitoring, tracking, and reporting to various stakeholders. The artefacts can also be adapted as appropriate. This is key to ensuring that the various mandates, as well as the social mission priorities, are accomplished. The table below provides excerpts of data that depicts how the theme was developed.

Table 10.9: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 7

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>"This policy and procedure manual is to provide guidance to all donors and or stakeholders regarding the effective and efficient management of S-Impact" (<i>policy manual document</i>)</p> <p>"The major functional areas at Head Office include finance" (<i>proposal</i>)</p> <p>"The finance team will be responsible for all key aspects of the financial management including producing accurate financial reports and accompanying project GLs, render regular review and updating of the project budget" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"Financial systems would have to be uniform because the organisation has to be audited at the end of the year"</p> <p>"You can do 999 entries under one company. So, we allocate one number to a specific funder or project and then we capture it altogether according to budget lines"</p> <p>"Use Pastel Evolution so that they can link every single account to a funder ... Each has been allocated a funder prefix, and then they can extract the information from the ledger and then put that into the reports of the funders"</p>	Centralised and agile accounting/finance systems	Centralised dynamic artefacts	Centralised dynamic artefacts that are nimble to align multiplicities simultaneously
<p>"The integrated MER plan and system underpins the successful implementation of S-Impact service delivery and the quantitative and qualitative measurement thereof. The results from the MER system are also used by S-Impact management to improve service delivery to OVC and their families and the management of all social work activities" (<i>policy document</i>).</p>	<p>"Within also our M&E systems, we've got also different actual SOPs, which we have standard SOPs; I think if we look at the SOPs, which we have between M&E and programmes, it's quite a lot. But then that talks also in terms of us being compliant and actually talking to quality reporting"</p>	Centralised and agile M&E systems/capabilities	Centralised dynamic artefacts	Centralised dynamic artefacts that are nimble to align multiplicities simultaneously
<p>"A full version of the audited annual financial statements has been made available to members. Annual financial statements will be distributed to major donors and funders" (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>"We work from a point where if a funder sends an auditor to us to audit our project, we must get a clean audit. So, we've been able to get clean audits in every project over the years. And that has given confidence to some of the funders to continue trusting and working with us over the years".</p> <p>"The financial audit was such an eye opener in terms of what we need to be compliant with in terms of organisational strategy, management"</p>	Audit report to dynamically report to multiple stakeholders	Centralised dynamic artefacts	Centralised dynamic artefacts that are nimble to align multiplicities simultaneously

<p>"Standard operating procedure for monthly internal data quality audit" (SOPs)</p> <p>"Standard operating procedures (including data collection methods, data sources and operational definitions of indicators" (SOPs)</p>	<p>"That is why I was using the word adapt; you then must adapt your policies to incorporate some of those elements that your donors are very particular about"</p> <p>"So, at the main account, we do have policies. We do your HR policy, your finance policy, or your supply chain policies. So that it governs us on what needs to be done. But also, we do have SOPs"</p>	<p>SOPs within policies to allow nimbleness</p>	<p>Nimbleness ability to adapt and adopt</p>	<p>Centralised Dynamic artefacts that are nimble to align multiplicities simultaneously</p>
<p>"Damco has implemented the Timesheet Management System that shows actual time worked on the project to support all salary expenses" (SOP_timesheet)</p>	<p>"We also use timesheets, especially the shared services also; they also use timesheets to report what they are doing on each and every project"</p> <p>"The timesheets help us to know what people are doing. Each and every person"</p>	<p>Nimble timesheet tool to manage time on different projects</p>	<p>Nimbleness ability to adapt and adopt</p>	<p>Centralised dynamic artefacts that are nimble to align multiplicities simultaneously</p>

As part of the centralised artefacts, the SMSEs use business tools and systems to balance mission and mandates. They have centralised accounting and M&E systems that allow the mapping of multiple projects, enhance project management and facilitate concurrent output reporting. Four cases use the SAGE Evolution accounting system to segment and track projects separately with unique accounting codes, but at the same time, the system can consolidate data as appropriate to account for core activities.

Furthermore, the SMSEs utilise a portfolio of policies that they standardise and replicate to balance mission and mandates. They have SOPs that are adapted from central policies and utilised as addendums to fulfil multiple funders' requirements. Essentially, the SOPs depict dynamic artefacts that serve multiple funder mandates. For example, they have M&E plans with standard language that can be adapted to multiple funders and financier requirements. In addition, the cases are able to facilitate the simplification of funder tools for internal alignment.

The effective enactment of multiple projects is achieved by using project management tools that are also centralised, but that can also be adapted to facilitate multitasking as well as output measurement. As an example, the employees' level of effort is captured and split between different funders by staff completing specific timesheets as part of the HR routine process. The timesheet is an example of an artefact utilised to facilitate different objectives simultaneously. For instance, the timesheets are used to simultaneously allocate costs to multiple funders, comply with certain funders' requirements, complete the monthly payroll process, and also as a project management tool across multiple funding agreements.

As further described in section 10.16, centralised routine reports, such as periodic reports, are also utilised as dynamic artefacts to meet multiple funders and financiers' requirements while foregrounding the organisations' core activities. Most projects require the completion of frequent reports and the SMSEs are able to disaggregate and integrate such reports as necessary to fulfil multiple funders' requirements.

10.13.1 Comparison with literature

The study extends the literature on routine dynamics (Feldman, 2000; Feldman et al., 2016; Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Salvato & Rerup, 2018) by showing that disparate routine actions can be 'dynamic' to facilitate the management of multiple conflicting goals simultaneously. Emerging research on routine dynamics points to disparate routines that have to be employed to manage varied goals through individuals managing interaction spaces (Feldman et al., 2016). In other words, they emphasise the process of ensuring the 'truce process' within routines to manage potential conflicts, whether as new routines, time/spatial, or sequentially (Salvato & Rerup, 2018). This study's findings in this theme extend this discourse by depicting how individual routines facilitate multiple conflicting goals simultaneously without the need of a truce process. This answers the call by Howard-Grenville and Rerup (2017) for further research on a gap in the role of dynamism of routines, more so through artefacts.

This study's findings extend the role of *dynamic artefacts* in SMSEs in facilitating how they utilise them as part of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2014, 2018) to simultaneously manage multiple competing actions. The time sheet is an example of a dynamic artefact tool utilised to facilitate the monthly payroll routine to allocate costs across multiple funding agreements, but it is also used as an HR performance tool. Another example is how M&E plans and the log-frames act as dynamic artefacts that align different multiple funders' goals and the organisation's priorities simultaneously, as opposed to requiring disparate artefacts to manage different goals (D'Adderio, 2014).

These findings are in line with the literature on the role of artefacts in how routines can interact (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017). The study's findings suggest that *dynamic artefacts* are not merely abstract in nature (Berglund et al., 2020), or boundary spanners only in stakeholder management (Fleming & Waguespack, 2007), but are practical and can dynamically be utilised to manage multiple conflicting goals across multiple projects in a simultaneous fashion. In other words, their simultaneous use is not only as boundary tools within the organisations but also between organisations and multiple stakeholders.

10.13.2 Theme 7 Conclusion

Routines can potentially facilitate social enterprises to be ambidextrous in dealing with internal mandate–mission tensions (D’Adderio, 2014; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). Despite the potential of routines to facilitate organisations' response to internal pressures (Feldman, 2000), the use of routines in the “simultaneous pursuit of competing organisational goals” has required further research (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 34). This study’s findings on this theme extend the literature on routine dynamics (Feldman, 2000; Feldman et al., 2016; Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Salvato & Rerup, 2018) by showing that disparate routine actions can be ‘dynamic’ to facilitate the management of multiple conflicting goals simultaneously. Therefore, it is attempting to extend ambidexterity beyond dual explore/exploit to managing multiple conflicting goals simultaneously.

The study’s findings also suggest the role of dynamic artefacts within the organisation through centralised and nimble functions as well as tools, to facilitate simultaneous management of mission–mandate tensions (D’Adderio, 2014; S. Turner & Rindova, 2012). Examples of organisational artefacts include SOPs, reporting tools, and programme monitoring audit tools. The study, therefore, extends the current literature on the role of artefacts in managing multiplicities (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017).

10.14 Theme 8: Adapting and adopting routines internally to balance mission and mandates

In their normal course of routine activities, the SMSEs adapt and adopt internally to ensure they achieve multiple goals simultaneously. This is especially so to facilitate the mapping of requirements, multitasking project management prowess, and concurrent measurement validation. While the SMSEs have centralised policies and artefacts as explained in section 10.13 and evidenced by their policy documents, they adapt the SOPs to nuance and align procedures by adding them as an addendum to other funders who have different requirements. Therefore, they practise the art of tweaking and superimposing with internal workings to balance mission and mandates. The organisations are quite nimble and quick in decision-making to facilitate effective adaptations and adoption. The table overleaf provides excerpts of data that depicts how the theme was developed.

Table 10.10: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 8

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
"Adapting and updating the HWSETA provided FETC 74410 qualification learning material, as well as adding newly developed material for elective unit standards not provided in the HWSETA bundle" (<i>company profile</i>)	"Adapt! Adapt! Yes, we have had to adapt; we have had to adapt" "We design our own templates to use, but we use the strategic one like the one from the funder so that this information can fit into the report that you're supposed to present to the funder"	Adapting internal tools and functions to funder requirements	Nimbleness ability to adapt and adopt	Adapting and adopting internally to align multiplicities
"2021 was a difficult year considering the effects of COVID-19. Despite all these challenges, C2 found ways to increase its visibility in the communities" (<i>annual report</i>).	"Under COVID, it necessitated that our supported beneficiaries needed to be compliant, which funders were not interested in funding. So, the moment that became necessary for them to access government funding, relief funding, and then we started supporting ... additional services coming in to ensure that they're able to also get access to additional funding that the government was putting in place, and the corporate world was putting in place. So we had to re-strategise and reorient ourselves so that we can remain relevant and continue supporting our clients" "Also, we have supported households during COVID. ... though that is not what we do" "When COVID came, it was a health issue, but it had a lot of socio-economic implications that needed an immediate response"	Nimble replanning of activities	Nimbleness ability to adapt and adopt	Adapting and adopting internally to align multiplicities
	"We are now expanding and exploring. How do you profitably utilise the Pty if there are opportunities to do that? And while you are utilising the NPO to do all this non-profit work"	Registration loopholes allow for adapting	Nimbleness ability to adapt and adopt	Adapting and adopting internally to align multiplicities
	"This is an advantage that small businesses have over bigger businesses" "I think it's the beauty of the organisation is that, because we are small...the ability to change swiftly" "The advantage of it is the decision-making is quick. It's rapid"	Advantage of small size to navigate	Small for nimble decision-making	Adapting and adopting internally to align multiplicities

The SMSEs adapt SOPS by tweaking existing ones and superimposing them on other funders. This practice facilitates efficiencies as well as balancing multiple mandates. In other instances, the SMSEs adopt funders' SOPs as appropriate, especially when they deem them to be beneficial to fulfil other varied mandates. The adopted SOPs enable the SMSEs to enact multiple projects simultaneously. Furthermore, this ensures they satisfactorily meet the demands at hand while ensuring they protect their own priority activities. The M&E function, tools, and capabilities allow the cases to adopt and adapt internally in ways that align the multiple requirements with the

mission, as explained further in section 10.12. For instance, this includes adopting funders' SOPs on internal M&E data quality assessments, activity tracking, and reporting templates as they deem them important to fulfil other mandates, as well as the core mission.

Reporting to various funders also requires SMSEs to adapt and adopt. This is evident in the reporting requirements within sample contractual agreements that have multiple reporting templates. The SMSEs have boilerplate templates that can be adapted for multiple reporting uses. Additionally, the SMSEs generally adopt the most stringent reporting requirements and apply them across other funders. This ensures the necessary alignment and reduces tensions.

The SMSEs' small organisational size helps them in being flexible and able to adapt and adopt as appropriate, unlike big and bureaucratic organisations. Additionally, the SMSEs can make decisions swiftly and ensure any required adaptations are implemented without jeopardising other projects or core activities.

The cases also utilise experiential interpreting through M&E tools, templates and software applications to report on achievements to multiple stakeholders simultaneously. The ability to utilise digital and IT solutions [as described further in section 10.15] also facilitates the SMSEs' ability to adapt and adopt mandates as appropriate.

10.14.1 Comparison with literature

The study's findings indicate that for effective adaptations, the cases use information from the external environment to enact change internally while adhering to their missions, as compliance with the environment may lead to mission drift (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The findings, therefore, contradict those of Ometto et al. (2019) regarding the inability to manage multiple internal tensions arising from externalities. From the findings in this theme, SMSEs align multiple contradictory goals simultaneously because they manage to adapt and adopt appropriately. On the one hand, this is demonstrated by how they "juggle" having specific SOPs, reports and tools that are bespoke to funders' requirements. On the other hand, they have policies and tools, such as organisational annual reports, that are adapted to communicate to stakeholders on matters regarding the SMSE's mission.

The study's findings on this theme further agree with extant literature, indicating that smaller organisations are more nimble in adapting internally (Miller et al., 2021). Hence, the SMSEs reorganise internally to address tensions swiftly. This is especially so with regard to reorganising their internal procedures and reporting mechanisms (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). In addition, the programme reporting functions on social missions within the SMSEs reside with their M&E

departments, as suggested by literature (Bopp et al., 2017; Hobson et al., 2016), while the financial reporting requirements reside with the finance team (Henderson & Lamber, 2018). The art of interpretation by the M&E and finance functions is important to ensure simultaneous reporting.

10.14.2 Theme 8 conclusion

The ability of the SMSEs to adapt, and in some cases adopt certain aspects internally, facilitates their ability to undertake routines in ways that manage multiple demands simultaneously. The small size of the organisations is an asset that they optimise to ensure easy adaptations. The small size bolsters the findings in this theme by how the cases swiftly adapt and adopt internally to ensure they are able to fulfil multiple stakeholder requirements simultaneously, and how quick decision-making helps to manage multiple requirements concurrently.

10.15 Theme 9: Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple tasks and routines

The role of digitisation and IT was empirically seen in how they facilitate internal adaptations for effective mapping of requirements, enactment of multitasking project management, and concurrent measurement validation of multiple mandates and mission. This is especially so during implementation, preparing different types of reports, ensuring communication, HR performance management, and monitoring. The use of IT facilitates disaggregated and integrated reporting concurrently. The table below provides excerpts of data that depicts how the theme was developed.

Table 10.11: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 9

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
"The processes we follow allow us to use our knowledge and skills, creativity and opportunities to develop state of the art services, using our own bespoke apps" (<i>annual report</i>)	"An app to collect the data. It is an Android app, they go to the field with their tablets, and they collect data on their phone. They submit it even if it's offline or online." "When it comes to developing apps, he knows what to do, doing analytics, statistics, so the quality of reports when it comes to evaluation reports, they are up to scratch, in terms of the standard."	Digital solutions tweaked to meet funder requirements	Digitisation and information technology prowess	Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple tasks
"The completed and signed forms will be photographed and sent to subdistrict WhatsApp group" (<i>proposal</i>) "Training delivery will utilise a "blended" approach, face-to-face and virtual" (<i>proposal; annual report</i>)	"Our message that's said on Facebook, it's still the same message to the core but it's just said differently on Twitter because, on Twitter, it's consumed in a different manner. On Instagram, it's consumed in a different manner; it's just a picture. So, it's different, but it's still going to be the same messaging; it's still about our child and youth care work, for example"	Social media in managing multiplicities	Digitisation and information technology prowess	Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple tasks

	<p>"Managing the team through group WhatsApp"</p> <p>"We're one of the first partners to come with Google Classrooms, come up with the WhatsApp platforms in terms of continuing [beneficiary service] even discussions in terms of your EBIs [evidenced-based interventions] and feedback, also telephonic calls"</p>			
<p>"Develop viable virtual training options to ensure training reach through COVID times" (<i>proposal</i>)</p>	<p>"Whatever our reporting is, they just pull it out of the system ... in terms of managing finance and reporting, everything must come from the system"</p> <p>"The app can also export reports in Excel Workbook"</p>	<p>Optimising IT and digital means</p>	<p>Digital innovations to align</p>	<p>Digitisation and information technology enhance simultaneous alignment of multiple tasks</p>

The uses of digitisation and IT are instrumental in multitasking project management prowess to fulfil multiple funders' requirements and ensure internal priorities are achieved concurrently. The SMSEs are able to customise tools that give real-time information that is useful in tweaking to meet funders' mandates as well as fulfilling the core mission, as appropriate.

The SMSEs optimise digital means to innovate how they balance multiple mandates and mission. Specifically, they have developed in-house software applications that are utilised in meeting various funders' requirements. The M&E functions mostly utilise these applications to implement, collect data and report.

The SMSEs use digital and IT means to facilitate the simplification of funder tools where appropriate to enhance internal alignment. For example, software applications are used to translate and map complex data requirements into user-friendly reports, allowing concurrent analysis of multiple data. Additionally, SMSEs' financial and programme reporting is automated, making it easy to work across data from multiple funders but still be able to easily integrate the data for key organisational reporting.

Digital and social media are also utilised to leverage social needs with the social mission, interpreting, enactment, and concurrent output reporting. Hence, they help the SMSEs in facilitating the achievement of multiple goals concurrently, such as monitoring, HR communication, social connections, reporting, and performance management. For instance, they use WhatsApp not only to socialise but also to facilitate the monitoring of projects, data collection, and reporting from field staff.

The use of digitisation is key to foregrounding the organisation's brand and core mission to stakeholders. All the cases utilise their websites in ways that they can 'sell' their brand to the

website users. The websites have platforms used to 'push' reports and content relating to the core mission, plans, achievements and other pertinent news. This is useful to align funders or financiers who want to fund the organisations' core activities from the onset.

10.15.1 Comparison with literature

The findings build on the current literature that has focused on the role of information technology and digitisation in adaptations (Klarin & Suseno, 2023), as well as attaining disparate goals such as dual social and commercial tensions (Alshawaaf & Lee, 2021). The literature on digital hybridity focuses more on exploring existing IT resources while exploiting new ones (He et al., 2022). Therefore, the IT ambidexterity literature does not fully explain how SMSEs lacking such IT resources can simultaneously balance multiple mandates and mission. The findings in this study extend the literature on how commonly used IT and digital solutions are harnessed by SMSEs to fulfil multiple needs concurrently. Beyond the potential of IT and digitisation to manage dual social-commercial tension management (He et al., 2022), these findings demonstrate how to leverage existing IT resources to balance multiple mandates and mission, for instance, through the use of digital and social media. This extends the discourse on frugal IT innovation in SEs (Klarin & Suseno, 2023).

The findings further build on Bidmon and Boe-lillegraven (2020), who suggest how tools can be utilised to exploit and explore, albeit in a sequential manner. The empirical evidence in the study shows how bespoke digital tools and IT applications are designed to bridge various management information systems, such as electronic reporting templates, to manage multiple mandates and mission requirements simultaneously.

10.15.2 Theme 9 conclusion

The use of IT and digitisation of management information systems are key in the SMSEs to facilitate adaptation and the ability of the cases to manage multiple competing and conflicting goals in a simultaneous fashion. This is especially so in facilitating the mapping of requirements, multitasking project management prowess, and concurrent measurement validation. This extends the role of digitisation beyond managing dual social-commercial tensions (Alshawaaf & Lee, 2021). It was interesting to observe how the organisations can develop and utilise in-house digital solutions and the innovative use of social media to fulfil multiple different goals concurrently. This is especially true during implementation and reporting. This is despite the fact that they are small organisations with minimal resources to implement such undertakings. Besides, they innovatively make use of available social media tools such as WhatsApp and other widely available digital

applications to enhance their employees’ performance management, reporting, social connections, and to facilitate formal meetings in a simultaneous fashion.

10.16 Theme 10: Concurrent disaggregated and integrated output reporting facilitating alignment

The ability to concurrently report to multiple stakeholders simultaneously is key for the SMSEs. The SMSEs have concurrent measurement and output validation capabilities. This is evidenced by how they leverage social needs with the mission, interpret reporting requirements, map them using varied mechanisms, enact regular multiple project management reporting, and ultimately concurrently validate the outputs. The cases have innovative ways of disaggregating and integrating data to achieve multiple reporting demands simultaneously by using their M&E and finance prowess. SMSEs’ ability to interpret and disseminate relevant reports to multiple stakeholders simultaneously is seen empirically as well. The table below provides excerpts of data that depicts how the theme was developed.

Table 10.12: Example of how data informed the development of Theme 10

Documentary data	Interview data	Code	Category	Theme
<p>“Damco has received unqualified audits for each year of its existence (<i>proposal; annual report</i>)</p> <p>“A full version of the audited annual financial statements has been made available to members” (<i>annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“For all the projects, we do a project report ... We are doing it on a monthly basis. And then we do other management reports, where you have a report on each project and then combine it”</p> <p>“Understand what activities we are doing and also what that means in terms of reporting as an individual, reporting as an office, also reporting as an overall programme”</p>	<p>Reports to address multiple stakeholders' needs</p>	<p>Concurrent integrated & differentiated reporting</p>	<p>Concurrent output reporting facilitating alignment</p>
<p>“The integrated MER ... system underpins the successful implementation of S-Impacts service delivery and the quantitative and qualitative measurement thereof. The results from the MER system are also used by management to improve service delivery to OVCs and their families and the management of all social work activities (<i>proposal; annual report</i>).</p>	<p>“Basically, it is just an aggregation of funders at the main level. Then from there, that’s how you have your reports that you send to the board. So we just combine and just pull the reports.”</p> <p>“The financial system allows for nine hundred and ninety-nine (999) entries under one company”</p>	<p>Malleable M&E and finance reporting systems</p>	<p>Concurrent integrated & differentiated reporting</p>	<p>Concurrent output reporting facilitating alignment</p>
<p>“A full version of the audited annual financial statements has been made available to members” (<i>annual report</i>)</p> <p>“We received unqualified audits for each year of its existence (<i>proposal; annual report</i>)</p>	<p>“The other audits are for projects, but also, the bank wants it. And the banks insist on having the audits and management systems ... so that they can extend your overdraft”</p> <p>“We’ve been able to get clean audits in every project over the years, and that has given confidence to some of the funders to continue trusting and working with us over the years”</p>	<p>Audit reports to address multiple stakeholders' needs</p>	<p>Report interpretation to align</p>	<p>Concurrent output reporting facilitating alignment</p>

	<p>"With clean audit report ... we still maintained the integrity of the organisation"</p> <p>"The financial audit was such an eye opener in terms of what we need to be compliant with in terms of organisational strategy, management ... I think it brought it a lot more focus on those aspects of management, which we did not have sight of, or did not really take into enough consideration"</p>			
<p>Annual financial statements will be distributed to major donors and funders" (annual report)</p>	<p>"Crafting of the report and making it sexy"</p> <p>"If you need donor reporting, those are pulled out individually. If you need management reports, it just depends on what they require, then you get it consolidated. And it's pulled out directly from the software system"</p>	<p>Report adaptation practice</p>	<p>Report interpretation to align</p>	<p>Concurrent output reporting facilitating alignment</p>
<p>"This report provides a summary of Ugo's current status and recent accomplishments. The aim of the report is to update board members on where we are"</p> <p>"We adapted the same data for the annual reporting purposes"</p>	<p>"We report to the board. We prepare board meeting reports that actually cover most of the implemented activities in a different project ... Then we do your annual reports ... and those are published"</p> <p>"We used a lot of the project reports, whether it be closeout, quarterly or annual, that would then feed into the annual reporting"</p> <p>"When the annual report comes, then I would sit with the operation manager, then I'd also sit with the finance manager as well on the HR side ... at the same time with the project managers just to kind of get their input ... of the project and the outcomes and everything"</p>	<p>Annual reporting to stakeholders</p>	<p>Report interpretation to align</p>	<p>Concurrent output reporting facilitating alignment</p>

The SMSEs package and repackage achievements to meet multiple funders' needs. They customise programme and financial reports for various funders and articulate the organisations' central achievements. Programme reports were reviewed, and it was noted that the sampled monthly, quarterly and annual reports to the funders are customised for each funder, despite being centrally prepared and originating from a central repository system. The M&E function is important in the reporting process and disaggregates programme reporting information from multiple sources into the achievement tables and disseminates the information to the relevant funders, respectively.

The organisations also utilise financial systems, which allow concurrent reporting to fulfil multiple funders' requirements as well as manage mission-related activities simultaneously. The systems are malleable and can disaggregate and integrate data to produce different reports as

appropriate. The funders and core activities are denoted by using unique codes to ease the disaggregation and integration of reports.

During implementation, the organisations are cognisant of the expectations to regularly report to multiple stakeholders. The requirements include multiple deadline dates, template formats, and content. In terms of dates, the SMSEs adopt the closest reporting date and align other funders as well as internal reports to this stringent deadline. The SMSEs have central repositories of templates that they tweak as appropriate for use. The SMSEs also design their own templates where necessary to ensure the core reporting aspects of their mission remain intact. When funders insist on the use of their templates, the organisations ensure the report templates align with their branding and mission-centric requirements for necessary attribution.

In terms of content, the cases interpret requirements and map the content to ensure reports fulfil multiple funders' needs, as well as mission achievement concurrently. This is evidenced in how the SMSEs practise shadow reporting to multiple stakeholders. For example, the annual reports are used to document achievements aligned with the core mission and the funded projects. The SMSEs innovatively distinguish achievements that relate to the organisation's core priorities vis-à-vis those that relate to other funders. SMSEs also use other communication channels, such as annual general meetings and beneficiary feedback sessions, to disseminate specific report outputs to meet various needs as necessary.

Concurrent measurement validation is also achieved by using audit reports. Audit reports are important in conveying information to various stakeholders and attaining multiple goals simultaneously. Besides, audit reports are important when pursuing funders and financiers alike. Clean audits are also utilised to address multiple requirements, which include statutory requirements, stakeholder management, access to credit financing, and improvement of internal management controls.

10.16.1 Comparison with literature

Reporting has been suggested as a means of demonstrating the fulfilment of dual commercial and social mission (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020; White, 2018). However, the tension to focus social enterprise reporting efforts more toward fulfilling multiple mandates than towards the core mission achievement is acknowledged (Mair, 2020). these findings within this theme extend the literature by pointing to how similar reports are utilised optimally as a means of achieving simultaneous alignment of mission and mandates, for instance, through annual reports and audit reports. In this way, SMSEs demonstrate their accountability by

reporting to the resource providers regarding the mandates, as well as to the targeted beneficiaries of the social mission (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Mair, 2020). This is with respect to financial accountability (Henderson & Lambert, 2018), and social mission achievement (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Mair, 2020) from the onset of pursuing multiple funding arrangements to monitoring achievement.

The findings further indicate how SMSEs nuance their reporting by practising shadow reporting to ensure they address the contractual requirements of funders and investors, as well as core social missions. This negates the findings by Mia and Lee (2017) who highlight an example of the occurrence of mission misalignment as microfinance social enterprises amend their internal reporting structures to suit new commercial funders. In the present findings, the funders' requirements lead the SMSEs to adapt their internal reporting structure to balance multiple mandates and mission. Therefore, the findings extend the literature by highlighting how the use of language and shadow reporting enables SMSEs to balance reporting to multiple stakeholders by using similar mechanisms while concurrently backgrounding their achievement of the core mission. The cases adapt the financial and programme reporting lingo to address these multiple requirements, even though each funder has different reporting requirements and templates.

Extant literature indicates that smaller organisations are more agile in experimenting with different approaches internally (Miller et al., 2021). The findings agree with this and illustrate how the SMSEs easily adapt their internal reporting functions to meet multiple mandates simultaneously. The organisations have flexible reporting mechanisms that allow them to report to multiple stakeholders concurrently.

10.16.2 Theme 10 conclusion

The study extends the use of output reporting to demonstrate SMSEs' fulfilment of multiple mandates and the mission simultaneously, beyond dual social-commercial requirements (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020; White, 2018). This is evidenced by how they report on achievements to multiple funders and financiers, as well as other stakeholders on the achievement of their core social mission. Reporting, especially referring to annual reports and audit reports, demonstrate the effective fulfilment of both, the mandates and the mission (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020; White, 2018) by the SMSEs. The present findings extend the literature beyond the sequential, structural, and contextual forms in well-resourced organisations (Foss & Kirkegaard, 2020), to simultaneous ambidexterity in less-resourced SMSEs. Specifically, this refers to the aspect of how reporting practices such as shadow reporting are used to simultaneously safeguard social enterprise

missions while managing multiple mandates that arise with the pursuit of multiple funding arrangements.

10.17 Across-case conclusion

The research found that South African SMSEs experience multiple logics, such as state, community, social, commercial, and religious (Littlewood et al., 2022). The SMSEs anchor on leveraging community embeddedness, mission agility, and M&E to facilitate their ability to balance the mission's objectives and the requirements set by multiple mandates. The role of community embeddedness, akin to community logic (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021), to legitimise the social mission of the organisations, is an important finding. The human art of practising enables the SMSEs' continuous endeavour to understand and leverage the communities' social needs as part of the SMSEs' social mission. The cases leverage on built relationships and utilise their interpretation skills to act as brokers on behalf of the communities to advocate for specific activities, beyond or even despite the funders' approaches, while pursuing activities of interest to the organisations [akin to internal–external practising].

SMSEs also continuously undertake internal–external assessments to interpret multiple requirements and translate them to suit their internal priorities by using their theory of change, hence being opportunistic as they pursue funders and financiers. On the one hand, this requires agility to align the community beneficiaries, multiple funders, and financiers' mandates. On the other hand, the SMSEs organise themselves internally to allow innovative ways to align the multiple mandates with the core social mission. In addition, it can be seen empirically how the SMSEs take advantage of the current regulatory loopholes (Littlewood & Holt, 2018a, 2018b), and utilise strategic collaborations (Oukes et al., 2019) to have leverage when approaching funders and financiers.

The SMSEs' leaders and employees also employ skills in relationship management, interpretation, mapping, project management, and HR practices. They allow the SMSEs to simultaneously align activities that may appear to be in conflict between multiple mandates and mission for effective internal functioning, and therefore, to emphasise the actors' pragmatic approach and art to deal with multiplicities concurrently (Feldman et al., 2021). In addition, they exhibit how human agency and practising transform repetitive routines, akin to ordinary capabilities, into dynamic capabilities (Schmidt & Santamaria-Alvarez, 2021). The leaders' proximity to field staff and the community also enables the understanding of social needs, fulfilling different goals, and aligning potentially conflicting goals or priorities. The staff's social

connections, transparency in the manner they work and report, and relationship management are important to ensure internal alignment, also through internal socialisation (Cornforth, 2014).

Mission agility within the organisations fosters the art of mapping and presenting multiple required outputs to different stakeholders while ensuring they remain mission-focused per their theory of change. The SMSEs translate and map the requirements while articulating their theory of change, especially during proposal development, to facilitate alignment. The required agility (Bacq, 2021), is also evident in the enactment and shifting of activities within the overarching mission objectives. Additionally, the SMSEs utilise BMI through adaptations in value capture, creation, and delivery (Foss & Saebi, 2018; Saebi et al., 2019), as well as in co-designing and co-creation with stakeholders.

The evidence from the study also underscores how dynamic artefacts within routines facilitate the management of multiple competing and conflicting goals simultaneously beyond the standardisation and customisation of patterns (Spee et al., 2016). The M&E routines and capabilities (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014) are at the core of ensuring the balancing of multiple mandates and the core mission in all the different project phases across the cases. M&E acts as an abstract artefact, allowing the quest to pursue multiple projects, enacting multitasking project management, and facilitating concurrent reporting. For effective project management multitasking, SOPs, tools, and templates, such as M&E log-frames and timesheets, are utilised within routines such as HR to align multiple actions concurrently. To facilitate concurrent reporting, annual reports, for example, are utilised to demonstrate the fulfilment of the mission as well as the multiple project requirements to multiple stakeholders. However, the navigation of the artefacts requires human actors to skilfully apply them in practice, akin to the art of practising, to render the dynamic artefacts' usefulness in managing multiple requirements simultaneously. This is in line with literature on how artefacts within routines can interact (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017).

The ability to adapt and adopt internally, capacitated by their small size (Miller et al., 2021), is advantageous, especially during enacting multiple tasks simultaneously and concurrent measurement validation. The use of IT and digitisation is also crucial to ensure multiple mandates, as well as mission-related activities, are fulfilled effectively and simultaneously. Reporting is mostly managed by the M&E and finance teams, and the systems in place ensure the achievement of multiple goals. This extends the discourse on the role of reporting in social enterprises (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020; White, 2018), through concurrent output reporting.

The table below summarises the simultaneous exploit–explore interplay at the micro-level across phases.

Table 10.13: Across-case simultaneous exploit–explore interplay at the micro-level across phases

Continuous internal-external interplay	Mission-mandate balancing theme	Micro-level practices and routines examples of simultaneous explore/exploit alignment
Understanding & leveraging – social needs and internal priorities	Community logic; Regulatory context; Leader & employee facilitation - Art of relationship management	Understand and leverage community priorities and reflect within mission-related activities through community/locally-led programming and development, community entry meetings, participation in 'induna' meetings, incorporating stakeholders in mapping social needs, co-design with government and communities, collaborations for 'non-core' activities; use of past beneficiary success stories, brand awareness at the community, optimise regulatory loopholes to utilise appropriately registered entities, use of M&E for baseline data from existing projects, relationship management, funder education. <i>Data evidence includes RFP, criteria, district recommendation letters, teaming agreements; interviews with key participants; observations.</i>
Interpretation – internal-external iterative practising	Community logic; Regulatory context; Business model innovation (BMI); Agility- Art of interpreting; Dynamic artefacts	Art of continuous interpretation to articulate activities aligning multiple mandates, co-designing, M&E lingo to balance mission-mandates, value proposition using the theory of change, mapping activities to fit within the mission, sell core competencies, business tools used dynamically to bridge, cost-pitching practice, business portfolio thinking, infuse existing structures, customised implementation plans, M&E plans and log-frames, internal budget template that links funders and mission activities, profit formulae, incorporation of unrestricted income as cost share, collaborations for 'non-core' activities. <i>Data evidence includes proposal documents, budget, profit formulae, criteria, district recommendations, M&E plans, implementation plans and interviews with key participants.</i>
Translation - Mapping of requirements and articulating theory of change	M&E role; Dynamic artefacts; Agility - Art of negotiations; Regulatory context; community logic; Leader & employees facilitation	M&E competency and tools to map and translate, M&E's role in articulating the theory of change, the art of negotiations, leverage community knowledge to translate priorities when negotiating and co-creating, leverage portfolio of relationships to negotiate, funder education, flexibility and nimble decision making, incorporate community leaders to advocate, pre-agreed % margins applied to budgets, optimise regulatory loopholes to utilise appropriately registered entities <i>Data evidence includes contract agreements, project structures, minutes, M&E versions/IP versions, Gantt charts, modifications and interviews with key participants.</i>
Enactment - Multitasking project management	M&E role; Dynamics artefacts; Leader & employees facilitation; Agility - Art of implementation; Adapt/adopt; BMI; IT & digitisation; Concurrent reporting	M&E systems, project management capabilities to multitask, business tools as artefacts to balance, portfolio of policies & centralised systems to manage multiplicities [enterprise resource planning finance systems, use of shared staff], procedures and tools adapted and superimposed, Leader/HR dynamics [core staff, use of project field staff, community hiring, internal promotions, meetings, socialisation, timesheets], co-implement, joint site visits, adapting value creation and delivery, adapt M&E and implementation plans, adopt the most stringent requirements, digitisation/IT role [applications, social media, automated systems] <i>Data evidence includes Policies, SOPs, monthly/quarterly reports, timesheets, regular monitoring, IP/M&E plans, modifications, email correspondences; interviews with key participants; observations.</i>
Measurement Validation - Concurrent output reporting	M&E role; Adapt/Adopt; Agility Concurrent reporting; Community logic; IT & Digitisation; Leader & employee facilitation; Dynamic artefacts	M&E function as a reporting hub, art of interpretation to report, dynamic use of annual report [funders, community, board & management reporting], creative practice of shadow reporting, dashboards, concurrent integrated & disaggregated reports, real-time reports, report adaptations & adoptions, packaging achievements, AGMs, active use of audit reports, community dissemination meetings, debriefs with community leaders, beneficiary feedback and success stories, digitisation/IT role. <i>Data evidence includes Annual reports, project reports, financial and audit reports, board & management reports; interviews with key participants; observations.</i>

CHAPTER 11: Contribution

11.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the theoretical model was developed, including the framework of the model and its description. Thereafter, the study propositions are highlighted with arguments for why and what kind of theoretical contribution is made, with the conclusion on how the study fills the identified gaps in the literature.

11.2 Theoretical model

The study suggests theory elaboration as posited by Fisher and Aguinis (2017). The observed phenomenon provides a platform to bridge academic research and actual organisational practising (Fisher et al., 2021). Specifically, this refers to how practices [and the art of practising] and dynamic artefacts are leveraged internally to facilitate the simultaneous alignment of multiple mandates and social mission in SMSEs. It also presents how simultaneous ambidexterity, as a capability, simultaneously aligns multiple conflicting goals in small organisations, and is not only a distanced concept between context and theory.

The main problem this study aimed to address was how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission. Similar to Lindgreen et al. (2021), the theoretical model emerged inductively from the study depicting how at a micro-level the SMSEs' art of practising and dynamic artefacts facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mandates and mission. This is despite other authors, such as Felicio et al. (2019) and Iborra et al. (2020) arguing that small organisations within resource-constrained environments find it difficult to simultaneously explore and exploit, and even more so when they are exposed to multiple internal tensions beyond dual, arising from multiple mandates (Mair, 2020).

Therefore, Figure 11.1, overleaf, summarises the theoretical model of how the SMSEs employ the 'art of practising' and dynamic artefacts at a micro-level. This approach enables them to effectively balance the simultaneous pursuit of multiple mandates and their core mission through a continuous explore–exploit interplay. SMSEs achieve this by harnessing community embeddedness, mission agility, and proactive M&E, which together support the micro-level alignment of mission and mandates. The SMSEs act as 'brokers', bridging the gap between communities and various stakeholders. They accomplish this by aligning their activities with critical community needs as part of their mission. Leveraging community structures and ToC, they

advocate for their missions with other stakeholders. Mission agility allows iterative internal–external practising, and positions SMSEs as intermediaries, allowing them to foreground their core social mission amid multiple mandates. The SMSEs are both intentional and opportunistic in resource-seeking from funders, aligning these resources with their core mission and community needs. Their proficiency in M&E empowers them to map, multitask, and report to multiple stakeholders simultaneously.

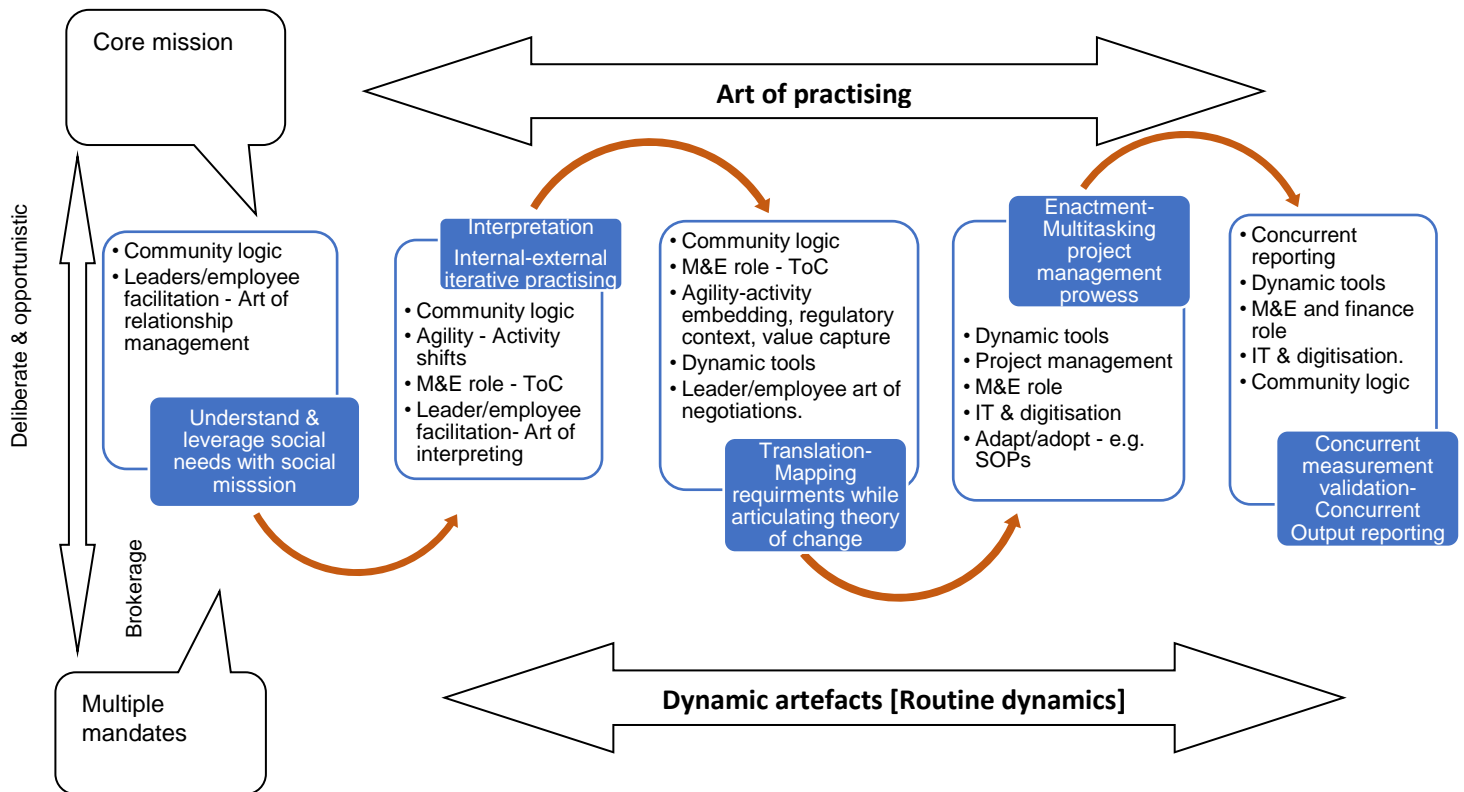


Figure 11.1: Theoretical model: Art of practising and use of dynamic artefacts to simultaneously align mission and mandates, leveraging community logic, mission agility, and M&E role

The ‘how’ aspects of balancing mission and mandates in the study findings are key. First, it has to be considered how SMSEs understand and leverage the social needs within the internal social mission and priorities. Second, one has to understand how they interpret with an internal–external iterative practising, and third, their ability to translate and map funder requirements while articulating their [SMSE] theory of change. Fourth, there are the capabilities of the SMSEs’ enactment of multitasking project management abilities, and finally, how the measurement validates the multiple funder requirements and mission simultaneously, specifically, through concurrent output reporting.

11.2.1 Understanding and leveraging social needs within social mission

The empirical evidence underscores how the SMSEs employ experiential practising to make sense of external mandates by first understanding the community's social needs and aligning them with their own social mission. The SMSEs then strategically leverage the community's social needs and embed them within internal priority activities when negotiating with funders. This strategy grants them legitimacy as 'power brokers' and social mission 'champions' on behalf of the communities they serve. Importantly, this approach serves as a foundation for how SMSEs employ the ToC practising to ensure alignment between community needs and their social mission from the outset.

Community buy-in through practices such as community-led programming, community branding, community entry meetings, and incorporating community leaders in governance play an important role in validating the SMSE work. There is a nexus between the expectations of the community on how they deem the social mission should be implemented and how the organisations adopt this as their core mission. Through the art of practising, for instance, relationship management and negotiations, the SMSEs obtain a social licence to operate, which gives them leverage over conflicting funder-related mandates.

Leaders and employees' experience also facilitate sense-making practising, understanding of communities' social needs, and leveraging these to align the funders' mandates and their own mission. For instance, through relationship management with community leaders, funders, and other stakeholders, the SMSEs are able to ground their mission amidst multiple stakeholders' mandates.

11.2.2 Interpretation: internal–external iterative practising

The SMSEs demonstrate adaptability by iteratively practising internal–external alignment, interpreting and harmonising their organisational mission with mandates. Utilising practices such as co-designing, they adeptly navigate complexities of understanding community needs, responding to RFP requirements, presenting proposals that satisfy stakeholder demands, and foregrounding their mission objectives in a simultaneous fashion.

The SMSEs are agile in how they interpret multiple requirements. They can accommodate and variate activities and geographical scopes within their broader missions in collaboration with the community stakeholders right from the onset of the projects. The SMSEs then adapt their value proposition to align the core and the proposed funder activities. Furthermore, they leverage appropriate entities to manage tensions from the onset by using the art of portfolio thinking.

Interpretation highlights the role of human agency in facilitating the balancing of mission and mandates. The leaders and employees use their proximity to the community stakeholders, their previous experience, and their background for effective iterative internal–external practising to manage tensions. They are able to use portfolio thinking and foresight to interpret multiple incoming requirements and align their core competencies.

11.2.3 Translation: map funder requirements while articulating theory of change

The SMSEs' M&E prowess allows them to map funders' requirements internally and synchronise them with their mission-related priorities. They utilise ToC practising to commence with the end goal, which is their social mission, and then reverse-engineer this to facilitate alignment between their mission and external mandates. In so doing, they ensure that the community's essential needs are an integral part of their mission and proposed activities.

SMSEs' agility allows them to optimise and map activities within the requisite registered organisational forms. The study findings demonstrate that the regulatory context acts as a catalyst for the SMSEs to innovatively utilise aspects, such as their registration status, to balance multiple mandates and the mission. The SMSEs take advantage of the regulatory ambiguity and using the art of portfolio thinking, they map different activities to the appropriate organisational form and ensure the core social mission-related activities are foregrounded amidst the multiple mandates.

Through practising co-creation and activity embeddedness, they also superimpose their mission-related activities within the funder-focused activities. Additionally, they overlay core central policies on the funders' requirements to minimise internal tensions. In some cases, they form mutually beneficial collaborations.

They also use pre-determined profit percentages and adapt proposal budgets to capture unrestricted income from the onset. Unrestricted income is then used as a source of financing unfunded core activities. Besides, through co-creation, they sometimes adapt activities to fit into various funders' implementation models.

Dynamic tools such as the logical framework are used to capture the broader organisational core activities while linking them with other mandated activities. Additionally, they articulate the assumptions and expected outcomes of the activities within the broader mission scope.

The art of negotiation is crucial for SMSE actors to align multiple stakeholders effectively. They negotiate with funders, often with the support of community leaders and sometimes beneficiaries.

They use their community proximity and knowledge to co-create with funders and the facilitation of funder education on priority activities to be implemented in a given locality. This approach makes it seem as though they are fulfilling the funders' requirements while they are actually prioritising their mission. Experienced leadership and dedicated employees play a pivotal role in this process.

11.2.4 Enactment of multitasking project management prowess

The SMSEs' art of multitasking to manage multiple projects while ensuring alignment of mission and mandates occurring was evident. The ability to utilise dynamic centralised tools that are nimble allows the SMSEs the necessary flexibility. The use of business tools to deliberately enact multiple projects is not commonly discussed in social enterprise literature. The study depicts how these tools, policies and procedures facilitate the mission–mandate balancing.

Using project management and the art of implementation, the SMSEs utilise the core shared staff to multitask as key project managers across projects. Since they understand the organisations' missions, they act as the coordination glue that aligns multiple activities with the key organisational priorities across the organisation. The SMSEs' frugal HR practices dynamically ensure employees are committed to the organisation and also deliver on multiple requirements. In addition, employees' socialisation with each other and their commitment to the SMSE's mission facilitates an enabling work environment for the SMSEs to navigate the myriad of challenges. Most of the field staff are hired from the beneficiaries and communities they came from, and this enhances their commitment to the SMSE.

The M&E practices facilitate project management being able to ensure multiple projects achieve the key funders' objectives while also ensuring the concurrent mission focus. As empirically seen within the cases, M&E is set up with the view to track how mandates are fulfilled and to measure whether the core mission is attained. This is achieved through multitasking and project management prowess, using tools such as M&E log-frames, timesheets, implementation plans, and Gantt charts. Other practices such as co-implementation are used to align competing activities.

The SMSEs also utilise IT and digital means to simultaneously align multiple tasks. Additionally, the cases adapt and adopt internal aspects that would manage multiple stakeholders simultaneously, such as developing SOPs as addenda to central policies. For instance, the establishment and optimisation of functions such as M&E and agile financial systems are used to balance multiple mandates and mission-related activities.

11.2.5 Concurrent measurement validation

The SMSEs utilise concurrent measurement tools and reporting to validate the achievement of mandates and mission simultaneously. They innovatively report on achievements to multiple funders and financiers, as well as to other stakeholders on the achievement of their core social mission. For instance, they use annual reports to demonstrate the fulfilment of both, the mandates and the mission. The content of the reports contains details that speak to multiple target audiences concurrently. The same annual report is a key artefact that is used to communicate to different stakeholders with multiple conflicting mandates on the fulfilment of the multiple requirements and the organisational mission.

M&E, as a function, is also key in tracking and reporting on funders' mandates and simultaneously on the mission's attainment. The ToC and M&E plans are used as the basis for identifying the activities, target population, indicators, and output measurement. M&E is appreciated within the SMSEs not only as a function within specific individuals, but as a collective organisational approach to align the core mission with other multiple mandates.

The SMSEs utilise centralised agile IT systems to disaggregate as well as integrate reports to fulfil multiple stakeholders' requirements. They optimise digitisation and advanced IT capabilities to facilitate real-time reporting. The SMSEs also use financial reports to meet multiple requirements. For example, the same audit reports are used to meet various regulatory requirements and funder requirements, and they are also used as a marketing tool to demonstrate sound management in obtaining financing from private credit institutions.

The SMSEs align the community stakeholders on project outcomes to ensure ownership and continued legitimacy within the communities. They utilise different avenues to align multiple stakeholders on project outputs and outcomes, for example, participation in community partner meetings, debriefs with community leaders, dissemination of project outcomes at community [and local government] meetings, and annual general/stakeholder meetings.

11.3 Propositions from the themes

The embeddedness of the SMSEs within the community increased the leverage to align mission and multiple mandates. The SMSEs optimised community buy-in, community leadership involvement, and proximity to beneficiaries to articulate the social needs and, subsequently, fuse within the social mission. The legitimacy (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020) gave the SMSEs leverage and inherent power on the negotiation table with funders. The role of the community is emerging as an impetus toward the nexus of entrepreneurship and societal impact (Bacq et al., 2022;

Littlewood & Holt, 2020). However, the literature on the importance of community logic (Waardenburg, 2021) in empowering SMSEs over their funders is still in its infancy stages. Besides, RDT argues that resource owners have power over the resource recipients (AbouAssi & Tschirhart, 2018; Mair, 2020; Malatesta & Smith, 2014). The study findings point to the SMSEs' negotiation power as they are using tactical mimicry practising (Dey & Teasdale, 2016) to align funders with the community priorities, akin to community logic (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). Inherently, community priorities are an important step (Mair, 2020) to be translated within the SMSEs' social mission. The proximity to the communities is enhanced by how the SMSEs branded and created awareness of their organisation's mission within the communities. They were well known; hence, the propositions below.

The more the alignment with the community's social needs [community buy-in], the more the ability to foreground the SMSE's social mission with funders.

The more the community is aware of the SMSE brand, the better the alignment of the community's priorities and the SMSE's social mission.

The SMSEs incorporated the community's needs into their mission and proposed activities right from the start through the use of the Theory of Change (ToC) practising. ToC was not project-specific as depicted in literature (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016); rather, it was viewed holistically as long-term, starting with the end goal [social mission] and then reverse-engineered to facilitate alignment between their mission and external mandates. Tools such as the logical framework were used to capture the broader organisational core activities while linking them with other mandates. The SMSEs were able to proactively use M&E as an abstract dynamic artefact to interpret, map, and translate multiple mandates within the mission. This took place while navigating multiple projects concurrently, from the commencement of project relationships with funders to how they reported on mandates. While M&E is a common routine in the social enterprise sector in defining the theory of change (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016), it has not received much attention in the literature (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). Hence, the proposition below:

The more frequently the Theory of Change is used to bridge the community's needs and the social mission, the better the alignment between mission and mandates.

The more frequently proactive practising of M&E is used in project initiation, tracking and reporting, the better the alignment of multiple mandates with the social mission.

While a range of practices were evident in the SMSEs, it was how they were practised or orchestrated that facilitated the SMSE's ability to manage multiple tensions; hence, to move "from the what of practice to the how and why of practice" (Gehman, 2021, p. 113). The study did not only focus on the as-practice literature, which situates practice in its nature of action and takes up given actions and institutionalises them (Andriopoulos & Lewis, 2009; Antonacopoulou & Pesqueux, 2010). Rather, the findings highlighted the role of human agency and their art of practising, including aspects such as relationship management, interpretation, co-designing and negotiations to dynamically undertake multiple actions to achieve goals simultaneously. The SMSE staff's exposure to multiple funders allowed them to be experienced in dealing with multiple funders' requirements and hence, use better judgement calls when applying various practices. Hence the proposition below.

The better the human actors' art of practising relationship management, interpretation, and negotiation in SMSEs, the better the ability to align multiple conflicting mandates and the mission concurrently.

The SMSEs in the study utilised mundane routines, such as HR recruitment, monitoring, and reporting routines, in a dynamic fashion to facilitate the management of multiple conflicting goals, specifically, the manner in which the routines in SMSEs facilitated the alignment of mission and mandates from the pre-proposal, proposal writing, negotiation, contracting, implementation, and reporting stages across multiple funded projects. There is limited knowledge of how disparate routines act as capabilities (Nosella et al., 2012), or recipes (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017) to achieve multiple goals simultaneously in short time spans. The dynamic artefacts embedded within the SMSEs' routines facilitated how they utilised them as part of dynamic capabilities (Teece, 2014, 2018) to simultaneously manage multiple competing actions. For instance, annual reports, audit reports, M&E plans, and timesheets were utilised to fulfil multiple stakeholders' requirements simultaneously. This sort of 'dynamic' nature of artefacts to handle conflicting actions simultaneously is not fully substantiated in the literature. Consequently, the resultant propositions are as follows:

The more routines such as reporting are adaptive over a short span of time, the more they act as capabilities to align multiple goals simultaneously.

The more the tools allow dynamism in interpretation and usage, the better the chance to coordinate and align multiple goals concurrently.

The ambiguity in the regulatory frameworks and context enhanced SMSEs' creativity and adaptability. They were opportunistic to take advantage of the regulatory loopholes in registering the appropriate organisational forms. They were also creative in mapping activities to the appropriate registered organisational entities, which allowed them to navigate competing and conflicting priorities. The social enterprise literature highlights the nature of social enterprises, such as the community interest companies in the UK and benefit corporations in the US (Haigh et al., 2015; Rawhouser et al., 2015) that are categorically registered and internally organised as social enterprises. However, how such organisations deal with nuances of conflicting dual social-commercial goals (Battilana et al., 2022), let alone multiple mission and mandates' conflicting goals in less regularised contexts, has not yet been sufficiently addressed in the literature (Klarin & Suseno, 2023; Littlewood & Holt, 2018b, 2020; Mair, 2020). Thus, the proposition arising from within the theme is as follows:

The more ambiguous the regulatory framework, the more the creativity and adaptability to better align multiple goals simultaneously.

The findings in the study indicated how the SMSEs took advantage of their small size to quickly adapt and make decisions to shift activities, expand geographical coverage, and broaden targeted beneficiaries to align multiple funders. The findings are in agreement with the literature on how the small size of the SMSEs facilitates the required flexibility (Miller et al., 2021), for instance, how they adapt reporting to meet various funder requirements (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The social enterprise literature is moving more towards understanding agility within the social mission beyond mission drift (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021). This led to the proposition below:

The smaller the SE is while being exposed to a resource-constrained environment, the more agile and innovative it is to be able to expand and shift multiple activities within the mission and manage multiple tensions simultaneously compared to larger SEs.

The leader and the employees' proximity to communities bolstered relationships and enabled them to be better attuned to managing emerging tensions swiftly. Furthermore, their experience in managing different types of scenarios and leveraging past relationships facilitated their ability to 'juggle' the SMSE's functioning and deliver on different funders' requirements, contrary to the argument in the literature (Ramus et al., 2018). The proposition arising from the theme is:

The closer the proximity of leaders is to the community's needs, the better the relationship management and the organisation's chances to align its mission with multiple mandates.

The SMSEs were flexible and swift in aligning multiple contradictory goals simultaneously. They adapted centralised policies and tools by using adapted SOPs to align multiple stakeholders. The policies were standard, but the detailed procedural content was customised and re-interpreted to fit multiple audiences. The other aspects of adaptations related to changes in value capture, value creation, and delivery to ensure alignment. For effective adaptations, the SMSEs used information from the external environment to enact change internally so that they can adhere to their missions, as compliance with the environment may have led to mission drift (Henderson & Lambert, 2018). The findings, therefore, contradict those of Ometto et al. (2019) regarding the inability to reconcile multiple internal tensions by indicating how SMSEs align multiple contradictory goals simultaneously. In some cases, they were also able to adopt the most stringent specific SOPs, reporting templates and tools that are bespoke to funders' requirements. Hence, the propositions below:

The SMSE's ability to manage multiple tensions simultaneously is increased by the customisation and re-interpretation of centralised policies.

The more advanced the adoption is of the most stringent mandates, the better the chances are to align multiple stakeholders' mandates and the organisational mission simultaneously.

The SMSEs were able to concurrently report to multiple stakeholders by both integrating and desegregating reports. Most social enterprises focus their reporting efforts more on fulfilling mandates than on mission achievement (Mair, 2020). Hence, the SMSEs had to adapt their reporting to ensure that they not only report and link specific funder requirements (Henderson & Lambert, 2018), but also adapt reports to demonstrate their achievements to multiple stakeholders simultaneously. This agrees with recent literature on the potential of reporting to address multiple mandates (Henderson & Lambert, 2018; Mair, 2020), in this case, in a simultaneous fashion. The SMSEs utilised centralised systems that could disaggregate and integrate reporting to multiple stakeholders simultaneously to facilitate alignment. For example, they used the annual reports to demonstrate the achievement of various priorities concurrently; hence, the below proposition:

The better the reporting capabilities to disaggregate and integrate data, the greater the ability to report and align multiple stakeholders simultaneously.

Information technology and digitisation were also innovatively adapted by the SMSEs to fulfil multiple actions simultaneously. The current literature points to the role of information technology and digitisation in attaining disparate goals, such as dual social and commercial tensions

(Alshawaaf & Lee, 2021). However, the study extended these findings through identifying the SMSEs' frugal IT innovations (Klarin & Suseno, 2023) and how IT and digitisation were adapted in facilitating the management of not only dual, but multiple internal tensions concurrently, and not only disparately. The use of M&E applications, social media, and centralised financial systems that had capabilities to integrate and disaggregate data was useful to achieve simultaneity. The resultant proposition is as follows.

The more frequent the use of frugal digitisation and the more advanced the IT capabilities, the greater the ability to align multiple stakeholders' mandates and organisation mission simultaneously.

11.4 Theoretical contribution

The literature suggests that beyond dual social-commercial tensions, SMSEs may experience difficulties managing internal tensions between mission and multiple mandates (Mair, 2020) and that small organisations lacking slack resources have difficulties undertaking simultaneous ambidexterity to balance conflicting goals (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020). The present study contributes theoretically by advancing both social enterprise and ambidexterity literature.

11.4.1 Context: contribution to social enterprise balance of mission and mandates

The context presented opportunities for the organisations to be creative and adaptable in managing internal tensions. Hence, the study contributes to the social enterprise literature in the following ways. First, the study's findings highlight the significance of SMSEs prioritising the alignment with the community's social mission, akin to the community logic (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). SMSEs leverage their community embeddedness, community leadership involvement, and proximity to beneficiaries to effectively articulate social needs and their own mission. This enhances their legitimacy (Grimes et al., 2019, 2020), and social licence to operate (Demuijnck & Festerling, 2016), giving them negotiating power with the funders. The practising of their flexibility and freedom, through subtle power (Dey & Steyaert, 2016) gives the SMSE impetus to assist the social mission in trumping conflicting mandates by funders. The beneficiaries and community appear resourceful and the biggest supporters of SMSEs. This powerful position gives impetus to SMSEs in aligning the funders' mandates with their own social mission. This is contrary to the RDT argument that resource owners have power over the recipients (AbouAssi & Tschirhart, 2018; Mair, 2020; Malatesta & Smith, 2014).

Second, the study extends the discourse on “the need for mission agility” (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021, p. 287) beyond mission drift (Varendh-Mansson et al., 2020) in SMSEs. The SMSEs balance mission and multiple mandates through activity expansion and shifts within the broader mission, allowing them to accommodate varied mandates. They use ToC holistically from a more long-term perspective, starting with the end goal, which is their social mission, and then reverse-engineer this to facilitate alignment between their mission and external mandates. Additionally, the art of language infusion and business tools are used to capture the broader organisational core activities, while linking them with other mandates in innovative ways of managing multiple logics and moving towards meeting the mission.

The study emphasises the unique features of SMSEs and their adaptability. Their small size and the regulatory ambiguity of the social enterprise sector enable them to be agile and creative. They take advantage of the regulatory loopholes (Littlewood & Holt, 2018a, 2018b, 2020) in registering the appropriate NPO and for-profit entities, which allows them the agility to navigate competing priorities simultaneously. The social enterprise literature has focused on well-defined entities, such as the community interest companies in the UK and benefit corporations in the US (Haigh et al., 2015; Rawhouser et al., 2015), more so, how they manage dual social-commercial conflicts (Battilana et al., 2022). However, how such organisations deal with the nuances of conflicting multiple mandates in less regularised contexts has not yet been sufficiently addressed in the literature (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b; Mair, 2020), as it has begun to be addressed in this study.

Third, the study contributes to the discourse from the seminal study on social enterprises' innovating models (Yunus et al., 2010) and the current discourse on innovating to address tensions (Hota, 2023; Littlewood et al., 2022), and more specifically, moving the current discourse from BMI facilitating SMSEs to navigate dual tensions (Klein et al., 2021; McDonald et al., 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021), to navigating multiple tensions. The SMSEs proactively use M&E to adapt, co-design, and co-create projects with multiple stakeholders in a manner that ensures that alignment with multiple stakeholders is happening simultaneously.

The study challenges the conventional for-profit sector perspective on value creation and capture, where value creation changes lead to value capture changes through appropriating profits (Foss & Saebi, 2017, 2018). It introduces a reverse pattern in the context of SMSEs, where value is captured upfront to support the social mission. Subsequently, value creation adaptations occur to align with this captured value. Specifically, the study findings point to how SMSEs adapt internally to first secure unrestricted earned income [value capture] and consequently adapt their value creation as evinced through mission achievement and fulfilment of multiple funders' mandates.

This differs from the for-profit sector's focus on value creation leading to value capture through profit (Bowman & Ambrosini, 2000; Foss & Saebi, 2018). The study highlights this distinction and its implications for understanding value creation and capture in SMSEs compared to traditional businesses.

11.4.2 Simultaneous ambidexterity at the micro-level to balance mission and mandates

First, the study extends ambidexterity at the micro-level within SMSEs. It explores how these organisations manage multiple conflicting goals simultaneously, rather than sequentially (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013) by synchronising and superimposing dual exploration and exploitation actions into continuous single actions. This simultaneous alignment is achieved through the use of dynamic artefacts and the art of practising, providing new evidence of how SMSEs align mission and mandates simultaneously. For example, it reveals nuanced practices such as the art of language infusion and of utilising annual reports to fulfil stakeholder mandates, promote the organisation's mission, and attract other financiers all at once. This introduces a new dimension of ambidexterity, termed 'tri-dexterity', which addresses the challenge of managing multiple competing actions concurrently in resource-constrained small organisations. As a response to calls for exploring simultaneous ambidexterity (Nosella et al., 2012), and especially in smaller entities (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020), this study presents novel insights into how SMSEs align multiple mandates with their core mission simultaneously.

Second, while prior research has acknowledged the use of artefacts disparately within organisations (D'Adderio, 2014; D'Adderio et al., 2019; W. Powell & Rerup, 2017), this study advances the field by illustrating how tensions can be managed simultaneously at a micro-level through the deployment of dynamic artefacts. For instance, it reveals the proactive use of M&E functions as an abstract dynamic artefact, facilitating coordination among actors, tools, and interpretation to carry out various activities concurrently across projects. This contribution sheds light on how dynamic artefacts [within routines] can serve as a potential means for the simultaneous management of conflicting organisational goals (W. Powell & Rerup, 2017, p. 33), thus enhancing our understanding of how routines operate in this context.

Third, using the classical pragmatic literature (Feldman et al., 2021) and the practice turn discourse (N. Thompson et al., 2020), the study addresses the gap in how actors as practice carriers (Champenois et al., 2020), make meaning of multiple goals to manage tensions simultaneously through the *art of practising*. The study demonstrates how SMSEs make sense of

and align multiple mandates with their mission by employing tactics such as tactical mimicry (Dey & Teasdale, 2016) and ideation bricolage (Molecke & Pinkse, 2017). They engage in deliberate internal–external practising to leverage community embeddedness and mission agility by mimicking to their advantage. SMSEs proactively use M&E to interpret communities' and funders' requirements, map proposals with the theory of change, negotiate with multiple funders as appropriate, enact implementation, and report across projects while ensuring mission–mandate alignment.

In this study, the focus shifts to the practising of practices by actors (Antonacopoulou, 2008; Antonacopoulou & Fuller, 2020), as they strive to achieve different goals simultaneously. The literature alludes to the fact that practices can be adapted within existing theories to interrogate phenomena at a micro-level (Sklaveniti & Steyaert, 2020). Therefore, the study enhances the understanding of how practices, such as community engagement, in conjunction with the art of practising, such as relationship management and co-designing, synergistically enable simultaneous ambidexterity. The study's emphasis on the interplay between practices and actors' actions at a micro-level refines the practise-centred approach (Antonacopoulou, 2008) by demonstrating how practices can be reconfigured and orchestrated to address multiple goals simultaneously.

Finally, the study extends the traditional understanding of ambidexterity, which has primarily focused on leaders' roles in coordinating potentially contradictory activities sequentially (Battilana et al., 2015, 2022). This study shifts the focus from an individual level of analysis to an organisational level. It explores how organisations structure their continuous exploitation and exploration decisions to simultaneously manage competing, and at times conflicting, mission and mandates. They achieve this through leveraging community embeddedness, mission agility, and the proactive use of M&E to interpret funders' requirements creatively and report to multiple stakeholders concurrently while aligning all elements with the SMSE's mission.

11.5 Methodological contribution

Most studies in organisational behaviour and internal organising are longitudinal to garner an understanding of the patterns of routines (Feldman, 2000; Feldman & Pentland, 2003; Feldman et al., 2016; Salvato & Rerup, 2018) and practices (Champenois et al., 2020). However, this study contributes to how the instantiation and relationality of routines and practices are evidenced by using specific dynamic artefacts and the art of practising within time and space bounds. Specifically, this refers to the question of how the disparate dynamic artefacts facilitate the

simultaneous management of competing and conflicting priorities as well as human agency in facilitating the art of practising. Hence, this study was looking at routines and practices from a capability's perspective (Nosella et al., 2012) in short spans of time and not merely longitudinally.

The study contributes to how hermeneutic analysis is utilised to gain insight into how SMSEs' similar documentary evidence is utilised to manage different tensions simultaneously. Specifically, hermeneutic analysis was used to gain insight into how SMSEs foregrounded and documented their mission-related achievements, as embedded in documents such as annual reports while demonstrating the achievement of other funders' multiple mandates. Furthermore, it highlighted how narrative artefacts [within as-practice literature] such as language infusion, act as sense-making enablers (Berglund & Glaser, 2022) to facilitate the synchronisation and alignment of multiple mandates and mission. This is especially so through the SMSEs' articulation of their theory of change.

The study also responded to further calls by Feldman et al. (2016) to empirically investigate routine work and patterns outside of observations, a commonly used technique to understand routines and patterns. Specifically, the study used documentary evidence to explain how the SMSEs undertook the different projects at different phases while foregrounding their mission. Documentary evidence was also used to account for time over the projects' life cycles, where necessary. The main documents utilised were the RFP detailing funder requirements; the proposal that included the M&E plan, the implementation plan, and the budget; the contract, policy documents, and sampled reports relevant to each case.

The study utilised a case study design and used Atlas.ti "for analysing the content of interviews to ensure the reliability of their themes and for further mapping the themes to the extant theory" (P. Gupta et al., 2020, p. 222). This followed a research call in social enterprise literature that "future studies use customised software such as Atlas.ti ... for content analysis, thematic coding analysis, and inductive content analysis". The stated reason is because "these techniques were rarely used in the past" (P. Gupta et al., 2020, p. 222).

Finally, the researcher leveraged his practitioner's tacit experience to his advantage to access additional data collection techniques and he was invited as an observer to some management and board meetings in the course of data gathering. This improved the quality of the data collected and data triangulation. However, the researcher ensured objectivity by highlighting to the cases of the need to obtain objective data and addressing any resultant support outside of the study.

11.6 Empirical contribution

This study led to a number of useful empirical contributions. The examined organisations serve as a unique context illustrating how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments navigate and balance multiple mandates from various stakeholders, including the community, funders, government, and internal boards. The study sheds light on how these organisations effectively manage the resulting tensions arising from these diverse mandates alongside their primary social mission. Empirically, this was evidenced by SMSEs' constant internal-external practising and subsequent internal organising to ensure simultaneous alignment, as further explained below.

First, the role of M&E function and capabilities was instrumental in facilitating the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates. M&E has not received much attention in the literature beyond the theory of change as a concept (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014), and in social impact measurement (Holt & Littlewood, 2015). The study contributes to elevating the proactive role of M&E from the 'what' to 'how' and how M&E manifests at a micro-level. Furthermore, the study provides insights into the practical ways M&E is utilised to manage different tensions simultaneously. The SMSEs use ToC holistically, taking a long-term perspective, and starting with the end goal, which is their social mission, and then reverse-engineer this to facilitate alignment between their mission and external mandates. From the pre-proposal stage, the SMSE actors utilise their M&E skills to enhance the 'brokerage' aspects of understanding the community's social needs and articulating them within their own social mission, especially through the co-designing of projects. During proposal writing, funders' requirements are interpreted and the M&E plans are mapped in ways that articulate fulfilling the funders' requirements while addressing their own core social mission activities simultaneously. During implementation, M&E tools are used to enact multitasking project management to track projects and mission achievements. M&E skills are also applied to concurrently measure and report data to funders and stakeholders alike to demonstrate the achievement of mandates as well as mission attainment in annual reports.

Second, the role of the community [social needs, beneficiaries and leadership structures] is extremely important to legitimise the social mission of the SMSE, and moreso, firming up the nexus of entrepreneurship and societal impact (Bacq et al., 2022). The community is increasingly being argued to be a powerful and important player in determining social impact, akin to community logic (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). In answering the call of the role of the community in resource seeking (Mair, 2020) and as resource advantage (Bacq et al., 2022), this study contributes by demonstrating how proximity to the community's needs was practically

utilised by the SMSEs to provide them with more power when negotiating with resource owners. This contradicts the RDT literature's argument that resource owners have all the power over the resource recipients (AbouAssi & Tschirhart, 2018; Mair, 2020; Malatesta & Smith, 2014).

Third, the role of concurrent reporting to fulfil multiple funders' requirements and those of the internal mission was empirically seen. While reporting has been mentioned in social enterprise literature as a means to demonstrate mission attainment (Henderson & Lambert, 2018, Mair, 2020), the study contributes to how concurrent financial and programmatic reporting can facilitate the alignment of multiple stakeholders simultaneously. This was achieved by the use of centralised dynamic artefacts, such as annual reports. The same annual report was a key artefact to communicate to different stakeholders with multiple conflicting mandates on the fulfilment of the funders' requirements, as well as those of the organisational mission. Additionally, audit reports and tools, such as automated financial systems or M&E applications, were utilised to both differentiate and integrate reports as necessary.

Finally, the study heeds the call by Zhang et al. (2021) that "more empirical studies on BMI need to be conducted" (p. 11) within the social enterprise sector. Studies in BMI point to how organisations have previously adapted their value creation and delivery to subsequently lead to value capture changes in the bottom line (Foss & Saebi, 2018; Saebi et al., 2019). The contribution highlighted a sequence where the SMSEs' value capture adaptations are founded on foregrounding their core mission-related activities from the outset. For instance, this is done by adjusting funding regimes and 'profit formulae' and subsequently demonstrating to the multiple funders how they create value for them through how proposals are presented and projects are implemented. Subsequently, they utilise reserve funds to sponsor activities central to the core mission in cases where funders and financiers are not prioritising these.

11.7 Practical contribution

This study has useful contributions for SMSEs pursuing multiple funding and offers some guidelines for SMSE managers by explaining how they can manage internal tensions. First, the continuous external and then internal iterative practising by social enterprises facilitates an understanding of the varied communities, funders, and financiers' requirements. Subsequently, they are able to offer funders what they need, but they still utilise resources to achieve the core mission, which aligns with the community's needs. The theoretical model in the study provides guidance on preliminary leverage assessment that organisations can conduct at the community level when soliciting new funding. The continuous assessment and monitoring at the

implementation and reporting phases facilitates more effective management of internal tensions. Internally, the SMSE managers have to evaluate how they action the organisation's practices and routines in a manner that addresses multiple mandates while leveraging their mission.

Second, the study spotlights the role of M&E in strategy planning and execution in social enterprises. Specifically, this refers to how these hybrid organisations can utilise M&E practitioners, approaches, and tools in leading the internal–external assessment to define core mission activities that align with the social needs [and their priorities] at the community level, and how M&E practitioners interpret RFPs and translate them internally in a fashion that foregrounds the core mission activities, as well as core competencies. Thereafter, they have to define how they enact, monitor, and report on outputs that meet funder requirements, as well as achievements attributable to the core mission. This facilitates the organisation's capability to safeguard its core mission amidst its pursuit of multiple funding to ensure financial sustainability.

Third, the research informs a portfolio of approaches that SMSEs utilise to enhance agility. For instance, developing and operationalising practical strategies in the current dynamic SMSE sector to grow unrestricted funding. It also includes how they develop a 'profit formula' or include fees at the onset to avail the necessary funding that facilitates better alignment of the core activities and better preparedness for financial sustainability while maintaining their missions. This is especially so through adaptations in their value capture and value creation, akin to BMI, to foreground social missions as they diversify (Klein et al., 2021; Weerawardena et al., 2021).

SMSEs optimise the ambiguous regulations to register entities that facilitate BMI, and requisite internal changes needing adopting and adapting, to facilitate the funding diversification processes while remaining mission-focused simultaneously. The study suggests how SMSEs optimise the co-designing of activities so that their value proposition is appreciated from the onset. This not only helps them to maintain the mission focus of the organisations, but it also contributes to their sustainability in dynamic environments.

Fourth, the study contributes to how the organisations can optimise their knowledge of the communities' needs and involve or incorporate community leaders to better articulate their internal social mission. Given the important role of the community in legitimising social missions (Bacq et al., 2022), the SMSE leaders need to ensure they are aligned with the communities' needs and that the mission embeds these needs (Littlewood & Holt, 2020). This facilitates the SMSEs' intermediary role of advocacy and hence, it provides a certain level of power when negotiating with the funders and financiers. Such close alliance with the communities and understanding the

priority of their needs is also essential so that SMSEs can utilise this ‘power’ deliberately and opportunistically to ensure the organisational mission is sustained.

11.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study makes a valuable theoretical contribution to the understanding of how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments effectively manage internal tensions arising from having to balance the requirements of multiple mandates and their core mission. It responds to the call for research on simultaneous ambidexterity (Nosella et al., 2012), especially in small organisations (Felicio et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020), by presenting novel evidence of how SMSEs concurrently align the mandates of multiple projects with their mission. At a micro-level, the study underscores the significance of the art of practising in real-time actions and interactions, highlighting the essential role of human agency. It suggests that practices can be adapted within existing theories to provide insights into the intricate dynamics of micro-level phenomena. Therefore, the study emphasises the interconnectedness of practices and the art of practising in facilitating simultaneous ambidexterity. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the role of dynamic artefacts in balancing mission and mandates. The theoretical model presented in this chapter encapsulates how SMSEs employ community embeddedness, mission agility, and proactive M&E as anchors within the art of practising and dynamic artefacts. This enables them to concurrently align their mission and mandates through processes involving internal–external sense-making, interpretation, mapping, multitasking project management enactment, and concurrent measurement. The interplay between the art of practising and dynamic artefacts at the micro-level offers valuable insights into how SMSEs manage tensions related to mission and mandates across multiple projects in different phases. The study also highlights useful methodological, empirical and practical implications.

CHAPTER 12: Recommendations and conclusion

12.1 Background to the study

Social enterprise research has blind spots on how social enterprises manage tensions when internally, multiple logics are at play (Littlewood et al., 2022; Mair, 2020), especially in resource-constrained SMSEs. These SMSEs act as melting pots of multiple competing, and sometimes conflicting mandates that result in tensions between meeting multiple mandates and fulfilling their core social mission (Littlewood et al., 2022). Conventionally, SMSEs pursuing multiple funding and dealing with multiple stakeholders were expected to find it difficult to simultaneously align multiple mandates and mission (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013), implying that either the fulfilment of the core mission, or the meeting of funders' and other stakeholder requirements would suffer. However, this study's findings challenged this notion. The theoretical, empirical and practical contributions are described in Chapter 11. SMSEs, through their internal-external art of practising effectively harnessed their community embeddedness and mission agility to continuously align multiple external mandates by, for example, leveraging on relationships, the art of interpretation, the art of negotiations, and co-designing. Moreover, their proactive use of dynamic abstract artefacts, such as M&E, facilitated the internal balancing of their mission and the mandates. This enabled them to align conflicting priorities in a simultaneous manner, defying the conventional assumptions.

The SMSEs leveraged their proximity to and involvement in the communities, relationships, connections, insights, and experience to serve as intermediaries, and championing the social needs of the community, which aligned with their core missions. They sought multiple sources of funding, aiming to simultaneously fulfil their social mission objectives while meeting the funders' expectations and securing financial sustainability. Benefiting from their social license to operate (Demuijnck & FASTERLING, 2016), the SMSEs approached funders with the intent of harmonising their mission, the community's needs, and the funders' mandates.

The SMSEs exhibited mission agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021), adapting activities within their overarching mission to harmonise with both mission and multiple mandates. They employed deliberate and opportunistic practices in using proactive M&E to align various stakeholder mandates with their mission by employing tactical mimicry (Dey & Teasdale, 2016). This encompassed interpreting, mapping the ToC, multitasking, and simultaneous reporting. Furthermore, the capabilities of M&E enabled the alignment of mission-related activities with multiple funders' mandates across different project phases.

This study challenges the conventional wisdom that simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations is impractical, often emphasising a more sequential and context-dependent approach (Luger et al., 2018; Ossenbrink et al., 2019). The extant literature primarily addresses the 'dual' trade-off between exploration and exploitation, using structural, sequential, or contextual ambidexterity (Tarba et al., 2020). However, this study delved deeper, providing a more comprehensive understanding of simultaneous ambidexterity at a micro-level. It explored how dynamic artefacts within SMSEs' routine activities and the art of practising enable them to manage multiple competing priorities simultaneously.

12.2 Summary of findings and conclusion

The study set out to answer the research question through a summary of the research study findings and conclusions, organised per the main research question and corresponding two secondary sub-questions below.

12.2.1 Research question: How do small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission?

Prior to the study, it was assumed that the small nature of the SMSEs and being in resource-constrained environments would inhibit their ability to manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission simultaneously (Felício et al., 2019; Iborra et al., 2020). However, contrary to these assertions, it was discovered that the SMSEs leveraged community embeddedness, mission agility, and M&E to align multiple mandates and the core mission. Their internal-external art of practising and deploying dynamic artefacts enabled them to align multiple mandates with their core mission. The art of practising mostly facilitated sense-making of external mandates, and dynamic artefacts mostly facilitated internal alignment to meet those requirements, while foregrounding the core mission simultaneously across multiple projects' phases.

The important role of the community (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021) was elevated. Proximity to and involvement with the community, knowledge and priority ranking of their needs and the use of traditional leaders in governance played pivotal roles in this process, giving SMSEs a social license to operate and leverage over conflicting funder-related activities. The community's expectations of social mission implementation was aligned with the SMSEs' core missions and what funders sought to achieve, creating a nexus of congruence. This, in turn, facilitated the simultaneous alignment of multiple goals. The SMSEs understood the communities' social needs and took on a brokerage role to internalise them within the missions, while advocating the

achievement of the same with funders, financiers, and government. Furthermore, mission agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021) allowed SMSEs to adapt varied mandated activities within the broader mission, while regulatory ambiguities encouraged business model innovation (BMI), such as optimising their registration status (Littlewood & Holt, 2018a, 2018b, 2020) to be aligned with the multiple goals.

The M&E served as an abstract dynamic artefact for defining their theory of change from the onset. They used ToC holistically from a long-term perspective, starting with the end goal, which is their social mission, and then reverse-engineered this to facilitate alignment between their mission and the external mandates. M&E was also used to map, enact and concurrently report on mandates, and serve as a continuous and simultaneous internal alignment with the mission across projects. Dynamic material artefacts, such as M&E plans, annual reports, SOPs, timesheets, and monitoring audit tools played a supplemental role in managing multiple activities simultaneously across different project phases, instead of being disparately applied as presented in the literature (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017).

Agility [within mission] was also key and the SMSEs utilised their small size (Miller et al., 2021) to be agile and shift activities as swiftly as necessary to align the funders' requirements with their own core mission. This was especially useful during the COVID-19 pandemic when the dynamics in the environment required agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021) and innovation. The SMSEs were adaptable enough to undertake and orchestrate non-trivial changes in how they captured value, for instance, by having pre-determined profit percentages and adapting implementation budgets around these rates. Thereafter, they would adapt value creation, and delivery means through the art of negotiations, based on social work experience with funders. This "tinkering of value capture" and value creation efforts, akin to BMI (Klein et al., 2021; Kwong et al., 2017), provided insight into how the SMSEs navigated the tensions. The following secondary research sub-questions were answered.

12.2.2 Sub-question 1: How do internal practices in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?

The study revealed that the art of human agency (Feldman et al., 2021) in the form of practising was instrumental in harnessing the potential of practices, enabling SMSEs to manage multiple requirements simultaneously. The SMSEs also went further to be deliberate and sometimes opportunistic in how they internally undertook different priorities to align with the core mission. The study enriched the understanding of how practices such as community engagement, in

conjunction with the art of practising, such as relationship management, synergistically enable simultaneous ambidexterity. Therefore, the study provided insights into how practices intertwined with the art of practising to facilitate simultaneous ambidexterity.

Community embeddedness, facilitated by SMSEs' internal–external brokerage art of practising, allowed them to act as influential brokers and champions of their social missions on behalf of the communities they served by practising co-designing to intentionally balance mission and mandates. This underscored the growing significance of the community in social enterprise literature (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021).

Leadership played a pivotal role in aligning competing goals, especially in resource-constrained SMSEs. Leaders leveraged their relationships and experience (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Ramus et al., 2018), as well as background (Klein et al., 2021; Ramus et al., 2018) to strategically approach funders, manage tensions, and facilitate alignment. The SMSEs applied frugal HR practices, including hiring staff from the communities, and the use of social media to manage employee-related matters. In addition, employee socialisation (Cornforth, 2014), and community embeddedness facilitated their commitment to the SMSE's mission and an enabling work environment for the SMSEs to navigate the myriad of challenges.

Mission agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021) enhanced the art of how, for instance, they articulated the SMSE ToC in ensuring alignment of mandates and mission. This was accomplished by how the actors experientially interpreted requirements, demonstrated the art of negotiation, and mapped the co-designing as well as co-creation stages to propagate their ToC (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014; Hobson et al., 2016). This was also reflected in how they demonstrated value creation for different mandates through deliberate and opportunistic approaches. They adapted the value creation of activities during implementation, encapsulating the requirements of funders, to align mandated activities with the broader social mission activities. Finally, they tactically employed practices such as the annual general meetings and annual reporting to manage tensions by reporting to multiple stakeholders concurrently. In summary, the art of practising by SMSE actors seamlessly connected their practices and routines, enabling them to manage multiple activities simultaneously and align external mandates with their central social mission.

12.2.3 Sub-question 2: How do internal routine activities in SMSEs facilitate the simultaneous alignment of mission and multiple mandates?

Contrary to initial assumptions, SMSEs effectively optimised their internal routines (Nosella et al., 2012) to manage competing activities aimed at both, the mission stabilisation and fulfilling multiple

external mandates across various projects. This dynamic approach successfully addressed tensions within their organisations.

It was found that M&E was not merely a routine for retrospective actions (Battilana, 2018; Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). The study highlighted the significance of M&E as a dynamic abstract artefact, which went beyond retroactive actions and instead, it played a crucial role in proactively ensuring alignment between mandates and mission at different project phases. Seemingly mundane internal routine activities (Molecke & Pinkse, 2017), for instance, recruitment routines in communities, joint data quality assessment routines, and concurrent reporting routines, were dynamically harnessed to align conflicting goals among stakeholders.

The SMSEs utilised dynamic artefacts to facilitate the fulfilment of multiple requirements concurrently. For instance, M&E plans [log-frames], SOPs, timesheets, automated financial systems, audit reports, and annual reports were utilised to manage different expectations simultaneously from funders, financiers, government, and beneficiaries. Hence, the artefacts acted as “intermediaries” (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017, p. 19) to align contradictory activities and goals. The empirical evidence points to how the internal processes and artefacts in the SMSEs turned out to be dynamic capabilities that facilitated sensing opportunities, seizing, and performing optimally (Teece, 2018). The SMSEs also adapted and adopted routine aspects that enabled them to manage multiple stakeholders simultaneously, such as adopting and adapting SOPs. The use of IT and digitisation (Alshawaaf & Lee, 2021) was integral in adopting and adapting routine aspects to accommodate multiple stakeholders' requirements and ensure the fulfilment of both mission-related activities and external mandates.

12.3 Recommendations for future research

The first recommendation for future studies relates to testing the validity of the theoretical model. This will entail the development of the construct measures and testing/validating the measures. Furthermore, the resulting propositions identified in section 11.3 will need to be tested. The first proposition is the closer the alignment with the community's social needs [community buy-in], the greater the ability to foreground the SMSE's social mission with funders. Second, the greater the awareness of the SMSE brand within the community, the better the alignment of community priorities and SMSE's social mission.

Third, the more frequently the Theory of Change is used to bridge the community's needs and the social mission, the better the alignment between the mission and mandates. Fourth, the better

the human actors' art of practising relationship management, interpretation, and negotiation in SMSEs, the better the ability to align multiple conflicting mandates and mission concurrently. Fifth, the more the proactive practising of M&E is used in project initiation, tracking and reporting, the better the alignment of multiple mandates with the social mission. Sixth, the more routines such as reporting are adaptive over a short span of time, the more they act as capabilities to align multiple goals simultaneously.

Seventh, the more the tools allow dynamism in interpretation and usage, the better the chance to coordinate and align multiple goals concurrently. Eighth, the more ambiguous the regulatory framework, the more the creativity and adaptability will be able to align multiple goals simultaneously. Ninth, the smaller the SE is while being exposed to a resource-constrained environment, the more agile and innovative it is to be able to expand and shift multiple activities within the mission and manage multiple tensions simultaneously compared to larger SEs. Tenth, the closer the proximity of leaders is to the community, the better the relationship management and the organisation's chances to align its mission with multiple mandates. Eleventh, the SMSE's ability to manage multiple tensions simultaneously is increased by the customisation and re-interpretation of centralised policies.

Twelfth, the better the adoption of the most stringent mandates, the better the chances to align multiple stakeholders' mandates and organisation mission simultaneously. Thirteenth, the better the reporting capabilities are to disaggregate and integrate data, the greater the ability to report and align multiple stakeholders simultaneously. Fourteenth, the better the use of frugal digitisation and the more advanced the IT capabilities, the greater the ability to align multiple stakeholders' mandates and organisation mission simultaneously.

The study argues that the community is increasingly being recognised as being a powerful and important player in determining the social impact of social enterprises' hybrid work (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021). However, further studies need to be conducted to understand the role of the community and its sub-groups –who might have other priorities and needs – in resource-seeking and social impact through the lenses of RDT (Mair, 2020), legitimacy (Grimes et al., 2020; 2021), and social licence to operate within the social contract theory (Demuijnck & Fasterling, 2016). This would be enriched by including community stakeholders in gathering data to understand the nexus of social impact, SMSE's social mission, and other stakeholders' priorities.

Mission agility is emerging as an important aspect of SEs (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021). The study's findings highlight the SMSEs' internal–external practising that facilitates the understanding of the funder and other stakeholders' requirements within the broader mission scope. It also needs to be assessed how requirements are interpreted and translated internally when using M&E in a fashion that fulfils the funders' and other stakeholders' needs, while still achieving the organisational mission simultaneously. The SMSEs optimise the regulatory ambiguities. Future studies can examine how mission agility, more so internal–external practising dynamics, manifest and are navigated in other contexts, in institutions of higher learning, and other large social enterprises. This would assist in enhancing the validity and generalisability of the findings (Yin, 2014, 2017).

While the study was not specifically focusing on dynamic capabilities, the empirical evidence points to how the dynamic artefacts in the SMSEs turned out to be dynamic capabilities. The study's findings further suggest the facilitation of ambidexterity through the agility of internal workings of routines [microfoundations and capabilities] to manage multiple tensions. This is because routines and routine dynamics can be building blocks of dynamic capabilities in SMSEs (Howard-Grenville & Rerup, 2017; Schmidt & Santamaria-Alvarez, 2021). Hence, future studies should examine how dynamic capabilities within social enterprises [devoid of resources] enhance sensing opportunities, seizing and performing optimally (Teece, 2018).

The study is in line with recent BMI literature on social enterprises (Weerawardena et al., 2021). However, beyond dual commercial and social competing goals in social enterprises, there is a need for more studies on BMI microfoundations in navigating multiple competing logics, especially through co-designing, co-creation, and co-delivery. As an emerging research topic, BMI provides a basis for rich, nuanced and dialectic discussions not addressed in previous studies in resource-constrained organisations and other contexts in this regard. In addition, a focus on the internal organising of routines and practices through the BMI lens can reveal significant and previously overlooked implications for aligning multiple mandates and mission. This will potentially generate new knowledge on coping strategies by social enterprises in resource-constrained environments for adaptability and survival, evidenced by NPO mission achievement (Berrett & Holliday, 2018).

Finally, from a practical perspective, the research also has implications for policymakers that can be researched further. Given the role of social enterprises, the study argues for a flexible regulatory context to support SMSEs' access to funding through multiple avenues. This is because of regulatory ambiguities (Littlewood & Holt, 2018b; Mair, 2020). However further

research needs to be undertaken to understand how these contextual ambiguities act as catalysts in social enterprises, for example, in opening up avenues such as credit and security markets to support social enterprises' social missions, without them being curtailed from accessing funds commercially due to their NPO registration status. A securities market can bring together social enterprises, government agencies, communities, and relevant for-profit organisations to spur emerging social impact investment initiatives. This would enable SMSEs to implement multiple projects while foregrounding their social missions. Policymakers can therefore develop a coherent agenda for a social enterprise sector that addresses social missions by using multiple funding mechanisms.

12.4 Limitations of the study

The first limitation relates to the inherent nature of a case study design regarding the inability to generalise results (Yin, 2014, 2017). However, the study purpose was not that of generalisation, and hence, a purposive sampling frame was utilised. The study's purpose was to obtain rich and deep insight into the specific phenomenon and it was context-based (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Welch et al., 2011; Yin, 2017), specifically, to garner insight into how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple external mandates and the internal social mission. Hence, a purposive sampling technique was best suited to ensure parity and exclusion of external effects. To avoid bias in selection, cases were chosen for maximum variation, based on the criteria identified in section 4.4.

Another limitation was related to pre-existing personal perceptions during the participant observation and analysis stages. However, reflexivity and acknowledgement of inherent biases upfront facilitated addressing inherent biases. A reflexive approach of constantly moving between data and analysis helped in solidifying the analysis. Replication logic and application of theory helped to ensure external validity (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017). Furthermore, the triangulation of data with other sources, such as semi-structured interviews and a review of documentary evidence, enhanced the researcher's objectivity in interpreting the data. The use of conventional content analysis in deriving themes and keeping analytical memos also assisted in addressing this challenge (Yin, 2017). Besides, Atlas.ti was utilised to support data management as well as storage.

12.5 Overall study contribution

In conclusion, the study intended to gain insight into how SMSEs in resource-constrained environments manage internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission. Theoretically,

the study advances simultaneous ambidexterity in small organisations that lack resources. The study concludes that SMSEs in resource-constrained environments achieve this by simultaneously balancing mandates and mission through the art of practising and dynamic artefacts at a micro level. This is attained through the superimposition and dynamic interplay of explore and exploit functions that happen in real-time, which is made possible by the SMSEs' internal-external art of practising to leverage community embeddedness, mission agility and the incredible and powerful dynamism of M&E, as well as the manner in which dynamic artefacts facilitate the simultaneous alignment of multiple mandates and mission. This research offers new insights into how SMSEs' practices and routines allow them to align their mission and multiple mandates concurrently, challenging the conventional notion of sequential alignment (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

Empirically, the study demonstrates how social enterprises engage in iterative internal-external practising to creatively organise and address competing and conflicting goals. They leverage the communities' social needs to legitimise their social mission (Bacq et al., 2022; Waardenburg, 2021) and promote awareness of their mission at the community level. SMSEs display agility (Bacq & Lumpkin, 2021) within their broader mission context. The proactive and dynamic use of the M&E function helps them interpret requirements, aligning with multiple stakeholders' needs. Thereafter, SMSEs enact and concurrently report to multiple stakeholders. SMSEs adapt their value capture, creation, and delivery mechanisms, including BMI, to effectively manage these multiple tensions.

Methodologically, the study argues that hermeneutic analysis is a valuable approach to understanding how SMSEs articulate their theory of change while balancing multiple mandates and their mission. The study emphasises the use of identical documentary evidence, such as annual reports, to concurrently manage various requirements. It offers a novel capability perspective on routines and practices, focusing on short time spans, rather than long-term views (Feldman et al., 2016; Salvato & Rerup, 2018) to elucidate how SMSEs navigate tensions between mandates and mission. Finally, from a practical standpoint, the study provides social enterprises with insights into optimising their proximity to the community, enhancing mission agility, and incorporating M&E into their strategic planning and execution to emphasise their mission. For instance, it elucidates how SMSEs effectively act as intermediaries or brokers between the communities and funders, adopting both deliberate and opportunistic strategies to ensure internal alignment with their core mission.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
DSD	Department of Social Development
ED	Executive Director
FM	Financial Manager
GIBS	Gordon Institute of Business Science
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
MD	Managing Director
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDoH	National Department of Health
NGO	Nongovernmental Organisation
NHI	National Health Insurance
NPC	Nonprofit Company
NPO	Nonprofit Organisation
OD/OM	Operations Director/Operations Manager
OVC	Orphans And Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	United States President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
PBO	Public Benefit Organisation
PTY	Proprietary Limited Company
SA	South Africa(n)
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SETA	Skills Education Training Authority
SMSEs	Small and Medium-sized Social Enterprises
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Appendix B: Interview guide

Interview date:	Interview mode (in person or virtual):
Respondent (identified by alphanumeric characters):	

Introduction:

My name is Emmanuel Osembo, and I appreciate your taking the time to meet with me today. I would like to talk to you about your experiences and insights managing/working for [NAME OF ORGANISATION]. I am interested in understanding how your organisation stays true to the primary social mission while pursuing and satisfying multiple external funders who may impose diverse and possibly conflicting mandates. The interview should take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Please note that I will be taking notes as well as audio-recording the session to ensure I capture all your comments. To ensure I correctly reflect your insights for transcription purposes, kindly do speak up as we progress through the session. The information you provide shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will only be shared with my research supervisor and with the Gordon Institute of Business Science. The information included in my final dissertation report will not reveal your or [NAME OF ORGANISATION] identification. While I would kindly encourage your openness, the interview is on a voluntary basis, and you should not be obliged to discuss anything you are not comfortable sharing. You may also end the interview at any time.

Do you have any questions before we commence?

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

Please read and sign the formal consent letter emailed to you. You can send it back via email, or I will have a hard copy for you to sign if we have a face-to-face session.

Interview Questions

Question	Area being addressed
Introduction 1. Kindly state your name and current title in the organisation. 2. What is your current role and length of service in the organisation?	Respondent's introduction
Organisation 3. Can you please tell me how the organisation is legally registered? 4. Please tell me more about how the organisation started. How many employees does the organisation have?	About the organisation

<p>Mission</p> <p>5. What are the core activities and your targeted beneficiaries central to your current mission focus? Have these changed over time?</p>	<p>Understanding mission scale and scope</p>
<p>Multiple external mandates</p> <p>6. What are your organisation's sources of funding and contractual arrangements you currently are engaged in? How many in total?</p>	<p>Multiple mandates</p>
<p>Internal alignment of mission and mandates</p> <p>7. How are decisions made to pursue multiple funding arrangements to fulfil core missions?</p> <p>8. How do you persuade multiple resource providers to support the organisation's core social mission?</p> <p>9. Tell me about the actions/tasks you undertake internally to ensure all funder requirements/objectives and mission-related activities are fulfilled concurrently.</p> <p>10. How do you monitor and report on multiple funders (program and financial) requirements/objectives concurrently, in addition to core mission tracking/reporting?</p> <p>11. What internal tools/procedures/SOPs facilitate monitoring and tracking tasks (program and financial) related to both funder requirements and core social mission?</p> <p>12. How are internal operations, efforts and staffing structured to concurrently fulfil contradictory multiple funder requirements and the primary mission?</p> <p>13. How do you resolve problems arising from inadequate time and resources to attend to activities relating to different funder requirements versus the organisation's mission?</p> <p>14. Describe your typical day activities/practices as you juggle to fulfil contradicting funder mandates and mission concurrently.</p> <p>15. How do you and other employees prioritise program activities and reporting relating to the mission over possible conflicting funder requirements?</p> <p>16. How are you dealing with time and resource reallocation across various funder-related activities and organisation priorities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p>Funding solicitation Practices</p> <p>Actors facilitating routines and practices</p> <p>Artefacts facilitating routines</p> <p>Systems and process agility to simultaneously manage mission-mandate tensions</p> <p>Practices/pragmatic ways to foreground mission</p>
<p>Any additional information</p> <p>17. What could the government/funders/other resource providers do to support social enterprises in achieving their missions during funding uncertainties?</p> <p>18. Would you like to share any other information on challenges about how the organisation aligns its mission and mandates? Are there any additional thoughts you would like to share?</p>	<p>Potential policy and legislative support</p> <p>AOB</p>

Conclusion:

Thank you for the time spent during this interview, and I hope it is fine with you to revert in case I need additional information.

Appendix C: Informed consent forms

The Executive Director

[ORGANISATION NAME]

[ORGANISATION ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear Sir/Madam....

Permission for your organisation to participate in an academic research study

I am a registered PhD student at GIBS, University of Pretoria. My supervisors are Prof Kerrin Myres and Dr Lauren Jankelowitz. The title of my research is: Understanding the management of internal tensions between multiple mandates and mission in small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs).

The objectives of the study are to gain insight into how SMSEs [non-profit organisations] in the South African context simultaneously align multiple funder mandates with core social mission.

I am hereby seeking consent to conduct a case study in your organisation. I am requesting permission to interview you, member/s of your management and staff, as well as participate in a strategy meeting session.

I am also requesting permission to review your annual and program reports, financial reports and statements, contract agreements and relevant strategic and policy documents.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in this study is very important to me.
- I am cognisant that some respondents may be wary of providing frank disclosure. However, please be aware that all components of the study will be treated with utmost and strict confidentiality. Every effort will be made to ensure the information included in my final dissertation report does not reveal your or [NAME OF ORGANISATION] identification.
- Your organisation may, however, choose to cease participation at any time without any negative consequences.
- The individual participants will be given the option to participate on a voluntary basis.
- The results of the study will be used for academic purposes and may be published in an academic journal. On request, I will discuss the interim results of this specific case study with you, and provide you with a summary of the findings.
- A number of similar organisations have agreed in principle to participate in this study, and your organisation's participation will result in me being able to obtain a holistic view.

To assist you in reaching a decision, I have attached to this letter:

- A copy of the ethical clearance certificate issued by the University.
- A copy of the informed consent letter that each individual will be required to sign, should they decide to participate.
- A copy of the interview guides which I intend to use in my research.

Should you require any further information, or have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisors, Prof Kerrin Myres and Dr Lauren Jankelowitz. Our contact details are as follows:

Emmanuel Osembo emmanuelosembo@gmail.com or 0605717704

Kerrin Myres myresk@gibs.co.za or 083 263 4175

Lauren Jankelowitz JankelowitzL@gibs.co.za or 073 820 9204

Please sign below to indicate that:

- You have read and understood the information provided above.
- You give your consent for your organisation to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.
- You are mandated by your organisation to give such consent.

Initials and Surname

Position in the Organisation

Signature

Date

Yours sincerely,
Emmanuel Osembo

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

[Informed consent form for _____]

Name of PhD student: Emmanuel Osembo

Name of organisation: Gordon Institute of Business Science

Name of supervisors: Prof. Kerrin Myres and Dr. Lauren Jankelowitz

Name of sponsor: None

This informed consent form has two parts:

Part I: Information sheet (to share information about the study with you)

Part II: Certificate of consent (for signatures, should you choose to participate)

You will be given a copy of the full informed consent form.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, which will take place from November 2021 to March 2022. This form details the purpose of this study, a description of the involvement required and your rights as a participant.

Part I: Information sheet

Introduction and purpose of the research

My name is Emmanuel Osembo. I am studying how small and medium-sized social enterprises [non-profit organisations] in a South African context are able to simultaneously align multiple funder mandates with core social mission. I am particularly interested in how small and medium-sized social enterprises (SMSEs) manage internal tensions between multiple funder mandates and core social mission.

The purpose of this study is:

- To gain insight into how SMSEs in this context simultaneously align multiple mandates and internal social mission.

The benefits of the research will be:

- To gain a better understanding of how SMSEs can simultaneously manage internal tensions arising from managing multiple funding while focusing on the core social mission.
- To develop a framework of internal routines and practices that could serve as a model for other organisations that want/need to align competing activities between mandates and core missions.

The methods that will be used to meet this purpose include:

- one-on-one interviews
- participant observation during a funding decision or strategic meeting
- document review.

I am inviting you to participate in this research. You may talk about the research to anyone with whom you feel comfortable doing so. You may take time to reflect on whether you want to participate or not. If you do not understand some of the words or concepts, then I will take time to explain them as we go along. You may ask questions at any time.

Your participation in this study is a voluntary choice. If you decide to participate, then you will be interviewed by me for approximately 45-60 minutes. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and you can stop the interview at any time. Our discussion will be audio-recorded to help me capture your insights accurately in your own words. All the interviews will be transcribed either via transcription software or by a third party who will sign a non-disclosure agreement. The transcripts will then be analysed and summarised. You may, at any time following an interview, request to see a copy of the interview transcript. The audio recording will only be heard by me for the purpose of this study. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. In the event you choose to withdraw from the study, all information you provide (including recordings) will be destroyed and omitted from the final research paper.

Insights gathered by you and other respondents will be used in writing a qualitative research report, which will be read by my research supervisors and presented to the examining committee at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. Though direct quotes from you may be used in the paper, your identity will be protected.

You are encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns at any time about the nature of the study or the methods I am using. Please contact me at any time at the e-mail address or telephone number listed on the next page.

Risk mitigation

To protect the security of your identity and data, no identifying information about you will appear in the research report, except by your request. Research records will be kept in a secure location and will be available only to me (Emmanuel Osembo). Your answers will be reported without identifiers and will not be shared directly at any time. This study has been designed to keep identities secure, and all reasonable efforts will be taken to maintain that security.

Compensation

While there is no compensation for respondents to participate in the study, I am authorised to reciprocate for your time by providing you with the study results. Participation is entirely voluntary.

Questions

If you have any questions about this study, you can call Emmanuel Osembo at 0605717704 or email at emmanuelosembo@gmail.com

Part II. Certificate of consent to participate in the study

You agree to participate in this study. You understand that your participation is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to participate in the study and can refuse to answer a particular question or withdraw your consent at any time. You understand that the security of your identity and data will be protected.

You hereby agree to participate in the qualitative interview/focus group and to the aforementioned terms.

Signature of participant

Date

Full name of participant

Signature of researcher

Emmanuel Osembo

Full name of researcher

Consent forms adapted from the literature, the GIBS Blue Book and previous graduates (Jankelowitz, 2020).

Appendix D: Observation checklist

Observation date:
Organisation (identified by alphanumerical characters):
Nature of the meeting:

Observation domain	Yes	No	Comments
Internal routines			
Clarity on internal ways on which funding to pursue/solicit and how they align with the social mission			
Use of artefacts in aligning multiple goals, e.g., SOPs			
Reporting of both funder-related activities and core mission			
Articulation of ways to monitor funder requirements as well as to attain the core social mission			
Internal practices			
Clarity on coordination of activities with conflicting goals and the role of different actors			
Reflection/discussions on prioritisation of contradicting activities between core mission activities and funder-required activities			
Clarity on resource allocation ways across multiple activities			

When observing, the researcher will be looking for the following: identify routines and practices adopted by actors/participants – focus on how they align competing and conflicting activities between funder mandates and organisation mission.