



**IMPLEMENTATION ANALYSIS OF KWAZULU-NATAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
POLICY ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (2020) WITH FOCUS ON YOUTH
MOBILISATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME : A CASE STUDY
OF UMVOTI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

by

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August 2026

DECLARATION

DECLARATION

I, Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, declare that:

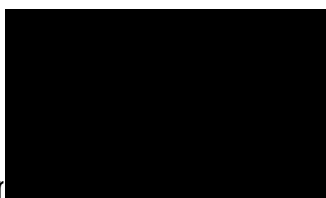
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for his protection over my life, mercies and favour and my late mom Phindile Maureen Busisiwe Ntshaba, my late brother Thembokuhle and my sister Nomthandazo Ntshaba. A special feeling of gratitude to my father, Jolozela Alpheus Ntshaba, words cannot describe my appreciation to you. You have been my source of inspiration, support, and my source of strength. A word of appreciation to my siblings Siyabonga Ntshaba, Celumusa Khulu and Phiwokuhle Ntshaba, you have taught me the importance of sibling love, to believe in myself, and because of your presence I now believe there is always light at the end of the tunnel. To my children, thank you for being part of my academic journey and understanding.

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ABSTRACT

Post 1994 youth in South Africa still face challenges, including a high unemployment rate, low educational qualifications, poverty, and health-related challenges. The democratic government implemented some strategies through youth-directed policies and legislative frameworks, to mitigate some of these challenges. The KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development (2020) is one of the policies that provides a framework for engaging youth to participate in socio-economic activities. The study thus investigated the implementation of this policy in Umvoti Local Municipality, in the Department of Social Development. The main objective of the study was to understand the experiences of the implementing agents, and the beneficiaries of the programme. Qualitative research methods were employed to gain deeper insights into the

lived experiences of policy implementers and policy beneficiaries. In-depth interviews were conducted with ten officials: government implementing agents, community development practitioners, social workers and service office managers, and nine Youth NPOs working in the municipality and 55 beneficiaries of the policy. The findings of the study indicated that the policy is implemented without sufficient knowledge of its content, there is no role clarification for the implementing agents, and they only serve as the link with the community. Many challenges were also highlighted, including the lack of resources, poor planning on the part of the implementers, duplication of information due to poor communication, as well as the lack of post-programme support to youth who would have completed the programme. These challenges are caused by poor coordination and lack of role clarifications within implementers. This impact negatively to policy result in terms of meeting immediate, medium and long term individual youth needs. In light of these findings, several recommendations are made, including the need for proper guidelines on the recruitment of the beneficiaries, multi-sectoral collaborations for knowledge and resource sharing, as well as implementing a tracking system for post-programme support.

Key words: *youth; social development, skills development, policy, KwaZulu-Natal*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCMM	Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CDF	Capacity Development Framework
CDP	Community Development Practitioner
CLP	Community Leadership Programme
COJ	City of Johannesburg
DoE	Department of Education
DOH	Department of Health
DSD	Department of Social Development
EPMDS	Employee Performance Management Development System
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FET	Further Education and Training
GEEP	Graduate Entrepreneurship Employment Programme
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEEA	Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZNDSD	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development
KZNDSDPYD	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development Policy on Youth Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC	Master of Ceremonies
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEET	Not in employment, education and training
NMBMM	Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NPOS	Non-Profits Organisations
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
NYC	National Youth Commission
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYDPF	National Youth Development Policy Framework
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYS	National Youth Service
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PYSP	Presidential Youth Service Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SAPS	South African Police Services
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa

STATSSA	Statistics South Africa
TREE	Training for Rural Economic Empowerment
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
YEDF	Youth Enterprise Development Fund
YEF	Youth Empowerment Fund
YOLO	You Only Live Once

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background to the Study

The democratisation process in South Africa created many opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups. Before 1994, youth faced challenges including racially based barriers to education and training and limited employment opportunities (National Youth Commission, 1997: 8) (NYC). Post 1994, the National Youth Commission was established as part of the government's plan to develop a comprehensive strategy aimed at addressing the challenges facing youth (NYC, 1997: 8). The UN defines the youth "as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years" (UN Department of Economic Development and Social Affairs, 2020: 5). In South Africa, youth are defined as young people between 14 and 35 years of age (Dept Women, Youth & Persons with Disabilities, 2020: 4). Graham, De Lannoy, Rosa and Breakey (2019: 8) note that since 1994, South African youth have faced a myriad of challenges, including high unemployment and low educational outcomes.

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) reported that in 2022, 33.1 per cent of the population was aged 15-34 (StatsSA, 2024: 6). The estimated unemployment rate for the third quarter of 2021 was 35,3 per cent; with the number of youth "not in employment, education and in training" (NEETs) increasing by 3 per cent to 46 per cent (StatsSA, 2022: 83). The World Youth Report reveals that 30 per cent of young women and 13 per cent of young men worldwide fall within this category of not employed or in education and training (UN Department of Economic Development and Social Affairs, 2020). Statistical estimates for 2022 revealed that the South African population is demographically youthful, with a median age of 28 (StatsSA, 2022: 17). Graham and De Lannoy (2016: 3) described some of the main reasons for youth unemployment in South Africa, including the high demand for skilled workers (many youth do not possess the requisite skills), lack of access to the internet and unequal access to study materials in public schools. De Lannoy, Graham, Patel and Leibbrandt (2018) also noted that a skills mismatch is another cause of youth unemployment, exacerbated by

the advent of technology in most workplaces, while Fox, Senbet and Simbanegavi (2016) pointed to other causes, namely, the very slow growth in wages in South Africa.

The KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development (2020) (KZNSDPYD) provides a framework for engaging youth by encouraging their participation in socio-economic activities. The targets of the policy include “youth in unemployment and youth with disabilities” (KZNSDPYD, 2020). The policy objectives are to “empower and actively involve the youth of KwaZulu-Natal in productive activities for individual and community development” (KZNSDPYD, 2020). It also aims to “promote self-empowerment and also improve youth socio-economic status through the provision of skills development programmes” (KZNSDPYD, 2020). The policy is implemented through the following programmes: skills development, youth empowerment, youth mobilisation and economic participation. The policy is implemented by community development practitioners and social workers in the Department of Social Development in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as by the Youth NPOs funded by the same department.

Based on the above, this study seeks to examine the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020 in Umvoti Local Municipality. The study focuses on two programmes of the policy: the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes, during the periods from June 2020 to June 2021. At the time of the research, the total youth population in Umvoti Municipality was 122 423. The South African Census 2011 recorded that the unemployment rate in Umvoti Local Municipality was 30,4 per cent, with youth unemployment at 38 per cent, indicating the dire need to create youth employment opportunities (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2021: 13) (COGTA).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (2017: 4) notes that many African countries have implemented programmes and policies targeting young people; however, these initiatives have frequently been “fragmented by many different actors including both governments and civil society”. The youth initiatives they engage in often overlap in terms of goals and are poorly coordinated (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 2017:

4). The Youth Policy Organisation (Youth Policy Organization 2014: 17) reports that during implementation, youth policies in most countries operate “with meagre financial resources and weak institutional structures”. The organisation further states that the vulnerability and marginalisation of youth are well documented and recognised in policies as requiring support, but, during implementation, the means for integrating young people into the existing programmes are lacking. The other issue mentioned by the Youth Policy Organisation report, which concerns African states, is the reality of uneven capacity, which constitutes an obstacle during the implementation of youth policies. Uneven capacity is also caused by a shortage of skills and financial resources (Corrigan, 2016: 3). Furthermore, Corrigan (2017) mentions that the central hindrance is the “information gaps” about the precise nature of youth problems, which compromises the quality of programmes. Gwala (2007: 3) posited that “policy makers have not given enough attention to the problem of unemployment in relation to its devastating effects on the youth”. South African studies on youth policies and their effectiveness have indicated that “most youth policies do not address implementation challenges at local levels” (Kampala, 2014: 14). While various studies have examined youth policy implementation, little has been done to examine the extent to which the current implemented policies align with the needs of the intended beneficiaries and their contribution during policy implementation. In light of these and other factors, this study therefore seeks to examine the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020 in the Umvoti Local Municipality. The study’s specific aim is to analyse the policy frameworks that direct youth development initiatives, and to assess the institutional structures, implementation processes, and the procedures adopted by the implementing agencies. In addition, the study also aims to investigate the experiences of programme implementers, as well as the beneficiaries, paying particular attention to identifying the obstacles to effective policy implementation, and to subsequently suggest recommendations that are pertinent to the local government level in order to improve the implementation and efficacy of youth mobilisation and skills development programmes.

The study engages with the following research questions.

1.3 Research Questions

- What are the policy and legislative frameworks for youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in the Umvoti Local Municipality?
- What are the structures, processes and procedures in place to implement the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development?
- What are the experiences of the implementing agents and the programme beneficiaries in the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development in Umvoti Local Municipality?
- What are the implementation challenges associated with the youth mobilisation and skills development in Umvoti Local Municipality?
- How can the challenges in question be addressed?

1.4 Research Objectives

- To establish what the policies and legislative frameworks guiding youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in Umvoti Local Municipality are.
- To assess the structures, processes and procedures in place to implement the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development
- To understand the experiences of the implementing agents, as well as the programme beneficiaries, in the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development in Umvoti Local Municipality
- To evaluate the implementation challenges associated with the youth mobilisation and skills development in Umvoti Local Municipality
- To propose the best practices to mitigate the identified challenges.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study holds a policy, academic and practical significance in the context of local governance and youth development in South Africa. From a policy perspective, the study sheds light on the extent to which current policies align with the needs of the intended beneficiaries. It seeks to identify gaps between the envisaged policy intent and outcomes, thereby furnishing the rationale for policy amendment, adjustment, or even change at the local governance levels. In the main, the study seeks to assess the effectiveness of the implementation process, evaluating government interventions

intended for youth mobilisation and skills development. The study findings could therefore provide various stakeholders (e.g., the Department of Social Development, local NGOs) with in-depth knowledge of what works better and why. By investigating the structures, processes, and procedures in place, the study may offer insights into the administrative and operational magnitude of programme delivery. This is pertinent because it provides information about where institutional support is concentrated and identifies whether any bottlenecks, inadequacies, inefficiencies, or misalignments exist. By incorporating the lived experiences of both implementing agents and beneficiaries, the study examines whether the bottom-up or top-down approach is dominant in the policy implementation. These perspectives are often understated in policy assessments, yet they are fundamental for recognising the real-life impacts and inadvertent consequences. The study also explored implementation challenges and proposes solutions, thus moving beyond mere critique and contributing to possible actionable change. The intention is for government departments and civil society organisations to enhance programme design and delivery for appropriate outcomes. Lastly, from an academic perspective, the study contributes to empirical research on public policy, development studies, and local governance. In doing so, the study fills a gap in the literature on youth development implementation at the local level, in the South African context.

1.6 Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology underpinned this study, which, according to Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2014: 173), includes studies

“which are often interested in the in-depth of human experiences including personal and subjective peculiarities that are characteristic of individual experience and meaning associated with a particular with a particular phenomenon”.

The research aims to gain in-depth insights into the experiences of implementers and beneficiaries of the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in Umvoti Local Municipality. A qualitative approach was adopted because it focuses on participants’ perceptions and experiences, which, according to this approach, is important (Babbie and Mouton, 2011: 270).

1.7 Research Design

Babbie and Mouton (2011) characterise the research design as focusing on the logic of the research and providing a plan regarding the intended research, specifically how the researcher intends to execute the methodological procedures. The case study research design helps to understand a phenomenon within specific circumstances and to authentically represent the case to systematically uncover symbolic realities (Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 178). The study investigated the Umvoti Local Municipality as a case study, as well as the youth mobilisation and skills development of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.

1.8 Population and Sample of the Study

Sampling occurs when a researcher is selective in choosing participants for the study (Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 131). The research used non-probability sampling methods to identify beneficiaries of the programmes, which are used “when it is impossible to determine who the entire population is and where the sample is in line with some parameters or shared characteristics” (Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014: 137). Purposive sampling was employed to select stakeholders involved in implementing the youth policies of the Department of Social Development.

The sample comprised beneficiaries who participated in the programmes from January to June 2021. A total of 385 young people in Umvoti Local Municipality participated in the programmes during this period: 338 in youth mobilisation programmes and 47 in skills development programmes. Of these 385, only 55 were available to participate; some were unreachable, and others had relocated.

The youth participants/beneficiaries involved in the two programmes numbered 55.

All 55 participants were from the historically disadvantaged racial group of black Africans. The majority, 33 or 60 per cent, had not matriculated, while 21 or 38 per cent had. The vast majority, 52 out of 55 respondents, were unemployed, and only three were employed at the time of data collection.

Of the 15 youth NPOs in Umvoti Local Municipality that participated in implementing the two programmes, only nine were available to participate in the study. The following NPOs participated: Kranskop Youth Foundation, Imfundoyethu Youth Foundation,

Jabulani Youth Club, Abaqquguzeli Youth Organisation, Silindokuhle Youth Organisation, Honey Guide, Amakhabela Youth Organisation, Ikusasalisezandleni Youth Organisation, and Inkanyezi Youth Club. The sample also involved 10 officials, including four community development practitioners, four social workers and two service office managers. Of the 12 social workers working in the Umvoti Local Municipality, only four participated in the study and were those responsible for youth programmes in schools and local communities.

All participants were given a code name to maintain anonymity. For example, each of the nine NPOs was assigned a number eg NPO1, NPO2, etc. Five males and three females led the five NPOs. The experience of participating NPOs in delivering youth services ranged from four and eight years. The NPOs deliver services across different types of communities, with five NPOs assisting youth in rural communities.

1.9 Data Collection Method

Data collection refers to the information collected to answer the research questions. Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2014: 191) argue that the process of data collection should allow the researcher to achieve the desired outcomes stipulated in the research question and objectives. Against this backdrop, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection tools, alongside secondary data. Du-Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2014: 183) define a focus group as a group interview that “serves to determine the attitudes, behaviour, preferences and dislikes of participants who are interviewed”. Semi-structured interviews “is a verbal interchange where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person by asking questions” (Longhurst, 2003: 143). Semi-structured interviews are “conversational and allow for open responses from the participant’s own words” (Longhurst, 2003: 143).

Two focus group discussions were conducted: one with the nine non-profit youth organisation participants working with the Department of Social Development in Umvoti Local Municipality, who are responsible for implementing the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes, and another with the youth participants. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with the implementers: community development practitioners, social workers and the management supervising them in Umvoti Local Municipality. Patton (1980), cited in Stofile

(2008:12), notes that the advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that they provide systematic and comprehensive procedures for delimiting issues to be discussed during interviews.

1.10 Data Analysis

Content and thematic analyses of the collected data were undertaken. Content analysis is described as “the collection and formation of systematic conclusions concerning the characteristics and meaning recorded in the form of books, reports and policy” (Babbie and Mouton, 2011: 481). Thematic analysis was applied to the collected data. Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) define thematic analysis as “the method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. Responses from the participants were analysed and grouped into themes derived from the research questions and the theoretical framework.

1.11 Limitation of the study

Only 55 programme participants, or 14 per cent of the total youth population, were available and willing to participate, along with nine Youth NPOs. The study was conducted in only one local municipality, and in two out of four programmes.

1.12 Structure of Thesis

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review.

Chapter 3 Policy and Legislative Framework for the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.

Chapter 4 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework.

Chapter 5 Findings and Analysis.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and Recommendations.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the setting for the study, including the statement of the problem and its background. The resulting research questions and objectives, which focus on the implementation of skills development and youth mobilisation, were outlined. This chapter also discussed the research methodology, research design,

study population and sampling, data collection and data analysis methods. The chapter also outlined the significance of the study, its limitations and finally, an outline of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the literature on the implementation of youth policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the South African context. The importance of involving youth organisations in implementing youth policies is also briefly discussed. Lastly, a review of secondary studies is presented, focussing on youth mobilisation and skills development to reduce youth unemployment.

2.2 Implementation of Youth Policies and Programmes in South Africa

In South Africa, the National Development Plan of 2012 and the National Youth Policy 2020-2030 (2020) align with the South African Constitution and with global and national rights frameworks that recognise youth participation as a right. Despite significant global and national commitments to youth involvement in policy processes, numerous impediments and constraints hinder youth participation in, for instance, health policy initiatives and programmes (Jacobs and George, 2022). Challenges include differing interpretations and methodologies concerning youth, particularly the varying definitions and processes for their inclusion in decision-making, which illustrate how constituencies and sectors influence youth policy priorities and programmes. Moreover, policy discussions around youth can be paradoxical, portraying young individuals as both “a risk” to social cohesion and democracy and “a solution” to “wicked problems” (Jacobs and George, 2022).

Despite several strategies to involve young people in the formulation of health policies and programmes, considerable discrepancies persist between policymakers' perceptions of young people's needs and their actual experiences. A review of youth health policies in South Africa from 2003 to 2018 (Jacobs and George, 2022) found that the policy documents referenced the South African Constitution and legal frameworks that prioritise human rights, including the right to health, access to

services, and the resolution of historical and contemporary barriers to access for all South Africans. However, only three of the policies they examined explicitly referenced the rights and empowerment of youth, and only one addressed youth engagement in the policy formulation process, namely the Adolescent and Youth Health Policy (AYHP) of 2017. Their review also found that the National Youth Policy incorporated consultations with youth from the nine provinces, but it offered limited information on the methodology employed.

Chamisa and Shava (2016) note that in South Africa, public policies lack youth input, making them rigid and undemocratic in how young people should experience development. The authors argue that the South African government needs to empower youth through skills development initiatives, public speaking, and group programmes that promote social cohesion, and improve communication and interaction with other stakeholders.

The report titled *What Drives Youth Unemployment and What Interventions Are Effective? A Systematic Overview of the Evidence and a Theory of Change* is a comprehensive analysis by De Lannoy, Graham, Patel and Leibbrandt (2018). The research examined the factors contributing to youth unemployment and assessed viable strategies to mitigate unemployment among young people. De Lannoy *et al.* (2018) argue that in South Africa, most policies are developed in light of multiple challenges, including the need for skills development and economic growth. They also argue that implementation within institutional bodies is poor, due to inadequate coordination between bodies entrusted with youth development. De Lannoy *et al.* (2018: 17) note that although the expectation is that the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) should lead the programme of youth employment and development, its mandate remains very broad to ensure accountability from different government departments. The mandate of NYDA includes integrating youth into the economy.

In their study, De Lannoy *et al.* (2018) found that existing policies were sufficient and correctly identified how to combat youth unemployment, but they lacked a strong coordinating government body, resulting in continued disconnection between skills development, social protection and economic policies. They also noted the lack of capacity among government officials to deliver youth programmes, arguing that the

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) should not be seen as a job creation programme, but rather as a short, sustainable relief programme for unemployed youth. Graham, De Lannoy, Rosa and Breakey (2019) acknowledge that South Africa possesses a robust policy framework, featuring numerous exemplary programmes that effectively address the issues encountered by youth during their transition from education to employment. Despite this framework, youth continue to face considerable obstacles during this transitional phase.

Graham *et al.* (2019) conducted a policy review within the framework of the Basic Package of Support for Youth in South Africa project, which included an evaluation of the then-current policies and multiple consultations with different departments regarding their support for unemployed young people and those not in education or training (known as the NEET). The policy evaluation focused on policies addressing the multifaceted requirements of youth, encompassing education, training, health, wellness, and employment. The study aimed to identify essential policies and programmes that established mandates to assist young individuals who were not engaged in education or training or employed. The primary finding was that multiple programmes existed, but that youth continue to “fall through the cracks” due to insufficient policy coordination and integration, as well as poor implementation of exit strategies for those who participated in programmes. The authors argue that the NYDA, the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, and the Department of Social Development have clear responsibilities and mandates to lead the integration of interventions, with other departments playing a complementary role (Graham *et al.*, 2019).

Graham and Mlatsheni (2015) assessed the effectiveness of the South African programmes of the National Youth Service, the Expanded Public Works Programme, the Community-Based Public Works Programme and Learnerships, all designed for unemployed youth. They noted that these policies are making positive contributions; however, their targets are inflated, and there is insufficient guidance on coordinating various departments to improve economic participation. The authors also argue that there are significant weaknesses in youth programmes in South Africa, including a lack of interaction with potential employers, so that skills gained through participation

go unnoticed by employers. Another notable weakness is that youth interventions and policies are uncoordinated and inaccessible.

Buntu and Lehmann (2015) conducted a study titled *Youth Policy Field and Institutional Analyses at Municipal Level in South Africa*. The study investigated the existing structures (institutions, actors and networks) affecting youth development in the three municipalities of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality (COJ), Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality (NMBMM) and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM). The study aimed to collect pertinent information to formulate recommendations for enhancing municipalities' abilities to address youth potential and vulnerabilities. A qualitative research technique was employed, utilising the Capacity Development Framework (CDF) as the analytical tool. In this study, an investigation into the stakeholder-owned process was crucial in identifying the factors influencing the quality of municipal youth development by examining the capacities of institutional instruments and processes across the domains of policy field, coordination and cooperation, institutional capacity, and individual capacity.

The study's findings revealed a lack of coordination among the government, the private sector and civil society in youth development programmes. There were also overlapping mandates and duplicate structures (Buntu and Lehmann, 2015: 9). The authors argue that there is no concrete commitment to policies as stakeholders do not develop implementation plans (Buntu and Lehmann, 2015: 9). In some metros, senior managers do not even know the content of the policy and commitments to implementation remain a concern. Policy documents are inaccessible to young people, and most officials responsible for implementation lack the relevant qualifications, relying instead on their experiences and involvement in youth activism, working with NGOs and the private sector (Buntu and Lehmann, 2015).

2.3 The Participation of Youth Organisations in Youth Policy Implementation in South Africa

In South Africa, there is a perception and concern about the inadequacy of youth policy (NUMSA, 2014; South African Broadcasting Corporation, 2011). Mtwesi (2014) asserts that several challenges have resulted in minimal youth involvement in the formulation and implementation of youth policies, including youth marginalisation,

inadequate information dissemination, ambiguous legislation on youth participation, and low educational attainment in the country's poorest areas. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2013) notes that youth unemployment in South Africa is characterised by marginalisation, hindering their integration into the mainstream economy and decision-making processes.

Farmanesh *et al.* (2005) argue that the defining feature of youth organisations is their primary focus on the views and needs of young people. The authors argue that even informal structures enable young people to organise community actions. They note that support for youth organisations through youth councils and committees is a strategy to ensure the involvement of young people in exercising their rights. They also argue that youth organisations face challenges such as instability, scarce resources and discontinuity in leadership. Farmanesh *et al.* (2005) argue that young people decide to be part of youth structures or NGOs because of their interest in the issues or because they see themselves as members of a particular group. The authors argue that young people play an integral part in addressing the challenges of poverty and hunger by providing fresh ideas for policymakers, promoting rural development and through entrepreneurial activities.

According to McLaughlin (2000), the effectiveness of youth organisations rests on three factors: programmes need to be youth-centred, knowledge-centred and assessment-centred. Their study revealed that youth-centred programmes foster loyalty and effective participation. Programmes need to respond to the differing skills, interests and talents of young people. The author argues that for a youth organisation to be effective, it must provide relevant activities; invite youth with a variety of interests, talents and abilities; build on youth strengths; identify appropriate material by tailoring activities to the strengths and needs of youth; and ensure the capacity to build on existing strengths and use appropriate materials (McLaughlin, 2000). McLaughlin (2000) claims that youth-centred organisations pay personal attention to youth who have been excluded, ensuring the provision of quality content by guaranteeing that youth activities do not lack quality, and that they have a clear focus on the programmes that attract the interests of youth.

McLaughlin (2000: 15) argues that being assessment-centred is a key feature of an effective youth organisation. Assessment may come from peers, coaches and

outcomes, and further highlights the importance of feedback and recognition, which enable young people to accomplish activities at a certain level and be celebrated in their communities. The cycles of planning, practice, and performance allow the youth to commit to regular attendance through practices (McLaughlin, 2000).

Mburu and Makori's (2015) study highlighted that youth groups need to improve their leadership. The authors propose that governments should organise workshops and training for youth to ensure they can select appropriate projects and be visionary in working towards achieving group goals.

From the literature discussed, it is evident that in South Africa, youth participation has yet to be integrated into policy-making. Among other things, inadequate education, training and skills development impede active youth participation, as most of them lack the analytical abilities necessary to scrutinise the nation's economic, social and political tendencies.

The next section discusses the skills development programme for the youth in South Africa.

2.4 Skills Development Programmes for Youth

Adams (2009: 3) notes that work-related skills are acquired across various sectors, including "training institutions, private for-profit and non-profit organisations". Training should be provided for employment purposes, or to improve skills and prepare for new technology (Adams, 2009: 3). The World Bank (2007: 58) highlighted that youth policy makers need to ensure that skills development is not limited to acquiring work-related skills, because young people need to learn to manage their health risks, exercise citizenship and break the cycle of poverty. Akojee, Gewer and McGrath (2005: 13) expressed similar sentiments, arguing that skills development programmes should comprise occupationally directed learning programmes, which, when combined, can lead to a qualification.

Tukundane and Zeelen (2015: 246) note that skilled youth have greater access to the labour market and to self-employment. Acquiring life skills contributes to positive behaviour change. Muafi, Hartati and Gusaptono (2010: 136) state that unemployed youth who have low self-esteem before enrolment in training usually find that their self-

esteem increases after training. Damirovich (2023: 478) posits that there is a need to conduct activities that will educate the young generation about the spirit and morals of patriotism, to protect the independence and sovereignty of the country.

Thwala (2011: 6015) argues that South Africa must classify skills shortages across industries, and ensure the recognition of work skills programmes critical to national economic growth. Dunbar (2013: 14) argues that employer involvement in skills development programmes has a positive impact. The International Youth Foundation (2012), cited in Duncan (2013: 40), notes that employers and their counterparts in Europe commonly agree on the provision of life skills, including leadership, conflict management and task-oriented skills.

According to Duncan (2013: 16), successful skills programmes have two features: education providers and employers cooperate to design curricula, and to intensify work opportunities by providing work before and during students' studies. This leads to a linear system in which enrolment leads to skills and jobs. The author argues that employers commit to hiring youth before their enrolment in skills programmes (Duncan, 2013: 16). Murinda, cited in Hlungwani, Masuku and Magidi *et al.* (2021: 4), argues that youth skills training in rural areas is limited to manual labour where they learn crafts, brick moulding etc.

Overall, the above clearly emphasises the importance of skills training. However, some challenges have also been highlighted. The first is the lack of variety in the programmes available to young people. Second, there appears to be a lack of monitoring and evaluation by those who implement the skills training. The tendency is to train young people and then leave them to manage on their own, which is difficult for most of them as they lack the capacity to 'kickstart' themselves. Young people are not given adequate support to ensure their continued use of the skills they have acquired.

2.5 Youth Mobilisation Programmes

Ayodele (2019: 20) defines mobilisation "as a process of putting people into readiness for active service, which will benefit them". According to the Department of Social Development Youth Mobilisation (2019: 20), youth mobilisation should produce the

following outcomes: “youth skills and knowledge needed to practice leadership, ability to make informed decisions, youth should acquire skills, knowledge that will lead to self-knowledge, social interactions and physical/mental health”. Joshi and Pandey (2021: 2532) argue that “the successful implementation of any intervention depends on the awareness of the youth to adopt it”. This can be achieved through the mobilisation and participation of young people in programmes. Olaleye and Ayodele (2016: 251) argue that the mobilisation process is closely linked to strengthening capacity. The authors’ features of mobilisation include engagement, communication and outreach. Olaleye and Ayodele (2016: 251) argue that creating inter-agency dialogue and early linkages during mobilisation may lead to the development of future relationships and partnerships within institutions. According to Olaleye and Ayodele (2016: 251), several key elements need to be considered in youth mobilisation programmes.

2.5.1 Participation as a Means of Mobilisation

Participation is a crucial feature of democratic states, playing a critical role in decision-making and promoting active citizen participation. Mandrysz (2016) argues that youth civic participation should be seen as preparation for the practice of citizens’ rights and duties in the future. She further contends that youth mobilisation will assist in solving common problems and satisfy shared needs in the practice of participatory budgets and in organising the local community. Bower and Donovan (2002) and Finkel (1985), cited in Gerodimos (2008: 966), show that there is a reciprocal relationship between efficacy and participation, constituting a virtuous circle of participation, where a citizen’s confidence in the effectiveness of their own actions and the system’s responsiveness to those actions will lead to the highest level of participation.

2.5.2 Access to Information and Youth Mobilisation

Shehata (2008) explains that in Egypt, young people made use of an extensive array of information and communication technologies to organise, mobilise and express their views, challenging the state and the Egyptian political system. UNESCO (2021) argues that the mass mobilisation of youth requires knowledge-based empowerment that highlights the consequences of their daily choices and actions, while safeguarding paths to creative engagement.

2.5.3 Youth to Take the Lead in Decisions

The Centre for the Study of Social Policy (2007: 5), cited in Anoll (2019: 4), articulates that “Getting youth to participate in activities and decisions that adults ultimately control is not a true engagement”. Proper youth engagement requires that they have full authority, build capacity while being responsible, and be allowed the opportunity to make their own decisions.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented literature on the design and implementation of youth policies and programmes with a particular focus on South Africa, to help the researcher understand these programmes and their effectiveness. In the main, the discussion noted that the formulation of youth policies and programmes is a milestone for any country; however, implementation remains elusive in addressing the needs highlighted by different policies. The effectiveness of such programmes is hindered by the lack of implementation plans, the capacity, skills and qualifications of programme implementers, as well as the absence of a single governing body dealing with youth development. In South Africa, good programmes exist, but they lack coordination. The literature also reveals that youth unemployment remains a challenge, despite the numerous policies in place to address it. The literature reveals that when youth employment interventions involve employers, employment opportunities improve as employers provide relevant input to the skills development programmes needed for their market. There is also a need for policies designed specifically for youth in rural areas, as such youth face unique challenges in their efforts to engage with youth programmes. The literature revealed that the provision of technical skills to young people is critical, but there is also a need to promote life skills to youth.

CHAPTER THREE

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS FOR THE KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

During apartheid, South African youth faced diverse challenges, particularly along racial lines, and there were no specific or responsive policies to address them. Since the transition to democracy post-1994, the newly elected democratic government in South Africa has sought to address youth challenges by developing legislation, policies and programmes that directly address them. This chapter presents the national and provincial policy and legislative frameworks that regulate youth-related issues in South Africa. Lastly, the chapter will analyse the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development, which is the focus of this study.

3.2 South African Youth Frameworks since 1994

3.2.1 National Youth Commission (NYC) (Act 19 of 1996)

The National Youth Commission Act of 1996 aims to “provide the establishment, constitution, objects and functions of the NYC”. The Act states that the object of the Commission is to promote the coordination and development of national integrated youth plans and policies, and to develop principles and provide recommendations to the government on youth issues. The Act further states that the object of the Commission is to address past imbalances and promote uniformity across all organs of state. The Act also makes provisions for the NYC to carry out the following functions: implement and monitor the National Youth Policy, prioritise youth issues, develop programmes in line with the National Youth Policy, aid partnership formation between government and youth organisations on matters relating to youth development, conduct needs assessments for youth needs and prioritise resources accordingly. The

Act proposes cooperation and liaison within and between institutions or authorities that operate similarly to the Commission, to form common policies and practices in youth-related issues. This Act further promotes the formulation of specific policies targeting youth, which promote equality, and address the imbalances of the Apartheid past.

3.2.2 National Youth Policy (1997)

The National Youth Policy of 1997 was the first of its kind in South Africa, following the National Commission Act, and aimed to coordinate the development of national youth policies to redress the imbalances of the past. The five goals of the National Youth Policy include:

- (i) raise awareness among youth and activate their commitment within the principles and values of the Bill of Rights;
- (ii) promote and encourage youth to participate and contribute in the reconstruction of the country;
- (iii) assist youth to create activities that promote youth development and empower societies;
- (iv) devise and coordinate effective holistic systems that respond to the issues of youth;
- (v) create platforms and communities that support youth while behaving as positive role models.

The policy sets targets in line with the vulnerability status of young people and reflects their diverse circumstances. The policy's target audience includes young men and women who are unemployed, out of school, in rural areas, at risk, with disabilities, and those living and working on the streets, as well as those living with HIV/AIDS. The policy provides strategies to address the challenges and needs of young people while creating opportunities for them. The National Youth Policy lays the foundation for youth development and participation in the country. It allocates responsibilities to different government departments to empower youth through partnerships, and identifies the institutions involved in implementation.

3.2.3 National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002-2007)

The purpose of this policy is to redress past injustices that affected young people and to create equitable policies and programmes for young women and men. The policy

framework defines youth as people aged between 15 and 28 years. It promotes the participation of youth, government departments and the NYC in youth affairs. The framework presents a holistic and integrated youth development approach that prioritises youth in the allocation of resources and in creating systems where different sectors work together. This promotes partnership in which youth, mature persons, government institutions, businesses and youth organisations collaborate to address the challenges of the past while achieving future targets. The policy suggests a process in which socialisation recognises issues of race, gender and disability, and equally distributes resources and creates opportunities.

The objectives of the framework include “locating youth development in a holistic strategy that encompasses political, economic and social dimensions” (South African Government Presidency, 2002), while the policy’s vision is to have an

“integrated, holistic and sustainable youth development, conscious of the historical imbalances and current realities, to build a non-sexist, non-racist, democratic SA in which young people and their organisations not only enjoy and contribute to their full potential in the social, economic and political spheres of life but also recognise and develop their responsibilities to build a better life for all.” (South African Government Presidency, 2002: 9).

This lays a foundation for young people’s participation in economic and social spheres, while also affording young people opportunities for them to take responsibility for creating a better life for themselves.

3.2.4 National Youth Service Policy Framework (2002)

The National Youth Service Policy Framework (NYDPF) recognises that the National Youth Service has a role in youth social mobilisation and capacity building. The National Youth Service is tasked with providing young people with opportunities for training, learning and experience as set out in the National Youth Service Development Policy Framework (2002). The National Youth Service (NYS) is defined as “a concept that is transformative in nature which ensures involvement of young people in activities which provide benefits to the community while developing the abilities of young people through service and learning” (National Youth Commission, 2002: 8). The policy aims to help young people access opportunities, develop

marketable skills and mobilise resources that support the national youth service programmes. The framework sets out institutional arrangements to implement the NYS. The vision of the National Youth Service is to develop “youth through providing a long-term and effective means of reconstructing South African society through physical rehabilitation, asset building and renewal of community resources and rebuilding the fabric of communities” (National Youth Commission, 2002: 9).

The policy targets higher education, as well as further education and training students, unemployed young people and youth in conflict with the law. The policy prioritises “young men and women with disabilities, unemployed young women and men, school-aged out-of-school young women and men, rural and urban young women and men and young men and women at risk” (National Youth Commission, 2002). The NYS programme operates on the following principles for youth mobilisation and skills development:

- (i) service learning, where young people gain clear learning objectives which allow them to participate meaningfully in their communities while gaining skills;
- (ii) education;
- (iii) accredited training – this promotes provision of structured training which meets the National Qualification Framework standards and others;
- (iv) promotion of self-reliance - this principle enables youth to interact with participants from diverse social and economic backgrounds;
- (v) partnerships – the NYS programme is cross-cutting in nature and is implemented through partnerships between stakeholders and government departments. This principle suggests the need for strong leadership, which enables the sharing of resources and joint working within sectors.

The NYS programme enables young people to participate in community upliftment programmes and addresses skills shortages among the youth as they learn through experience.

3.2.5 National Youth Development Agency Act 54 of 2008

The National Youth Development Agency Act (NYDA) provides for the establishment of the National Youth Development Agency, which aims to coordinate youth development issues. The Act requires the agency to develop a youth-integrated plan

and strategy. It also authorises the agency to conduct career guidance for youth, share information about national youth funds, and create youth employment opportunities. The NYDA is mandated to provide financial assistance to young people to further their studies. The Act proposes prioritising small youth-owned micro and medium enterprises. The Act stipulates the roles that organs of state, companies and civil society need to play in relation to youth development. The Act proposes that the plans for organs of state must align with and be guided by national priorities when planning youth activities, and that they must submit annual reports to the youth agency for all youth priorities implemented. The Act also promotes youth development through the establishment of youth-specific institutions that promote and address youth unemployment.

3.2.6 National Youth Policy 2020-2030

The Department of Youth, Women and People with Disabilities, in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund, developed the National Youth Policy 2030. This is the first youth policy designed for a 10-year period to align with the National Development Plan 2020-2030. The policy defines youth as young people aged 15 and 35. This is consistent with the various National Youth Policies: 2009-2014, 2015-2020 and up to 2020-2030. The vision of the National Youth Policy 2030 is to have

“An integrated, holistic and sustainable youth development, conscious of historical imbalances, current realities, and diversities in building capacities for young people, so that they can in turn contribute to building a better life for all” (Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, 2020).

The policy aims to address persistent youth challenges, including poorly coordinated youth programmes, under-resourced youth services, poor mental and physical health, the effects of COVID-19, unemployment, poor entrepreneurial spirit, low skills, skills mismatch and school drop-out, all of which negatively affect opportunities to transition to work. This policy recognises young people as key role players in their own development in partnership with other stakeholders.

3.3 KwaZulu-Natal Youth-Related Development Frameworks

3.3.1 KwaZulu-Natal Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy (YEES) 2008

In 2008, Doctor Zweli Mkhize, the former MEC for the Department of Economic Development, approved the Youth Economic Empowerment Strategy which aims to ensure that all young people can access meaningful opportunities to participate in the economy. The goal of this strategic document was to launch an entrepreneurship practice for youth in KwaZulu-Natal, by developing sustainable, viable enterprises. The strategy aims to improve employment opportunities and skills development linked to employment and entrepreneurship. It also provides for the development of institutions that promote youth economic development in KwaZulu-Natal. The policy articulates the importance of increasing access to information for young people. The strategic objectives of the YEES include developing sector-specific youth enterprises, providing youth work through experience, capacitating existing institutions to promote economic development, facilitating early market entry, and developing school programmes that link to employment. The policy outlines the key pillars of YEES as the development of youth enterprise, youth employment programmes, youth skills development and training, information dissemination, and institutional development.

3.3.2 KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Youth Development Integrated Strategy 2021-2026

The KwaZulu-Natal Youth Development Integrated Strategy was developed after the National Youth Policy 2030. The strategy is a tool to assist the KwaZulu-Natal province in implementing the National Youth Policy 2030 and youth programmes. The strategy aims to develop skilled, capable youth who are empowered to contribute to a prosperous province. The strategy provides a framework for planning, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating youth development interventions and for providing progress reports. The strategy supports the coordination and implementation of policies and programmes that lead to the holistic development of youth in KwaZulu-Natal, in partnership with social partners. The strategy outlines how the government, public sector, labour, civil society and private sector should contribute to and support youth in relation to skills development, whilst enabling them to participate in the upliftment of their societies. The youth development strategy outlines key activities to enable the province to deliver and implement national youth priorities.

This lays the foundation for youth development programmes to achieve uniformity in KwaZulu-Natal and provide holistic youth development.

3.3.3 KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020 (KZNSDPYD)

The KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020 “serves as a strategic framework in support of the RSA Constitution, National Youth Policy and other youth-related regulatory frameworks” (KZNSDPYD, 2020: 3). The policy identifies the main challenge to youth participation in the economy, namely “joblessness, poverty and inequality” (KZNSDPYD, 2020: 3). It advocates interventions to address the above challenges and clarifies that, if left unaddressed, these socio-economic challenges may worsen and lead to crime in the province. The KZNSDPYD notes the high level of marginalisation among youth, and advocates for youth-specific programmes and interventions that promote their participation. The policy places the following principles at the centre of its implementation:

- (i) provision of guidance to youth in outlining their developmental goals and youth objectives;
- (ii) provision of physical and social platforms that allow participation to improve youth development;
- (iii) inter-sectoral collaboration whenever there are development programmes which promote youth development;
- (iv) youth interventions to be needs-based.

These principles mirror the objectives of the NYDPF of 2002, which makes provision for the location of “youth development in a holistic strategy that encompasses political, economic and social dimensions” (KZNDSDPYD, 2020).

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter analysed the development of youth policies in South Africa. It is evident that since 1994, there have been significant attempts to develop youth-related policies that seek to address youth challenges. Since 1994, the government has made deliberate efforts to foster youth inclusion by introducing national programmes and enacting legislation aimed at promoting youth development and expanding employment opportunities. The last section of the chapter discussed and analysed the two pillars of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development, namely youth mobilisation and skills development. The stated intentions of these frameworks need to be examined against empirical evidence, so this study researched the actual implementation and implementation issues related to these frameworks in

Umvoti Local Municipality in KZN. This analysis answers the research question about the policies and legislative frameworks guiding youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in Umvoti Local Municipality.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the conceptual framework employed in the study to analyse the implementation of the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes contained within the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Youth Policy. This study seeks to analyse the experiences of policy implementers including public officials, non-governmental organisations and youth NPOs. The chapter discusses the definitions of public policy, the policy-making cycle, the structures of policy implementation, factors affecting policy implementation, policy delivery mechanisms, the actors involved in implementation namely non-governmental and street-level bureaucrats, and policy implementation evaluation. The chapter further clarifies the roles played by government agents, beneficiaries, and civil society during policy implementation.

4.2. Public Policy

Anderson (2011: 6) defines public policy “as a relatively stable, purposive course of action or inaction followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern”. This definition is similar to Dewey’s 1927 definition, cited in Parsons (1995: 496), which states that public policy is about “the public and its problems”. These definitions focus on how problems and issues are defined, constructed and made part of the policy agenda. Brooks (1989: 16) defines public policy as the “broad framework of ideas and values within which decisions are taken, and actions or inactions are pursued by the government in relation to some issue or problem”; “goals or desired outcomes that the organisation put in place to address a certain social or public development”. Similarly, Anderson (2011: 7) identified certain concepts that public policy can be linked to, such as purposive or goal-oriented, designed to accomplish specific goals or produce definite results, patterns of action followed over time, response to policy demands and lastly, what the government intends to do.

The study employs the definition of public policy by Brooks provided above. According to Mertanen (2020), youth policies are often created to govern young people by controlling them as part of the population at risk, aimed at enabling them to become normal members of society. Brunila *et al.* cited in Mertanen (2020: 66), argue that most youth policies and their implementation have a central mandate promoting youth economic participation and their being normal members of society by capacitating them with skills needed in the workplace. The KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development (KZNSDPYD) is a public policy that seeks to address youth challenges in line with the National Youth Policy, which also serves to tackle issues facing young South Africans as a whole. Cloete and Wissink (2000: 13) mention that “public policy is generated within the framework of government influence and procedures”. This study analyses the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Youth Policy.

4.3 Policy-Making Cycle

The primary reason for developing policies is to change and improve the lives of members of the public. Capano and Pritoni (2020: 6) state that the policy-making cycle “is a heuristic tool through which different stages of ongoing and never-ending dynamics of policy process can be segmented”. Warner (2022) describes the public policy cycle as divided into five stages, including agenda setting, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation, as indicated in Figure 1 below.

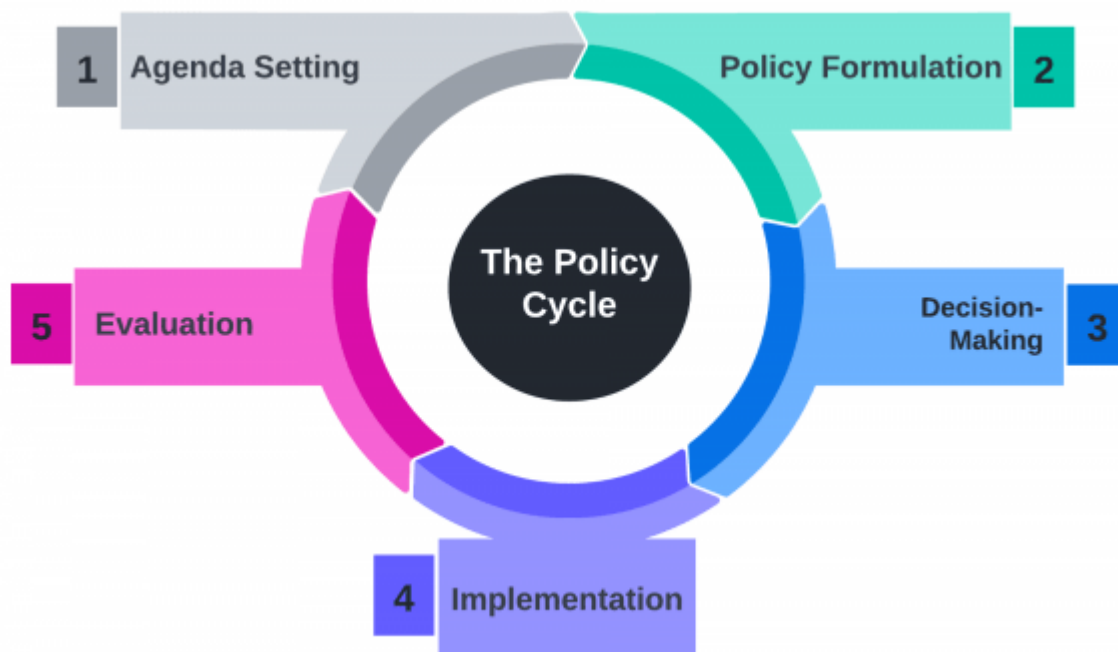


Figure 1: The Policy Cycle

Source: Warner (2022: 1)

According to Capano and Pritoni (2020: 6), the policy stages provide a framework for different actors to play their particular roles while pursuing their individual goals. Peters and Pierre (2006: 6) claim that the main reason for these roles is “what actors do at one stage of the policy process is to a large extent framed by what other actors have done earlier in the process”. Howlett and Ramesh (2003), cited in Savard and Banville (2012: 1), define the policy stages as follows: agenda setting is the first phase, where social conditions are recognised and considered public problems that need to be addressed by the government. Policy formulation is the second stage, where possible solutions to policy problems are identified and assessed, and policy options are weighed and ranked (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003: 156-157). After the third step of decision-making, Megie (2004), cited in Savard and Banville (2012: 2), states that policy implementation is the phase where policy decisions are put into action through the application of government directives. Finally, there is evaluation. Bridgman and Davis (2003: 102) mention that the policy-making cycle involves “start with a problem, seek evidence, test proposals and put recommendations before the Cabinet”. The authors state that the policy cycle approach “can help public servants develop a policy and guide it through the institutions of government (Bridgman and Davis, 2003: 102).

Against this backdrop of these conceptualisations, this study focuses on the implementation stage of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020. The policy cycle described above helps the researcher analyse the public policy processes, procedures, roles and responsibilities in place for the different actors involved in policy implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.

4.4 Policy Implementation

Policy implementation began as a struggle to understand the “missing link” between the expression of government intention and the world of action and result (Imperial, 2021: 01). Parsons (1995: 491) states that “implementation is about how policy is put into action and practice”. Similarly, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1983: 21), cited in Hill and Hupe (2002: 7), state that policy implementation “is about carrying out basic policy decisions usually incorporated in a statute which can take the form of important executive decisions”. Anderson (2015: 227) also notes that factors affecting implementation include state and local economic conditions, the attitude of officials and the actions of clients. Implementation can only take place when formal agreements and decisions have been accepted and approved.

According to Moore (1995), cited in De Coning and Cloete (2011: 137), a comprehensive public policy implementation strategy should be in place to ensure public value. The authors suggest that this strategy should include elements of substantive value, legitimacy, political sustainability and operational feasibility in administration. To support this, O’Toole (2000: 267) states that policy implementation is “what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action”.

Moore (1995), cited in De Coning and Cloete (2011: 137), argues that policy implementation is more about the value that the policy carries. Lessons learnt from South African policy implementation indicate that there are important ingredients that make implementation successful. These are: the formation of a planning strategy, partnership in delivery and programme and project management (De Coning and Cloete, 2011: 163). This study analyses the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal

Social Development Policy on Youth Development, specifically the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes. The study thus focuses on policy implementation models that may be employed, with the aim of interpreting the experiences of the implementers and beneficiaries of these programmes. The next section discusses the structures of policy implementation.

4.5 The Structures of Policy Implementation

Sager and Gofen (2022: 347) indicate that policy implementation occurs within a specific “institutional setting and requires specific structure and organisation to conduct it”. This includes decision-making and role-specification. Peters (2014) and Imperial (2021), cited in Sager and Gofen (2022: 348), describe implementation structures as institutions. The authors highlight that policy implementation occurs where there is an *implementation arrangement*, meaning an institutional and organisational arrangement (Sager and Gofen, 2022: 348). Institutional arrangements help policy implementers realise policy achievements, using both formal and informal institutions, in line with opportunities available within organisational borders (Sager and Gofen, 2022: 348). Hall and O’Toole (2000: 682) note the importance of maintaining and revisiting such arrangements in a way that matches local conditions. Cameron (1999), cited in Hall and O’Toole (2000: 680), mentions that where there are multiple actors from different categories, i.e. the business sector, intergovernmental and non-profit institutions, there is a demand for minimum-pooled links between institutions participating during implementation. Hall and O’Toole (2000: 689) are of the view that the programme environment is complex and demanding in identifying the links to be established and sustained. The authors discuss the importance of having coordinating requirements, highlighting that new programmes require new methods of coordination, information and new multi-organisational collaboration initiatives. (Hall and O’Toole, 2000: 682). This section helps the researcher answer the research question about the structures, processes and procedures in place to implement the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development. Implementation approaches and structures can act as barriers or enablers to effective policy implementation. The next section reviews the factors affecting policy implementation.

4.6 Factors Affecting Policy Implementation

This section highlights some of the pertinent factors influencing policy implementation

4.6.1 Unclear guidance to Implementers and Actors

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983), cited in Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002:390), note that one factor behind poor policy implementation is “the inability of policymakers to craft clear, consistent directives regarding desired behaviours of implementing agents and actors”. To support this, Mthethwa (2012: 42) opines that implementation becomes more challenging in the absence of written guidance on goals to achieve, strategies to employ and responsibilities to deliver on, as well as when there is no monitoring framework. Muthanna and Sang (2023: 22) refer to work by the Ministry of Higher Studies and Scientific Research in Yemen, which highlights that policies need to be accompanied by implementation plans so that implementers have step-by-step details during implementation. According to Ajulor (2018: 542), policy design may also be poorly structured, or the original design may not be communicated effectively to staff.

4.6.2 Social and Political Environment

Calista (1994: 3), cited in Mthethwa (2012: 38), indicates that implementation is an ongoing process in which key actors “work in complex policy and institutional contexts face pressures from interested, as well as opposing parties”. This underscores the importance of understanding the dynamics of the environment in which the policy is to be implemented. According to Calista (cited in Mthethwa, 2012: 42), achieving policy-intended goals “means that implementation must proceed through inevitable changes in political regimes, governmental structures, economic conditions, and social environments.” The author states that changes in political economy mean changes in policy environment so implementers are also affected, and eventually, processes and operations become affected (Walt & Gilson, 1994: 362; Bhuyan *et al.* (2010: 5), cited in Mthethwa, (2012: 42)). These changes may delay implementation or cause conflict between the beneficiaries who expect to receive the services presented within the policy.

4.6.3 Lack of Trust

Scheberle (1997), cited in Bowman (2005: 211), argues that the working relationship between federal and state personnel influences policy implementation. This relationship evolves with trust and involvement. Bowman (2005: 212) states that where high involvement and trust exist, the implementers (state personnel) work together to

achieve synergy, which promotes effective implementation. Brynard (2009: 560) mentions that trust is one of the contributors to successful implementation. The author articulates that for a policy to be implemented successfully; there should be a high level of trust among the policy implementers.

4.6.4 Inadequate Monitoring

Makinde (2005: 66) suggests that inadequate monitoring may lead to undesirable policy outcomes. Monitoring must be undertaken during policy implementation. Mthethwa and Jili (2012: 106) describe monitoring as a controlling process or procedure that aligns with the achievement of an objective relevant to the beneficiaries. Mthethwa and Jili (2016: 107) argue that monitoring is a tool that assesses whether “a programme /system is going in the right direction, as previously planned”. According to Khandaker and Khan (2016: 543), implementation requires effective monitoring and evaluation, with efficient operating procedures and techniques that enable implementers to describe “the scope of their responsibilities in line with policy objectives”. Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2012: 23) indicate that policy implementation involves monitoring and the outcomes.

4.6.5 Communication

Effective communication among multiple actors, including policy implementers and target groups, is a key factor in successful policy implementation. Bowman (2005: 212) claims that policy implementers need to use various communication channels to share information and provide timely feedback to promote “interagency learning”. The author explains that implementation managers play a role in improving communication and fostering cooperation, while addressing trust issues among implementers. Makinde (2005: 63) argues that communication is important during implementation, noting that where implementers have inadequate information, misunderstanding may arise as they may be confused about the specific activities to be conducted. Makinde (2005: 66) encourages effective communication between beneficiaries and implementers to close policy gaps.

4.6.6 Availability of Resources

O'Toole (2012), cited in Taweekaew (2013: 75), mentions that incentives for collaboration are crucial for successful policy implementation. The author defines

incentives as the extent to which resources are made available. Muthanna and Sang (2023: 13) argue that financial resources are crucial during policy implementation, and that successful implementation occurs with the provision of sufficient funding. Civil society organisations play an effective role in monitoring policy implementation. They advocate and recommend strategies to enhance the implementation process, and they serve as watchdogs in assessing the appropriate use of funds. Muthanna and Sang (2023) further advocate for the provision of sufficient infrastructure for implementers, including access to the internet.

4.6.7 Shared Decision-Making and Policy Implementation

According to Durlak and DuPre (2008: 340), shared decision-making improves implementation. The authors argue that it empowers individuals to initiate change and exercise control in their local contexts. Sharing decisions during implementation ensures that the programmes delivered match local needs, including preferences and culture. Calista (1994: 120), cited in Mthethwa (2012), and Brinkerhoff and Crosby (2002: 44) highlight that coordination among organisations at the operational and local levels may have negative or positive effects, as some lack the experience of working together. Because the implementers of the two programmes under study, who are crucial for effective policy implementation, come from the government and the NPO sector, shared decision-making should be a priority given the multiple actors.

Shared decision-making is important in stakeholder relationships during policy implementation. Ledingham (2003: 184), cited in Maxwell and Carboni (2013: 302), describes the relationship as “the state which exists between an organisation and its key publics in which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural, or political well-being of the other”. This definition allows for an assessment of stakeholder actions during policy implementation, and the impact they have on one another. Ledingham further argues that Relationship Management Theory supports the use of communication as an effective tool for managing internal and external stakeholders. Chacha and Sitienei (2020: 247) are of the view that successful policy-making and implementation require good relationships, needed, as well as role assignment among stakeholders.

These authors believe that the relationship between individuals and institutions is critical to enabling coordination and cooperation during implementation. Orem *et al.* (2013: 11) argue that it is important to identify each stakeholder's strengths during role positioning in policy implementation. The authors recommend establishing platforms to ensure synergy among stakeholders. Chauke, Malatji and Obadire (2021) also state that the success of any organisation depends on the positive relationship among all members involved. These issues inform the analysis of findings in relation to the research question on the experiences of both participants and implementers with relationship management during implementation.

4.7. Policy Implementation Management Model

Khandaker and Khan (2016: 541) identify three categories of policy implementation performance: policy output and outcomes, the impact of policy and the assessment of whether the policy leads to the development of a country or society as a whole. Because policy implementation involves turning policy goals into actions, it cannot be detached from the third category, which is assessing whether the policy achieves the desired outcomes. Khandaker and Khan (2016: 541) argue that policy outcomes rely not only on effective systems, but also on the management of the policy's implementation. The authors argue that policy implementation requires rational management and that successful implementation requires effective leadership, coordination and planning. They also argue that the management model is a factor that enables successful policy implementation. The authors attribute this to the belief that policy performance implementation "depends on many factors such as organisational structure, personnel and human resources, the activities of frontline implementers, equipment and technology, the level of coordination and cooperation, the exercise of authority, and place/location as implementation infrastructure" (Khandaker and Khan 2016: 543).

Brinkerhoff (2002: 6) states that successful policy outcomes depend not only on well-designed policies but also on the management of policy implementation. The author notes that implementers must accommodate the views and needs of all parties collaborating in the policy implementation process. To support this, Maduabum (2008) argues that effective policy implementation requires sound managerial and administrative capabilities to reduce policy implementation gaps. Management models

are used to understand the structures, systems and processes involved in implementing the programmes under investigation.

4.8 Policy Delivery Mechanisms

For Parsons (1995: 510), public goods and services can be delivered through four delivery mixes, namely the “governmental mix, sectoral mix, enforcement mix and value mix”. The governmental mix focuses on the different levels of government, national, provincial and local, which are responsible for delivering programmes across these three levels. The sectoral mix focuses on the relationship between the public, private and voluntary sectors that play a role in service delivery. The enforcement mix ensures compliance with public policy delivery (Parsons, 1995: 551). Crane and Clarke (2018: 303) describe sectoral partnership as “intensive, long-term interactions between organisations from the least two sectors, business, government and civil society aimed at addressing a social problem”.

Mackintosh (1992) cited in Crane and Clarke (2018) mentions that partnerships “enable the leveraging-in of new resources- either by enabling access to grant regimes requiring financial and in-kind contributions from private sectors to overcome public sector constraints on access to capital markets”. According to Lowndes and Skelcher (1998: 314), the key motivating factor for the development of partnerships is resource dependency. Crane and Clarke (2018: 303) further state that “the key driver of partnership is the need to address complex social problems that are too large or intractable for one organisation or one sector to tackle”.

The KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development utilises networks to deliver youth mobilisation and skills development programmes. Cerna (2013: 12) defines policy networks as “a cluster or complex of organisations connected to each other by resource dependences”. Partnerships can maximise resource efficiency by making better use of existing resources and reducing duplication, while adding value and bringing together complementary services (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 315). Phillips (1991), cited in Cerna (2013: 12), mentions that social movements are networks that provide “structures within which organisations negotiate meaning by constructing collective identities. Tony (1998: 10), cited in Lowndes and Skelcher (1998: 314), argued that:

“If local people are to enjoy a sound economy and a better quality of life and if communities are to deal with cross-cutting issues like youth justice, drug abuse and social exclusion, we have to harness the contribution of businesses, public agencies, voluntary organisations and community group and get them working together to a common agenda”.

The authors believe that multi-agency partnerships are a strategy that promotes locally based decision-making as the demands of interest groups and community bodies have a voice in decisions affecting their lives (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998: 314). The KwaZulu-Natal Youth Policy is implemented by NPOs in collaboration with the Department of Social Development to ensure maximum coverage. The policy delivery mechanisms are critical as they help analyse the systems and processes put in place for policy implementation.

Lowndes and Skelcher (1998: 318) highlight that network governance arises when the “view that actors are able to identify complementary interests and that interdependent relationships based on trust, loyalty and reciprocity enable collaborative activity to be developed and maintained”. The authors state that voluntary networks promote long-lasting loyalty among members and help resolve conflicts that arise within the network drawing on members’ reputational concerns. De Coning and Cloete (2011: 163) articulate that service delivery in South Africa usually relies on cooperative governance, where relationships and partnerships exist between government units, including the private sector, municipalities, CBOs and NGOs. The KZNDSDYP employs networks and partnerships to deliver youth mobilisation and skills development programmes. The KZNPYD (2020: 6) states that inter-sectoral collaboration could enhance the effectiveness of youth development. The policy advocates for coordination to ensure the efficient use of resources (KZNPYD, 2020: 11). Networks exist between the Department of Social Development, community development practitioners, NPOs and the TVET colleges that train some of the young people identified by NPOs.

4.9 Actors Involved in Policy Implementation

Parsons (1995: 491) highlights that implementation involves multiple stakeholders. Weible and Sabatier (2018: 5) affirm that public policy interaction occurs when actors

or collectives such as organisations, networks, and coalitions share their attributes and knowledge. Parsons further notes that some stakeholders affiliated with government and non-governmental organisations may seek to influence the government on a particular issue. Understanding among actors during policy implementation is important so they can appreciate and analyse the experiences of implementers. Policy implementation involves non-governmental organisations and street-level bureaucrats as actors. The processes and procedures put in place for the actors involved are outlined below.

4.9.1 Non–Governmental Organisations

Paxton, Pearce, Unwin and Molyneux (2005: 82) note that voluntary community organisations exist for different reasons, such as implementing key objectives, providing a service, providing a public benefit and acting as pressure groups. The authors also emphasise that not all of them are suitable for delivering public services (Paxton *et al.*, 2005: 6). Furthermore, Paxton *et al.* (2005: 3) state that the voluntary sector continues to expand its role in delivering public services and has received sustained and continuous support across the political spectrum. Contrarily, Parsons (1995: 502) cautions that the use of the voluntary sector in the delivery mix may create risks to the sector as actors for citizenship and empowerment. Paxton *et al.* (2005: 12) also state that the more the voluntary sector depends on the state for funding in delivering public services, the greater the risk of losing its independence as a sector. The recommendation is that policymakers need to establish a balance between the voluntary sector operating as a service provider and as a contributor to the strengthening of communities (Paxton *et al.*, 2005: 22). Wallis and Lane (2009: 148) mention that “turning to NPOs may also complement or reduce the somewhat brutal tendering/bidding approach in the new public management”. The authors further recommend that NPOs should be involved in partnerships formed by the government to stimulate networks in governance, rather than being allocated specific tasks or responsibilities.

In implementing the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy, the non-governmental actors involved are youth NPOs. Section 11(b) of the KwaZulu-Natal Policy on Youth Development states that “Government, development partners, civil society organisations and organised private sector, shall endeavour to work together to ensure

the full implementation of this policy.” (KZNPYD, 2020: 8). Wallis and Lane (2009: 141) suggest that “if successful policy implementation is related to learning, adaption, innovative and motivation coming from bottom- up rather than from top-down, then the Non-profit Organisations would be serious candidates for public contracts about service delivery”. In addition, Wallis and Lane (2009: 148) further note that findings from existing studies evaluating NPOs are mixed, with some concluding that “NPOs become an intermediate level between government and citizens\consumers”. The youth NPOs involved in implementing youth mobilisation and skills development programmes also serve as a link between the youth community and the government.

4.9.2 Street-level Bureaucracy

Camillo (2017: 2) describes street-level bureaucracy as “the practice by low levels of government implementing government policies through day-to-day transactions with individual members”. Lipsky (1980) describes street-level bureaucrats as public servants who directly interact with clients and exercise discretion when carrying out their duties. DeLeon and deLeon (2002: 13) argue that “if local officials do not pay attention to the needs and opinions of the target populations, they may soon find themselves out of touch and surrender their professional identity.” Lipsky (1980: 389) also argues that public policy becomes what street-level bureaucrats carry out. This is because they ultimately define the eligibility criteria for who receives a service at a given point. Parsons (1995: 470) states that whether the mode of implementation is top-down or bottom-up, those on the frontline of policy delivery have varying degrees of discretion over how they choose to exercise the rules they are employed to apply. De Coning and Cloete (2011: 145) also argue that policy evolves when implementers tend to change it. Brynard (2009: 564) articulates that “implementers have the power to influence how policies are experienced and how their impact is achieved”. Brynard further argues that implementers reshape and re-interpret the policy when unexpected, uncontrollable situations arise. The street-level bureaucracy involved in implementing the youth mobilisation programme and skills development is community development practitioners and social workers.

Tummers and Bekkers (2012: 3) highlight the effect of street-level bureaucrats’ discretion during policy implementation, noting that in some instances, bureaucrats lack the information needed to respond to citizens. The rules stipulated in policies do

not match with the situations they face, and as a result, they devise their own coping mechanisms. To enhance policy implementation and stay relevant, they adapt to “client meaningfulness”: they only act to meet the needs of the clients (Tummers and Bekkers, 2012).

The next section discusses the evaluation of policy implementation.

4.9.3 Policy Implementation Evaluation

Vedung (1997: 4) defines evaluation as a “careful retrospective assessment of the merit, worth, and value of administration, output, and outcome of government interventions, which is intended to play a role in future, practical action situations”. Dye (1987: 351), cited in Parsons (1995: 545), says that policy evaluation is “learning about the consequences of public policy”. Parsons (1995: 545) also stated that “policy evaluation research is objective, systematic empirical examination of the effects of the ongoing policy / public programmes have on their targets, in terms of goals they are meant to achieve”. This refers to an assessment of the value or worthiness of a government intervention, as well as the effects of its implementation in relation to policy intentions. Implementation evaluation has become increasingly critical and is in demand across all sectors including private, public and non-profit organisations, assisting with achieving “measurable results and active management of programme operations needed to attain results” (Love, 2004: 64).

Parsons (1995: 547) mentions that formative evaluation occurs during policy or programme implementation. Palumbo (1987: 40), cited in Parsons (1995: 547), argues that formative evaluation monitors programme administration and management while providing feedback on what needs improvement during implementation. Love (2004: 41) argues that the importance of implementation evaluation is promoted by management reforms, which include “giving primacy to identifying and meeting the needs of the customer or citizen, delivering high quality programmes, continuously improving business and service delivery processes”. Bickman and Heflinger (1995), cited in Love (2004: 66), state that implementation evaluation helps “evaluators to understand what worked and what did not produce the intended programme outcomes”. According to Bickman and Heflinger cited in Love (2004: 65), implementation evaluation occurs in four stages. The first stage is assessing the need

and feasibility. Here, various issues are considered, including the needs of the target group, the effort made to meet those needs and the main implementation challenges with the programme delivered.

The second stage of implementation evaluation is planning and designing the programme. This stage highlights aspects of the programme that require improvement or modification to achieve the intended outcome. It also reviews the plans put in place to monitor the implementation, suggesting changes where possible. The third stage of implementation evaluation focuses on the programme's target group. This stage determines whether the programme is serving the right group, whether there are any dropouts, and the reasons for them.

The last stage, according to Love (2004), assesses whether the programme design is implemented in line with the plan. Love (2004: 69) argues that implementation evaluation needs to determine whether the programme is delivering the expected services, identify the programme's strengths and weaknesses, the external effects on implementers and clients, and any unintended results that may occur. Durlak and DuPre (2008: 340) state that "evaluations that lack carefully collected information on implementation are flawed and incomplete". The authors articulate that when data is not collected during implementation, the "research cannot document precisely what programme was conducted, or how outcome data should be interpreted". The role of beneficiaries becomes crucial during programme or policy implementation evaluation. The implementation evaluation process is critical, as it addresses issues that arise during implementation and analyses the experiences of beneficiaries and implementers of the KwaZulu-Natal Youth Development Policy. Evaluation also helps assess whether the programme is moving in the correct direction while enabling the monitoring and management of activities during the policy implementation.

The next section describes the role of programme beneficiaries during implementation.

4.10 The Role of Targeted Beneficiaries in Evaluating the Policy During Implementation

Hall and O'Toole (2000) claim that the policy's target beneficiaries should not be "passive recipients of the publicly initiated effort, they are among the parties who have

to be active toward implementation through coproduction". The authors emphasise the importance of considering the "perspectives of beneficiaries or clients of services covered by the policy" (Hall and O'Toole 2000: 45). The authors mentions that through feedback received and information on how policy implementation unfolds, "policymakers and implementers will be in a better position to assess interim achievements, make necessary course corrections" (Hall and O'Toole 2000: 45). Finsterbusch and Wicklin (1987: 4) note that beneficiary participation serves as "a catalyst for mobilising further development efforts". These authors mention that the benefit of participation is that it opens up communication, as people who stay in the same place or village get to associate with others, and further assist to "create[s] local level awareness, competence, and capacity where it did not exist before." Durlak and DuPre (2008: 334) indicate that the advantage of achieving good implementation does not only increase programme statistics, but also that the greater benefits go to participants.

Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2012: 392) have described various evaluation models. The authors emphasise the importance of the *client-oriented model*, which enables clients of "the intervention's target group to perform the evaluation on the basis of their own merit criteria." This process allows clients of the intervention to judge implementation from the process to the delivery. According to Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2012: 393), clients assess the intervention in terms of the following aspects:

- "(1) in terms of its content;
- (2) during the process up to its delivery;
- (3) in the delivery proper;
- (4) as regards client responses;
- (5) through its eventual outcome effects achieves the quality that clients deem reasonable".

This model considers what the client wants to see or what they desire in the future. The authors argue that a client-oriented evaluation increases the legitimacy of the intervention because clients share their opinions and are allowed to influence the intervention's processes and outputs. This is why acceptance of this model is increasing (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2012: 392). The role of beneficiaries in the implementation of the programme is important because of their experiences of the two

programmes under study. This process allows the targeted beneficiaries to evaluate the implementation on its merits and enables them to share their opinions and desired future.

4.11. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the concept of public policy, focusing on the policy cycle and implementation. Street-level bureaucrats have discretion over how the policy is implemented, and the policy may become what they implement. The chapter also discussed partnerships in public policy during implementation, and considered the different actors involved, including the voluntary sector and the street-level bureaucrats. The factors affecting policy implementation were highlighted alongside policy implementation evaluation, and the role of participants during policy implementation. The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and the analysis of the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Youth Development Policy, focusing on the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes. The presentation of the findings is based on the following research questions:

1. To establish what the policies and legislative frameworks are that guide youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in Umvoti Local Municipality; (covered in chapters two and three)
2. To assess the structures, processes and procedures in place to implement the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development;
3. To understand the experiences of the implementing agents, as well as the programme beneficiaries, in the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development in Umvoti Local Municipality;
4. To evaluate the implementation challenges associated with the youth mobilisation and skills development in Umvoti Local Municipality;
5. To propose the best practices to mitigate the identified challenges.

In terms of data collection, two (2) focus group interviews were conducted with Youth NPOs, one comprised of four participants, and the other, five participants. Four (4) focus groups were conducted with the youth beneficiaries (55 youth), each group consisted of approximately 13 participants. Ten (10) semi-structured interviews were conducted with three different categories of government officials who are implementers in different levels within the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Department of the Umvoti District.

The study employed thematic analysis to analyse data from respondents. These themes were identified to investigate factors affecting the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development policy on youth development in Umvoti Local Municipality. The findings and analysis are presented under themes that emerged from the content analysis.

5.2 Participants in the Study

The implementers of the policy comprised four (4) community development practitioners, four (4) social workers, two (2) service management officials and nine (9) non-profit organisations (NPOs working with the Department of Social Development in Umvoti Local Municipality – listed in Chapter One), 19 in total. The beneficiaries of the two programmes included 55 unemployed youth who participated in the youth mobilisation programme and the skills development programme in Umvoti District.

The respondents for the study were coded as follows: youth NPOs – NPO 1-NPO 9, community development practitioners – CDP1-CDP4, social workers – SWS1-SWS4, service office managers – SOM1 and SOM2 and programme youth beneficiaries- Y1 – Y55. Table 1.1 below presents demographic data for the nine (9) NPO implementers. A majority, six out of nine (66 per cent) were males, and a majority, six out of nine (66 per cent), served in rural or semi-rural areas. Experience with youth programme implementation ranged from four to eight years, with an average of 5.4 years, indicating that these were fairly experienced workers, which is important to know as experience may affect capacity, skills and knowledge when it comes to implementing a policy.

Table 1.1: Profile of nine NPOs present who participated in the interviews

Participants	Gender Representation	Number of Years in Implementing Youth Services	Type of Community Being Served
NPO 1	Female	5	Urban area
NPO2	Female	4	Rural area
NPO3	Female	4	Semi-rural
NPO4	Male	5	Rural
NPO5	Male	7	Rural
NPO6	Male	8	Urban area
NPO7	Male	6	Rural area
NPO 8	Male	6	Rural
NPO 9	Male	4	Urban area

Table 1.2 below provides demographic information about the 10 government implementers – four social workers, four community development practitioners and two service office managers.

Table 1.2: Profile for 10 government implementing agents

Category	Gender	Section/Component	Number of Years in Youth Development Field
Community Development Practitioner	Female	Development and Research	13 years
Community Development Practitioner	Female	Development and Research	13 years
Community Development Practitioner	Female	Development and Research	12 years
Community Development Practitioner	Female	Development and Research	9 years
Service Office Manager 1	Female	Administration	2 years and 9 months
Service Office Manager 2	Female	Administration	5 years
Social Worker	Male	Social Services	10 years
Social Worker	Male	Social Services	05 years
Social Worker	Female	Social Services	5 years
Social Worker	Male	Social Services	4 years

Seven of the government implementing agents were females, and three were males. The two service managers were female, and three of the four social workers were male. All four community development practitioners were involved in the department's development and research section and had considerable experience in their roles, ranging from nine to 13 years. The social workers also had between four and 10 years of experience. One service office manager had less than three years of experience, and the other, seven years. Both were involved in administration.

Table 1.3 below shows the demographics of the 55 youth beneficiaries. The majority of 50, or 90 per cent of the youth, were between the ages of 18 – 35; the majority of 34 or 61.8 per cent, were females, and all were African. A majority of 33 or 60 per cent had only reached Grade 11 schooling, thus had not matriculated. The overwhelming majority of 52 out of 55 were not in employment, highlighting the high unemployment in Umvoti Local Municipality and possibly their reason for enrolling in the programmes offered.

Table 1.3: Demographics of the youth beneficiaries

Age range	Gender	Race	Educational Level	Employment Status
18-35 = 50	Females = 34	African = 55	Up to Grade 11 = 33	Currently employed = 03
36-40 = 5	Males = 21		Grade 12 = 21	Not in employment = 52
			Diploma = 01	

5.3 Questions for the Participants

The questions for each group of implementers (see Appendices 1-4) were similar, with variations or additional questions to accommodate the particular category of participant. There were ten main questions covering the participants' role in the programme implementation and why they were recruited; their understanding of the purpose of the programmes and the content and skills their particular programmes offered. They were also asked about the processes they went through with the Department of Social Development to participate; the programme structures they were involved in; their experiences of involvement; any support they received; communication with the Department and the youth beneficiaries; and challenges and perceived improvements. The two service officials were asked about policies and frameworks in place, programme monitoring, how partners are monitored and the support they provide.

There were ten questions for the youth programme beneficiaries in the four focus groups (see Appendix 5). The questions covered their recruitment to the programmes, their knowledge of the available programmes and their purpose, what they learnt, the benefits, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the programmes, the role the youth should play in youth development programmes and whether the programmes helped them find employment.

The themes that emerged were:

Theme 1: Management of programme implementation (answers research question one)

Sub themes:

- Policies and frameworks
- Management and monitoring of implementation partners
- Relationships between partners
- Support to partners

Theme 2: Knowledge and skills of implementers needed for participation in programme implementation (answers research questions two and three)

Sub themes:

- Understanding of the policy behind the programme and the purpose of the programme
- Role in the programme implementation
- Access to resources

Theme 3: Participation process (answers research questions two and three)

Sub themes:

- Processes and structures to become involved in implementation

Theme 4: Beneficiaries' views about participation in the programmes (answers research question three)

- Experience of the programmes (which included language of instruction, venues, engagement with training content, non-provision of stationery, refreshments)
- Lessons learnt
- Takeaways from the programmes
- Programme benefits
- Role in the implementation process.

Theme 5: Interpersonal communication (part of research question two and three)

Theme 6: Implementation challenges (answers research question four)

Theme 7: Recommendations (answers research questions four and five)

5.4 Data Presented by Theme

5.4.1 Theme 1: Management of Programme Implementation

5.4.1.1 In terms of sub-theme 1, the two service officials were asked about the **policies and legislative frameworks** in place that guide programme implementation.

Both officials only referred to the National Youth Policy as guiding programme implementation, and one mentioned the Constitution.

The responses from both managers indicate that they solely use the National Youth Policy for guidance on implementation. Muthanna and Sang (2023: 19) note that a lack of information among policy implementers about the targeted policy hinders implementation. None of the managers mentioned the policy under study, the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development, which is supposed to guide the two programmes.

The managers were also asked about the structures for implementing the youth mobilisation and skills development programmes, and they noted the following, in this regard:

SOM2 noted that

“The structure that we have for implementation is NPO forum”

SOM1 said that

“Consultations are done through meetings and community dialogues.” (SOM1)

The responses from the managers indicate that there is only one structure for implementation and the consultations, which are meetings. According to Sager and Gofen (2022: 347), policy implementation requires specific structures and institutional settings for it to happen successfully. The absence of youth-specific structures for implementation might compromise the quality of programmes delivered as it is implemented without implementation arrangements. Khandaker and Khan (2016: 541) argue that policy outcomes do not rely only on having effective systems in place, but also on managing policy implementation. Sager and Gofen (2022: 347) indicate that policy implementation occurs in a particular institutional setting and requires specific organisations and structures to conduct it.

5.4.1.2 In relation to the second sub-theme of **how implementing partners (CDPS, SWS, NPOs etc) are managed and monitored** during policy implementation, the researcher sought to understand how programme implementation is monitored. Makinde (2005: 66) mentions that inadequate monitoring of implementation may lead to undesirable results. The service officials outlined the process and emphasised the importance of maintaining good relationships with partners. They mentioned that:

“CDPs and social workers are managed through signed EPMDS documents, individual targets on youth sub-programme and monthly reports. Another monitoring is done through supervision sessions that are structured such as one-on-one and continuous holding of meetings such as NPO forums to check if policies are still being implemented appropriately.” (SOM1)

“CDPs are engaged on one-on-one performance sessions to check progress on implementation and provide advice. They are also exposed to trainings and workshops” I provide guidance and monitoring when it is needed.” (SOM1)

“Monitoring is done quarterly to the NPO’s, it can be the scheduled one or unscheduled where one will physically visit the site for observation and collection of the information through interviewing apart from that is to give support to NPO where they are having challenges and able to identify things to be corrected or given attention/priority immediately” (SOM1).

“The officials develop scheduled and unscheduled quarterly monitoring visit plans. They share scheduled visits dates with the NPOs and conduct visits as per plan. During monitoring visits, they check the NPO’s compliance with the service level agreement signed with the Department, approved deliverables, re-aligned budget as well as relevant policies and legislations. Information received during monitoring visits is used to assist NPOs to develop organisational development plans to close compliance gaps identified” (SOM2).

The community development practitioners added information on the kinds of monitoring and the problems associated with it. They highlighted the following:

“We do monitor and report about non-financial data where we do monthly report (Statistics) we report to our service office manager the challenges that we face with” (CDP1).

On the contrary, one CDP stated that:

“When we are doing drivers licence and skills development, there is no proper monitoring of the programme because it does not take place in our presence it is implemented in academies” (CDP2)

“In my side I am noting poor quality reporting in terms of content, only because our concerns and monitoring is associated with numbers, which does not show any impact and how funds are used only” (CDP3)

“Monitoring is done to NPOs operating locally, so it depends on who has initiated it because sometimes interventions of youth are implemented in youth academies so I can’t do monitoring on those, but those who are initiated locally I am able and I write monitoring report” (CDP4)

The responses provided by the community development practitioners and service officials indicate that a monitoring system is in place, although it is generally number-based and not fully qualified, and there are some problems. The community development practitioners were more critical of monitoring problems than the service officials. NPOs monitor programme implementation at the local level. Some skills development interventions, which do not take place in the local space but far from offices, are impossible to monitor because of their distance. There are reporting processes that start with community development supervisors, go through service office managers, and extend up to the district. In the main, these findings resonate with those of Mthethwa and Jili (2016: 106), who argue that monitoring is a tool to assess whether a programme is going in the right direction in relation to what was planned.

According to Brinkerhoff (2012: 23), policy implementation involves monitoring progress and outcomes. Maduabum (2008), cited in Ajulor (2018: 1500), argues that inputs from capable management promote effective implementation. Khandaker and Khan (2016: 543) note that successful implementation requires effective leadership, coordination and planning. In addition, Muthanna and Sang (2023: 19) argue that leaders who fail to provide the implementers with information and support, demonstrate a lack of commitment.

Following on from this, the two senior office managers were asked how they used the information received during monitoring.

SOM1 explained that the information is used as follows:

“With the information I receive from NPOs I check if the NPOs achieved targets for the quarter and also check if during implementation they followed correct procedures in spending funds allocated to them and the portfolio of evidence for programme rendered.”

SOM2 said that:

“The information received helps to do planning for the following year, or quarter, like target setting and also to gauge the impact of the programme to beneficiaries, this also helps to mobilise resources and understand what are the challenges during implementation”

The responses indicate that these officials shared the same understanding of how the information is used, primarily for planning, setting targets, and lobbying for additional resources for programme implementation. This suggests that service managers are concerned with achieving the Department’s targets and with adherence to policies and processes. There is a lack of analysis during implementation that could help assess whether implemented programmes are contributing to the policy vision or to the needs of the policy targets. Limiting the use of monitoring information to government planning and compliance with government processes poses a risk to policy implementation, because planning and adherence do not guarantee delivery of a policy’s intended result. There is a need to analyse the information received to gauge its contribution towards addressing the policy problem.

5.4.1.3 In relation to the third sub-theme on **relationships between stakeholders**, there were varying views. Parsons (1995: 491) notes that policy implementation involves multiple stakeholders. This question was asked to understand and analyse the experiences of implementers. The two service officials viewed relationships positively.

Said SOM1:

“Once you are working together as stakeholders, professionalism needs to be maintained, as well as respect for a relationship to be healthy and acceptable so far I can say through that relationship is good”. (SOM1)

SOM2 added:

“The relationship is good and there is sense of respect for each other and willingness to assist”

The youth NPO participants had mixed views. The general feeling among the participants was that, with the DSD, there is a constrained relationship characterised by a lack of trust, and too much control exerted by the DSD, among other things. The participants noted the following:

“For me the relationship with DSD is not that good, as we do not usually meet their targets and we don’t know those targets, but they ask us to give attendance registers” (YNPO1).

Said YNPO2:

“DSD usually wants to control us in such a way that they treat us as people that are not trustworthy, we do not use those funds in a good way.(YNPO2)

YNPO3 mentioned that:

“The relationship with other implementers is good because they attend our meetings and also provide training for the youth”.

“The relationship only becomes good with DSD when they want us to attend their programmes and having to meet their work targets” (YNPO4).

YNPO5 raised a concern that:

“The issues of trust are always a problem between us DSD as our funder want to control us as if we started programme in order to work for them, yet we had our own vision with youth when starting NPOS”.

Most of the NPOs indicated that their relationship with the DSD was not good, their experience was that it was one-sided, only benefiting the Department as the funder. The Department does not treat them as equal partners in implementation, with independent visions for their organisation. They assert they are being controlled and used to achieve Departmental targets. This might compromise the quality of programme delivery.

According to authors such as Camarinhas (2019: 16), Chacha and Sitienei (2020: 247), and Chauke, Malatji and Obadire (2021), the success of any organisation depends on positive relationships among all the members involved. Other authors including Paxton *et al.* (2005: 22), Wallis and Lane (2009: 148), Klein and Knight (2005: 245) and Brinkerhoff (1996: 1399) suggest that policymakers need to view NPOs as service providers, as they serve as intermediaries between government and citizens, bridging service delivery voids. Without stakeholder engagement, the policy may lack buy-in from stakeholders and fail to address the needs of target beneficiaries. The authors argue that disseminating policy information to stakeholders is a factor in successful implementation.

De Coning and Cloete (2011: 163) argue that successful policy implementation requires partnerships in programme delivery and project management. Similarly, Crane and Clarke (2018: 303) emphasise the importance of sectoral partnerships. Moroke (2019: 20) says that networks are crucial for NGOs' support of youth development, as they help align their services with the interests and needs of the local community. Moroke (2019: 33) further notes that the youth NPOs assist young people in realising their talents by creating a platform where they can reach their potential and showcase them. It is therefore commendable that the officials who participated in this study recognised the importance of partnership, despite some improvements being needed.

5.4.1.4 Sub-theme four focused on the support provided to implementing partners. Support is a critical component of effective policy implementation.

The two officials responded thus.

SOM1 stated:

“for me consultation is very important, needs analysis should be done correctly with their involvement and let them lead but with us directing the whole process, involvement of every stakeholders that has the role to play in the implementation of youth policies, collaborative process is very crucial”.

SOM2 explained the support provided to NPOs:

“None other than providing guidance, support and mentoring where there is a need, NPOs are assisted to develop and implement organisational development plan in response to monitoring visits findings”

NPOs had varied views about support from the Department:

“Department of Social Development do support with funding, although is not uniform, you find that some NPOs receive more, while others are informed early when there are resources, but they do support through the NPO” (YNPO1).

“DSD assist us with training opportunities and link us with other sectors I personal attended the training in Durban, we were taught on entrepreneurship” (YNPO2).

“DSD sometimes assists with provision of refreshments during our programmes which keep youth” (YNPO3).

“Being in the committee, I do get assistance with access to information because officials do share with us when there are opportunities, we are the first to know as youth NPOs” (YNPO4).

“They help support us with provision of information which help us to better our self and be able to raise issues” (YNPO5).

“DSD programmes help us to be exemplary because through them we are able to lobby for more resources and be able to avoid negative behaviour because people are knowing us working for the community, they expect only good things for us so I end always maintain good behaviour as I am the one who talk about it” (YNPO6).

MacAbbey (2007: 3), cited in Mudogwa (2016: 17), highlights that NPOs improve government capacity by “making institutions respond to the needs and rights of the people”. It is clear that NPOs are receiving some support to deliver programmes to young people. However, the responses indicate that most support is linked to strengthening programme implementation particularly logistics, with only a few

responses showing building the capacity of youth NPOs as implementers of the policy, so there is room for improvement.

5.4.2: Theme 2: Knowledge and Skills of Implementers Needed for Participation in Programme Implementation.

This theme had three sub-themes: understanding the policy behind the programme and the purpose of the programme, and their role in programme implementation and access to resources.

5.4.2.1 Sub-theme one addressed the **understanding of the policy underpinning the programme, the programme's purpose, and the structures and their implementation.** This question was asked to establish whether implementers understood the link between the programme they were implementing and the policy from which it stems, as well as the purpose of the programme. This helped the researcher understand the implementation processes. Community development practitioners, social workers and youth NPOs provided feedback. The following responses were provided.

During the interviews, the community development practitioners were asked to provide their understanding of the policy underpinning the programme. The responses from them were as follows:

“I know the policy and I have attended the workshop where we were giving our inputs but I have not seen the final policy.” (CDP1)

On the contrary, three community development practitioners stated:

“Well I cannot say I know the policy but what I know is that what I do is in line with the policies and Act I have seen it but not knowing it by heart, but I basically know what it allows for me to do.” (CDP2)

“I don't know the policy but what I know is that what I do is according to the policy which is youth mobilisation and identification of youth to participate” (CDP3)

“To be honest I do not know the policy on youth development because I was not trained about it, but I do youth mobilisation and link youth for skills development as it is my duty”. (CDP4)

The responses from the CDPs indicate that they do not have the same level of understanding of the policy. While the CDPs reported that some officials contributed to policy development, the social workers (see below) responded that there was no consultation or training, even though the policy also applied to them. According to De Coning and Cloete (2011: 145), the policy’s content is critical, as it describes what needs to be done and what the policy seeks to achieve. This includes the policy’s mission. De Coning and Cloete (2011: 147) argue that policy content needs to present the goals, mission, and vision to be achieved.

Social workers are also involved in empowering youth within the Department of Social Development. They were asked about their understanding of the policy being implemented. The responses were as follows:

“I don’t know the policy, but I know that we are working together with programme five on youth when they ask for participants policies are just given to us within the Department no one is capacitating and giving us guidance with them” (SWS1).

“I don’t know the specific policy of youth, but I know that the programmes that we are implementing are in line with Batho Pele principles which about putting people first and they are also in line with national policies” (SWS2).

“No I honestly don’t know the policy, but we are working together when dealing with youth” (SWS3).

The responses above indicate that the social workers had no knowledge of the policy content. The policy identifies them as implementers. If implementers do not have the same level of understanding of the policy content, this may negatively impact implementation as policy targets might be missed. Tummers and Bekkers (2012: 3) note that in some instances, street-level implementers lack the information needed to

respond to citizens. De Coning and Cloete (2011: 147) stress that the policy content will specify the mission, vision and goals that the policy seeks to achieve. This guides the implementation of what needs to be achieved.

During the focus group discussions, NPOs were asked about their knowledge of the policy and programme, including its purpose. In response to this, the participants described the extent to which they understood the programme:

“I think I have understanding of the policy although I don't not know the specifics, I have the common understanding of what youth programmes should cover. In our NPO we were not given any guide to run the programme” (YNPO5).

“I do understand the purpose of the programme although it was never explained, but I know that it serves to empower youth” (YNPO 1).

“I understand that the South Africa government want to fight youth unemployment, and empower youth so the programme purpose is in line with all national policies which aim to assist young people” (YNPO2).

“The purpose of the programme is to empower young people give them skills development that will help them participate in the economy be able to make their own money without being dependent on the government” (YNPO3).

“I think the purpose of the programme is to empower youth with knowledge and to address youth problems that we face for example crime issues and unemployment” (YNPO4).

Overall, all the participants showed some understanding of the purpose of the programmes, which is to equip young people with knowledge and skills for future employment, but they had limited knowledge of the underlying policy. One participant noted that while they understood the purpose, “it was never explained”, while another indicated that they did not “know the specifics”. This indicates some weaknesses (knowledge gaps) in the programme implementation. The participants were not fully equipped before the programme was implemented. This is a risk because how can

one effectively implement what they have limited knowledge of? This echoes Brynard's (2009: 562) sentiments that when implementers are empowered, they become confident in delivering the required action. In the case of these NPO workers, they would surely not be confident because they lack some knowledge regarding the programme and its purpose. Some of the NPOs were evidently not fully capacitated as they did not have a comprehensive understanding of the programme.

The CDPs were also asked to explain their experiences with the guidelines for the two programmes, as well as the document that guides their day-to-day implementation of those programmes.

One CDP stated that:

“For a moment we are using the CDP tool kits that guide us how to do mobilisation, we currently don't have norms and understands that guide different steps.” (CDP1).

The two respondents mentioned the existence of policies that guide implementation.

“There are implementation guidelines which are the policies that guide us what to do with youth than we start with implementation” (CDP2 and CDP3).

One official stated had a slightly different view:

“We are using the business plan and SLA and NPO Act which stipulate what can we do and not do” (CDP4).

The document by the Ministry of Higher Studies and Scientific Research (2005: 14), cited by Muthanna and Sang (2023: 22), advocates the development of implementation plans after policy development, which provides step-by-step guidance to implementers during policy implementation.

The responses indicate that most implementers, particularly the NPOs and social workers, are not aware of the policy content. They rely on general knowledge and experience to implement the policy. The community development practitioners hold different understandings and cite different implementation guidelines. This lack of policy knowledge among implementers might lead to unintended policy outcomes.

5.4.2.2 Sub-theme on role in the implementation of the programmes

This subsection examines the roles played by the non-governmental organisations, the youth NPOs, during policy implementation. This question helped the researcher understand the contributions and roles of programme implementers as well as their experiences. The comments are as follows:

“I work with the Department of Social Development because I like youth programmes, I just assist where they ask my help, like telling young people to come together and start programmes” (YNPO1).

“In our NPO we are doing many programmes involving children, homework and youth mobilisation, the programme that we see going more is the one for homework and to assist children most of the times we do programmes that our community’s needs” (YNPO2).

“In my NPO, we call youth to come together and deal with empowering topics for young person like how we can fight crime. So, my role is to bring youth in one place and tell them when there are programmes” (YNPO3).

“My role is to assist young people with knowledge and help them to receive professional support, for example, the Department of Labour assisted with compilation of database for job seekers” (YNPO4).

Other NPO representatives explained that their role involved organising the youth for interventions. The participants stated the following:

“My role in youth mobilisation is to organise youth that will attend to youth programmes, share training information that I understand or have learnt and invite them to share opportunities advertised” (YNPO5).

“My role is to assist youth to attend meetings because I learnt about the DSD funding from other NPOs, that’s when I went and told that I can access youth funds from one NPO which is nearby if all delivering same activities to youth” (YNPO).

Most of the responses above show that NPOs are actively involved in mobilising and linking youth to ensure the policy's implementation. This involvement echoes the assertion that NPOs play an important role in working in partnership with the government. Section 11(b) of the KwaZulu-Natal Policy on Youth Development states that the "government, development partners, civil society organisations and organised private sector, shall endeavour to work together to ensure the full implementation of this policy." (KZNPYD, 2020: 8). Wallis and Lane (2009: 141) also suggest that

"if successful policy implementation is related to learning, adaption, innovative and motivation coming from bottom-up rather than from top-down, then the Non-profit Organisations would be serious candidates for public contracts about service delivery".

5.4.2.3 Sub-theme of access to resources

Implementers were also asked to share their experiences of access to resources to implement the programmes.

The CDP respondents noted the following:

"The Department provides us with resources like transport, which we use to visit youth and conduct research at faster pace most of the time we have information, but we don't have pamphlets within the Department which speak about the programmes that we are doing which youth can take them for proper" (CDP 1)

"We receive resources such as transport and refreshment during meetings and skills training from the Department" (CDP 2)

"I can say with resources the Department is supporting us I have a laptop I have access to the car we also have internet the Department gave us 3Gs which assist us to do online youth-related activities when I am not in the office" (CDP 3)

On the contrary one CPD mentioned that:

"Although we are provided with the resources, I feel keeping the funds that are meant for youth development with youth NPOs causes some limitation because when the offices want to do programmes, we now depend on NPOs even if programmes are initiated by offices. The old way where programme funds was

with the Department was better now, we as officials need to request funds from NPOs” (CDP 4).

These responses indicate that access to resources is not a challenge. The Department even provides the tools needed for officials during implementation. However, there are concerns about how the programme implementation funding is managed, with funds held by NPOs. As implementation is also the responsibility of officials, the officials rely on NPOs for activities that require programme logistical arrangements. According to Taweekaews (2013: 75), the extent to which resources are made available contributes to successful implementation.

As far as the skills development programme is concerned, the CDPs were asked to reflect on the programme’s contribution or impact on the participating youth, and how they were trained to deliver it. The main purpose of this question was to understand how skills development programmes are implemented and to assess the extent to which the implementers were trained or empowered to provide skills development to the youth participants, and the NPOs.

The CDP officials responded as follows.

“The training programmes assist with ensuring that the youth refrain from drug abuse through training them on how to become entrepreneurs although training is not provided by us, we look for people who will train” (CDP 1).

“The programme prepares the youth with early intervention skills such as job preparedness which is done in partnership with Department of Labour and life skills by DOH and social workers” (CDP 2).

“We do develop a specification of what the skills training should cover before the training by getting advises from subject matter expert the Department do not provide training specific for youth development; I just use my common knowledge when facilitating”. (CDP 3).

“The programme allows for the youth to have access to computer skill and to job opportunities as officials we were not specifically trained for youth development but for community development as a whole” (CDP4).

These responses indicate that the implementers recognise the importance and positive contribution of skills development programmes for young people. The implementers know which skills the programmes equip the young beneficiaries with. The community development practitioners play a linking and organising role; they do not solely provide training themselves. The responses presented above resonate with Brynard’s (2009: 562) views that training strengthens programme, arguing that it assists implementers to improve self-efficacy and be empowered to deliver. Graham and Mlatsheni (2015) concur that most government-implemented programmes benefit the youth, and that those in charge should have direct knowledge of them before implementation.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Participation Process (answers research questions two and three)

5.4.3.1 In relation to the sub-theme on the **processes and structures** for involvement in implementation, the CDPs and NPOs were asked about the processes they follow to implement the programme, and the logical steps involved in youth mobilisation and skill development programmes. This question helped the researcher to understand what processes are followed, whether they are the same for all implementers and how this contributes to understanding the experiences of implementers.

Said one CDP:

“We start by mobilising youth or making dialogues and ask youth about what we can do for them we do not impose and need to be in line with SETA. Mostly youth complain about lack of skills in searching employment.” (CDP1)

CPD2 added:

“We identify their needs in the community and to get views on how they feel about how government services that are rendered to youth, consultation with youth where they share their needs and how can we assist responding to what they want”.

“We do invitation to youth, conduct household profiling if we are doing skills development and stakeholders for skills, we invite stakeholders that we use our youth structures/NPOs who will assist with venue” (CDP3).

“Identification of youth who are not able to pay for trainings in like TVETs, we profile their needs and holistic household needs and refer to different stakeholders. We check also health status and educational level than link with skills development in academies” (CDP4).

The participants confirmed that some policies exist to govern the implementation of youth programmes and processes. Regarding day-to-day operations, respondents stated that:

“We work closely with the community Councillors which usually mobilise the youth when they need to interact with them regarding the programme, although sometimes they only invite the youth associated with their political affiliation, but they always assist and use our platforms to reach communities” (CDP1).

“There are structures that we work with in communities: Councillors, Ward committees war room chairperson which assist you when you want to see youth” (CDP2).

Two community development practitioners mentioned NPOs’ structures and said:

“We use youth structures (NPOs) which assist us to do youth mobilisation, assist to identify youth to participate and also the NPO forum” (CDP3).

“We work closely with NPOs who identify the youth to participate and also form part of the mobilisation committee” (CDP4).

5.4.4 Theme 4: Beneficiaries’ Experiences of the Programme Implementation

The responses discussed in this section support research question three on beneficiaries’ experiences. Data were grouped into the sub-themes of recruitment, understanding of the purpose or objectives of the programmes, experience with the programmes (which included language of instruction, venues, engagement with training content, non-provision of stationery, and refreshments), takeaways from the programmes, benefits, and their role in the implementation process.

5.4.4.1 Sub-theme of recruitment experiences

This section discusses how the programme beneficiaries were identified or recruited by implementers. In describing this, participants were further asked about their motivations for participating in the programmes.

“I heard that they are mobilising people who are job seekers through loud hailing than I went to register my name and that how I end up participating” (Y1).

“I was recruited the official from DSD who told me about the camp and during the camp we were told about youth programmes and the benefit that you get free trainings” (Y2).

“I saw an opportunity for young people as we have seen in TVs youth doing youth development opportunities and I felt I can also do it.” (Y3).

“I was told by the youth club member that the Department of Social Development is helping people” (Y4).

“I was told by my neighbour that there is a programme which is helping youth people, says youth mobilisation help me to be protected from wrong doings in the community and help me to meet more people that I did not know”. (Y5).

“In my area loud hailing was done by car saying that DSD is coming with programmes for young people they are all invited. I went there to listen than I register my name” (Y6)

The other programme participants reported that the NPO representative mobilised them. The participants stated the following:

“I was personally invited by Thoko who explains that we need to attend to programme and share that Department will come assist with trainings that will assist young people.” (Y7)

“We were playing soccer in the soccer field and brother Sipho came to us to present youth programmes and he assisted many of us to enrol with TVET and he explains it is free. He then advised us to come to programmes when Department come in the community” (Y8)

A variety of responses were provided, indicating that a wide range of methods were used to recruit young people to the programmes, particularly one-on-one communication. There is no standardised recruitment process in place. 70 per cent of the beneficiaries participating in the programme were recruited informally, meaning they did not meet any criteria; however, they voluntarily decided to participate in a programme. A few beneficiaries were identified and recruited by youth NPOs and the Department’s officials, which may lead to missing the policy target groups. Joshi and Pandey (2021: 2532) reiterate that “the successful implementation of any intervention depends on the awareness of the youth to adopt it”. Olaleye and Ayodele (2019: 251) also indicate that the mobilisation process is closely linked with strengthening capacity, highlighting the importance of engagements, communication and outreaches in this regard.

5.4.4.2 Sub-theme of **Beneficiaries’ knowledge and understanding of the purpose of the programmes**

The participants reflected on their understanding as follows:

“Many of us here don’t know what the programmes are, we are participating in, we just attended when were told young people are invited for the programme because we are unemployed” (Y1).

Another respondent explained:

“My understanding is that here in rural areas we don’t have knowledge like some of us were not aware of NSFAS, but we learn about it the day we attended mobilisation programme” (Y2).

“It is not easy for me to know the purpose of the programme because I am called to attend maybe a one day or an hour programme than sign the registers” (Y3).

Other participants also provided reasons based on their knowledge and understanding of the purposes of the programmes:

“My understanding is that it equips young people with knowledge and how to attend interviews and it guide youth on career opportunities” (Y4)

“I think the purpose is that is seek to help youth people not to be in drugs because we” learn life skills” (Y5)

Other participants had their own assumptions about the purpose as they were not told by implementers. One participant said:

“My own understanding although I was not told, is that the purpose for the programmes is to fight poverty and empower young people to unite and fight social ills” (Y6)

Another young person who participated explained their assumption in relation of the purpose. The respondent state that:

“My understanding of purpose is that skills development assist youth to get employment and give them knowledge about job opportunities” (Y7)

The findings presented above indicate that most of the youth participated in the programmes because they were told that the programmes would create job opportunities for them, given their unemployment. The responses indicate that the programmes were not properly communicated to the beneficiaries. There was no common understanding of the purpose of the programmes, and most of the beneficiaries held different assumptions about the purpose. Failure to communicate the purpose might lead to the enrolment or identification of beneficiaries who are not suitable for the programme. According to Brynard (2005: 662), communication plays an integral part in policy implementation phases. The author mentions that communication should be included as an implementation variable because it is important in all policy phases.

5.4.4.3 Sub-theme of Beneficiaries’ experiences of the training programmes

According to Mayombe (2021: 1), a training course for unemployed youth should be designed after consultation with stakeholders and potential employers. The author argues that this might enhance skills utilisation, not just skills acquisition.

Some participants commented on the **language of instruction**:

“The training was conducted in Isizulu the trainers did not give us any handouts for reading where we did not understand. Brief explanations. Training conducted in a short space one day” (Y1)

“The training on entrepreneurship was done in English I understood what I learnt, and I do see myself as a businessperson the certificate will be sent to us” (Y2).

The participant explained the **training venue** accessibility:

“The training was far from home it was on class training in a hall although when I came I was hoping the gathering was about people who are not working. I was able to grab the training content” (Y3).

Another added:

“The venues are not a problem because they normal fetch us and they are held in our communities. The content was clear as result I have grown an interest in cooking”.

On the contrary, one participant stated that:

“The training was conducted away from home for a period of six months and the venue was in good place we learn how to cook in a class setting I was attending in the same place I was staying in the youth academy. The trainers were very knowledgeable about what they were teaching” (Y4).

The participants explained how they engaged with the **training content** while attending the training. One respondent stated that:

“The training of computer was good it lasted for two weeks, and the language used was understandable except the handout books were written in English I was being driven from home to town by DSD officials. The trainers were able to explain issues. (Y5).

Another respondent stated that:

“I was able to grasp the information as we were taught by the TVET College I was able even to pass the assignments I got my certificate our training was done inside the academy” (Y6).

Other participants expressed concerns with the **non - provision of stationery** to write on.

“I do listen during training, but the problem starts when we are not given stationery to write on when trainings are done by officials within the community having to use our own monies” (Y7).

Another issue raised by participants who attended skills development training in the local space was the **length of the training** and **lack of refreshments**:

“The training took long and there was no food provided although it took a day but the issue of not having refreshment whereas you spend the whole day make us not to respond again when they need youth” (Y8)

A variety of responses were provided which may indicate multiple local challenges for youth participants that organisers need to be sensitive to. Most participants indicated satisfaction with how the training was conducted and with being shown empathy. The responses also indicate that officials have devised coping strategies for beneficiaries in areas with no venues. The results also show there is little communication to beneficiaries before implementation about the duration and logistics of the programmes. The programme was implemented without understanding the capacity or profile of the targeted beneficiaries. There is a need to engage and consult with potential beneficiaries before training to ensure appropriate training is delivered to them.

5.4.4.4 Sub-theme of Beneficiaries’ perceptions of the skills gained from the programmes

Dye (1987: 351), cited in Parsons (1995: 545), argues for an empirical examination of the effects that ongoing policy and public programmes have on policy targets, in relation to the goals to be achieved. With this in mind, the participants were asked about the skills they acquired from the skills development and mobilisation programmes. The respondents indicated that a wide range of technical, life, and

practical skills had been learnt, as well as useful information about topics such as NSFAS:

“I attended hospitality where I learnt cooking skills and driver’s licence”. (Y1)

Others focused on life skills learnt:

“I have learnt about the issues of self-discipline, patriotism and the importance of intergenerational programmes” (Y2).

“I learnt the important of fighting social ills and the problems of young people, that they are the same” (Y3).

“I have learnt about life skills cleanliness the importance to abstinence” (Y1)

Four participants mentioned technical skills learnt:

“I attended a computer course where I learn typing and all Microsoft programmes and computer literacy” (Y4).

“I did the computer where I learnt how to do CV and Cooking skills” (Y5).

“I learnt project management, how to start and to manage projects” (Y6).

“I studied the hospitality programme and got the certificate and drivers licence” (Y7).

“I have learnt that Department of Labour is able to help unemployed youth to register on their database so that they can access jobs” (Y2).

“I have learnt the importance of sharing your views and working in a group platform. I have the negative things that drugs do the person” (Y3).

“I have learnt that the problems of the youth are the same although youth in township have better access to resources” (Y4).

“I have learnt information about NSFAS how to do things online and apply online” (Y5).

“I have learnt about the careers that government Departments have” (Y6).

“I have learnt about the issues of self-discipline, patriotism and the importance of intergenerational programmes” (Y7).

“I have learnt to use the natural resources and how to lobby for resources and the importance of using partnership” (Y8).

“I attended the entrepreneurship programme where I have learnt how to start and manage your own business” (Y9).

Most of the focus groups agreed that implementing skills development programmes, empowers young people by improving access to information, skills and knowledge. The responses indicate that youth participation in skills development programmes is making a significant impact on their lives, enabling them to make informed life decisions. This shows that skills development needs to be two-fold, incorporating both life and technical skills. The interaction and participation among youth from different places strengthens the capacity of other youth to grow in their local spaces. This resonates with Tukundane and Zeelen (2015: 246), who argue that skilled youth have greater access to the labour market and a better chance of self-employment.

5.4.4.5 Sub-theme of benefits that the skills programme and youth mobilisation programme provided

Some participants explained how participation had benefitted them in relation to access to job opportunities. The participants responded as follows:

“I have passed matric, and the programme helped to apply online now I am doing learners and getting a stipend the learnership is for community development. participation open opportunity (Y1).

“I was assisted with NPO Data to apply for job using his data and I am currently getting a stipend in a learnership” (Y2).

“I was just staying at home without the ID Document by the NPO assisted me now I have the ID document because I was in the programme” (Y3).

“The programme assists us as youth with programmes, and it also assist to identify their existing skills that we have even for singers as for me I am the MC in events” (Y4).

“The programme is assisting many people as some of us are already studying in TVET due job knowledge that was shared in the programme many have applied and currently in TVETs” (Y5).

“The programmes are helpful because children and youth that are engage in our programme gain knowledge and learn to interact with other young persons” (Y6).

“I have participated and attended but as I am still not working or having income I don’t see how my participation has helped me” (Y8).

“I was helped to register the business online and complete the form although I have not received any job opportunity but when it comes at least I have the certificate” (Y9).

Some youth highlighted how the programme assisted in rural areas and stated that:

“The programme is also implemented in our deep rural areas, so it helps us to get information that we don’t know” (Y10)

“I was also assisted with doing application online and I was called for the interview but I did not pass the interview” (Y11).

The responses above indicate that youth participation in government programmes is beneficial as it opens up opportunities and increases access to important information. The programmes benefit rural youth who gain access to a wide range of knowledge. However, job opportunities linked to programme participation are limited. There is a need to strengthen programme implementation by incorporating local employers and local government to ensure that skills learned align with active local economic activities. O’Toole (2000: 45) emphasises the importance of beneficiary or participant perspectives through feedback. O’Toole states that using information on

implementation may assist in tracking interim achievements and making necessary corrections. Adams (2009) states that training should be provided for employment purposes or to improve skills and prepare for new technology. As noted earlier by Mayombe (2021: 1), training courses for unemployed youth should be designed after consultation with stakeholders and potential employers as this might enhance skills utilisation rather than skills acquisition.

5.4.4.6 Sub-theme of **beneficiaries' understanding of their role in programme implementation**

The youth were asked to reflect on their role or involvement in the skills and youth mobilisation programmes. Durlak and DuPre (2008: 340) state that shared decision-making improves implementation. Through shared decision-making, individuals become empowered to change and exercise control in their local situations (Durlak and DuPre, 2008: 340).

The participants unanimously agreed that young people themselves, as the targeted beneficiaries, must lead development initiatives. They highlighted the following issues:

“Youth should lead the programmes, not old officials who sometimes take offence when we raise our issues who want to treat us like people with no inputs” (Y1).

“Young people should be the one saying what they want because out of our situation and poverty we end up taking anything that come with the fear that what if nothing comes back again” (Y2).

The youth participants recommended that:

“Youth should be consulted at all times for youth programmes even policies youth should contribute and sit in the planning of issues here we were not involved at all we just attended and only play the role of listening DSD should not treat as people who don't have views, we clearly know what can work for us as youth in Umvoti “ (Y3).

“We should not be seen as people to dump information to. We should be included in processes that the government seek to deliver for example here in Kranskop we know a service provider who trains people on baking on a cheap price, and we would love that because we can be able to put our products in shops but the platform for inputs never came hence young people take what is available” (Y4).

The participants explained the importance of being allowed to provide input and stated:

“As young people we are energetic and know what we want I believe government should create a conducive platform for youth to work with government recognised structures not structures that are only used when it is time for reporting just numbers” (Y5).

“I personally think we are the one who need to say what we want because out of our situation and poverty we end up taking anything that come with the fear that what if nothing comes back again” (Y6).

The programme participants mentioned the importance of attending government programmes and stated that:

“I think one other thing that can assist unemployed youth is to keep on attending government programmes when they are conducted and held in the community because if they keep on sitting in the shops, they will know what opportunities are” (Y7).

One programme participant shared their assumption that programmes led by youth attract more youth:

“I for one I believe if the programme can be led by youth more than officials and be able to yield result like those who participated get employment or opportunities many discouraged people can start to attend them than sitting in the shops” (Y8)

Most of the youth who participated in the programmes raised common issues and agreed that consultation and engagement of targeted beneficiaries is crucial. The responses provided indicate that young people are interested in youth development programmes and want their input to be recognised. There is also an indication that

they recognise the benefit of the programmes and the role that they can play. According to Udensi *et al.* (2013) cited in Chamisa and Shava (2016: 169), development practitioners and stakeholders should involve youth in decision-making at the community level to ensure positive community and network relations. The authors argue that youth offer “an invaluable resource for the programme planning and effective evaluation”.

5.4.5 Theme 5: Communication

Issues were raised regarding interpersonal communication among stakeholders and between implementers and programme beneficiaries.

The service office managers indicated that communication with various stakeholders within the programmes was important. The two service office managers referred to the forms of communication. SOM1 said:

“Communication depends, it can be through interaction with one another, meetings and written correspondences, telephones etc.”

The other service office manager supported and confirms that:

“Most of communication is on face to face with NPOs and other stakeholders”

According to Corrigan (2017), any organisation needs different types of communication to disseminate information. There is no standard way of communicating among stakeholders, which might compromise communication processes. According to Taweekaew (2013: 1), effective communication promotes successful implementation among multiple actors, including policy implementers and target groups. Bowman (2005: 212) notes that policy implementers should use various communication channels to share information and also obtain timely feedback.

Regarding their relationship with the programme beneficiaries, the NPOs had mixed views and stated the following:

“Other participants do not respect us, but there are also those ones who are respectful and dedicated to the programme” (YNPO1).

However, one mentioned that:

“The relationship with participants is sometimes good, depending on the nature of activities they are engaged in when they are recruited for life skills which usually take place in their community they misbehave and don’t want to stay in one place” (YNPO2). “I have kept the good relationship with the participants even if they have gone out, they will refer others and they will keep coming to check if there are no more programmes” (YNPO3).

“Personally, some of the participants are very respectful, I even afraid to raise their views because they are afraid they might be removed from participation since nothing is signed when they are taken to trainings they remain passive” (YNPO4).

One NPO mentioned the issue of communication and said:

“Sometimes communication breaks the relationship between our programme participants normally done through social media group WhatsApp where everyone is expected get information. That creates problems because other youth don’t have cell-phones compatible with WhatsApp they complain to say we share with the ones we like” (YNPO5).

The findings presented above indicate that, to a large extent, the officials and the beneficiaries have a good relationship, although there are instances in which the beneficiaries show disrespect. There is also no formal communication strategy to maintain the relationship between NPOs and their beneficiaries. It is therefore important to suggest that before engagement, the parties should discuss what is expected of each of them and establish a code of conduct for all participants.

5.4.6 Theme 6: Challenges to Programme Implementation

Implementation is dependent on many factors including stakeholder involvement, management style and leadership (Brynard, 2009: 559). Among other things, Muthanna and Sang (2023: 13) note that the availability of financial resources is crucial during policy implementation. The study participants were asked to identify what they considered to be the main challenges affecting programme implementation. Depending on their role and involvement in the programmes, each participant category

provided the challenges they experienced. To some extent, these challenges compromised the quality of their services or, for the programme beneficiaries, meant that their expectations were not met. In view of this, this section presents and analyses some of the challenges highlighted, by by each group in turn.

Challenges Highlighted by the NPOs

According to Brynard (2001:192), implementers need to be equipped with tangible and intangible resources to carry out the policy. According to Bowman (2005:212), where there is considerable involvement and trust, implementers work well to achieve cooperation and produce successful implementation. The NPOs stated the following challenges:

Lack of trust by programme beneficiaries

“We experience lack of trust from the communities because when we address the youth about the programme, the DSD officials will come and say a completely different things which result to lack of trust because it’s like we are not in the same page. This starts because DSD make promises to attend our programmes where we gathered youth and do presentation, but when it is time, they don’t come and say there was no car in the office” (YNPO1).

Others noted the *lack of transport* to reach more places, which caused mobility challenges.

“I do programme like raising awareness to young people using my personal knowledge when I rely on DSD to come with the proper information as people who are trained they don’t show up even if they promise to and More For me is lack of transport in that we don’t have access to transport funds to get to communities and schools and also lack of enough information for us to deliver to the youth” (YNPO2).

Payments as implementers. Implementers felt that they should receive payment for their work, and this seemed to demotivate them in their endeavours to discharge their duties:

“As we are assisting DSD, we are told that we are doing voluntary work, as we are registered as NPOs. we don’t even get a stipend I was hoping they will help us with stipend because they take our information and report with it”. (YNPO3)

Lack of understanding on activities to be undertaken.

Another NPO expressed concerns about the lack of understanding of activities to be undertaken, especially those that attract the youth.

“ I am a young person that understands the activities that attract youth in my area but there is always lack of understanding when I suggest programmes sometimes DSD officials dispute them and force us to do what they want which result to poor attendance and participation” (YNPO4)

“I asked one official about the possibility of starting a business, I was advised to look for other departments because when registered with DSD, I am volunteering all your services yet you are job seeking” (YNPO5)

Lack of Internet access to support youth programmes in the community was also highlighted as a major challenge. One respondent noted the following:

“Most of our work needs to have access to the internet because youth can’t do youth development without internet we end up using our own resources to do what is needed by communities and to assist.” Other young people even visits us in our families seeking help and having higher expectation here in Umvoti I was told that the Department bought the laptop for us as NPOs but when it is time to get it or to use it official don’t give us” (YNPO6)

Process used to acquire funds. The participants also explained that there is a process for acquiring funds to be used during programme implementation. The lengthy process complicates the creation and implementation of programmes, as the responsible officials do not seem to have a sense of urgency in the matters. Some respondents indicated that:

“Always, when we need funds to cater for our events, we are requested to submit quotations when we secure quotations, we use our personal money than officials will tell you to submit stamped receipts before receiving the financial support. Sometimes the approval is only received after date of the event has passed” (YNPO7)

Poor communication amongst the implementers was also highlighted as a challenge, as noted below:

“One of the reasons that make the programmes not to go smooth is the lack of communication with DSD as the funder we don’t have meetings and there is no communication as an NPO you plan to do the event and submit everything that you were told is needed upon your arrival you are told things are no longer done in that way so in that way your programme won’t be funded whereas youth are expecting a service from you as the NPO” (YNPO9).

Access to resources. Some participants emphasised that the lack of access to resources that are essential for supporting the youth programmes is a major hindrance, as indicated herein:

“Here, in Umvoti, I was told that the Department bought the laptop for us as NPOs but when it is time to get it or to use it official don’t give us” (YNPO1)

“Sometimes when we ask for support that we were promised the officials do help us even just to provide us with 2 quire that does not happen.” (YNPO2).

“DSD is only assisting service providers who are providing cooked meals during our events because they do give us refreshments that the support we get in terms of transport when request support we are told there is no car” (YNPO3)

“There was a time where I requested the official to drive me with state transport to the nearest town for fundraising I was told I only have 30 minutes to do that if not I need to use my own” (YNPO4)

Lack of referral system. The participants also highlighted the lack of a referral system from the NPO sector to departments as an ongoing challenge, as noted below:

“I am youth NPO chairperson working in the area when I meet young people with different challenges including those who are abused and coming from poverty-stricken family those youth are in need of social workers and some are youth fired in school who are in need of education if I bring it to officials it becomes like I’m crossing the line and they end not being attended. Yet as stakeholder

representing youth sector I need to take up matters and issues of youth to where they gonna get attended. So, we end up knowing if we are allowed to do referrals or to just tell people to take a taxi and go to offices” (YNPO5).

From the NPOs’ perspectives, they are indeed facing many challenges that affect them while trying to run the programmes. There appears to be no synergy between government officials and the NPOs, which hinders the success of the programmes. NPOs and other officials do not communicate the same message to the youth, resulting in the youth not trusting them. According to Muthanna and Sang (2023: 13), to achieve successful implementation, implementers need to be provided with sufficient infrastructure, including transport. O’Toole (2012) also pointed to the need to make sufficient resources available.

Challenges Highlighted by the Social Workers

Bekkers and Tummers (2012: 3) argue that during implementation, implementers encounter situations in which policy rules do not align with the situation at hand, leading to the development of different coping mechanisms. The social workers indicated the following challenges:

Ignorance of the Beneficiaries

The social workers highlighted the poor attitude among the intended beneficiaries who seem to lack commitment and respect for the empowerment initiatives, as indicated below:

“People lack understanding, most of youth believe human rights are made for certain people like children, so when the empowerment is about human right they just ignore us social workers, some of our trainings include empowerment on human rights and sexual reproductive rights sometimes those who unemployed sometimes come to our programme already drunk or under influence on substances since there is no screening of participants and we don’t do follow up on where are the youth that we once empowered or supported” (SWS1).

The response above highlights a major issue: the lack of set criteria when recruiting beneficiaries. In the absence of such criteria and housekeeping rules for beneficiaries before onboarding, problems of youth attendance at the programmes while

intoxicated, for example, will occur. These are some of the things that can easily be managed from the outset, in terms of 'do's and don'ts' and a code of conduct.

Lack of Motivation to Attend Programmes

One social worker explained that the youth show a lack of motivation if, from the youth's perspective, a programme will not benefit them directly; they think there is nothing beneficial because there is no short-term financial gain. She explains that:

"Youth don't want to do something for free, they need money if you find those who are dedicated in the youth structures, they eventually drop-out because they point out that they don't benefit anything they want something that will benefit them in as much as when there are programmes we try to feature them in, but there no commitment to their participation" (SWS2).

Poor Attendance

One of the social workers indicated that poor attendance among the youth is a major concern, and this is due to the non-provision of refreshments during the sessions:

"The main challenge we face is that where there is lack of refreshments there is poor attendance, and the venue that we utilised are not conducive for youth programmes, we only have refreshments when we partner with officials from development and research you find that the programme is designed to have 5 sessions than young people will only be available in day 1. Once they see there are no refreshments, they don't come back the following day the number decreases" (SWS3).

The point raised above is important when one considers the households from which most of the youth come. Most of them live in households in abject poverty, where they may have only one meal per day, or sometimes not even that. Therefore, when they attend the programmes, they expect to be fed first before they are engaged. It should be emphasised to the organisers of the programmes, that they budget for catering.

Duplication of Information to Youth

Another challenge mentioned by social workers concerns the provision of information during school days, which is also available in schools. She explained that:

“For me, the challenges is that we do sessions and render life skills which, sometimes we deal with youth who are still in school when dealing with those. It is much better because they are already in one , but schools do not fully accept us we have to beg because we are told we are distracting the school calendar. More than anything, there is no balance between what we do with life orientation teachers because we sometime teach about teenage pregnancy whereas they also do” (SWS4).

Strengthen Partnerships

During the implementation of youth activities, there is a need to strengthen partnerships as some activities rely on other government departments. The responses show there are no coordinated plans for implementation. DuPre and Durlak (2008: 340) argue that shared decision-making improves implementation. Sharing decisions during implementation helps to ensure that the programmes delivered match local needs and accommodate preferences and culture.

Challenges Highlighted by the Community Development Practitioners

A variety of challenges were also raised by community development practitioners.

Beneficiaries Expecting Instant Life Improvement

Officials who implement programmes reported that the programmes bring long-term changes or improvement, whereas young people need instant change. The officials reported that:

“One of the main challenges is that when dealing with youth, we are dealing with people who are eager to get jobs, whereas youth is need of change now and their needs are. The programmes are also moving slowly”. (CDP1)

Lack of Infrastructure in Rural Areas

Another official added that:

“Youth from deep rural areas often complain about lack of access to information and sometimes it is hard to acquire a venue to conduct a programme from, as there are no community structures like hall, so we end up disregarding rural youth.” (CDP2)

Migration of Youth for Better Opportunities

The officials mentioned that young people do not stay in one place, and when those who have received certain training or are needed to do more programmes, have disappeared. The community development practitioners stated that:

“The challenge of disappearance of youth going to Johannesburg for job opportunities and do not finish our programmes. Youth start with a person when you want to provide other empowerment youth find nowhere to be found” (CDP3).

High Dropout Rates from the Programmes

The officials also mentioned the drop-out of youth during programme execution.

“Poor attendance and withdrawal of youth to attend follow up programmes youth people like faster things they end up dropping out especial if youth do not provide food they don’t finish the programme sometime attend our programmes while drunk and make move down and out” (CDP4).

The point above aligns with what the social workers said, namely that the youth often only attend the first day, and then do not return, especially because no food is provided. The social workers also noted the issue of poor attendance. The lack of motivation was a concern for another official who highlighted that:

“Youth are demotivated and tend to pour out their anger on government official as they feel that government is not doing enough to address the issue of unemployment even the youth organisations such as youth clubs are also demotivated because they have plans and ideas in place to assist them in having a sustainable livelihood but they are not receiving any funding” (CDP4).

The responses above indicate that many challenges faced by implementers during a programme compromise programme outcomes. Morites *et al.* (2005) argue that youth programmes face challenges such as instability, limited resources and leadership discontinuity.

Summary of Challenges Experienced by Implementers

A common challenge for implementers was erratic attendance among programme participants and a lack of commitment, resulting in a high drop-out rate. The

implementers encountered youth who were angry at the government, and as a result, even with good programmes available, young people were reluctant to participate.

The lack of infrastructure was also a challenge, ranging from physical facilities to accommodate programmes, to transport for beneficiaries when programmes are offered at a distance, and this affects the quality of service rendered. Dealing with young people with high expectations who do not understand the processes and need instant changes in their lives is difficult. The provision of duplicated information to youth in schools is a concern for social workers, as educators also provide the same. The NPOs implementing the programmes have poor access to government resources; although there is funding for youth programmes accessing it is difficult. Poor communication exists between the NPOs and government officials implementing the programme.

Challenges Highlighted by the Programme Beneficiaries /Youth

During the interviews, participants were asked about the challenges they faced during the programmes. The participants pointed out several challenges which directly affected them.

Lack of Resources

The participants voiced their frustrations about the non-supply or limited availability of resources, which are supposed to be the 'tools of trade' for them. The lack of such resources compromised their participation, resulting in the ineffectiveness of the programmes. The following statements reflect their sentiments about the lack of resources:

"No stationery provided when information is shared, we cannot refer the information we receive" (Y1).

"Currently we do not have resources no ball no pamphlets, which can pull the crowd of youth" (Y2).

"Here in our area, we have very big space to plant but when we plant the challenge start with cattle they walk in and destroy what we are planting the

community gardens are not fenced this causes problems for us to do the things we like” (Y3).

“I think the issue of staying in rural areas where schools are far and there are no factories which can create employment will always remain behind unable to use what we have learnt” (Y4).

“I do have skills of baking and cooking, but the material needs to be bought by money when I ask for it at home, they said it is for eating it is better now we have R350 I can start buying and see if people will support my business” (Y5).

“Limited funding because when I asked why do we do short programmes which give us too much information in a short space we are told there is small funding” (Y6).

Effective policy implementation requires resources. Muthanna and Sang (2023: 13) note that financial resources are crucial during policy implementation. It is evident that participants have unequal access to resources. Successful implementation of policy relies on sufficient funding.

Poor Time Management

Participants noted that lack of adherence to start and finish times of programmes and delays in implementation:

“Programme do not start at the exact times which make them finish late” (Y1)

“Delay in implementing the promised programmes” (Y2)

Programme beneficiaries shared concerns and mentioned:

“Leaving youth with expectations that are not fulfilled and delay in projects remains a weakness (Y3)

Lack of Sufficient Support Post Participation

Two participants stated that:

“As young person’s we do have business ideas that we think of and wish to pursue but they are not supported or recognized by people we work with and we

don't have means to start them and there is no support but we only have the option of participating in programmes not to do what we want”(Y7)

“I believe I will not speak justice if I leave out the issue of not being checked or followed after we have enrolled or attended the programme to check if help was gainful” (Y5)

“Officials are leaving us with expectations that are not fulfilled that they support us and link us with other companies for job purposes” (Y6)

Love (2004: 69) argues that implementation evaluation helps identify policy strengths and weaknesses. O'Toole (2000: 45) notes that through feedback and “using information on how policy implementation progresses, policymakers and implementers will be in a better position to assess interim achievements.” In this case, if beneficiaries are equipped but fail to secure employment, it might mean some flaws in the manner in which the policies are drafted and implemented.

Summary of Challenges Experienced by Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the programmes indicated that after participating in a programme, the relationship with trainers ends with no follow-up on the impact of the programme. This not only undermines the provision of skills, but also provides no support for how to start utilising them, and there is a lack of resources and funding. The challenge of incomplete information about programmes such as programme duration, and start and finish times was also raised. The issue of unfulfilled promises is also a challenge because, post-participation, participants are informed they will be supported, but it does not happen; hence young people feel the programme implementers just dump information with no guidance to measure progress.

5.4.7 Theme 7: Strategies to Improve the Implementation Challenges

The study also sought to highlight potential measures to mitigate the challenges identified by participants. The suggested strategies are presented by participant group.

Community Development Practitioners' Recommendations

The CDP made the following recommendations:

“We try to build trust with the youth groups by including them in any other youth programmes like skills development, where they will see practical involvement because of lack of programmes addressing their immediate need” (CDP1)

“Where there are no community structures, youth usually gather under trees, and we host our programmes under trees in order to ensure youth in rural areas do not remain behind we end up shorten our programmes” (CDP2)

Another participant indicated that they sometimes opt to exclude youth who live at a distance, because it remains their responsibility to transport them, whereas those who live close to the training facility can walk to it. She stated that:

“...sometimes we opt to work with youth residing closer to our offices because they don't complain with transport fare”.

Another official explained that in most cases, they opt to work with any young person available for the programme and undertake profiling later. The official explained that:

“In some instances, when we do programme and have done all preparations and there are targets that we have set for ourselves, we end up taking any person who is available we even request women organisation to assist”. (CDP4)

The responses above indicate that officials exercise their discretion when implementing the programmes. Lipsky (1980:389) also argues that public policy becomes what street-level bureaucrats execute, including defining the eligibility criteria for who is to receive a service at a given point.

Social Workers' Recommendations

The social workers were also asked how they deal with the challenges they indicated, or to suggest what could be done in future, and they stated that:

“To address the issue of distracting the school calendar we limit the number of stakeholders per session, e.g. have three stakeholders to do teenage pregnancy awareness on the next session have career guidance programme with three speakers for consideration of time” (SWS1)

“Our programmes are designed in such a way that when you want call it a programme you must have certain days and meet certain criteria and spend 10 days with participants, we sometimes shortened the programme to avoid drop-out” (SWS2).

One of the social workers highlighted the importance of partnering and stated:

“I normally choose to work with other stakeholders like CDPs because they have refreshments, so when they go for youth programmes I do mine too in order to ensure youth remain during the course of the intervention.” (SWS3)

The responses indicate that there are deviations from the approved expected activities due to challenges encountered during the implementation of youth mobilisation and skills development programmes; however, the implementers are committed to adopting strategies to ensure work continues.

Beneficiaries’ Recommendations

The programme participants were asked to suggest what they thought needed to be done to improve the skills and mobilisation programmes. They proposed interventions that would accommodate even those youth without a Matric qualification. One respondent stated:

“The government programme should also assist youth who are school drop-out because they can’t just sit in the whole day that how they start to rob people or still cows because they don’t know what to do available” (Y1).

Another participant suggested that consideration should be given to their knowledge and skills before enrolment. The participant mentioned that:

“I think the consideration should also be given to the existing skills that we have find ways to shape and nurture them, but we don’t know which route to take” (Y2).

A respondent stated that:

“For me the skills programme needs to link with places that can take few people trained for work exposure because all jobs need experiment, I only have skills and no knowledge so I will be left out when the opportunity come” (Y3.)

Other participants expressed that the programmes need to encourage entrepreneurship, arguing that:

“The programme needs to assist with formation of business groups, like for example selling can help us when there are soccer matches” (Y4)

“I think the programme must also assist us youth with talents and those with interest of sport activities because sometimes official need to come in our soccer field and assist us with nurturing of sport activities” (Y5)

Mthalande (2020) argues that government interventions, particularly the provision of resources for entrepreneurship programmes are significant in enabling the youth to venture into business and reduce unemployment. O’Toole (2000) highlights that policy target beneficiaries need to be active during implementation, not merely passive attendees. The Centre for the Study of Social Policy (2007: 5), cited in Anoll (2019: 4), suggests that the youth should take control, and have the capacity and opportunity to make decisions on issues that affect them, in this case, the skills development programmes. The literature review notes that the South African government does not include the youth in decision-making of this nature, which often results in programmes being designed that are not fit for purpose and therefore, less effective.

5.5 Summary of Findings

Overall, most participants gave similar responses to the questions presented to them, with some exceptions. The findings show that there is no uniformity in how different implementers roll out the same programmes. Circumstances often dictate how they act. The analysis shows that some implementers lack knowledge of the relevant policy being implemented. There is a robust monitoring and evaluation system in place but it appears to be largely numbers-based, not focused on content, and haphazard, depending on who is doing the evaluation and where it has to take place. Whilst acknowledging support from the DSD in terms of funding, resources and communication, the responses indicate that the DSD is largely top-down in its approach to policy implementation and there are gaps at all levels of knowledge and implementation. There is also no clear role definition between implementers who are partners. Service office managers are supporting officials who implement the policy to

ensure it is implemented. There is also a lack of support from other local leaders who feel threatened by the existence of youth NPOs, leading to youth NPOs being denied access to community halls. There are structures in place for NPO development, however, there are none specifically for youth.

The results show that youth beneficiaries are largely passive participants who rely on NPOs and officials for information. For the youth, communication about the programme's existence, nature and benefits is uneven, often insufficient, with information duplicated across different forums. There is often a mismatch between their expectations of a programme and what is actually offered, including follow-up support. For the youth, there are location-specific challenges, such as distance to training venues, transport, the non-provision of resources such as stationery, internet access, and refreshments, and the length and timing of training sessions. These are exacerbated by their general situation of poverty and unemployment. They are also acutely aware of the top-down approach and feel that they need to be fully involved in all stages of programme development and implementation. Programme implementation in Umvoti lacked input from the policy target group.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter presented findings from programme beneficiaries, government officials and non-profit organisations engaged in the skills development and youth mobilisation programmes in line with the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Youth Development Policy. An analysis and interpretation of the data are provided. The data were collected through focus groups and interviews and analysed using thematic analysis. The emerging seven themes related to the management of programme implementation (including policies and frameworks, management and monitoring of implementation partners, relationships between partners and support to partners); the knowledge and skills of implementers needed for participation in programme implementation (including understanding of policy, role in programme implementation and access to resources); the participation process (including processes and structures for becoming involved in implementation); beneficiaries' views about participation in the programmes; interpersonal communication; implementation challenges and recommendations. Data are presented by theme and respondent group.

The findings show that the basic elements of the policy cycle are in place, with structures and processes for youth policy programme implementation in Umvoti Local Municipality operational but implementation is not as effective and efficient as it could be. Experiences of implementers and beneficiaries on the ground suggest gaps across all aspects of policy knowledge and implementation, with practical difficulties often overlooked. The challenges listed by all groups of participants were varied; some were unique to a specific group, but they often overlapped, particularly in the areas of communication and programme planning. Many suggestions were put forward to improve implementation.

The conclusions and recommendations are covered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study investigated the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development, in a case study of Umvoti Local Municipality, with a focus on two programmes, youth mobilisation and skills development. The first section concludes the research by summarising the findings in relation to the research questions, which is followed by an overall summary and recommendations.

6.2 Summary of Findings

6.2.1 Research Question 1: What are the policy and legislative frameworks for youth mobilisation and skills development programmes in the Umvoti Municipality?

Chapter Three of this study discussed the various policies and legislation that guide and relate to youth mobilisation and skills development programmes. This study revealed that since 1994, there have been significant attempts to develop youth-related policies that seek to address youth challenges. Since 1994, the government has attempted to ensure youth inclusion by launching programmes and legislation at national, provincial and local levels that promote youth development and contribute to improved employment opportunities. The study further revealed that the government understands the diverse challenges facing youth and their impact on society, so programmes and policies are in place to make a meaningful contribution to young persons. The frameworks and policies relating to youth promote access to education, healthy living and youth participation in the economy, and in particular highlight the importance of including rural youth and youth with disabilities in programmes. The study further revealed the importance of having a coordinated structure for youth development in each local context. The stated intentions of these frameworks and policies need to be examined against empirical evidence, so this study researched the actual implementation and implementation issues related to these frameworks in Umvoti Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal.

The respondents of the study, in particular, the implementers and service officials from the DSD, had varying knowledge of the relevant legislation and policies relating to youth, and of guidelines for policy implementation. Whilst most understood the purpose of youth policies, they did not all know what was in the policies; in particular, the youth NPOs appeared ignorant of the policies, being more familiar with the structures and processes at the local level. What emerged was the need for education and information about the whole package of legislation and policies at all levels of government. The fieldwork showed that the implementation of these two programmes is in line with the objectives of the existing youth frameworks and policies, and that it makes a meaningful contribution to young people, by providing access to information and empowerment programmes.

6.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the structures, processes and procedures in place to implement the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development?

The study revealed that the KwaZulu–Natal Social Development policy on youth development has established youth development academies, which are residential training centres and non-residential youth centres where young people attend programmes daily. The policy specifically defines the roles of implementers at different levels of implementation. It also suggests that young people need to be mobilised as change agents in their communities. The policy also provides for partnerships and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. It requests that district offices in local government spaces develop implementation plans with young people as the policy targets. It further promotes the importance of attending intra-departmental youth development forums. The analysis indicates that there is a budget allocation process for all youth development programmes.

The fieldwork showed that the implementers are familiar with only two structures, the ‘war room’ and the NPO forum, which is not specifically designed for youth. There are standardised processes in place for social workers, but there is no standardisation for community development practitioners and NPOs. The issue of working with external stakeholders such as the private sector was not raised, yet youth skills development needs to match local economic drivers.

6.2.3 Research Question 3: What are the experiences of the implementing agents, and the programme beneficiaries, of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development in Umvoti?

Through focus groups and interviews with policy implementers and youth beneficiaries, the study investigated the experiences and challenges these groups faced with the local implementation of the policy. Overall, responses indicated that although the policy is being implemented, there are challenges at every stage, and implementation reflects a top-down approach from the DSD.

The study revealed that most implementers had access to some resources, but there were some practical issues with venue availability, programme length and refreshments for participants at training (said social workers). Implementing agents noted the lengthy process of acquiring funds that are needed for programmes.

Social workers felt that programme quality was compromised when they sometimes had to shorten training sessions because refreshments were unavailable. Most young people come from impoverished backgrounds where irregular meals are the norm. Funding for youth NPOs in Umvoti strengthens the implementation of youth programmes as without funding, implementation is impossible, and the policy target cannot be reached.

Youth NPOs as implementers play an important role in advertising and promoting training programmes given their integral connection to the community. Most NPOs even work on weekends to reach more youth. However, while the NPOs do mobilise the youth, they rely on government officials to deliver programmes because of their own lack of knowledge about the content. Implementers indicated that an effective working relationship with officials is lacking, and that they are neither included in programme development nor kept informed of the practicalities of implementation. The DSD has objectives that do not always match what is happening on the ground and are not well communicated. The top-down approach by the DSD led some youth NPOs to distrust the DSD, particularly where information was lacking or duplicated (being provided by different stakeholders operating independently of each other) due to poor communication and non-inclusion in multiple aspects of the implementation.

There is a need to improve policy performance implementation. Managers did not share how they managed implementation. Their responses were limited to managing implementation within the Department of Social Development. This largely focuses on managing staff and not on considering implementation holistically, which includes managing partnerships, resource distribution and how implementing agents are empowered with the knowledge or content of the policy. Implementing agents face numerous challenges that need attention for the programmes to be implemented successfully. These include high youth dropout rates from programmes, and a lack of motivation among youth to attend programmes that do not meet their immediate needs. This often relates to poor communication about the purpose of programmes.

There is no referral system from NPOs to the government for youth issues, and as a result, these issues remain unresolved, which is not helpful for young people.

The study revealed that there is no uniformity in recruitment criteria, making it impossible to ensure that a programme is relevant to programme beneficiaries. Most recruitment strategies are informal and carried out by different stakeholders using different means, namely through youth NPOs, DSD officials and through neighbourhood chats. This compromises the quality of programmes and services rendered because beneficiaries might be participating in programmes they have enrolled in before. Another finding is that motivation for youth to participate is driven by their future desires. Recruiting young people during their leisure time might jeopardise the recruitment process because young people may individually accept or reject the programme based on how the majority does things at a specific time.

The beneficiaries appear to be ill-informed about the purpose of the policy and programmes and generally lack programme information. They are passive participants simply waiting for an opportunity to receive information from their implementers. It is clear that consultation with the target beneficiaries during the KwaZulu-Natal youth policy implementation, was lacking. The programme beneficiaries also encountered challenges, including delayed planned programme execution, insufficient support post-participation, and a lack of follow-up once beneficiaries exit the programme to assess whether the programme has changed or

improved their lives. Political interference and a lack of prior engagement with the beneficiaries were also noted. The unavailability of stationery, internet access and refreshments was also indicated as demotivating issues during the training.

6.2.4 Research Question 4: What are the implementation challenges associated with the youth mobilisation and skills development in Umvoti Local Municipality?

The study revealed that the overall implementation process has neglected the actual roles and needs of NPOs and policy targets (beneficiaries). The participants' responses indicated they had little to no input on what is implemented. There was no platform or process which accepted or opened for inputs from local communities where implementation takes place. The exclusion of policy targets and youth NPOs compromises public participation during implementation. This weakens the empowerment and ownership by policy targets. Responses from the youth clearly indicated that the youth want to be involved in planning programmes that target them. The treatment of policy targets and youth NPOs as passive citizens only available to accept what is presented with no input weakens the implementation process, as they do not own the process or the programme.. The finding reveals that not all actors in Umvoti are aware of the policy content.

The approach to implementation has been shown to be top-down. The study further revealed that implementers of the policy do not have the same level of understanding of the policy, as very few officials have been empowered about the policy they are implementing, and this could result in deviations from the policy objectives. There is a lack of knowledge about the policy content among social workers who are also implementers. Due to the lack of meaningful involvement of all stakeholder groups, local conditions are not considered in planning. The study reveals that while extensive monitoring and evaluation occurs, it is not consistently applied, and it needs improvement from being a largely numbers-based format to one that takes cognisance of the impact of attendance at the programmes.

6.2.5 Research Question 5: How can the challenges in question be addressed?

The researcher sought recommendations from the stakeholders on best practices to implement during programme delivery. The participants' responses varied, according to their particular roles within the projects. Most indicated that policy beneficiaries should be engaged to represent all categories of youth in practice, not just on paper, for example, youth with disabilities and youth residing in rural areas. Beneficiaries need to be empowered and prepared for enrolment in any government programme, and their areas of interest need to be considered. Youth NPOs need to be known by their local leaders to avoid conflicts of interest where local leaders feel threatened by existing youth NPOs. NPOs also feel that there needs to be better communication with them from the DSD officials. To achieve successful implementation, structures and processes for implementation need to be standardised to ensure the same policy outcomes among implementers. The youth mobilisation programme needs to be structured and clearly defined in terms of programme detail, duration and purpose. During programme implementation and training, beneficiaries need to be provided with learning materials such as stationery and pamphlets to share information and provide the youth with references. In relation to the provision of life skills programmes during school times, the Department of Social Development needs to coordinate with life orientation teachers so that any information provided is not duplicated. NPOs are categorised as implementers/actors, yet they lack knowledge and content regarding what they are expected to offer. As a result, their role is that of a link with the youth and not an implementer. Implementing agents need sufficient knowledge and assistance from funders to deliver services and content that are relevant to the beneficiaries. The skills development programme needs a post-support programme to track what young people are doing with the skills acquired and what kind of further support is needed. A relationship needs to be established with potential employers before implementation of any skills development programmes to ensure young people are equipped with practical, not just theoretical, skills that are in demand. The establishment of a youth NPO forum is recommended so that youth NPOs can share knowledge and resources in their local spaces.

6.3 Recommendations made by stakeholders

The participants in the programmes recommended that during the planning and implementation of any government programme, the existing skills of targeted

beneficiaries should be considered so they can be enhanced. The participants recommended skills development interventions, such as providing workplace exposure pre- and post- training to ensure experience is gained, which many employers request when opportunities arise. Some of the mobilisation programme participants recommended that these interventions needed to happen in a timely manner; it was sometimes more than a year before issues and requests were dealt with, during which time priorities and needs may have changed.

6.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings of the study.

1. A youth NPO forum should be established to ensure that NPOs implementing youth programmes learn from one another and have formal opportunities to discuss implementation issues in depth. This will also help NPOs to lobby collectively for resources from the private sector. Before programmes are implemented in Umvoti, local business sectors need to be engaged to identify scarce skills and to ensure that implemented programmes respond to local needs.
2. The DSD should provide detailed implementation guidelines to policy implementers. Implementers need to be able to develop the implementation plans with logical steps and specific timeframes. This will allow for reflection on how far a programme has realised policy objectives.
3. A process should be developed to involve the youth in programme content and to accommodate local needs, ensuring programmes address the actual needs of the local youth and thus add value to the programme offerings.
4. There is a need for DSD to clearly specify the roles of implementing NPOs and to empower all policy implementers regarding the content of the policy.
5. There is also a need to develop and clearly set out the recruitment requirements and procedures to ensure that those who most need the programmes are targeted, rather than simply including youth just because they are available.
6. DSD should also have youth-specific funding available so that implementers do not have to rely on NPOs for programme implementation logistics.

6.5 Conclusion

This thesis examined the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development Policy on youth development in Umvoti Local Municipality through an examination of relevant legislation and policies, as well as interviews and focus groups with four groups of policy implementers and youth beneficiaries of two particular programmes. Data were gathered based on research questions relating to knowledge of existing legislation, policies, structures and processes surrounding implementation, as well as the experiences of all groups of participants with various aspects of implementation. The data showed that there were gaps in all areas of the implementation as summarised above. The main problem was the top-down nature of the implementation and associated communication gaps, lack of information and attention to local conditions, and the needs of the local youth. This led to unplanned policy desires and limited the policy's contribution to the lives of young persons. This chapter has provided a summary of the findings for each research question and provides some recommendations for improving policy implementation.

The study therefore makes a theoretical contribution by adding to the body of knowledge on youth development policy implementation. The study contributed context-specific knowledge of policy aims, institutional arrangements, governance structures, and implementation realities, whereas prior research has mostly concentrated on policy formulation or broader national evaluations. Empirically, the study provides evidence of the implementation of youth mobilisation and skills development programmes within the Umvoti Local Municipality, which has thus far received limited, if any, scholarly attention. Incorporating the perspectives of both implementing agents, and programme beneficiaries, produced a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the existing programmes, the implementation gaps, and the lived experiences of the various stakeholders. This evidence has therefore contributed to the emerging literature on youth development and local governance in South Africa. From a methodological perspective, the study adopted a multi-stakeholder approach that integrated the perspectives of various stakeholders, generating rich qualitative evidence that moves beyond policy analysis to capture the realities of implementation.

The uniqueness of the Umvoti Local Municipality is evident in its localised perspective, which recognises that policy success is largely determined by implementation practices at the local level, where service delivery and youth programmes directly affect beneficiaries. Essentially, the study went beyond identifying implementation challenges by proposing practical, context-sensitive strategies to improve youth mobilisation and skills development programmes, thereby not only explaining implementation problems, but also contributing actionable solutions that could strengthen policy effectiveness. By generating evidence from government departmental officials, the research provided further insights into how youth development policies could be implemented more effectively, especially in resource-constrained local government contexts. In a nutshell, the study has endeavoured to link policy frameworks, institutional implementation processes, stakeholder experiences, and practical policy recommendations. This dynamic and comprehensive approach thus distinguishes the study from previous research on youth development policy implementation in South Africa.

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Appendix 1

Interview Guide for Service Office Managers

Introduction:

Greetings/Welcome

I am here to conduct a research on this topic Implementation analysis of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development Policy on Youth Development (2020) with a focus on Youth mobilisation and skills development programmes: A Case Study of Umvoti Local Municipality. The purpose of the research is to find out which policies and legislative frameworks guide youth mobilisation and skills development programmes and to explore the strategies that were put in place by the Department of Social Development Umvoti for the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development policy on youth development

I am Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal, in the School of Social Sciences Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am currently doing Master's Degree in Social Science, Policy and development programme in Umvoti Local Municipality.

I hereby humbly request two hours to interview the officials and to be assisted with reports for youth mobilization programmes and skills development programmes. I humbly request the time and venue for our interview be stated by you to ensure your schedule of work is not disrupted.

The main objectives of the research are to analyse how the Department is implementing the KwaZulu- Natal Social Development policy on youth development with regards to youth mobilization and skills development programme. This will assist to see how young people are developed and mainstreamed in their local spaces and eventually in provincial economy. This study will enquire information relating to the process of implementation the successes and challenges that the organization faces during implementation of the policy.

1. 1.What is your role in implementing in the Youth Mobilization and skills development programme?
2. What is your understanding of the purposes of the programme?
3. What are the main youth challenges that the youth policy is trying to address
4. What is the content and skills of the training programme?
5. Which programme structures do you participate in and with other stakeholders to implement the programme? Experiences?
6. Describe the communication between you and each of the other stakeholders in the programme CDPs/Social workers, participants, NPOs
7. Describe your relationship with each of them
8. Do you have policies and legislative frameworks that guide implementation of youth mobilisation and skills development programme? If yes, what are those?
9. How is monitoring conducted of the NPOs implementing youth mobilization programme and skills development? How do you use the information received during monitoring?
10. How are implementing partners (CDPS, NPOs etc) managed in the implementation of this policy?
11. What support do you provide to implementing partners to implement the programme

Appendix 2

Interview schedule for community development practitioners

Introduction:

Greetings/Welcome

I am here to conduct a research on this topic Implementation analysis of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development Policy on Youth Development (2020) with a focus on Youth mobilisation and skills development programmes: A Case Study of Umvoti Local Municipality. The purpose of the research is to find out which policies and legislative frameworks guide youth mobilisation and skills development programmes and to explore the strategies that were put in place by the Department of Social Development Umvoti for the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development policy on youth development

I am Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal, in the School of Social Sciences Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am currently doing Master's Degree in Social Science, Policy and Development. The area of my research is Youth. My degree requires me to conduct research for my thesis: An implementation Analysis of the KwaZulu Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.: A Case Study of Youth Mobilization programme and skills development programme in Umvoti Local Municipality.

I hereby humbly request two hours to interview the officials and to be assisted with reports for youth mobilization programmes and skills development programmes. I humbly request the time and venue for our interview be stated by you to ensure your schedule of work is not disrupted.

The main objectives of the research are to analyse how the Department is implementing the KwaZulu- Natal Social Development policy on youth development with regards to youth mobilization and skills development programme. This will assist to see how young people are developed and mainstreamed in their local spaces and eventually in provincial economy. This study will enquire information relating to the process of implementation the successes and challenges that the organization faces during implementation of the policy.

The interview should take 30-45 minutes.

This interview is voluntary and can be done either in English or isiZulu

Are you comfortable that we can proceed with this interview? Feel free to withdraw from the interview at any point if you get uncomfortable.

Questions

1. What is your role in implementing in the Youth Mobilization and skills development programme?
2. What processes did you go through with the Dept to participate and implement youth mobilisation and skills development ? selection/contact/recruitment, venues ,training What were your experiences of this process?
3. What is your understanding of the policy in relation to the purpose of the programme?
- 4.. Which programme structures do you participate in to implement the programme?
5. Describe the communication between you and the departmental Officials and external
6. Describe your relationship with the participants in the programme and NPOs who are implementers
7. What is your understanding of the content and skills of the training programme?
8. What are the challenges that you are experiencing in the implementation of the programmes?
9. How is monitoring conducted of the NPOs implementing youth mobilization programme and skills development? How do you use the information received during monitoring?
10. As an implementer what the are implementation issues that you face during execution of youth mobilization programme?
11. Is there anything you want to recommend to assist with the effective I implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development policy on youth development?

Appendix 3

Interview schedule for Social Workers

Introduction:

Greetings/Welcome

I am Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal, in the School of Social Sciences Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am currently doing Master's Degree in Social Science, Policy and Development. The area of my research is Youth. My degree requires me to conduct research for my thesis: An implementation Analysis of the KwaZulu Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.: A Case Study of Youth Mobilization programme and skills development programme in Umvoti Local Municipality.

I hereby humbly request two hours to interview the officials and to be assisted with reports for youth mobilization programmes and skills development programmes. I humbly request the time and venue for our interview be stated by you to ensure your schedule of work is not disrupted.

The main objectives of the research are to analyse how the Department is implementing the KwaZulu- Natal Social Development policy on youth development with regards to youth mobilization and skills development programme. This will assist to see how young people are developed and mainstreamed in their local spaces and eventually in provincial economy. This study will enquire information relating to the process of implementation the successes and challenges that the organization faces during implementation of the policy.

The interview should take 30-45 minutes.

This interview is voluntary and can be done either in English or isiZulu

Are you comfortable that we can proceed with this interview? Feel free to withdraw from the interview at any point if you get uncomfortable.

Questions

1. What is your role in implementing in the Youth Mobilization and skills development programme?
2. What is your understanding of the policy in relation to the purpose of the programme?
3. What processes did you go through with the Dept to implement this programme?
What were your experiences of this process?
4. What content of training do you provide (target and content?)
5. Which programme structures do you participate in to implement the programme?
6. Describe the communication between you and other departmental Officials in relation to youth development.
- 7 .Describe your relationship with the participants in the programme
8. What are the challenges that you are experiencing in the implementation of the programmes?
9. As an implementer what are the implementation issues that you face during execution of youth mobilization programme and skills development?
10. Is there anything you want to recommend to assist with the effective implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Social Development policy on youth development?

Appendix 4

Questions for Youth NPOs implementing youth mobilization and skills

Development programmes

Introduction

I am Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal, in the School of Social Sciences Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am currently doing Master's Degree in Social Science, Policy and Development. The area of my research is Youth. My degree requires me to conduct research for my thesis: An implementation Analysis of the KwaZulu Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.: A Case Study of Youth Mobilization programme and skills development programme in Umvoti Local Municipality.

I hereby humbly request two hours to interview the officials and to be assisted with reports for youth mobilization programmes and skills development programmes. I humbly request the time and venue for our interview be stated by you to ensure your schedule of work is not disrupted.

The main objectives of the research are to analyse how the Department is implementing the KwaZulu- Natal Social Development policy on youth development with regards to youth mobilization and skills development programme. This will assist to see how young people are developed and mainstreamed in their local spaces and eventually in provincial economy. This study will enquire information relating to the process of implementation the successes and challenges that the organization faces during implementation of the policy.

The interview should take 30-45 minutes.

This interview is voluntary and can be done either in English or isiZulu

Are you comfortable that we can proceed with this interview? Feel free to withdraw from the interview at any point if you get uncomfortable.

Questions

1. What is your role of your organization in implementing in the Youth Mobilization and skills development programme
2. Why and how was your organization recruited to implement the programme? Briefly describe what your organization does
- 3 .What is your understanding of the policy content in relation to the purposes of the programme?
4. What processes did you go through with the Dept to implement this programme? Or how were you selected to be part of the programme? Eg selection/contact/recruitment, briefings, documentations, training etc experience of the process
5. What is the content and skills of the training programme you deliver?
6. Which programme structures do you participate in to implement the programme?
 1. Describe the communication between you and the departmental officials.
 2. Describe your relationship with the participants
7. What are your experiences as the Non-Profit Organization implementing the mobilization and skills development programme?
8. What are your experiences as the NPOs implementing the two programmes and What are the challenges that you are experiencing in the implementation of the programmes?
9. Describe the support you receive to deliver the programme to the youth.
10. What improvements do you recommend to more effectively implement the youth and skills development programme

APPENDIX 5

Interview schedule for Participants that benefitted from youth mobilization and skills development programme

Introduction:

Greetings /Welcome

I am Nomkhuleko Muriel Zwakele Ntshaba, a student at University of KwaZulu Natal, in the School of Social Sciences Pietermaritzburg Campus. I am currently doing Master's Degree in Social Science, Policy and Development. The area of my research is Youth. My degree requires me to conduct research for my thesis: An implementation Analysis of the KwaZulu Natal Social Development Policy on Youth Development 2020.: A Case Study of Youth Mobilization programme and skills development programme in Umvoti Local Municipality.

I hereby humbly request two hours to interview the officials and to be assisted with reports for youth mobilization programmes and skills development programmes. I humbly request the time and venue for our interview be stated by you to ensure your schedule of work is not disrupted.

The main objectives of the research are to analyse how the Department is implementing the KwaZulu- Natal Social Development policy on youth development with regards to youth mobilization and skills development programme. This will assist to see how young people are developed and mainstreamed in their local spaces and eventually in provincial economy. This study will enquire information relating to the process of implementation the successes and challenges that the organization faces during implementation of the policy.

The interview should take 30-45 minutes.

This interview is voluntary and can be done either in English or isiZulu

Are you comfortable that we can proceed with this interview? Feel free to withdraw from the interview at any point if you get uncomfortable.

Questions

1. Why and how were you recruited to participate in the programme?
2. What is your understanding of the KwaZulu –Natal Social Development policy ?and its purpose
3. What is your understanding of the purpose of the youth mobilization and skills development programme?
4. What did you learn from the training (skills and content)?
5. What were your experiences of the training (delivery methods, trainers, times, venues used, content etc.)
6. What were the benefits of the programme for you?
7. Are you currently employed? if yes did the programme assist with you gaining employment?
8. How has the programme been beneficial to you? if so how? if not why not?
9. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this programme?
10. What role do you think that the youth should play in government youth development programmes?
11. What should these programmes cover?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add or recommend to assist the unemployed youth in this community?

We have reached the end of our interview I would like to thank you for making time to participate.

APPENDIX 6

Gate Keepers



UMVOTI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Enquiries: Mr. Dlomo Contact Number: 063 715 2825; Ward 6

Date: 10 December 2022

Ms. N.M.Z Ntshaba

32 ulundi Drive

Dundee

3000

Attention: Ms. NMZ Ntshaba

Permission to conduct research study to the youth NPO in Umvoti Ward 6: Ms. NMZ Ntshaba

NMZ Ntshaba who want to do a research of Social Development based in ward 6 and skills development programmes. As the ward result will be shared.

me.

