

P.O.Box 30162  
Mayville  
4058  
25 May 2006

The Director  
Themba Lesizwe  
P.O. Box 13244  
Hatfield  
0028

Dear Sir

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH THEMBA LESIZWE**  
**KWAZULU-NATAL AFFILIATES**

I am currently registered for a course work Masters Degree in Social Work (Clinical Practice) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. As part of my degree requirements I am expected to conduct an independent research project under the supervision of Professor Carmel Matthias. I am writing to ask for permission to conduct my study with 10 managers of Themba Lesizwe affiliates in KwaZulu/Natal.

The title of my research study is:-

***Responses of Non-Governmental Organisations to the Needs and Expectations of Volunteer Trauma Support Workers within the Victim Empowerment Sector in Kwazulu-Natal.***

This study aims to understand the challenges faced by NGOs in addressing the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. The research study will cover issues such as reasons why NGOs use volunteers, volunteer policies, volunteer workload, work environment, education and training for volunteers, volunteer care and support programmes and recommendations with regards to volunteer care policies and programmes.

Participants will be required to participate in an interview that will take approximately an hour. A tape recorder will be used to record the interviews so that the researcher can concentrate on listening rather than writing. The interviews will be held at a place comfortable/convenient to the participant. The researcher will request from managers volunteer policies to be analysed as a secondary source of data. All information from the interviews and the policy documents will remain confidential and will not be discussed with anyone else. The tapes will be destroyed after use. Participants' names and organisations will not be identified in the report.

Participating in this study will make a significant contribution to prevention of vicarious trauma in organizations, and well as developing appropriate care

and support programmes for optimum utilization and retention of volunteer services.

There will be no payments made for participating in the study. The participants have a right to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason.

Yours Faithfully

---

Vusi Khoza

**APPENDIX 2**

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

THEMBA



LESIZWE

July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006

Vusi Khoza  
P.O. Box 30162  
Mayville  
4058

Dear Vusi

**Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH THEMBA LESIZWE  
KWAZULU-NATAL AFFILIATES.**

Your request to conduct research amongst Themba Lesizwe affiliates re. the "*Responses Of Non-Governmental Organisations To The Needs And Expectation Of Trauma Support Workers Within The Victim Empowerment Sector In KwaZulu-Natal*" refers:-

As you know Themba Lesizwe is a national Network of victim empowerment organisations in South Africa. The network currently has more than 300 non-governmental and community-based affiliates working in the field of victim empowerment for victim of crime, violence, political and organised violence. The network acts as the largest grant-maker in the sector and supports the establishment of norms and standards for victims related services and skills interventions. It plays a very active role in developing advocacy, research, policy engagement, etc. For more information, please visit the following website: [www.thembalesizwe.co.za](http://www.thembalesizwe.co.za)

I herewith confirm that Themba Lesizwe grants its permission and endorses your proposed research as it would provide valuable information for the development of our Care for Caregiver programme.

Please note that Themba Lesizwe affiliates are all independent organisations and therefore still have the final say whether they want to participate in the research or not.

You are further encouraged to use the "Code of Ethics Relating to Social Science Research with Victims of Crime and Other Vulnerable Groups". This deals with issues such as *privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, foreseeable consequences of*

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Email: [info@thembalesizwe.co.za](mailto:info@thembalesizwe.co.za) Homepage: [www.thembalesizwe.co.za](http://www.thembalesizwe.co.za)

Themba Lesizwe is a joint programme of the European Union and the Centre for Study of Violence and reconciliation (CSVRI), the Kwa Zulu Natal Programme for survivors of Violence (KZN-PSV), the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture (TCSVT) and the National Peace Accord Trust (NPAT). It is funded by the European Commission under the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development.

An EU/SA Partnership



*research (including the potential to traumatize clients and the need to establish support systems) access to public information, copyright and the publication of results, as well as guidelines with regards to the rights and responsibilities of service providers and researchers (including students)*

Although the Code of Ethics was developed specifically for research with victims of crime and violence, it can also be used for research with other vulnerable client population where is a risk of re-victimisation and stigmatisation, e.g. in research with children and youth, people with HIV, mental disabilities, refugees and other victims of human rights violations.

Should you require further information, please contact the writer at [zuzelle@thembalesizwe.co.za](mailto:zuzelle@thembalesizwe.co.za)

AP 

**Zuzelle Pretorius**

**Deputy Director: Themba Lesizwe**

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Themba Lesizwe is a joint programme of the Fullhead Trust and the Centre for Justice, Gender and Reconciliation (CGJR), the Kwa-Zulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence (KZN-PSV), the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Abuse (TCSVA) and the National Peace Accord Trust (NPAT). It is funded by the European Commission under the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development.



**APPENDIX 3**

**INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

P.O.Box 30162  
Mayville  
4058

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: INFORMED CONSENT**

You are hereby invited to participate in a study of "*Responses Of Non-Governmental Organisations To The Needs And Expectation Of Volunteer Trauma Support Workers Within The Victim Empowerment Sector In Kwazulu-Natal*". This study aims to understand the challenges faced by NGOs in addressing the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. The research study will cover issues such as reasons why NGOs use volunteers, volunteer policies, volunteer workload, work environment, education and training for volunteers, volunteer care and support programmes and recommendations with regards to volunteer care policies and programmes.

Participants will be required to participate in an interview that will take approximately an hour. A tape recorder will be used to tape the interview so that the researcher can concentrate on listening rather than writing. The interviews will be held at place comfortable/convenient to the participant. The researcher will request your organisations volunteer policy to be analysed as a secondary source of data. All information from the interview and the policy document will remain confidential and will not be discussed with anyone else. The tapes will be destroyed after use. Participants' names and organisations will not be mentioned in the report.

Participating in this study will make a significant contribution to prevention of vicarious trauma in organizations, and well as developing appropriate care and support programmes for optimum utilization and retention of volunteer services.

There will be no payments made for participating in the study. The participants have a right to withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason.

I \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned hereby understand the contents and conditions of participating in this research.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on this day \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_  
year \_\_\_\_\_.

Yours Faithfully

Vusi Khoza \_\_\_\_\_

My contact number is: 082 213 8196

Supervisors' contact number: 031 260 7922

**APPENDIX 4**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE**



**Responses of Non-Governmental Organisations within To the Needs and Expectations of Volunteer Trauma Support Workers the Victim Empowerment Sector in KwaZulu-Natal**  
**Interview Schedule**

**1. Identifying details**

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	
<b>Date established</b>	
<b>No. of paid staff</b>	
<b>No. of volunteers</b>	
<b>Communities served</b>	
<b>Designation of the respondent</b>	

**2. Volunteerism**

- How does your organization define a volunteer?
- What is the profile of volunteers in your organization?
- What are the reasons for your organization using volunteers?
- Describe the work undertaken by volunteers in your organization.
- Who within the organization works with the volunteers? (Probe; duration of contact, frequency, whether it's individuals or team, and who supports and supervises volunteers)
- How are volunteers;
  - Recruited,
  - Oriented,
  - Trained,
  - Recognized,
  - Supervised and supported

**3. Impact of trauma support work on volunteers**

- How does trauma work affect your volunteers?
- What programmes are in place to deal with the impact of trauma work on volunteers?
- Can you give a description of those programmes
- Do volunteers have access to debriefing services?
- Has any research been undertaken with regards to the impact of trauma work on volunteers in this organization?

**4. Needs and expectations of volunteers**

- Has any research been undertaken with regards to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers?
- How does your organization respond to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers?

- What programmes are in place to address the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. (Obtain detailed description of programmes)
- If no programmes have been established, why not?

#### **5. Volunteer Policy**

- Does the organization have a volunteer policy?
- What are the components of this policy?
- What are the challenges and constraints in implementing this policy?

#### **6. Success and Challenges**

- What are some of the successes of your volunteer programme?
- What are the challenges of your volunteer programme?
- What is the volunteer turnover like in this organization?

#### **7. Recommendations**

- What are your recommendations with regards to volunteer care programmes and policies?
- Is there anything I haven't asked that you feel is important?

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Responses of Non-Governmental Organisations to the  
Needs and Expectations of Volunteer Trauma Support  
Workers within the Victim Empowerment Sector in  
KwaZulu-Natal**

**Richard Vusindaba Khoza**

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (Clinical Practice) in the  
School of Social Work and Community Development,  
Faculty of Humanities, Development and Social Sciences  
University of KwaZulu-Natal**

**16 January 2007**

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

The work described in this dissertation was carried out in the School of Social Work and Community Development, University of KwaZulu-Natal, from March 2006 to November 2006 under the supervision of Prof Carmel Matthias (Supervisor).

This study represents original work by the author and has not otherwise been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to any tertiary institution. Where use has been made of the work of others, it is duly acknowledged in the text.



.....  
Richard Vusindaba Khoza  
16 January 2007

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people to whom I am indebted and without whom this study would not have been completed. I would like to express my gratitude to the following people in particular:-

- I acknowledge and deeply appreciate the support I received from my supervisor, Prof Carmel Mathias for her wisdom, understanding, guidance and most especially her dedication. I also appreciate her for sacrificing part of her Christmas holidays to supervise my work.
- The participants of the study, for taking time from their busy schedules. Thank you.
- Siphamandla Dladla for transcribing the tapes. Thank you Spha.
- My family and friends for their unfailing love and support throughout the years.
- My colleagues at Themba Lesizwe especially Zuzelle Pretorius for encouragement and support.
- My “foster family” at Life Line Durban, thank you for your support and understanding.
- To the Almighty God.

## DEDICATION

**This study is dedicated to all volunteers.**

## ABSTRACT

The study examined the responses of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) within the victim empowerment sector in KwaZulu-Natal, to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. The objectives of the study were to determine whether or not NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and what challenges or constraints exist in providing such programmes. Systems and ecosystems theory were used as the theoretical framework guiding the study. Firstly, it provided a basis for understanding reciprocity between organisations and the environment. Secondly, it provided a framework for understanding the context in which volunteers and NGOs operate.

A qualitative approach was used. This allowed the researcher to gather in-depth data necessary for the study. The study made use of non-probability sampling. Ten organisations were purposively sampled for the study. These included two organisations from Pietermaritzburg, and eight organisations from Durban. All organisations are affiliated to the Themba Lesizwe network. Data was collected by use of in-depth interviews, using an interview guide. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

The results of the study have shown that, although volunteers were recruited to provide trauma support work, they were also providing generic work including community interventions. The organisations' major reasons for utilizing the services of volunteers were shortage of staff and lack of funding to employ full-time staff. The study found that whilst all organisations had care and support programmes in place to support volunteers, in the form of training, supervision and debriefing, these were uncoordinated and unstructured. The major finding of the study was that out of ten organisations, only one had a volunteer policy. All participants in the study agreed that there was a need for a volunteer policy and recommended that volunteer policies be developed.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### CONTEXTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

#### 1. Introduction

The year 2001 was declared the international year of the volunteer by the United Nations (Lombard and Modise, 2002). This declaration showed the significance of volunteerism. The aim of the international year of the volunteer was to enhance the “networking, facilitation, promotion and recognition of volunteers and their efforts” (Lombard and Modise, 2002: 1). According to Nassar-MacMillan and Borders (1999: 39) “94.2 million adult Americans or 51 % of the adult American public, volunteered in 1991. Volunteers contributed an average of 4.2 hours per week in 1991 and the amount of volunteer time equals 20.5 billion hours”.

South Africa has a history of relying on volunteers. This is deeply rooted in the history for the struggle for liberation and democracy. According to Volunteer Centre (2005) the first real empirical study on the value of volunteerism in South Africa demonstrated that volunteers are contributing in excess of five billion rands worth of free service in the non-profit sector, and that as many as 49% of the workforce in the non-profit sector are unpaid workers. The phenomenon of volunteerism has become increasingly important in South Africa, given the shortage of personnel in the human service professions. The high rate of unemployment, limited number of practicing social workers, coupled by the exodus of nurses immigrating to other countries, has given impetus for working with volunteers. The high rate of HIV/AIDS infection and the need for care and support in this sector, coupled by the high rate of violence and trauma in this country also gives impetus for the need for volunteer services.

There are no statistics available with regards to the number of volunteers within the trauma sector. However, the literature shows that a sizeable number of volunteers work within the HIV/AIDS sector (Akintola, 2004). According to Lombard and Modise (2002: 1) “while it is easy to recruit volunteers, it is difficult to retain them”. Questions that may be asked are why people volunteer, how volunteer services can be

retained, and how can NGOs provide care and support programmes and policies for volunteers.

South Africa has been historically ravaged by political violence, especially the province of KwaZulu-Natal, hence the need for volunteer trauma support workers. KwaZulu-Natal was worst hit by political violence in the 1980's and 90's (Higson-Smith, 2002), and currently it has the highest HIV infection rate in the country. Reeler (1998) noted that following periods of civil conflict, there is usually a dramatic increase in other forms of violence, in particular domestic violence, sexual violence, and child abuse. This gives impetus for the need for volunteers in this province. According to Moultrie (2004) mental health service providers cannot meet the need for trauma services, and she noted that there has been an increase in volunteer trauma support workers in South Africa.

The victim empowerment sector refers to the many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who work with victims and perpetrators with an aim of helping them overcome their traumatic experiences. Volunteer Trauma Support Workers (VTSW) are mostly women. Some of them have been exposed to multiple traumatic events; some come from communities with extreme levels of poverty and high levels of violence. Most of these VTSW join because they see this work as a stepping stone to future employment (Akintola, 2004). Hence there is a high turn over rate, where volunteers find better paying jobs. The challenge therefore is how to recruit, retain and develop these VTSW. According to Lombard and Modise (2002) both the organization and volunteers need to be clear about each other's expectations and this will have a lasting effect when it comes to retaining volunteers.

### **1.1. Problem Statement**

South African society has a history of volunteerism, yet few studies have been conducted on organisational responses to volunteer care and support programmes. Studies in South Africa have focused on volunteers especially in the HIV/AIDS sector (Richter, Durheim, Griesel and Solomon 1999, Akintola, 2004 and Mahilall, 2006). According to Moultrie (2004) few studies have focused on the work that is being

done by volunteers in the trauma sector. Bell, Kulkarni and Dalton (2003) noted that even internationally fewer studies have attempted to explore the responses of organisations to volunteer care and support programmes in terms of training, supervision, care and support programmes and policies. Therefore, there is a need for data on the type of care and support that is offered to volunteers in terms of, training, debriefing and supervision. The large numbers of volunteers in this sector gives impetus to document what is happening in this sector. The study therefore is crucial in providing greater understanding on whether or not NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and what challenges or constraints exist in providing such programmes. This greater understanding could then be translated into more holistic and effective management of volunteer programmes

## **1.2. Rationale**

This research study was conducted under the auspices of Themba Lesizwe network, (Themba Lesizwe was initially known as the South African Network of Trauma Service Providers). The purpose of the Themba Lesizwe network is to strengthen and consolidate the victim empowerment and trauma sector and to make trauma and mental health care services more accessible, affordable and professional throughout South Africa.

The researcher is employed by Themba Lesizwe to set up among other things a network of NGOs and CBOs in KwaZulu-Natal who are engaged in victim empowerment work. One of the objectives of the network is to build the capacity of network members to properly manage victim empowerment programs, effectively source and manage their resources and actively participate in the activities of the network (Terms of Reference for Themba Lesizwe Provincial Network, 2006). The researcher has received a number of requests from Themba Lesizwe affiliates in KwaZulu-Natal for the development and implementation of a caring for carers programme. The findings of this study will assist the researcher to develop policy guidelines on care and support programmes for volunteers.



### **1.3. Main aim of the research**

The main aim of the research was to determine how NGOs respond to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers.

### **1.4. Research Objectives**

The objectives of the research were as follows:-

- To determine whether or not NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and policies.
- To explore challenges faced by NGOs in providing such programmes.
- To formulate recommendations and guidelines with regards to providing volunteer care and support programmes and policies.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

Research questions were as follows:-

- Do NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and what forms do these take?
- Do NGOs have policies with regards to volunteer care and support?
- To what extent are volunteer care programmes and policies implemented?
- What are the constraints and challenges in providing such programmes?

### **1.6. Underlying assumptions**

The underlying assumptions of this study were as follows:

- NGOs have policies and programs in place to respond to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers.
- Whilst volunteer care programs and policies are in place, they are not implemented.
- NGOs do not have the capacity to provide care and support to volunteers.

### **1.7. Value of findings**

The findings of this study would have a multiplier effect. Firstly, the study would assist the researcher and Themba Lesizwe in understanding the constraints and challenges experienced by NGOs in responding to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. Secondly this would help Themba Lesizwe in developing an informed strategy on how to develop care and support programmes for volunteers. Thirdly, the findings of this study could encourage organisations to develop volunteer care and support programmes. Fourthly volunteers would benefit in that an enabling environment would be created for them to render their services. In addition, the findings could guide provincial and national government in the development of policies, legislation and programs to respond appropriately to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers. The gap in research on organisational support and care programmes for volunteers will be filled by the findings of the study. The study would hopefully encourage other research in the area, thereby contributing to the growing body of knowledge on organisational prevention of vicarious and secondary trauma among volunteers.

### **1.8. Theoretical framework guiding the study**

This research was informed by systems and ecosystems perspectives. The ecosystems perspective is influenced by ecology. Ecosystems theory “views the person as developing within a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surroundings environment” (Berk, 2001: 25). This approach moves away from linearity and focuses on the wholeness, and interdependence of living organisms. A system can be defined as a whole made up of mutually interdependent parts where a change in one part has an impact on the other parts (Potgieter, 1998). Systems theory merely represents a way of thinking and a way of understanding observations and the data that are elicited from observations. Individuals, families, small groups, organizations, communities, societies and cultures can be viewed as systems. Each of these entities affects the others.

The ecosystems model was pertinent in this study of organisational responses to volunteer care and support programmes for the following reasons. Firstly it provided a basis for understanding reciprocity between the organisations and the environment. Secondly it provided a framework for understanding the social, political, economic context in which volunteers and organisations operate.

According to Ortlepp and Friedman (2002: 213) "organizational behaviour, including trauma counseling in the work setting, can be analyzed and understood from a systems perspective". This study used the model developed by Nadler and Tushman (1981), which states that any organizational interventions are determined by the interaction of four key components, namely factors related to the individual, the task, and the formal and informal organizational arrangements. On the basis of this model of organizational behaviour, the study focused on organisational responses to volunteer care and support programmes in terms of what programmes exist and the constraints in providing such programmes.

Organisational responses to volunteer care and support programmes can be viewed ecosystemically in terms of three levels namely micro, mezzo and macro levels. The micro-level includes the volunteer, his/her family, peer groups and social groups (McAdoo and McAdoo, 1985). The micro level factors also refer to volunteer motivations and experiences of volunteering, and were not examined in this study. However the motivation to volunteer may be the result of numerous interacting factors such as altruism, sociability, and perception of volunteerism as a stepping stone to future employment. The mezzo level includes organisational structures that serve to connect micro systems of the volunteers. Poverty, unemployment, lack of supervision and support are factors that manifest at the mezzo level. The macro-level represents the ideology and social policies that impact on the volunteers experience. The contexts within which these systems operate are different for each organisation and individual volunteer. Issues, such as gender, socio-economic status, distribution of resources, race, and class characterize all levels.

According to Veeran (1999: 12) "a fundamental implication of the ecosystems perspective lies in its ability to add to the understanding of human development,

which is valuable to the policy maker and practitioner". Understanding the dynamics between the volunteer, the organisation, the community and the environment is necessary in order to develop effective and appropriate care and support programmes for volunteers.

Although the ecosystems framework has been criticized as being "liberally oriented in that it appears to support the "goodness of fit" approach" (Veeran, 1999: 12), the researcher is of the opinion that it provides an excellent framework for the holistic analysis of the organisational responses to volunteer care and support.

### **1.9 Operational definition of terms**

**Victim empowerment:** "Implies a certain philosophy, method or technique of handling victims in which it is accepted that, rather than being dependent on the expertise and assistance of a professional or someone else, all people have certain skills and competencies which, with the right assistance and /or support can assist individuals to help themselves or cope with an incident of victimization" (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 59).

**Victim empowerment sector:** Refers to all organizations that render services aimed at assisting victims of crime and violence with crisis intervention services, court support or public awareness campaigns, amongst others (Themba Lesizwe, 2005).

**Victim:** "Persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical and mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss and substantial impairment of their rights, through acts or omissions that are violations of National Criminal Law or internationally recognized norms relating to human rights" (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 59).

**Trauma:** Refers to "a highly distressed, but not necessarily unhealthy emotional state experienced by individuals or families, and arising from exposure to traumatic event" (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 56). It must be noted that trauma refers to an emotional state, not an actual event (Themba Lesizwe, 2005).

**Traumatic event:** Refers to when a “person experiences, witnesses or is confronted with an event involving actual or threatened death, serious injury or threat to bodily integrity of the self or others, and when the person responds with intense fear, helplessness or horror” (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 56).

**Trauma support:** “The provision of emotional first aid, practical assistance, psychological education and the mobilization of coping resources and social support. The aim of trauma support is to stabilize the person immediately after a traumatic event and to make appropriate referral” (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 57). A trauma support worker is a person who provides trauma support to victims as described above.

**Volunteer:** Refers to a “person who offers his/her service or who is recruited to render services usually without remuneration” (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 61).

### **1.10 Structure of the dissertation**

Chapter one, focuses on a broad overview of the study including the context of the study, problem statement, rationale for the study, main aim of the research, research objectives and questions, underlying assumptions, value of the study and the theoretical framework guiding the study

Chapter two presents the literature review, which incorporates both local and international research. The chapter discusses volunteerism, trauma and its impact on volunteer trauma support workers, and the South African victim empowerment programme.

Chapter three outlines the methodology used in the research process. The sampling method, procedure for collection of data and the analysis of the data are explained. Ethical considerations and the limitations of the study are discussed.

Chapter four provides a brief profile of each organisation. The main focus of this chapter is on the in-depth analysis and presentation of the findings

Chapter five presents conclusions and recommendations of the study. The main findings of the study are used to form the basis for the recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

According to Moultrie (2004) the impact of trauma work on volunteer trauma support workers has been under researched in South Africa. Furthermore, organizations working with volunteer trauma support workers have noted that it is difficult to retain these volunteers and it is difficult to understand “why they discontinue their services” (Lombard and Modise, 2002: 1). Research, both locally and internationally has focused on identifying sources of stress, burnout, (Maslach, 1993), vicarious and secondary traumatisation (McCann and Pearlman, 1990b; Pearlman and Saakvitne 1995a, 1995b) and coping and prevention (Yassen 1995, Pearlman and Saakvitne 1995, Conrad and Perry, 2000; Astin, 1997). Occupational stress has been examined in terms of characteristics of the organization that contributes to stress (Sze and Ivker, 1986). Organizational responses to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers have been an underresearched subject of scientific research (Ortlepp and Friedman, 2002 and Bell et al, 2003).

The literature review includes four major sections: volunteerism, management of volunteer programmes, trauma and its impact on volunteer trauma support workers, and the South African victim empowerment programme.

#### 2.1. Volunteers

A volunteer is someone who “gives a service to an individual or a group of people in need; carries the interest of the community at heart, wants to see positive changes taking place in the community and gives service out of his or her free will” (Volunteering (1999) cited in Lombard and Modise, 2002: 2). The core of volunteerism is the willingness to render services freely, without expecting any

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<sup>1</sup> Section of this chapter has been published in Khoza, V (2006) “Vicarious Trauma: The Impact of Caring and Self Care Strategies for Carers”. In Kasiram, M., Partab, R., and Dano, B. (2006) (eds) **HIV/AIDS in Africa, *The Not So Silent Presence***. Durban: Print Connection.

monetary rewards. According to Morris (1996) volunteerism is about helping people and providing services freely. Thompson (1995) confirmed that volunteers render services without pay and they do this of their free will. This section will focus on the reasons for volunteerism, reasons why NGOs use volunteers, recruitment of volunteers, capacity building and training of volunteers, and acknowledgment and recognition of volunteers.

### 2.1.1 Reasons for Volunteerism

Studies conducted by Akintola (2004), Lombard and Modise (2002) Gann (1996), Cuthbert (1992), Bennet (1987), and Blais, Corcoran, Lash, and Kelly, (1996) found that the reasons and the motivations for people to become volunteers were as follows: - **Pure altruism** or love for fellow human beings – defined as the inner need to become helpful to community or wanting to do something for others. **Sociability** – the need to affiliate in order to avoid loneliness. This includes wanting to meet people and making friends. **Unemployment** – people volunteer because there are no jobs. **Hope for future reward** - some people see volunteerism as a stepping stone to future employment. In addition to the above reasons, Akintola (2004) noted that religious considerations are one of the reasons why people become volunteers. He noted that some people volunteered because volunteerism was a good cause, and Godly thing to do. Hedley and Smith (1992) noted that previous exposure to traumatic events was one of the reasons why people volunteered. They noted that trauma survivors felt that by volunteering their services they would help others heal. Qureshi et al (1989) noted that some people volunteered in response to previously received help from others. According to Lombard and Modise (2002), it is vital for organisations to consider these reasons and motivational factors for volunteerism. They argued that retaining volunteers provided “stability and continuity to the organisation’s development and history” (Lombard and Modise: 2002; 3).

The following section will discuss why NGOs need volunteers.



### **2.1.2 Why do NGOs need volunteers?**

According to Kutrz and Burrows (1971) writing from the United States context, organisations used volunteers for the following reasons:- Enhancing quality of care – the more hands we have the better service and care we have for people. Combating depersonalisation- hospitals and welfare agencies can be very impersonal; volunteers spent time with people and gave a human face to the clients. Community responsibility – in order to reach more people, it makes sense to go where the people are and work with them in their community. Provision of complementary skills – volunteers acted as support systems to professionals.

Holme and Maizels (1978) writing from a British context found that organisations used volunteers in order to offer practical support. For example, volunteers can spend more time providing extra practical services for clients. They noted that volunteers established special relationships with their clients, thus providing resources. They found that volunteers relieved social workers by doing home visits. The community gained by having volunteers. Because most of the volunteers lived in these communities, they were accessible during times of emergencies, thus providing a continuum of care. The role of volunteers was to supplement, compliment, and support contributions made by salaried staff members.

According to Akintola (2004) writing from the South African HIV/AIDS context, the high rate of HIV/AIDS infection gave impetus for organisations to use volunteer care-givers. He noted that organizations could not cope with the demands placed upon them by the impact of HIV/AIDS. Moultrie (2004) writing from the victim empowerment context stated that high levels of violence and trauma in communities, and the shortage of personnel to render trauma services, gave impetus for organisations to call on volunteers to provide trauma support. The following section will look at the recruitment of volunteers.

### **2.1.3 Recruitment of Volunteers**

Research study findings confirm that volunteers must be properly recruited (Lombard and Modise, 2002). According to Lombard and Modise (2002: 4) recruiting means “getting the right person in the right job with the right skills at the right time”. Volunteers need to be recruited when there are positions for them to occupy (Blais et al, 1996, Labuschagne, 1991 and Larmer, 1996). The literature also stressed that organisations needed to demonstrate capacity to accommodate the volunteers. A proper needs assessment needed to be developed, and gaps to be identified which would be filled by volunteers. In this case volunteers would feel part of the organisation (Lombard and Modise, 2002).

Larmer (1996) proposed the following steps to be followed when recruiting volunteers: define the job, determine the job qualification, develop a list of potential candidates, interview the volunteer, and appoint the volunteer. According to Lombard and Modise (2002) volunteers need to be carefully recruited. Like salaried staff they need to be supported, supervised and rewarded for their hard work and they concluded that this would have a lasting effect in retaining them.

### **2.1.4 Orientation and training**

Like salaried staff, volunteers must be oriented into the new organisation and receive proper training into their job. Orientation is the process of integrating the volunteer into the new job. According to Kowi (1990) and Schindler (1987) orientation allowed volunteers to adapt easily to the organisation. Lombard and Modise (2002: 6) proposed the following purpose for orientation:

- “To facilitate knowledge and insight into the organisation and its policies and procedures,
- create a positive image of the organisation
- create a feeling of belonging
- diminish fear or apprehension
- assist newcomers to identify with the organisation and social environment
- stimulate acceptance of common goals”.

They suggested that this needed to be followed by ongoing in-house training and development (Lombard and Modise, 2002).

### **2.1.5 Recognition of volunteers**

Because volunteers work without pay, their recognition and incentives become vital. According to Lombard and Modise (2002: 7) “no matter how sincere the volunteer’s motives may be volunteers should receive recognition in some form or the other”. Recognition should be for the work done, and also acknowledging volunteers contribution to the organisation. This is crucial in keeping volunteers motivated, and retaining them. According to the Canadian Fundraiser (1994: 3) cited in Lombard and Modise (2002) there are two approaches to recognise volunteers, that is informal and formal methods. Informal rewards involve spontaneous acknowledgement of volunteers for the work well done. Formal rewards could be given during the annual general meeting in the form of prizes, medals and pins to mention a few. Recognition is very important in terms of boosting the volunteers self esteem and feeling of acceptance in the organisation. Lastly the literature confirms that supervision and evaluation of volunteers is essential (Morris, 1996).

### **2.1.6 Managing volunteer programmes**

The central idea of volunteer management theory is the volunteer management cycle (Volunteer Centre, 2005). The volunteer management cycle states that in order for volunteers to be properly managed the following steps must be followed,

- planning,
- recruitment,
- orientation and training,
- supervision and evaluation
- and recognition.

In addition, there is also a sixth step, which is preliminary to planning, that is the initial assessment, which allows the organisation to create a comprehensive view about the possibilities and capacities of the organisation to involve volunteers.

According to Lombard and Modise (2002: 2) “volunteers are vital to the success of many different kinds of organisations, yet often newcomers as well as long-time volunteers end up quitting because they do not feel valued”. They argued that “managing volunteers and ensuring that they are full-fledged contributors requires that organisations determine the motivational factors for volunteering” (Lombard and Modise, 2002: 2). NGOs need to be clear about the role of volunteers in their organisations; Lombard and Modise (2002: 4) noted that many volunteer programmes failed “because the role of volunteers in an agency and their relationship to paid staff has never been defined. This failure results in confusion for the volunteer and resentment on the part of paid staff”. To deal with this problem, Lombard and Modise (2002) proposed that roles need to be clearly defined and boundaries need to be set, and reasons why the organisation needed volunteers had to be clarified and communicated with the potential volunteer. By so doing this would “ensure that genuine reasons exist to utilise volunteers, as this will provide them with the challenge for continued success, and above all, the motivation to remain with the organisation Lombard and Modise” (2002: 4).

The following section describes trauma and its impact on volunteers.

## **2.2 Understanding trauma**

In 1987 the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM III) referred to trauma as an event beyond common human experience, which would be distressing for anyone. This view of trauma assumed that an environment where the traumatic event took place was outside of the normal range of human experiences, and that the traumatic exposure was usually a result of a single exposure, and that the traumatic event was unexpected. The reality in a South African context as in many developing countries and countries at war is that these assumptions are not true. Violence in South Africa is seen as normative rather than extraordinary (Evans and Swarts, 2000, Hember and Lewis, 1997). Traumatologists talk of multiple traumas, where a person has been exposed to more than one traumatic event (Sinani, 2003).

Currently trauma is used to refer to a person who has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following are present:

- 1) The person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.
- 2) The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror (DSM IV, 2000).

In DSM IV the definition of trauma was broadened to include the phrase "confronted with" which acknowledges the impact of trauma on the people who work with traumatized clients, such as police, nurses, social workers, and volunteer trauma support workers. Under this definition there is a shift from focusing on the objective traumatic event to focusing on individual's subjective understanding of the event (Moultrie, 2004). Under this definition it is not sufficient to confront the life threatening event; one also needs to experience the range of emotions including fear, horror or helplessness (Carlson and Ruzek, 2006). According to Moultrie (2004: 6) "trauma is thus commonly understood as a function of interaction between the objective event or set of events and the individual's subjective experience of these".

### **2.2.1 Impact of trauma on volunteer trauma support workers**

In several publications it has been suggested that helpers of traumatized clients can become traumatized themselves by the assistance they give to their clients. Volunteer trauma support workers are not immune to this impact. However, the researchers who have examined this issue do not all agree on what to call this phenomenon or how to define it. McCann and Pearlman (1990) introduced the concept of vicarious traumatisation and Figley (1995) called this process secondary traumatisation.

Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995a) described seven major schemas that are prone to being shattered by experiences of trauma: frame of reference about self and the world, trust, safety, power and control, independence, esteem, and intimacy.

According to Hesse (2002: 298) these “schemas include beliefs, assumptions, and expectations about the self, the world and enables people to make sense of both”. McCann and Pearlman (1990) noted that “traumatic experience can cause serious disruption of certain aspects of a person’s schema and that working with trauma survivors can have the same effects for therapists” cited in Hesse (2002: 298). Similarly Janoff-Bulman (1992) wrote about the theory of shattered assumptions. She argued that trauma shatters individuals’ basic assumptions about life. Specific assumptions affected include the belief in personal invulnerability, the perception of the world as meaningful and the perception of oneself as positive (Janoff-Bulman, 1992). She argued that we tend to operate with the assumption that if we are good, other people will be good to us and, that the world is a just and fair place. However exposure to trauma can shatter this assumption.

According to Moultrie (2004) any literature trying to understand the impact of trauma work on volunteer trauma support workers should take into account the social context in which these volunteers work. This includes the link between trauma and oppression in their lives. It is also important to understand the context of poverty, trauma and psychological disempowerment (Moultrie, 2004).

Volunteer trauma support workers may begin to have high levels of mistrust of people and society. Just as clients feel vulnerable, volunteer trauma support workers may also question their safety; “it can happen to me or my children”. Just as trauma impacts on the client’s self esteem, volunteers trauma support workers may also begin to question their ability to help people, and may even doubt their skills. This may result in volunteers becoming biased, judgmental, and partial. According to Herman (1992: 130) “the core experience of psychological trauma is disempowerment and disconnection from others. Recovery therefore is based upon the empowerment of survivors and the creation of new connections”. Herman (1992) made an important contribution in reminding trauma workers that the core of human assumptions is about relationship, empowerment and connectedness.

### **2.2.2 Risk factors to vicarious trauma**

Volunteer trauma support workers face many risks. According to Moultrie (2004: 4) by simply residing where they do, volunteer trauma support workers “are at high risk for primary traumatisation, as are their clients”. She argued that this “has implications for their roles as helpers and both their and their client’s approach to their work” (Moultrie, 2004: 4). Many volunteer trauma support workers have found effective tools for coping with the impact of working with trauma survivor. However prolonged exposure to clients with difficult problems takes its toll on volunteers at some point. It is important that volunteers are able to assess their own symptoms of distress, and take self-assessment and care seriously. Herman (1992) noted that working “with clients who have been traumatised has inevitable, long lasting, and often detrimental effect on therapists”. These reactions can be experienced by all counsellors, regardless of age, race, colour or level of training (Edlewich and Brodsky: 1980). However, the literature also noted that volunteer trauma support workers may be more vulnerable, because of their rescue fantasies about clients, unrealistic expectations, through becoming intensely preoccupied by specific clients and by being fearful of failing the client (South African Institute of Traumatic Stress Studies: 2005). This may result in over extending assistance at the expense of self (Moultrie: 2004).

A study conducted by Kassam-Adams (1995) of 100 psychotherapists, found that being female significantly predicted PTSD symptoms. It was also noted by Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995a) that members of marginalized groups were more vulnerable to vicarious trauma due to their tendency to identify with others who were also marginalized or victimized. Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995b) found that poverty, unemployment and previous exposure to trauma could also be risk factors to vicarious trauma.

### **2.2.3 Vicarious/ Secondary traumatisation**

This is a process whereby a counsellor becomes traumatised by hearing and working with traumatised clients. Counsellors may develop symptoms of Post

Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) including intrusion symptoms such as night mares, arousal symptoms such as anger and irritability, numbing symptoms such as avoiding conversations about the client's story, depersonalisation, flashbacks, and even suicidal ideation (Hodgekinson and Sherperd, 1994, O'Rear, 1992).

#### **2.2.4 Burnout**

All human beings experience stress or distress; it is somehow normal for many people living in a demanding society. According to Maslach and Leiter (1997) burnout is frequently related to workload, autonomy, control, institutional power, immediate work, community and reward. Other factors include role ambiguity and role conflict (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter: 2001). Richter et al (1999) found that burnout in South African lay HIV/AIDS counselors was associated with inadequate training, lack of appropriate institutional support and insufficient referral networks.

Counsellors may as a result feel guilty, have low energy levels, and the effects can be felt systemically, for example at work, home, as well as social and personal lives. Symptoms of burnout include among others extreme fatigue, insomnia, demotivation, anxiety, feeling overwhelmed and somatic symptoms such as headaches. Swartz and Gibson (2001) noted that volunteers working in South Africa were at risk of burnout due to lack of proper boundaries such as fixed working hours, which is commonly associated with professional mental health workers.

#### **2.2.5 Helper guilt**

Counsellors who are working with people sometimes feel guilt that they have not done enough to help their clients. They feel that because they are in a helping role, they should be able to make things better for the client. They may start thinking after the counselling, what else they could have done. They may feel incompetent and helpless. Some counsellors may even try to do extra things for the client for example providing food, making calls and giving gifts. It is important for counselors to realise that this is a normal and compassionate response. It means that they have done well



to empathise with the client's distress and have heard the person's own guilt about the event.

The Sinani handbook on trauma support workers (2003) makes the following suggestions on dealing with helper guilt. It is important to acknowledge that this is a healthy and compassionate response. It is important to realise that you have done well in empathising with the client. It is also important to speak to someone who is trustworthy, and talk about one's feelings of guilt. It is also important for counsellors to remind themselves that they cannot take the pain away from the client. Their role is to listen and allow for the release of some of the painful feelings. It is also important to check if the counsellor is feeling guilty because the client is feeling guilt. This process is also known as "transfer of feelings" (Sinani, 2003). It is important that counsellors try not to do too many extra things for the client, as this may end up disempowering the person and comforting the counselor.

## **2.2.6 Coping and Prevention**

The section that follows will discuss individual self care as well as organisational care.

### **2.2.6.1 Individual self care**

The literature suggests that individual coping and prevention should include a balance of work and play (Yassen, 1995, Pearlman and Sakvitne, 1995b, Conrad and Perry, 2000, Astin, 1997, Sinani, 2003, and Hesse, 2002). The same principles of helping clients apply to self-care. One of the most important steps is to talk about the details that are bothering the counsellor. Formal and informal debriefing can be useful. This means allowing space for one another to talk about the cases. Proper supervision with someone who is trustworthy can be extremely helpful. This means taking a risk to let supervision go deeper and explore the links between the cases and counsellor's own personal life.

Self-awareness is also very important. Volunteer counsellors should know what types of cases get to them the most. It is also equally important to know and recognize signs and symptoms of stress. Developing professional skills means learning more about the type of cases that you are working with. According to Sinani (2003) research shows that people with more experience and who read and learn more become less stressed. This is because they can make sense of what is happening and become less overwhelmed (Sinani: 2003).

Structured supervision is very helpful. In addition during supervision the supervisor can talk to the volunteer about a parallel process. A parallel process is used to mean the same dynamics which happens during client/counsellor relationship, may be played out in the supervisor /supervisee relationship. For example if a client was feeling hopeless and helpless, the supervisee may appear to be helpless and hopeless during supervision (Sinani: 2003). It is important for the supervisor to point out the supervisee that this is a parallel process. The supervisee is feeling hopeless and helpless because the client felt that way (Sinani: 2003).

Maintaining connections with normal people, means that counsellors should try not to isolate themselves from friends and family. When spending time with work friends, counselors should try to talk about things other than work. The key to self care is maintaining a balanced healthy lifestyle, where one's energy is spread into a variety of activities for example eating healthily.

Taking breaks is also very important. Experts talk of the need for 40 minutes of real relaxation a day (Sinani, 2003). If a counselor takes leave, it might be an idea not to go to the office, take calls, or check e-mails. Developing boundaries is also very important. One of the most important boundaries is to leave work files and materials at work. It might be useful as well to discourage clients from calling at home and try not to encourage colleagues to contact you after hours about work matters.

Resolution of own experiences of trauma and emotional issues is very important. Most counsellors have their own experiences of pain, and if these experiences are not resolved, it may impact on counselling. If counsellors are still struggling with

certain issues, it might be an idea to seek counselling first, before attempting to help others. Personal psychotherapy for counsellors is very helpful, and the literature seems to be in favour of psychotherapy (Pearlman and Saakvitne, 1995). Most writers also agreed that spirituality is very important. Becoming spiritually connected could include meditation and yoga, becoming part of a religious group, or participating in community activities (Pearlman and Saakvitne, 1995, and Yassen, 1995).

#### **2.2.6.2 Organisational care**

Bell et al (2003) noted that organizational responses to prevention of vicarious trauma should include the following; organizational culture, workload, work environment, education, group support, supervision, and resources for self care. According to Saakvitne and Pearlman (1996) organizational contexts can affect vicarious trauma, especially if counselors are treated with disrespect or if staff are not provided with the resources that they need to do their work. Sinani (2003) suggested the following steps for organizations caring for their trauma workers. At a staff level, colleagues can offer one another space for informal debriefing, for example if you know someone has been doing a lot of counselling, make an effort to ask how it went. Another important point is to respect one another's time off, this means that colleagues should not intrude on a colleague's time off unless it is a life and death matter. It is also helpful to keep an eye on one another's health and well being, for example if you notice someone is stressed or irritable, let them know you are concerned.

Literature also suggests that colleagues should make space for some stress release from colleagues (Sinani, 2003). For example if someone is a bit aggressive or rude towards you when they are clearly stressed, try not to react negatively. It might also be an idea to limit exposure to traumatised clients and rotating clients (Pearlman and Saakvitne, 1995). Another useful approach to prevention of secondary traumatization is intervision, (Groeneveld and Haans, 2000). Intervision is a process where counsellors come together and talk about their cases without the presence of the supervisor or senior management. The idea is for the counsellors to supervise and support one another without feeling concerned that their supervisors will judge them.

This approach also helps to normalise feelings that counsellors might be experiencing. It is also important to celebrate each others significant events for example birthdays, mother and father days.

The following describes the South African victim empowerment programme.

### **2.3 The South African Victim Empowerment Programme**

Recognizing the ripple effect of crime, in 1996 the South Africa government responded by initiating a range of policies, most notably the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) (Prozesky and Kotze, 1998, Stavrou, 1998, Moran, 2003). The NCPS advocates for “the paradigm shift from crime control to crime prevention, from crime as a security issue to crime as a social issue, a move from a state centered to a victim centered, restorative justice system and viewing safety as a basic right” (Prozesky and Kotze, 1998: 4).

One of the pillars of the NCPS is the victim empowerment programme. The purpose of the victim empowerment programme is to respond to the effect of crime on the victims (Snyman, 1998). The primary goal of the victim empowerment programme is to take issues of victims seriously, with the aim of reducing and preventing crime (Snyman, 1998). Victim empowerment is based on the premise that empowerment of victims “reduces secondary victimization, encourages cooperation with the criminal justice process, reinforces socially desired behaviour, acts as a deterrent to offenders or potential offenders and enhances public support for the criminal justice system” (Snyman, 1998: 44). The victim empowerment programme is led by the Department of Social Welfare, with close cooperation from other government departments such as South African Police Services, Correctional Services, Justice, Education, Safety and Security, and Health.

According to Stavrou (1998: 26) the victim empowerment programme defines “victims in the broad sense as persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or

substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are violations of national criminal laws or internationally recognized norms relating to human rights". The vision of the victim empowerment programme is a "peaceful society where the interests of victims are acknowledged and the balance between victims, communities and offenders is restored" (Stavrou, 1998: 26). According to Stavrou (1998: 26) the "aim of the victim empowerment programme is to provide supportive and coordinated services to victims of crime and abuse of power that is accessible, timeous and thorough, thus contributing to a sense of empowerment".

The victim empowerment approach is based on the belief that services to victims are fragmented. The focus of victim empowerment programme is to coordinate and consolidate "existing models, testing of new practices and the expansion and strengthening of existing services" (Prozesky and Kotze, 1998: 6). The approach of the victim empowerment program is to facilitate partnerships between government, non-governmental organizations, business, volunteers, academics and researchers (Prozesky and Kotze: 1998). The victim empowerment programme "strives towards developing a deeper knowledge of victim issues, strengthening resources, addressing the needs of victims, stimulating volunteers participation and taking the concerns of victims seriously" (Prozesky and Kotze:1998; 6).

According to (Holtman, 1998), the victim empowerment programme recognizes the rights of victims. These rights include:

- "The right to be treated with respect and dignity
- The right to offer information
- The right to receive information
- The right to legal advice
- The right to protection
- The right to restitution
- The right to compensation" (Holtman, 1998; 11)

In order for these rights to be implemented there is a need for awareness raising, education and training of all front-line workers including volunteers. According to Holtman (1998) front-line workers need to understand and practice victim

empowerment. The victim empowerment programme also proposes four basic levels of support to victims, these include offering emotional support, and this refers to listening to victims and offering psychological first aid (Stavrou, 1998). The second level of support is informational support. According to Stavrou (1998) victims are often in shock after the trauma and they need information about what is going to happen to them. The third level of support is offering immediate practical support, for example providing transport to victims' home, shelter, clothing and food to victims (Stavrou, 1998). The fourth level of support is networking support. This involves the provision of coordinated services "based on networking between the role players in the government and civil society on behalf of the victim/client" (Stavrou, 1998: 28). I want to argue that volunteer trauma support workers are better positioned to provide these four levels of basic trauma support as they are at the fore-front of service.

In spite of the existence of victim empowerment, victims are still being treated negatively by service providers (Stavrou, 1998, and Snyman, 1998). According to Kooverjee (1999), if empowerment of victims is to be achieved there needs to be training of all front-line workers. This training should also include volunteer trauma support workers. In principle, victim empowerment is a good approach. According to Kooverjee (1999), there are a number of issues that need to be addressed, and these include, lack of resources, in terms of funding, skills and human resources, lack of training for service providers including volunteers, unavailability and inaccessibility of service in rural areas. Moran (2004) has noted that it is clear that whilst the government has made progress in developing and implementing legislation, policies and strategies. However he argues that pieces of "legislation such as sexual offences and child justice legislation and policies such as the victim's charter and policy related to the compensation fund remain in the development stages" (Moran, 2004: 59). According to Moran (2004), another challenge facing the victim empowerment sector is the identification and sharing of best practice models.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The literature on volunteers confirmed that volunteers must be treated like salaried staff with a proper job description, they need to be supervised, and recognised for the good work they have done. NGOs need to manage volunteers appropriately and effectively. Expectations both of the volunteer and NGOs must be clearly stated. Volunteer trauma support workers in South Africa are likely to be vulnerable to exposure to primary and secondary traumatic stressors. Furthermore, they may be at risk for burnout due to accumulation of stressors they face in their work contexts. Victim empowerment does not only address issues of caring for survivors of violence but directly contributes towards prevention and control of crime. Empowerment of victims requires skilled and dedicated people, including volunteer trauma support workers. The chapter that follows discusses the methodology used in conducting this research study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3. Introduction**

This chapter provides details of the processes that were engaged in when the study was conducted. The research design, data collection method, the sampling technique, data analysis, validity and reliability, the limitations in research design and methodology, and the ethical considerations are discussed.

#### **3. 1 Research Method**

A qualitative method was used. There are many advantages to using qualitative methods. It is less restrictive and participants have an opportunity to expand further on their responses. Qualitative research is less concerned about testing hypotheses but rather more concerned with emerging themes and idiographic descriptions (Casell and Symon, 1995: 3). Qualitative methods allow for more flexibility in the research process. There is also flexibility on the part of the researcher, in terms of probing more, and expanding on emerging themes. By using a qualitative research method, the researcher was able to obtain rich and in-depth descriptions of data. This allowed the researcher to find themes and wider patterns and develop insights into the area of volunteerism. The qualitative method therefore permitted the researcher to obtain a better understanding of the area under study.

This research was undertaken with NGOs. According to Casell and Symon (1995: 4) qualitative research is more appropriate in organizations as it “allows the researcher to change the nature of his/her intervention as the research develops in response to the changing nature of the context”. In support for qualitative research in organizations, Casell and Symon (1995: 4) stated that “with respect to organizational research – where we always have to be responsive to the organizational circumstances, this is crucial”. Qualitative research methods ensure that the researcher adopts a holistic view of an organization (Bogdan and Tylor, 1975, Patton, 1980 as cited in Casell and Symon, 1995).



### 3. 2 Research design

The research was descriptive in nature. A descriptive design allowed the researcher to describe, record and report the phenomena being studied. Miller (1986) recommended a descriptive design when one aimed to describe a certain phenomenon, or aspect or ideas about an issue. Patton (1980) emphasised that the advantage of the descriptive design was that the reader was taken into the setting of the participants' lives. Descriptive designs are not concerned with causality; they merely attempt to describe phenomena. Generally descriptive studies help the researcher to answer specific questions. Mitchell and Jolley (1988: 281) stated that "although descriptive research cannot tell you whether one variable causes another, it may stimulate causal hypotheses". Descriptive studies report phenomena as objectively as possible. This kind of research design is concerned with the extent of the problem, for example, to what extent is volunteer care and support programmes implemented. Descriptive designs are useful because it paves the way for prediction (Mitchell and Jolley, 1988: 281).

### 3.3 Sampling

The researcher used non-probability sampling. Within non-probability sampling, purposive sampling was used. By implication then, the sample was not representative of the population. The results or findings obtained through a non-probability sampling methods typically could not be generalized to the population. When using purposive sampling the "criterion of selection is first laid down and items are selected in accordance with it" (Chaudhary, 1991: 61). The criteria for selection in this research study were follows:

- NGOs had to use the services of volunteers as trauma support workers.
- The number of volunteer trauma support workers had to total more than 10 in an organisation.
- NGOs had to be based in Durban and Pietermaritzburg,
- NGOs had to be affiliated to Themba Lesizwe.

The sample size was another factor to be considered. There are no hard and fast rules regarding the sample size. However, Seaberg (cited in Grinnell, 1988) stated that knowledge of the population size would also allow the researcher to postulate the sample size. It is generally accepted that the sample size should be one tenth of the population size (Grinnell: 1988). There are thirty affiliates of Themba Lesizwe in KwaZulu-Natal, therefore ten of those thirty affiliates seemed reasonable. Reamer (1998) recommended a larger sample as this would reduce sampling error and thereby increase the accuracy of the results. Bailey (1987) cautioned however, that a large sample necessitated a longer time to gather data. The disadvantage was that the data obtained might be less accurate because the information gathered at the beginning of the study might differ significantly from the information gathered at the end of the study. In addition, a larger sample also required many researchers or interviewers to collect the data. This might have forced the researcher to employ an interviewer, which in turn might have decreased the accuracy of the data collected. With this in mind a sample of ten organisations was agreed upon. This was acceptable for a qualitative study.

Organisations that were purposively selected were initially contacted to participate in the study through e-mail. In the e-mail a consent letter was attached. A consent letter appears in appendix three. These e-mails were followed by telephone calls to ascertain whether the e-mails were received and to set up an appointment to conduct the interviews. Six organisations contacted the researcher to confirm their participation in the study. However, numerous set backs were experienced when it came to setting up an appointment with them. The reason being, research participants were senior people in their organisations, and therefore, were extremely busy. Four organisations had to be contacted by the researcher again to check if they had received an invitation to participate in the study and to set up an appointment.

### **3.4 Data collection**

Two methods of data collection were planned:

#### **3.4.1. Secondary sources**

The researcher requested all policy documents relating to volunteers in the organizations. These were to be analysed as secondary sources of data. However, out of the ten organisations studied only one had a volunteer policy. This policy consisted of a paragraph which talked about volunteers in general, and the person interviewed reported that this paragraph was never implemented in the organisation.

#### **3.4.2 Primary sources**

Qualitative data was collected by means of a personally conducted semi-structured interview with managers of ten NGOs. An interview guide was used. Oakley (1981) described an interview schedule as a pseudo-conversation, where the success lies in conversation exchange, coupled with personality traits of both the interviewer and the interviewee. Oakley (1981) noted that establishing rapport is an essential tool in conducting a comfortable, yet valid and reliable interview. Semi-structured interviews are "conducted with no predetermined questions but which proceed on the basis on an interview guide" (Chuadhary, 1991: 70). This ensured that the same information was gathered from a number of different participants and allowed the interviewer flexibility to decide on the sequence and wording of the questions as the interview progressed. The interview guide allowed for comprehensive data to be collected in a systematic way for each participant. It also enabled the researcher to identify gaps in the data. Participants were made to feel comfortable, as the interview was conversational. Burns (2000) concurred that an interview that did not have structured questions allowed the researcher to tailor the questions so that they were appropriate for the participant and could document perspectives not envisaged by the researcher, thereby empowering the participant by validating his/her experience.

The flexibility of the semi-structured personally conducted interview schedule meant that the researcher was able to probe, adapt, develop, and generate questions as the interview progressed. Respondents were able to speak without writing and this was advantageous. The researcher felt that the response rate would have been low had he administered a self administered questionnaire.

The researcher was able to take note of any spontaneous behaviour that occurred and control the environment by ensuring that the interview took place in privacy. Ambiguities were minimised by stating questions as simply as possible and by avoiding double-barrelled questions. The researcher ensured that interviews took approximately an hour and a half. This was particularly important since research participants, were generally busy in their duties as senior members in their organisations. All interviews took place in the offices on the research participants.

There are many disadvantages of the semi-structured interview schedule. These types of interviews are time consuming and costly especially where expenses of travelling are involved. These disadvantages were countered by the fact that most interviews were held in Durban and the researcher is based in Durban. Where travelling to Pietermaritzburg was necessary, the researcher ensured that he arranged other business meetings on the same day to ensure cutting down on unnecessary travelling. Pietermaritzburg participants were interviewed on the same day. Another disadvantage of personally administered interviews is that the researcher might “experience “difficult” interviewees – defensive, hostile or unable/unwilling to focus on the research topic” (Cassell and Symon, 1995: 4). This limitation was counteracted by the fact that the researcher knew and had a relationship with all respondents. All the respondents were part of the Themba Lesizwe network. The researcher is a social worker and he used his interviewing skills to facilitate the process.

### 3.4.3 Data collection process

Participants were informed of the planned research via e-mail. This was followed by a telephone call to confirm receipt of e-mail and to set up an appointment date and time that was most suitable for the participants. All participants preferred to be interviewed in their offices. There were no disruptions during the interviews. This was due to the fact that participants were senior people, and therefore their privacy was respected. The researcher explained the reasons for the study, and possible benefits for the participants in participating in the study. In addition, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, the possibility of sharing the results and possible publication were discussed. The researcher used a tape recorder. Permission to tape record the interviews was requested. Various authors including Patton (1980) and Burns (2000) have supported tape recording interviews for several reasons. Tape recording increases the accuracy of data collection, and allows the interviewer to be more attentive to the participant as the interviewer did not have to write down responses, while responding appropriately to the participant. The interviews lasted for about an hour and a half. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher himself. Participants were requested to sign their consent to participate in the study. A copy of the consent letter appears in Appendix 3.

All questions were open-ended, which allowed the participants to respond in their own words, thus enabling the researcher to understand the world as seen by the participants. Open-ended questions are crucial in exploratory and descriptive research designs. Burns (2000) and Mark (1996) further supported this type of questioning as it allows more valid responses to be obtained from participants. The questions provided a frame of reference, with limited restraint on the participant's answers. Open-ended questions also allows for depth as well as flexibility, which was well suited to the qualitative research strategy. This form of questioning allowed the interviewer to probe and clarify participants' responses. Further, participants may provide unexpected responses that may lead to new research or theoretical explanations. The drawback of using open-ended questions is that they are more difficult to code, as the ranges of responses are much greater.

### 3.5. Data analysis

To analyse qualitative data, interviews were tape recorded and transcribed onto a computer diskette. The researcher was cautious about making his own interpretation of participants' responses. In order to overcome this, the researcher listened to the whole interview to gain a complete sense of the participant's responses and delineated these into units of meaning that appeared to be relevant to each research question.

The researcher listened to the tape recordings as soon as possible after the interview. This proved to be helpful for checking ambiguities in the data (Patton, 1980). Data were coded using a template approach. According to Crabtree and Miller (1992) cited in Cassell and Symon (1995: 26) "in the template approach, text is analysed through the use of an analysis guide or "codebook" consisting of a number of categories or themes relevant to the research question (s)". Data were analysed by identifying emerging themes and these themes were interpreted qualitatively. According to Cassell and Symon (1995: 26) the advantages of using a "codebook" are that it can be revised and modified "through exposure to textual data". In addition, indigenous and researcher-constructed categories were used to analyse the data. Marlow (1998) defined indigenous categories as those themes or patterns that seemed to recur from the data. Indigenous categories entailed seeing the world and the area of study from the participant's point of view.

The researcher also applied previously identified categories such as the needs and expectations of volunteers to the data. These are regarded as researcher constructed categories (Marlow, 1998). While bearing inter-participant variations in mind, the researcher wrote out a list of salient points, and placed a check on responses that had been repeated by other participants. Social work jargon was used by most participants, which necessitated that the researcher gained clarity on the meanings of these for each participant. Units of relevant meanings were then clustered together, thereby giving rise to themes or patterns from clusters. These were collated into a composite summary of all interviews.

### 3.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability basically means that the same questionnaire/ test can be administered to different people or the same people and produce the same results. It refers to the consistency of the measure. With regards to interview bias, Cassell and Symon (1995: 31) suggest two ways to deal with them; firstly they suggest that researchers should “explicitly recognize their presuppositions...and make a conscious effort to set these aside... secondly at a stage of coding for themes or categories, inter-rater comparisons can be used”. Emerging themes from the data analysis were verified independently by the university supervisor, in this way synchronic reliability of the coding procedures was determined.

On the surface the interview guide consisted of what Reamer (1998) called face validity. This meant that the interview guide measured, or in this case, obtained information about what it was supposed to – the responses of NGOs to the needs and expectations of volunteers. The interview guide also contained content validity in that all the relevant aspects of volunteer needs and expectations were included.

Validity can be ensured by building rapport (Goldstein, 1963 cited in Mariah, 2003). The researcher attempted to build rapport during the interview by assuring the participants of anonymity, confidentiality, explaining the value of the research study, and asking questions in a respectful manner. Reamer (1998) wrote of random error which refers to unpredictable ways in which errors in the research might occur. In this study random error was minimised by tape recording interviews, thereby increasing the reliability of the findings of the research study.

Validity means that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Similarly in qualitative research, a study is valid “if it truly examines the topic it claims to have examined” (Casell and Symon, 1995: 31). To ensure validity in qualitative studies, Casell and Symon (1995: 32) proposed “the involvement of other people – colleagues, interviewees, expert judges and so on”. In this research study validity was ensured by giving feedback to participants to see if indeed the findings

represented their views and by “seeking contradictions in the data” (Casell and Symon, 1995: 32). Struwig and Stead (2001) wrote about trustworthiness of the data as part of validity. In this research trustworthiness or validity was ensured by asking participants to comment on the interpretations of the researcher after the interviews had been completed (Struwig and Stead, 2001). The point of qualitative studies according to Rubin and Babbie (2005: 201) “is to study and describe things in such depth and detail, and from such multiple perspectives and meanings, that there is less need to worry about whether one particular measure really measures what it’s intended to measure”. In this study flexibility of the open-ended interview guide ensured that the researcher was able to probe deeper. Secondary analysis of NGO volunteer policy documents would have widened the method of data collection.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

In any type of social research participants should be ensured of confidentiality, informed consent and voluntary participation. The researcher complied with the code of ethics as prescribed by Themba Lesizwe. This code of ethics states that “research should always be conducted with sensitivity, respect for the dignity and self esteem of the individual and his/her human rights and honour and recognition of the authority of professional Codes relating to the specific discipline of the researcher” (Themba Lesizwe, 2005: 3).

Permission to tape record interviews so that accurate transcripts can be made was obtained from participants. The purpose of the study was explained verbally and in writing to management of participating NGOs. Participants were ensured that their names and that of their organisations would not be revealed in the research reports emanating from the project. The researcher would provide participating organizations with transcripts, and interpretations would be made available to participating NGOs. Furthermore a copy of the findings of the study would be made available to participating NGOs at the completion of the research. Permission was obtained from Themba Lesizwe to conduct this research with its affiliates. An informed consent



letter was issued to participants, which they signed prior to commencing with the interview.

One of the ethical considerations cited by Finkelhor, Hotaling and Yllo (1988), related to the remuneration of research participants. The literature is divided on this issue as some writers feel that participants should be compensated for their time, effort and risk, while others have stated that incentive of money or other incentives might be coercive and distort conditions of informed consent. In this study, the research participants were not offered any remuneration in exchange for their participation in this research and this was made explicit in the consent form they signed.

Although the researcher carefully considered ethical concerns, the possibility that certain issues were overlooked existed. In that case, the research study was supervised, to ensure that the study was carried out in accordance with strict ethical codes.

### **3.8 Potential limitations of the study**

As already stated under the section on sampling, the size and type of sampling used impacted on the generalisability of the study. The non-probability sampling techniques that were used made it difficult to determine how representative the sample was. The small sample had its own unique features, such as all affiliates were part of the Themba Lesizwe network and were based in KwaZulu-Natal, in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Such features limited the researcher's ability to generalize the findings of the study to the population. It must be noted that a smaller sample (10 organisations) did not necessarily limit the value of the study. As stated previously, qualitative data is more concerned about the richness of the data obtained than the number of participants. Furthermore it must be borne in mind that the study was descriptive in design. The aim of the study was not to provide a comprehensive understanding of responses of all NGOs to the needs and expectation of volunteers. The study, achieved its objective of gaining insights into how NGOs in KwaZulu-Natal respond to the needs and expectations of volunteers within the victim empowerment sector. The data obtained therefore represents one

perspective of Themba Lesizwe affiliates in KwaZulu-Natal. There is scope therefore for further research to be conducted to provide information and perspectives from other provinces and other networks.

## **CHAPTER FOUR DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4. Introduction**

In this chapter data analysis is presented and the findings are discussed. Before presenting this analysis of the research data, a profile of each participating organization is presented. A more detailed discussion on the identified themes is then presented. Names of the participating organizations have not been provided to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participating organizations.

### **4.1 Profiles of participating organizations**

The following section provides the profile of each participating organization and covers the following: date of the founding of the organization, the context of the organisation's work, number of paid staff, number of volunteers, services offered and lastly a comparison is made between the duties of volunteers and those of paid staff.

#### **Organisation One**

This organization was founded in 1970. The context of this organization's work is victim empowerment, community development and HIV/AIDS. The organization has 26 paid staff members and about 150 volunteers. The organization offers a 24 hour telephone counseling crisis line and also face-to-face counseling. In addition, the organization offers the following programmes/services: - emotional wellness, telephone counseling, face-to-face counseling, crisis response counseling, and trauma debriefing. The HIV/AIDS programmes provide voluntary counseling and testing, on-going counseling, support groups and training. The organization's gender wellness programme focuses on domestic violence, rape and youth at high risk. Paid staff run the day to day functions of the organization, and renders services in the other programmes. Volunteers are used mainly on the telephone crisis line, and for the training of other volunteers. The organization services the whole of eThekweni municipality.

## **Organisation Two**

This organization was founded in 1996. The context of this organisation's work is victim empowerment and HIV/AIDS work. The organization has 10 paid full-time staff members and fifteen volunteers. The organisation offers 24 hour victim empowerment crisis and trauma management, through a 24 hour telephone counseling. In addition, the organization has the following programmes: abuse and domestic violence programmes, rape survivor programmes, children's programmes, youth programmes, victim empowerment, and a shelter for abused women and children. Similar to organization one, the crisis line in this organization is run by volunteers. Volunteers also help with training other volunteers. This organization is relatively new, and does not yet have many volunteers. The organization services the following communities:- Pinetown, Marianridge, KwaNdengezi, and iNchanga.

## **Organisation Three**

This organization was founded in 1940. The context of the organisation's work is physical disability, victim empowerment and trauma work. It has 10 other branches in KwaZulu-Natal. Although the organization has ten other branches, at the head office where this interview was conducted, the office was run by thirteen paid staff members and ten volunteers. The organisation offers the following services to its clientele: - residential care facilities, outreach programmes, rehabilitation services to persons with disability in the form of physiotherapy, and chiropractics. The children's stimulation programmes focuses on creating opportunities for development and maximizing individual potential of children. Through its sheltered employment workshop, the organisation provides skills development to persons with disability in a protective and supportive environment. Unlike organization one and two, this organization started working with trauma support volunteers five years ago. The rationale for working with trauma support volunteers was due to the increase in trauma cases in the form of rape and abuse of persons with disability that was reported to the organization. There are ten trauma support volunteers, who are also health care workers, and are based in black communities which are serviced by the

organization. These volunteers are assisting social work staff with early identification of abuse cases and referral. The organization serves the whole of KwaZulu-Natal.

#### **Organisation Four**

This organization was founded in 1954. The context of this organisation's work is marriage and family work, victim empowerment and trauma counseling. It has 14 paid staff members and 150 volunteers. The following services are offered: community development, counseling, employee support services, training and education. Through counseling, the organisation helps individuals, families and groups with a wide range of services which include marriage preparation, marital and divorce counseling and family therapy. Divorce mediation, grief counseling and trauma debriefing are also offered. Similar to organization three, volunteers in this organization are largely black, and are community based. The work of these trauma volunteers includes intake, community outreach and awareness and training. These volunteers assist the social work staff with intake work, and referral. The organization started working with volunteers when there was a high turn over of social workers in the organization. The organisation serves the whole of the eThekweni region, and Maphumulo in the north of Durban.

#### **Organisation Five**

This organization was founded in 1910. The context of this organization's work is offender reintegration, victim empowerment, crime prevention and restorative justice work. The organization has 40 paid staff members and 28 volunteers. The core services of the organisation are provision of diversion, offender reintegration and supporting victims of crimes. The organisation lobbies and advocates for non custodial sentencing in order to reduce the number of people who are incarcerated for minor offences. In addition to the above, victim support services are rendered in the organization. While full-time staff members deal mainly with reintegration and restorative justice work, victim support services are rendered by volunteer trauma support workers in police stations and courts in and around the province. The

organization services the whole of KwaZulu-Natal province and it has three branches in Empangeni, Port Shepstone and Pietermaritzburg.

### **Organisation Six**

This organization was founded in 1986. The context of the organisation's work is victim empowerment and HIV/AIDS with a special focus on children. The organization has 22 paid staff and approximately 60 volunteers. The organization renders the following services:- preventive, educative, therapeutic and rehabilitative services to children and their families. The organization offers 24 hour crisis counseling and help line for children and adults with concerns about children. Preventive and educational programmes are offered in order to sensitize children and adults about abuse and to teach potential protective behaviors and life skills. Therapeutic services to abused children and their families, adult survivors of childhood abuse and children presenting with inappropriate sexual behaviours are offered in this organization. In addition to the above services the organization also offers court preparation and support programmes for children who are complainants in cases of abuse. The organization also does a lot of awareness raising as well as advocacy and lobbying on issues affecting children. Similar to organizations one and two, volunteer services in this organisation are used mainly to run the 24hour crisis line. While the focus in organization one is mainly adult, in organization two the focus is both adult and children, and in organization six, the focus is mainly on children. The organization services the whole of KwaZulu-Natal.

### **Organisation Seven**

Organisation seven was founded in 2001. The context of this organisation's work is HIV/AIDS with a special focus on orphaned and vulnerable children. The core services of this organization are child bereavement. The organisation aims to bring hope and healing through therapeutic interventions to bereaved, orphaned and vulnerable children in communities affected by death and loss. This is achieved by training "*abasizi bezingane*" child comforters (volunteers). The organization has nine paid staff and 40 volunteers. These volunteers are trained in skills to support

individual and groups of bereaved children, practical training skills on how to talk to children about death and dying and how to use basic play skills. Mentoring is offered to volunteers in order to help them work directly with children through support groups for bereaved and traumatised children. Most of the work in this organization is done by volunteers, and the nine staff members act as a support structure for the volunteers. Although the focus and context of the work of this organization is HIV/AIDS, the organization trained volunteers on trauma support work, to enable the volunteers to respond sensitively and appropriately to the needs of traumatized children and their families. Awareness presentations are done in target communities in order to increase the response to bereaved children. Volunteers from other organizations are also trained on working therapeutically with children. Similar to organization three and four, these volunteers are community based and are mainly black. The organization serves the following communities Swayimane, Willowvale, Ashdown and Elandskop.

### **Organisation Eight**

This organization was founded in 2001. The context of this organisation's work is victim empowerment and HIV/AIDS work. The organization offers shelter for abused women and children. The organization has six staff members and ten volunteers. This is the smallest organization, and it is still in its nascent stage of organizational development. The organisation is affiliated to a church-based NGO in Pietermaritzburg. Paid staff members are involved in the running of the shelter. Volunteer services are used for psycho-social support for victims as well as providing trauma support services to hospitals and police station. The organization operates within the uMsunduzi Municipality area.

### **Organisation Nine**

This organization was founded in 1940. The context of the organisation's work is victim empowerment, mental health and illness and community development work. The organization has the largest staff compliment. It has 203 paid full-time staff members and utilizes the services of 20 trauma support volunteers. There are other

categories of volunteers in this organization. The following services are offered in this organization; mental health and promotion programmes, which are aimed at empowering people to cope with different life stresses. Private sector employee programmes are offered through training, stress management, trauma debriefing and capacity building services to corporate and private sectors. The organization has eight residential care facilities offering profoundly handicapped children and adults with psychiatric illness and intellectual disability an opportunity to be nurtured in a safe and secure environment. Day care programmes are offered in nine centres where profoundly handicapped children who reside with their families receive stimulation and developmental re-education during the day. Social workers offer a range of service to families experiencing life crisis, suicide, rape, trauma, and counseling to cope with living with a person with an intellectual disability or persons suffering with psychiatric illness. In addition to the above services, protective employment in the form of skills training and manufacturing and sub-contract work is offered to people who suffer from psychiatric illness and intellectual disability. Similar to organization three, this organization started working with volunteer trauma support workers when it noticed an increase in rape and abuse cases of profoundly handicapped clients. Similar to organization two, three, four and seven, volunteers in this organization are all black, and are community based. They do outreach work for the social workers and assist the social workers by identifying cases which need social work interventions. Paid staff in this organization deals mainly with professional work. The organization services the whole of eThekweni municipality, Hammersdale, Maphumulo and uMzumbe.

### **Organisation Ten**

This organization was established in 1994. The context of this organisation's work is victim empowerment, peace building and community development work. The organization has 12 paid staff members and sixty trauma support volunteers. The organization believes that communities affected by violence such as political violence tend to experience high levels of other forms of violence for many years. The following services are offered in the organization; peace building, poverty alleviation and HIV/AIDS. The peace programmes tackles sensitive topics such as



reconciliation, trauma and gender issues. Poverty alleviation programmes involve leaders and community members in economic development. This includes income generating projects which are linked to local municipal economic development plans. It also includes career development to encourage youth and adults to find their personal career interests and further their education to reach these dreams. HIV and AIDS programmes help community based organisations to offer supportive services to people affected and infected by HIV and AIDS. Similar to organizations two, three, four, seven, and nine, volunteers in this organization are community based, and they assist paid staff by identifying trauma cases, provide trauma support, and refer cases for professional counseling to paid staff. Volunteers also assist with home visits and with running of support groups of survivors of trauma, with a co-facilitator who is a full-time staff member in this organization. The organization services the coastal and midlands areas of KwaZulu-Natal.

The following table provides a summary of the profiles of the organizations studied.

**Table 4.1: Profiles of the Organization**

<b>Name of Organisation</b>	<b>Context of work</b>	<b>Years in Existence</b>	<b>No. of Paid staff</b>	<b>No. of Volunteers</b>	<b>Communities Served</b>
Organisation One	Victim Empowerment, Community development and HIV/AIDS (Adults)	36	26	120 – 150	eThekwini Municipality
Organisation two	Victim Empowerment and HIV/AIDS	9	10	15	Marianridge, Ndengezi, Nchanga
Organisation Three	Disability, Victim Empowerment, trauma	65	13	10	eThekwini municipality
Organisation Four	Marriage and families, victim empowerment, trauma	52	14	150	Ethekwini region, Maphumulo
Organisation Five	Offender reintegration, Victim Empowerment	96	40	28	Whole of KZN
Organisation Six	Victim Empowerment, HIV/AIDS (Children)	20	22	40 - 60	Whole of KZN
Organisation Seven	HIV/AIDS (Orphans and vulnerable children)	6	9	40	Swayimane, Willowvale, Ashdown, Elandskop
Organisation Eight	Victim Empowerment and HIV/AIDS	5	6	10	Greater Msunduzi region
Organisation Nine	Victim Empowerment, Mental illness, community development	66	203	20	Ethekwini, Hammersdale, Maphumulo, uMzumbe
Organisation Ten	Victim Empowerment, Peace building and Community development	12	12	60	Durban Coastal and Pietermaritzburg midlands

#### 4.1.1 Discussion of the organizations studied

Ten organizations were studied. These organizations were operating in the greater Durban and Pietermaritzburg areas. Two organizations reported that they were servicing the whole of KwaZulu-Natal. Two organizations were in Pietermaritzburg. Three organizations had satellite offices around major towns in KwaZulu-Natal. Three organizations were Durban based. Another emerging trend was that with the new demarcations, most organizations delineated their boundaries based on the new demarcations, hence the talk of eThekweni Municipality.

Of the ten organizations studied, five were founded over thirty five years ago. These organizations were likely to have been formerly white managed NGO's. Five of these organizations had been founded between 1980 and 1999. This was a period of significant change in the history of South Africa. The national crime prevention strategy had been developed in 1998 which called for a greater response to the needs of victims, and gave birth to the concept of victim empowerment.

All ten organizations knew their client community very well. They all utilise volunteers in the delivery of services. For most of the organizations, the communities served were poor with most people finding it difficult to meet their basic needs. The organizations' target groups ranged from children (orphaned and vulnerable), to predominantly unemployed youth, disabled people, women and men.

Four organizations had only between 6 and 12 permanent staff members and correspondingly utilised the smallest number of volunteers, between 10 and 20. These organizations had similarities in that they were established around ten years ago. They were in their nascent stages of development. These organizations also did not utilise many volunteers. This was attributed to the lack of organizational capacity to manage volunteers. Two organizations whose core business was running a 24 hour crisis telephone counseling line had the highest number of volunteers.

Although organizations studied had different areas of focus and different target groups, they were all involved in victim empowerment work. The most notable point is that victim empowerment was not the core business of any of the organizations

studied; rather, victim empowerment was seen as overarching to all interventions within the organizations. For example, the core business of organization three was working with disability, but then found that they were dealing with a lot of victims of abuse and rape within the disability sector, hence the organization decided to include victim empowerment work in their intervention.

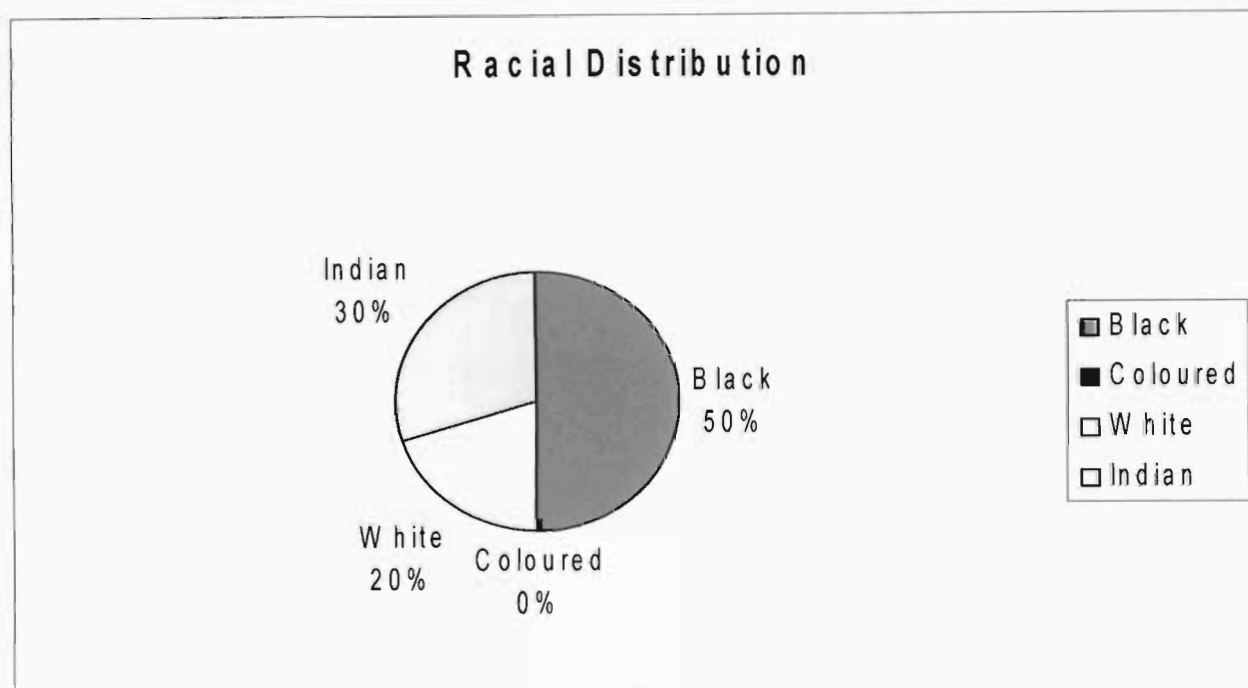
An interesting finding which emerged from this study is that although volunteers were recruited to do victim support work, they were actually doing generic work, ranging from home visits to community development work. Four organizations reported having started income generating projects since 1994. Another four organizations reported having mentored a group of volunteers into a fully fledged Community Based Organisation (CBO). This was seen as a good strategy for the sustainability of the organisations' impact in the community. While this was seen as a positive development, one organization reported that they have encountered difficulties with fundraising as most of the donors preferred to fund the CBOs directly, thus making it difficult for the mentoring NGO to raise funds.

#### **4.2. Demographic Data of Research Participants**

Research participants were senior staff members in their organizations. Seven participants were qualified social workers. Of these social workers, three were directors and four were senior social workers/managers. One participant who was a director had no background in the social sciences, she was an economist. One participant was a community development worker, and one participant was a volunteer coordinator. The choice of speaking to senior people was made on the basis that they would have more insight into the programme, and would have knowledge of the policies of the organization. However, this choice proved to be problematic when it came to setting appointments to conduct interviews, since many of the senior people were unavailable at the times suitable for the researcher. All ten research participants were females; and this can be attributed to the fact that more females are drawn into the human/social services professions.

The figure below presents sample distribution by race.

**Figure: 4.1: Sample distributions by race**



From the above graph on the racial distribution of the research participants, it can be seen that the sample consisted of three racial groups, African, Indian and White. The largest number of participants (50%) was African; this can be attributed to the transformation and changes in society and within the NGO sector of empowering the previously disadvantaged sector. Thirty percent of the research participants were Indian. Twenty percent of the research participants were White. These statistics concur with the demographics of the KwaZulu-Natal province where the majority are black isiZulu speaking people. There were no Coloured respondents in the sample.

### 4.3 Defining a volunteer

Participants were asked how they define the term “volunteer” in their organization. Three themes emerged out of their definitions. The first theme was about a person’s willingness to help. All ten participants responded in the manner mentioned below:-

***“Anybody that’s willing to help”***

The second theme was about non-remuneration of volunteers. All ten participants defined the volunteer as someone who renders his/her services without any expectations of payments. The following responses demonstrate this:-

***“A person who is not expecting anything for their time”.***

***“A volunteer is a person who gives his/her services without any payments or remuneration”.***

The third theme which emerged out the definitions related to giving something back to the community. Six participants felt that volunteers were offering their services for the benefit of their communities. The following response illustrates this:-

***“A volunteer is somebody who renders his/her services ....without an intention of getting employed in the process and also just to bring back something to his/her community”.***

The above themes can be summarized as follows. Volunteering is:-

- Done by choice (willingness to help/offer time)
- Without monetary rewards (not expecting anything in return)
- For the benefit of the community (to give something back to their communities).

Much of the understanding of the concept of volunteer is based on an understating that volunteerism is for free. This understanding of volunteerism becomes difficult in the South African context where there are high levels of poverty and unemployment. In fact the Volunteer Centre (2005) cautioned that “without monetary rewards” does not exclude the payment of out of pocket expenses, which are reimbursement for actual costs incurred rather than a reward. It is important to realize therefore that only two organizations felt that volunteers needed to be helped with transport costs. This was an indication that these organisations were aware of the context of poverty and where these volunteers were coming from. Other organizations felt that volunteers did not need any monetary rewards.

The issue of the “without monetary rewards” becomes a moral and ethical dilemma in the South Africa context where there are high levels of poverty and unemployment. One participant reported that they did pay their volunteers stipends at the end of the

month. From an ecosystems perspective this could be seen as promoting interconnectedness of systems and promoting the “goodness of fit” so that all systems work well together to create the whole. The issue of monetary rewards has a direct bearing on the retention of volunteers which will be discussed later. In summary therefore, a volunteer is a person who gives his/her services freely, without any expectation of remuneration and does this for his/her community.

#### **4.4 Profiles of volunteers**

In this section, the following themes will be discussed: - age; gender, race, and socio-economic status.

##### **4.4.1 Age**

All ten organisations reported that their volunteers were between the ages of 21 and 50 years old. In respect of ages of volunteers, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Mahilall (2006) who found that 80 % of participants in her study were between the ages of 31 to 40 years. Mahilall (2006) reasoned that most people in the age category of 31 to 40 years should be remuneratively employed. However, the reality of the South African context is that there are high levels of unemployment and poverty; therefore younger unemployed people may see volunteerism as a stepping stone to future employment.

##### **4.4.2 Gender**

The majority of volunteers were overwhelmingly women. All ten organisations confirmed this. The findings of this study in relation to gender are consistent with the findings of the studies conducted by Mahilall (2006), Akintola (2004), Ogden, Esim, and Grown (2004), Marenga (1995) and Ritcher et al (1999) who found that women practiced mainly as volunteers in the organisations they studied. These findings reflect the reality of the South African society and broader structural issues of patriarchy where women's status and roles are largely seen as that of helping and caring for others.

Three organizations reported that they had a few males in their volunteer programmes. For example two organisations reported that:-

***“We’ve got only two males”.***  
***“We’ve got women and a few men”.***

These findings are consistent with the findings of Mahilall (2006) and Akintola (2004) who also found that in their studies men were becoming involved as volunteers. Perhaps one of the reasons why there are few male volunteers in this sector is that men are usually perceived as perpetrators of violence and some organisations may be reluctant to take male volunteers for safety reasons. This point was explored with the participants and one participant reasoned that this is a reflection of the human service professions which is made up of predominantly women.

#### **4.4.3 Race**

Eight organizations reported that their volunteers were from all racial groups. There were Black, Coloured, Indian and White volunteers. Two organisations utilized services of all black volunteers. The racial profile of volunteers was also dependent on where the organization was located. For example an organisation which operates in the black township will have predominantly black volunteers, and an organisation which works in the city or suburbs will have racially mixed volunteers to cater for the diverse clientele. Therefore, the impact of apartheid in terms of the Group Areas Act is still evident. The following quote illustrates this:-

***“We have more Indians....and that’s also because we are situated in this area. It depends where we are situated, because in various branches we have different volunteers”.***

Six organisations reported that although volunteers represented all racial groups, there were salient yet unique features. For example, four organizations reported that they found White, Coloured and Indian volunteers were likely to be professionals, older or retired people, while black volunteers were relatively younger, or out of school youth. One organisation also reported that young White, Coloured and Indian psychology and social work students were likely to volunteer in order to gain experience. The following quote illustrates this point:-

***“Our black volunteers are young, and are out of school, while our white volunteers are older people, or just retired people who are looking for something to do. We have also found that***



***White and Indian students volunteer their services when they graduate with a social work or psychology degree just to gain employment, and then when they get married they leave”.***

Perhaps the reason for this is that younger black volunteers use volunteerism as a stepping stone to future employment. This becomes a challenge when it comes to retention of volunteer services.

All ten organisations reported that their black volunteers were IsiZulu speaking. This is a reflection of the province of KwaZulu-Natal where the majority of the black population are IsiZulu speaking. This is also linked to the homeland system which was implemented by the apartheid government. Similar findings were noted by Mahilall (2006), who found that all the volunteers in her study were isiZulu speaking.

#### **4.4.4 Socio-economic status**

Socio-economic inequalities were reflected in this study. A theme emerged in this study, which indicated that black volunteers were likely to be poor and unskilled. All ten organisations reported that they found that the needs of these volunteers varied significantly and the organisations treated these volunteers differently. The following quotes illustrate this:-

***“We charge our white volunteers for attending training... and we do the training free for our black volunteers”.***

***“We provide them (black volunteers) with bus fare and lunch... we supply them with money for refreshments, and transport”.***

***“Our black volunteers are the poorest”.***

All ten participants reported that black volunteers were from poverty stricken communities; while White, Coloured and Indian volunteers came from relatively affluent backgrounds. Therefore, the volunteers' motivations for volunteering were likely to be different, with black volunteers volunteering in order to be able to get employment. Black volunteers were given bus fare and stipends at the end of the month for the work they had done, while other volunteers were not getting any stipends. The reason for this is that other volunteers were well off as compared to their black counterparts. This understanding of macro issues that impact on the volunteers is seen as crucial from the ecosystems perspective, so that the volunteer

systems function properly. These findings are confirmed by the findings of Mahilall (2006) who argued that white urban dwellers were the wealthiest, while black rural and township dwellers tended to be the poorest. According to Marenga (1995) rural black women were a particularly vulnerable group of workers.

#### 4.5 The work undertaken by volunteers.

Although volunteer services were accessed for victim empowerment work, this study found that organizations were using volunteers in a number of ways.

The table below presents the summary of work undertaken by volunteers:

**Table 4.2: Types of work undertaken by volunteers**

Type of work undertaken by volunteers	No of organisations
Counseling face-to-face	8
Home based care	6
Facilitating psychosocial groups	5
Crises intervention	5
Caring for children	4
Helping with birth registration and social security grants	4
Counseling-telephone	3
Training	6
Development work	8
Providing practical assistance	3

*NB: Multiple responses allowed.*

Table 4.2 presents a summary of the activities undertaken by volunteers. This study found that volunteers were involved in wide range of community work interventions. These ranged from helping community members with accessing birth registration and social security grants. Volunteers were also involved in offering trauma support to traumatized clients, counseling trauma victims, manning the crisis telephone line as well as providing face-to-face interviews with clients. Contacts with clients were usually on a once off basis, and the referral would be made to the professional social worker. Four organizations stated that they used volunteers as contacts or links between the organization and the community. Volunteers would bring issues from the community to the organization and vice versa. In line with NGO work, this study

found that volunteers were not only doing victim support work. They were involved in a variety of front-line work, ranging from crisis work to more developmental work.

These findings are consistent with the findings of Volunteer Centre (2005), Akintola (2004), Mahilall (2006), Moultrie (2004) and Ritcher et al (1999) who also found that volunteers were involved in a number of activities including home-based care for HIV/AIDS patients, counseling rape survivors and domestic violence, to mention a few. In terms of the racial division of labour, a theme emerged in this study that black volunteers were likely to be involved in community based interventions including home based care work, community outreach, home visits, victim support skills, while White, Coloured and Indian volunteers were likely to be involved in telephone and crisis management activities and training within the premises of organisations where they volunteered. It also emerged that because black volunteers were based in communities and were known to communities, they were likely to be at risk of being attacked or to being harmed. As one participant noted:-

*“... they are attacked by people in the community. Sometimes they get robbed off their money and sometimes family members chase them away...they say we don't want you here”.*

This finding is consistent with the findings of Ritcher et al (1999) who found that volunteers were at risk of being attacked by community members where they worked. This was attributed to the lack of support and understanding of the role of volunteers by community members. The ecosystems perspective would be helpful in thinking about how the community system, the organisations, and volunteers can work together for the betterment of the communities served. This lack of connectedness in the systems is seen as a gap from the systems framework which needs to be corrected in order for the systems to work well.

#### **4. 6 Reasons for utilizing volunteer services**

Most of the organizations reported that their programmes have been developed with the intent to uplift and transform the living standards of the people they served. Therefore the aims of utilizing volunteers will be discussed according to the following themes:- transfer of skills and sustainability of impact, improvement and extension of services, and financial constraints to employ new staff.

#### **4.6.1 Transfer of skills and sustainability of impact**

Sustainability of impact was seen as crucial as volunteers were based in the communities. Four organisations talked about the need to sustain their impact in the communities. Utilizing volunteer services was seen as a good strategy to sustain the impact and transfer skills to the community, so that the project would continue to run even if the organization terminated its services in the community. The following quote illustrates this point:-

***“It is because we understand that we are not based in those communities, we are there for a short while and need to leave. So if we leave without having imparted our skills to the community members we have not done a good job”.***

This finding is consistent with the findings of Wint and Khoza (1999) who found that because of the skills shortages in the communities organisations started utilising volunteers in order to transfer skills in the communities where they were based. Wint and Khoza (1999) reasoned that lack of skills was a result of more qualified and active people leaving communities and the country.

#### **4.6.2 Improvement and extension of services**

Three organizations said that they utilized volunteer services for the improvement and extension of services. This was consistent with the findings of Holme and Maizels (1978) who also found that volunteers provided special resources and complimented the social worker’s duties. Studies conducted by Kutrz and Burrows (1971), Holme and Maizels (1978), Ritcher et al (1999), Akintola (2004) and Moultrie (2004) also found that organisations utilized volunteers services in order to extend their services and reach more people. The following quotes illustrate this:-

***“In order to render effective service delivery, to reach the communities that we’ve been unable to reach, we’ve got volunteers that are assisting us to reach those communities”.***

***“We do not have the capacity to see clients face to face. Our volunteers run the crisis line, and they also offer debriefing and run support groups for our clients. We realized that we couldn’t do this work alone”.***

#### **4.6.3 Financial constraints to employ staff**

Six organizations stated that lack of funding to employ more staff was one of the reasons for utilizing volunteer services. Funding crises within the NGO sector was highlighted as one of the reasons for using volunteers. The following quote illustrate this:-

*“The organisation does not have enough resources and enough money to pay people”.*

This was echoed by Akintola (2004) who also found that because of the shortage of funds in the HIV/AIDS sector more organisations were utilizing volunteer services. A study conducted by Moultrie (2004) found that volunteers were used to do trauma work in schools because the organisations did not have the capacity to employ staff to do that work. Akintola (2004) also noted that the demands placed by increased HIV/AIDS infection meant that more volunteers were needed to work with infected and affected people. Moultrie (2004) also reasoned that the high rate of violence and trauma in this country made it impossible for professionals to respond adequately to traumatized people, therefore there was a need to utilize services of volunteers.

#### **4. 7 Recruitment of volunteers**

Nine out of ten organisations studied reported that they did not actively recruit volunteers. The following quote confirms this:-

*“We never recruited them; they recruited themselves “.*

Reasons given were that people became aware of the organization and their needs through media and through workshops run in the community.

This study also found that three recruitment strategies were used by one organization: media, awareness raising workshops, and indirect recruitment.

With regards to using the media, one organization said that they were using the media, to advertise for volunteers. The response was as follows:-

*“We advertise through papers in the community, and also the big papers like Ilanga, Isolezwe and UmAfrika”*

Awareness raising workshops were used as a recruiting strategy. For example one participant stated:-

*“We do awareness raising in communities, and then people come to volunteer”.*

Organisation six said that they were recruiting through awareness raising, where they would talk about child bereavement, and then ask for volunteers who are interested in working with bereaved children.

With regards to indirect recruitment, the following strategies were used by four organisations. Firstly recruitment was done through community leaders, for example organisation four said that they recruited through community leaders. Their strategy was to address community leadership about the organisation’s services in the area, and then ask community leaders to recommend volunteers. Organisation nine said that they were approached by the community to work with their volunteers. Organisation ten’s strategy was to ask the community to recommend volunteers for them. Organisation six said that they asked another organisation to recruit volunteers for them.

Ritcher et al (1999) warned that indirect recruitment and referrals of potential volunteers must be discouraged, as valuable training resources are wasted in attempting to develop a person who would otherwise be better suited to other forms of human or social service delivery. Another implication is high drop out rates as potential recruits may realize that volunteerism is not what they hoped it would be. To address this challenge, Ritcher et al (1999) suggests that a minimum standard policy for recruitment and selection of volunteers be developed to deal with this challenge.

#### **4.8 Training of volunteers**

All ten organisations reported that they trained their volunteers. The table below indicates the type of training offered to volunteers:

**Table 4.3: Types of training offered to volunteers**

Topic	No. of organizations
HIV/AIDS	6
Victim Support Work Skills	6
Child abuse and neglect	5
Understanding children	5
Working therapeutically with children	4
Grief and bereavement	3
Trauma management and counseling	3
Self care	3
Court preparation	2
Play skills	2

*NB: Multiple responses allowed*

The table above indicates that six organisations were training their volunteers on HIV/AIDS and victim support, the reasons being that volunteers were on the front-line, they were constantly exposed to HIV/AIDS and trauma victims, and the fact that some people may have contracted HIV through violence and trauma. Five organisations trained their volunteers on working with children; this was emphasized as most volunteers were encountering children as victims in their daily activities. Three organisations trained their volunteers on trauma management skills. The reason for this was that volunteers were not properly equipped to deal with complex trauma issues; their role was more on supporting victims and offering psychological first aid. McSweeney and Alexander (1996) agreed that volunteers must be trained in the area of their required performance.

With regards to the style of training, organisations reported that their training approaches were participatory and experiential in nature, which was in line with adult basic education principles. Ritcher et al (1999) similarly found that the training of volunteers in her study was participatory. There was an overall common understanding amongst all participants that volunteers needed to deal with their problems first prior to helping others. This was seen as crucial as volunteers were

likely to impose their own issues from counseling. These findings are consistent with the findings of Moultrie (2004) and Mahilall (2006), who also found that volunteers were given the opportunity to deal with their problems prior to working with others, and this was seen as helping the volunteer to grow into a better person (Mahilall, 2006). The quote below illustrates this belief:

*“....on the first day we deal with their own grief first before, they can help other people like children”.*

With regards to ensuring that volunteers transfer skills learnt during the training, one organisation reported that after completion of the training participants have to sign a contract which says that for at least a year, they will plough back the skills learned in their communities. However, this was not the case with three other organisations who reported that after the training half of the participants did not even start work, they left, and found paying jobs.

The above discussion shows that volunteers were exposed to a wide range of generic training. This is in line with front-line work, where volunteers are exposed to different cases. This was an interesting finding in that although volunteers were trauma support workers, they were not necessarily dealing with trauma cases; they were dealing with generic cases. This finding confirms the finding of Moultrie (2004) and Ritcher et al (1999) who respectively found that volunteers were doing more than what their jobs entailed.

#### **4.9 Volunteer recognition**

The figure below represents the types of recognition given to volunteers.



**Figure 4.2: Types of recognition offered to volunteers**



Figure 4.2 illustrate that all ten organisations gave certificates to their volunteers after the completion of the courses. Again, all ten organisations provided Christmas lunches for their volunteers. Five organisations reported that they celebrated significant events for example birthdays. For black volunteers, name badges, t-shirts, and bags were seen as an important and symbolic form of identification. This was seen as crucial since community members were able to identify volunteers. Although volunteers were known in their communities, there were still high levels of mistrust when it came to their credibility as volunteers and as helpers. Forms of identification are also used for safety reasons, for example one organisation reported that volunteers were sometimes chased away from the homes of their clients; therefore having similar forms of identification was a good strategy for the credibility of the volunteers.

Research studies, conducted both locally and internationally, show that volunteers need to be properly recognized and encouraged so that they stay motivated. In addition, studies conducted by Moultrie (2004), Mahilal (2006), Akintola, (2004) and

Richter et al (1999) all found that the above forms of recognition were used. They noted that these forms of recognition were appreciated by volunteers.

#### **4.10 Needs and expectation of volunteers**

An interesting finding which emerged out of this study was that, even though organisations were involved with volunteers, they had not done any research with regards to needs and expectation of their volunteers. The following response illustrates this.

*“We have not done any formal research...., but we ask them why do you come, why are you here even though we don't give you money?”*

*“We ask that question individually..... “Why do you want to come and volunteer?”*

Organisations gave various reasons why they had not done research. One organization stated that they did not have time to do research. Nine organizations said that they had not thought about it. However, all organisations indicated that in their screening meetings they asked volunteers why they were interested in volunteering in their organisations. This has serious implications when it comes to organisations developing responses to care and support programmes for volunteers. According to Lombard and Modise (2002) it is crucial for the organisation and the volunteer to be clear about each other's expectations. This has a lasting impact on volunteer retention.

#### **4.11 Impact of trauma work on volunteers**

The following themes emerged out of the discussion on the impact of trauma work on volunteers.

#### **4.11.1 Volunteering as self healing for volunteers**

Three organisations felt that trauma work was not affecting volunteers negatively. In fact they felt that volunteering was therapeutic for volunteers as they were healed from helping others. The following comments were made by two participants:-

*“Some of them (volunteers) were bereaved as children. By helping other bereaved children, it is healing for them”.*

*“It is for their own therapy while they are helping that young child. It's like they are healing their own painful childhood”.*

#### **4.11.2 Psychological impact**

Most organisations spoke about stress and burnout as impacting on volunteers. This was attributed to the fact that volunteers had unrealistic expectations about their roles as volunteers and thinking that they could change the world. This impact is experienced by both the crisis line volunteers as well as the community based volunteers. The following quotes illustrate this:-

*“....they feel stressed.... because we are working in a context whereby there is also poverty.*

*“When they first start working they feel that they are going to change the world. But actually when they start working..... they find that they are at the beginning of a long process”.*

*“They often complain that whenever they are dealing with the issues in the community, it brings back some of their own issues, sometimes they cannot contain themselves or do enough for the patient because they realize that they have their own issues to deal with”.*

This finding is consistent with studies conducted by Moultrie (2004), Otlepp and Friedman (2002) who found that volunteers trauma support workers in their studies were prone to high levels of burnout. According to SAITS (2004) volunteers through their rescue fantasies are at high risk of developing burnout.

#### **4.11.3 Lack of community support**

Two organisations spoke about the lack of support from community members. They expressed that volunteers felt stigmatized by community members because some of them were rape survivors or had HIV/AIDS. In relation to this, one participant noted that:-

*“Mainly it’s stigma, issues with AIDS because some of them are living with the virus, and then whenever they hear comments from the community, I mean people are so harsh in terms of dealing with this disease, so then it goes back to themselves and they are also living with this, so they see how the society is so cruel around that”.*

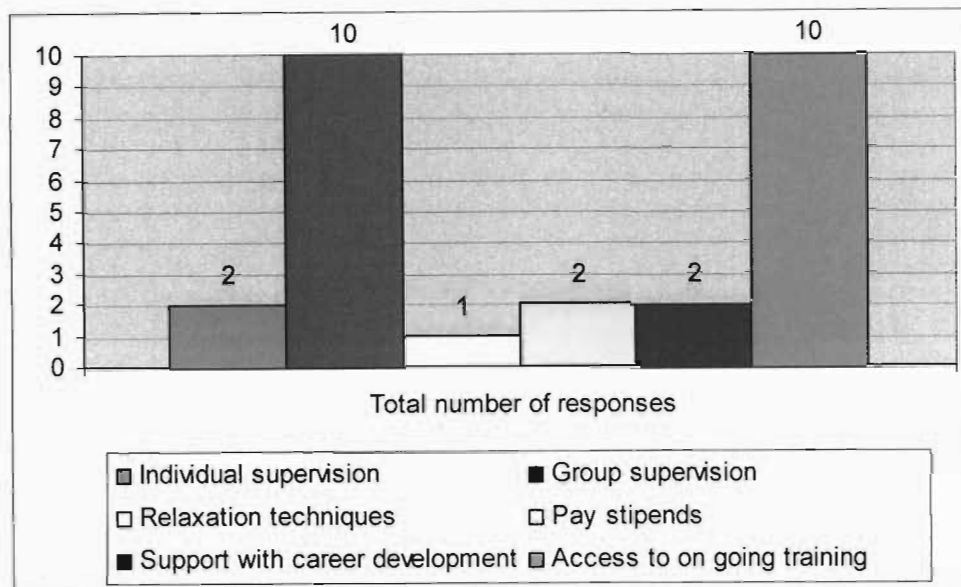
In addition, one organisation shared that after having trained 20 volunteers, community members did not come for counselling, because they did not trust the skills of volunteers. One organisation spoke about the fact that volunteers were sometimes attacked by community members. One organisation spoke about the challenge, where community members had unrealistic expectations from volunteers. This resulted in high stress and burnout levels among volunteers. Two organisations spoke about the lack of cooperation and support from community members to volunteers who were working tirelessly and for free. There was a sense that community members did not appreciate the work of volunteers.

This finding was interesting in that it differed from the study conducted by Akintola (2004) who found that volunteers in his study received a lot of support from the community, but very little support from family members. This was attributed to the fact that volunteers were not seen by family members to be bringing income to the family. The ecosystems perspective is useful in understanding the broader macro issues that are influencing communities’ responses to HIV/AIDS and those people who are bringing help.

#### **4.12 Supervision and support of volunteers**

All ten organisations reported that they were providing supervision and support to their volunteers. The figure below describes the form of support available to volunteers.

**Figure 4.3: Types of supervision and support offered to volunteers**



Studies conducted by (Ortlepp and Friedman, 2002, Bell et al, 2003, Akintola, 2004, Moultrie, 2004, and Mahilall, 2006), found that supervision and debriefing are crucial when working with trauma survivors. Figure 4.3 above indicates the type of support offered to volunteers. Of the ten organisations studied only two organisations reported that they offered individual supervision to volunteers. All ten organisations reported that they offered group supervision. Group supervision was preferred as it was cost effective, and it fostered team spirit amongst volunteers. Lack of capacity and human resources was given as a reason for not using individual supervision.

Although all organisations were doing trauma work, only two organisations reported that they had a structured group debriefing for their volunteers. This service was available to those volunteers who were manning crisis telephone lines. Organisation eight reported that it offered relaxation techniques to their volunteers. Two organisations reported that they paid stipends to their volunteers. Another two organisations linked their volunteers with further education and training colleges for career development. All ten organisations offered their volunteers access to ongoing training.

#### 4.12.1 Frequency of supervision meetings

The graph below presents the summary of the frequency of the supervision meeting.

**Figure 4.4: Frequency of supervision meetings**

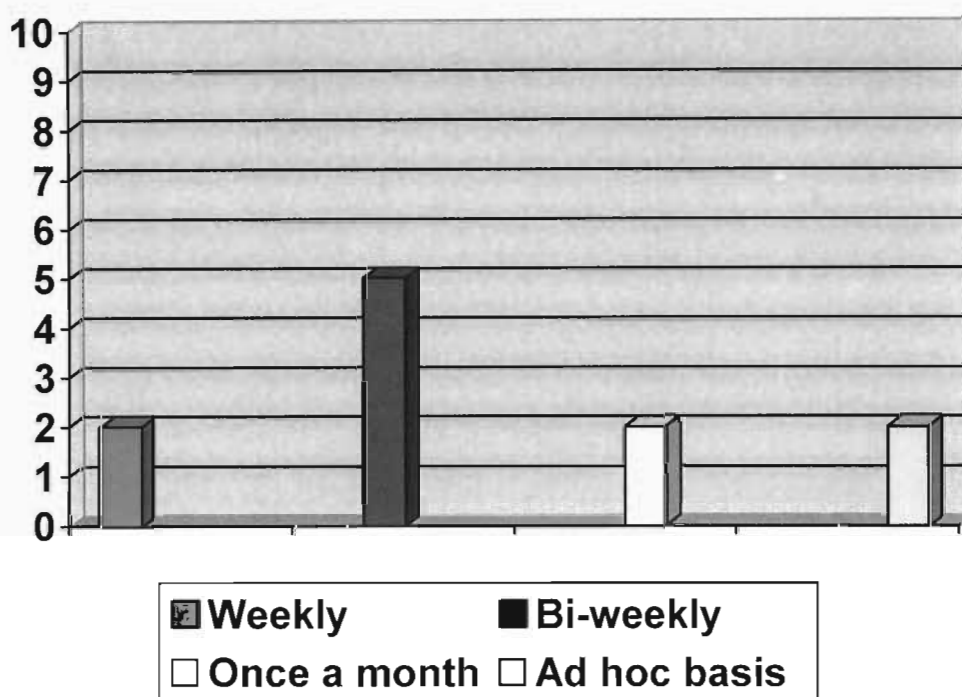


Figure 4.4 above describes the frequency of the supervision meeting. Two organisations reported that they saw their volunteers on a weekly basis. Five of the organisations reported that they saw their volunteers on a fortnightly basis. Two organisations reported they saw their volunteers once a month. One organisation said that supervision was unstructured and that it was happening on an ad hoc basis. The duration of this supervision was said to be two to three hours long. Supervision is usually provided by volunteer coordinators or project managers. The content of supervision meetings consisted of reports of the activities of the volunteers as well as plans for the week ahead.

#### 4.13 Responses of organisations to the needs and expectations of volunteers

Six of the organisations did not have systems in place to respond to the needs and expectations. Organizational responses to the needs and expectations of volunteers varied from no payment to referring volunteers to appropriate resources for example

registration as CBO and supervision. Seven organisations did not have systems in place. Three organisations reported that they gave stipends to their volunteers. The followings quotes illustrate this point.

*“There are no programmes in place, focusing on volunteers”.*

*“No, there are no programmes, except that we meet with them once a month, that’s where we discuss anything relating to their needs, concerns....any problems that they are experiencing, then we gives them a chance to express how they feel about that”.*

*“We give them stipends”*

It is clear from the above quotes that in seven organisations there are no structured programmes in place to respond to the needs and expectations of volunteers. Four organisations who were working mainly with black volunteers, reported that they helped their volunteers to register as a CBO so that they will be able to access their own funding. This is done in order to help the CBO to develop into a fully functioning NGO.

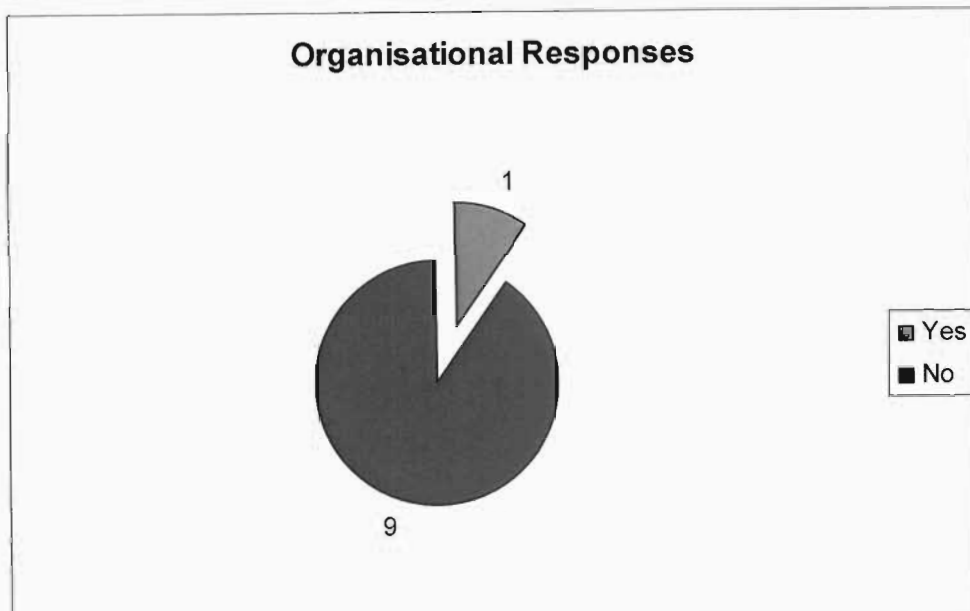
For example one participant said:-

*“We refer them... we are encouraging them to register as CBOs so that they will be recognized as an organization... then they will be able to access funding”.*

#### **4.14 Volunteer policies**

The figure below represents responses to the question whether or not the organisation had a volunteer policy.

**Figure 4.5: Existence of volunteer policy**



The above graph indicates clearly that nine organisations reported that they did not have volunteer policy. One organisation said that the policy existed but they have never seen it. The researcher requested this organisation's policy to analyze as secondary source of data, and found that it was only a paragraph that spoke about volunteers. The respondent said this policy was never implemented.

The quote below explains why there is no policy for volunteers.

***"The only time you get a policy out of an NGO is when it is compulsory and its fault related, and then you'll have a policy drawn".***

There seemed to be concerns about developing a policy, with no proper knowledge on the legalities around working with volunteers. The following concern was raised by one participant:

***"..if we put policies in place we might find that we are infringing or breaking the law".***

Another reason for no policy, relates to the informal nature of working with volunteers. There seemed to be a sense that, because volunteers do so of their free will, then there is no need for policies. One respondent noted that:

***"We've never looked at it because.... It's an informal agreement and people come here not because they looking for jobs. I know at other organizations you find volunteers volunteering because are looking for jobs and looking for experience. Here on the other hand the***



*motivation is very different. People come here because of their past experience, wanting to give something. There is no expectation. So in that way I think it makes things easier I think to work with”.*

A major picture which emerges out this study is that, while organisations studied had been running volunteer programmes for years; they did not have volunteer policies. The implication of this is that, as can be seen above, there are no proper guidelines or strategies with regards to developing volunteer care and support programmes. The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Wint and Khoza (1999), who found that out of 25 NGOs they studied only one, had a volunteer policy. According to Wint and Khoza (1999) much of the confusion has to do with the narrow interpretation of the “not for profit status” where NGOs believed that the “not for profit” status means that volunteers must work for free.

#### **4.15 Organisational challenges to volunteer programmes**

Organisations reported many challenges facing their volunteer programmes, which results in high turn-over of volunteers. These challenges are grouped into themes which are discussed below:

##### **4.15.1 Retention of volunteers**

All ten organisations spoke about the challenge of retaining volunteers. Most organisations reported that volunteers left when they got paid employment, or when there were other organisations offering stipends or payments. One responded stated that:-

*“The biggest challenge is how to retain them. Because if they are not paid, it means that you are more vulnerable because if they get an organisation that will pay them, they will leave .... We had a situation whereby there is an organisation that is giving or paying stipends, so if we set meetings with them and that organisation sets a meeting, they are not coming to us, they are going to that organisation.. So it's quite a challenge because then we need to negotiate around that organisation that is providing material support”.*

This finding is consistent with the findings of Lombard and Modise (2002), who also found that in their study retention of volunteers was a major challenge. According to Lombard and Modise (2002) retention of volunteer is a process that needs to be

planned carefully as it involves defining the volunteer and determining motivational factors for volunteering.

Three organisations spoke of the challenge of dealing with volunteers who had benefited from the training they provided and left before they had rendered any voluntary service to them. They left because they had received skills and knowledge, which they would use in their careers. Two organisations shared stories whereby after having trained volunteers, very few actually started the job. In the context of high level of unemployment, organisations were at high risk of equipping people with skills who would then leave. The following quotes illustrate this:-

*“The challenge is the expectation that they would automatically be given employment”.*  
*“We trained 25 volunteers...only five started the job, and after a month all the five were gone”.*  
*“The main reason for their volunteering is the career”.*

The above findings are consistent with the findings of Akintola (2004) and Mahilall (2006), who both found that black volunteers saw volunteerism as a stepping stone to future employment. This was attributed to the high unemployment rate in South Africa. This perception of volunteerism as a career path becomes a challenge when it comes to retention of volunteers. The problem of unemployment is a macro level issue from a systems perspective. Therefore, organisations need to be able to take into account these socio-political issues when planning and designing volunteer programmes.

#### **4.15.2 Sustainability of the volunteer project**

Two organisations spoke about this challenge. The issue here is that because there is no budget for volunteers, it is difficult to sustain volunteer programmes. Three organisations, who had initially received funding to train volunteers, spoke of the difficulty in securing funding to pay stipends for volunteers in order to keep them interested and motivated. As one responded commented:-

*“We cannot sustain the programme with no funding”.*

#### **4.15.3 High turn-over of professional staff**

This was seen as a major challenge. Six organisations spoke about the challenge of volunteers building a relationship and rapport with a particular worker, and when that

worker leaves, the morale of the volunteers decreases, and volunteers struggle to connect with the new worker. This is a major challenge in the NGO sector where social workers, are leaving for better paying government jobs.

#### **4.15.4 Expectation of employment**

All ten organisations spoke about this as a major challenge. They argued that no matter how explicit you state that this is a voluntary work, people still expected to be employed in the organisation when vacancies arose. The following quote illustrate this point:-

***“The challenge is the expectation that they would automatically be given employment”.***

This finding was also confirmed by the studies of Akintola (2004) and Mahilall (2006) who found that volunteer home based carers had expectations of getting employment as part of their motivations for volunteering. In the context of high levels of poverty and unemployment this challenge will remain the major obstacle in the retention of volunteers.

#### **4.15.5 Lack of professional boundaries**

Because volunteers were not guided by any code of conduct, three organisations reported that they had incidences where volunteers had behaved inappropriately for example misusing money or having sexual relationships with clients. The quotes below illustrate this point:-

***“We had one volunteer who was having sexual relations with Police officers”.***

***“One volunteer was collecting money for maintenance from clients, promising to give it to the mothers, which was all wrong”.***

This finding is consistent with the findings of Ritcher et al, (1999) who found that HIV/AIDS lay counselors they studied did not have a code of conduct. They Ritcher at al (1999) recommended that a code of conduct for volunteers was urgently needed.

It is clear from the above quotations that organisations are faced with many challenges. The emerging themes out of these challenges are retention of volunteers, over expectations from community members, sustainability of the

volunteer programmes, turn-over of professional staff, expectation of employment, and lack of professional boundaries

#### **4.16 Successes of the volunteer programmes**

In spite of the many challenges experienced with working with volunteers. There were successes which were noted. These successes will be categorized into the following themes; volunteers have formalized their organisation, reaching many people/maximizing impact, feedback from other service users and duration of volunteerism.

##### **4.16.1 Volunteer formalizing their structure**

A picture emerged in this study that most of the black volunteers, were made up of groups that existed in the communities prior to the organizations coming in. These groups were voluntary community service groups, who needed skills to be able to work with their communities. The organization trained these groups of people with the intention that they would be an extension of the work that is done by the organization. Therefore, one of the indicators of success is to help this group to register as a CBO and getting them to set up their systems. The organization would then offer mentorship and technical assistance. These volunteers would then offer services in their community. This was seen as strengthening the existing capacity in the community as well as mobilization of local resources. Two respondents stated that:

***“Successes are that some of the volunteers have formalized their structures and they are able to access funding and also that some of the volunteers have been able to get work outside”.***

***“It has been amazing with this particular community because most of them have been trained and then most of them preferred to stay in their CBO’s especially when they are able to access funding”.***

Success was also measured by volunteers developing their careers. For example one organisation reported that, those volunteers who had matric certificates were now employed as nursing assistants in hospitals:

***“Those volunteers who have matric are now working as nursing assistants in government hospitals which is quite a big step”.***

These findings are consistent with those of Wint and Khoza (1999) who found that organisations measured success by having started an income generating project, and they noted that this reflected the new emphasis on capacity building of both clients and agencies.

#### **4.16.2 Reaching many people/maximizing impact**

Working through and with volunteers was seen as a huge step in reaching many people in the communities and maximizing impact. Six organizations reported that through their work with volunteers they had reached more people. This was seen as complementing the workload of already overburdened social workers, as is shown below:

*‘We’ve really reached so many people... the contact is not one contact; they have ongoing contact with these people’.*

*“The crisis line speaks for itself, with 35 000 calls per month. That should indicate success”*

This finding tallies with the findings of Wint and Khoza (1999), who found that organisations in their study, reported that volunteers helped to maximize impact in the communities.

#### **4.16.3 Response/feedback from other service users**

Success was measured by the feedback received from service users and other professionals. Two organizations reported that they had received positive feedback on the work which is done by their volunteers. The following quotes illustrate this.

*“Well the responses in courts, like the volunteers in courts have been overwhelming”.*

*“We’ve met the prosecutors just recently, and they say that, they cannot imagine how they would survive without volunteers in court”.*

#### 4.16.4 Length of stay by volunteers

The length of stay by volunteers was seen as an indicator of success of the volunteer programme. The belief is that if volunteers were not satisfied they would leave. The following responses illustrate this:

*“Oh, we have volunteers that have worked here for years”.*

*“We have people who have volunteered here for over 40 years”.*

*“You know the thing is, we’ve been very fortunate. There have been about 8 volunteers that have been here for like seven years”.*

*“I’ve still got people I started with in 2003 in the group. There are about three of them that are still with us, but we had some people that came went and came back”.*

Successes of the volunteer programmes were mainly measured in terms of the extension of services, for example four organisations spoke about reaching more people with the help of volunteers. Successes were also measured by the length of time volunteers have been in the organisation. It is interesting to note that even though there are no policies in place, volunteer programmes are running successfully.

#### 4.17 Recommendations: Organisations Speak Out

This part of the report deals with recommendations as reported by organisations. The researcher found that some organisations were already thinking about implementing these solutions, others were already implementing. As organisations shared their suggestions, new solutions emerged. All these ideas are recorded below. The following table represents solutions as presented by participants with sub-themes.

**Table 4.4: Recommendations with regards to volunteer care programmes and policies**

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency
Effective management of volunteers	Planning for volunteers	03
	Orientation	02
	Recruitment	05
	Training	10
	Recognition	10
	Supervision	10
Creating an enabling environment	Care for care-givers	10
	Supervision and support	10
	Recognition/reward for volunteers	10
	Access to debriefing services	08
	Payment for services	05
	Job descriptions	02
	Create a forum for volunteers	01
Putting systems in place	Development of volunteer policy	10
	Code of conduct	10
	Problem solving procedures	03
	Disciplinary procedures	04
	Grievance procedures	04
	Health and safety issues	02
	Compensation for injury or disease	02
Monitoring and evaluation	Record keeping	01
	Performance appraisals	01

#### 4.17.1 Effective management of volunteers

All ten organizations expressed the need for effective management of volunteers. Three organizations expressed the need for proper planning for volunteers and two organizations felt that there was a need for proper orientation of volunteers. Five organizations expressed the need for the development of a recruitment strategy. This was seen as necessary in order to attract the right people. All ten organizations agreed that training, recognition and supervision was crucial for volunteers. This was seen a good strategy for retaining volunteers. The following quotes illustrate these points:-

***“Policy should cover issues of training and debriefing and supervision”.***

***“It should state clearly what are the expectations from your organization and also hear from their expectations what do they expect from you”.***

***“I feel volunteers should be offered some sort of remuneration but in kind”.***

***“A job description definitely”.***

The above findings tallies well with the findings of Lombard and Modise (2002) who found that effective planning, recruitment and management of volunteers were essential for the successful running of the programme. Similar findings were made by Akintola (2004) and Mahilall (2006).

#### **4.17.2 Creating an enabling environment**

All ten organizations expressed the need for an enabling environment where volunteers would feel welcome and part of the organization. There was a feeling that volunteers needed to be cared for, this would be achieved through proper supervision, instilling the culture of caring for carers, providing rewards and stipends, as well as access to debriefing. Two organizations spoke about the need for a proper job description for volunteers. One organization felt that there was a need for a forum for volunteers, where all volunteers from across organizations can talk about their experiences and learn and share from each other. This was seen as a good way of reducing isolation and creating awareness raising and marketing volunteers.

The following quotes illustrate these points.

***“Debriefing is quite important especially when it is going to include victim support, so the debriefing is quite important, because they are often exposed to a lot of traumatic experiences out there in the community”.***

***“I feel volunteers should be offered some sort of remuneration but in kind”.***

***“We need to create a forum for volunteers where volunteers from all organizations can come together and talk about their experiences”.***

***“...“volunteer’s forum”, I totally support....where do they go to, how they are represented, and most of them remain because they have no other opportunities and no other options. So they are remaining in a situation where they are totally unhappy”.***

***“... care of the carers should include volunteers as well and not just the paid staff. I think that would be part of the policy to look at the involvement within the organization and their rights within the organization in terms of do they have a right to come to staff meetings”.***



This finding is consistent with the findings of Mahilall (2006) who found that volunteers appreciated personal contact and being cared for by the organisation. She also noted that volunteers appreciated supervision, debriefing and ongoing training. Similar findings were noted by Ritcher et al (1999) and Lombard and Modise (2002).

#### **4.17.3 Putting systems in place**

All ten organizations agreed that there was a need for putting systems in a place. All ten organizations felt that there was need for volunteer policies. However, there were many differences with regards to what should be in that policy. All ten organizations agreed that there was a need for a code of conduct, and already they had developed their own codes of conduct. Only three organizations spoke about the need for effective problem solving. Again, only four organizations spoke about the need for disciplinary and grievance procedures. Two organizations felt that this was not necessary since the volunteers were not full-time employees of the organization. Two organizations expressed the need for inclusion of third party insurance as well as indemnity for volunteers. This was stated with regards to their dealings with clients as well as their own physical safety. The following quotes illustrate the above points:

***“We should create policies that cover both South African and international volunteers and also emphasize the issue of equality”.***

***“It should also cover basic conditions of service”.***

***“Although they are volunteers, they should have rights to maybe sick leave”.***

***“Safety measures are very important”.***

***“A policy should also cover very basic things like their rights within the organization in terms of what do they have access to and what do they not have access to, like to say do they have access to the vehicles”***

***“Are they covered by indemnity?”***

***“They should be covered in somewhere. Let’s say they are working in the field and they working with a client who has been abused or something has happened and something happens when they get sued. Who covers that? They need to be covered like social workers; they are doing social work so they need to be covered”.***

***“Code of conduct is very important”.***

*“I’m just looking at vehicles.....do they have access to these? Are they insured by the organization? I mean we won’t just let the volunteers because they are not covered by out insurance...”*

The recommendations of the participants of this study are consistent with the recommendations made by participants in Richter et al’s (1999) study, where the issue of code of conduct was mentioned at the highest priority. Similar recommendations were noted by Lombard and Modise (2002) and Volunteer Centre (2005). The ecosystems framework is useful in providing an understanding of the context of safety where the volunteers are operating at mezzo level.

#### **4.17.4 Monitoring and evaluation**

Two organizations spoke to this theme. One spoke about the need for proper record keeping as a tool for monitoring and evaluating the work that the volunteers do. One organization expressed the need for proper performance management so that the volunteers would feel valued and would recognize the favourable impact that their work has. The responses below illustrate this:-

*“Our volunteers keep a record book and time sheet because we pay them. They need to account for the time they spent”*.

*“I think performance appraisal as well is crucial”*.

Richter et al (1999) also found that monitoring and evaluation was critically important for the successful running of the volunteer programmes. Similar sentiments were made by Lombard and Modise (2002) who found that evaluation and monitoring of volunteer programmes was very essential for the successful running of the programme.

In this chapter results of the organisations studied were presented. These included the profiles of organizations, definitions of volunteers, volunteer recruitment and sections, training, recognition and supervision of volunteers. Results regarding the volunteer policy and recommendations as presented by participants were discussed.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5. Introduction**

In this chapter the conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented. The main aim of the study was to determine whether or not NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and what challenges or constraints exist in providing such programmes. Ten organisations that are part of the Themba Lesizwe network participated in the study. These organisations were purposively selected. Interviews were conducted by means of a personally administered interview schedule, using an interview guide. An interview schedule was designed to address the following questions: Do NGOs have volunteer care and support programmes and what forms do these take? Do NGOs have policies with regards to volunteer care and support? To what extent are volunteer care programmes and policies implemented? What are the constraints and challenges in providing such programmes? The findings of this study will be used by Themba Lesizwe and its affiliates to develop strategies to respond appropriately to care and support programmes for volunteers.

The ecosystems perspective was pertinent in this study of organisational responses to volunteer care and support programmes for the following reasons. Firstly it provided a basis for understanding reciprocity between the organisations and the environment. Secondly it provided a framework for understanding the social, political, and economic context in which volunteers and organisations operate.

#### **5.1 Conclusions of the study**

The general conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that volunteer programmes in the NGOs studied were uncoordinated and unstructured. Volunteer care and support programmes were provided to volunteers but these were not structured. Of the ten organisations studied only one had a volunteer policy. Participants defined a volunteer as a person who freely renders his/her services without expecting any remuneration for the work done. Usually the work is done for the benefit of the community.

### **5.1.2 Profile of volunteers**

The total number of volunteers in each organisation ranged from ten to 150. Eight organizations reported that they had female volunteers only. Two organizations reported that they had two males each in their programmes. A salient finding which emerged out of this study was that there were two main types of volunteers. These were volunteers who were from affluent backgrounds, and those who were from poor backgrounds. White, Coloured and Indian volunteers tended to be from affluent backgrounds. Black volunteers on the other hand came from situations of extreme poverty and unemployment. Organizations spoke the about challenges in retaining black volunteers. The reason for this was the expectation of getting employment, or that black volunteers left when they got paid jobs. This is further discussed in section 5.1.5 below.

### **5.1.2 Volunteer recruitment, selection and training**

With regards to recruitment of volunteers, this study found that nine organisations were not actively recruiting volunteers. Most of the recruiting was done through word of mouth. Only one organization reported that it was recruiting through the print media. All ten organizations did not have written selection criteria for their volunteers. With regards to training, all organizations reported that they were providing training to their volunteers on various topics, such as HIV/AIDS, play skills with children, victim support and trauma management, to mention a few.

### **5.1.3 Work undertaken by volunteers**

Although volunteers were recruited to do victim support work, this study found that volunteers were involved in a variety of activities including but not limited to home visits, home based care work, and training. In terms of the racial division of labour, a theme emerged in this study that black volunteers were involved in community based interventions including home based care work, community outreach, home visits, victim support skills, while White, Coloured and Indian volunteers were involved in

manning telephone lines, training and crisis management activities usually within the premises of organisations where they volunteered. It also emerged that even though black volunteers were based in communities and were known to communities, they were likely to be at risk of being attacked or harmed. This is often because communities do not recognize and support volunteers.

#### **5.1.4 Volunteer care and support programmes**

The study found that although there were programmes designed to care and support volunteers, these programmes were not coordinated, and were not structured, therefore defeating the purpose which it was designed for. All ten organizations reported that they had volunteer recognition programmes, such as certification ceremony, Christmas parties, volunteer awards.

All organizations reported that they were providing supervision and debriefing services to their volunteers. The findings of this study suggest that although management was aware of the impact of trauma work on volunteers, supervision was unstructured and uncoordinated. All organizations reported that they were providing supervision, but could not give detailed descriptions of what happens in those supervision meetings. Volunteer were seen once a month to bi-monthly basis.

Most of the participants spoke about the culture of caring, and that their volunteers were being cared for. This could be one of the reasons why many volunteers remained. For example, one participant spoke about saying little things to volunteers such as asking them how they were feeling. Celebrating important events and practicing yoga and meditation are some of the examples of caring that were identified.

#### **5.1.5 Coordination of volunteer services**

This study found that volunteer programmes were uncoordinated, and that there was a lack of organizational capacity to run volunteer programmes. This was evident as there was no documentation or programme designed for volunteers. An interesting

finding was that although volunteer programmes were uncoordinated and were not managed properly the volunteer retention rate was found to be very high among White, Coloured and Indian volunteers. The reason for this could be that volunteers found this normal and had no other experience to compare with. Another reason for this is that these volunteers work a few hours a day or a week as compared to black volunteers who work longer periods and on communities. The current status quo is thus acceptable and taken as a norm. The retention rate was found to be low among IsiZulu speaking volunteers, because they leave to go to paying jobs.

#### **5.1.6 Research on volunteer needs and expectations**

This study found that all ten organizations had not done any research with regards to the needs and expectations of volunteers. In addition, organizations did not have a clear strategy of how to respond to the needs and expectations of volunteers. Even though organizations had not done research with regards to needs and expectations of volunteers, this study found that organizations were aware of the needs of volunteers such as training, supervision and debriefing, but were unable to respond accordingly. The researcher noticed the lack of congruence between the organizations' knowledge of and awareness of the impact of trauma work on volunteers and the actual programmes they were implementing to care and support volunteer trauma support workers

#### **5.1.7 Challenges and constraints faced by NGOs**

In exploring the challenges and constraints faced by organizations in providing care and support programmes, this study found that organizations experienced the following challenges: inadequate funding to run volunteer programmes, and lack of human resources to facilitate volunteer programmes. Funding was seen as a major factor as organizations struggled to fundraise for volunteer programmes. For example volunteer programmes are not catered for in organisational budgeting as it is considered to be "for free". The funding issue was a major threat to the sustainability of the programmes. Organizations also spoke about the high turn over rate of professional staff to facilitate these volunteer programmes. This was

attributed to the high discrepancies which exist between government and NGO salaries for social workers. Another challenge was that some volunteers were seen as using the volunteer programmes as stepping stones to future employment. Participants spoke about the absence of volunteer policies. This was an interesting finding, in that the researcher had assumed that organizations would have a policy in place, but have trouble implementing it. Some of the reasons were that participants were not sure about the legalities involved in drafting such a policy. Secondly there was a sense that because volunteerism is voluntary there is no need to formalize policies around it.

#### **5.1.8 Successes of volunteer programmes**

In terms of successes of the volunteer programmes, organizations spoke about helping volunteers formalize their community structures and register as CBOs. They also spoke about maximizing impact and reaching more people. Feedback from service users was also highlighted as one of the successes of volunteer programmes. The length of stay by volunteers in their organizations was also highlighted as an indicator of success of the volunteer programmes.

#### **5.1.9 Organisations' recommendations with regards to volunteer care and support programmes**

Organisations made the following recommendations with regards to volunteer care and support programmes:-

- Effective management of volunteers
- Creating an enabling environment
- Putting systems in place
- Monitoring and evaluation of volunteer programmes.
- More funding for volunteer programmes

While the study was small in nature, the findings and themes which emerged in this study do have significance for organizations, policymakers and researchers interested in volunteer care and support programmes.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

While responses of organizations to volunteer care and support programmes may differ from organization to organization, province to province, it is crucial for organizations utilizing volunteer services to understand and reflect on their responses on volunteer care and support programmes. The following recommendations emerged from the study and will be discussed as follows: practice recommendations, policy recommendations and research recommendations.

It is recommended that larger studies be done in this field. The literature review indicated that there is small but growing body of literature in respect of volunteers within the trauma sector. Responses to volunteer care and support programmes seem to be under researched in South Africa. The literature review indicated that most of the body of literature tended to focus on the impact of caring on volunteers.

### **5.2.1 Practice recommendations**

Organizations need to create an enabling environment where volunteers can flourish. This can be achieved by:-

- Thinking strategically around recruitment and selection of volunteers. Selection criteria as to who can be a volunteer within the victim empowerment sector must be developed.
- Structured organizational care and support for volunteers in the form of supervision, debriefing, peer supervision and self care. It is recommended that supervision and support for volunteers be improved. Training programmes should include models of peer and group supervision, as well as importance of self care. Volunteers should also be taught signs and symptoms of work related stress as a component of their volunteers training.
- Integration of volunteers into the organizational system. The lack of integration of volunteers into the organisation means that most volunteers work without enough support, quality control or sufficient risk management.



- Developing clear roles, responsibilities and job descriptions for volunteers.  
There is an urgent need to develop boundaries of what volunteers can and cannot do. This will go a long way in preventing stress and burnout.
- Training and capacity building: The main recommendation with regards to training and capacity building is to examine to what extent does the knowledge imparted to volunteers enhance their practice? Therefore training needs to be tailored to such an extent that it builds volunteer's prior knowledge and it contributes to their professional development. A recommendation is also made to organizations training volunteers to align their training with the South African Qualifications Authority, and linking up the unit standards of each training module. In this regards the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) could be used. By using this SETA volunteers can be helped to develop their careers. This can be done by linking up with the standard generating body for victim empowerment which has developed a qualification on victim empowerment for levels 3 and 4.
- Mentorship: the importance of mentorship has been highlighted in this study, as having a multiplier effect, in terms of capacity building and sustaining impact in communities. In this regard networks such as the Children in Distress and Themba Lesizwe can be used to provide resources and skills to organizations wishing to embark on CBO mentorship programme.
- Promoting volunteerism: it is recommended that awareness raising and educational programmes be developed to promote volunteerism. These programmes need to popularize the issue of volunteerism to heighten awareness about, and provide solutions to addressing the problems facing volunteers. Volunteer forums and networks need to be developed where volunteers will be able to talk about their experiences and challenges.

### **5.2.2 Policy recommendations**

- There is an urgent need to lobby national and provincial government to develop policies and legislation with regards to volunteers. In South Africa, at the time of writing this report, there is no national policy or legislation on volunteers. Provincial governments in the Western Cape and Gauteng have

developed theirs, but in KwaZulu-Natal where this study was conducted, there is no provincial policy. Therefore, there is an urgent need for NGOs to develop their own policies on volunteers, and then align their policies with provincial and national policies once they have been developed. The policy needs to outline amongst other things: the code of conduct for volunteers, health and safety issues, training, supervision, and mentorship of volunteers.

- There is an urgent need for policy makers, government and donors to make funding available for volunteer programmes. It emerged out of this study that the reasons for utilizing volunteers' services was the financial constraints of employing full-time staff members. In addition, organisations with no funding to run volunteer programmes were at risk of losing the same volunteers to organisations who would pay them. The problem of funding paints a disturbing picture and raises a number of concerns regarding the sustainability of volunteer programmes. In the context of high levels of poverty and unemployment, it is recommended that more funding be made available for volunteer programmes and that organisations budget for volunteers especially for stipends and bus fares.

### **5.2.3 Research recommendations**

This study was qualitative in nature, from a small sample of ten NGOs who are affiliated to Themba Lesizwe. Findings therefore cannot not be generalized. However, they may provide indicators of potentially relevant issues in similar programmes. The study has contributed to the growing literature on volunteers within the victim empowerment sector and prevention of secondary traumatisation.

Further research is needed in the following areas:-

- A study comparing NGOs provision of care and support programmes for volunteers, and volunteers' perception of the NGOs care and support programmes.

- A comparative study of those NGOs with volunteer care programmes and policies to those who do not, to ascertain whether these policies make a difference.
- A study looking at community responses to volunteers.
- Studies should be conducted to understand ways of involving men in the volunteer programmes.
- A study documenting “best practice” models of volunteer care and support programmes within the victim empowerment sector.

#### **5.2.4 Dissemination of recommendations**

One of the purposes of this research was to inform practice. Participating organisations were told that the findings of this study will be used to help improve volunteer programmes. It is important then, that findings of this research are disseminated to role players in the field.

The following steps will be taken to disseminate the findings:-

- Copies of research findings and recommendations will be given to participating organisations.
- Presentations of the findings will be made at conferences and meetings including those involved in discussions around issues of volunteers.
- Articles will be submitted to various journals as well as newsletters relating to volunteers or caring for carers.
- Meeting with policy makers and key role players to discuss implementation of the findings for policy development.
- Engage advocacy and lobbying organisations around the issues of volunteers care programmes.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion this study has found there are many challenges and constraints which NGOs face in responding to the needs and expectations of volunteer trauma support workers in KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore volunteer care and support programmes are unstructured and un-coordinated among the affiliates of the Themba Lesizwe network in KwaZulu-Natal. NGOs do not have a strategy for recruitment, selection, and retention of volunteers. There is a need for strategic planning among NGOs who utilise volunteer services, in terms of planning around volunteer programmes. The lack of funding and poor planning for volunteer programmes makes it difficult to sustain volunteer initiatives. Therefore there is an urgent need for funding for volunteer programmes. Only one NGO had a volunteer policy, and this policy was never implemented. Therefore, there is a definite need for the development of volunteer care and support programmes and policies. The findings of this study confirm the challenges and constraints faced by NGOs in running volunteer programmes.

This research was carried out with an effort to gain more understanding about the complex issues facing organisations in responding to the needs and expectation of volunteers, and to impact on the volunteer care programmes. It is hoped that findings and insights gained from this research will inform organisations, government and policy makers to provide better resources to meet the needs and expectations of volunteers. In addition it is hoped that these findings and recommendations will contribute to the development, improvement and sustainability of volunteer care and support programmes within the organisations. It is further hoped that this research, in some way, will contribute to the development of programmes aimed at prevention of secondary trauma on volunteers.

This chapter presented the conclusions of the study. Furthermore recommendations were made in relation to practice and policy formulation. These recommendations can be applied ecosystemically, at micro, mezzo and macro levels of intervention. The challenge is to identify points of leverage, where minimum resources will be invested, which would yield maximum results.

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**APPENDIX 1**

**REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

# APPENDICES