AN INVESTIGATION INTO SERVICES OFFERED FOR CHILDREN AT STREET SHELTERS IN THE DURBAN AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

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Submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Social Work (MSW) in the College of Humanities, School of Applied Sciences.

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM

I, Woolagavathie Nair, declare that

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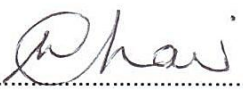
Signed 

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ABSTRACT

The study was motivated by a dearth in qualitative research on shelters. Moreover, the complex nature of the phenomenon of street shelters appeared to present challenges for researchers, policy makers as well as service providers in arriving at a shared understanding of the causes and symptoms and possible responses to addressing the needs of street children.

This study focused on shelter services to street children. Three Shelters registered with the Department of Social Development participated in the study. The researcher used semi-structured interviews as a primary source of information in conjunction with other relevant available sources of material to gather information from service providers. The investigation was undertaken over two cycles. The initial investigation was carried out prior the passing of the Children's Act No 38 of 2007 and the follow up investigation was conducted three years into implementation. The aim of the study was to explore the nature and extent of programmes offered to street children prior and post implementation of the Children's Act. The investigations revealed that although shelters initially gained legal recognition through the registration process, they were not recognized in the same light as other child care and protection services and were discriminated against, directly as a result of exclusion from relevant policy. The passing of the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 signalled hope for shelter services. It set in motion a paradigm shift in the manner in which shelters operate and function and signals partnerships and co-operation between the state and non-government sector.

However, the findings revealed that three years into implementation, the Children's Act No 38 of 2007 has not yielded much progress in shelter services. This research draws attention to the prevailing gaps in services as well as the purposeful implementation of policy towards meaningful interventions to street children.

It is hoped that the findings will influence purposeful engagements between the Shelters and the Department of Social Development in addressing identified gaps.

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ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AD	After the death of Christ
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AVERT	AIDS Education and Research Trust
CBO	Community Based Organization
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DSD	Department of Social Development
IDP	Individual Development Plan (DSD)
IDP	Integrated Development Plan (Municipality)
ILO	International Labour Organization
FBO	International Labour Organisation
FIFA	Federation of International Football Association
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NASC	National Alliance for Street Children Living and Working on the Streets
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
OSD	Occupation Specific Dispensation
SANCA	South African National Council for Alcoholism
STEP	Systematic Training for Effective Parenting
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programmes on HIV/AIDS

UNCRC	United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

While much general knowledge existed on the phenomenon of "street children" (hereinafter referred to as street children) in South Africa prior to 1994, less information was available on services that address the needs of this marginalized group of children (Veeran, 1999). In the post-apartheid era, there has been growing interest in interventions to address the needs of children living on the streets. While researchers such as Chetty (2002), Naidoo (2005), Reddy (2005), Trent (2006) and Osthus (2009) focused on interventions aimed at assisting these children, Kariuki (2004) solicited the views and experiences of shelter personnel and children on services within the Durban region. He found that shelters have taken on the challenge of addressing the needs of street children and recommended that policies be put in place to guide service delivery. Nonetheless, Tom Hewett of Umthombo as well as other advocacy groups for the rights of street children subsequently complained of the lack of appropriate interventions and government initiatives to address the issue (www.umthombo.org), (I Care (www.icare.org) and street children's forum (www.streetchildren'sforum.org), Beni'tez (2011), Budlender & Proudlock (2010). Researchers have also noted the paucity of appropriate legislation and initiatives to addressing the problems of street children (Bessler, 2008; Beni'tez, 2011; Kariuki, 2004; Schernthaner, 2011; Reddy, 2005; Trent 2006).

Prior to passing of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended), there were no policies or protocols guiding interventions aimed at street children. As a result, state authorities, individuals and organizations were divided in their approach to understanding and addressing the needs of these children. Ennew (2003) and Proudlock et al (2008) assert that whilst government was slow to respond, many non-governmental organizations have done much to alleviate the plight of street children. Shelters responded to the children's need for protection, safety and care. Interventions were developed in accordance with their own objectives, based on the organization's perception of the problem and of street

children's needs, as well as available resources. Hence services for street children were compromised, as shelters that operated as non-profit organizations were discriminated against in terms of registration and state funding (Child Care Act No 74 of 1983, as amended).

Whilst shelters responded from the perspective of care and protection, individuals and advocacy groups campaigned against injustices towards street children from a policy perspective as well as the practice of harmful interventions. Much attention was drawn to the manner in which the authorities dealt with the problem of street children, particularly in the urban areas (Anthony & Bessler, 2008; Brazier 2006; Hewitt (www.umthombo.org); Moccia, O'Donnel, 2013; www.streetchildren.org; Willis, 2011).

One intervention which gained much public attention was the tendency on the part of the eThekwini Municipality, especially the Metro police, to make children "disappear" from the streets of Durban when the city hosted major events such as heads of state conferences, the Tourism Indaba (2005) and the Federation of International Football Association World Cup in 2010. This attracted widespread media attention and was widely criticized by the public (Hewitt, 2010; Langanparsad, 2010; *Daily News*, Makhaya, (19/10/2011). The police crackdown on such children and use of inappropriate interventions, such as detention, physical threats and criminal charges sensitized the public to the needs of street children (*Daily News*, Attwood, (03/07/2010).

Such practices are not unique to South Africa. There has been a growing trend in Europe and North America, to criminalize eating, sleeping and begging in public places. Street children are often regarded as delinquents by the authorities and criminal charges are laid against them, rather than seeking ways to address their situation (Beni'tez, 2011). Advocacy groups have called for greater involvement on the part of government in developing policies on the provision of services and the protection of street children's rights (Cross & Seager, 2010; Proudlock, 2008; Bessler, 2008; www.streetchildren.org, www.unicef.org, www.umthombo.org). For example, Hewett stated in the *Mail and Guardian* (22/01/2010), that the welfare of these children was more important than the municipality's image. He noted that 'round ups' and removals were socially unacceptable.

Through the use of media and networking with advocacy groups, he successfully campaigned against such practices and halted removals during the FIFA World Cup. Whilst the media reported that streets had been cleared by Municipal officers, there have been no recent reports of forceful or inappropriate interventions. In 2011, Eugene Msomi, a Senior Superintendent with the Metro Police Department, was quoted as stating that the police services work in collaboration with the Department of Social Services and Places of Safety to place street children in appropriate care (*Daily News*, Makhaya (19/10/2011) and East Coast Radio news watch (Thrishni Subramoney, 20/10/2013). In a telephonic interview with the researcher on 22/03/2013, Msomi confirmed these reports. On 25/03/2013, Msomi once again stated to Radio Lotus morning news presenter Nagasser, that his department was busy clearing the streets of 'vagrants' for the March 2013 BRICS Summit. However, no mention was made of how these removals were implemented and who the 'vagrants' were. Makhaya (*Daily News*, 19/10/2011) quoted Dumisile Nala of Childline South Africa as saying that South Africa has the necessary resources to help change the lives of street children. However, these activities suggest that whilst much concern has been raised regarding the presence of street children and their right to protection, there has not been any constructive or collaborative approach to address the issue. This study examines the extent to which shelter services are aligned to current policy and guidelines in addressing the needs of street children.

As early as 1999, Veeran acknowledged shelters as a suitable alternative for street children within the continuum of care. However, she noted that shelters lack funding, resources and legal recognition and motivated for appropriate legislation and guidelines for intervening with street children. Chetty (2002), Kariuki (2004), Muikila (2006) and Trent (2006) concurred with Veeran (1999) that relevant policy was imperative in order to ensure that interventions were more meaningful and coordinated. The non-governmental sector played a pivotal role in lobbying policy makers and relevant government departments to pay greater attention to this issue. The fruits of these efforts were ultimately realized in the promulgation of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended). The Act recognizes street children and supports an integrated response to deal with the care and protection of such children. In terms of the Act, street children fall under the

category of ‘children in difficult circumstances’. Individuals such as Hewett and advocacy groups were among those who engaged with national government departments to ensure that street children fell within the ambit of the Children’s Act and who developed guidelines for interventions with street children (www.consortiumforstreetchildren.org).

The passing of the Act has meant that both the government and non-governmental sector have access to relevant policies as well as The National Norms and Standards for Child and Youth Care (Children’s Act, Section 194:77) (Norms and Standards) to engage collaboratively to ensure that the ‘best interest principle of the child’, enshrined in the Act is upheld in all interventions concerning street children. These legal provisions offer opportunities for meaningful engagements between non-profit organizations and the government in meeting service objectives for street children.

The current investigation into services provided by shelters was undertaken in light of previous findings by researchers in the field, which concluded that South Africa’s social welfare system lacks adequate policy to guide interventions with street children. Local and international policy developments also motivated the study. This study is based on the premise that policies influenced changes in the manner in which shelter services were managed both by the service provider as well as the Department of Social Development which is responsible for their financing and monitoring. The shelters and the Department (Ngcobo, 2013) have both reported transformation on two levels; service delivery by shelters and state funding in line with provisions for Child and Youth Care Centres. This study sought to highlight the extent to which shelter services were aligned to current developments in policy and guidelines in addressing the needs of street children.

1.2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts were applied to the study and were defined as follows:

1.2.1 *Child*

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended) defines a "child' as a person under the age of 18 years.

1.2.2 *Street child*

i. The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended) defines a *"street child"* as a child who:
   a. because of abuse, neglect, poverty, community upheaval or any other reason has left his or her home, family or community and lives, begs or works on the streets; or
   b. because of inadequate care, begs or works on the streets but returns home at night.

ii. UNICEF differentiates between "children living on and working on the streets". Children "on" the street are engaged in the street but have regular contacts with their families. They return at the end of the working day and have a sense of belonging to the local community. Children "of" the street live work and sleep in the street. They maintain tenuous relations with their families, visiting them occasionally. They see the street as their home where they seek shelter, food and companionship (Ennew, 2003).

The term "street children" is used for the purpose of this study, as shelters do not discriminate against children seeking their services. Both categories of children are equally vulnerable and can access shelter services at any time. Moreover, shelter services are not limited to custodial care. They include working with children within their environment.

1.2.3 *Shelter*

a) The Child Care Act No. 74 of 1983 (as amended) defines a "s*helter*" as any building or premises maintained or used for the reception, protection and temporary care of more than six children in especially difficult circumstances.

b) The Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005 (as amended) which replaced the Child Care Act, defines a *"shelter"* as a facility located at a specific place which is managed for the purposes of providing basic services, including overnight accommodation and food to children including street children, who voluntarily attend the facility but who are free to leave. The former definition refers to any structure with no specific expectations towards street children and is generic, whereas the latter makes reference to services and is inclusive of street children.

1.2.4 *Child and Youth Care Centre*

According to the Children's Act (No.38 of 2005) a *"Child and Youth Care Centre"* is a facility that provides residential care to more than six children outside the child's family environment in accordance with a residential care programme suited to the children in the facility (Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended). Shelters fall under the umbrella of Child and Youth Care Centres.

1.2.5 *After-care*

The Integrated Service Delivery Model for Developmental Social Welfare (2005) (Service Delivery Model (2005) as well as the Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005 (as amended) define *"after-care"* as a means of supportive services provided by a social worker or a social service professional to monitor progress with regard to the child's developmental adjustment as part of reunification services upon discharge from alternative care.

1.2.6 *Assessment of a programme*

"Assessment of a programme" means a process, conducted by a suitably qualified person, to determine whether the provision and content of a programme comply with prescribed Norms and Standards.

1.2.7 *Early intervention programmes*

"Early intervention programmes" refers to programmes provided to families where children have been identified as being vulnerable to or at risk of harm or removal to alternative care (Service Delivery Model 2005).

1.2.8 *Outreach programme*

An *"outreach programme*" refers to a programme that reaches out to children living and working on the street to empower them to express their rights and needs and to link them with the necessary resources when required (Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended).

1.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

A review of literature on the phenomenon of street children revealed that it focused largely on factors that gave rise to the presence of street children, the impact this had on the environment and the factors that impacted on the lives of these children. There was less emphasis on interventions and services to meet their needs (Muikila, 2004; Trent, 2006). Globally, governments have been criticized for not dealing effectively with the problem of street children. In the South African context, the non-existence of policy or formal guidelines for services to street children resulted in the shifting of responsibility between different state departments in both formulating policy and offering direct services to address this need. Historically, the Department of Social Development and child welfare organizations did not prioritize direct services for street children (Kariuki, 2004; Trent, 2006). The constant shifting of responsibility for services between the state and the non-governmental welfare sector resulted in street children being marginalized and unable to access social services that were offered to other vulnerable groups. Chetty (2002), Kariuki (2004) and Trent (2006) note that the lack of policy led to the neglect of services for this specific group of children. Philanthropic efforts by individuals, religious

organizations and other non-governmental organizations were viewed with scepticism, particularly by government. Many shelters that were deemed unfit to care for street children were closed down by the Department of Social Development. The researcher was part of a team that assessed shelters in the north of Durban from 2004 to 2006. The general perception was that these interventions were driven by individuals' or organizations' personal philosophies and ideologies (Trent, 2006). As noted earlier, there were no formal guidelines to set standards or inform planning and the implementation of services and programmes.

The initial efforts to amend the Child Care Act No 74 of 1983 to include shelters provided impetus for the registration of shelters. This provision in the Act came into effect in 1995. It recognized the services provided by shelters and provided them with access to state funding in terms of the Department of Social Development Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (Policy on Financial Awards) (2005). This policy was a tool to assess organizations' applications for funding; it prescribed uniform funding criteria in respect of children's homes. Shelters fell under the category of children's homes and therefore had to comply with the Norms and Standards applicable to them. As shelters often fell short of such standards, registration was granted on three levels, namely level 1, level 2 and level 3, with level 1 being the lowest. Department of Social Development district offices used their own discretion to determine criteria and recommend the level at which a shelter should be registered. The researcher assisted at district office level in assessing shelters for registration. The assessment criteria were not uniform across provinces, regions or districts. Hence, the implementation of the Act and the application process for the registration of shelters left much to be desired. The need for a more structured and uniform approach with specific reference to street shelter services was acknowledged by researchers (Kariuki 2004, Veeran, 1999); and further motivated this study.

The researcher's initial investigation into shelters which was completed in January 2010 concurred with the findings of earlier researchers (Trent, 2006) that there was an absence of specific policy, Norms and Standards to guide and evaluate services. However, both street shelters and the Department of Social Development had access to policies such as the White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997 (White Paper (1997), Integrated Service Delivery

Model for Developmental Social Services, 2005 (Service Delivery Model (2005), and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, as well as international instruments on the rights of children. Regardless of gaps in policy, by virtue of children being admitted to a shelter for care and protection, the fundamental principles of existing legal provisions for the protection of children in alternate care applied. In addition to meeting their basic needs, such as food, clothing and accommodation, shelters provided a wide range of services in accordance with children's individual needs to ensure their growth, development and integration into society. This study analysed the efforts of shelters to render meaningful services in the wake of the transformation of welfare services in the democratic South Africa.

The Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), which is the supreme law of the country, provided the basis for all policies affecting children. The constitutional provisions were largely influenced by international laws such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). These policies served as guiding instruments on the rights and protection of children, including the right to social services. The Bill of Rights under Section 28 of the Constitution refers to the right to "social services'' and lists "welfare services" among other essential services such as housing, health and education. Whilst it was debated whether they meant one and the same thing, traditionally social services were regarded as the service delivery arm of the welfare system, including health, education, social security and social services.

The current study acknowledges that policy has evolved in recognizing services to street children. The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (as amended) (the Children's Act) afforded equal protection to all children, including street children. Whilst broad policies at both local and international level, advocated for the rights of children to access resources, protection and care, the Act recognized shelter services and provided legislation to guide and regulate such services. The Children's Act, that came into effect in July 2010 paved the way for shelters to render services in a more meaningful, structured and systematic way.

The Department of Social Development and the non-governmental sector are partners in providing social welfare services. While the former is responsible for registration, financing and monitoring, the latter provides direct service delivery. There was a need for specific guidelines to guide processes to ensure positive outcomes in the services offered to children at shelters. While the Children's Act provides the necessary legislation for registration, the Norms and Standards developed by the Department of Social Development guide intervention. In the initial draft of the Children's Bill, shelter services were differentiated from Child and Youth Care Centres as the level of protection afforded to street children at shelters was considered to be lower than that offered to children who were placed in Child and Youth Care Centres. The Children's Act reclassified shelters as Child and Youth Care Centres to ensure that the highest standards of care and protection for this vulnerable group prevail. Whilst many researchers are of the opinion that the needs of street children are more complex and different from those admitted to Child and Youth Care Centres, this approach does not repudiate this claim, but instead allows for a flexible approach to street children's particular needs whilst simultaneously ensuring that they receive the highest level of protection services (Beni'tez, 2011; Chetty, 2002; Kariuki, 2004).

The Sexual Offences Act No.32 of 2007 and the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 have since been reviewed and aligned to the Children's Act. The Sexual Offences Act provides for the protection of street children who are considered vulnerable. During a training workshop on this Act in 2010, Joan van Niekerk, Director of Childline, Durban noted that street children are most at risk of being abused in terms of child pornography. Osthus (2009) found that female street children were vulnerable to exploitation as commercial sex workers. As this offers them a means of financial support, they fail to report such abuse. While the legislation provided for the protection of these children from such abuse, the challenge of making the legislation work rested on service providers such as shelters, who were charged with designing suitable alternatives that would encourage such children to seek help. Outreach programmes to street children are one arm of shelter services that use innovative and non-threatening means of reaching out to children.

Durban is the major political and economic hub of the eThekwini Municipality. The Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 which focused on various issues in the inner city of Durban, one of which is safety; considered street children nuisances and an obstacle to tourism and economic development. In order to protect the city's image, the authorities constantly cleaned the streets of these supposedly deviant groups (Beni'tez, 2011; Chetty, 2002). This approach came under fire from various sectors, notably the non-governmental sector. Obed Mlaba, the former Mayor of Durban and Michael Sutcliffe, former City Manager, embarked on a transformation process to address the needs and interests of all citizens, including street children. In collaboration with the Departments of Health, Social Services and Security, Naidoo (2005) drafted the eThekwini Municipality Policy on "Children Living and Working on the Street''. This policy and on-going advocacy on the rights of street children influenced positive actions towards aligning the local Government's Municipal Systems Amendment Act No 7 of 2011 with current child care legislation. This piece of legislation emphasizes co-operation between municipalities and stakeholders such as shelters.

This study acknowledges the efforts of shelters in responding to the needs of street children and highlights the challenges of implementing programmes in line with existing policy mandates.

1.3 MOTIVATION

Rubin & Babbie (2001) state that in social work research, the impetus for selecting a topic should come from the issues confronting social service providers or the information needed to address practical problems in social welfare. As noted earlier, in choosing this topic, the researcher was motivated by her experience with unregistered shelters in the north of Durban.

In 1994, the researcher was part of a social work team from the Department of Social Development, Phoenix District Office that investigated four unregistered Shelters in the Phoenix, Verulam and Tongaat areas of KwaZulu-Natal. As a service office tasked to render services to emerging organizations, the District Office investigated these facilities in order to make recommendations with respect to registration. The investigations into

the services revealed that these facilities offered informal care for children and provided food and accommodation. The children at one of the shelters were found to be without appropriate adult supervision and were left to their own devices. These children were removed to alternate care or reunited with their families. The facility was subsequently closed. The Commissioner of Child Welfare, who presided over these matters as well as local Child Welfare organizations, expressed concerns regarding the existence of such facilities that functioned independently and without guidance, control, or monitoring of their activities. The children tended to vacillate between these facilities and the streets, exposing them to repeated risks.

Whilst the above outcomes supported the perceptions of researchers such as Veeran (1999) and Kariuki (2004) that shelters operated in accordance with their own philosophies and ideologies with little or no regard for child protection legislation, the researcher's investigation prior to the implementation of the Children's Act shed a different light on the issue. The investigation revealed different interpretations and application of policies and guidelines both by the shelters and Department of Social Development officials who were responsible for guidance and supervision. This supported and Kariuki (2004) and Veeran's (1999) recommendations for appropriate policy to guide interventions, which materialized in the Children's Act. The details of the findings of the initial investigation as well as the follow-up investigation, post the passing of the Children's Act are provided later in the study report.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Vithal and Jansen (2006) defined a 'rationale' as a brief statement of how the researcher became interested in the proposed topic and why he/she believes that the proposed study would benefit the discipline concerned. The rationale for the study and the professional environment within which it was contextualized is briefly described.

As stated previously, a number of studies have noted the need for suitable interventions for street children. Alternate care services such as children's homes, foster care and places of safety apply rigid criteria for admission, often excluding children who have had

exposure to being on the street. Such children's needs often fall outside the scope of specialized services and programmes. Shelters play a pivotal role in addressing the diverse needs of street children. The needs of this vulnerable group of children as well as shelters as a response to meet their needs have been given due recognition and integrated into the Children's Act.

The follow-up to the investigation 32 months after the implementation of the Act revealed a number of changes. This study aimed to highlight these changes.

1.6 VALUE OF THE STUDY

The researcher's early engagement with shelters provided much insight into the needs of children at shelters. Furthermore, the review of relevant literature and legislation provided insight, knowledge and orientation to the topic, serving as a foundation for this study. The Department of Social Development formally sanctioned the study and a letter of approval was granted in 2008. Managers of the Shelters as well their staff consented to the investigation. Both felt that such an investigation was of mutual benefit in that the findings would assist the Department of Social Development to identify gaps and guide and support shelters in rendering relevant services. The study was of further value in that the earlier findings which were based on investigations prior to the implementation of the Children's Act revealed gaps in policy and resources which hindered services. Shelters have since gained recognition, affording them legitimate status equal to other registered service providers. Their services have also gained prominence. The study enabled the researcher to explore the extent to which shelters have embraced policy in transforming their services. The time line between the initial and subsequent investigations assisted in drawing comparisons, determining progress and identifying gaps in programmes so as to inform and guide future interventions.

As this was an exploratory study, the researcher hoped to raise awareness of the different aspects of shelter services. She acknowledged and highlighted their role in meeting the specific needs of street children. The study also drew attention to the gaps, challenges and constraints hindering or preventing shelters from achieving their service objectives.

The study also highlighted the roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders in working collaboratively towards integrated, holistic and meaningful service delivery. It is hoped that the outcome of the investigation will place shelter services in perspective and that the recommendations will pave the way towards a collaborative approach, thereby eradicating the discriminatory practices of the past.

1.7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to understand the role of shelters against the background of policy. The following objectives were set to meet the aims of the study:

- To explore the nature and range of services offered at all registered shelters in the Durban area.
- To explore the different kinds of programmes being implemented by these shelters.
- To explore the specific challenges experienced in the implementation of programmes.
- To solicit recommendations from respondents working at shelters to improve service delivery.

The following key research questions were derived from the above objectives:

- What types of services are offered to children at street shelters?
- What specific programmes are currently implemented?
- Who are the members of the establishment and what are their duties and functions?
- What are the gaps and challenges in implementing programmes?
- What recommendations can be made in order to provide optimal services to children?

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING THE STUDY

Various theoretical perspectives were explored to provide a global understanding of the causative factors and issues impacting on the personal lives of street children. The ecological systems framework was found to be most appropriate to understand the experiences of both the children as well as shelters in the context of their environment. The ecological theory proposes that environmental factors play a major role in children's development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) regards the individual's total social environment as "the context of development". He identifies three levels at which the systems impact on the child, namely, the micro, meso and macro levels. The micro level refers to the child's immediate environment. It is the setting in which children have direct interactions with social agents such as family, friends, classmates, teachers, neighbours and other people whom they are in contact with. Children are not mere recipients of experiences within their immediate environment; they also contribute to the construction of that environment Beni'tez, (2011); Lewis & Heinonen (2003).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) highlights the principle of interconnectedness and emphasizes that it does not only apply within a setting but also between the settings in which the developing person exists. He calls this interconnectedness the meso-system. The meso-system places the child in the context of interactions and relationships between the micro-systems, for example, the relationship between his/her family and the school. If the child's parents are physically abusive towards him/her, he/she may resort to bullying other children at school or allow him/herself to be bullied by others. The macro-system places the child within the context of his/her cultural background which involves the socio-economic status of the individual and/or his/her family. For example, a child who is born into a poor family may work harder every day and strive to improve his/her status.

The ecological systems perspective emphasizes the interactions between children and their environment. Each does not exist in isolation, but are connected to each other in their interactions and reciprocal influence. Payne (2005) examined the processes of these relationships and the possible resulting influences.

The street is a place of cohesive functions including work, recreation and socializing and influences situational learning and adaptation (Beni'tez, 2011). Studies have indicated that children who are exposed to life on the streets are vulnerable and susceptible to negative influences (Chetty, 2002; Kariuki 2004; Muikila, 2006; and Trent, 2006). These children are exposed to constant changes in their environment, each with its own values and precepts. They have to continually adjust, adapt and adopt values prescribed within each system in order to survive. Drawing on the ecological systems theory, Beni'tez (2011) makes reference to "street connectedness". She asserts that, street children's identity formation processes differ from those experienced by other urban children, as their relationship with the urban environment is unique. Street children are subjected to a more volatile environment of violence, stigmatization and discrimination. This experience, which contributes in a unique way to the development of values, behaviours, beliefs, etc., constitutes "street connectedness". A holistic understanding of children's connectedness to these variables is a key to developing interventions.

Whilst the ecological systems theory provides a strong support base for understanding the behaviour and needs of children within the context of their environment, structural theory is significant in understanding the phenomenon within the broad socio-economic and political dimensions of society, especially the effects of capitalism, and the impact of these influences in creating unequal relations amongst individuals (Sewpaul & Holscher, 2004). This approach focused on particularly the broad structural barriers relating to institutional arrangements, such as power and the imposition of their own ideological views as well as broad social relational patterns, such as competing for resources (Mohne, 2010). These manifestations benefitted the interest of service providers in maintaining their power and privilege at the expense of those who are marginalized. The primary goal of structural theory is to reduce social inequality through the emancipation of those who have been oppressed. It serves as an effective tool in advocating for strategies to enhance social justice. It acts as a moral compass for practitioners and offers direction for the course of action in social service delivery, hence it's relevancy to this study.

The Children's Act and the Service Delivery Model (2005), as primary policies guiding social work interventions is prescriptive in that services be transformed to benefit

previously disadvantaged and marginalized groups, street children included (structural theory). The policies provide for interventions specific to their needs (ecological systems approach).

The conclusions and recommendations discussed in chapter 4 were presented through the lens of both the above theoretical approaches to give impetus to social service delivery that is transformed and relevant.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

1.9.1 INTRODUCTION

This section focuses on the empirical component of the research study. It describes the research methodology and design which guided the investigation and provided the framework for the research design as well as the steps and processes in respect of the methodology.

1.9.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves to bridge the gap between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999). Terre Blanche *et al*. (1999) note that it is a logical strategy for gathering evidence about the knowledge desired. They add that in order for it to be methodologically sound, reliable and valid, the evidence has to be efficient. The research design should provide a plan that specifies how a research study is going to be executed in order to answer the research question.

This study employed an exploratory research design within a qualitative framework. Exploratory research is conducted to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual, as well as understand and interpret the meaning and impact of a given phenomenon (De Vos, 2002).

The researcher applied the qualitative framework proposed by Rubin and Babbie (2001) for exploratory studies, which is fluid and open. Semi-structured interviews with a degree of consistency in the use of open-ended questions were used as a primary tool for data collection. The open-ended questions, together with the interactive process which the researcher engaged in, were flexible and fluid. Whilst the semi-structured interview served as a primary source of information, other forms of evidence was accessed through observation, minutes of meetings, websites, press articles, photographs and visual material. The description of individual experiences, insights and perceptions together with other sources of information accessed, the researcher was able to obtain a holistic understanding of the nature of the services offered by shelters. This method further enabled the researcher to explore all possible facts in order to compose a general picture of conditions that exist (De Vos, 2002). The researcher was able to obtain the most relevant, recent information on current practices at street shelters in order to draw conclusions and make appropriate recommendations, in line with the transformation of service delivery.

1.10 CHOICE OF LOCALE

This investigation was confined to shelters within the Durban area. Although a number of facilities operate as shelters in this district, the investigation was limited to shelters that were registered in terms of Section 30 of the Child Care Act No.70 of 1983 (as amended). The reasons for choosing registered shelters were twofold. Firstly, only shelters registered in terms of the Act were reflected on the Department of Social Development's database. Secondly, a preliminary investigation revealed that unregistered shelter services were transient and could cease to exist during the investigation, hence potentially nullifying the data. The final sample included three registered shelters which will be referred to as Shelters A, B and C to maintain anonymity. These were the only registered shelters in the given research locale on the Department of Social Development's database during the period of the study. Given the focus of the study, the population of interest constituted shelter personnel who were involved in planning, implementing and evaluating services and programmes.

The investigation into the services and programmes offered by these shelters commenced in 2009 and was concluded in 2013.The reason for the long time lapse in gathering the data was personal constraints in finalizing the study. Permission was granted for an extension of time to conclude the study. As noted earlier, this offered the opportunity for follow-up interviews which enabled the researcher to draw comparisons.

This study explored the nature of services offered to street children to meet their specific needs and critiqued such services against the background of international and local legislation and guidelines for service delivery. As investigations were conducted prior to and post implementation of the Children's Act, the findings are presented side by side, to enable comparisons as well as to determine the current status of services.

1.11 SAMPLING

According to Arkava and Lane, cited in Vos *et al*. (2005:194), a sample comprises representative elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. The sample was primarily influenced by the unit of analysis, namely services and programmes at shelters in relation to local and international policies. Since the investigation was conducted at specific shelters, the researcher used purposive sampling. As the statutory body responsible for maintaining a database of registered shelters, the Department of Social Development was approached with a view to identifying registered shelters in the Durban area (Appendix C). This was time saving and cost effective, as the sample was available electronically and it was established that three shelters were registered. Lofland and Lofland (1984), cited in Kariuki (2004) observed that researchers were more likely to gain access to situations if they made use of contacts. This strategy proved successful as the three identified shelters were approached to participate in the study and were amenable and co-operated.

Purposive sampling was also employed to select respondents for interviews. This enabled the researcher to choose the units to be engaged as sources of information, namely a shelter manager and two staff members who were directly involved with the children. These respondents were interviewed at their respective shelters. The initial set of

interviews was conducted with 9 respondents in May 2010 and was repeated with the same number and category of respondents in the second cycle between March and April 2013. Approximately ninety minutes were spent with the respective interviewees. In total, 18 respondents from three shelters participated in this study.

One of the objectives of sampling is drawing inferences. As this is a limited population, there was no intention to generalize across all shelters. However, inferences can be made about other registered shelters in the province, as they are expected to function in terms of minimum standards that are applicable across all registered services.

1.11.1 SAMPLING PROCEDURE - RECRUITMENT AND RESPONSES

The following sampling procedure was implemented:

- A written request was submitted to the Department of Social Development seeking approval to undertake the study at the specific shelters (Appendix B). Approval was granted and written permission was obtained.
- The processing of the application and feedback extended over a year.
- This was followed by telephonic contacts with shelter managers, outlining the purpose of the study with a view to establishing their willingness to participate.
- The verbal communication was followed up with written requests.
- Based on the positive responses, appointments were scheduled and interviews were conducted with individual respondents.
- The first set of interviews was conducted with nine respondents, namely the shelter manager, social worker and child care worker in 2010 in each of the shelters.
- The time lapse in completing the report on the study, as well as the need to increase the sample size, necessitated follow-up interviews.
- Telephonic consultations were held with the respective shelters and follow-up interviews were conducted to complete the process and ensure that the data were relevant.

1.12 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Terre Blanche *et al*. (1999) refer to data collection as a planned, detailed strategy for the collection of data. The researcher employed multiple forms of evidence to collect data, namely, semi-structured interviews, observation, and minutes of meetings, websites, press articles, photographs and visual material. The semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions served as a primary source of information. They allowed for flexibility and yielded variations in responses. According to Lofland, Snow, Anderson and Lofland (2006) an interview schedule is a list of questions or general topics that the interviewer wants to explore during each interview. Although the schedule was prepared to ensure that the same basic information was obtained from each person, there were no predetermined responses. The semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewer the freedom to probe and explore within the predetermined categories. This allowed for natural responses and spontaneity, as well as taking into consideration any additional information not anticipated by the interviewer. This process helps to broadly define the issue, focusing on particular aspects, and relating experiences unique to individuals (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

The semi-structured interview schedule was divided into the following themes: demographic profile; policies and legislation; physical resources; support systems; staff development and training; and recommendations. Each theme was divided into relevant subheadings to gather relevant information pertaining to the theme.

The researcher used the natural setting as the source of data collection as it offered opportunities to observe and interpret settings. Observation led to a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation as it provided knowledge of the context in which the services were provided (Lofland et al, 2006). The researcher was able to see things that participants themselves were not aware of or that they were unwilling to discuss. By using the inductive data analysis approach, the researcher was able to respond to environmental cues and interact with the situation while simultaneously collecting information at multiple levels. She was able to perceive situations holistically,

provide immediate feedback and request verification of data where necessary. The researcher used interpretive analysis as a research tool for analysing the data that had been collected. The interpretive approach attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings people assign to them (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). The emphasis was on the variety of meanings, insights, attitudes and interpretations found within the different categories of data obtained, the participants' experiences in rendering services and the meanings they attached to their roles and responsibilities.

As this was an exploratory study, the researcher did not seek to test whether the collected data fitted with any preconceived theory, but rather to develop knowledge from the data collected. The researcher considered the presence of multiple realities and attempted to adequately represent them.

Following the earlier contact with the respective shelters, the researcher secured individual appointments and conducted a second round of interviews with the respondents to validity the findings. A total of 18 in-depth interviews were held in the two research cycles, namely, with the Manager, Social Worker and Child Care Worker at each of the three shelters. The interviews focused on the following key categories:

- Demographic profile of the shelter and the children.
- Physical resources facilitating service provision.
- Services being implemented according to any specific models of intervention or policy legislation.
- Role and function of Management in service rendering.
- Job-specific requirements with regards to qualifications or experience.
- Provision for training.
- Nature of services and programmes.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Challenges impacting on service delivery.

1.13 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher focused on the verbal interactions derived from these interviews as well as the meanings and interpretations of the questions (Vithal & Jansen, 2006). Greeff, in de Vos (2002) recommended that the content of interviews be analysed while they are still fresh, as he was of the view that semi-structured in-depth interviews lend themselves to content analysis. Therefore, as soon as the interviews were concluded, they were transcribed and assigned categories according to key concepts and recurrent themes. Coding was the first step in the process of data analysis. The inductive approach was used to identify emerging patterns, themes and categories of data and was linked to existing policies and the literature within the ecological approach. This enabled the researcher to obtain the most relevant and recent information concerning the current practices at street shelters, enabling conclusions to be drawn and appropriate recommendations to be made (these are discussed in detail later in this report).

The researcher used data from diverse sources to reveal the views and experiences of different shelter staff. Terre Blanche and Durrheim, cited in Kariuki (2004:53-59) state that “data from different sources can be triangulated” and describe triangulation as “the craftsmanship of a researcher collecting data from different and diverse sources”.

In qualitative research, reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness based on the extent of accuracy of the findings from the researcher’s standpoint (Creswell, 2003). The researcher attempted to eliminate all possible biases to increase truthfulness throughout the process of data collection and analysis in order to achieve an optimal level of accuracy. In facilitating the interview process, the researcher considered other factors that affected this process such as the respondents’ availability, their work schedule, time of day, or any other factors unique to individuals that impacted on the process. To this end, the researcher took all necessary precautions to create a conducive and non-threatening environment to ensure maximum participation. The researcher was sensitive to the respondents’ needs and accommodated individual requests in scheduling appointments for interviews. She also remained flexible and adjusted to any changes that occurred during the process.

1.14 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following possible limitations of the study were identified:

The study was restricted to registered shelters within the Durban area and excluded unregistered shelters. This was deliberate in order to maintain homogeneity so as to increase the reliability of the findings. However, it is possible that unregistered shelters would have yielded information that was similar to the registered shelters.

The scope of the study was not large enough to adequately generalize the findings to all shelters regarding service delivery. At the time the study was conducted there were only three registered shelters in the Durban area. According to discussions held on 12/02/2011 and 13/02/2013, with Jabu Ngcobo, an official from the Department of Social Development in Durban, the population of unregistered shelters was greater in numbers. Unregistered shelters do not fall within the scope of this study.

Other possible limitations of this study revolve around interviewer bias, participants' unwillingness to share information, untruthful responses or responses being misconstrued, and questions being misinterpreted or not understood. To ensure openness and honesty, participants were assured of confidentiality, that both the identity of the shelter and respondents will remain anonymous. The researcher explained the purpose of the research was for academic purposes and allowed participants to seek clarity through questions and feedback.

The management and respondents were informed that identifying details of shelters, respondents, staff personnel or children will remain anonymous. Assured respondents that the information gathered will not be used for purposes other than which it is intended for. Ensured that participation was voluntary and informed participants of their right to withdraw their participation any time during the process, should they wish to. The researcher, who conducted the interview, clarified and checked back to ensure appropriate and honest responses and interpretations. However, interviewee/interviewer biases were not ruled out.

1.15 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a social worker by profession, the researcher adhered to the code of conduct prescribed by the South African Council for Social Service Professions in addition to the ethical principles of research. Collins *et al*. (2000) support the view that ethics in research should be reflective of the professional codes of conduct within the country in which the research was conducted. The following ethical considerations were adhered to:

- Obtained ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Obtained written consent from the Department of Social Development. (Refer to Appendix B)
- Permission was obtained from shelter managers to undertake the study (Refer to Appendix D).
- The researcher clarified the purpose, aims and objectives of the study to the participants.
- The role of the researcher and the processes were made explicit to the participants, who signed consent forms (Refer to attachment to Appendix D).
- Appointments were scheduled in accordance with each respondent's availability.
- Participants were ensured of confidentiality and anonymity.
- The researcher maintained neutrality and did not influence the responses of the participants.
- Openness and honesty were maintained in the presentation of the study and the findings.

1.16 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The chapters of the study report have been organized as follows:

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study. The study was introduced by outlining its context, rationale and value. The aims, objectives, theoretical framework and research methodology used in the study were clarified.

Chapter 2 reviews the current literature on policies, guidelines and practices in child care.

Chapter 3 discusses the analysis of the data and findings.

Chapter 4 provides conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review was a significant aspect of this study in that it provided a global understanding of the phenomenon of street children from different perspectives. The South African situation cannot be viewed in isolation as, worldwide, most countries and cities are confronted with the issue of street children which poses complex and serious challenges (Le Roux, 1996).

The chapter is divided into five sections:

- Section one focuses on a *definition* which provided the basis for an understanding of street children's specific needs and appropriate interventions.
- Section two examines the *prevalence* of street children worldwide, the South African context and the local situation in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Section three focuses on *etiology,* highlighting different views on the presence of street children from a political, economic and social perspective.
- Section four reflects on international and local *legislation* that has influenced interventions with street children.
- Section five concludes the chapter by examining *intervention strategies* adopted by government and non-government organizations to address the issue.

2.2 DEFINITION

The definition of street children has generated much discussion and is contested by practitioners and policy makers' alike (Ennew et al 2003). According to Ennew et al (2003) the term 'street children' has been used to refer to children in a variety of circumstances, creating confusion about who they are and what kinds of experiences brought them to the streets. Many countries, practitioners and policymakers subscribe to the definition

adopted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF distinguished between two groups of street children, namely:

Children 'on' the street: These children are viewed as having some family ties. They engage in various forms of economic activity on the street ranging from begging to vending, probably to support their family. They go home after their activity on the street. Due to the continued economic instability of their families, such children may eventually opt for a permanent life on the streets.

Children 'of' the street: These children live on the street and family relationships are normally non-existent or weak and unsupported. Where family contact exists, it may be intermittent or occasional.

While this definition was popular among researchers in the 1980s, by the 1990s, it did not reflect realities on the ground, as not all street children fall into these two categories. The definition drew attention to children's physical presence on the streets, but ignored their emotional attachments to their environment (Ennew et al 2003; 2006; Beni'tez, 2011, Willis, 2011) Beni'tez (2011) emphasized the need to consider the various physical and social circumstances of street children in constructing a definition of street children.

Furthermore, Brick (cited in Beni'tez, 2011:11) noted that, "Children themselves defied these generalizations". It has been widely recognised that street children are not a homogeneous population. Sociologists and anthropologists view them as a socially constructed group (Ennew et al, 2003). They therefore need to be viewed in the context of their social environment. In terms of this viewpoint, street children are competent social actors who interact with a variety of environments. Despite the challenges confronting them, they are able to assert control over their own lives and develop strategies to cope and survive (Kruger, Chawla & Chawla, 2002; Ennew et al 2003). Cox and Pawar (2006) placed street children in the context of family relationships, distinguishing between the following:

- Children who see their families daily;
- Children who see their families intermittently;
- Children, who never see their families, but know where they are; and

- Children who have no knowledge of or contact with their families.

  The more recent rights-based approach placed street children within their social situation. The perceived problem is no longer children or their families, but rather the situation these children find themselves in (Beni'tez, 2011; Makopo, 2005).

David Fortune, a Child Care Worker with Streets (a non-profit organization working with street children in Cape Town), claimed that a generalized approach to understanding street children contributed to the success of their programmes. He viewed such children as architects of their own future, irrespective of their background (www.shareintl.org).
The literature reveals that the phenomenon of street children encompasses a variety of circumstances and characteristics which challenge policymakers and service providers to describe this population group and address the issues related to it.

2.3 THE PREVALENCE OF STREET CHILDREN

Although the phenomenon of street children dates back to as early as 1848 (Ball, 1996), it became prevalent in South Africa in the early 1980s (Le Roux, 1996; Maree, 1991). The eThekwini Municipality generally referred to street children as 'vagrants' or 'vagabonds' who threatened the City of Durban's image. The city authorities regularly removed them from the streets in order to keep the city clean and safe (streetkidnews.blogsome.com). Ironically, although there has been much progress in understanding street children and strategies to address the problem, the eThekwini Municipality's mindset around street children has not evolved in line with such understanding. As recently as 25/03/2013, Eugene Msomi of the South African Police Services made reference to clearing Durban streets of 'vagrants' in preparation for the BRICS Summit (East Coat Radio News Watch, Subramoney, 20/10/2011).

According to the latest UNICEF report, the exact number of street children worldwide is not known. The World Health Organization and UNICEF estimate the number at approximately 150 million (www.unicef.org). Latin America is reported to have around 45 million street children, India is home to approximately 18 million, Africa has around 10 million street children and there are an estimated 40 million in Asia. While the majority of

street children appear to exist in underdeveloped or poor countries, they are also found in highly industrialized and relatively rich states such as Germany, which has about 1 million such children, while the United States is home to around 1.3 million. Every year, millions of children are pulled into a life on the street as a result of economic deprivation, problems at home, commercial exploitation or poor access to school (Casa Alianza, 2000). Ennew (1998) observed, however, that it is not clear whether the number of street children is increasing, or whether awareness of street children is growing.

According to the *eThekwini Municipality Policy on Children living on the Street (2005)*, more than 3000 children were estimated to be living on Durban's streets in 2005 (Naidoo, 2005). The Department of Social Development's *Strategy and Guidelines for Children Living and Working on the Streets* estimated that between 9 000 and 10000 children had been living on the streets of South Africa from the 1990s. A national census conducted by the National Alliance for Street Children Living and Working on the Streets (NASC) in 2004 found that 13 275 children were living and working on the streets. At a national level, the figures in 2012 were said to be between 250 000 to 300 000 (www.streetchildren.org.za).

2.4 ETIOLOGY

Unlike other countries, where a single cause such as extreme poverty, civil war or natural disasters might be the leading cause of the phenomenon of street children, in South Africa, a combination of factors often leads to a child ending up on the street. Researchers (Kariuki, 2004; Kerr, 2006; Makopo, 2005; Mhone, 2010; and Reddy, 2005) assert that the problem of street children is a global one and cannot be attributed to a single factor. The leading causes of the problem are poverty, unemployment, the breakdown of the family, child abuse, neglect, dropping out of school, child labour and social or psychological factors related to the social environment, behavioural disorders or sensation seeking. Kariuki *et al*. (2004) perceive the South African situation to be worse than other countries, because it has been exacerbated by the legacy of apartheid, rapid urbanization, HIV/AIDS and crime. They identify racial segregation as a primary cause of the phenomenon. The following are some indicators of the South African etiology.

2.4.1 IMPACT OF APARTHEID

The Children's Charter of South Africa (1992), which voices children's opinions on matters affecting them, recognized that, as a direct result of apartheid, children were not treated with respect and dignity and were subjected to discrimination, violence and racism that destroyed family and community social relationships.

According to Le Roux (1996), the apartheid ideology played a major role in the phenomenon of street children. Lewis and Heinonen (2003) and Veeran (1999) argued that migratory labour laws and the Group Areas Act of 1950 showed no regard for the value of Black family life; which contributed to the disintegration and weakening of traditional modes of existence characterized by extended family support. The Group Areas Act of 1950 prohibited a Black child from staying with his or her parents where they worked; in the so-called White residential areas (Peacock, 1994). The migrant labour system and influx control prohibited the migration of families as an to the cities. The father, the head of a Black household, migrated to the urban areas in search of employment and was absent from the family for long periods of time. This led to a gradual or complete neglect of traditional customs, practices and group values. The disruption of family institutions led to instability. Children were reared and socialized by a single parent, their peers or left to their own devices. Parents lost control over their children (Peacock, 1994). These children looked for meaningful relationships outside their homes and in some cases on the street. According to Brendtro *et al*. (1990) some of these children turned to outcasts, who pulled them onto the streets. Beni'tez (2011) concluded that the effects of South Africa's apartheid policies will remain with us for many years to come. Street children interviewed in Durban by Chetty (2002) and Reddy (2005) attested to family disorganization, a loss of a sense of belonging and family cohesiveness, family disintegration, all forms of abuse, and delinquent tendencies relating to apartheid that resulted in them taking to the street.

Le Roux (1996) observed that South Africa has one of the most unequal distributions of economic and human resources in the world, mainly due to apartheid. Beni'tez (2011) noted that the country is still recovering from the residue of the apartheid system,

notably poverty among the previously disenfranchised majority. A study by the Human Sciences Research Council (www.sarpn.org) observed that while South Africa ranked high on the world's stock exchanges and boasted modern infrastructure and abundant resources, economic growth is not sufficiently high to lower unemployment rates. The inequality generated by the apartheid system poses many challenges. High crime and HIV/AIDS infection rates have exacerbated the situation as they deter foreign investors. According to the *eThekwini Municipality Draft IDP Strategic Approach* (2005/2006), the municipality's focus over the past 10 years has been reversing the legacy of apartheid by meeting the basic needs of vulnerable groups. Former South African President, Thabo Mbeki stated in his State of the Nation address in 2005 that "our liberty is only possible if no human being feels vulnerable to any act of nature or humankind" (eThekwini Municipality Draft IDP Strategic Approach, (2005/2006:23).

2.4.2 IMPACT OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), South Africa was home to an estimated 350000 refugees in the 1980s. The influx of refugees into South Africa has contributed to the increase in the number of street children. Most of South Africa's refugees came from countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Angola and Somalia (www.southafrica.info). Refugees entertain high expectations of obtaining employment and improving their standard of living. However, they soon learn that life is difficult. South Africa's high unemployment rates make it difficult for them to find jobs in the formal sector (www.southafrica.info). Not having the necessary identification documents or work permits further jeopardizes their chances of obtaining gainful employment. The informal economy is often the site of violent conflict between South African citizens and refugees. Moreover, the South African government has not provided systematic and comprehensive assistance to this group of people (Refugee Information Guide and Directory of Services, Lawyers for Human Rights, South Africa (2009) These foreigners, including children, increasingly depended on the street for their survival. According to Le Roux (1996), the community of street children tends to be made up of people from many different communities with diverse needs. Despite their

diverse background, language, culture and needs, the streets serve as a common and neutral place with similar experiences “unique to street life”.

Social Workers know all too well the challenges experienced when rendering protective services to displaced children without identification documents. Refugee children confront barriers in accessing schooling as schools require birth documents. Accessing services in terms of the Children’s Act No 38 of 2005 as well as the Social Assistance Act No 13 of 2004 is a legal nightmare, as a South African identity document is essential for any statutory assistance. These requirements are impediments to this group of children accessing their rights. Displaced children who cross our boarders in search of protection and a better life are discriminated against and marginalized as a result of bureaucracy and legislative barriers. Refugee children go through a myriad of experiences and challenges. If they are unable to overcome these challenges and successfully integrate into broader South African society, they may turn to the streets for refuge (Chetty, 2002; Gramanie, 2006).

2.4.3 IMPACT OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

When countries imposed economic sanctions on South Africa during the 1980s, many breadwinners lost their jobs. This meant that parents could not provide for their children. Families sought alternate means of survival. Children moved onto the streets to earn a living. This was exacerbated by high inflation rates during this period (Barrette, 1995).

The discriminatory laws adopted prior to 1994 affected the majority of South Africans and have continued to have a negative impact on families. According to Patel (2005), Sewpaul & Holscher (2004), the South African government inherited an economy with high levels of inequality, where the bulk of its citizens lived in poverty. The *Fact Sheet on Poverty* (www.allafrica.com) released by the Government on 26/07/2004, revealed that unemployment rose from 30% in 1996 to 40% in 2003. Major labour intensive industries such as the textiles sector were under threat as tariff barriers fell, and imports flooded the market (www.allafrica.com). According to Luzipho (Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) KZN Provincial Secretary) factories remain under threat as there are no

strategies in place to prevent the influx of cheap or illegal goods (*Business Times*, 27/01/2013:1). He added that the National Bargaining Council had threatened to close 450 textile, leather and clothing factories that failed to comply with minimum wage in terms of the Labour Relations Act No 66 of 1996. This does not bode well for South Africa's disadvantaged citizens.

A study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in 2004 (www.sarpn.org), found that the number of people estimated to be living in poverty had not changed significantly between 1996 and 2004. It identified the unequal distribution of wealth as the primary reason for continued poverty, which shaped the lives of many children. A report by Maisteng (*Mail and Guardian*, 4/5/2010) noted that unemployment was highest amongst those aged 15 to 24. The National Youth Development Agency (www.ngopulse.org.za) which falls under the Office of the Presidency (2009) found that despite several policies launched post-1994 to address youth unemployment, it remained one of the major socio-economic challenges facing South African youth. The National Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy and Implementation Framework: *"Mainstreaming Youth in the South African Economy" (2009-2019);* aimed to promote economic empowerment and increase business opportunities for youth. It reported that 70% of the unemployed are youth. Research undertaken by the Department of Trade and Industry Ndumo (2008) identified several challenges in promoting business opportunities and economic empowerment for youth. Poverty is the natural outcome of unemployment. Desai (2003) alludes to unemployment being partially responsible for poverty and draws attention to the huge numbers of working class poverty in South Africa due to workers earning less than the poverty line. Researchers in the field cite poverty as one of the main reasons for children being on the streets (Beni'tez, 2011; Kerr, 2006; Muikila, 2006; Reddy, 2005; and Trent, 2006).

2.4.4 IMPACT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Apartheid policies used race to determine access to education. "Access to quality education was reserved for the minority and Blacks were designated to inferior quality schools" (Fiske & Ladd, quoted in Juan, 2007:34).This had long term, negative effects on

individuals as education is fundamental to accessing social and economic resources. Such policies explain South Africa's skills shortage. Juan (2007) noted that the UNCRC 28(1) (a) and South Africa's Bill of Rights 28(a), contained in the Constitution Act 108 of 1996, promote the rights of children to access free education. However, this does not apply at a practical level, as admission to most schools is dependent on the payment of fees. The South African Schools Amendment Act No. 84 of 1996 regulations relating to the exemption of parents from payment of school fees in public schools (Regulation 1052 of 2006) did little to promote or protect this right. Social Workers are often called upon to assist with letters of motivation to exempt children from school fees or to secure the release of school reports of learners who did not pay fees.

A family's ability to provide for their children's education is dependent on its resources. The cost of travelling, school books, uniforms and other financial requirements place heavy burdens on families who are already struggling to meet their basic needs of food and shelter. Providing for their children's education intensifies such families' vulnerability (Juan, 2007).

2.4.5 IMPACT OF HIV AND AIDS

UNICEF (www.unicef.org) estimated that 33 million persons were living with HIV/AIDS worldwide in 2012 and noted that the pandemic was a primary reason for the large number of orphans in South Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world. In South Africa, an estimated 5.7 million people are living with HIV/AIDS and there are estimated 1.5 million to 3 million children orphaned on account of HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that one in nine individuals is living with HIV/AIDS (www.avert.org). According to the Aids Organization and Research Trust, AVERT (2011); South Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic has had a devastating effect on children. It estimated children orphaned on account of HIV/AIDS in the region 1,9 million, with either one or both parents being deceased. It further reported that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is responsible for half of South Africa's orphans. While the inter-connectedness or consequences of HIV/AIDS are not clearly defined, it is clear that it pushes poor individuals and households into deeper poverty, especially because it is associated with

illness, loss of employment, loss of education and the death of care givers. Mhone (2010), Reddy (2005) and Osthus (2009) concurred that HIV/AIDS is related to poverty. Households which otherwise might have remained above the poverty line are pushed below it, due to the financial strain HIV/AIDS imposes on a family. This, in turn, feeds the epidemic. Makopo (2005) and Mhone (2010) note that rapid urbanization and dislocation through migration contribute to both the HIV/AIDS epidemic as well as children ending up on the streets.

According to Kazatchkine (2007) HIV/AIDS affected children in the following ways in the Sub Saharan African countries:

- The death of a parent led to poor school progress.
- The death or illness of a parent or caregiver led to loss of support which caused children to drop out of school.
- The death or illness of a caregiver caused children to take up informal work to support the family.
- Parents' deaths led to early marriage and pregnancy.
- Most homes are child-headed.

When children lose their parents or guardians to HIV/AIDS, they also lose their primary source of care and support. The snowball effects of HIV/AIDS result in children being orphaned, abandoned, neglected and abused, or having to take on adult responsibilities as care givers and breadwinners. This often results in them leaving home and taking to the streets. A study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in a number of districts in Zambia revealed that the majority of child prostitutes were orphans, of which most were street children. Studies in Uganda, a country known to practice child labour, revealed that girls orphaned by AIDS were especially vulnerable to sexual abuse at work because of the stigma attached to such children (www.ilo.org). Whilst the phenomenon of street children is a global one, localizing the situation contributes to a better understanding that will enable the formulation of appropriate responses and interventions. Beni'tez (2011), Chetty (2002), Reddy (2005) and Osthus (2009) found that a growing number of children orphaned by AIDS have taken to the streets for survival. Female children are drawn into prostitution as a means of livelihood and this increases

their risk of HIV infection. They are vulnerable to abuse and are psychologically damaged. They are exposed to trauma and threats of danger, yet are offered little protection. UNICEF has placed HIV/AIDS high on its agenda and together with the WHO and UNAIDS has pledged to eliminate pediatric HIV infections by 2015 through a global plan as well as national policies (Hall et al 2012).

2.5 REVIEW OF POLICIES

The section articulates the policy considerations that informed and shaped the implementation of services and programmes for street children. It focuses on the government's constitutional mandate in line with international obligations to protect children. It identifies international legislation which contributed to legislative changes in South Africa as well as the transformation of services to meet the needs of street children.

The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989*)* and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1990) provided a contextual framework for child rights legislation. Together, they provided a package of rights that should be enjoyed by children throughout the world. The state's obligation to protect children in difficult circumstances is emphasized in Article 3 of the UNCRC and Article 4 of the ACRWC, both of which note that the "best interests of children is of primary concern in making decisions that affect them". South Africa is a signatory to these instruments and is therefore held accountable to protect children. South African legislation has adopted the UNCRC's rights-based approach. The "child's best interest" principle is upheld in both the Constitution Act 108 of 1996 (Constitution) and the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 (as amended). In recent years, there have been a number of positive legislative developments relating to children spanning child justice, education, social security and social services. The shift in policy to include street children supports the view that street children are "no longer a matter of humanitarian and charitable concern, but a legal responsibility at local, national and international levels" (Brick, cited by Beni'tez, 2003:6).

The Children's Institute of South Africa monitors government and civil society's progress in realizing children's rights. Their annual publication, the *South African Gauge* (2010/2011) focused on children's participation (Article 12 of the UNCRC), reflecting UNICEF's 2010/2011 priority of the right of children to "express their views freely on matters affecting them" (www.unicef.org). In his opening remarks in this report, Reverend Archbishop Desmond Tutu acknowledged the importance of engaging children in decisions that concern them. He stated that: *"As a legal nation we have made remarkable progress in building the legal foundation for ensuring children's best interest. Now is the time to put policies of inclusion into action by listening to children and feeding their insight into the way we run our social services and government departments. No longer can we hold to the myth that we adults always know better than children. Children know what is happening around them and can see ways of improving their own lives as well as those of others"* (Jamieson *et al.,* 2010/2011:6).

However, while the necessary legislative measures may be in place, prejudice against street children remains a major concern. Children's rights advocacy groups and researchers in the field cite police brutality as a common occurrence worldwide that is especially prevalent in developing countries (www.streetchildren.org.uk, Chetty, 2002; Kariuki, 2004). South Africa is no exception. Several recent studies of street children in Durban have exposed police violation of children's rights and as well as police brutality. Such violations escalated during major events in the city centre (Makopo, 2005; Mhone, 2010); Reddy, 2005). In chapter one the researcher made reference to lobbying for the rights of street children. Advocates such as Hewett (www.umthombo.org), Naidoo (Durban Child Line) Consortium for Street Children (www.streetchildren.org.uk) used various forms of media to highlight the issue of the insensitive handling of street children by police and local authorities. The apprehension and detention of street children by police officers during major events is a common practice worldwide and not unique to South Africa (www.streetchildren.org.uk). Advocates for the rights of street children are of the opinion that the most serious threats come from the very people that are responsible for their protection, namely local government and law enforcement officers

(www.streetchildren.org.uk). International advocacy group, the Consortium for Street Children, expressed the view that police officers who are the first point of contact with the child should be advocates, rather than violators of their rights.

Placing street children in detention is unlawful. The Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (as amended) makes provision for the management of children in conflict with the law. The Act does not discriminate against street children, who are entitled to the same protection as all other children. South Africa, like other countries that ratified the UNCRC, is held accountable for any unjust practices concerning children who are in conflict with the law (UNCRC sections 37 and 40). The Children's Act and the Child Justice Act work in tandem to protect children's rights. The justice system, together with the Department of Social Development has mechanisms in place to protect the rights of children in conflict with the law. Instead of the previous approach, where juveniles went directly to trial, probation officers from the Department of Social Development are based at courts to assess and make recommendations taking into account the "best interests of the child" principle. Detention is considered the last resort. As a former employee of the Department of Social Development, the researcher was involved in setting up such mechanisms and served as a probation officer in courts north of Durban.

In South Africa the Western Cape Province appears to be the forerunner in considering appropriate strategies to address the issue of street children in their city centres. In collaboration with stakeholders, the Western Cape municipality developed a *Policy Guideline on Street Children* which translated policy into action. Provincial departments and non-governmental partners collaborated to manage the issue. Likewise, the eThekwini Municipality devised the *eThekwini Municipality Policy on Children living on the Street (2005),* to guide intervention in respect of street children. While this initially focused on the protection of the city rather than children, the policy was later revised.
The revised *eThekwini Municipality Policy on Children living on the Street* (2005) and Integrated Development Plan (2007-2008) called for stakeholders to work together to find solutions to the challenges of street children. However, it is questionable whether these policies honoured the requirement contained in both the Children's Act and the Child Justice Act to uphold the "best interests of the child", especially in light of reports of

police brutality and the mass removal of children during major events, only to have them miraculously re-appear after such events (*The Mercury*, Oliver (13/11/2008); *Daily News*, Attwood (03/07/2008); Hewitt (www.umthombo.org). In response to these reports, the Head of the Municipality's Safer Cities Unit, Martin Xaba denied that the authorities had undertaken "rounding up operations". He called for stakeholders to rally together to address the problem of street children rather than criticizing from the sidelines. While he claimed that the role of the Municipality was to support and integrate street children into society as well as keep them off the streets, he did not explain the basis on which the Municipality removed such children (*Daily News*, 16/06/2010). This once again begs the question of proper guidelines and the implementation of appropriate procedures when dealing with street children.

Ethiopia and Tanzania have acknowledged the detrimental effects of such practices and have resolved to take a more humane approach when dealing with street children. From 2007 to 2009 the Consortium of Street Children and UNICEF entered into a partnership with the Ethiopian and Tanzanian governments to train police officers on the rights of children with a focus on street children. The training was reciprocated and the respective police departments together with stakeholders have since devised and implemented policies for collaborative interventions (www.streetchildren.org). While South Africa has the necessary mandates in place to render appropriate interventions, there is a need for a collaborative approach.

The eThekwini Municipality has since engaged with the Department of Social Development and relevant NGOs to revise its policy to provide appropriate responses to the issue of street children. The review of the *Integrated Development Plan* (2007-2008) in 2010 was the first step in building a constructive partnership between state departments and NGOs. In addition to developing specific strategies, the Municipality identified key role players to help implement these strategies. It also offered financial support to organizations through the tendering process. From March 2012, an amount of R42000.00 per month for two years was offered to organizations that met certain criteria (www.durban.gov.za). Umthombo, Agape, I Care, Street Wise and Youth for Christ were some of the organizations that benefitted. In the face of limited funds and the growing

demands for services the funding served as a life line to shelters. Linda Naidoo, Director of Child Line applauded these efforts to support Non-Profit Organizations' work with street children (*Daily News*, Luthuli, (19/10/2011).

Mhone (2010) considered the politics of donor funding and the influence it had on programmes. He asserted that programmes were often designed to meet donor objectives rather than the needs of children. However, the programmes of the shelters examined for this study were monitored and evaluated by the Department of Social Development in terms of prescribed Norms and Standards as well as statutory mandates. Shelters are primarily accountable to the Department as their services are registered in terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that sets out objectives for shelters. This serves as a binding contractual arrangement between the parties. Subsidies from the Department of Social Development are contingent on shelters complying with the objectives contained in the MOU. However, as subsidies are specifically for children in care and shelters offer a broad range of services, challenges remain in evaluating compliance as well as their successes and achievements as there are no standardised evaluation criteria or specific targets to measure outcomes.

The previous Child Care Act No. 74 of 1983 (as amended) did not provide adequate protection to street children. It barely recognized shelter services and failed to establish mechanisms for accountability (Proudlock, Smith & Jamieson, 2008). The Children's Act 38 of 2005 (The Act) which was implemented in July 2010, represents a complete overhaul of welfare legislation. It recognized shelters and the services they offer street children. Shelter services fell within the category "Child and Youth Care Centres (Section 191/1) and were registered as such. The Act gave effect to the constitutional rights of street children to services by considering a range of interventions to meet their specific needs. As discussed earlier, street children present with varying characteristics. Their reasons for being on the street as well as their needs are unique. Not all street children are inclined towards institutional services. In recognizing the diverse needs of this group of children, the Act provides for community outreach programmes, "Drop in Centres" and community/family reintegration programmes instead of applying the traditional statutory intervention that placed children in institutional care.

The regulations and the National Norms and Standards for Child and Youth Care Centres (Norms and Standards) contained in the Act, guide the effective implementation and monitoring of services to street children, the latter being the function of the Department of Social Development. The Norms and Standards are critical to ensure that service delivery in respect of street children is improved. It requires that the State play a pivotal role in partnering with shelters as NPOs and treating them as equal partners in service delivery. The Children's Act secures this relationship through its registration, funding and monitoring process. The Policy on Financial Awards and the Norms and Standards complement the provisions of The Act regarding services to children. Collectively, they provide clarity on what services need to be delivered, by whom and to who by specifying the roles of national government, the Department of Social Development and NPOs such as shelters. If shelters are to play a meaningful role in addressing the needs of street children, it is essential that their services are in line with legal requirements, while simultaneously allowing for flexibility and innovative interventions to meet the varied needs of street children.

The Children's Act addresses the State's obligation to allocate resources to service providers such as shelters, especially financial assistance, to ensure that services are effectively rendered to these children and that they are not discriminated against. The Policy on Financial Awards which was implemented in 2005 was reviewed in 2010 and 2011 to identify and address gaps. The policy regulates the manner in which NPOs access state funding and sets criteria for service delivery. The ability to access funding is determined by the extent to which services are transformed in line with the White Paper (1997) and the Service Delivery Model (2005). The Department of Social Development Portfolio Committee, in consultation with NPOs, identified the following shortcomings in the implementation of the funding policy which inadvertently impacted on shelter services:

- There was inequitable distribution of funding. The more established services received a larger allocation. The policy was not aligned to other legislation relating to services to previously disadvantaged communities.

- The policy was programme/project based and no specific guidelines were formulated for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.
- While reference was made to the failure of NPOs to disclose or account for public funding received, no guidelines existed to monitor financial accountability. Veeran (1999) and Mhone (2010) observed that misuse of funds and lack of accountability on the part of shelters stemmed from poor co-ordination of services and the lack of monitoring mechanisms.
- The policy failed to achieve transformation objectives in line with the Service Delivery Model (2005) in that the limited funds available hampered service delivery. Only existing services were considered for funding and no allowances were made to initiate new services.

In September 2011 the National Coalition for Social Services and the National Welfare Forum (advocacy groups comprising NPOs) forwarded submissions on the government's proposed revision of the policy in which they expressed their concerns and recommended guidelines for implementation (www.forum.org.za). The revised Policy on Financial Awards (2011) is currently being phased in. The policy acknowledges shelter services and funding is aligned to other services within the Child and Youth Care System. Whilst the policy makes reference to financing programmes, there were no major changes in the funding of shelters as they continue to receive subsidies according to the number of children placed with them. Shelters receive a subsidy of R2238 per child per month (Department of Social Development, Ngcobo, 3/3/2013).

The White Paper (1997) was the first overall policy to address the imbalances of the welfare system during the apartheid era. It called for transformation towards a developmental social welfare service to meet the needs of previously disadvantaged sectors. The policy advocated that government and the private sector work together to support broad-based development programmes in order to meet economic, social security, health, housing and other needs (Patel, 2003).

The White Paper (1997) was crucial in transforming welfare services as it was aligned with international policies which recognized human rights. It identified a range of children

living in difficult circumstances, namely the poor and children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, and acknowledged their right to services. Although no specific mention was made of street children, the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (Children's Act) which is based on the White Paper (1997) and other local and international legal instruments, placed street children in the category, "children in difficult circumstances". The White Paper (1997) further served to realize the objectives of the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, (1994), a people-driven programme initiated by the ANC and its Alliance partners. The central objective of the RDP was to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, in particular the most poor and marginalized sections of our communities.

The White Paper (1997) and the Children's Act tasked the Department of Social Development with taking the lead role in creating conditions for NGOs to promote social services. It further addressed the need for the Department to establish viable partnerships with NPOs in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in order to achieve effective service delivery. The White Paper (1997) viewed NGOs as equal partners in service delivery; however, the inequitable allocation of funding to meet legislative requirements remains a challenge.

The White Paper (1997) represented a first step towards transformation and paved the way for a developmental approach to welfare service delivery. The Service Delivery Model (2005) served as a blueprint for the restructuring of social services. This document is one of a series of documents that gave effect to the transformation of services in line with international legislation. The key principles of this model are participation based on the recognition that people have the potential to develop. Their right to participate in their own development must be acknowledged, respected and promoted. This model represents a significant advance from the previous 'Welfarist approach' which was criticized as being fragmented, limited, inappropriate, remedial and unsustainable. This paradigm shift towards a developmental approach carved a new path for welfare services in a democratic society (Patel, 2005; Veeran, 1998).

The model is based on the indigenous lifestyle of the Native American people and is believed to be the closest to the African tradition (Brendtro, Bockern & Brokenleg, 1990). The framework provides guidelines and tools for implementation within this paradigm shift. It incorporates four levels of intervention on a continuum, namely prevention, early intervention (non-statutory), statutory intervention (residential or alternate care) and reconstruction/aftercare. Programmes at the different levels are interactive and interdependent on one another. The model recognizes the need for an eclectic approach that draws on social science, human behaviour and developmental theories of social welfare. It focuses on the causes and effects of social vulnerability and embraces the generalist approach to service delivery (Patel, 2005).

The model further combines the "Circle of Courage" model proposed by Brendtro *et al*. (1990) with international learning on development work with children and with indigenous South African ideas and practices. It is most appropriate for this study as it focuses on the strengths of individuals, groups and communities and promotes their capacity for growth and development. It gives effect to the rights of individuals, groups and communities to participate in decision-making on their own development. It allows for a flexible approach to street children's unique needs, while ensuring that they receive the highest standard of protection.

The Children's Act supports the above framework as it provides guidelines for identifying and assessing levels of services within the continuum of care. This enables on-going monitoring and evaluation of existing services as well as the registration of new services. It is within this framework that facilities rendering services to street children were classified as "Drop -in-Centres" or shelters.

Adequate funding and resources are required to deliver meaningful programmes for street children within the Service Delivery Model (2005). Patel (2005) criticized Government's overreliance on the private sector to fund NGOs. A survey by the National Coalition for Social Services and National Welfare Forum in 2012 (www.nwf.org.za) revealed that these organizations do not necessarily have the financial capacity to offer meaningful programmes. It called on Government to accept primary responsibility to

provide services and support NGOs' service delivery efforts. Shelters, like other service providers, enter into a contractual relationship with the Department of Social Development through a "Service Level Agreement" or "Memorandum of Understanding". The partnership is defined, roles and responsibilities are specified and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation are put in place to ensure accountability, as well as the realization of the objectives and standards for service delivery

2.6 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

There has been growing interest in building theories from successful practice rather than trying to put theory into practice (Brendtro *et al*., 1990:2). Brendtro *et al*. (1990) note the importance of "practice wisdom"; this refers to the need to study the characteristics of existing practices in order to develop models for effective practice.

This section acknowledges existing interventions by various stakeholders which served as a foundation for shelters in designing suitable alternative responses to cater for the needs of street children. These practices and experiences, together with theories and policies, will build a knowledge base to chart a way of working with children in difficult circumstances. An analysis of secondary data from existing research, documents, websites, reports and pamphlets from organizations revealed that a number of local researchers have investigated the phenomenon of street children. These studies focused on causes, the impact of this phenomenon on children and concerns relating to the lack of policy and government initiatives to deal effectively with the issue. While all of the studies allude to shelter services as an appropriate response to meet the needs of street children; as far as the researcher is aware, the only study on shelter services was undertaken by Kariuki (2004). Kariuki (2004) used random sampling and included the entire population of facilities operating as shelters, irrespective of their registration status. He randomly selected four out of 24 identified shelters. The current study used purposive sampling and places shelters within the legal framework of social welfare service delivery; hence the focus on shelters registered with the Department of Social Development.

Mhone (2010) focused broadly on organizational dynamics (*Intra and inter-organizational factors that facilitate or hamper services to children and youth living on the streets of Durban CBD*). This study engaged all available organizations, including the State and NGOs that had primary access to children and youth on the streets of Central Durban. His findings revealed the following:

- An absence of integrated and collaborative interventions to provide meaningful services for children within the organization as well as between service providers.
- Leadership challenges, namely making unilateral decisions, a lack of transparency, accountability, communication, respect and knowledge in dealing with issues, as well as administrative skills.
- Inability to let go of authority and power and allow those responsible to manage the programme.
- Management was pre-occupied with funding.
- "The political economy of the organization's survival works against the children" in that programmes were designed to attract funding rather than meet the needs of children (Mhone, 2010:82). While Mhone (2010) makes reference to children not being integrated into the child and youth care system, the researcher, in her experience, found that shelters could not access children from informal "drop in centres". These centres were reluctant to refer children to shelters as this would cause their numbers to drop and would impact on private sponsorships and funding. The funding of shelters is likewise based on numbers. State funding is allocated according to the number of children admitted. Private funders often fund what they see. "Organizations taking other approaches constitute an implicit threat to the security of resource flow into their organizations" (Benson, in Etzioni and Lehman, quoted in Mhone, 2010:74).

A study on "Emerging practices in community based services for vulnerable groups" in Armania, Azerbaijan, Romania, and Russia (Europe and Eurasia regions) revealed that child care practices were similar to the current reforms taking place in South Africa (Kariuki, 2004).

Cape Town appears to have been at the forefront of many initiatives, both in terms of policy and interventions to meet the needs of street children. In collaboration with stakeholders, the Western Cape Municipality developed a *Policy guideline on Street Children* which translated policy into implementation. Services were based on collaboration and partnerships between the State and NGOs. Despite an array of shelter services in Cape Town, Ons Plek, meaning *Place for us* (www.onsplek.org.za), which opened in 1988, is reportedly the only shelter operating as a Child and Youth Care Centre which caters for females only (www.onsplek.org.za). Mhone (2010: 115), cited a Department of Social Development official's personal experience of shelter services in Cape Town, Chicago and US as saying; "I see here in Durban we are sitting with a problem where you find that services are not coordinated there is still a lot of politics here unlike in Cape Town and in overseas countries".

With the emphasis on development in the post-apartheid era, more NGOs started getting involved in the care of street children. Organizations like Street Wise in Durban and Johannesburg, Ons Plek in Cape Town, Friends and African Kids in Soweto and other shelters adopted a common goal to protect and care for these children (Makopo, 2005)

Historically, interventions with street children included providing basic shelter, food, clothing, some form of education and skills development and more recently re-integration into society (Kariuki, 2004). Internationally, the trend was for governments to rely on NGOs, benefactors and well-wishers to provide resources to shelters. The UNCRC, the Amos Trust and the Development Innovations Group are some of the NGOs that funded children's programmes. The shelters in Durban mentioned in this study were initiated through the philanthropic efforts of individuals and groups. An international philanthropic effort of note was the Johnny Bosco Projects. Johnny Bosco (2003), an Italian, established centers around the world, including India (wikipedia.org). The Bosco Projects offers a range of services, including shelters. The shelters are opened 24 hours, providing basic needs to children. They are free to enter and leave at will. Studies in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam and other developed countries revealed similar interventions (Muikila, 2006). However in India and Brazil there appeared to be more government initiatives and less dependence on non-governmental involvement (Veeran, 1998).

Chetty's (2002: 42) investigation into the *"rehabilitation and re-integration of street children with their families"* found that a common solution to the problem was to "pack street children off to the institutions for rehabilitation and safe keeping" which appeared to be more of a custodial and punitive approach than a rehabilitative one. She concluded that recidivism was almost one hundred percent (100%).

In her study on the *"phenomenon of street children in Durban*", Gopaul (2004) called for government to give more recognition to the efforts of NGOs and voluntary organizations in providing services to street children. This suggests that government should network with rather than attempt to control such organizations. Radebe's (2000) study on *"The perceptions of service providers in the Durban Metropolitan area, on effectiveness of intervention strategies regarding street children"* concluded that lack of resources hampered services to street children.

Earlier research studies noted the absence of legislation and appropriate policy guidelines to direct interventions and standardize service delivery to street children. This resulted in a lack of uniformity in interventions, control and accountability. The historical discrimination against shelters in respect of funding, resource allocation and legal recognition posed challenges to shelters in meeting their objectives. Research supports that the phenomenon of children living and working on the streets is a social reality that imposes itself on society in a manner that demands society's response (Beni'tez, 2011 and Chetty, 2002). The eThekwini Municipality was criticized for the way in which it dealt with the issue of street children in order to promote the City's economic development. Attempts to address the situation ranged from trying to control, punish or remove the children. However advocacy, legislation and good practices such as those adopted by Cape Town and other international efforts have served as a catalyst for change towards reformed policy and interventions. The Department of Social Development, the eThekwini Municipality and NGOs have formed meaningful partnerships to develop strategies to work with street children. In 2010 the eThekwini Municipality, the Department and other relevant stakeholders revised the municipality's existing *Policy on Children living on the Streets* as well the *Integrated Development Plan* (2007-2008) and

devised strategies towards a collaborative effort to manage the issue. The strategies included:

- Strengthen the capacity of existing resources. This has since been implemented through grants-in-aid to shelters and Drop-in-Centres. Street Wise Durban (Overport), I Care, Umthombo and Agape are beneficiaries to date. All these service providers render basic services excluding accommodation to children who voluntarily attend the facility to meet their basic needs such as food, clothing, health care etc.; then leave again.
- Provide services where there were gaps. Outreach programmes were one such gap. The Open Door Crisis Centre was identified to provide outreach services to link street children with Drop-in- Centres and shelters.
- Consider multi-dimensional programmes as proposed by Chetty (2002). Initiate innovative street-based interventions such as mobile clinics and workshops to meet the different needs of street children who do not access shelter services.
- Establish two First Phase Shelters in Durban, namely in Albert Park and the Point area. These shelters will offer short term basic accommodation and therapeutic services in preparation for transfer to Second Phase Shelters, which will offer a more intensive programme to either, reintegrate the child into the family system or transfer them to a Third Phase Shelter.

The phases outlined appear to fit with previous thinking and practice by the Department of Social Development in categorizing shelter services. However there are no policy frameworks to guide the implementation of this proposal. The Children's Act does not make the above differentiation between phases of shelters. The collaborative integrated approach to service delivery appeared to be a step in the right direction.

However, given the criticism of city officials noted earlier concerning the manner in which they have dealt with street children, it is clear that unless these strategies are appropriately and actively implemented, they will become obsolete. The Department of Social Development's *Strategy and Guidelines for Children living and Working on the Streets* acknowledged both international and local strategies, focused on the

implementation of policies and identified the Department's role as identifying gaps in services and monitoring and evaluating interventions to ensure that street children receive adequate services. Some of the NGO initiatives in Durban, other than those included in the study, include the following:

- Services offered by Agape, Street Wise (Overport), I Care, Umthombo and the Open Door Crisis Centre as indicated earlier.
- Youth for Christ is a national organization. Its KwaZulu-Natal branch was established in the 1980s. The organization renders a broad spectrum of street-based programmes as well as shelter services for girls under the Tennyson House Project. Details of their programmes will also be outlined later in this study.
- Umthombo was founded by Tom Hewett and Bulelwa Hewitt, a former street child, in 1998. It offers various programmes as alternatives to street life. It aims to empower street children and change the way society perceives and treats them. Hewett serves as a public watchdog of negative public responses to street children. His advocacy campaigns for street children's entitlements have gained much recognition. Umthombo has initiated many street children's events in the central Durban area. A major event which gained international recognition was the "Street Child World Cup" which was hosted during the Federation of International Football Association World Cup 2010 (FIFA, 2010). Street children from around the world participated in football tournaments as well as children's conferences throughout South Africa, giving them a voice and platform to articulate their concerns (www.umthombo.org, www.amostrust.org).The inclusion of children in World Cup activities was a stepping stone towards co-operative initiatives that were guided by social development thinking rather than safety and security issues.

UNICEF has called on all communities to step up and play a more significant role in protecting vulnerable children and youth. It has partnered with numerous local NGOs at various levels to address the needs of children; of significance was the Isibindi project to protect and support orphans and vulnerable children. The Isibindi model involves a five-way partnership between the National Association for Child Care Workers (NACCW), the

provincial Department of Social Development, donors such as UNICEF, implementing organizations and the community in which the project is based. Programmes were developed to address the special needs arising from the vulnerability of child-headed households, children from under-resourced rural communities and children in need of protection. Although the programmes do not make specific reference to street children, the prevention-based interventions run parallel with those of two of the shelters in this study which work in the life-space of children and families considered vulnerable to prevent secondary symptoms such as child prostitution, school drop-outs, and children living on the streets, etc. (www.naccw.org.za, Child and Youth Care Work: 37-39).

The literature review in the chapter aimed to provide an understanding of the street children's phenomenon, the relevant responses from the government and non-government sectors as well as the influence of policies on services

CHAPTER THREE
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As outlined in Chapter Two the researcher obtained multiple forms of evidence through the use of semi-structured interviews, observations and relevant records. By using different sources of data the researcher was able to engage in triangulation of the various sources of data (Humphries, 2008:98). This allowed for a holistic understanding of the functioning of shelters and the factors impacting on their services.

The researcher went through two research cycles. The initial data were obtained in May 2010 from interviews with nine participants, observations and relevant administrative records. The processing of the data occurred prior to the passing of the Children's Act in July 2010. The passing of the Act held much significance for shelter services as their legal status changed from that of shelters to Child and Youth Care Centres (Children's Act: Section 191/1). The term 'shelter', was retained throughout the study in order to maintain their identity. A follow-up investigation was undertaken approximately three years after the passing of the Children's Act. The second set of investigations explored the extent to which the provisions of the Children's Act specific to shelters, together with other statutory provisions, influenced or impacted shelter services. A further nine interviews were conducted with the same shelters between March and April 2013. Except for two original participants, the others had resigned and new staff that was employed in their place formed part of the sample interviewed. Repeating the research cycle added value in establishing any significant shift or changes from the initial investigation. Comparing the new data with previously collected data from different persons within the same settings allowed for greater diversity in responses. The researcher was able to identify similarities and differences and gained new perspectives on issues already explored in the initial investigation. Assumptions were checked against the data to ensure that the findings had high reliability. Qualitative researchers argue that repeating interviews increases the reliability of the data (Rolfe, 2006).

The researcher identified four broad areas from the raw data, namely:

i. Profile of the shelters;
ii. Shelter capacity and demographic profile of children admitted;
iii. Organizational structure and leadership; and
iv. Nature and range of programmes.

Various themes emerged from the data obtained in the categories listed above. The services offered by shelters were analysed under various themes that developed from data obtained under these four broad categories.

The data obtained from the initial investigation did not differ significantly from the second cycle and thus offered little room for reflection on paradigm shifts in service delivery, programmes or other interventions by shelters to allow for a critical comparison of the two cycles. Furthermore, the small sample size did not offer scope for such comparison to be discussed with certainty. The researcher thus opted to present the information gathered from both cycles simultaneously.

3.2 PROFILE OF SHELTERS

To maintain their anonymity, shelters are referred to as Shelter A, Shelter B and Shelter C. Shelter A was established in 1993 and is situated approximately 30 kilometres north-west of the Durban Central Business District (CBD). Shelter B was established in 1998 and is located approximately 35 kilometres south-west of the Durban CBD, while Shelter C was established in 1996 and is situated approximately 12 kilometres west of Durban's CBD. The shelters were registered in 1994, 1995 and 1999, respectively. Shelter A was established by and functions under the auspices of the Durban Children's Society. Shelter B functions independently and was initiated by a Christian missionary volunteer group. Shelter C was established and functions under the auspices of Youth for Christ which was also initiated by a Christian missionary volunteer group. Shelters B and C had a strong Christian ethos.

By virtue of their initial registration with the Department of Social Development in terms of the Child Care Act (Section 30), the shelters under study complied with health and town planning regulations in respect of the physical aspects of the facility. Observations indicated that they provided adequately for the physical needs of the children, including living space, beds, equipment, clothing, meals, transport and recreation. With the implementation of the Children's Act, all the shelters retained their registration status, but were subsequently referred to as Child and Youth Care Facilities. However the operational status of Shelters B and C remained unchanged in that children were admitted without court orders and remained in care without any statutory protection. Shelter A operated within the parameters of the Children's Act in that children were subjected to a Children's Court enquiry on admission. Whilst the researcher does not repudiate the efforts of the shelters, of concern was the on-going practice of informal care despite mandatory statutory provisions specific to their services. As child protection agents, shelters were cognisant of the legal provisions for children in alternate care. Both the Children's Act and the Service Delivery Model 2005 placed shelter services on level 3 (the statutory level of the continuum of care). As such, they were required to comply with provisions of section 167 (57) of the Children's Act when accepting children to their care. The prevailing practice did not fit with the expected profile of shelters within Child and Youth Care Facilities as indicated in the Children's Act. However, whilst the shelters' practices were not consistent with legal standards, their unfailing response to the plight of street children remained consistent as is illustrated in the statistics outlined under

3.2.1 SHELTER CAPACITY AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF CHILDREN ADMITTED

The table below shows the different variables relating to children that were admitted to the shelters.

TABLE 1: ADMISSION OF CHILDREN

SHELTER	AGE GROUP	MAXIMUM CAPACITY	GENDER	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE INTAKE PER WEEK
A	8-18	35	Males	35	1
B	10-18	45	Males	34	2
C	10-18	15	Females	9	2

The shelters' capacity and demographics were determined by the Department of Health and Social Welfare Development during the initial registration process. The *status quo* did not change after the initial investigation. Shelter A admitted children aged eight to 18 years and Shelters B and C admitted children between 10 to 18 years. Shelters A and B accommodated males only and had a maximum capacity of 35 and 45 children, respectively. Shelter C catered for females only and had a capacity of 15. The figures remained consistent for both the cycles. The shelters' capacity was determined through the registration process by Department of Social Development, in accordance with the regulations contained in the Child Care Act. The researcher's observation of the facilities and feedback from participants revealed that there had been no expansion since the first investigation to warrant an increase in the number of children admitted. Shelters A and B maintained a constant flow of children in and out of the facility through new admissions, transfers from Drop-in-Centres, reunification and children absconding. They retained 95% of their capacity at any given point in time. As the table shows, Shelter C catered for females only with a maximum capacity of 15. Their admission statistics fluctuated between 60 and 80%.

The following criteria and admission processes were adopted at the different shelters:
The sources of referral to all the shelters included police officers, Drop-in-Centres, Reception Centres, members of the public, outreach workers, Social Workers from welfare organizations and self-referrals when children called for assistance themselves.
During office hours, the Social Worker, in consultation with the Manager and Child Care Worker, generally received and admitted the child. After office hours the Child Care Workers received the child and referred him/her to the Social Worker the next day for an assessment of his/her circumstances and recommendations. In all instances the Social Workers, who generally attended to admissions, indicated that the shelters were not exclusively for street children and that children were not discriminated against in terms of race or age. Any child who required assistance was warmly received. Whilst admission to Shelter A was generally *via* a formal application and an assessment process, Shelters B and C responded spontaneously in admitting children who were considered destitute. This response to the protection needs of children was commendable, as this was not the case with other Child and Youth Care facilities that had long, drawn out processes that

normally extended over a week. Furthermore, Social Workers from Shelters B and C struggled to secure accommodation for street children at alternative places of care.

The researcher's direct experience of working at four Child and Youth Care Centres; previously referred to as Children's Homes, revealed reluctance on the part of these facilities to admit children who were exposed to living on the street. During the initial investigation, the Social Worker at Shelter B indicated that she had made approximately 40 applications to five Children's Homes from 2009 to 2010, with no success. In all instances, she received the same response: "the children do not meet criteria". One Manager suggested that she refer the children to a Place of Safety; and once the children had stabilized, she could refer back to them for possible admission. The Social Worker added that state Places of Safety were equally difficult to access and that on the rare occasions that children did gain admission to a Place of Safety, she had no success with follow-up applications for admission to Children's Homes as these children were considered high risk. Except for Shelter A which operated as a Children's Home, no other facility accepted children referred by her shelter. As part of an assessment team at some of the Children's Homes during that period, the researcher was personally aware of the reluctance of managers to accept children dubbed 'street children'; it was assumed that such children would not adjust to structure and would destabilize the home's programmes.

Given the high mobility rate noted from the registers and discussions with Shelters A and C, the researcher is of the opinion that the failure to comply with statutory procedures might result in children misusing this service and seeking refuge for the wrong reasons. Children may hide behind anonymity and not divulge vital information to assist with appropriate interventions. Furthermore, there were no binding statutory obligations for accountability on the part of children as well as service providers.

The general impression gained from discussions with the participants and observation of activities at the three shelters was that children were cared for within a structured and ordered system. Details of the organizational structure are provided in the next section.

3.2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

The former Child Care Act as well as the Children's Act provided for structured management systems within welfare organizations which included Boards of Management serving as the controlling body. According to Davison (2003), an organizational structure defines the manner in which an organization systematically arranges, classifies, and delegates personnel and materials to achieve its goals. An organizational structure offers parameters within which staff functions and the processes necessary to accomplish the shelters' main objectives. The shelters in this study shared similar features in their organizational structures, depicted in the following diagram:

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The following figures represents the structures of the three shelters. Except for shelter A that is managed by a qualified Social Worker, the managers' of shelters' B and C do not have any Social Work training or qualification.

FIGURE 1 (SHELTER A)

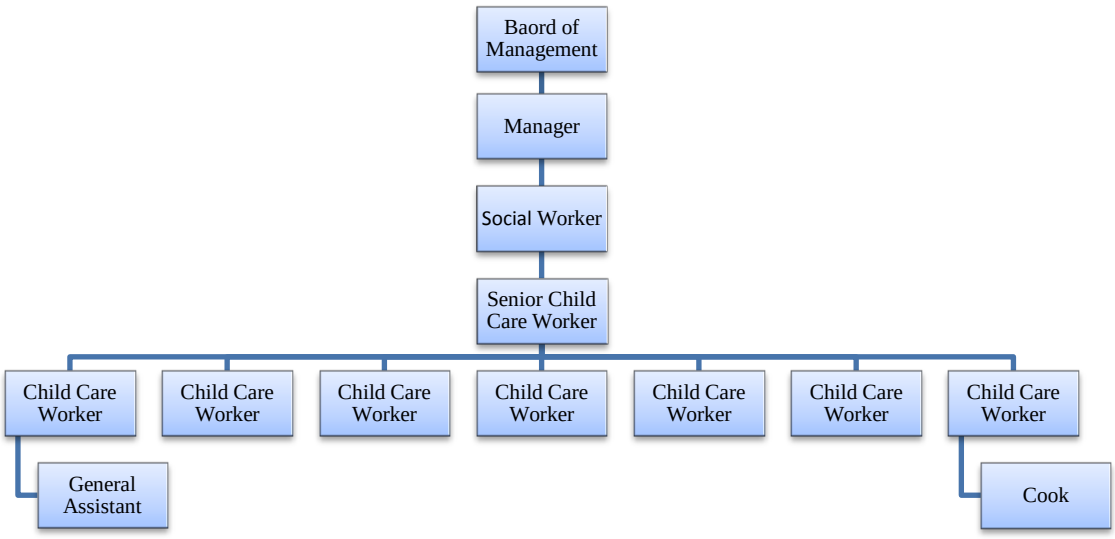


FIGURE 2 (SHELTER B)

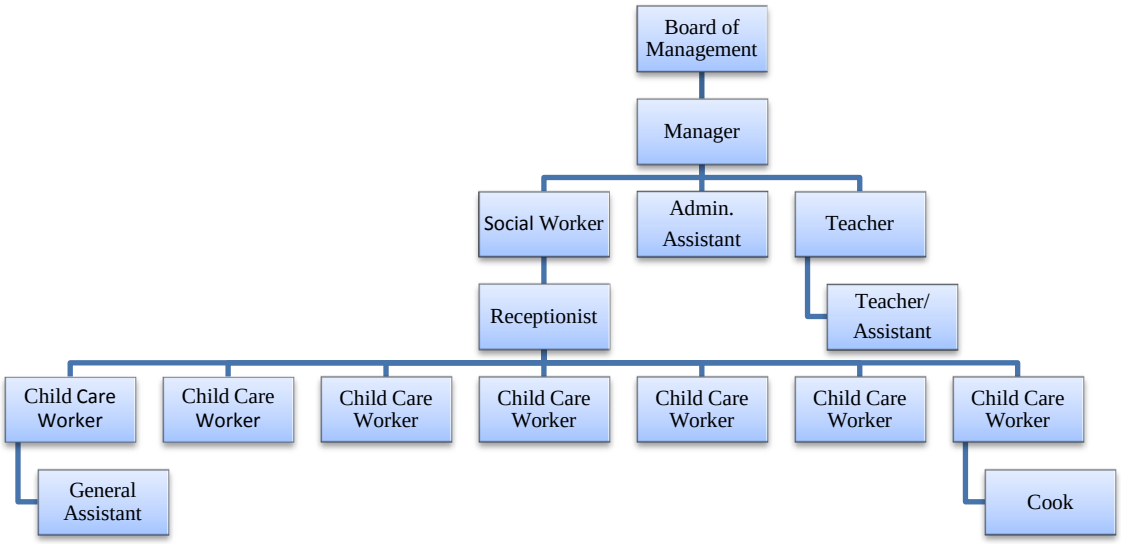
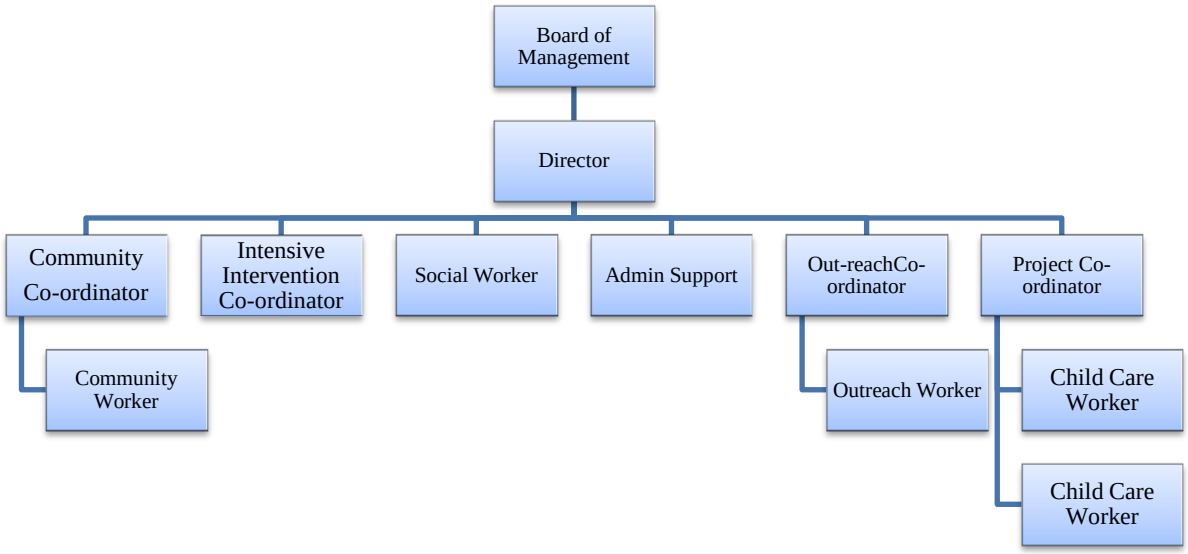


FIGURE 3 (SHELTER C)



Discussions with the Managers during the second interview cycle revealed that these shelters complied with the provisions of the Children's Act in appointing Boards of Management. Shelters B and C were accountable to a National Board of Directors, while Shelter A was managed under the auspices of the Durban Children's Society which is regionally based and governed by a Board of Governors. Members served in a voluntary

capacity, each having expertise in specific areas of work. Mc Namara (2009:3) stated that, “Law and theory dictated that the board was in charge and directly accountable for the overall direction and policies of the organization. Powers were given to the board by for example, Articles of Association and the Constitution”. Given the multifaceted objectives of shelters, the Boards had to ensure appropriate management of human resources, financial management, funding and networking to achieve these objectives. Accordingly, board members of the three shelters were businessmen, accountants, fundraisers, educators and spiritual leaders. The Durban Children’s Society which governed Shelter A’s services had a directorate comprising five members with Social Work qualifications, overseeing different components of the organization’s social services; residential services being one of these. Although the structure remained the same through both the cycles, two members resigned and were replaced. Shelter A fell under the banner of residential services.

According to Williamson (1999), there is no single best way to structure an organization; rather, there are several organizational models. However, Mc Namara (2009) and Williamson (1999) agree that it is important to have a healthy balance between an organization’s structure and output. By way of ‘output’, the shelters in this study were organized into three major functions:

Governance - The governance function provided overall strategic direction, guidance and control. Organizational governance, according to the Children’s Act, is designated to “boards of management” (Section 191/84-87). Traditionally, while this remained the function of the board, governance was shared with Shelter Managers based at the shelters. In the case of Shelter A, the Board of Governors depended on the Director of residential services as well as the Shelter Manager for input into strategic planning. Managers represented staff at board meetings and staff provided written feedback on direct services which was tabled and discussed at Board meetings. The Children’s Act promotes a collaborative approach: “The manager and the management board must strive for a co-operative relationship characterised by openness and trust” (Section 191/87). The Managers controlled and were responsible for the day-to-day management of the shelters as well as direct services and programmes to children and communities.

Certain programmes were planned and developed as a team, including relevant staff members, to accomplish the shelters' mission and desired goals. Whilst there were no changes in the practice of governance since the first investigation, during the initial investigation, the Social Worker from Shelter B expressed the view that her management did not place much value on input from the Social Work perspective as the organization was dominated by non-professionals who played an active role in running it with little or no support and funding from the Department of Social Development. In the second cycle, the Social Worker from Shelter A indicated that she was unable to access hard copies of relevant policy, such as the White Paper (1997), Service Delivery Model (2005), the Children's Act No 38 0f 2007, Norms and Standards etc. from the Department representative who was responsible for guiding Social Services. Other participants did not comment on this issue in the initial interview. During the second phase, the Social Workers and Child Care staff at Shelters B and C did not comment on policy as they were not fully conversant with the statutory requirements. Whilst shelter A had a host of experienced Social Workers managing the affairs of the shelter from policy to implementation and evaluation of programmes, Shelters B and C's Social Workers were fairly new in the field, with no experience of basic statutory work with children; this further impeded their ability to contribute to policy decisions. The Regulations within the Children's Act that govern the appointment of the board require members to be trained in the legal framework within which Child and Youth Care Centres operate. Whilst the Regulations provide for the inclusion of a member of staff and the Manager, they do not necessarily guarantee the inclusion of a Social Worker. Unlike the provisions in the Child Care Act which required the Manager of a children's facility to be a Social Worker, the current Children's Act allows for either a Social Worker or a Child Care Worker to manage Child and Youth Care Centres. Of concern was that while section 191/86 of the Children's Act states that boards are required to provide support and advice to Managers, evaluate the performance of the Manager and monitor, review and approve the business plan, Shelters B and C's board members appeared to lack knowledge of child care legislation and appropriate processes. Furthermore, the Shelter Manager from Shelter B, a Child Care Worker, was not fully informed about statutory interventions in implementing the Children's Act. Shelter C was at a further disadvantage as the only individual trained in child care legislation was the Social Worker who had limited practical experience. The

Social Workers from both Shelters B and C were not familiar with the previous Child Care Act or the Children's Act. The researcher was of the opinion that there had been no shift in Shelters B and C's governance since the previous investigation. These shelters were required to bring their processes in line with the statutory provisions prescribed under sections 150-155 of the Children's Act, which apply to all registered shelters. Tandon (in Hulme and Edwards cited by Mhone, 2010:15-16) noted that "governance in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) included obligations in fulfilling statutory requirements applicable to them. Crucial to NGO governance was its ability to meet the needs prescribed in its mandate to the constituents it claims to work for". Compromising on standards or the failure of these shelters to manage legal processes in respect of the children in their care constitutes a legal contravention which could be attributed to poor governance.

The effectiveness of governance depends to a large degree on the working relationship between the board and top management (Mc Namara, 2009). All the shelters reported a good working relationship and communication channels between managers and staff and that they felt respected and valued by their board members. An outstanding feature reported by Shelter A Managers in both cycles was the engagement of their board members with the shelter. They rendered hands-on assistance by undertaking general maintenance of the premises, furniture and equipment. The general impression gained at Shelter A was a shift in the functioning of the board of management from a supervisory to a more hands-on approach. They assisted with transporting children to community resources, provided tuition to bridge the schooling gap, arranged week-end and holiday programmes etc. Participants at Shelter A, especially the Child Care Worker who participated in both the interviews, as well as the Manager in the second cycle were impressed with their board members' motivation and desire to serve the community; this gave them a sense of personal satisfaction.

Central administration - Each shelter was headed by a Manager who was responsible for day-to-day operations in accordance with the provisions in the Children's Act Section 171/87. The Manager co-ordinated and supervised the administrative processes and services of the shelter as a whole. Structured procedures and protocols were in place at

all the shelters. However Shelter A demonstrated superior administrative standards, in that policy and procedures were in place and roles were clearly defined. According to the Shelter A Manager, records of admissions and the movement of children were meticulously maintained and independent developmental plans and case conferences formed the basis of the team's collaborative programmes to address the children's needs. Information gathered from the Social Worker and Child Care Worker in the second cycle indicated that the new Manager placed greater emphasis on administrative tasks. There was stricter control of all the recording processes in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Social Development's monitoring tools guide.

According to the Manager at Shelter A, she managed both the shelter and children's home which were housed on the same premises. She depended on the Social Worker to manage daily administrative processes. She asserted that whilst reporting protocols were in place, shelters were less focused on bureaucracy and more concerned with service delivery. Other administrative processes maintained by the shelters are outlined as the various programmes are covered in this report.

Programmes – Mc Namara (2009) describes programmes as a collection of resources in an organization geared toward accomplishing certain goals. As indicated earlier, the Board and Managers at Shelters A, B and C were directly responsible for strategic planning and administration of services to meet the broad aims of the shelters. Specific programmes which are discussed later in the report were planned either jointly or individually by different staff members depending on the need and expertise required to manage the task. During the second cycle of interviews conducted with the Child Care Worker and Social Worker from Shelter A, they reported that the programmes had become more structured and that they had been able to broaden their scope of supportive programmes since the arrival of the new Manager. They noted the Manager's willingness to share her wealth of knowledge and material on empowerment and social skills development programmes, which they accessed when planning and implementing programmes. They also expressed the view that the Manager had high standards with regard to compliance with procedures and ethical practices and applied strict controls in respect of all statutory procedures to ensure that the best interests of the children were

upheld. Whilst the primary focus of Shelter A's programmes was custodial care and support programmes for children at the shelter, the researcher observed that Shelter B had become more involved in establishing community-based services in informal settlements where there are high rates of poverty and a lack of resources. In comparison with Shelters A and C, Shelter B was more involved in networking and advocacy. Shelter B engaged in numerous collaborative social and advocacy programmes with I Care and Umthombo Street Shelter while Shelters A and C tended to remain independent.

Sufficient staff is essential for the effective management of the shelters' various functions, tasks and programmes; hence a discussion on the staff complement and the roles of respective staff members preceded the discussion on programmes offered by the shelters. A diagrammatic representation of the staff structure provided an overview of the staff complement. Although all staff played a significant role in the overall functioning of the shelters, the discussion below focuses on those who engaged in direct services to the children.

3.2.3 STAFFING

The management of any Child Care Facility by a person other than a qualified Social Worker was considered improper under the previous Child Care Act. During the initial investigations when the said Act was in force, there were no mandatory provisions specific to shelters for the appointment of staff or the delegation of responsibilities. The shelters used their discretion in matching education, skills, experience and training in employing full time staff for specific functions.

Except for Shelter A, which was managed by a qualified Social Worker who simultaneously managed a Children's Home, Shelter B was managed by an individual who held a higher education qualification in child and youth care and Shelter C was managed by an educator. Although Shelters A and C's Managers were replaced in the second cycle, their qualifications were the same as the previous managers. Shelter B's Manager has been at the shelter since inception. Whilst the previous Child Care Act required that shelters be managed by qualified Social Workers, the Children's Act and the current

Norms and Standards provide that a Child Care Worker can also serve as a Manager. This gave recognition to the status of Shelter B management and brought it in line with existing legal standards. As indicated above, Shelters A and C experienced the resignation of their managers and new persons filled their positions. Shelter C still needs to comply with legislative requirements, as the Manager is an educator.

During the initial investigation, Shelters A and B enjoyed the services of Social Workers, while Shelter C functioned without a Social Worker. In the second phase of interviews all the shelters had Social Workers. They all reported a high turnover of staff and noted that resignations were sudden and unplanned which periodically left them without a Social Worker. Shelters B and C remained without a Social Worker for periods of six months to a year. However, Shelter A was privileged to employ a Social Worker from their Children's Home housed on the premises, who willingly provided the necessary services until the post was filled. The high turnover of Social Workers disrupted programmes and impacted negatively on the direct services offered to the children at shelter level. Whilst Shelter A could draw on other resources, Shelters B and C experienced challenges in accessing the services of the Department of Social Development or Child Welfare in their areas. This placed strain on the other staff that had to manage processes in the absence of a Social Worker. This did not augur well for the functioning of the shelters and the successful management of their programmes.

The Social Worker at Shelter B, who was interviewed during the initial phase of the investigation as well as the Social Worker who replaced her and was interviewed in the second stage, stated that, despite the positive professional relationship they both shared with their Managers, conflicts arose, both at a supervisory and service delivery level. They experienced challenges in applying Social Work interventions pertaining to statutory care, family integration and re-unification programmes that were not supported by the Manager. Not having the necessary expertise in Social Work, the Manager's well-meaning guidance and directions were often dictated by personal views and biases which conflicted with Social Work precepts and practices. Valuable time was spent explaining terms of reference and defending and negotiating interventions which often delayed or hampered programmes and did not serve the interests of the children. The Social

Workers were also supervised and evaluated by the Manager, which created ethical dilemmas and sometimes resulted in conflict. The Social Worker from Shelter B echoed these sentiments. This contravenes the Social Work profession's code of ethics, as "A Social Worker should be supervised on Social Work matters by a supervisor who is registered as Social Worker"(Policy Guidelines for Course of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Rules for Social Workers: 38). Bradley and Kottler, cited by Scott (2009:65), defined counsellor supervision as *"a process in which an experienced person (supervisor) with appropriate training and experience mentors and teaches a subordinate (supervisee). It is a process of professional and personal development in which the supervisor challenges, stimulates and encourages a counsellor to reach higher levels of competence."* Social workers, by virtue of their training, view themselves as being knowledgeable about the principles and methods of social services delivery. Being supervised and evaluated by non-Social Workers who were not conversant with the profession demoralized the Social Workers. Although they did not overtly show disrespect towards their Manager, the Social Workers expressed a sense of disillusionment. The Child Care Staff from Shelter B were equally affected, as their Manager had no training in child care.

Staff at Shelter A did not express concerns regarding the above issue. Both the Social Worker and Child Care staff were able to make the transition and adjust to having a new Manager, who replaced their previous Manager in 2011. They stated that the Manager engaged with staff, allowed for collaborative planning of services and was willing to share and engage the experiences and knowledge of staff as experts in guiding interventions. Staff appraisals were structured, standardised and guided by the umbrella Child Welfare Organization that managed all its subsidiaries, including the shelter. The Social Workers attributed the high staff turnover noted earlier to lack of career development opportunities and poor remuneration. According to the Managers, Social Workers used the shelters to gain experience and left as soon as other opportunities arose, often within six months to a year.

Earle (2007) observed that the movement of social workers from the NGO to the government sectors started in 2005, due to better salaries offered by the government. NGOs subsequently struggled to find qualified staff and suffered a decrease in

productivity, as new staff constantly has to be trained. According to Earle (2007), the image of social work as a profession improved when government declared it a scarce skill and salaries were improved after the release of a policy on “Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers in South Africa” (2006). While this has benefitted the Department of Social Development’s recruitment efforts; “conversely, in the face of overall shortages, recruitment efforts on the part of the NGO sector have deteriorated” Earle (2007:88).

Each of the shelters employed between four and six Child Care staff who worked on a rotational basis. Except for two staff that resigned at Shelter B and were replaced, there were no other changes. While some of the Child Care staff in Shelters B and C had basic skills and qualifications on appointment, approximately 40% of the Child Care staff and Community Workers acquired the necessary education, training and skills only after being employed at the shelter. This training was undertaken at their own expense through the National Association for Child Care Workers South Africa (NACCW).

The Managers, Social Work and Child Care staff formed the core group of persons who engaged directly with the children. The staff was not limited to the above as the symptoms presented by street children demand interventions at different levels, including direct interventions with the children affected, families and communities as well as prevention strategies to address the needs of communities potentially at risk. The Global Conference on Orphans and Vulnerable Children held in South Africa in November 2010 and the subsequent Conference on Orphans, Vulnerable Children and Youth held at Durban ICC in May 2013 highlighted the demand for social services in South Africa to meet the needs of these specific groups of children. Dr Connie Kganakga of Department of Social Development, a speaker at the latter Conference expressed doubt that the primary challenge to strengthening South Africa’s social welfare workforce was the scarcity of social workers and ancillary workers. She asserted that although the Children’s Act came into effect in 2010 and was part of the transition to a new social service paradigm, full implementation of the Act will require further diversification of the roles and a substantial expansion of the size of the social welfare workforce as well as further development of its knowledge and skills. The Isibindi Model, a partnership between the

provincial Department of Social Development, NACCW, donors and community and implementing organizations was highlighted at the conference as a response to this need. According to Kesarnand (2013) who reviewed the model, this five-way partnership was designed by NACCW and addressed needs at different levels, including funding, training, monitoring, evaluation and responding holistically to the needs of children, youth and communities who were vulnerable and at risk. Whilst the ultimate beneficiaries were vulnerable children and families, communities were strengthened through an injection of skills and resources and individuals were offered a career. While this model claims success through its implementation in 55 sites in eight provinces, the shelters under review did not benefit in any way from resources such as funding for training, mentorship or any other assistance that was made accessible to other partner organizations. The researcher is of the view that, whilst the Isibindi Model meets the objectives of the paradigm shift towards developmental welfare services, the adoption of the model by shelters remains impractical, considering the resource implications of such a model.

Shelters revealed that they had limited resources, especially funding. Shelters B and C did not receive any funding for staffing either prior to or post the implementation of the Children's Act. In the face of limited financial and personnel resources, volunteerism was an integral component of all the shelters' staff in meeting programme objectives. Shelters B and C especially, depended largely on volunteers to meet community-based programme objectives. These volunteers were generally not paid any allowances. According to the Oxford Dictionary a volunteer "works for an organization without being paid". It is an altruistic activity that promotes the well-being of others and gives the volunteer a sense of positive self-worth and self-fulfilment (www.wikipedia.org). All the Shelter Managers concurred that "volunteers formed the lifeblood of our organization". Indeed, South African President Jacob Zuma stated at the launch of ANC Moses Kotane volunteer brigades in Gauteng ahead of the 2014 national elections, that, "Volunteers are the life blood of the ANC". They must understand the interests of their organisation and the interest of the people" (*Sunday Times*, 05/05/2013).

Volunteers were involved in the implementation of programmes at various levels; the specific programmes are explained in detail as the report progresses. In addition to the

local volunteer base, Shelters B and C had an extensive international volunteer base. These volunteers were seen as an essential part of the team and were greatly valued. The three Shelter Managers reported that, without volunteers, their community/family-based programmes as well as support programmes including life skills, vocational training and remedial education would not have been possible. The volunteers were an invaluable resource who contributed to making programmes viable. They had a positive impact on service delivery as a whole. Sharon Capeling-Alakija (www.unv.org), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Executive Coordinator, described volunteers as being the “backbone of civil society". She added that without volunteers it would not be possible for organizations to provide the services for the poor set by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

“Developmental social welfare covered a range of services and programmes that were directed at enhancing the capacities of people to address the consequences of poverty and vulnerability” (Service Delivery Model 2005:6). According to Shelters B and C’s Managers, the lack of capacity to meet the overwhelming demand for services led to increased dependence on overseas youth who came to South Africa through their families, churches or placement agencies. Shelters B and C opened their doors to such opportunities and allowed these young adults to engage with their services while simultaneously being mentored in the youth development field. Shelter B encouraged local youth to offer philanthropic services to less privileged and disadvantaged youth communities through engagements with churches and tertiary educational institutions such as UNISA and colleges. The prospects of living and working among the youth attracted school and university students who were required to engage in some form of community service as part of their course requirements. In addition to working with the children at the shelters, they served as change agents, presenting customized life skills programmes designed by the shelter to youth in neighbouring communities. Whilst local volunteers reportedly spent a few hours to a few days at Shelters B and C, international volunteers spent between three months and a year or more working on one or more of the shelters’ programmes. Shelter A volunteers mainly assisted with a one-day programme or presented scheduled life skills, educational and spiritual programmes to

the children. Shelter B Social Workers in both cycles observed that UNISA students proved most valuable in rendering therapeutic work.

The shelters were unanimous that volunteers contributed to the diversity of expertise and culture which was reflected not only in different races and ethnic groups, but different values and perspectives. This benefitted shelters in that input from a wide variety of perspectives contributed to the generation of new ideas which was healthy for programme development and implementation (Mc Namara, 2006). Shelter personnel were accustomed to this diversity, embraced it with openness and adopted it as part of the shelters' functioning and existence.

While the contributions of volunteers cannot be underestimated, the constant cycle of volunteers who served in a temporary capacity combined with the high turnover of staff inadvertently impacted on the development of children. The Social Worker at Shelter B remarked, *"If there is anything consistent at shelters, it is change*. *The children were exposed to constant changes in personnel. No sooner had they adjusted to new staff, these staff members were ready to leave. In effect they had to constantly adjust to changing behaviour, personalities and variations in the implementation of programmes, as no two individuals were alike. Each applied their unique skills and rendered programmes according to their styles*". This did not bode well for these children whose lives were already weighed down with inconsistencies and insecurities which contributed immensely to their sense of loss and instability. The shelters need to seriously consider eliminating inconsistent practices if their programmes are to benefit children in developing a sense of belonging and self-worth through meaningful relationships. Shelter managers were of the opinion that funding had the greatest impact on retaining staff. Shelters could not afford fully qualified personnel and depended on persons who were partly qualified or engaged in studies so that they could not demand a full salary. Staff training needs have always been a contentious issue, as both the shelters and the staff looked to each other to provide financial resources for training and both were out of pocket given their financial constraints.

The National Department of Social Development's Strategic Plan (2010/2015) claimed to have a strategic plan for building the required skills based on the Department's study of supply and demand for services and projections of staff needs which guided implementation of the Service Delivery Model 2005. To address the skills shortage, the Department developed a Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social workers in 2006 and later networked with NACCW and relevant role players to implement the Isibindi Model which trained individuals as Child and Youth Care Workers to serve orphans and vulnerable children and families. However, neither initiative met the needs of shelters as Social Workers capacitated through the Department's bursary system, were exclusively targeted for employment by the Department, and shelters did not qualify for this funding. Shelters were of the opinion that whilst the Policy on Financial Awards required that shelters show visible evidence of on-going staff training that ensured that they were informed of new developments in service delivery which increased their capacity to deal with needs and challenges, departmental officials have failed in their responsibility to capacitate staff, especially supervisors and managers. The Shelter B Manager felt that the funding relationship between the Department and service providers does not augur well for services to be rendered within the developmental framework of service delivery. However, despite their constraints, all the shelters engaged staff in some form of training as outlined below.

3.2.4 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Managers were expected to be experts in child care services, planning, marketing, information management, telecommunications, property management, personnel, finance, fundraising and programme evaluation. Building capacity was a key challenge. The shelters hesitated to spend money on overheads such as training as this was seen as diverting valuable financial resources from direct services; given the concern around staff turnover, this might not be regarded as money well spent.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the implementation of the Children's Act required a range of social service practitioners to implement many services and included, among others, early childhood development practitioners, child and youth care workers and

social workers there remained a shortage of practitioners. Proudlock, Smith and Jamieson (2008) alluded to the Government's responsibility to bear the cost of implementing the Act. Alongside other enabling factors, an increased budget is essential to provide capacity building so as to ensure that children receive the services they need.

The Child Care staff showed a high level of motivation for self-development. This stemmed from their disillusionment with their salaries; they viewed education as a gateway to better opportunities. As members of NACCW, they received on-going training in various aspects of child care, including relevant child protection policies and the legislation guiding service delivery and practice. Two staff members from Shelter C who pursued studies in Social Work and Community Development during the initial investigation were subsequently employed by the shelter. A third year UNISA student who had volunteered her services from 2009 was offered full time employment in 2012. This speaks positively of the shelter's commitment to lending support to government's skills development objectives by providing opportunities for volunteers' career paths and the development of skills in the community.

3.3 NATURE AND RANGE OF PROGRAMMES

The terms 'programmes' and 'services' were generally used interchangeably by the three shelters. For the purposes of this study, the researcher differentiated between services and programmes in order to provide an overall indication of the goals of the shelters and the different programmes that were implemented to achieve these goals. The participants unanimously agreed that the term 'services' generally referred to what the shelters wished or hoped to achieve. All the shelters wished to "provide care and protection" for street children by offering a range of services in terms of section 191 of the Children's Act. This was stated as the overall aim or goal of the three shelters in both the cycles.

The evolution of welfare services from remedial to developmental required major shifts in practices in order to bring services and programmes in line with the Service Delivery Model 2005. This model offered a range of services within a continuum, namely Prevention, Early Intervention, Statutory and Aftercare services. In meeting their specific

objectives each shelter implemented a range of programmes along the continuum of care. All the Social Workers expressed that the availability of resources dictated the level at which programmes were offered. Their resources were organized and managed in a manner that enabled them to achieve basic service goals in line with their mission. Mc Namara (2009) viewed all programmes in terms of inputs, process, outputs and outcomes. Inputs refer to the various resources needed to run the programme, e.g., money, facilities, clients, programme and staff, etc. The process refers to how the program is carried out, for example admitting children at the shelter, children receiving counselling, children receiving care, community outreach, re-unification, support to staff etc. The outputs refer to the units of service, namely, the number of children admitted, number of staff, etc. Outcomes refer to the impact on the children and communities receiving direct services, such as safety and security, children being successfully reunited with families, children admitted to school, families being fed, etc. As the primary objective of the study was to engage with services at the shelter level, the researcher gave priority to programmes relating to the children in care and thereafter focused on community-based interventions which included both prevention and early intervention programmes.

Shelter A exclusively rendered a residential care programme which fell within the realm of statutory services. In addition to offering residential care, Shelters B and C engaged in intensive community-based prevention, early intervention and after-care programmes. The *status quo* remained the same in both cycles. The shelters' programmes are detailed under specific headings and presented alongside each other to allow for comparison.

3.3.1 RESIDENTIAL CARE

Shelters A, B and C's Residential Care programmes had similar objectives, namely, to meet the personal growth and developmental needs of the children. While the programmes at the three shelters fell within the broad objectives of the Service Delivery Model (2005) and the Norms and Standards, Shelters B and C experienced challenges in engaging in statutory services as the children did not have documents and families and next of kin were hard to trace. Furthermore, the Social Workers did not have the

necessary experience or a Supervisor to guide and supervise the processes. Schenck (2004) found that Social Workers were frustrated with working conditions in the welfare sector in South Africa regardless of whether they were based in the public or private sectors. The overwhelming needs of the community in relation to their own relatively low personnel, combined with the lack of other critical resources and adequate supervision impeded services.

The Social Workers from all the shelters were mainly engaged in services relating to children admitted to the shelters. The Social Workers from Shelters B and C experienced challenges in heeding the call to bring in more children to keep up the numbers as well as the admission of children considered to be at risk, without following legal procedures. These participants experienced challenges in balancing the leadership's vision and demands for service delivery to meet donor expectations which contradicted Social Work ethics and statutory guidelines and processes. Mhone (2010:16) observed that NGO governance structures are "formulated to fit within legal prescriptions of what is required for an NGO to meet the criteria required to function or to be perceived as credible by donors and funders".

The Social Workers viewed the registration of the shelters as the first step towards compliance, but felt that the Managers placed a high premium on implementing programmes that would be attractive to donors and funders. The Shelter B Social Worker observed that maintaining statistics remained a high priority as there was a constant need to assure donors that their funding was utilized for the desired purpose. Mohne (2010:21) supported the Social Worker's view that shelters' "reliance on donor funding made them more prone to donor influence than to communities which they serve". However, a donor's agenda and understanding of needs and services is not necessarily in line with that of welfare policies; this poses a challenge to staff rendering direct services.

The Social Workers from Shelters A and B were equally frustrated with rigid and inflexible court systems that demanded documentation of children and significant others when initiating children's court enquiries. One remarked: *"Try obtaining a death certificate for parents who are deceased and there is no evidence to identify them by their registered*

names. No birth details or other identification details were available and sometimes the children did not even know who they were. They merely heard from someone that their parents died. Or try obtaining a birth document for such a child with no record of birth. It a painful and slow process and sometimes not worth the effort as children disappear in the middle of the process. You can only imagine the frustrations we face". Similar sentiments have been echoed not only by other shelter personnel, but Social Workers generally who need to place children in school or alternate care. As a Social Worker, the researcher experiences this daily in the field.

Although the programmes at all the shelters were offered from the same theoretical and philosophical frames of reference, the discrepancy lay in the application and implementation of statutory mandates. Shelter A implemented statutory procedures in keeping with the provisions of the Children's Act and interventions were aligned with the administrative guidelines and procedures outlined in the Service Delivery Model (2005). Shelter A conducted a pre-admissions interview with the child, the referral Social Worker and significant others where possible, to assess and establish the child's needs as well as to prepare them for admission. Children were admitted on a court order or Form 36 in crisis situations, which were later validated *via* a children's court enquiry by the Shelter Social Worker or referring Social Worker. Shelter A provided statutory services for admission of children referred from Reception Centres and Drop-in-Centres. The other two shelters did not offer similar statutory services across both time cycles. Rather, welfare organizations referring children were expected to manage the statutory process. If admissions were not accompanied by a Care Plan, the Shelter Social Worker and Care Staff developed the necessary Independent Development Plans which the team reviewed regularly to monitor interventions and progress in accordance with the requirements of the Service Delivery Model (2005) and the Norms and Standards.

Shelters B and C admitted children in crisis and children considered to be at risk, on an informal basis, with a few exceptions where children who were awaiting trial or were placed by Social Workers from other Welfare Organizations, went through the legal channels. The Social Workers at these Shelters depended on the services of the local Child Welfare Organizations and Department of Welfare to assist with children's court

enquiries, but due to their work commitments, they were unable to assist. Having attained the same legal status as other Child and Youth Care Centres, the assumption was that Shelters B and C would conform to statutory processes as prescribed by the Children's Act when admitting children. However there was no shift in their approach since the previous investigation. This was disconcerting, as they were under the legal obligation to conform to standards and practices in child care, failing which necessary measures should be taken by the supervising body, namely the Department of Social Development to ensure that services to children are not compromised.

The Social Workers reported that referrals to the Department of Social Development and Child Welfare for statutory intervention and, in certain instances, after care services proved a major challenge as cases were either not accepted or interventions were delayed. In some instances, a follow up by shelter staff revealed neglect of these cases. Both the Department and Child Welfare organizations experienced challenges in meeting their own service demands and these referrals added to their burden. The Children's Act provides for both assistance to organizations and cancellation of registrations.

3.3.2 THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

Phelan (2009:46) described the therapeutic milieu as "a thoughtfully constructed environment promoting healing, growth and remediation". The key assessment tool for Social Workers in assessing developmental needs to guide appropriate interventions is the Individual Development Plan (IDP) which was specified in the Norms and Standards. This tool is deemed compulsory when working with children in alternate care. A child's development is portrayed within the four core values of Belonging, Mastery, Generosity and Independence within the Circle of Courage adopted from Brendtro, Bockern and Brokenleg's (1990) work with youth at risk. The tool which is described extensively in the Service Delivery Model (2005) reflects the strengths and developmental areas of the person being assessed.

At Shelters A and B, the Social Worker assessed the needs of children on admission. During the initial investigation, Shelter C did not have a Social Worker; hence the Child

Care Worker managed the process. Shelter C subsequently employed a Social Worker and in the follow up interviews all the shelters reported that the assessments were undertaken by both the Social Worker and respective Child Care staff. Challenges remained in adhering to the prescribed standards and formats set out in the Service Delivery Model (2005). Only the Shelter A Social Worker was acquainted with this model. Shelters B and C improvised and carried out assessments and interventions which focused on the child's physical, social and emotional needs. These assessments were based on their personal knowledge, using their interviewing skills and techniques. This was worrying because skilling and training staff was highlighted as one of the key elements of the Children's Act (Proudlock, 2007). Ten years have passed since the implementation of the Service Delivery Model (2005) and three years since implementation of the Act; yet the Social Workers at all the shelters had not had sight of the Service Delivery Model (2005), let alone training. In his State of the Nation Address on 9 February 2007, former President Thabo Mbeki highlighted the need to accelerate the training of Social Workers at professional and auxiliary levels. According to Earle (2007:8), "This statement represented the most high-level public acknowledgment by government of the critical role of social workers in social development and an important step towards improving the support of these professionals at both the level of education and working conditions".

All the shelters provided opportunities for emotional healing through counselling by Social Workers. The Child Care Workers who worked in the life space of the children served as active agents to provide opportunities for children to experience healing through the conscious use of their environment, for example; the Child Care Worker would comfort children who displayed anxiety at bed time by reading, singing or remaining with the child until he/she fell asleep. This is admirable because most of these children lacked parental love and affection, a primary need of all children. The presence of adults and the immediate response to their needs helped to develop their sense of belonging which set the foundation for their future development.

Participants from all the shelters stated that the joint efforts of the Child Care Workers' as well as the Social Workers' therapeutic interventions to help children adjust soon after admission were important aspects of their work. While the Child Care Workers focused

on practical ways to address children's immediate physical, medical and emotional needs, the Social Workers dealt with issues on two levels, namely, situations that impacted on their lives prior to their admission and factors within the Shelters that impacted a child's adjustment such as a change in their structure, routine, discipline etc. The Manager and Social Workers from Shelter A felt that it was sometimes difficult to discern whether the symptoms manifested by the children such as anger outbursts, aggression, physical fights, depression, anxiety and defiance were associated with adjustment to the Shelter or were the residual effects of their previous experiences. The staff expected changes in behaviour; as Glans (1997) notes, behaviour is dynamic and is influenced by personal, environmental and social factors. In keeping with the ecosystems perspective within which the study was based, an individual's development was viewed in the context of his/her total social environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In the initial round of interviews, the Manager of Shelter C indicated that the cumulative effects of the children's traumatic experiences warranted the immediate services of a multi-disciplinary team of experts. However, specialist services were non-existent and Social Workers had to adopt different roles for which they were ill-equipped. Worse still, her shelter was without a Social Worker and she performed these functions, a field in which she had no knowledge or experience, as she was a teacher by profession. Except for Social Workers and Child Care Workers, the shelters did not have access to other forms of therapeutic interventions such as play therapy, kinder kinetics, psychology and the like. This placed the Social Workers as well as the children at a disadvantage as the Social Worker was unable to make appropriate referrals due to limited knowledge and understanding of the presenting symptoms.

In both rounds of interviews, all the participants stated that the loss of significant care givers had a devastating emotional and psychological impact on the children. These were made manifest in the behaviour indicated above. Bedwetting was common among children who had experienced sexual abuse and children whose care giver had died withdrew or gave vent to angry outbursts. During the first interview, the Social Worker from Shelter B said that she was often able to ascertain the cause of the care giver's death from the way the children described them. For example, *"my mother was coughing*

too much, she was very sick and looking very small, nobody want to come near her to clean her or even touch her when she died, the people call me dirty like my mother and chase me away".

She used these indicators to help the children through the grieving process. The information provided by all the Social Workers in the second phase of interviews concurred with the above. The Social Workers also used stories told by children about their experiences to assess and assist in the counselling process.

It was generally reported in the later interviews that interventions with the children in the case work and group-work context was very much person-centred (Grobbler & Schenck, 2009). Although counselling was primarily the responsibility of the Social Workers at all the shelters, they were not available 24 hours a day. Certain needs arose when the Social Workers were off duty; it was vital to ensure that the child's needs were met immediately. The Child Care Staff generally stepped into the Social Workers' shoes, made the necessary intervention and gave feedback to the relevant Social Worker as soon as possible. Given the different milieus in which interactions with children took place, namely on a formal level with the Social Worker, Teacher, Manager and on an informal level with the Child Care staff and volunteers on a 24 hour basis, all the shelters acknowledged that all these associations provided channels for children to express their emotions and needs that signalled an immediacy response. There was growing awareness of the need to work in the life-space of vulnerable children and families.

Policy developments and government initiatives have resulted in a more inclusive effort rather than an exclusive Social Work approach; Child and Youth Care Workers and Community Care Givers are recognised as important components of service delivery within the Service Delivery Model (2005) and the Children's Act NO 38 of 2005. The partnership approach advocated by the Department of Social Development highlighted earlier in the Isibindi Model signalled hope for children's services. In the attempts towards registering Child and Youth Care Workers, the South African Council of Social Service Professionals provided impetus for standardized practices and accountability in order to ensure that the best interests of the children are met.

The Social Workers from all the shelters stated that much of the children's experiential world was gained through feedback from associations with Child Care Workers and volunteers. They added that they sometimes had to relinquish their engagement with children to a certain degree and supported children's right to choose to engage with, for example, the Child Care Worker. The necessary consultation, guidance and supervision were provided until the Social Worker was able to take over, especially when alternate care was indicated, as the Child Care Worker's knowledge and responsibilities excluded statutory work. In addition to the individual and group counselling undertaken by the Social Workers at all the shelters, the Child Care staff and volunteers provided support and educational groups.

All the shelters utilized King George V Hospital's children's psychiatric department for children presenting with deep-seated emotional, adjustment or psychiatric symptoms. This is a valuable service as other service providers charged exorbitant fees. The Social Worker from Shelter B felt that the treatment received addressed the symptoms presented by the children, especially hyperactivity and aggression. The children responded positively to medical treatment. The medication helped stabilize their behaviour and improved their functioning both at the shelter and in the classroom. While the medication served as an external control to stabilize the children's behaviour, there was still a need for intrinsic behaviour change and improvement in academic functioning.
Shelters B and C placed great value on spiritual healing contributing to behavioural change. The staff and volunteers working with the children were required to apply Christian principles of love and compassion in all their interventions. The interventions were driven by their passion to serve in accordance with God's calling cited in Philippians (Chapter 2: verse 4): *"Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others".*

The volunteers from Shelters B and C said that they often prayed for the children's hurt and emotional pain caused by abuse and neglect to be healed. They called for divine interventions and turned to Jesus as a healer; as the Manager of Shelter B stated: *"It did*

not matter whether the children needed help for physical, spiritual or emotional healing, we find hope in the Bible. God had the power to make us better". These shelters did not consult the children about this approach and this could be regarded as a contravention of children's rights in respect of participation and decision making enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa Act (1996) as well as the Children's Act.

All the shelters found that sporting and extra-curricular activities were therapeutic. These activities were either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation can be described as motivation that comes from the inner self. Intrinsically motivated activities are self-determined and individuals can engage in them freely without outside controls (Abdullah & Fauzee, cited by Streak & Poggenpoel, 2005). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to motivation that is externally inspired and is associated with external benefits such as awards, money, prizes, social approval and, conversely, discipline or reprimand (Weinberg & Gould cited by Poggenpoel, 2005). All the shelters gave the children incentives for achievements and they were given choices in respect of certain activities, but sports activities were compulsory at Shelter B. The Shelter Managers noted that acknowledgement of their participation built the children's morale and self-esteem. The children from all the shelters shared common interests, which included singing, dancing, soccer, swimming, cricket and drama. Volunteers played a leading role in arranging, supervising and engaging with the children in such activities. The children from Shelters B and C visited local churches and presented song items and sketches. The shelters utilized community swimming pools to teach children to swim. Shelters B and C were often invited to Umthombo's surfing clubs and other competitive sports arranged by the organization (www.umthombo.co.za)

Ward *et al.* (2006:3) state that "we need instruments that tell us about the context in which street children are living. We need to measure children's accessibility to services as well as the quality of services". Programme monitoring, according to Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman (1999: 170) is defined as "the systematic attempt by evaluation researchers to examine programme coverage and delivery". Evaluation aims to determine the extent to which a policy is being implemented according to its intended objectives. In the shelter context, this means that the interventions with the children should be purposeful and

meaningful. As the services at all the shelters fell within protective care, a shift toward compliance with legal provisions was found to dominate service at shelter A. The Negotiated Service Delivery Agreement entered into between the Department of Social Development and the shelters spelt out the expectations of both partners. Service providers were mandated to deliver services in accordance with the Department's National Action Plan (2012-2016) which was aligned with existing legal frameworks. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework served as an instrument to monitor the sustainability and quality of various initiatives and the integration of linkages and partnerships (National Action Plan, 2012-2016:27). As there were no standardized objectives, the monitoring and evaluation of shelter services were undertaken in accordance with an individual shelter's service objectives and outcomes were subject to interpretation and individual bias.

3.3.3 ROUTINE AND DISCIPLINE

Scheduling and routine are critical to children's development and formed part of the therapeutic interventions at the shelters. The Manager at shelter A expressed the view that: *"Routine was important because children thrived on predictability and children were generally more comfortable when they followed a regular schedule as it offered security."*

All the shelters maintained structured programmes, but were flexible, taking into account the needs of the children, the environment and manpower and other resources. Formal activities were generally planned collaboratively with staff and children planning certain social activities such as outings, commemorating Children's Day etc. There were no changes between the interview cycles. According to the Manager at Shelter A, the formal programmes were periodically reviewed at staff meetings and revised as the needs of the children and circumstances within the institution changed, for example, when staff resigned. The children's daily routine was balanced with the needs of the organization, the individual child as well as the group as a whole, yet flexible, with certain controls in place.

This was exemplified in the following response from a Social Worker from Shelter B: *"The children did their own washing as we did not have washing machines and they cleaned up their own rooms so as to learn independent living skills and they shared in house chores to ensure a clean environment for all"*. During the initial investigation, the Social Worker from Shelter B stated: *"As recipients of negative social experiences within their homes and the streets, the children needed to be socialized. Chores were an important aspect of their socialization in order to re-integrate them into society".*

All the shelters echoed similar sentiments during both interview cycles and engaged the children in chores. In so doing, they placed the children in the context of their former experiences and considered what was necessary to prepare them for reintegration into the mainstream of society. This approach brought into focus the inter-relationship and reciprocal influence of the environment and individuals on each other (Payne, 2005). The Child Care Worker discussed the chores with the children and consequences for failing to carry them out were mutually agreed. Chores are essential to instil discipline and skills and in the holistic development of children. Agreed upon consequences for failing to do chores were applied at all the shelters. This included taking away privileges such as not attending a social activity which differed from the traditional discipline of punishment such as confinement. The Social Worker from Shelter A, who participated in both investigations, expressed: *"If one made children responsible for their environment, they become more aware of what was going on around them and they responded positively".*

The Manager of Shelter B indicated that it was a spiritual responsibility to "parent children" in a Godly way. She quoted the following scripture from the Bible to support her statement: *"Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it"* Proverbs (26:6). Whilst there are no specific guidelines for chores, the Children's Act makes provision for parents and care givers to safeguard the well-being of children (section 144) and prohibits child labour or exploitation of children (section 141). All the shelters needed to set proper guidelines for age-appropriate chores so that children were not violated and they were not exploited by care givers.

The children at all the shelters initially experienced challenges with routine and chores. They considered it “hard work”. In both cycles, the Social Workers from Shelter A and B attributed this to them not being accustomed to the concept of time, structure and schedules; life skills development was non-existent in their former environment and foreign to them. They felt that establishing routine was essential for the children’s development. Fiese cited by Wittig (2005) noted that: “Experts in child development have long emphasized the importance of routines and parental consistency in fostering adaptive child behaviour and family relationships”. Keltner, cited by Wittig (2005:7), associated family routines with “increased child cooperation, social competence and compliance”.

“The ecological model recognizes that human beings operate within connected or nested environments: the home (primary relationships), the community and wider society in what can be thought of as a ‘constant process of reciprocal interaction’” (Jack 2001:185). Each has its peculiar mores, norms and values that determine an individual’s behaviour and responses. Beni’tez (2011) made reference to “street connectedness” and drew attention to the choices children make in developing their relationships, identities and behaviours in connections with the street environment. Exploring children’s connections to the street, alongside their other relationships, is critical to understanding their needs and behaviour in order to implement appropriate interventions.

Although some children presented with resistance initially, they mostly adjusted and stabilized with time. There were occasional instances of rebellion and some absconded if they found the conditions intolerable. Children who were accustomed to a life of begging as a means of earning an income and those presenting with drug addiction were among those who found the programme too restrictive and confining and experienced difficulties in adjusting. The sensitive use of different forms of appropriate discipline which ensures that the self-worth, value and dignity of the children are not compromised is very important. Wittig’s (2005) work with children indicated that reliable and consistent consequences promoted compliant behaviour and helped the child to learn and seek out positive reinforcement. His findings supported the approach of the “Common Sense

Parenting" programme which uses consequences in a structured manner to achieve positive behavioural outcomes.

3.3.4 FORMS OF DISCIPLINE

Cagle (www.ezinearticles.com) refers to the common threads that are essential for successful children's discipline models. These include committed staff, well-defined expectations, and clear rules and procedures. In her work with children she found that activities to promote self-esteem and belonging were more effective in reducing behavioural problems than punishment. All the shelters experienced challenges in adopting a specific model and maintaining consistent procedures as a number of staff interacted with the children, each with their own ideology and precepts. The Shelter B Social Worker felt that, as a Christian-based organization, the Manager's focus was Christian-based principles and that secular-based knowledge was rarely considered.

All the participants reported that the types of misbehaviour presented by the children were typical of those occurring at other child care facilities and families in general. They unanimously disapproved of the use of corporal punishment. The researcher received general feedback from the shelters on their rules and the methods used to address behavioural problems. The Social Workers from Shelters A and B stated that there were no rigid sets of rules or disciplinary methods applied to children who presented with misdemeanours. The measures used were flexible and staff had to take into consideration the nature and circumstances of the offence and the individual concerned. The participants stressed the importance of giving the children an opportunity to learn to accept responsibility for their behaviour and make appropriate choices should a similar situation confront them in the future. However, it was unclear how the behaviour was assessed, what opportunities for learning took place and what controls or measures were used to monitor the possible use of punitive disciplinary methods. The Managers addressed any complaints levelled by children against staff. According to the Social Workers in both cycles, no incidents of corporal punishment were reported by any of the Shelters. Shelters A and B Managers stated that the staff were adequately informed of the consequences of any form of corporal punishment and if there were any incidents,

these had not been brought to their attention. However, these were very general statements and it was impossible to gauge the extent to which the shelters embraced the rights-based approach in addressing children's behaviour. Children's rights to respect and participation in matters affecting them hung in the balance.

The researcher gathered from the Child Care staff at Shelters A and B that they had access to parts of the training material on "Systematic Training for Effective Parenting" (STEP Programme) by Dinkmeyer and McKay (1976). This was the only parenting education programme known to all the shelters' Social Workers. The programme promotes the use of natural and logical consequences. This approach is considered non-punitive and it reinforces positive behaviour as well as minimises negative tendencies. The programme suggests negative consequences to address non-compliance, mainly in the form of withdrawing of privileges. Of concern was the interpretation of the programme without the investment of adequate resources and training in using it that could result in inappropriate application or abuse of consequences and re-enforcers, to the detriment of children's development.

The interventions outlined above are central in preparing the children to function within their broader social environment of which the family and the community are fundamental components. The stability of the children is vital if they are to be successfully reintegrated into the community. The shelters' efforts to reintegrate the children into the broader community were viewed against the background of the provisions in the Children's Act, the Service Delivery Model (2005) and the Norms and Standards which required the provision of reunification and reintegration services to children placed in alternate care. The efforts of the shelters in this regard are discussed in the next section.

3.3.5 RECONSTRUCTION/ REUNIFICATION/ RE-INTEGRATION SERVICES

The above terms were often used inter-changeably; however they collectively gave direction to what the Children's Act referred to as permanency planning which was mandatory for children in alternate care. The Norms and Standards require that every

child in a Child Youth Care Centre be afforded the right to permanency planning, which includes reunification and life-long relationships.

In rendering services within the continuum of care, all three shelters recognised that the family plays a key role in the children's lives. In both cycles, they all reported that the children had some connection or attachment to family or community. Sixteen of the 18 participants in the study who were isiZulu speaking were passionate about returning the children to their community of origin and strongly subscribed to the principles of UBUNTU. This term was used to express their respect for the values and practices of children's African culture. In both rounds of interviews, the Social Workers from Shelter A quoted the Zulu maxim, "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu", when means, "a person is a person through other persons". This approach was strongly supported by the child care legislation and practices and reinforced placements within the community context. The Service Delivery Model (2005) is based on the concept of the "Circle of Courage", a model in which Brendtro, Bockern and Brokenleg (1990) integrated Native American child-rearing practices with western psychology. The adoption of this model is based on the premise that African culture parallels that of the Native American people and it is entrenched in policy (Norms and Standards), indicating that the macro-system has an enormous impact on the micro-system (the child). While the concept appears sound in principle, the challenge for both children and Social Workers was the barriers to family/community support which was inherent in Native American culture. The stories of loss of parents; rejection by extended families and communities, exploitation and alienation were echoed by a former street child who documented his experiences of exploitation by adults, the very people considered symbols of care to vulnerable children: *"My mum gave me a name. It's the only thing that I have left from her. I live alone. The streets of Sea Point are my home. I am thirteen years old"* (Duiker, 2000:1). Social Workers from all shelters in both cycles indicated that circumstances such as these were common, rendering reunification almost impossible.

All the shelters embarked on various interventions with the children to facilitate and influence the reconstruction process. Shelter A referred to this process as "Reconstruction Services", while Shelters B and C called it the "Rehabilitation Phase", and

"Family Readiness Program", respectively. Despite the differences in terminology the shared vision of the three shelters was to secure suitable, long term placement and care for the children in the community. As these children reportedly came from structurally disadvantaged homes, the interventions were aimed at stabilizing family circumstances to effect family reunification and reintegration without compromising the child or the family's safety. The Shelters' processes were similar in that:

- Where possible, contact was established with families by a designated outreach team member, with the expressed consent of the child.
- Shelters B and C engaged the services of the Child Care staff and volunteers in this regard.
- Suitable alternate care was considered in all cases. The Social Worker from Shelter C requested the local Durban Children's Society and the Department of Social Development to facilitate suitable alternate long term care for the children, but reportedly received little or no co-operation.
- Both the child's and the family's needs were assessed.
- The Child Care Worker and Social Worker worked in collaboration to determine possible intervention plans and responsibilities were designated and implemented.
- The Social Worker was directly responsible for therapeutic work with the child.
- The Child Care Worker rendered supportive assistance to the children and significant others.
- The child's response to therapy was assessed *via* continuous consultations between the Social Worker and the child and any other staff member, including volunteers that engaged with the child.
- At Shelter A, weekly case conferences were held to review children's progress. This process, which was generally accompanied by the review of the IDP as indicated in the Norms and Standards, was not indicated by Shelters B and C.

The Social Worker from Shelter A, who managed the case review meetings, stated that, although she completed the IDP for the children, challenges remained in their

implementation as the staff sometimes failed to follow through, especially when confronted with resistance or challenges from a child. This impacted negatively on team work which is essential to ensure the success of interventions with children. Maxwell (2004) described teamwork as a process of achieving a common objective as a unified group of people. It requires the different members of the team to work together to achieve a common goal. The researcher is of the view that the onus is on Shelter Managers to create a non-threatening and conducive environment for the team to work co-operatively. If combined in a synchronized manner, their diverse skills and capabilities will enhance the attainment of the shelter's goals.

Family strengthening work was the joint responsibility of the Social Worker and the Child Care Worker, with the latter undertaking most of the field work. This intervention focused on assessing family needs and offering practical assistance to address these needs, which generally related to accessing identification documents, referral for medical treatment, application for child support, providing material assistance and parenting as well as social skills. In order to impact positively on family communication and relationships, contact between the children and families were arranged in a co-ordinated and structured manner. The shelters' approach was to first arrange for families or significant others to engage with the child at the shelter. This process was observed either by the Social Worker or Child Care Worker *via* on-going interactive sessions with the children and their families at the shelter. Visits to family homes were undertaken at intervals by the Child Care Worker to assess the family's response to the various interventions and the progress made. Family events were arranged periodically at the shelters, where the respective families and children engaged on a social level to develop relationships and strengthen bonds. Considering that most children were without immediate or extended families, this was difficult to achieve. However, Shelter B considered host families an integral component of the children's lives that helped children socialize and connect with the outside world.

When it was safe for children to visit their families, they spent weekends and school holidays with them. Although few children were in this situation, Social Workers, especially from Shelter C, were able to secure host families for the children over school

holidays and long weekends. Their reciprocal response and adjustment was monitored by the Social Worker and Child Care Worker before a decision was made for the child's release into the family's care. While permanency planning and reunification with families were undertaken by all shelters, Shelter A followed through with the legal processes of discharging the child from the provisions of the Children's Act while Shelters B and C's processes were informal, except for those children placed in foster care who were referred to the local child welfare organization or Department of Social Development, depending on the child's age or the area from which they came.

A disciplined and consistent effort is required for the above interventions to yield successful outcomes. The high turnover of staff (Lombard, 2008) no doubt exacerbated staff resource constraints and negatively impacted programme implementation which inadvertently impacted on the success of the programmes. Staff turnover for the majority of NGOs is nearly 50% within a six month period. Despite this, Shelters B and C reported 90% successful integration into society. The researcher is of the view that this is an unrealistic assessment, given that there is no structured tracking and evaluation system and volunteers and Child Care staff had little or no knowledge of programmes or the standards applicable within the continuum of care services. What shelters considered a success may have fallen far short of acceptable standards. For children placed in custodial care, permanency planning is a shared responsibility. The findings at Shelter A confirmed Moodley's (2006) findings in that, the placement organizations failed to render the necessary reconstruction services, nor did they engage the child in permanency planning. Shelters B and C mainly worked independently and could not be compared with Shelter A in this regard as other organizations were not involved in the placement of the children in their care.

Alternate institutional care was considered the most suitable option for children without any immediate or extended family. However, the shelters reported huge challenges in securing long term alternate placements as Children's Homes and Cluster Foster Facilities discriminate against street children. The Shelter B Social Worker said that the application came to a halt at the query stage, as these organizations generally viewed these children as a threat to their environment. This placed a huge burden on the shelters as they were

forced to provide long term care and independent living programmes for children without suitable alternatives.

According to the Children's Act, children in custodial care are expected to exit the facility when they turned 18 years and return to the community. There is no state funding to allow them to remain, unless they are in formal schooling (Tanur, 2011). This assumes that the youth concerned have obtained an adequate level of education or skill to be able to live independently. In reality the situation was quite different, and the shelters were left with the choice of either discharging the youth or engaging them in a suitable programme to prepare them for independent living.

In 2006, Shelter B established a Half Way House to cater for children being prepared for independent living. The facility was an important component of its continuum of care programme. The project was managed by two Child Care Workers who were available 24 hours a day to supervise the children. The children functioned independently under their supervision. The project catered for approximately 15 children. Children 14 years and older who did not stand a chance of being reunited with their family and those requiring independent living skills in order to reunite with families were considered for admission to this project. They completed their secondary school education or higher education and remained at the facility until they were able to live independently. Youth seeking employment were assisted with job applications, preparing their curriculum vitae and job interviews. Shelter B's sense that they lacked both physical and human resources to implement a range of programmes at micro level to promote youth economic empowerment was similar to that of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) which focused on interventions on a national, provincial and local level. All the shelters expressed challenges in accessing learnerships and bursaries for those wanting to study at private colleges or other tertiary institutions.

Children at Shelter A who had reached the age of 18 and had not been successful in securing placement within a family system were also prepared for independent living. Shelter C depended largely on host families for these hard to place girls. The children were placed with host families at different intervals until they became independent.

While Shelter A's programme provided greater security for youth, both Shelter B and C's were not consistent and offered little or no assurance of independent living.

3.3.6 EDUCATION

All the shelters reported that the children's educational needs were compromised in that almost 90% either did not have any formal schooling or were forced to abandon their school career whilst in primary school. Seventy percent could not read or write which was consistent in both the cycles, suggesting no educational advances over this time period. The reports of high levels of illiteracy and school drop-outs were consistent with the Government's finding that: "At least 12 000 children aged 7 to 15 were not attending school and a further 368 624 teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 had dropped out of school without completing matric" (Govender, *Sunday Times*, 07/04/2013). The Director General of Basic Education, Soobrian's assertion that education quality and excellence is the cornerstone of the Department of Basic Education's Action Plan to 2014 appeared ambitious (www.skillsportal.co.za).

The Child Care staff said that the children did not attend school while at home or on the streets as their adult care givers were ill and could not afford school fees, clothes and books. Beni'tez's (2010) study on the impact of HIV/AIDS and terminal illness on street children concluded that illness had a negative impact on the realization of children's rights to education. Children living in households with ill adults were more likely not to attend school than those in other households for the reasons cited above. Other issues of concern that emerged from discussions with the different participants included:

- Assessing children's level of literacy was a big challenge as the staff did not have the expertise to do so.
- Accessing formal assessments was beyond their means as specialist services carried high costs which the Shelters could ill afford.
- Children's literacy levels were not consistent with their age.

- Some children with no formal education that were quite advanced in age were precluded from entry into mainstream education, as they were considered too old to start schooling from grade 1.
- Almost 100% of the children admitted did not have an identity document and were therefore not eligible for admission to formal schools.
- Children with learning difficulties were hard to place.

"*Education plays an important role in promoting inequality in South Africa….and remains a complex issue"* Branson & Zuze in the South African Child Gauge (2012:69). They asserted that while some progress has been made, further efforts were required to extend quality education to the poor to allow learners to complete schooling on an equal footing. This has the potential to address the divide between the rich and poor in the labour market and move towards breaking the cycle of poverty. All the participants in both research cycles stated that the shelters rendered individualized programmes to the children to bridge their educational gaps and enable transition into mainstream schooling where possible. On admission to mainstream schooling, the children were assisted throughout their school career with support services, including remedial lessons, extra tuition, structured and supervised homework sessions and assistance with homework and projects. School progress was monitored through school visits either by the Social Workers or Child Care staff. Furthermore, Shelter B offered home schooling for groups of children who could not access mainstream schooling and life skills training for children that were academically challenged. The shelter had a strong and consistent volunteer base comprising teachers and students who assisted in co-ordinating and facilitating the programme.

Shelters A and C depended on volunteer services to run the bridging classes, while Shelter B employed a fulltime educator and skills training officer who taught carpentry and woodwork. Apart from secular education, Shelters B and C placed strong emphases on spiritual education to teach the children respect and responsibility and adopt a more positive attitude towards life.

3.3.7 SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Shelter A embraced all religions and allowed the children freedom of choice. They were allowed to attend local community religious organizations' services and community members were encouraged to actively engage with the children by accompanying them to places of worship as well as rendering religious programmes at the facility. Shelters B and C had a strong Christian ethos and this was not negotiable. Church attendance was compulsory. Services and worship programmes were structured and conducted by designated Pastors or religious leaders on the premises. This undermined the children's right to decision making and freedom to choose. However the shelter staff defended the practice by stating that the children had not requested otherwise and that Christianity would have been their preferred choice as this was the only faith they had been exposed to. The children from Shelter C were actively engaged in Church activities, such as music and drama and often performed at churches and community programmes.

"A child's identity is formed relative to, but separate from, his or her family" (Scolnicov, 2007:15). A child's spirituality and religion are part of his/her identity and as such need to be respected. Any attempt on the part of an adult to impose his/her religious practices on a child is considered an infringement of the child's rights which are protected by the Constitution and the Convention on the Rights of the Child(CRC). Built on various legal systems and cultural traditions, the Convention is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations.The CRC grants children the right to freedom of thought and religion, among other rights. The Managers of Shelters B and C claimed that they upheld the rights-based approach; however, this was contravened in adopting the Christian faith without discussions or negotiations with the child. Questions that emerge from this practice are:

- Were the children consulted on the issue?
- Was the staff oblivious to other preferences expressed or unexpressed by the children?
- What happened to children within the system that wished to choose otherwise?
- Were they considered problematic and challenging if they expressed otherwise?

- Would they be allowed to remain at the shelter if they wished to engage in other religious practices or would they be asked to choose between their preference and the shelter (with the conditions attached)?
- Were other religions respected or criticized, as this would impact negatively on children whose family or significant others practiced other forms of worship, for example, ancestral worship.

Whilst it is noted that welfare services have their roots in all major world religions, especially Christianity, where welfare services existed around 550 AD, long before Social Work originated as a profession in the 19th Century (www.wikipedia.org), the religious ethos within which services were rendered at two of the shelters in this study is considered discriminatory.

3.3.8 STATUTORY INTERVENTION

Understanding and implementing the Children's Act, the Norms and Standards and other mandatory guidelines issued by the Department of Social Development appeared to be major stumbling blocks for Shelter Managers as well as Board members in programme planning and implementation. Shelter A's Manager and the Social Workers from Shelters A and B felt that they were guided by and sometimes dictated to by Department officials who had limited knowledge of the implementation of the Children's Act, a concern expressed earlier in relation to the admission of children considered to be at risk. Furthermore, these officials had a narrow view of service delivery, which they saw as confined to "institutional care practices" as in the old Child Care Act. It was asserted that these officials had no understanding of the special circumstances of these children that informed programmes, but dictated that programmes be aligned with the traditional practices of children's homes or their preconceived expectations of what was acceptable.

The White Paper (1997) that was discussed in detail in the literature review called for a shift away from the 'welfare approach'. According to the respondents, services were planned and delivered using a developmental approach. The ultimate aim was to improve

the impact of service delivery by integrating and linking the various programmes directed towards vulnerable people, including children.

According to the Manger at Shelter A:

- The officials were not adequately equipped to provide direction or guidelines for the delivery of social welfare services to street children.
- There was no clarity regarding exactly what services government and shelters were obliged to plan and budget for to protect the constitutional rights of these children.
- The officials were unable to provide guidance on the possible packages of social welfare services for this group.

Shelters B and C did not take the need to formally place children in their care seriously. This appeared to be "elective ignorance" or failure on their part to embrace or implement child protection mandates. The role of the Department of Social Development as a supervisory and monitoring agent, mandated by the Children's Act, is to ensure that shelters apply child care policy. The Department's responsibility in exercising its legal obligation to guide and monitor shelter services left much to be desired; the shelters reported that they did not get the necessary support and guidance from Department officials as expected. Visits by officials were few and far between, sometimes approximating only one per year. However, this did not mean that the shelters could claim ignorance of statutory mandates, as was the feedback from Shelters B and C in the initial investigation. These shelters are in the child protection business and, given their legal status, they have a legal responsibility for the protection and care of street children.

While the shelters appeared to share similar constraints and concerns, there was no collaboration with one another or existing services to overcome their challenges. Shelter A used the expertise of the Children's Society to guide and direct transformation of its services and programmes. Mhone (2010:86) observed that "racial politics in organizations that work with children and youth living on the street appeared to be a dominant theme which had a big impact on the challenges for collaborative partnerships between

organizations to achieve unified efforts". He was of the opinion that attaining legitimacy through registration undermined the possibility of collaborative efforts as each organization sought recognition for their work. The Managers in this study held the view that running a successful organization and delivering quality services that fulfilled the organization's mission was not enough. In addition to the core business of service delivery, the Managers and Directors spent much time raising money for the abovementioned. Both are complex and very time-consuming activities, especially when the Director had to multi-task and wore numerous hats as Manager, programme director, fund raiser etc. Secondly, developing networks to share resources or researching joint ventures was time-consuming, expensive and risky. Shelters therefore argued, that there was limited scope for partnerships and did not see the benefits of engaging collaboratively.

However collaboration and partnerships occur at different levels and serve specific purposes. The researcher is of the opinion that, if it were left to the shelters, there would be no shift in the way they operate and that the Department of Social Development, as a supervisory body, plays a significant role in advocating for and steering shelters towards a collaborative approach in rendering services. The Isibindi programme discussed earlier is a good example of how government, civil society, business and multi-lateral donors are working together to achieve common objectives (Child and Youth Care Work, Proudlock, 2012:16).

3.3.9 OTHER SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

Specialized services were accessed for interventions beyond the scope of the shelters' programmes or resources. Children presenting with alcohol and drug abuse were referred to SANCA for assessment and outpatient treatment or to Newlands Park Centre for in-patient treatment. The shelters experienced challenges in accessing rehabilitation services for youth as Newlands Park Centre's youth intake was restricted to the June and December school vacations and costs were attached to SANCA's outpatient as well as in-patient services *via* Lulamma.

Childline's services were utilized by all the shelters for children requiring therapeutic intervention related to abuse. The waiting list and appointments system caused some delays, but the services were described as good with positive outcomes, especially in respect of therapeutic interventions with children who were abused and needed to be prepared as witnesses in their court proceedings.

The children were referred to local primary health clinics for minor ailments. The services of Mc Cords and St. Mary's Hospital were utilized by Shelter B for specialized or more serious medical cases. Children from Shelters A and B were referred to, either Addington or Mc Cord's Hospital for specialized medical care.

Dickson-Tetteh and Ladha (cited in Kampala, 2011:54) warn that "sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies" are among the health problems associated with sexual and reproductive health behaviour. The girls admitted at Shelter A that had been sexually exploited were at risk of contracting STDs, HIV and possible pregnancy. These conditions were often accompanied by psychological trauma which required intervention at different levels. Pregnant girls from Shelter C without the necessary family or alternate community support were referred to a teenage pregnancy programme at Inchanga. This is a specialized unit catering for teenage pregnant girls without a support system. The services provided are holistic and include ante-natal services. The girls are guided throughout their pregnancy and the delivery of the child, provided with assistance in adjusting after the birth and supported in their transition into the community. The centre works with the local child welfare organization if adoption or foster care is indicated.

3.3.10 MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

Shelters B and C enlisted the help of individuals and groups in the community who served as hosts to the children or engaged with them at a social, recreational or educational level either directly or indirectly, serving as positive role models or mentors. Shelter B assigned a few of the children to mentors from "Big Brother Big Sister". Both Shelters B and C had a strong international volunteer base. International volunteers, mainly youth, lived and

worked among the children and engaged with them in their life-space, again serving as role models and mentors. Apart from direct work with the children, through their broad volunteer base, these shelters extended their services to street children through various programmes, some of which are outlined below.

3.3.11 COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

The ecosystems approach recognised the family as a foundation of society; the family unit is integral to the care and support of its members. According to the Managers of Shelters B and C, their community-based services recognise the need to preserve the family unit as a support structure for its members. Individuals and families form part of the broader community and are dependent on resources and the support of other systems for their existence and survival (Payne, 2005). The shelters partner with relevant resources at various levels, including extended families, government departments, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs, as well as businesses to address the social and economic needs of vulnerable groups in their respective communities.

Not many NGOs can claim to render sustained, extensive early intervention and prevention programmes in respect of street children, as shelters do. One often hears of intermittent once-off programmes initiated by individuals or organizations. Much of the shelter's resources are invested in work with street children in their environment who do not choose to seek entry to shelters. "Youths are active agents in their own lives; they construct meanings and are subjects of rights" (Ennew & Swart-Kruger quoted by Beni'tez 2011:21). Shelters B and C respected the children's rights to make decisions and they were not compelled to participate in any of the programmes. These settings allow children to use public spaces and form supportive networks that are crucial for their livelihoods. Youth Care Workers and volunteers engage with the children in their environment without boundaries. They use opportunities in the environment to engage with and assist the children. In employing the rights-based approach, shelters rendered a variety of programmes on the streets to enable street children's optimal development. Shelters B and C that worked with children in their life-space respected their decision to

retain their *status quo*; while giving due consideration to their participation in services to ensure that their basic needs were met.

Services to children included *inter-alia*, the following:

Application for birth registration

The absence of a birth certificate or an official identity document increases children's vulnerability to exploitation of all kinds; from child trafficking to being forced into child marriage, child labour or hazardous work. Without a birth certificate, a child in conflict with the law may also be treated and punished as an adult by the judicial system. Children are able to access schooling and financial assistance *via* child support grants as well as suitable employment only if they have such documentation.

Family support services

Interventions were based on the principles of family preservation and family integration. Shelter B referred to these programme as Community Outreach programmes, while Shelter C ran a Community Family Preservation Programme. Designated Community Workers are tasked with interventions in the community. This process began with locating the streets where children were present and that they frequented. The outreach and community work team visited these areas. They engaged with these children either individually or in groups through various activities and built trust and relationships. These relationships were strengthened by creating a safe environment for the children to engage on a more personal level with the members of the team to share information on their personal circumstances. The members acted on any direct or indirect information that indicated any physical, medical or emotional need. Depending on the child's personal circumstances and needs, the team member explored the best possible way to help the child. The goal of the programme was to encourage the children to refrain from seeking refuge on the streets and to choose alternate, safer options. The first step was to provide for the children's basic needs which often included a meal which was offered in the form of a sandwich and fruit.

Other basic interventions included escorting the children to a primary health clinic or hospital or providing a place for them to wash their clothes. Working in close consultation with the children, the teams located families and assessed their circumstances. Where possible, children were reunited with their families. The necessary support services were rendered to the children and families to address any concerns expressed by the child or family. Assisting children to return home and rendering follow up support services was an important aspect of the street team's job. They conducted case conferencing with the children and their families to help them work through issues. Basic material support such as food and clothing was provided to help them through difficult financial periods. Further, the family was assisted in accessing basic services such as medical care, identity documents, grants and schooling. The children's adjustment and progress was monitored by means of home visits and telephone calls.

Shelters B and C also engaged in social programmes with children in their life-space. Shelter B referred to these programs as Youth Programmes, while Shelter C called them diversion programmes. The activities included soccer, arts and drama. In addition the children were exposed to basic life skills programmes to educate and empower them to make informed decisions. Whilst Shelter C admitted females only at their facility, the programmes on the streets were not gender-specific.

Both Shelters B and C established Drop-in Centres in communities considered high risk, so that children could access services on their terms. This helping environment was not prescriptive; rather, it was non-threatening and "street-child friendly". The children were free to enter and leave as they desired. The programmes offered included meals, clothing, educational, recreational and material support and assistance in accessing resources such as identity documents, grants and schooling, spiritual support, skills training, advocacy and supportive counselling. Drop-in Centres are basically day services, but offered overnight stay for children in crisis. If the children needed to extend their stay they were referred to shelters. These programmes were contingent on resources, especially funding.

The outreach and community support programmes were labour intensive and demanded physical resources, as services needed to be readily accessible and consistent. The constraints posed by the lack of adequate resources were echoed by staff and the Managers of Shelters B and C. Staff were thinly spread and there was a lack of financial resources and transport. Staff also earned very low salaries. Staff well-being is important in any organization as it impacts on performance and service delivery. Shelters B and C were indebted to their volunteers who dedicated their labour and time to their programmes. The volunteers were crucial to service delivery, as they shouldered most of the support programmes with the street children as well as in the community.

Social workers are familiar with these idioms: "*one need to get to the source of the problem"; and "stop the dripping tap and you won't have to mop up endless buckets of water".* The investigations into the programmes offered by the shelters in this study demonstrate that much effort was invested in programmes on the different levels of the continuum of services. Despite certain shortcomings in statutory processes, policies and procedures, the programmes were commendable given the limited resources. All the shelters reported that their staff, both paid and voluntary worked relentlessly to maintain standards and sustain programmes initiated in the community. They noted the lack of personnel, especially to work in rural areas and that a significant number of their staff, including volunteers, was not trained in the developmental approach to service delivery, which impeded services. This was further compounded by a lack of funding to sustain programmes as well as retain staff.

3.4 FUNDING

Although various sources of financial support were tapped by the different shelters, both Managers and staff argued that the funds received were not adequate. Valuable time that could have been spent on service delivery was spent accessing funding and resources for basic needs and specific programmes through sponsorships.

One of the key aims of transformation, as set out in the 1999 financing policy, was to adopt a new method where NGOs would be funded on a programme basis. Although

there were instances where government switched to the programme-based funding of NGO service delivery, very little progress has been made in implementing this new funding method, called for in the White Paper (1997) and the Financing Policy.

Programmes were adapted to meet the needs of children, and fell far short of expected standards and procedures, statutory services being one of them. The shelters' programmes were severely affected by high staff turnover, putting programmes at risk. Programmes were temporarily halted or closed at great cost to children and the community. The needs of children and the community often exceeded the shelters' resource capacity. The withholding of, or unexpected termination of volunteer funding placed severe strains on services. It was hoped that the Funding Policy for Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004), revised in 2010, would adequately address the funding needs of shelters. However there did not appear to be much relief in that although subsidies were in line with other service providers, subsidies were granted per child admitted and did not cater for the broad range of programmes for street children

3.5 ADMINISTRATION

In maintaining relevant records, shelters recognized the children's status as individuals. Separate files were maintained. The children's records served as an indicator of their progress and future planning was based on these records. The maintenance of statistics, reports and recording indicated a systematic and planned approach to services. As discussed earlier, shelters claimed to maintain independent developmental plans and care plans for the children. This was not strictly adhered to and no uniformity was observed in the structure and format of the documents or the reviews of children's progress in accordance with these plans. The maintenance of registers for admissions, discharges, case registers, recording of activities, programmes, progress reports on programmes, evaluations and statistics was an indicator that the shelters attempted to operate in an orderly and organized fashion. This served to ensure continuity of services, evaluation of progress, accountability and purposeful planning and the execution of responsibilities in respect of services to the children as well as all other programmes. In keeping individual records of the children's activities, the Child Care staff, Social Workers

and volunteers adopted a collaborative approach. This enabled individual children's needs to be purposefully planned and met. Furthermore, supported by case conferencing and team discussions and consultations, this process enabled effective management of the children's needs within an interdisciplinary team approach.

The shelters maintained adequate records in respect of all work undertaken; namely, statistics, admissions registers, and attendance registers of children, discharges, and case files for each child. All interventions with the children and significant others were recorded in the case file. All team meetings and case conferences were minuted. Staff maintained diaries of their daily activities. Daily, weekly, monthly and annual schedules were planned and maintained. Monthly reports were compiled by respective staff on accomplishments, challenges etc. Reports were presented to the respective Boards at quarterly or six monthly intervals.

All shelters reported that they held structured monthly meetings to discuss progress, conducted annual evaluations of programmes with staff and when possible board members met with staff to check on progress. External evaluations by the Department of Social Development were undertaken at least once a year. These focused on the residential care programme to ensure the shelters' compliance with, among other things, maintenance of registers indicating admissions, discharges of children, maintenance of files for individual children, recording of counselling sessions and reunification programmes. Not much attention was paid to prevention programmes with children directly on the streets or work with children and families in their life space. As indicated in Chapter Two, with the exception of the residential care programme, there were no mandatory or standardized criteria to evaluate or critique the shelters' programmes or hold them accountable. The shelters' survival depended on their relationship with the organs of state, *viz.* the Department of Social Development as well as private funders and the consumers of their services. Each demanded a certain level of compliance with their specific goals and expectations which were not necessarily compatible. Shelters' programmes can only work in the best interests of the children and operate within ethical boundaries if all role players collaborate, which did not seem to be the case in these shelters. The Isibindi programme was considered the "best practice model for the

provision of quality child care and protection services to vulnerable children, including orphans and child headed households" (Child and Youth Care Work, 2012, Proudlock, 2012).

In the second research cycle, the Social Workers from Shelters B and C stated that the Department officials who were the guardians of NGO programmes, government policy and guidelines for services lacked the ability to guide and support programmes, as they were ill-equipped or restricted in their knowledge of policy and resource identification. They felt that this was an impediment to the shelters' progress. Apart from their need to be guided and capacitated, they felt that monitoring and support systems ought to be strengthened. The abilities and availability of Department officials to adequately fulfil their roles and responsibilities was a major concern. Any shortcoming on the part of the shelters was the joint responsibility of the monitoring body (the Department of Social Development) and the shelters. Should shelters fall short in implementing services in the best interests of children and not fulfil ethical expectations, the responsibility of instituting corrective measures rests with the Department of Social Development. Mhone (2010) suggested the services of an Ombudsman to act as a supervisory link between organizations, the Government and the consumers of services to ensure that the interests of all stakeholders are adequately catered for. Programme monitoring is defined as the systematic attempt by evaluation researchers to examine programme coverage and delivery (Rossi & Freeman, 1989:170). Evaluation is dedicated to establishing the extent to which a policy is being implemented according to its intended objectives.

The various programmes offered at the shelters indicate elements of integrated models of intervention. The team members utilized various methodologies and approaches to deliver programmes within the continuum of care described by the Service Delivery Model (2005). Despite resource constraints, the broad-based programmes offered by Shelters B and C, especially life space work within communities, is commendable. However, challenges remain in meeting policy mandates in respect of statutory programme implementation. The final chapter concludes findings and offers recommendations to address compliance with policy.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher's motivation for this study was based on concerns raised about services specific to street children in various empirical studies and the literature as well as subsequent policy developments giving recognition to the needs of street children. The study explored the extent to which shelters have engaged policy and accompanying guidelines in transforming services. The findings of the research three years after the implementation of the Children's Act, provides some guidance to both the shelters as well as the monitoring body, the Department of Social Development, to take appropriate steps to address gaps at various levels to bring services in line with relevant policy and welfare guidelines.

The aim of this study was to understand shelter services against the background of policy. The following objectives were set to meet the aim of the study:

- To explore the nature and range of services offered at all registered shelters in the Durban area.
- To explore the different kinds of programmes being implemented by these shelters.
- To explore specific challenges experienced in the implementation of programmes.
- To explore recommendations suggested by respondents at shelters to improve service delivery.

The study was conducted using the ecosystems framework. This framework placed the child as well as shelter services within the context of their relationships and interactions within the different environments. In the same way that a developing person's immediate environment is linked to and affected by other environmental settings, shelters operate within the broader welfare system in relation to other NGOs, and legal systems as well as

society. Bronfenbrenner (1979) refers to this principle of relationships as 'interconnectedness'. As highlighted in chapter 2, this principle is further emphasised by Beni'tez (2011:23), with special reference to 'street connectedness" in respect of street children.

As the primary theoretical framework on which the study was based, the ecosystems approach was useful in contextualizing the street children phenomenon. However, the practice of conventional social work within the ecosystems framework tends to focus only on the relationship between people and their environments (Mullaly, 2007). Social work practice concerns values and ethics with the core mission being to promote social justice. The study pointed to the need to include elements of structural theory in order to consider macro-level factors such as the economic, social and political milieu as well as the legislation impacting services on the ground. While the ecosystems frame of reference alerts one to areas where problems lie, structural theory allows for an understanding of the underlying causes of social problems (Mullaly, 2007).

The study, which was conducted in two cycles drew parallels between practices that existed prior to and post implementation of policy guiding interventions. The findings were presented concurrently, thereby establishing the impact of policy as well as identifying gaps in various levels of shelter functioning, including service delivery. The recommendations presented in this chapter are based on the findings of the study and are presented against the background of other relevant studies as well as policies and guiding instruments developed since 2004.

The recommendations are presented under the themes derived from the analysis of the findings. The findings of both research cycles are presented together to produce a flow in the discussion, so that once the conclusions are discussed, recommendations to address concerns/findings follow as a natural consequence. The themes are as follows:

- Legislation
- Recognition of shelter services
- Organizational structure and leadership

- Staffing
- Programmes
- Integration of services
- Funding and resources
- Monitoring and evaluation

4.2 LEGISLATION

Legislation is critical to social service delivery and serves as a catalyst for change. The South African welfare system has experienced transformation since the advent of democracy and is paying increasing attention to previously disadvantaged groups. Street children, among others were identified in this category. Researchers attribute the neglect of services to street children, among other causes, to the following:

- The absence of child care legislation in line with the Constitution (Proudlock, 2008).
- Society's perception of street children being that they were little adults who could care for themselves (Veeran, 1999).
- Street children being perceived as deviant by standards of conventional society or running away from home to escape discipline (Ennew, 2003; Veeran, 1999).

Chapter 2 described the economic, social, political and legislative contexts of the street children phenomenon. The findings of this study supported previous researchers' assertions that street children are discriminated against, are not viewed in the same light as other vulnerable children and are often excluded from services. According to Lundy (2004), such inequalities are inherent in a capitalist society which results in the exclusion of certain oppressed groups (structural theory). While South Africa is a signatory to various international declarations on the protection and promotion of the rights of citizens, this has not had much impact on direct services to street children at the local level. Veeran (1999:363) emphasized that the UNCRC and South Africa's Constitution, as guiding frameworks for policies, "need to serve more than an inspirational function to the

Government's commitment to redress the inequalities of the past". She recommended the formulation of child care policy and guidelines specific to street children.

This study acknowledged the national response in considering street children in the recent Children's Act No 38 of 2007. The Act brings child care legislation in line with all other international and local legislation as well as the Constitution's Bill of Rights, giving effect to the state's obligation to protect street children. Furthermore, this piece of legislation is crucial in recognizing not only street children, but shelter services as a primary response to cater for their needs. Shelters form the frontline of defense and are a safety net for these children. While policies serve to strengthen this safety net, the impact of policy at micro level is contingent on support and meaningful partnerships with systems on a macro level. The responsibility now rests with both organs of state and shelters to fulfill their respective obligatory roles to effectively translate policy into practice, in order to make services a reality for street children. The impact of the above aspects on services was considered in formulating recommendations.

4.3 RECOGNITION OF SHELTER SERVICES

A review of empirical studies and the literature (Kariuki, 2004; Osthus, 2009; Trent, 2006; Veeran, 1999) revealed that shelter services are a first response to the needs of street children. Shelter services existed long before any policies were implemented to guide or inform their interventions. The findings of the study highlighted the developments in shelters since they gained legal recognition in line with other Child and Youth Care Centres. The Children's Act No 38 of 2007 gives recognition to shelter services and provides the necessary legal framework for such services within the broader child and youth care system. The National Norms and Standards contained in the Act are essential to planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating services and programmes. Whilst the primary objective of Child and Youth Care Centres is "protective care" based on the medical model approach, the findings revealed that shelters' programmes were rendered within the broader context of the meso-environment in which the various symptoms manifested (ecosystem theory). Street children's connection to their environments and their decision not to leave the streets were the main concerns expressed. Most

programmes were community-based, working in the life space of the children and their environment. Mhone (2010:99) alluded to organizations "*blaming the victim"* to understand why children take to the streets with little or no understanding of the dynamics of their micro and macro environments that contributed to them leaving home. The ecosystems framework helps to frame this understanding, whilst structural theory suggests seeking solutions within the macro environment. This study found that shelters recognized the social, political and economic environment as having a profound impact in shaping the lives of street children. They attributed children leaving home to forces in their relationship within their micro-environment, namely, family, school and the immediate community which lacked the necessary support systems or posed a threat to their well-being, thereby using both ecosystemic and structural underpinnings to make sense of the phenomenon. The broader macro systems relating to lack of welfare support, protection and employment contributed to and destabilized relationships within the micro environment, negatively influencing their growth and development. Poverty was viewed as a major contributing factor. Varied interventions were adopted to meet the needs of children within the different contexts.

The broad range of programmes provided by shelters across the continuum of care distinguished shelter services from conventional Child and Youth Care Centre's services. However, challenges remained in determining the extent to which programmes are effectively implemented, given the inconsistencies in staffing, inadequate financial and other resources and the absence of benchmarks to measure success. To measure effectiveness and the success of programmes, minimum norms and standards need to be developed specifically for street children programmes across the continuum to guide practice.

According to McNamara (2006), the reference point for planning services and budgets should be the population for which it is intended. The demand for services should match estimates of the number of street children and these statistics should inform programmes and the budget. According to the National Department of Social Services, the estimated demand in 2011 for capacity was 1 757 at Drop-in-Centres and 4 423 at shelters (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010). This estimate appears conservative, given that the

national estimate of street children, outlined in Chapter 2, ranged from 9 000 to 10 000 in 1990, with an estimated 3 000 in the eThekweni Municipality in 2005 (eThekwini Municipality Integrated Development Plan Review (2005/2006). It should be noted that the figures are reported to be growing.

In order for the government to meet its obligations and fulfil its responsibilities at different levels, it requires reliable information to make decisions. The need remains for updated national statistics as well as an integrated national plan to be developed by the Departments of Social Development and Health, the Municipality, and Government on service delivery and funding specific to street children. Relevant government sectors at the local level should work collaboratively with shelters to develop services and programmes. The funding of programmes is discussed in detail under section 4.6.

4.4 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Factors relating to governance are controlled at the macro level, including national policies and government structures to which shelters are accountable. In addition, shelters are administrated by mechanisms within their own structural systems that govern leadership and accountability, which impact and influence organizational dynamics. “Law and theory dictate that the board has overall authority and control of its micro environment and responsible for the overall policies and strategic direction of the organization” (Mc Namara, 2006:3). The shelters viewed the South African political system and government structures with scepticism. They held the opinion that state governance was based on control and was not aligned with the core vision of social work in promoting social justice through policies (Weinberg, 2005). Government seems to have created structural barriers that perpetuate discrimination against the marginalized sectors of society. These arrangements allow a privileged few to maintain control and power at the expense of the oppressed (Payne, 2005) in this case, the children. Advocacy is necessary to influence decisions at a macro level and significantly impact both governance and services at the micro level within and between organizations.

It was found that all the shelters considered governance as a function carried out by the board and top management. Of concern was the finding that the boards constituted members that were not from the social services profession and were thus not adequately equipped to guide policy and process. In the case of Shelter C, both the board and top management were constituted of members that were not in the social services profession. Similarly, Mhone (2010:75) found that "while leaders are great custodians of visions and values of an organization, some do not have management skills to handle developing organizations". Unless informed by relevant knowledge and the training associated with the social services profession, strategic guidance will be largely ineffective and will not serve the interests of children. For boards and top management to make informed decisions, they need to consult relevant professionals as well as become conversant with the principles and teachings of the social services profession and relevant policies relating to service delivery. Shelter management must have strong knowledge of the vast array of rules and regulations governing welfare services, as well as the social services profession that impact the shelter's functioning and service delivery.

To be effective in strategic planning and guidance, it is recommended that boards and managers acquire knowledge and skills in the following key areas:

- Relevant local and international policies and guidelines for practice and directing interventions.
- Leadership in programme formulation and implementation and in directing the overall functioning and services of the organization.
- Strategic management skills to manage complex issues concerning human and other resources.

A major responsibility of the board is to set strategic goals for services and programmes. Notwithstanding the shelters' objectives, programmes must be informed by policy and aligned with national norms and standards. Shelters' objectives should reflect the aims of national government in service rendering. It is imperative that boards understand the basic principles of welfare programmes, their implementation and management. As non-profit organizations, shelters receive grants, subsidies and other forms of donations to

support their operations and are exempt from tax. These features are unique to non-profit organizations. This requires budgeting and accounting procedures in line with welfare policies that are not applicable in the corporate management sector.

It is recommended that Government take the initiative to formulate and implement relevant training programmes for shelters' boards and management staff through their regional and district offices to improve governance in the NGO welfare sector.

4.5 STAFFING

4.5.1 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

It was found that there is an overall shortage of adequately trained staff and that this undermined the quality of services. The situation was exacerbated by the high turnover of qualified social services professionals, which shelters attributed to low salaries and poor working conditions. To achieve transformation from the conventional medical model approach that focused primarily on an individual's immediate microsystem, to a structural approach that considers broader socio-economic factors impacting on individuals, consideration needs to be given to improving the composition of staff to include a broader spectrum of qualified personnel that could intervene at various specialist levels (ecosystems and structural theory).

There was an overreliance by these shelters on volunteerism, resulting in transitional staff. Volunteers served for limited periods of time and had to be constantly replaced. Notwithstanding the benefits of engaging volunteer services, the need remains to increase the number of full-time, qualified and trained staff to undertake primary responsibilities in respect of children in care. Volunteers at Shelters B and C largely assumed primary responsibilities in work with children; this is considered unethical in terms of the standards set by the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978. The Act is decisive on ethical practices guiding direct interventions with clients, with therapeutic services being the designated responsibility of the Social Worker. The researcher is of the view that volunteers should serve as support to full-time staff, assisting with all

programmes other than direct counselling of children. This will allow for some consistency and continuity of programmes, when volunteers leave.

The neglect of and compromised standards in existing services to street children is also discussed by Kariuki (2004), Trent (2006) and Ostus (2009) and reciprocally influences policy gaps. The Children's Act which guides the operation of shelters, does not provide clear guidelines on staffing; hence the differing standards and practices among the shelters in terms of qualifications and experience as well as ratio of staff to programmes. Except for the designated responsibilities of the Manager and the Social Worker, the Children's Act does not specify staffing norms for shelters. The inclusion of the term 'social service professionals' in the Act refers to a range of social services practitioners, which includes social workers and auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, early childhood development practitioners, community development workers and home-based carers. Whilst this may allow for flexibility in recruitment of staff and also reduce costs, it poses challenges in that, as in the case of social workers, there is a shortage of social services practitioners (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010). Furthermore, appointing staff is a challenge if managers do not have a clear understanding of the knowledge, skills and responsibilities associated with these different practitioners.

The following recommendations should favourably influence future initiatives to address the prevailing challenges associated with staffing at shelters:

- Norms and standards specific to each social services practitioner should regulate staff recruitment to avoid compromising the quality of the services rendered.
- Practitioners' qualifications and skills should be matched with specific activities.
- Standardized job descriptions should be developed in order to avoid confusion and inconsistencies in role functioning.
- Uniform remuneration packages specific to each social services professional would address salary anomalies.

The findings also revealed that the lack of state subsidies to fund staff salaries impacted negatively on the recruitment of staff, especially professional staff. Except for the Social

Worker's salary at Shelter A that was partly subsidized, the Shelters did not receive state funding to cover the cost of staff salaries. "For social workers in the NGO sector, pay packages and benefits have not changed in over 20 years" (Earle, 2008:70). The National Department of Social Development (DSD) implemented the Specific Dispensation for Social Service Occupations (2008) (OSD), as a recruitment and retention strategy. The strategy included a substantial increase in salaries for social workers, social auxiliary workers and community development workers within the government sector. In addition, the Department implemented a bursary scheme to increase the recruitment of entry grade social workers. The shelters in the study concurred that these initiatives exclusively benefitted state departments, creating inequalities in service delivery. The consequence was that NGOs lost staff to state departments due to the higher salaries offered in this sector and in some instances due to contractual agreements in respect of bursary recipients (Kasiram, 2010). Others, who do not secure state employment, seek alternatives, such as jobs overseas, part-time private practice and other part time initiatives. Kasiram's (2010) assertion was supported by Petty, a UNISA student co-ordinator (e-mail correspondence dated 04/04/2013) who stated that almost 50% of facilitators and student supervisors are in full-time employment. These findings were consistent with feedback from the shelters in the study. These government-created inequalities do not augur well for social service delivery in the NGO sector, as the turnover of social work staff compromises services. Tackling inequality is essentially a matter of "rooting out the mind-set that tolerates the various forms of inequality" (Ramphele, cited by Rudin, 2012: 1).

Shelters held the view that paying partial attention to and providing a piecemeal approach to addressing this issue, will only serve to perpetuate and worsen the situation. The Children's Act and the Social Development Strategic Plan 2010-2015 acknowledge that the majority of social services in South Africa are provided by NGOs. The logical conclusion is that the NGO sector would require a greater number of practitioners than the state welfare sector, which, according to shelters, is not the case.

Government's policies and practices that affect both service providers and recipients suggest that the rights of citizens to welfare services are not high on the agenda. Radical

steps to effectively transform services are essential to eradicate the historical pattern of exclusion of street children from essential services. The responsibility rests with the national government to abolish discriminatory practices and speedily address gaps, especially skills shortages, in the NGOs. The situation calls for a holistic approach. Firstly, consideration should be given to 100% funding of NGOs, so that their employees can be paid decent salaries and the NGOs can retain staff, be sustainable and expand into under-serviced areas. Secondly, the government bursary scheme should benefit both the state and NGO sector to prevent the historical practice of exclusivity in favour of the state sector. As NGOs, shelters should be respected as equal partners with state welfare services in all matters relating to service delivery.

4.5.2 TRAINING OF STAFF

Feedback from shelter Managers and staff revealed a limited understanding of the socio-economic, political and legislative processes impacting service delivery. Structural social work extends beyond conventional casework. It emphasizes the oppressive influence of socio-economic structures (Weinberg, 2005). The role of social services professionals in promoting social justice through social work practice requires that both Managers and staff recognize and understand the large-scale social processes negatively impacting on street children's personal and social lives. Notwithstanding their differentiated roles, management and staff need to adopt a uniform, integrated approach to planning and implementing programmes to address these issues. Practices should promote public goals in improving the welfare of individuals, families and communities as opposed to the perceived domination by Shelter Managers in using children as a vehicle to promote their agendas and donor ideologies (Mhone, 2010). Social services professionals need to draw on critical social work theories that offer alternate approaches in order to overcome oppression and domination (Weinberg, 2005). To eradicate the unjust practices of the past, interventions should embody a collective understanding of relevant aspects, which can only be achieved through conscious training and application, recommended by the researcher as a way forward.

The findings also revealed limited knowledge of the policies influencing services to children. None of the shelters in the study had access to any formal training on the Children's Act or relevant child care policies and guidelines. Training, which is integral to the implementation of the Act, was to be provided by the government at an estimated cost of between R110 million and R165 million, and spread over four years (Barberton, 2006). However, three years into its implementation, not much has been documented in the area of training. The training process needs to be fast-tracked in order to promote compliance and a uniform approach.

As custodians of policy, it is recommended that government agencies, in this instance the national Department of Social Development accepts full responsibility to train and equip NGOs such as shelters on legislation critical to service delivery. Furthermore, priority should be given to shelters accessing the Children's Act, the National Norms and Standards and the Financing Policy.

In order for shelters to achieve their overall objectives of protecting and promoting street children's rights to services, transformation towards structural social change both internally within the organization as well as externally at the various social levels is imperative. Shelters need to "take cognisance of the power dynamics within the organization" and engage in a more participatory approach on a micro level that "incorporates local knowledge and capacity" (Mhone, 2010:26). Of equal importance is advocacy for clients' rights, access to resources and services and promoting social change at a macro level. Social services professionals need to make the transition from the micro level work of improving the lives of street children to macro level engagements, altering our social systems and institutions through broad social action and advocacy (Hoffler & Clark, 2012).

The researcher's recommendation that shelters re-orientate practices from the traditional passive approach to more integrated, pro-active interventions towards social transformation, should be facilitated through education and training. The need remains for training institutions to address the gaps in education and training to equip social

services professional to engage at both the micro and macro levels critical to reform in policy and services.

The following critical focus areas for training were identified by the shelters:

- Change management course
- Overview of relevant child care legislation
- Budgeting
- National Norms and Standards
- Programme formulation
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Understanding of all relevant services and programmes
- Service Delivery Model (2005)
- Critical theories for practice

Whilst staff training in respect of policy, programme planning, implementation and evaluation remain imperative, the researcher identified other training gaps directly related to therapeutic interventions, especially that of managing children with difficult behaviour. Considering the concerns expressed by shelter staff, the researcher is of the view that training is vital in order that all staff have a uniform understanding of:

- What constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior
- The application of any discipline and consequences
- The impact of different forms of discipline on children
- The expected outcomes for the individual and the shelter

Children's behaviour needs to be understood within the context of the meso-system which influences behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The combined experiences of the child's family and the community especially that of the streets, on a social and economic level for survival, thus needs to be considered. Their behaviour must be understood against the background of their relationship with the streets and so may differ from the problematic behaviour manifestations of other children.

The researcher is of the opinion that, clear guidelines on the methods and expected outcomes of discipline will promote successful interventions. This will further allow for conformity as well as consistency in application by all staff. If shelters are to achieve positive outcomes in the management of the behaviour of the children in their care, a systematic, structured discipline programme associating consequences with specific behaviour needs to be developed and implemented.

One such set of guidelines that guides shelter services well, is the Girls and Boys Town, "Common Sense Parenting" and "Well Managed Classroom". These guidelines and models support the paradigm shift towards a developmental approach indicated in the Service Delivery Model (2005). They are based on the principles of self-development, self-control, and self-direction and use role modelling and praise as a primary method to correct and reinforce appropriate behaviour. The model provides specific application skills as well as evaluation tools to monitor staff's engagement with the children and to prevent any inappropriate discipline or abuse of children. Lee Loynes, Chief Executive Officer of Girls and Boys Town who initiated the programme, is hopeful that it will be adopted by the Department of Social Development and the education sector and that training in using the programme will be subsidized (www.girlsandboystown.org.).

Establishing and managing routines posed a major challenge for both the children and staff at all the shelters as the children found routine unsettling and tended to resist efforts by staff. Evident in the children's behaviour was the lack or absence of normal age-appropriate developmental opportunities. The associated behaviours accompanying their resistance needed to be managed simultaneously to encourage the child's development and adaptation. Developmental experts suggest that the "foundation for social competence and child adaptability is established within the first few years" (Keltner, cited by Wittig, 2005:7). Lundy (2002) asserted that routine and structure enhance children's ability to regulate emotions and control impulses. In this regard, shelter staff needs to have a uniform understanding and approach to developing and implementing age-appropriate discipline, routine (including independent daily living skills) and structure.
The harnessing of the diverse knowledge, skills and abilities of staff through relevant training and mentoring will enhance the shelters' attainment of goals and improve service

delivery. Shelters will be able to render programmes with positive outcomes. It is imperative that custodians of services are adequately equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to assess needs, and plan and implement appropriate programmes. This can only be achieved through training.

4.6 NATURE AND RANGE OF PROGRAMMES

It was found that the shelters offered a range of programmes on the continuum of care from early intervention, to prevention and, to an extent, statutory and after care. Government policy guiding social welfare programmes, contained in the following key general policy documents, was broad and vaguely defined:

- White Paper (1997)
- Revised Policy on Financial Awards (2011)
- Service Delivery Model (2005)
- Strategic Plan (2010-2015)

These policies do not sufficiently detail or clearly distinguish the nature of specific programmes to be rendered by shelters. The programmes offered by the shelters were therefore diversified and based on certain assumptions regarding their need and importance, as indicated in the following.

4.6.1 STATUTORY PROGRAMMES

The absence or lack of statutory services which was evident in two of the shelters was attributed to lack of funding and resources to sustain the programme. The Shelter Managers indicated that they employed entry grade social workers who were not adequately equipped to undertake statutory work. Shelters could not afford the cost of experienced social workers as they did not receive state funding for salaries. Furthermore, the DSD did not render the necessary support to shelters to manage this process. According to the Children's Act, the state has an obligation to provide statutory services, either directly or through NGO funding. The need remains for the government to

align the funding of shelters services with that of state organizations in such a manner that:

- The full-cost of services is met in accordance with prescribed norms and standards.
- Discriminatory practice in funding between NGOs and the government sector is eradicated.
- Children receive services that comply with the prescribed norms and standards.

There were no uniform criteria or minimum standards against which the success of the shelters' programmes could be measured. Assessment of outcomes was based on the individual shelters' views and were subjective. As with statutory services, the need remains for minimum standards to be implemented for critical programmes with target indicators that will guide allocation of funds, monitoring and evaluation. This will further ensure that the shelters' efforts are in keeping with the service principles outlined in the White Paper (1997).

The researcher recommends appropriate policy defining programme specification or standardization with accompanying criteria to guide critical programmes. The rationale for this recommendation is as follows:

- Addressing the lack of uniformity in the implementation of programmes
- Preventing ineffective implementation of policy
- Ensuring that Shelters render services in accordance with prescribed standards
- Accountability for providing services as prescribed in the Service Level Agreement or any contractual agreement
- Enhancing transformation of services
- Assisting with standardization of quality assurance systems for delivery of programmes
- Assisting with standardization of monitoring and evaluation tools

- Identifying, linking and partnering programmes to prevent duplication and multiple funding to various NGOs for the same programmes
- Serving as a means to promote intersectoral collaboration and strengthening partnerships between service providers. In so doing, duplication of services will be avoided and service delivery will be better co-ordinated and managed more effectively
- Being able to identify and determine priorities for service delivery
- Serving as a guide for uniform funding to avoid disparities in allocation of funds.

The above approach is expected to yield the following outcomes:

- Street children and affected communities will access services.
- Programmes will be appropriate and responsive to the range of cultural, social and economic conditions in communities.
- Programmes will be designed and implemented collaboratively by all stakeholders and be congruent with policy.
- Interventions will be viable and sustainable.
- Shelters will be accountable and there will be transparency at all levels.
- In keeping with the spirit of UBUNTU, service providers will adhere to the principle of caring for one another's well-being, strengthen bonds with one another and work collectively towards common goals.

Other statutory services identified by shelters that are discussed hereunder were:

- Reconstruction and re-unification services to children admitted at the shelters
- Community-based early intervention and prevention services
- Education and preparation for independent living

4.6.2 RECONSTRUCTION AND RE-UNIFICATION SERVICES TO CHILDREN ADMITTED AT THE SHELTERS

Reconstruction and re-unification services are integral to permanency planning for children admitted to shelters. Challenges were experienced as a result of the absence of immediate family and the barriers to finding suitable alternatives by virtue of the 'street child' label. Arising out of these concerns, the researcher proposes that trans-racial placements be considered. Prior to 1991, legislation precluded the trans-racial placement of children. The amendment of the Child Care Act No. 74 of 1983 in 1991 allowed for such placements. This provided alternate options in the absence of suitable family placements. Within a changing Child and Youth Care System, South Africans are viewed as a 'rainbow' family. The trend towards alternate trans-racial and transcultural placements is gaining momentum, currently extending across our country's borders.

For children to achieve a greater measure of success in permanency planning, shelters will need to shed their traditional practices, become more practical and embrace opportunities for trans-racial and transcultural hosting. However, consideration of such placements should always take the child's best interests into account and the child should be consulted.

To prevent challenges in permanency planning post removal, proactive interventions are needed to prevent children from entering the system, as this often results in children losing their families. To avoid the risk of detachment from their roots, all attempts should be made to work with at-risk individuals, families and significant others to support and capacitate them in their communities. Prevention and early intervention programmes should form an essential component of all shelters. These are discussed in the following section.

4.6.3 COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION SERVICES

The call by previous researchers for prevention and early intervention programmes to address the mounting needs of vulnerable children, families and communities, so as to prevent children taking to the street, is supported by the findings of the current study.

Shelters B and C engaged in a range of prevention and early intervention programmes aimed at educating and protecting children on the street as well as preserving families. These interventions were outlined in detail in chapter three. Prevention programmes need to be addressed within the context of poverty, unemployment, lack of economic empowerment, the breakdown of African family systems and the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. Programmes to address these social issues require resources, which was a major constraint to shelters rendering services at this level (structural theory). Shelters should address family difficulties at an early stage and work developmentally to change the circumstances in the community, which give rise to children turning to the streets. The White Paper (1997) addresses the role of the Department of Social Development in leading incentives that foster social development, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities. One recommendation to fulfil this obligation was creative and viable partnerships with non-profit organizations and the private business sector. The Children's Act places emphasis on prevention and early intervention programmes and obliges all role players to engage collaboratively and co-ordinate their services to ensure integrated service delivery to children. The importance of such collaboration is reiterated throughout this report.

4.6.4 EDUCATION AND PREPARATION FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

The findings revealed that the children presented with unique and varying educational needs. Almost 50% of the children had not been exposed to any formal schooling, were illiterate or experienced educational lags due to leaving school prematurely. The conventional schooling system did not cater for their needs and the bureaucracy around admissions made it virtually impossible for most of these children to access formal education. The schools did not consider these children's culture, language, or social experience. This is a significant omission (Beni'tez, 2011) that suggests the need for an

understanding of the unique needs of street children. The need remains to address this crisis, perpetuated by the western philosophies that dominate our systems, with implications for structural change.

The researcher suggests a more flexible and creative educational system that will break down bureaucratically administered traditional educational systems. To this end, Government is legally obliged to develop laws, policies, programmes and budgets in a way that advances the realization of the right of street children to educational opportunities appropriate to their needs. In light of the lack of suitable alternatives, recognition needs to be given to the shelters' informal initiatives that are relevant to the needs of these disadvantaged groups. A successful project of note was developed by Homestead in Cape Town (Cockburn, 2002). 'Learn to Live' is a comprehensive programme that meets children's individual needs. The programme has the following six components:

- A remedial programme, which prepares selected boys for re-entry into school
- A vocational training component, which teaches skills like candle making, making wire toys, screen printing, bicycle repairs and weaving
- The vocational training is linked to a small business venture in the informal sector
- Functional literacy and numeracy
- Life skills
- Enrichment programmes using art, music, drama and dance.

The implementation of similar suitable programmes to equip street children for their future roles in society is recommended. In addition, the following are proposed:

- Where possible, children should be integrated into the mainstream schooling system.
- Shelters should provide remedial education to assist with transition to the mainstream system.

- For children who cannot access mainstream education, shelters should implement programmes that are geared towards skills development and pre-vocational training to prepare children for independent living.
- Programmes should be developed to accommodate individual aspirations and interests. Programmes must be flexible.
- Skills training with basic literacy and numeracy as well as social skills should be included to enable children to cope independently on exiting the shelter.

4.6.5 INTEGRATION OF SERVICES

The shelters in the study offered multiple programmes on different levels of the continuum of care. The nature of the programmes remained consistent, but the frequency and duration fluctuated in accordance with human and financial resources. The programmes were rendered independent of one another in accordance with the shelters' objectives. There were no consultations with other shelters. Although there were no overt indications of conflict between the shelters or between the shelters and other NGOs, they were guarded in sharing their resources or information about their programmes with one another.

In the face of tough economic conditions and resource constraints, shelters, like many NGOs, have considered various sustainability options. These range from new fundraising ventures to venturing into new areas such as enterprise development. In some instances programmes have been curtailed. It was evident from the findings that the option of forming alliances or engaging collaboratively was not considered. Non-profit coalitions have been a topic of discussion for many years. Some organizations share knowledge and best practice to a certain extent, although brand identity, funding relationships and intellectual property are often jealously guarded (www.ngopulse.org). Collaborative initiatives need to be considered not only in response to financial constraints but, more importantly, as a way to harness scarce resources, knowledge and leadership to collectively address the needs of society. The researcher is of the view that this approach will provide opportunities for organizations operating in the same sector to strengthen initiatives in ways that improve their overall functioning. The effective implementation of

the Children's Act and the transformation of shelter services are contingent on collaboration and effective partnerships. The researcher supports Mhone's (2010: 128) recommendation that "organizational politics and conflicts be set aside to build institutional capacity that would foster positive programmes and services" and suggests an umbrella body such as a Street Children's Forum.

Responding to the interests and needs of street children, the eThekwini Municipality's Integrated Development Plan 2006/7, reiterated the need for an integrated, co-ordinated approach from all key role-players within the Municipality. It is therefore recommended that shelters, NGOs and the Department of Social Development as well as local municipalities engage as a collective whole in all aspects of service delivery to ensure holistic interventions. In addition, partnering is encouraged to offer scope for collaborative and creative initiatives and to produce structural changes to old ways of working (ecosystems and structural theory).

The researcher recommends linkages at different levels, namely:

- Between shelters, NGOs and other organizations with similar interests, to form networks and render collaborative interventions to avoid competition and duplication.
- A forum to include representatives from the private sector, local government, including the municipality, welfare, health, education and justice and the private sector, including individuals and business. The forum would serve as a platform for open discussions between the different sectors to address issues and promote co-operation as well as harness resources for more comprehensive and unified service delivery.
- Collaboration should not only be considered at the level of individual organizations but also at the level of corporate funders. To support effective social interventions, corporate funders need to consider funding effective collaborative programmes to the ultimate benefit of their beneficiaries.

A collaborative approach necessitates the creation of a co-ordinating mechanism, which the relevant stakeholders need to consider. The researcher is of the opinion that trained staff need to facilitate this process. This calls for flexibility in funding and support mechanisms to facilitate collaborative initiatives and sharing of resources. The biggest challenges to networking and joint initiatives are often merging organizational cultures and personalities, let alone leadership challenges. However, in a sector with scarce skills and resources to provide the required services, collaboration provides opportunities to strengthen resources and the sustainability of services for those whose lives depend on them.

4.7 FUNDING AND RESOURCES

One of the shelters in the study was adversely affected when it lost its annual funding of R1.4 million from the European Union to the Reconstruction and Development Programme in 1998. Four of its five programmes were terminated, leaving children and families destitute. It is critical that funding remains stable and consistent for the sustainability and success of programmes. Given that the bulk of the shelters' programmes were managed *via* donor funding and volunteerism, sustainability and the success of their programmes were unpredictable.

Budlender and Proudlock (2010:26) indicated that, despite the government's reliance on NGOs to deliver services and its recognition of the need for a more appropriate funding model to support institutional capacity to deliver quality services, the average transfer of funding for 2011/2012 was 51%. The costing of NGOs' services was not consistent with state-run welfare services in that the costing of the latter included variables such the range of programmes, capital/running expenses, professional/support staff, physical resources, services, training, transport, staffing; these were not considered for NGOs. Funding remained the primary stumbling block for programme implementation by NGOs.

For government to achieve its strategic objectives in delivering social welfare services in partnership with the NGO sector, it needs to improve its relationship with NGOs. One way of achieving this is to address the gaps in funding NGO services, as identified in the Report

of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on the revised Policy on Financial Awards (2011). The shift to programme financing, as envisaged by the policy, is supported by Barberton (2006). This needs to be fully implemented in order to minimize the negative influences of the private sector and the prevailing *status quo* of shelter programmes being geared towards meeting donor objectives. Fundamental to this process are mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure that funds are appropriately managed and that services meet required standards. However, despite the obligations placed on the State to prioritize expenditure on programmes aimed at giving effect to the rights of disenfranchised groups, there is no evidence of this shift occurring (Budlender & Proudlock, 2010:27).

The findings indicated a strong desire on the part of shelter staff to help children and families in distress, but they felt less effective than those employed by the DSD, as they lacked capacity and resources. They sometimes felt that they were applying band-aid services. Clearly, programmes were in constant jeopardy due to the uncertainty of donor support. Social workers and child care staff felt that government's policy on funding and the NGO subsidy system works against them. The apartheid divisions in welfare systems are further entrenched by unjust policies that continue to preserve the *status quo* of the poor majority, given that the majority of welfare services are delivered by NGOs. Although the study did not set out to investigate workplace stress, the injustices imposed through policies left staff, especially social workers and child care staff, feeling dissatisfied, demoralized and burnt out. The shelter A Manager remarked that the consequences were frequent staff absenteeism and a compromised quality of work.

Barberton (2006: 11) reiterates the concern that "under-funding of NGOs impact negatively on the quality of the services and ultimately on the sustainability of the NPOs' actual provision of services". If shelters are to be able to scale up services to meet demand, this requires increased institutional capacity that takes time to develop. Without the necessary financial resources, this may not be possible. The shift from state delivery of welfare services to neoliberal practices based on business principles of profit cannot be applied to NGO services as expected by government. In December 2008, former President Thabo Mbeki, along with other key proponents of neoliberalism, was ousted from

leadership, a victory for the masses led by the trade union movement. Whilst this political shift heralded changes in accessing rights to services such as the treatment of HIV/AIDS, the current leadership's faith in neoliberal models continues to impact negatively on welfare services (Ambramovitz, 2012).

The shared interests between NGOs, forums and volunteer bodies provide productive ground for social action aimed at policy change. The situation calls for renewed commitment to advocacy and social action to effect changes at a macro level within government institutions to hold them to their promises of serving the poor and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

4.8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The findings revealed that the shelters had different methods of monitoring and evaluating their overall services. Of the three shelters, only one engaged in regular, structured evaluation of their overall functioning, including services and programmes. The remaining two considered that their annual general meeting served an evaluative function. All the shelters were visited at least once a year by the Department of Social Services for a formal evaluation and review of their service level agreements.

Whilst policies provide frameworks that guide the implementation of services, they will not yield desired outcomes unless accompanied by leadership, direction and support through the monitoring and evaluation process. Under the old Act, monitoring and evaluation of Child and Youth Care Centres was complaints-driven. The Children's Act requires the government to be proactive in its monitoring and evaluation activities. It designates the Department of Social Development as the body responsible for monitoring, supervision and evaluation of services. For this process to be meaningful and effective the following should be considered:

- The personnel responsible should have the knowledge, skills and expertise required to assess, guide and facilitate compliance.

- Adherence to the requirements of the Children's Act. Section 211(1) (2) of the Act stipulates, "Within two years of registration, Shelters must undergo a quality assurance process. The quality assurance process must be repeated periodically, at intervals of not more than three years from the date on which the previous quality assurance process was finalised".

The Children's Act No. of 2005 calls for close monitoring of services and collaboration between the Department of Social Development and NGOs. If effectively managed, this process would address the current situation where shelters work independently, with minimal supervision, guidance and accountability. Furthermore, all service providers are under the obligation to work collaboratively and plan programmes through consultation in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and replication. In affording shelters legal status and measures to ensure effective monitoring, the mushrooming of shelters will be prevented and unscrupulous practices will be eradicated.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This study found that shelter services lacked uniformity and services were fragmented, with each service provider having their own procedures, styles and approaches. Whilst this was attributed to the lack of appropriate policy in the past, the necessary instruments are now in place to guide interventions. Social welfare policies were not fully adhered to. The need remains for local government departments and civil society to strengthen their efforts to work collaboratively in order to avoid piecemeal and fragmented services.

"One's commitment symbolizes the driving power or fuel to an engine, without which the engine may fail to move" (Kariuki, 2004:31). It is hoped that commitment from all stakeholders will fuel meaningful intervention so as to render existing deficiencies in services to street children, a thing of the past.

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