RESEARCH Report 44

A Scan of Rural Civil Society

Rick de Satgé

(Phuhlisani Solutions)

RESEARCH Report 44

A Scan of Rural Civil Society

Rick de Satgé, Phulisani Solutions
January 2013

Contents

Acknowledgements

1 Introduction

PLAAS commissioned Phuhlisani to undertake a review of rural civil society, to explore innovative ways in which researchers and organisations in rural civil society can work together in linking research to policy engagement from 'below'. PLAAS, being a research institute, is interested in how research can best empower rural civil society organisations (CSOs) in their dealings with government and other role players, and how to strengthen the democratic policy process.

This review seeks new information that goes beyond the usual discussions of rural civil society to help inform fresh-thinking and a deeper understanding of the strategic issues involved in relations between poor, marginalised rural people, their organisations, and organs of the state.

1.1 The research questions

- Who is out there? How are rural people currently organising themselves, and in what organisational forms?

- How do they engage with the organs that govern them? This aspect of the analysis should provide, in broad terms, a typology of the different strategic approaches at the disposal of poor rural people and their organisations.

- What is the role, or potential role, of information, knowledge and research in strengthening the position of the rural poor in their interactions with the state and other developmental sectors?

- Where does absence of knowledge, or a lack of ability to make use of available information and knowledge, hamper or disempower poor rural people?

- How do rural organisations and people currently use information in the pursuit of their goals?

- What forms of media or information are most appropriate to reach organisations operating in different rural settings?

- What is the impact, if any, of organisations that produce policy-relevant knowledge in this sector?

2 Methodology

This section summarises how Phuhlisani approached this task using five components:

2.1 Scanning the literature

There is a vast amount of international literature on civil society, social movements and the state, most of which originated in the North. There is also a significant body of literature in Spanish and Portuguese from Latin America, which is inaccessible to English speakers. We explore a range of definitions and examine the changing focus on civil society that takes place in the era following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which propelled the rapid globalisation of capital and markets, and which had implications for the negotiated transition in South Africa.

We briefly examine the changing role and function of civil society in South Africa pre- and post-1994, and its changing relations with the state through successive presidencies. We review available data on rural CSOs and scan associated interpretive studies.

Given that the rural civil society scan is motivated by the intent to find ways to link research to policy engagement from 'below', we also scanned the literature on changing scholarship and research paradigms and research-to-action frameworks.

2.2 Obtaining and synthesising data on civil society

In order to establish 'who is out there', we have sought data from a variety of sources which we combined into a single database. However, it was clear from the outset that data capture and subsequent data management on almost all existing databases are extremely poor. It seems that most organisations, whether state or non-profit, lack the capacity to document data. So, although we have aggregated a number of different data sets, the proportion of bad data is relatively high in all of the databases we accessed. This is discussed in-depth in Section 6.4.

2.3 Developing a typology of CSOs

We have developed an indicative typology of CSOs, in which organisations are placed into one of four quadrants. Database entries tend to feature organisations that fall into the first two quadrants, which capture formally constituted organisations, – such as NPOs, cooperatives or other legal entities. There are a host of rural organisations which are less formal and which remain largely invisible to a rapid and predominantly desk-based scan of this nature.

2.4 Undertaking a survey of a purposively selected sample of CSOs

We designed a short survey that was emailed and conducted telephonically. This verified contact information and posed 26 questions with a selection of multiple choice answers. The purpose of the survey was to:

- briefly profile the respondent organisations and locate them within the civil society typology;

- identify the nature of CSO interactions with the state and relations with other organisations in the process;

- identify the different rural sub-sectors in which the organisations polled were working;

- examine their sources of funding;

- examine internet access;

- compare levels of information literacy;

- identify particular types of information needs of the organisations profiled, which would enable them to engage more effectively with the state at different levels; and

- identify the most appropriate delivery options to enable rural CSOs to access the information that they need.

2.5 Rural CSO case studies

Six short case studies were prepared to examine organisations in different rural and institutional settings. These include:

- Three cases where a non-governmental organisation (NGO)/NPO has a relationship with a rural network or aspirant social movement:

  o The Food Sovereignty Campaign and its relationship with the Surplus People Project (SPP);

  o the Rural Network and its relationship with the Church Land Programme (CLP); and

  o rural savings groups and their association with SaveAct.

- Two cases where government development programmes resulted in new organisations or institutional structures:

  o The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme's (CRDP) Muyexe pilot project and the establishment of a Council of Stakeholders; and

  o the Simondium Rural Development Forum in the Cape Winelands, which was registered as an NPO through an initiative supported by the district municipality.

- The case of the United South African Agricultural Association (USAAA), an organisation of emerging farmers, which was established against a backdrop of political contestation over access to resources.

The case studies help us to critically examine the typology and fit between the conceptual framework and complex and messy realities shaping rural social formations.

2.6 Identification of key knowledge gaps and emerging trends

In the final section, we combine our analysis from the different sections to identify key gaps in our knowledge of rural civil society, and summarise trends which emerge from the literature and the findings of the mini-survey.

3 Issues from the literature

The rise of 'civil society' and 'social capital' in international development literature draws on deep historical and theoretical roots. Contemporary portrayals of civil society tend to foreground what are considered to be its democratic and heroic qualities. Civil society plays a leading role in various scripts and theatres of resistance countering arbitrary state power in a variety of settings, such as:

- in the former Soviet bloc;

- by the juntas in South American states;

- the pursuit of unjust wars in Vietnam and Iraq;

- against the apartheid government in South Africa;

- the World Social Forum (WSF) and campaigns related to debt, global land grabs, climate change and environmental degradation; and

- leading the Arab Spring in the Middle East.

The dominant narratives highlight the roles played by civil society formations in countering the power of coercive elites, irrespective of their ideological leanings, together with their contribution to holding new governments accountable following democratic transition.

These narratives tend to overlook that civil society is also the domain of other social formations, both formal and informal, which can be reactionary and repressive. This requires that any review of civil society questions generalisations and assumptions that civil society is automatically progressive and a force for change in the interests of the poor and the marginalised. As Robinson and White observe:

> Unfortunately, the use of the term 'civil society' in development discourse tends to be confused and confusing, reflecting both the ambiguous theoretical heritage of the term itself and the competing uses to which ... (it is) put. Actual civil societies are complex associational universes involving a vast array of specific organisational forms and a wide diversity of institutional motivations. They contain repression as well as democracy, conflict as well as cooperation, vice as well as virtue; they can be motivated by sectional greed as much as social interest. Thus any attempt to compress civil society into a homogenous and virtuous stereotype is doomed to fail (Robinson and White, 1997: 3).

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the democratic transition in South Africa in 1994, the global focus on democratisation was speedily eclipsed by the rapid globalisation of capitalism and the unfettered logic of neo-liberalism, which has resulted in 'the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands and the unprecedented extension of hopeless poverties (Berger, 2001: 211).

Robinson and White (1997) observe that the growth of civil society globally has been in response to 'three sets of pressures':

- the need to create social and organisational spaces outside the state to counter oppression or improve lives;

- a response to the push of development agendas promoted by aid organisations and donors, which directs resources to local NPOs; and

- the involvement of CSOs as partners of the state in the delivery of public services linked to the above.

They note that the democratisation discourse frequently draws on the 'dominant neo-liberal perception that state organisations are predatory and inefficient, with rent-seeking as the primary motive for the behaviour of public officials' *(Ibid: 1).*

Significant tension remains between the 'defensive' and 'developmental' pressures shaping civil society. There are persuasive arguments that these pressures are irreconcilable and that the creation of alternative spaces and new discourses, which directly counter the pervasive neo-liberal agenda, are required. Social movements move to claim

this new space but this remains a complex and contested arena, as examined in 3.1.

3.1 Global discourse on social capital and civil society

The resurgence and reframing of civil society in the international literature is closely linked to the theorising of 'social capital', which first appears in the 1990s before gaining currency as a mainstream concept. *Putnam et al (1993)* defines social capital as 'features of social organisations, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society.' *Clark (1995)* emphasises the relational nature of social capital, defining it as 'relationships grounded in structures of voluntary association, norms of cooperation and attitudes of social trust and respect. It is argued that there are close connections between stocks of social capital, the relative vibrancy of civil society and the extent of independent local development initiatives.

The framing of social capital is primarily developmental. Social capital features strongly in the 'capitals framework', which anchored the asset-based livelihoods approach *(Scoones, 1998; Chambers and Conroy, 1992; Carney, 1999)*, and which was subsequently strongly promoted by a wide range of international agencies.

This marked a shift away from development paths in which 'development' was designed to create jobs. Although seldom acknowledged as such, the concept of 'sustainable livelihoods' is premised on the diminished expectations of employment by the poor in the context of a rapidly globalising economy, where rapidly increasing numbers of workers are trapped into 'a lifetime of weak attachment to the labour market, alternating between low paid, insecure work and outright unemployment' *(ILO Global employment trends – January 2009).* In this setting, *Coole (2009: 376)* has argued that 'recent attention to social capital is best understood ... in the context of profound economic and demographic changes associated with globalisation, coupled with a new localism in public policy'.

3.1.1 Relations between the state, private sector and civil society

Understanding civil society and the framing of the relationships between NGOs, CBOs, social movements and the state vary widely. *Esteves et al (2009)* argue that 'the terms "civil society", "social movements", "non-governmental organisations" and so on do not have any single, simple meaning: they are massively inflected by their national and regional context, as well as by the academic discipline or theoretical perspective they are spoken within'.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1994) distinguishes three domains which, as we examine in *Figure 1*, shade into one another to some extent. Mainstream perspectives, which reflect the rationalities of the 'new economic order', see the private sector as an integral part of civil society in which the markets and CSOs combine to roll back the state. However, social actors which contest the neo-liberal world view are deeply suspicious of the role of the private sector and the extent to which organisations that represent commercial interests should be recognised as part of the civil society sphere.

We examine if the informal sector fits into this framework and we question whether the millions of small producers and people making a living in the interstices can be said to be part of the private sector or are more at home as a subset of civil society.

As can be seen from *Figure 1*, the state sphere contains political and public sector institutions of governance while private enterprises and the informal sector comprise the private sector sphere.

There are intersections between these spheres. While the UNDP locates the informal sector as part of the private sector sphere, it seems marginal at best and is probably better located in the crossover zone with civil society. In South Africa, this zone is also home to institutions like the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), which bring together state, private sector and CSOs. Businesses invest in non-profit corporate social investment (CSI) activities, which also straddle the boundary with the civil society sphere. Political parties and institutions of traditional governance occupy positions in the spaces where civil society and the state overlap.

Figure 1: Visual representation of the UNDP (1994) framework
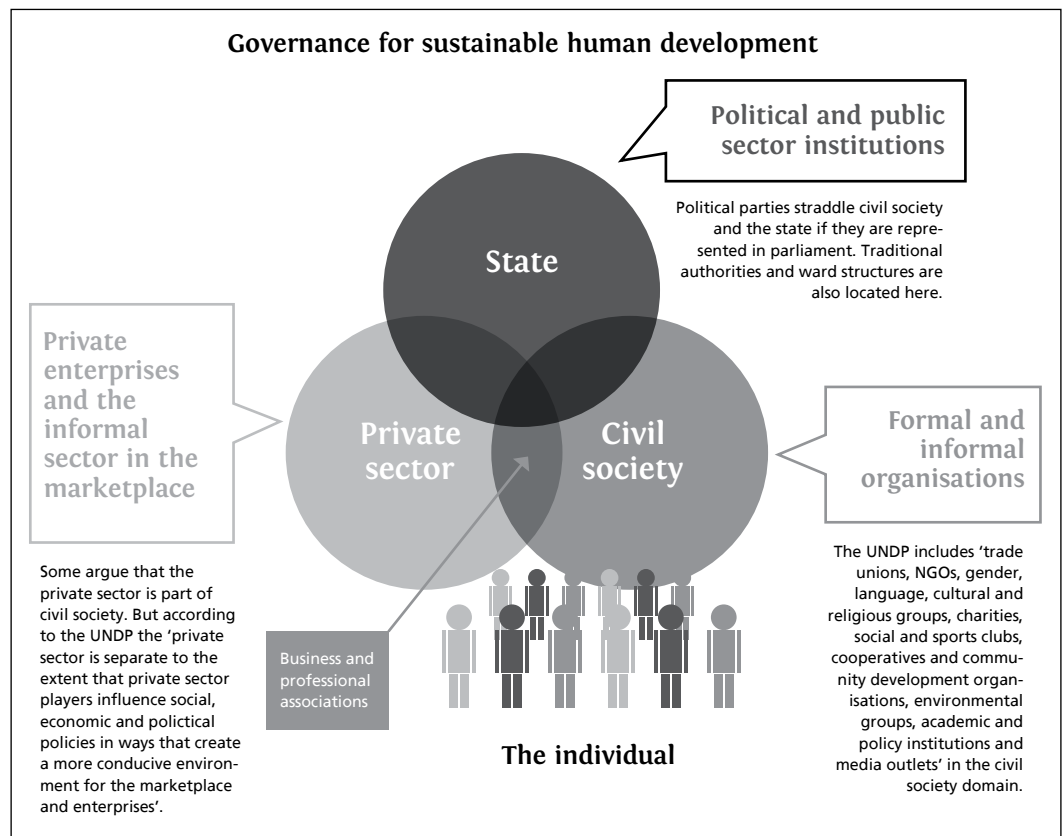
Adapted from UNDP. 1994. Good Governance and Sustainable Human Development [Online].

3.2 Definitions of civil society

We review some of the broad definitions of civil society before focusing on the specifics of South African civil society and rural civil society in particular. Some definitions focus on institutional characteristics of CSOs while others emphasise the broad roles and functions of civil society vis-à-vis the state and the market.

The civil society sphere is complex and has been variously described as:

- the space of uncoerced human association and relational networks formed for the sake of family, faith, interests and ideology *(Walzer, 1991)*;

- a sphere of social interaction between the household and the state which is manifest in norms of community cooperation, structures of voluntary association, and networks of public communication *(Bratton, 1994)*;

- modern institutions of associational life which are based on notions of equality, autonomy, freedom of entry and exit, contract, deliberative procedures of de-

cision-making, and recognised rights and duties of members *(Chatterjee, 2001)*;

- the connective tissue of a democratic political culture *(Andersson, 1999)*;

- an ensemble of associations that interact with the state and which can significantly determine or inflect the course of policy *(Taylor, 1995)*;

- an associational sphere which is the intermediary between the individual/family and household and the state *(Woolcock, 1998; Blair, 2000; Moore and Cisse, 2005)*;

- a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements and forms of public communication *(Keane, 1998 in Umhlaba Wethu 2005)*; and

- an associational realm operating between the state and the family. Its organisations are self-ruling, able to both engage with, and challenge the state. Members of so-

ciety join CSOs voluntarily to protect or extend their interests *(White, 2004 in Reitzes and White, 2010)*.

3.3 Changing state – civil society relations in South Africa

We examine the 'heterogeneous nature of civil society in South Africa', which ranges from 'conservative cultural associations to socialist social movements, from small church groups to large business associations' *(Reitzes and White, 2010: 10)*. We explore the changing relations between civil society and the state and in the process identify the characteristics and dynamics shaping rural civil society.

Historically, relations between the state and civil society have been highly dynamic and have changed substantially across different political eras. There are different perspectives on the function and theoretical framing of civil society and its engagement with the state and other social actors. *Greenstein (2003: 1)* characterises the state and civil society as 'spaces of power' rather than as 'mutually exclusive and internally consolidated sectors'. These spaces of power are to be found both within and between organs of state and are distributed among diverse actors within civil society. He distinguishes three key dimensions of this power:

* social power which relates to resource allocation;

* institutional power which determines administrative and legal authority; and

* discursive power which sets agendas, tells stories and shapes meanings.

It is within the space of discursive power that key differences emerge within civil society. Very different stories are told about the relationships between knowledge, power and policy change.

Reitzes and White, researchers at the Centre for Policy Studies, have produced a detailed assessment of civil society relations vis-à-vis the ruling party and the state in South Africa, as illustrated in *Table 1*.

3.4 Civil society and social movement relations

While much of the discussion above focuses on the relations between civil society and the state, this section focuses on the role of social movements and their place relative to other CSOs in civil society, which has come to the fore in recent years. It has been argued that while NGOs and research institutes largely operate within the established discourses and practices of policy change, social movements operate outside these conventions and set out to 'create forms of countervailing power to challenge local and global elites' *(Bendana, 2006: 7)*.

This has caused internal tension within civil society, which has called into question the relationship between NGOs and social movements. *Bendana (2006)* highlights how the proximity of NGOs and research institutes to governments and funders, and their reliance on sources of donor and contract income, can undermine their independence. Bendana questions whether social movements have the potential to absorb and reorient NGOs or whether social movements are more likely to become assimilated into the civil society mainstream.

Esteves et al (2009) have characterised social movements and NGOs as 'different modes of popular organisation, the latter typically with input from states and donors or run by the local middle classes, the former typically with only self-generated resources'. They argue that their 'abilities to ally with one another, to play each other's roles (as when things that look like movements act like NGOs or vice versa), to push each other out of the way or to play a good-cop, bad-cop routine can be analysed within a single frame of reference – and assessed in terms of their effectiveness as strategies and their ultimate outcomes'.

The rise and fall of the Landless People's Movement (LPM) illustrates the tensions implicit in the relationship between NGOs and social movements and the clash between their respective interests, rationalities and discourses. It provides rich insights into the relative spaces of power and mechanisms of control which differentiate formal and informal organisations and their relative access to resources.

Greenberg (2004: 16) acknowledges that 'it is impossible to separate the formation of the LPM from the NGOs and, in particular, the National Land Committee (NLC) and other rural NGOs'. He examines how the LPM was established at the 2001 World Congress against

Table 1: Civil society relations (Reitzes and White)

Era	State/civil society relations
Pre-1980	The majority of CSOs mobilise against the apartheid state. Many are allied to the ANC, but significant numbers pursued other paths and political affiliations across the political spectrum. The apartheid state and its allies promote and make use of conservative social formations benefitting from homeland rule and set out to exploit social and political divisions between urban dwellers and rural migrants.
1990–1994	In the transitional period many organisations in civil society become openly allied with the ANC. The ANC tells certain organisations to disband and practise 'organisational envelopment' to shepherd CSOs into the movement *(Mckinley in Reitzes and White 2010: 26)*. This period is also marked by political destabilisation, violent struggles and immense social dislocation. Responsibility for this is attributed to a 'third force' made up of white security force members providing covert support to Zulu nationalists, while others *(Jeffrey, 2009: 513)* identify the people's war waged by the ANC as a co-driver of the violence which also effectively silenced or marginalised alternative voices and secured the ANC a 'virtual monopoly on power' in the post-transitional period.
1994–1998	The Mandela presidency sees immense changes in civil society. Many organisations that are in resistance mode have to reinvent themselves and align their missions with the national priorities of reconstruction and development. Some organisations fail to manage the change and close down or lose their most experienced members to government or the private sector. Others experience significant internal conflict around the politics of race, voice and representation. At the same time, the new constitution and NPO legislation creates spaces for an independent and registered CSO sector. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is premised on active citizen and CSO engagement. The first five or six years post-1994 are dominated by policy making, and NGOs in certain sectors are well placed to influence policy in key sectors, such as land, health, education, housing and the environment. They are less successful, however, with economic policy, particularly after the adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme in 1996.
1999–2008	The Mbeki presidency is widely associated with a focus on delivery and an emphasis on a restructured developmental state to effect improved delivery. It is during this period that tensions in state civil society relationships begin to deepen. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) emerges as a new social movement organising people living with HIV and combining CSOs to challenge government's policy on HIV/AIDS. Land reform and housing policy implementation is also under intense criticism. NLC stimulates the emergence of the LPM and gains some momentum before tussles over control fragment it and contribute to the demise of the NLC. More broadly, engagement between civil society and the state is described as becoming progressively 'hollower' (Worthington in *Reitzes and White, 2010*). Many NGOs opt for critical engagement with the state while continuing to consult and provide services to government departments.

	New, independent social formations emerge in shack settlements and poor communities as people take to the streets in widespread service delivery protests. This prompts state accusations that service delivery protests are being stoked by a resurgent 'third force'. This allegation prompts *S'bu Zikode (2006)*, chair of Abahlali baseMjondolo, to respond: *We need to get things clear. There definitely is a 'third force'. The question is, what is it and who is part of the third force? Well, I am the 'third force'… That 'third force' is all the pain and the suffering that the poor are subjected to every second of their lives … The life that we are living makes our communities the 'third force'.*
2009–2012	*Reitzes and White (2010: 85)* indicate that after the fall of Mbeki at Polokwane, and his replacement with Zuma, there is a sense among civil society actors that 'more space has opened up for CSOs' to engage with the administration. However, they also cite Adam Habib who cautioned that 'although civil society is in a much more positive space, it is a space that they should not be complacent about because it is not a guaranteed space' *(Ibid)*. The Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) report also observes how 'research is mentioned by a number of respondents as being a powerful tool to wield influence over decision makers … The relationship between research, campaigning and negotiations has become more interlinked … If organisations wish to be taken seriously and have a substantial impact on policy making through institutional submissions or strikes and protests, good informational back-up is essential'. This optimistic view of the potential for research to shape civil society positions and influence policy contradicts a more sober assessment in an earlier study of CSOs in South Africa, Uganda and Ghana *(Robinson and Friedman, 2005: iii)*, which found that: *Despite the acknowledged importance of policy engagement … few CSOs demonstrate a consistent level of direct involvement in the policy process and, fewer still, make a significant difference to policy outcomes.* Robinson and Friedman observe that 'organisations that are closely linked to political parties and the state through ideological affinities or material resources have the greatest ability to exert policy influence' *(Ibid)*. In recent years, there has been an almost complete breakdown in dialogue between the state and organisations in civil society in the land and rural sector. The recent Green Paper on Land Policy, issued by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) after years of delay, is characterised by a secretive and closed-door policy-making approach, which fails to engage with land-reform research and praxis. At the same time, the process has highlighted the fragmentation and isolation of rural civil society formations, which at best form a loose alliance.

Racism (WCAR) and how it brought together groups organised through the NGOs and shack dwellers resisting eviction from informal settlements on the urban periphery. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 offered another space for social mobilisation, but would also bring to a head conflicting perspectives about the relationship between NGOs and groups of landless people organised or supported by them and the nature of their engagement with the state. Greenberg argues that:

> The NGO network was instrumental in the formation of the LPM. But once the LPM began to transcend the NLC, beginning to move outside its control to pose a potentially greater challenge to the state (even if this was merely nascent), the NGO reasserted its control over the movement, and thereby functioned precisely to defend the integrity of the state (Ibid: 21).

Of greater relevance was the reliance of the LPM on foreign funding, which was controlled by the NLC who mediated access to funders. These factors began to undermine the movement's legitimacy and rendered it increasingly vulnerable to internal conflict and struggles over resources.

Alexander (2006) undertook an analysis of the LPM that focused more on the approach to landlessness which attempted to break the mould separating urban and rural sectors. She notes that many LPM members were shack dwellers and people occupying high-rise buildings in the inner city. She argues that 'at the core of the LPMs definition of "landless" lies a rejection of South Africa's rural-urban divide'. She notes that historically, rural-urban distinctions 'have divided landless actors among themselves' *(Ibid: 2).*

Consistent with the analysis offered by Reitzes and White above, Alexander draws on *Eveleth and Mngxitmama (2003)* to observe how:

> Throughout the 1990s, most were optimistic that land reform could be achieved through governmental policy. The role of land sector NGOs quickly shifted from supporting opposition struggle to carrying out the technical work of information dissemination, capacity building, legal support, research, mediation, and other forms of intervention aimed at identifying and closing the legal and bureaucratic gaps in the new land-reform programmes. After 1994, the role of the landless was merely to complete the necessary organisational and bureaucratic requirements to "place themselves in the relevant queue, and then wait for the promised land".

Six years ago Alexander observed that it had become 'unpopular to write about the LPM in the present tense', noting how commentators 'have taken to writing about its implosion, "collapse" and "decline"'. While the LPM has shrunk significantly, with its current membership largely located within selected urban informal settlements in Gauteng, in September 2011 an article appeared on the Abahlali website inviting the media to a press conference in Johannesburg, 'where together with friendly CSOs and La Via Campesina leaders, LPM will launch the revival of the struggle for land and agrarian reform after a moment of apparent silence'*(LPM, 2011).*

3.5 Perspectives on the place of the rural and urban poor in civil society

Pieterse (2003: 103) highlights how 'development theorists' expect that South Africa's rural and urban poor 'will recognise their collective interests and associate in various forms of voluntary groups, and exercise social citizenship to advance their social and economic position'.

He contrasts this with perspectives from the left where 'the expectation is that poor people will become "conscious" of the causal factors of their exploitation ... and that associational formations of the poor must become the bedrock of militant social movements that will challenge the hegemonies and technologies of the government agenda' *(Ibid).*

Pieterse critiques both these framings of the place of the poor in civil society. He argues that the contextually mediated 'life worlds' of the poor give rise to situated affiliations and diverse strategies of engagement with the state. These are far more complex and dynamic than the static narratives of participation and dialogue preferred by the state and the organisation of a militant challenge from below, which characterises the discourse of the Left. They can also appear to be internally

contradictory at times. These three perspectives are contrasted in the following graphic.

Pieterse observes that 'it is not uncommon for people to identify closely with organisations with contradictory cosmologies, both modern and traditional'. Drawing on different sources *(Marais, 2000, Friedman and Chipkin, 2001)*, Pieterse argues that:

> *At the same time, the associations contain a range of interests, and are characterised by inequality and patronage partially linked to the role of political party patronage in these communities. Such factors militate against idealistic assumptions about building autonomous centres of (socialist) power and social processes that can lead to social policy reforms 'from below'. In fact they raise difficult questions about how exactly one can shift the various sets of vested interests that feed off the existing patterns of associational life at the grass roots.* (Pieterse 2003: 110)

This view of civil society state engagement meshes well with *Robinson and White's (1997)* observations of civil society in the introduction to this section highlighting issues from the literature.

3.6 The context in which CSOs operate in rural areas

Rural CSOs operate in contexts which are frequently inhospitable. The Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) has highlighted

Figure 2: Perspectives on civil society state engagement

Situated affiliations shaped by identities and localities and which may simultaneously combine associations with modern and traditional cosmologies, and engagement strategies which may draw on networks of patronage and alternatively combine militancy, dialogue, strategic disengagement and tacit sabotage employing the 'weapons of the weak'.

Perspectives on civil society state engagement

The poor become conscious of exploitative conditions and form militant social movements to challenge State hegemony and systems contributing to impoverishment.

Citizens form voluntary associations to advance their social and economic position through participation and dialogue in invited spaces.

Militant challenge from below

Mediated participation in development planning

Adapted from Pieterse (2003)

a local government system in distress wherein it is seen that:

a. local government is failing the poor;

b. local government is not working properly;

c. local government is unaccountable to the citizens;

d. local government is marred by excessive levels of corruption, fraud and maladministration; and

e. municipalities are centres of factional conflicts, political infighting and patronage' (CoGTA, 2009: 18).

In a similar vein the National Planning Commission's (NPCs) diagnostic report (2011) reflects on the challenges facing South Africa as a whole. The commissioners caution that 'political change brings no guarantee of social, economic, or indeed political progress ... The indicators most often associated with decline include:

• rising corruption;

• weakening of state and civil society institutions;

• poor economic management;

• skills and capital flight;

• politics dominated by short-termism, ethnicity or factionalism; and

• a lack of maintenance of infrastructure and standards of service.'

Elements of these indicators are already visible in South Africa, though their strength and prevalence is uneven and differs from sector to sector. If they become more prevalent, the country's progress could be stalled, its gains reversed and even the foundational aspects of democracy unravelled. If these threats are not tackled, the probability of decline will increase (NPC, 2011: 8).

The factors identified in the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) and NPC reports impact heavily on the rural poor. The Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution (CASAC) notes that 'corruption is costly, not only for the general public but mainly for

the poor as resources are diverted away from them' (CASAC, 2011: 3). Corruption fuels systems of patronage politics and weakens state and civil society institutions. A distressed local government system contributes to a generalised lack of service delivery in key areas, such as:

• health care;

• water and sanitation;

• education;

• roads; and

• land and agriculture.

This impacts heavily on the lives and livelihoods of the rural poor.

3.7 Types of CSOs

Pieterse (2003) draws on *Andersson's (1999)* categorisation of three different types of CSOs (see *Table 2*).

All three forms of CSOs are found in rural areas. Those which seek to improve household livelihoods and strengthen the social fabric predominate as poor rural households attempt to mitigate the impacts of poverty and ill health in settings where the efficacy of state institutions is in sharp decline. However, this typology does not adequately integrate recent trends towards state-led CSO formations or discuss how these organisations articulate with broader definitions of rural civil society.

3.7.1 State-led CSO formations

The rural poor have been the focus of multiple state initiatives in the land, agricultural and rural development sphere. According to *Jacobs et al (2008)* there are an estimated 240 000 black farmers with a commercial focus, and between 2 and 4 million farmers who produce food mainly to meet their own household consumption needs.

Until recently, the land-reform programme was predicated on the establishment of land-holding and land-rights management entities of different kinds that took ownership of land transferred through the restitution or redistribution programmes. According to the DRDLR, by 2010 more than 2 000 Communal Property Associations (CPAs) and trusts had been registered.

Table 2: Types of CSOs

Objectives	Associated CSO types
Improving household livelihoods	Stokvels, horticultural groups, small enterprises
Influencing political processes	Civic associations, development forums
Strengthening the social fabric	Crèches, care groups, religious associations, burial societies, sports and cultural associations, etc

Sourced from Pieterse (2003)

Table 3: Registered Legal Entities

Number of registered legal entities (restitution & land-reform programmes)			
Province	CPAs	Trusts	Total
Eastern Cape	159	70	229
Free State	21	477	498
Gauteng	17	16	33
Kwazulu-Natal	279	353	632
Limpopo	67	101	168
Mpumalanga	150	75	225
Northern Cape	35	27	62
North West	52	87	139
Western Cape	9	177	186
National	**789**	**1383**	**2172**

Sourced from the DRDLR (2010)

However, various studies *(Bosch and Hirschfeld, 2004; CSIR, 2005; Cousins, 1999; Sustainable Development Consortium, 2007; CASE, 2005)* show that the majority of these entities function poorly, if at all. While government suggested that people form legal entities to hold land, very little state support was provided to help them function effectively. Even if state support had been in place, there remains a strong likelihood that the bureaucratic and legalistic rationalities associated with the formation and management of legal entities would have failed to articulate with the logic of the poor in their attempts to survive and thrive *(Murray Li, 2007)*.

The situation in the cooperative sector is not dissimilar. According to *Satgar (2007)* there were 4 061 cooperatives registered in South Africa in 2007, the bulk of which were in Kwa-Zulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Many of these cooperatives are registered as agricultural farming but, as Satgar points out, con-

tact information was not always available and the data is not credible 'because there is no way of confirming whether the cooperatives are engaging in cooperative activity'. Satgar also observes that cooperatives have been promoted and registered in great numbers by government:

> *Many cooperatives have not even entered a start-up phase and merely exist as formal entities waiting for government support. Put more sharply, many of these institutions have a paper membership and are dysfunctional (Satgar, 2007: 10).*

These observations place into perspective the startling figures for new cooperative registrations, which are contained in the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTIs) Co-operative Development Strategy (2010).

> *The promulgation of the new Co-operatives Act, No.14 of 2005, facilitated a boom in the registration of new cooperatives never*

seen before in South Africa. According to the Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office (CIPRO) register, 19 550 new cooperatives were registered from 2005–2009 in various sectors, representing a growth rate of 86%. Within a period of four years, the number of new cooperative registrants has almost quadrupled the number of cooperatives that were registered over the previous 82 years (1922–2004) (DTI, 2010: 27).

Theoretically, the new social formations created through the land, agriculture, rural and cooperative development programmes could be important actors in rural civil society. Such a contribution was envisaged as an element of The Settlement and Implementation Support (SIS) Strategy for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa, launched by the Minister of Land Affairs in 2007, which explicitly highlighted the importance of building strong local organisations based on associations of people acquiring land through the land-reform programme. However, this strategy was never implemented and many of these government-initiated entities exist primarily in departmental databases or, more recently, as targets of departmental 'regularisation' initiatives, which aim to secure their compliance with the legal framework.

3.8 Contrasting perspectives on policy making

As noted in the introduction, PLAAS is interested in the relationship between research and civil societies' input into policy making. There are different paradigms that inform the policy-making process. *Sutton (1999: 10)* identifies different approaches to policy making, including:

- the rational linear model of policy making;

- the incrementalist model, which involves a series of small steps 'each of which does not fundamentally rock the boat';

- the mixed-scanning model, which combines elements of the rational actor model and the incrementalist approach;

- policy as a social experiment, 'which sees social change as a process of trial and error'; and

- policy as interactive learning, which encourages 'an interaction of ideas between those making policy and those who are influenced most directly by its outcome' *(Ibid: 11)*.

The mainstream model of rational actor policy-making proposes that the findings of 'evidence-based research' will somehow influence the rationality of the policy process (Cook, 2001), and that there is a mutually intelligible language between academic researchers, technical experts and policy makers. This view is rooted in the New Public Management (NPM) model associated with neo-liberal public sector restructuring in Britain in the 1980s and 1990s. This is premised on planned, managed and modernised approaches to policy development where policy can be defined as a 'purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors' *(Anderson, 1975: 3)*.

The alternative view is sceptical of the value of policy models per se, and holds that real-life policy processes are rarely, if ever, linear and rational but are complex and contested. 'The whole life of policy' has been memorably described as a 'a chaos of purposes and accidents' *(Clay and Shaffer, 1984: 192)*. This critique expresses deep reservations about the adequacy of the 'linear model' of policy making, based on 'objective analysis' of options and separation of policy from implementation *(Sutton, 1999)*. This 'rationalist model of a … linear policy development sequence' has been described as 'simplistic and reductionist' *(Dhunpath and Paterson, 2004: 126)* and is criticised for its tendency to depoliticise issues that are the focus of policy through the use of neutral scientific language. 'This masking of the political under the cloak of neutrality is a key feature of modern power' *(Shore, 2011: 171)*.

This brief description of policy-making approaches suggests that if PLAAS seeks to influence policy through research it will need to research the policy-making process itself. In the 2011 workshop which PLAAS organised to facilitate conversation around what should be in the Land Reform Green Paper, a representative of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) outlined his perspective of the realpolitik of policy making, which had little in common with the evidence-based, research-led approach to policy formulation, which is presumed to influence policy makers by force of rational argument.

**Figure 3: Perceived links between research, civil society
and 'democratic policy making'**

4 Changing scholarship and research paradigms

The literature-scan highlights two key issues regarding scholarship and research. One relates to the land-sector research focus specifically, while the other examines changing modes of scholarship more broadly.

4.1 Critique of land-sector research focus

Alexander highlights arguments by Hart and Sitas that:

> Most researchers have pursued 'the land question', 'the labour question', and 'the question of livelihoods' (or 'non-formal employment') in isolation. Post-1994 labour studies became heavily focused on metropolitan areas, ignoring the persistence of migrancy and instead focusing on black workers 'as a class of brand new wage earners and stakeholders. In other words, as a collective tabula rasa without a history rooted in prior struggles and negotiations across different socio-spatial arenas of practice. As a consequent of such representations, this research lost track of enduring and changing urban-rural interconnections' (Alexander, 2006: 7).

This argument is well made and could suggest a reappraisal of how future research is framed. The interplay between norms of rural-social organisation and urban informality, and the analysis of the structural factors influencing rural and urban poverty, suggest ways to connect social sectors, which remain artificially divided.

At the same time there is a need for a closer examination of the potential for research to impact on policy making and the ways in which it can be of value to organisations and institutions in rural civil society. This suggests a reassessment of different scholarly research paradigms to determine how the research agenda is defined and conceptualised within them. We need to critically examine what constitutes a more socially engaged and responsive mode of research and scholarship where individuals and organisations in rural civil society contribute to shaping a research agenda, which has the potential to contribute to local solution finding and national pro-poor policy making and programme development.

4.1.1 Traditional scholarship

Czerniewicz (2011) compares different modes of scholarship within higher education. These range from the traditional knowledge-creation dissemination cycle captured in *Figure 4* to new forms of digital and open scholarship.

The research conceptualisation process which triggers the cycle in *Figure 4* remains something of a 'black box'. While the cycle varies between different disciplines it seems taken for granted that it is the scholar/researcher who:

- defines the central and subsidiary research questions;

- develops an appropriate theoretical framework and methodological approach to frame the collection and analysis of data; and

- disseminates the findings from the research study.

4.1.2 Digital scholarship

The advent of digital scholarship creates a more complex cycle which increases the opportunities for engagement, collaboration and research dissemination. However, the underlying premise remains largely unchanged: namely that the institutes and agencies which fund research will continue to set the research agenda together with individual scholars/researchers.

4.1.3 Open scholarship

There is an increasing convergence of initiatives driven by openness: open research, open access and open content *(Czerniewicz, 2011)*, which is contributing to the momentum of

Figure 4: The knowledge-creation dissemination cycle

Scholarship
Knowledge creation & dissemination

Conceptualisation

Data collection

Data analysis

Translation

Engagement

Findings   (Discipline-specific forms)
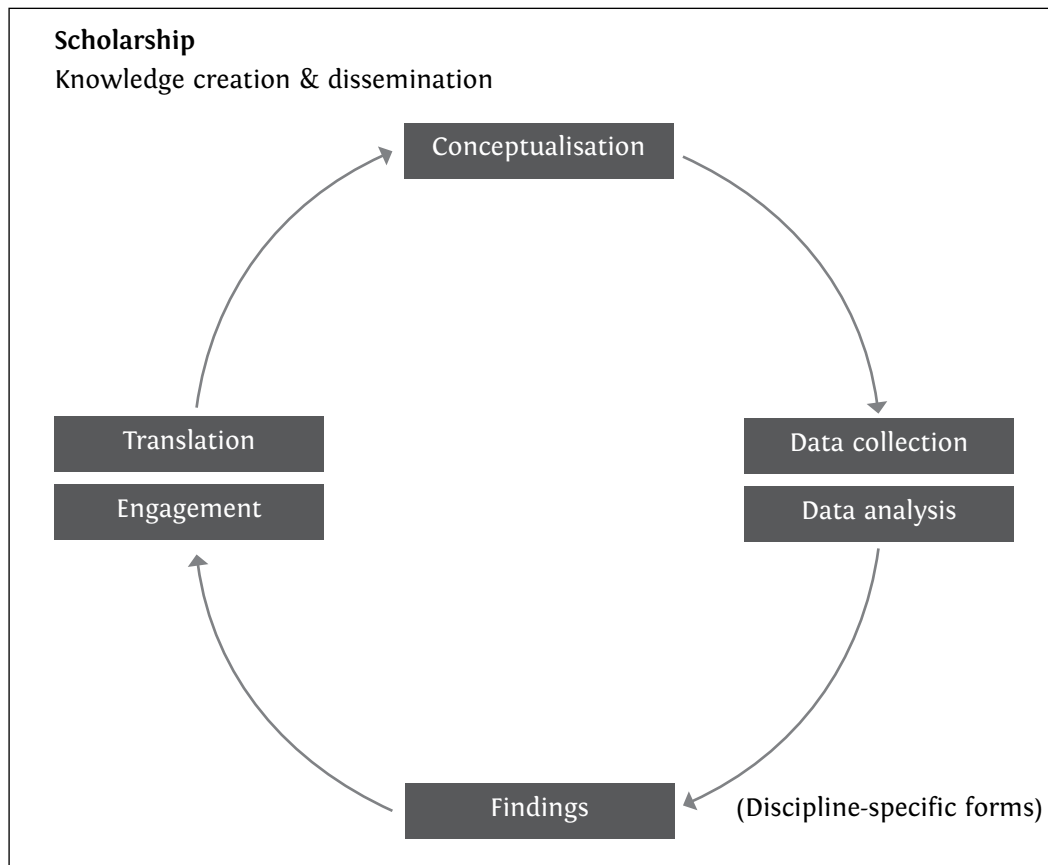
Sourced from Czerniewicz, L. (2011)

Figure 5: Impacts of digital scholarship on the research cycle

Student

Literature reviews
Conceptual frameworks
Bibliographies
Proposals

Conceptualisation

Interviews
Reports
Presentations
Lectures
Notes

Translation

Engagement

Data collection

Data analysis

Recorded interviews
Data sets
Images
Audio records

Community

Findings

Scholar

Conference papers
Technical papers
Books
Journal articles
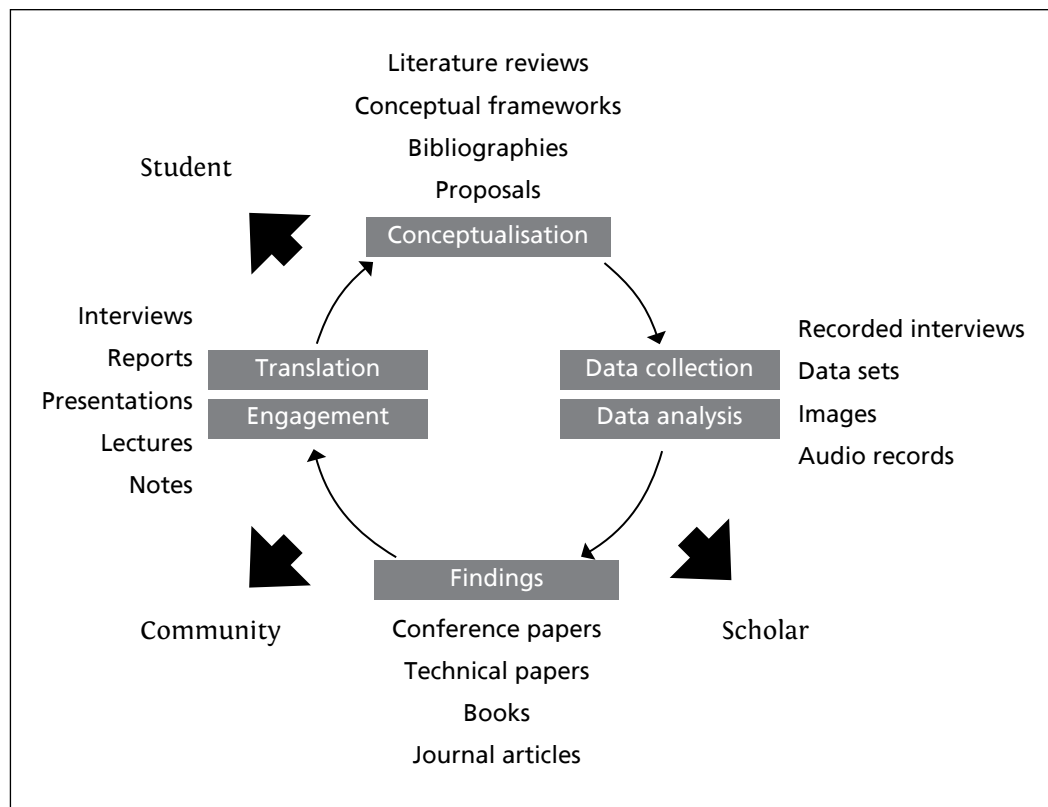
Sourced from Czerniewicz, L. (2011)

'open scholarship'. This is driven by 'increasing interest from governments, funders and the research community itself in opening up the way research is carried out and communicated. This interest is complemented by new research practices and processes that can work effectively only in an open, collaborative environment' *(EOS, 2011)*.

4.1.4 Beyond open scholarship?

While there is a strong push to open up access to research data and outputs and make this freely available, a number of critical constraints remain, which limit potential impact for the poor and the rural.

Currently, the emphasis is weighted heavily towards dissemination of knowledge produced within the academy and other research institutions. There remains silence around the actual practices of knowledge creation and the power/knowledge relationships embedded within this *(Foucault, 1979)*. *Mills (2003: 70)* draws on Foucault to argue 'that the production of knowledge about economically disadvantaged people plays a significant role in maintaining them in this position'.

We argue that the development of a research process to strengthen democratic policy making and reshape the politics of research and knowledge creation will require:

- a critical assessment of the power-knowledge relationships in the research and knowledge-creation arena; and

- fresh thinking about how the research agenda is set and the nature of a research paradigm that better engages with the dynamics shaping rural civil society.

5 Towards an actor-focused rural-civil society typology

The precise contours of rural civil society in South Africa remain elusive. A wide range of organisations and social formations are joined under the rubric of 'rural civil society'. However, their different institutional forms and the nature of the relationships between them are seldom examined in any depth. This section puts forward a conceptual reading of the components which make up rural civil society.

In the typology below, the different social formations which make up rural civil society have been located along two axes:

• a relative informality – a formality axis which enables the comparison of different organisational forms; and

• a primary purpose and outlook axis which distinguishes between formations that are locally focused and inward-looking and formations whose primary focus is on effecting change on a broader scale.

Figure 6 locates different types of social formations in four quadrants, which are created through the intersection of the above two axes.

5.1 Mapping the rural civil society landscape

Clearly any typology which attempts to map complex social relations and realities has its limitations. The selection of the axes and the identification, inclusion and location of the different organisations and social formations in the different quadrants will inevitably raise questions and debate.

These debates can be expected to intensify when we examine how research institutes, land sector and socio economic rights NGOs and institutions engage with rural social formations and organisations in the different quadrants. While research organisations, socio-economic rights and land- sector NGOs in Quadrant 1 are part of the associational sphere which intermediates between citizens and the state, and make important contributions to strengthening democratic political culture in South Africa, the researchers, Social and Economic Rights (SER) advocates and land-sector NGO activists are seldom poor or rural. They draw on their professional and academic disciplines to research and lobby around rural issues. Their analysis of these issues can contribute to the articulation of rural concerns and advocacy for policy reform which advances the interests of the rural poor.

Figure 6: Civil society four quadrant framework at a glance

Quadrant 4: Organisations in this quadrant are informal and comprise networks and coalitions which are formed out of dynamic combinations of social formations in the other quadrants. They have the potential to link with or expand into popular broad-based social movements.	See F*igure 7: Civil society four quadrant framework* (page 21)	**Quadrant 1:** Very few organisations in this quadrant are directly part of rural civil society, but they shape and support rural organisation. Organisations in this quadrant are self-starting, relatively well resourced and have a formal legal identity. While they might support organisations on the ground, their primary purpose is to influence policy processes on different scales
Quadrant 3: Organisations in this quadrant are informally constituted and shaped by local relations of power, practices and norms. They are locally focused on supporting livelihoods and strengthening the social fabric. They draw on diverse resources and may enter into linkages with formations in other quadrants.		**Quadrant 2:** The organisations in this quadrant are also formally constituted with a clear legal identity. This quadrant contains independently initiated organisations whose primary focus is to support local initiatives and constituencies. It also includes formal institutions such as CPAs, trusts and coops that rural people are required to form as a condition of their obtaining resources through government programmes.

Figure 7: Civil society four quadrant framework
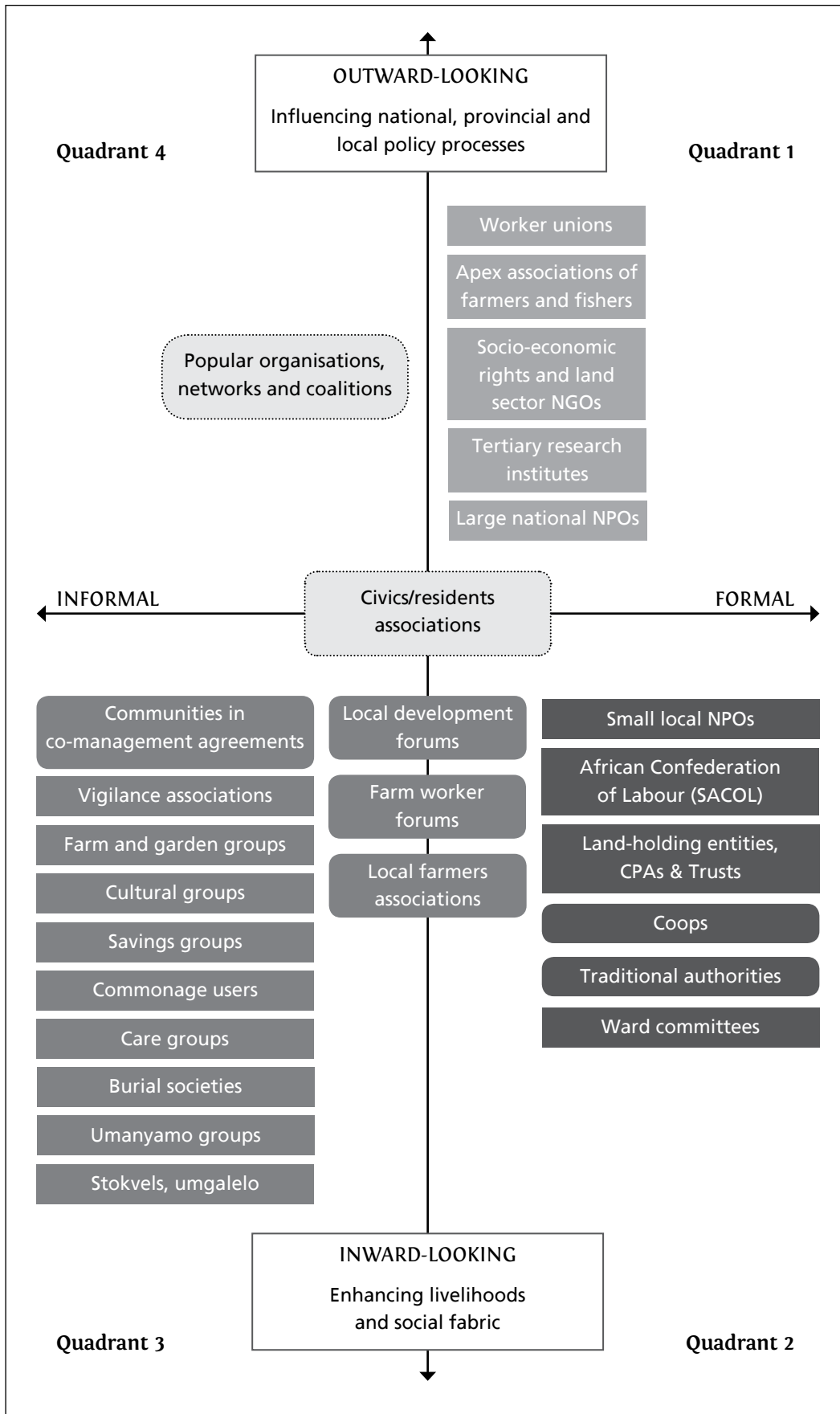
5.1.1 Quadrant 1: Outward-looking and formal

Organisations and social formations that occupy this quadrant have particular characteristics. Between them they generate substantial research outputs and are engaged in supporting practical rural development actions of different kinds. They have a formal legal identity and make important contributions to influence policy processes on different scales.

Tertiary research institutes and independent think-tanks[1]	There are a number of research institutes and independent think-tanks which focus wholly or in part on rural issues including land, agriculture, livelihoods, water, poverty, rural development, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), vulnerability and disaster risk, health, living customary law, environment and natural resource management. Examples include: • Agriculture and Rural Development Research Institute (Fort Hare) • Centre for Development and Enterprise (Independent) • Centre for Rural Health (UKZN) • Disaster Mitigation Programme for Sustainable Livelihoods (SU) • Institute for Poverty Land and Agrarian Studies (UWC) • Institute for Social and Economic Research (RU) • Post Graduate School of Agriculture and Rural Development (UP) • Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute (Independent) • The Centre for Rural Development (Nelson Mandela Institute) • The Law, Race and Gender Research Unit (UCT) • The School of Public Health (UWC) • The Sustainability Institute • UKZN School of Development Studies • Wits Centre for Rural Health • Wits Rural Facility • Numerous other similar entities
Socio-economic rights and land-sector NGOs	There are a range of NGOs, the majority of which are urban-based but which work with and support rural people, organisations and social formations. These include NGOs such as: • Association for Rural Development (AFRA)

[1] These listings are indicative. There is a wide range of organisations in addition to those listed here

	• Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD)
	• Black Sash
	• Border Rural Committee (BRC)
	• Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS)
	• Centre for Rural Legal Studies (CRLS)
	• Church Land Project (CLP)
	• Community Law Centre (SERI)
	• Community Law Centre/Human Rights Institute of South Africa
	• East Cape Land Committee (ECLC)
	• Health Systems Trust (HST)
	• Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA)
	• Ismail Mahomed Centre for Human and People's Rights
	• Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR),
	• Legal Resources Centre (LRC)
	• Nkuzi
	• People Against Suffering, Oppression and Poverty (PASSOP)
	• Surplus People Project
	• Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE)
	• The Socio-economic Rights Institute (SERI)
	• Transkei Land Service Organisation (TRALSO)
	• Treatment Action Campaign (TAC)
	• Tshwaranang Legal Advocacy Centre
	• Women on Farms
	• Other NGOs with a similar work focus or rural constituency base
Worker Unions According to the Department of Labour, there were at least thirteen unions registered in April 2010 which represent workers in the agricultural and fishing sector.	• BAWSI Agricultural Workers Union of South Africa (BAWUSA) • Commercial Stevedoring, Agricultural and Allied Workers Union (CSAAWU) • Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU) • Hospitality, Catering and Farm Workers Union (HOCAFAWU)

	• Independent Catering and Commercial Farm Workers Union (ICCAFAWU)
	• National Certificated Fishing and Allied Workers Union (NCFAWU)
	• National Domestic Security Agriculture and Allied Workers Union (DOSAWU)
	• Retail Allied Agricultural and Associated Workers Union (RAAAWU)
	• Sikhula Sonke (SSONKE)
	• South African Farming and Commercial Workers Union (SAFCWU)
	• South African Food, Retail and Agricultural Workers Union (SAFRAWU)
	• The South African Fishermen Trade Union (SAFTU)
	• The Trawler and Fisherman's Union (TALFU)
Large national or interprovincial NPOs	There are a range of other NPOs, many of which are faith-based with rural programmes: • Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) • Catholic Welfare and Development (CWD) • Christelike Maatskaplike Diens (CMD) • Diakonia Council of Churches • South African Council of Churches (SACC) • South African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC) Some of these agencies have industry links. For example, TEBA has established a Section 21 Company, TEBA Development, which has a large rural-development programme in communities and send labour to the mines.
Apex organisations of farmers, fishers, rural women and youth etc	This includes organisations such as the National African Farmers' Union (NAFU), National Emergent Red Meat Producers Organisation (NERPO), Masifundise Development Trust, Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD) and Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development (YARD). Some of the organisations which fall into this category have close state ties and others are independent.

5.1.2 Quadrant 2: Inward-looking, locally focused and formal

The organisations in this quadrant are all formally constituted and at least have a clear legal identity. The quadrant combines organisations operating at different local scales, including those with a provincial, district, city or neighbourhood reach whose primary focus is to support local initiatives and constituencies.

This quadrant is conceptually quite complex because some of the social formations included are both of the state and embedded in local society. It includes formal institutions such as CPAs, trusts and cooperatives that rural people are required to form as a condition to obtain resources through government programmes.

It also includes local organisations that play influential roles in local civil society but are extensions of the state, such as traditional authorities and ward councils. While the functions of traditional authorities are legislated by the state through the Traditional Leadership and Governance Act (No. 41 of 2003) they provide a nexus of sorts between law, power and culture in certain rural settings *(Ooomen, 2005).*

Likewise, ward committees have a legislated mandate. The Guidelines for the Establishment and Operations of Ward Committees (Notice No. 965 of 2005) identify different groupings and interests that must be represented on the ten-member committee which is supposed to contribute to policy making in the local municipality. But how they work in practice is another matter. As *Smith (2008: 4)* notes:

> *Questions have been asked about how effective these institutions actually are; whether they are useful conduits for community involvement in local governance; whether, as 'created spaces' for public participation, they are inherently capable of playing the critical role expected of them; and whether they create opportunities for real power-sharing between municipalities and citizens.*

The social and institutional complexity contained in this quadrant is a reflection of the localised focus of the institutions which operate within it.

5.1.3 Quadrant 3: Inward-looking, locally focused and informal

Organisations in this quadrant are likely to be highly diverse and small with a narrow local reach. They are predominantly self-funded and rely on volunteers, although they may also benefit directly or indirectly from state, NGO or faith-based organisation (FBO) programmes. Community-based organisations (CBOs) in this quadrant are primarily 'social production organisations' *(Rubin and Rubin, 2001: 14)*, which enhance livelihoods and strengthen the local social fabric. Their engagement in local policy making and shaping local development will vary significantly from place to place. The role of local CBOs in local service delivery protests remains unclear, particularly those which benefit from government programmes in any way.

5.1.4 Quadrant 4: Outward-looking and informal

The explicit objective of organisations in this quadrant is social mobilisation. As we will examine in the case study section this can take place on different scales and involve local defensive/protective networks where members respond to threats and infringements of rights to those who seek to construct alternative centres of power.

5.2 Inter-quadrant relationships

The key question is how CSOs in Quadrant 1 engage with organisations and social formations in quadrants 2, 3 and 4 and vice versa. Organisations in Quadrant 1 produce a high volume of formal research outputs. How can this knowledge, much of it generated through interviews and surveys involving actors in the other three quadrants, and recast in academic idiom, be less extractive and become of greater use to social formations in wider civil society?

6 Surveying rural civil society

This section attempts to shed light on the key questions underpinning the rural scan:

- Who is out there? How are rural people currently organising themselves; in what organisational forms?

- How do they engage with the organs that govern them?

- What is the role (or the potential role) of information, knowledge and research in strengthening the position of the rural poor in their interactions with the state and other developmental actors?

- Where does absence of knowledge, or a lack of ability to make use of available information and knowledge, hamper or disempower poor rural people?

- How do rural organisations and people currently use information in the pursuit of their goals?

- What forms of media or information are most appropriate to reach organisations operating in different rural settings?

6.1 Data collection, analysis and selection

The process of data collection highlighted enormous problems in the available data sets relating to the quality of data capture, the inability to update data sets and keep data reasonably current and the difficulty in gaining access to existing information.

The depth of these challenges became starkly apparent as we set out to gather data on different types of organisations working/operating in the rural sector.

6.1.1 Requesting data

One hundred and sixteen organisations were identified as potential sources of data for the scan. Of these we approached 100 organisations by phone or email.

Sample letter

We are requesting any raw data (Word documents, Excel spreadsheets or Access databases) that lists names, addresses and contact information of different stakeholders involved in the rural sector. From you in particular we are requesting information on any of the following:

- National member associations

- An organogram or diagram clarifying the structure of the associations connected with the organisation

- Local-level associations and the persons chairing those organisations (formally elected person in office).

- Community-based development organisations that you initiated or support

- Beneficiaries of your organisation

- Savings clubs

- Farm-worker organisations

- Farmers' associations

- Land-reform beneficiaries and emerging farmers

- Production and marketing cooperatives

- Women's organisations

- Rural home-based care groups involved in food gardening or agricultural production

- Any other relevant organisations that you may have on record

---

We requested data from organisations known to be active in the rural domain as well as from others who could be reasonably expected to have relevant information.

Email requests were sent to groups including NGOs, private companies and government departments. Each request was modified to reflect the likely type of information available to that organisation. The email also provided background on the purpose of the study and requested the following information:

6.1.2 Responses to requests for information

Only fifteen of the approached organisations responded to our request for data. Respondents included national and provincial government departments, commodity organisations, cooperatives, NGOs and University Research Institutes who either sent Excel spreadsheets or Word documents containing contact information.

Organisations that supplied data are listed alphabetically below:

1. African Scholars Fund

2. Cotton SA (two separate sources within Cotton SA)

3. Farm and Garden Trust

4. Forestry South Africa: Commercial farmers division.

5. National Department of Trade and Industry: Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (DTI:CIPC)

6. National Development Agency (NDA)

7. National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC)

8. National Wool Growers Association (NWGA)

9. Nkuzi

10. PLAAS: Research department

11. South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO)

12. Savings and Cooperative League of South Africa (SACCOL)

13. South African Pork Producers Organisation (SAPPO)

14. Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: Fisheries directorate

15. Western Cape Department of Social Development (DSD)

Some of the data received from Forestry SA, Nkuzi, Cotton SA, CIPC and SAPPO and the African Scholars Fund were unsuited for the purposes of the study and were not used for this purpose.

6.2 Key data gaps

Phuhlisani gained access to an Excel spreadsheet listing all the land-reform projects in the DRDLR database but the version we obtained contained no contact information. After numerous unsuccessful attempts to obtain this information from the DRDLR, we were eventually forced to leave out this important grouping.

The significance of this gap cannot be understated. According to *Tables 4 and 5*, as at 31 March 2011, 198 901 people had benefitted from the land-redistribution programme while 1 645 898 people are beneficiaries of the restitution programme, of whom 1 121 831 were rural claimants.

Of the 10 274 settled rural claims, 4 680 claims involved land restoration. However, available data sources do not clarify how many beneficiaries were associated with these claims but it seems likely that the combined figure of people/households[2] benefitting from both programmes is in the order of 500 000–600 000. A verified profile of de facto beneficiaries with rights to this land is not available.

6.3 Data mining and synthesis

Prior to synthesising the data, copies of each database were saved separately in their original, unedited format. Copies of the original data sources were then made from which relevant data was extracted into Excel spreadsheets for import into a predesigned Access database. Synthesising data presented its own challenges as each data source received had its own system of coding and organising information. While each database shared some common fields, such as addresses and telephone numbers, the majority of the field descriptors were unique.

---

2 This is not always clearly distinguished

Table 4: Redistribution: Cumulative Statistics, 1994–31 March 2011

Province	Projects	Hectares	Beneficiaries
EC	733	399 180.2092	26 971
FS	834	365 825.4393	8 134
GP	315	38 042.5501	7 875
KZN	768	588 018.8229	75 011
LP	333	100 349.1313	7 921
MP	507	366 000.1766	14 559
NC	306	1 144 617.7178	3 083
NW	355	302 465.8559	41 150
WC	240	142 728.7094	14 197
Total	**4 391**	**3 447 228.6125**	**198 901**

Sourced from Directorate: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DRDLR, May 2011)

Table 5: Restitution Cumulative Statistics, 1994–31 March 2011

Province	Claims	Hhs	Ben	Ha	Land cost (R)	Fin comp (R)
EC	16 254	65 041	224 735	129 075	217 735 504.13	1 352 474 309.34
FS	2 672	6 089	41 635	51 452	9 428 300.00	136 729 387.96
GP	13 161	14 000	65 618	16 378	110 388 340.57	635 204 709.29
KZN	15 075	77 019	456 515	669 898	4 044 169 380.30	1 508 600 139.20
LP	3 326	43 667	227 128	548 044	2 882 622 170.98	198 262 989.77
MP	2 778	48 775	226 277	409 665	3 924 429 368.58	368 857 822.69
NC	3 707	19 669	104 237	559 634	443 263 840.50	742 086 527.92
NW	3 718	37 483	176 058	372 544	1 364 753 960.12	278 360 549.37
WC	15 537	25 280	123 695	3 837	46 526 068.72	839 755 586.52
Total	**76 228**	**337 023**	**1 645 898**	**2 760 527**	**13 043 316 933.90**	**6 060 332 022.06**

Heading Keys: HHs – Households, BEN – Beneficiaries, Ha – Hectares

We designed an Access database to capture and synthesise data from different sources. Integrating the fields from each received database involved renaming certain fields, merging fields and in some cases excluding fields that were not relevant, for example names of individual farmers. The information was classified into different fields to allow for standardised import and subsequent filtering. The fields created were:

- Name of organisation

- Contact person/s

- Contact: telephone and/or mobile

- Fax number

- Postal address: post office box, location and city

- Email

- Website

- Physical address: street, suburb and city

- Province

- Type (for example NGO/association/government department)

- Primary focus area

- Secondary focus area

- Members (relating to the number of members that an association has)

6.3.1 Data imported

The following data list was imported into the combined Access database:

1. Cooperatives: A-L Reg 1 September 2009–28 February 2010

2. Cooperatives: A-M Reg 2 May 2007–16 June 2008

3. Cooperatives: Reg January 2011

4. Cooperatives: A–I Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009

5. Cooperatives: A–M Reg 1 May 2009–31 August 2009

6. Cooperatives: Reg December 2010

7. Cooperatives: M all Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009

8. Cooperatives: M 1 Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009)

9. Cooperatives: M 2 Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009)

10. Cooperatives: M 3Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009

11. Cooperatives: M–Z Reg 1 September 2009–28 February 2010

12. Cooperatives: Reg November 2010

13. Cooperatives: N–R Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009)

14. Cooperatives: N–Z Reg 2 May 2007–16 June 2008

15. Cooperatives: N–Z Reg 1 May 2009–31 August 2009

16. Cooperatives: S–Z Reg 17 June 2008–30 April 2009)

17. Cooperatives: Reg July–31 August 2010

18. Cooperatives: Reg March–30 April 2010

19. Cooperatives: Reg May–30 June 2010

20. Cooperatives: Reg September–31 October 2010

21. Cotton SA (1)

22. Department of Land Affairs Projects[3]

23. DSD WC De-Reg NPOs 1 July 2011–30 September 2011

24. DSD WC De-Reg NPOs 16 May 2011–30 June 2011

25. DSD WC Reg NPOs 1 July 2011–30 September 2011

26. DSD WC Reg NPOS 1 September 1998–13 May 2011

27. DSD WC Reg NPOs 16 May 2011–30 June 2011

28. Farm and Garden Trust contacts

29. Fisheries document: *PLAAS: Research Department & DAFF: Western Cape Fisheries*

30. List of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs)

31. National Development Agency SA CSO database

32. NWGA

33. SANGOCO database

6.4 Data limitations

Numerous data entry errors were carried over from the source documents which prevented the full functionality of the database. A range of data entry problems are highlighted below.

6.4.1 Spelling errors

The database matches spelling during searches. For example a search for 'agriculture' will not find any listings with 'acriculture'. The spelling errors were numerous and from all data sources. Some of the errors were corrected when the database was cleaned up and spell checks have been done in the amalgamated database.

6.4.2 Colloquialisms/abbreviations

Colloquial abbreviations when listing streets and suburbs, for example Johannesburg written as Joburg, prevent accurate and complete filters by city and/or suburb. There were different city spellings or abbreviations in each database and the random nature of these errors made it difficult to completely clean up the data.

6.4.3 Erroneous contact information

Databases contain numerous errors in the recording of contact information. For example, there were address listings that place a single organisation in two different provinces. Er-

---

3 Minus contact information

rors where the address listing does not correspond with the area code for the post office box or the locality also limited filtering.

There were numerous entries where the telephone area code did not correspond with the location of the organisation. So one might find an [021] area code being ascribed to an organisation located in Limpopo. This problem was particularly prominent with data from the Western Cape and Gauteng which frequently transposed the area codes for Cape Town and Pretoria (021 and 012). While most of these errors can be attributed to typographic error it was impossible to correct all these errors with complete accuracy without access to original listings. When this type of error occurs in combination with other gaps in an entry the data is unusable.

6.4.4 Spatial name changes

Many data entries were inputted prior to provincial or city name changes. For example, some data sources make reference to Pretoria while others refer to Tshwane. An attempt was made to reconcile these entries. Provincial name changes have also served to scramble large chunks of the data. The renaming of the Northern Province resulted in many entries located in Limpopo being arbitrarily allocated to the Northern Cape or North West Provinces.

Large-scale errors in the coding of locational data meant that trying to develop a secondary database to filter rural organisations was impossible. In the end, a selection of rural organisations had to be done manually by looking at the address field.

6.4.5 Incomplete data entry

Many entries were incomplete. In several instances contact details were not available. Several organisations were nameless. Entries that did not have phone numbers were excluded during the selection for interview and questionnaire process. As noted above, none of the organisations received from the DRDLR could be selected for the questionnaire or interview as the entire database did not have any project or beneficiary contact details.

6.4.6 Incompatible fields

A few databases contained information that could not be integrated into our database fields. Some information provided, though useful, did not fit the parameters of the database and could therefore not be used. Information pertaining to individual cases or private individuals was excluded from the database. The African Scholars fund data, the DSD funding baseline data and the Nkuzi data were not added for this reason.

6.4.7 Outdated data entries

Much of the data received by Phuhlisani was out of date. Given the high failure rate for small businesses we did not include historical data on cooperatives registered before 1998. Many of the organisations have not updated their database in the last year and, if they did, it was to add new entries rather than check continued accuracy of existing data.

6.4.8 Incompatible data formats

The format in which the data was received also presented a problem. Given the time and budget limitations on the project we were prevented from transferring some data from Word documents into Excel sheets as these presented formatting problems that would have required manual correction of approximately 7 540 entries.

6.4.9 Data standardisation

The process of standardising data in order to merge it means that:

- the resultant product will not correspond exactly with the original data set;

- attempts to condense the focus areas into more manageable groups may overgeneralise the list, resulting in organisations with more specialist focus areas being lost in broad definitions; and

- certain information is missing. As an example, the SANGOCO database did not have a field for primary or secondary focus of the organisations listed. This meant that our database has at least 2 325 organisations that are listed without a primary focus and thus cannot be found using a focus filter. This limits the usefulness of the database to identify which organisations are doing what.

6.5 Purposive data selection

In total there were 35 347 organisations listed in the Phuhlisani database at the time of selection. Land-reform beneficiaries (4 215) could not be included due to a lack of contact information. Another 4 740 were excluded because the entries lacked essential information. This left 26 392 organisations in the selection pool.

Purposive data selection for the scan involved a series of filtering functions and the pool was filtered first by organisational type and then by province. For example, the cooperative selection identified 50 cooperatives from each province which had contact information, were located in a rural area and whose primary focus was poverty, land and livelihood-related. The same process was followed for the NGOs.

The initial number of organisations targeted to go into the selection pool of organisations who would receive the questionnaire was 986 but this was subsequently reduced to 776. However, the general lack of email addresses or errors in the email addresses limited the number of organisations that could be emailed a questionnaire even further.

6.6 Interview targets

We initially aimed to send the questionnaire to 400 organisations. Of these, 300 would receive it by email and the rest would be interviewed telephonically.

Given that the database is heavily skewed towards registered cooperatives, we sought to develop a sample that would more evenly reflect organisations in the database that were active in rural areas and which could be considered part of rural civil society. This meant that for some organisational types the entire group was included in the sample. For example, all 103 CBOs listed in the database were considered for the questionnaire process. The same applied to rural associations, media, SACCOs and trade unions. This was done in an attempt to offset the dominance of coops and NGOs in the database.

6.7 Testing the questionnaire

The draft questionnaire was tested with the following organisations. Where the organisa-

tion was reached, the questions were administered telephonically and in English.

As can be seen from *Table 6*, interviews with five of the twelve organisations were completed successfully. Two numbers did not exist. Two numbers were unanswered. Language was a problem in two instances, which confirmed that we would require a multilingual team of telephone interviewers.

6.8 Emailed questionnaires

The questionnaire was sent to 269 of the 897 organisations which had email addresses listed. At least 50% of the emails sent bounced back. Alternative email addresses were sought but many of these also bounced back.

Some organisations were concerned about the privacy of their members and opted to have the questionnaire sent to their head office and filled out on behalf of members. These were:

- South African Pork Producers Organisation (SAPPO)

- Cotton South Africa

- Cane Growers Association

Of the 275 emailed questionnaires sent out, Phuhlisani only got back 15. This is a response rate of 5.5%. There are a number of possible reasons for this:

- Data was dated and thus email addresses were non-functional or no longer existed.

- The questionnaire was often sent to a general email address, which is possibly not monitored regularly, which could have resulted in the information being overlooked.

- People had no time or were not interested in responding.

6.9 Telephonic interviews

A group of 354 organisations was polled for the telephonic interviews.

6.9.1 Organisations selected for a telephonic interview

The following chart shows the composition of the pool and the distribution of

the organisations by type. Eighty three percent of the organisations in the pool are a combination of NGOs (48%) and cooperatives (35%). *(See Figure 8: Distribution of organisational types selected for telephonic interviews).*

6.9.2 Telephonic interview success rate

Of the 354 organisations that were phoned, approximately 25% were interviewed and completed the questionnaire. *(See Figure 9: Telephonic interviews success rate).*

For the most part, interviews were conducted in English. English language telephonic inter-

views took about 10 minutes to administer. Those requiring translation took longer as the questionnaire was in English and required translation and explanation in some instances.
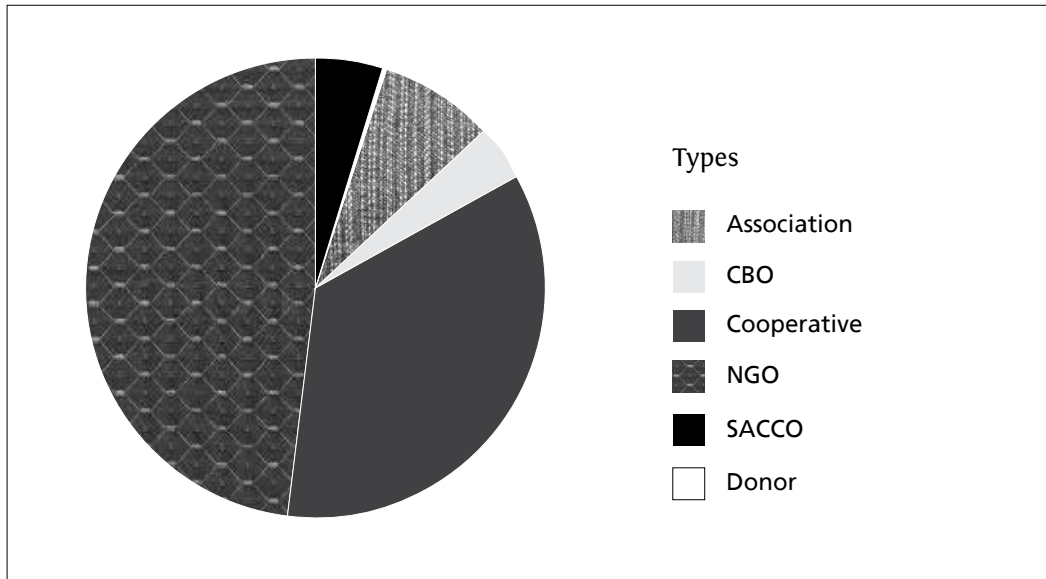
Of the 100 completed questionnaires a total of 76 completed questionnaires were in English (of which 15 were emailed responses). Twenty four interviews needed translation into Sepedi, Sotho, Afrikaans, Zulu or Xhosa. All of these first language interviews were with members of registered cooperatives. Clearly language and literacy levels impact the mode of disseminating research findings if one of the constituencies for processed research information is the rural poor.
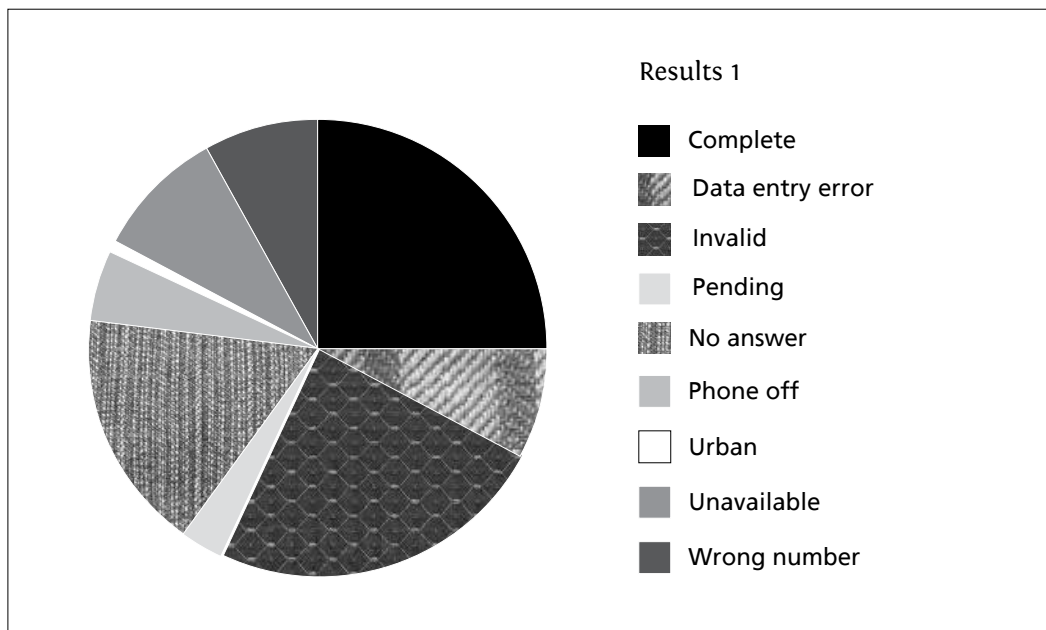
Table 6: Testing draft questionnaires

Name of organisation	Completed/ failed	Reason for failure
A Hi Ti Vimeleni Egg and Vegetables	Completed	–
Abakhethwa Projects	Completed	–
Abomthonyama Bakery and Catering	Completed	–
Amachule Akwantu Art and Craft	Completed	–
Fisheries Association Hermanus	Completed	–
A Re Kopaneng Construction	Fail	Number does not exist
Abakhi Besizwe	Fail	Number unanswered
African Building Materials and Services	Fail	Wrong number
Aganang Club	Fail	Language
Amandla	Fail	Number unanswered
Amandlethu	Fail	Language
Umthathi Training Project	Fail	Number does not exist

Figure 8: Distribution of organisational types selected for telephonic interviews

Types

Association
CBO
Cooperative
NGO
SACCO
Donor

Figure 9: Telephonic interviews success rate

Results 1

Complete
Data entry error
Invalid
Pending
No answer
Phone off
Urban
Unavailable
Wrong number

7 Survey findings

7.1 How long has your organisation been in existence?

Question 1 received 100 answers. Of the organisations polled, 68% reported being in existence for three years or more. However, as we examine in the following graph, this does not imply that all organisations in this category are active.
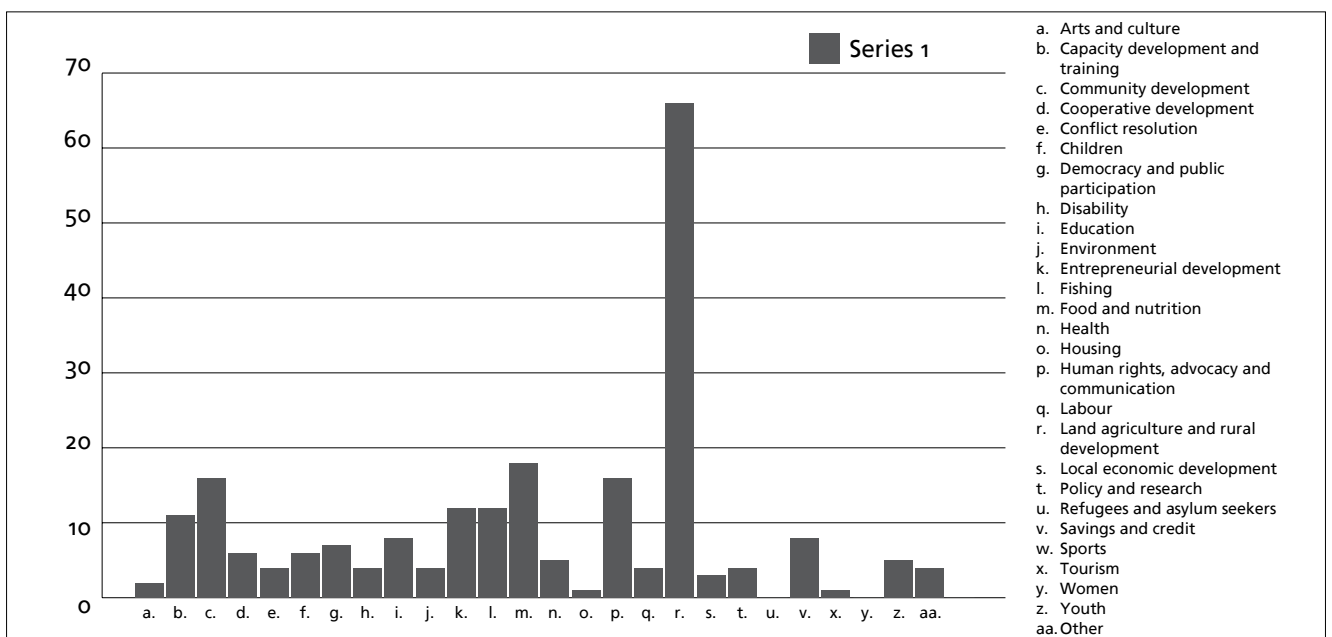
Figure 10: Length of CSO existence
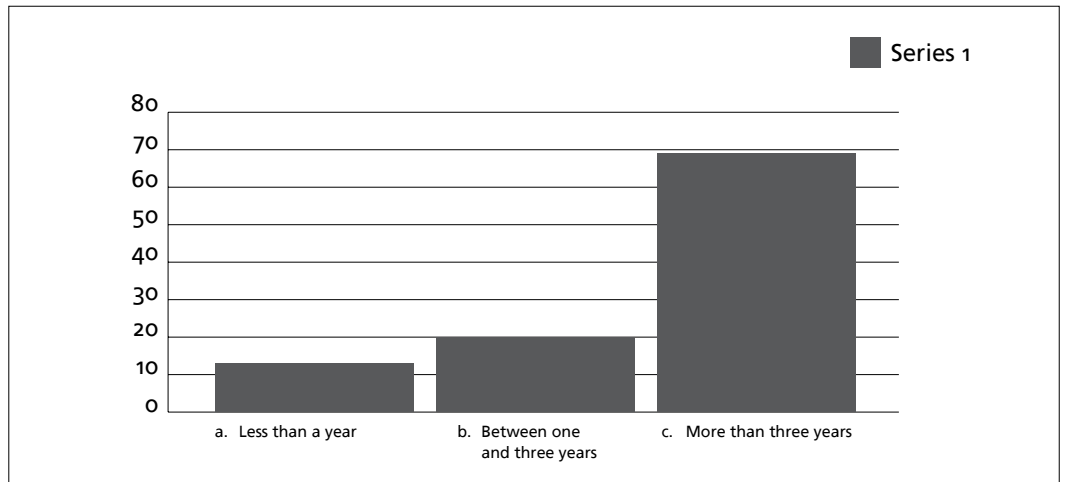
7.2 What is the work of your organisation?

All 100 organisations answered this question. Organisations could select more than one activity when answering this question. The graph below indicates the relative weightings by activity category. Rural CSOs that were polled undertake diverse activities. Several organisations undertake activities in multiple activity areas. However, of the organisations interviewed, 65 reported working on land, agriculture and rural development-related activities. Other key areas include food and nutrition (18) followed by community development (15) and human rights and advocacy (15).

Figure 11: Work domains of surveyed organisations

a. Arts and culture
b. Capacity development and training
c. Community development
d. Cooperative development
e. Conflict resolution
f. Children
g. Democracy and public participation
h. Disability
i. Education
j. Environment
k. Entrepreneurial development
l. Fishing
m. Food and nutrition
n. Health
o. Housing
p. Human rights, advocacy and communication
q. Labour
r. Land agriculture and rural development
s. Local economic development
t. Policy and research
u. Refugees and asylum seekers
v. Savings and credit
w. Sports
x. Tourism
y. Women
z. Youth
aa. Other

7.3 Where does your organisation work?

All 100 organisations answered this question and it was found that (76%) worked primarily in rural areas while 21% worked in both urban and rural areas.
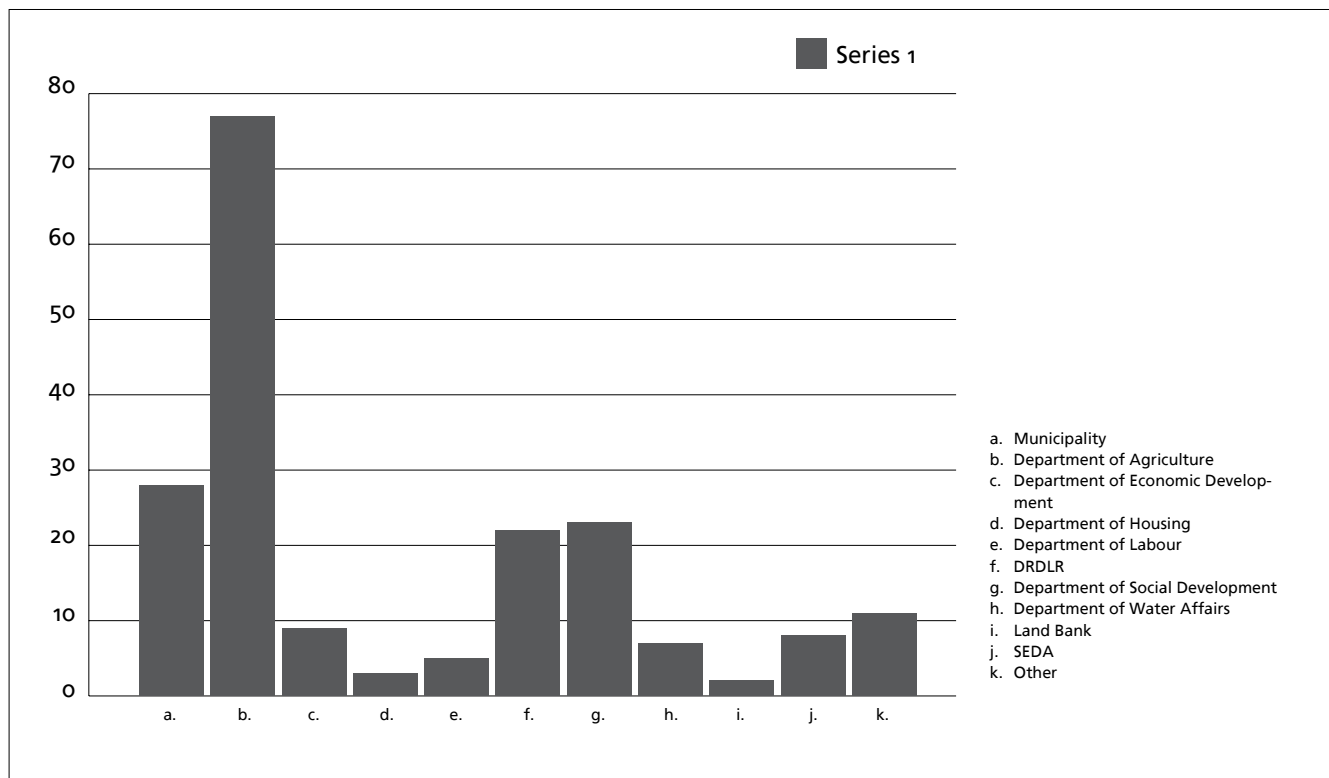
Figure 12: Urban–rural work focus
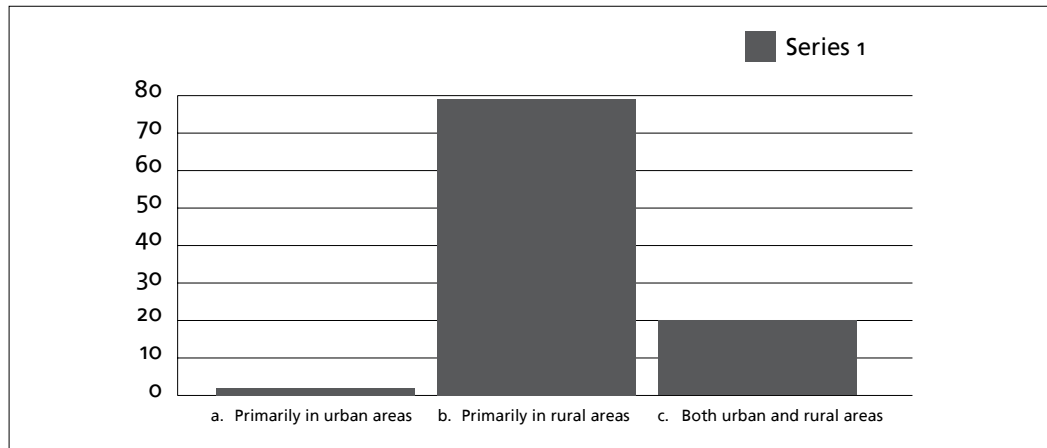
7.4 Which of the following government organisations have you had contact with in the last six months?

Only 94 organisations answered this question. Of these, some organisations reported wide-ranging sets of contacts and some contacted multiple departments and/or actors. The DoA was the most frequently contacted (70%), which is to be expected given the high percentage of organisations working in land, agriculture and rural development, and food and nutrition. The municipality was next (28%), followed by the DSD (24.5%) and the DRDLR (23%).

Figure 13: CSO interface with the state

a. Municipality
b. Department of Agriculture
c. Department of Economic Development
d. Department of Housing
e. Department of Labour
f. DRDLR
g. Department of Social Development
h. Department of Water Affairs
i. Land Bank
j. SEDA
k. Other

7.5 Why did you have contact?

Only 89 organisations answered this question. Organisations could identify more than one reason for making contact. The majority of organisations contacted government or other organisations to obtain information (56). More than half of the organisations approached the listed actors to apply for funds, while eighteen organisations indicated that they made contact to protest or make demands.

Figure 14: Reasons for CSO–state contact
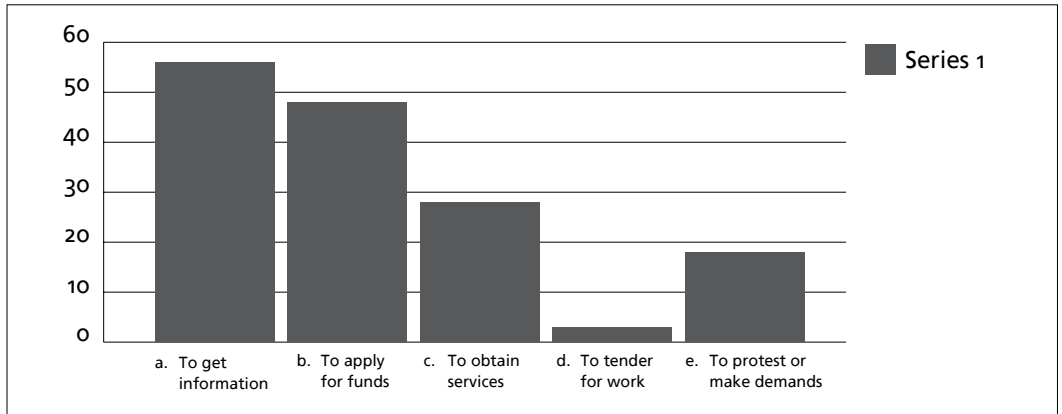
7.6 Did you get support from any NGO or other service organisation to make your approach to government?

Only 96 organisations answered this question, of which 40 (41%) had been assisted by an NGO while 56 (62%) did not receive any assistance to make the approach. However, this question does not help clarify whether this was because they could make the approach successfully on their own or because there was no NGO available from which to seek assistance.
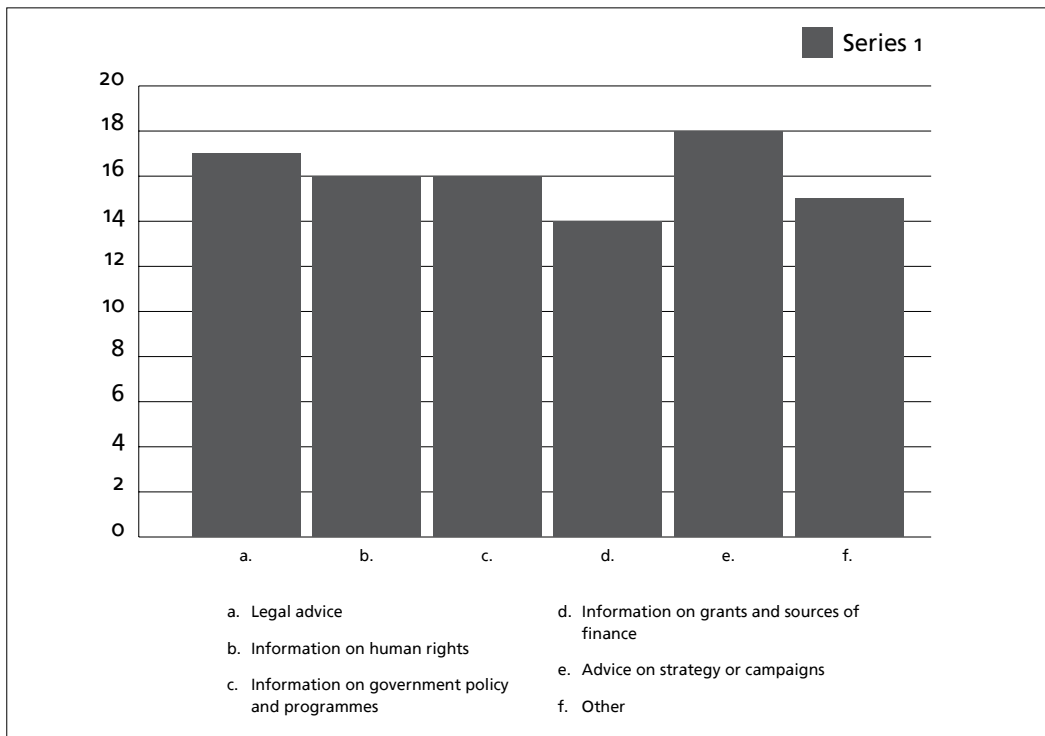
Figure 15: NGO linkages and support
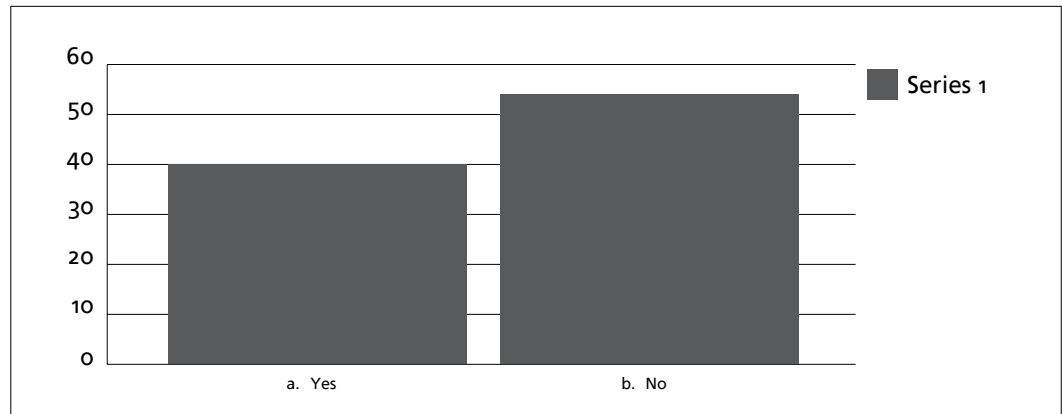
7.7 If yes, what type of support was provided?

A total of 40 organisations responded to this question. Organisations could indicate more than one type of support provided. Eighteen organisations (45%) received advice on strategy and campaigns while seventeen (42.5%) reported receiving legal advice. There was a fairly even distribution of support services among the categories identified.
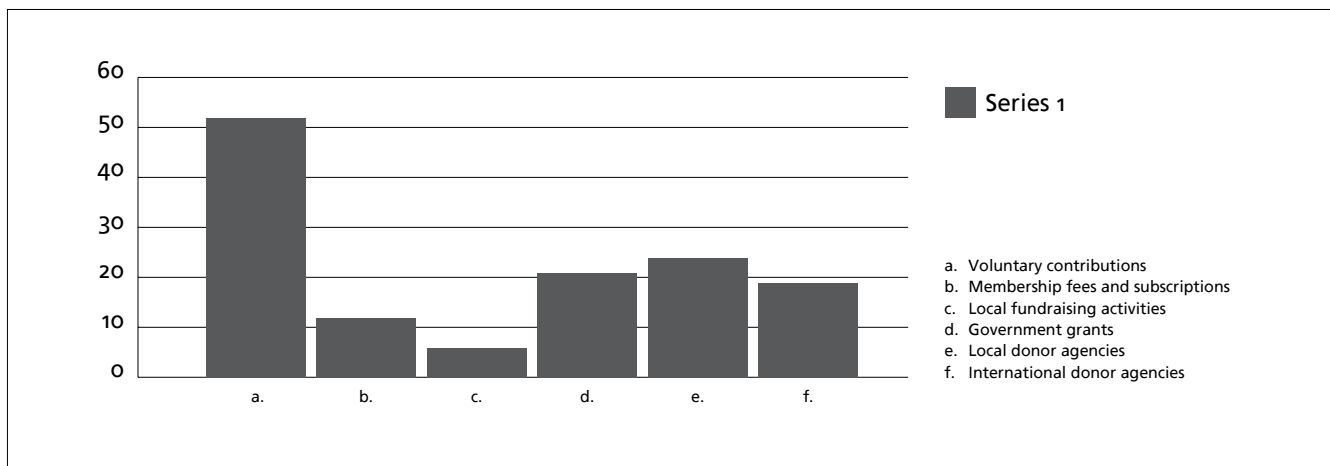
Figure 16: Type of support received

a. Legal advice

b. Information on human rights

c. Information on government policy and programmes

d. Information on grants and sources of finance

e. Advice on strategy or campaigns

f. Other

7.8 How does your organisation fund its activities?

A total of 95 organisations answered this question. Once again, organisations could pick more than one funding source in responding. Of those who responded, 51 organisations (53%) indicated that voluntary contributions were part of their funding strategy. A further 24 organisations (25%) reported funding from local donor agencies, followed by 21 organisations which reported getting government grants. A relatively small grouping of 19 organisations received funding from international donors and these were likely to be the more established rural NGOs which responded to the survey. Membership fees and local fundraising activities also made a contribution but these were the lowest-rated funding sources. It seems a reasonable hypothesis that formal organisations in Quadrants 1 and 2 would make use of local and international donor funding sources. Organisations registered as NPOs or coops could also make use of government grants, while informal organisations would make more use of voluntary contributions and local fundraising activities.

Figure 17: CSO funding sources

a. Voluntary contributions

b. Membership fees and subscriptions

c. Local fundraising activities

d. Government grants

e. Local donor agencies

f. International donor agencies

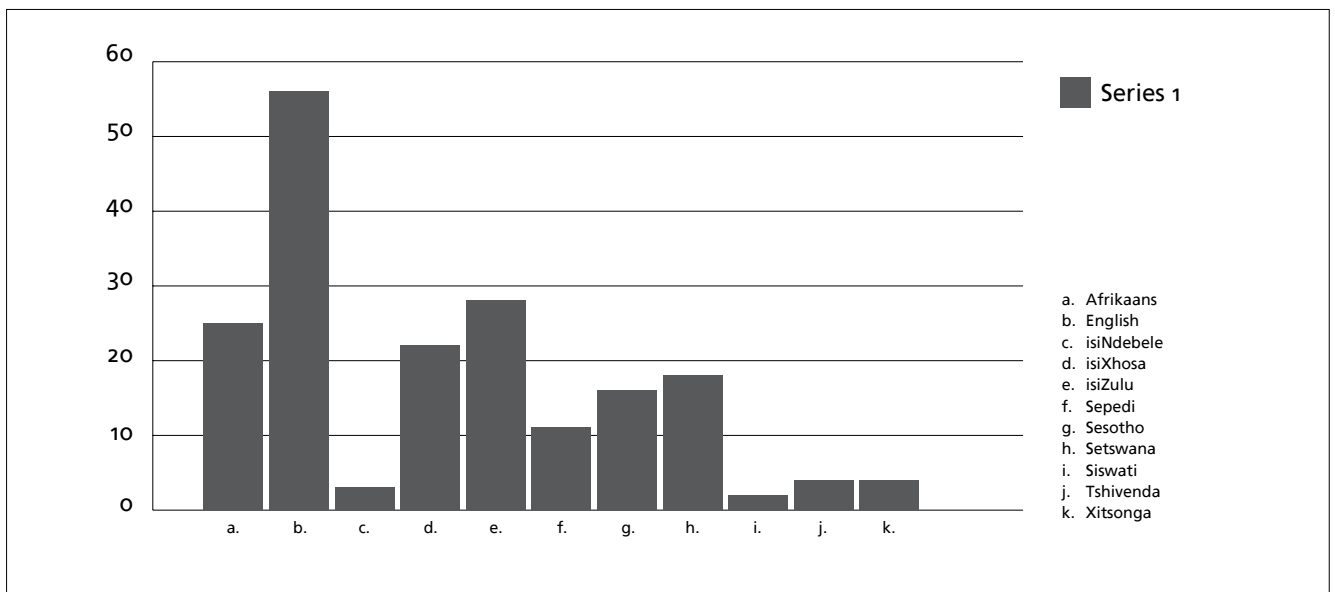## 7.9 Does your organisation have any full-time employees?

This question received 97 responses. Of those who responded, 49 organisations (51%) reported employing full-time staff and, the majority employed less than ten staff members. The significance of these figures is difficult to interpret as the employees are not differentiated and there is no data on job categories or levels of remuneration. This would require a more in-depth survey.

Less than 5	15
5–10	15
11–20	12
More than 20	7
Total	**49**

7.10 Which language do you use most in the day-to-day running of your organisation?

This question received a response from 99 organisations. Just over half of the organisations use English as their primary operating language, while other national languages predominate according to the area of operation, as could be expected. Multilingualism is a key issue for rural civil society as fluency in English is frequently a factor that equips people to take leadership positions and remains a key requirement for engagement with donors and policy processes.
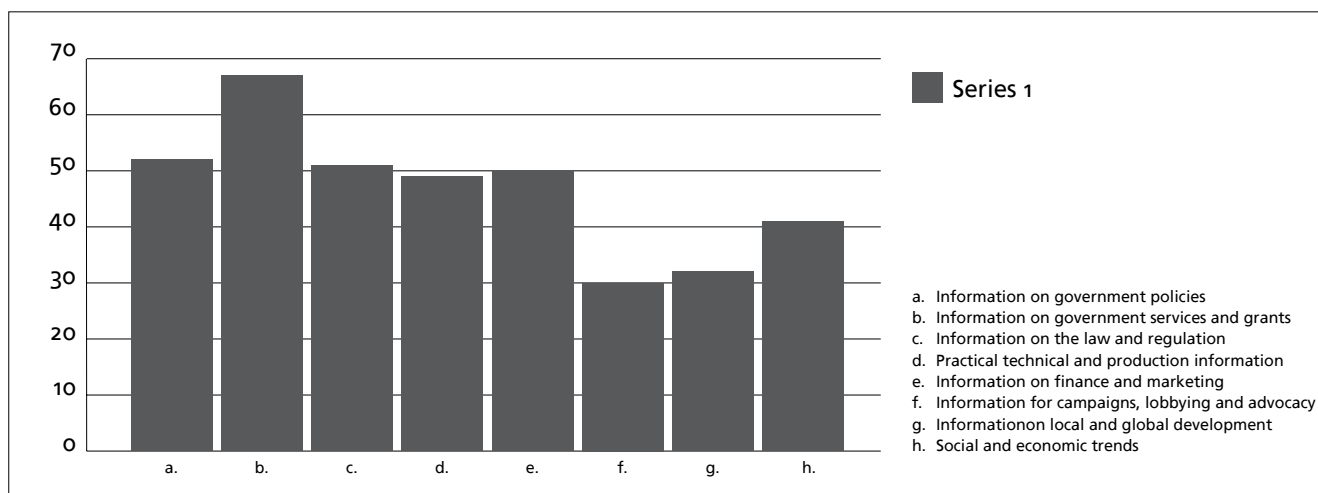
Figure 18: CSO primary language use

a. Afrikaans
b. English
c. isiNdebele
d. isiXhosa
e. isiZulu
f. Sepedi
g. Sesotho
h. Setswana
i. Siswati
j. Tshivenda
k. Xitsonga

7.11 What are your main information needs?

This question yielded 97 responses from organisations. They were able to pick more than one category in their responses. The main categories of information are ranked below. Information on government services and grants tops the list of responses with 66 organisations (68%) identifying this need. Information for engaging in campaigns, lobbying and advocacy and, by implication, the policy process scored the least, with less than a third of respondents highlighting this as a need. This suggests that the majority of the organisations sampled fall into quadrants 2 and 3 – organisations that are both formal and informal and which are primarily locally and livelihood focused.
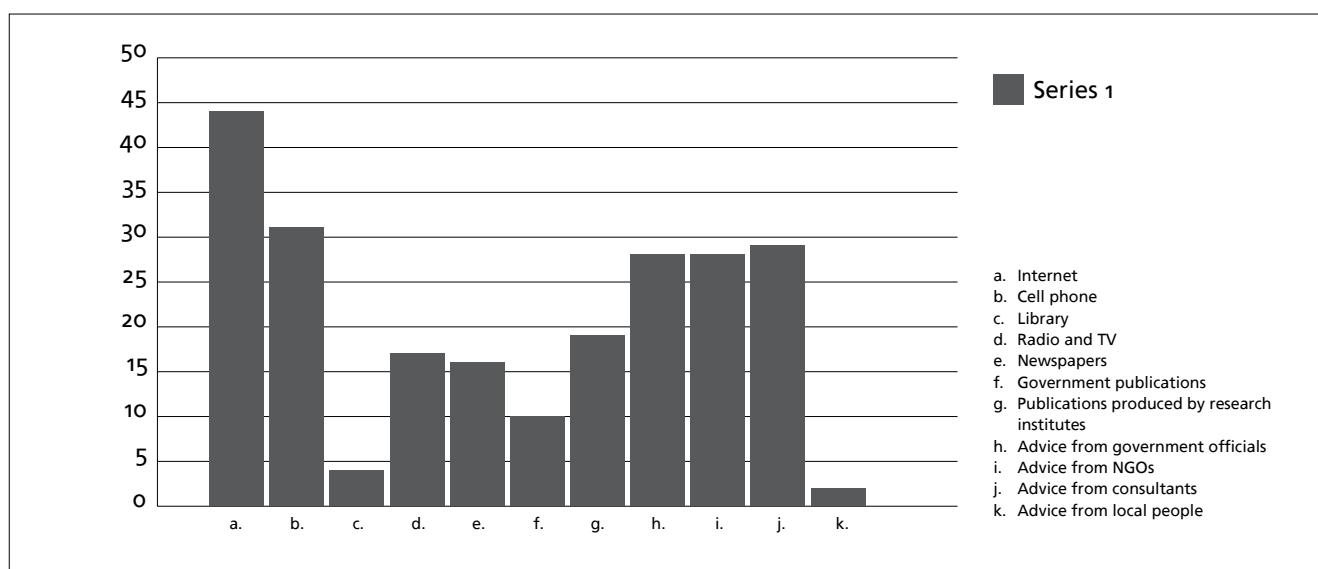
Figure 19: Identified CSO information needs

a. Information on government policies
b. Information on government services and grants
c. Information on the law and regulation
d. Practical technical and production information
e. Information on finance and marketing
f. Information for campaigns, lobbying and advocacy
g. Informationon local and global development
h. Social and economic trends

7.12 What is the main source of information that you use for your work?

Digital information sources predominate with the internet and cell phones constituting the most highly ranked information sources. Word of mouth comes second, with organisations obtaining information from local people, government officials and NGOs. Interestingly, publications from research institutes feature as the highest ranked source of information, which includes newspapers, radio and TV, government publications and libraries. However, this finding is probably influenced by the purposive sampling approach. The question is also a little confusing as many publications and other information content is accessed via the internet. The dominance of the internet for organisations that have internet access is the key finding here but, as we examine in subsequent questions, close to 40% of organisations sampled did not have access to a computer or the internet at work.

Figure 20: CSO information sources compared

a. Internet
b. Cell phone
c. Library
d. Radio and TV
e. Newspapers
f. Government publications
g. Publications produced by research institutes
h. Advice from government officials
i. Advice from NGOs
j. Advice from consultants
k. Advice from local people

7.13 Does your organisation have access to a computer for work purposes?

All 100 organisations answered this question. Of these, 63% have access to a computer while 37% do not.
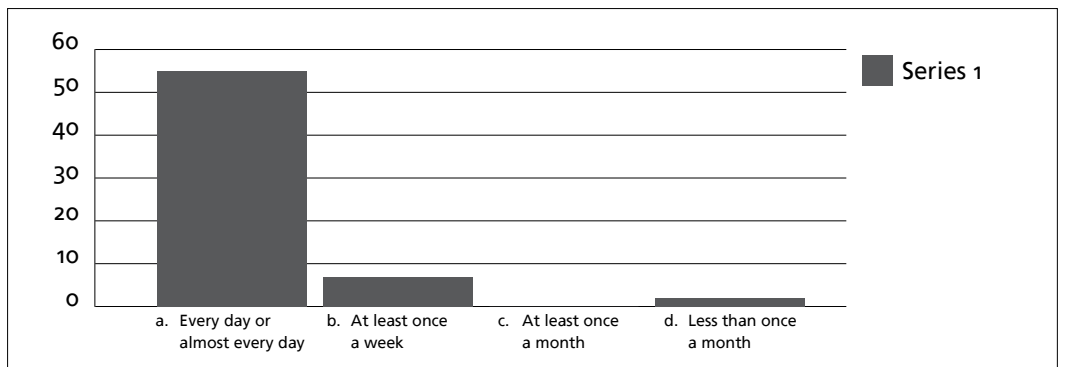
Figure 21: CSO computer access
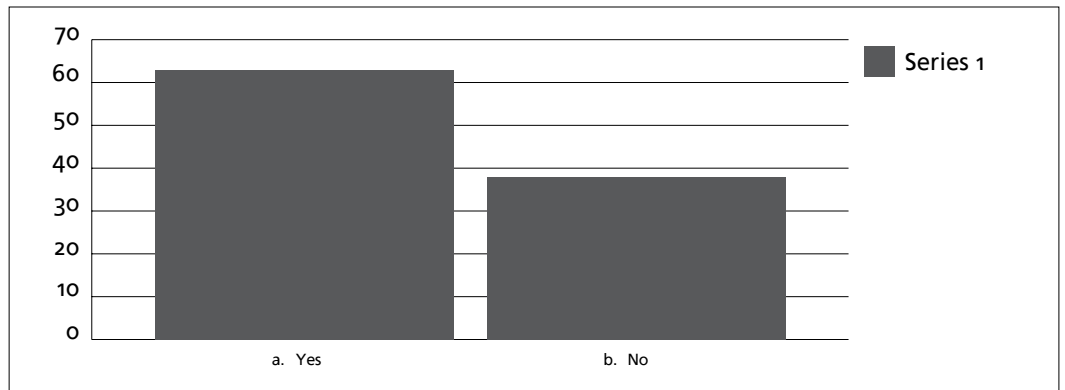
7.14 How often have you used a computer in the last three months?

Of those 63 organisations with computer access, 87% use a computer every day or almost every day.

Figure 22: CSO computer use

7.15 Does your organisation have access to the internet at work

Of the 94 organisations that answered this question, 50 (53%) stated that they had internet access at work while 42 (45%) did not. The remainder did not know so we can probably assume that they do not have internet access.
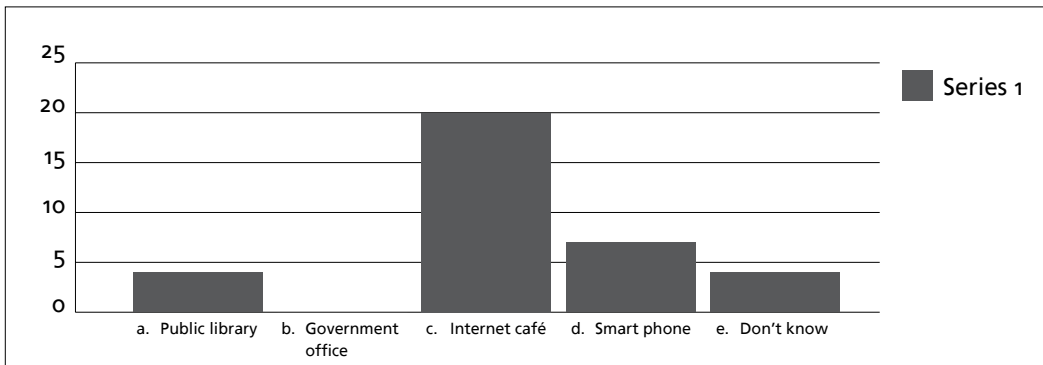
Figure 23: CSO internet access at work
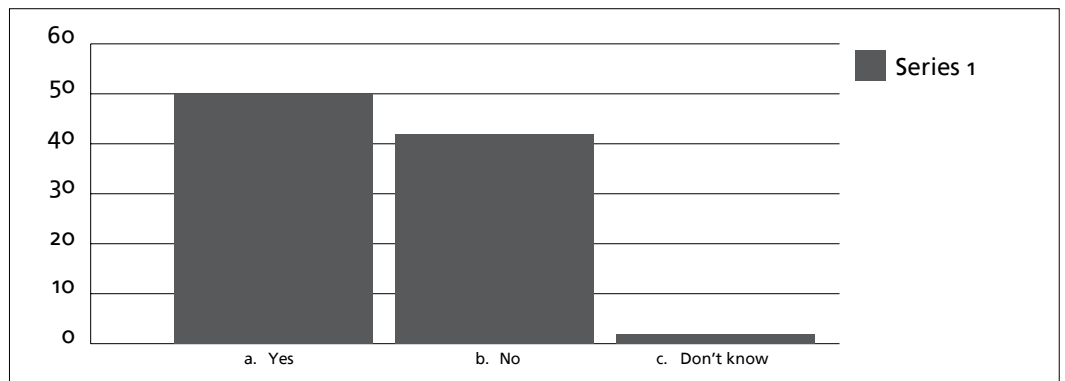
7.16 Does your organisation have access to the internet from any other place?

Only 34 organisations answered this question of whom 20 used an internet cafe, 7 made use of a smart phone, 4 used a public library and 3 did not know.
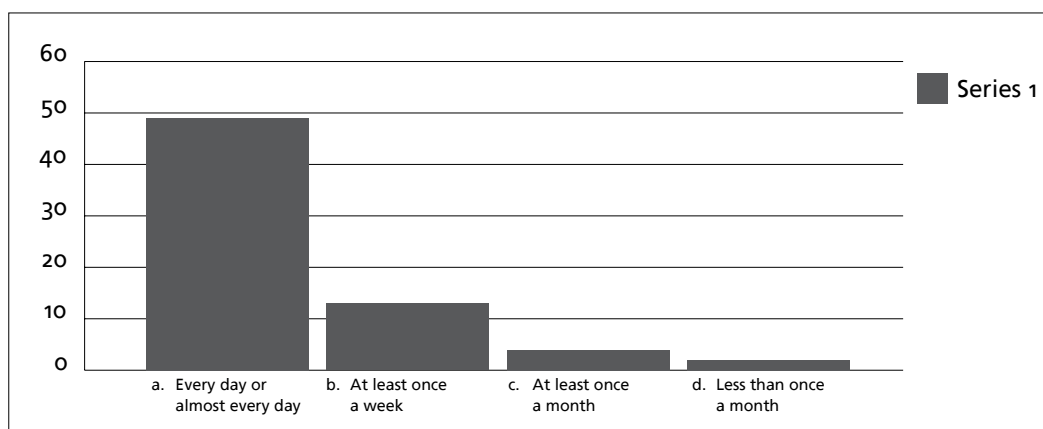
Figure 24: CSO alternative internet access sources

7.17 On average how often did you use the internet in the last three months

Of the 66 organisations that answered this question, 49 (74%) used the internet every day or almost every day. The majority of the remainder accessed the internet at least once a week.
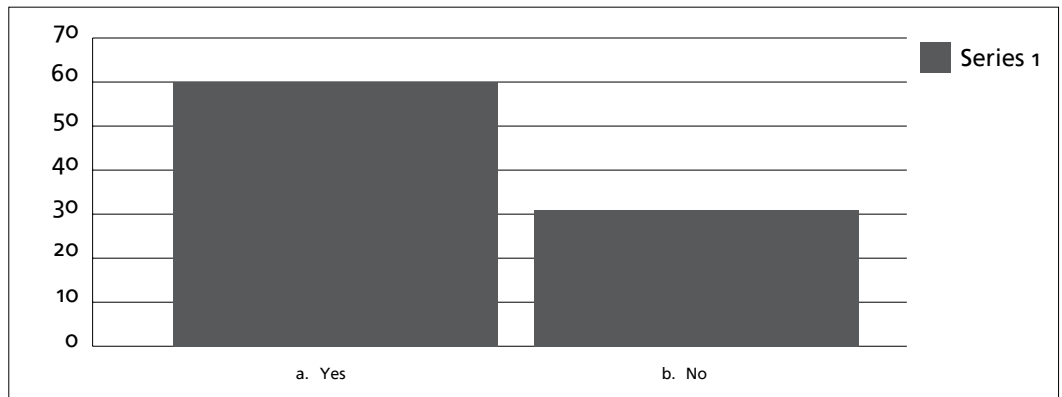
Figure 25: CSO internet use

7.18   Does your organisation use email?

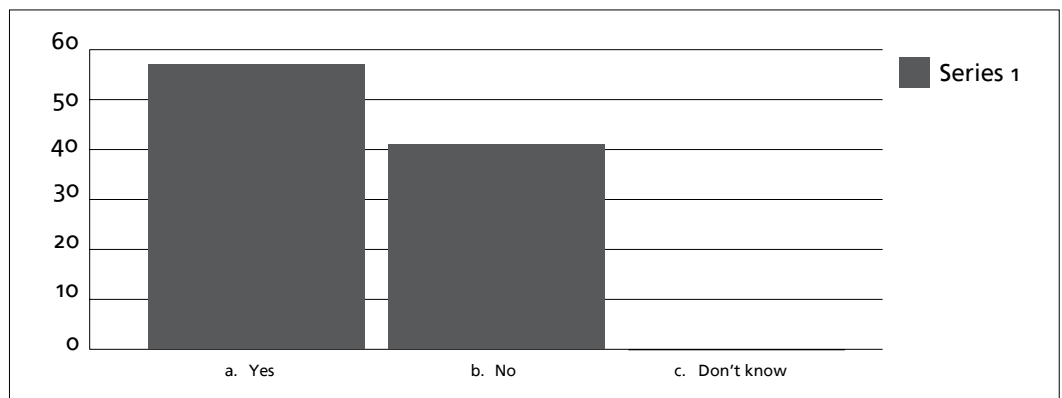Of the 93 organisations that answered this question, 61 (66%) make use of email while a third do not.

Figure 26: CSO access to email

7.19 Does your organisation use the internet to search for information to assist you in your work?

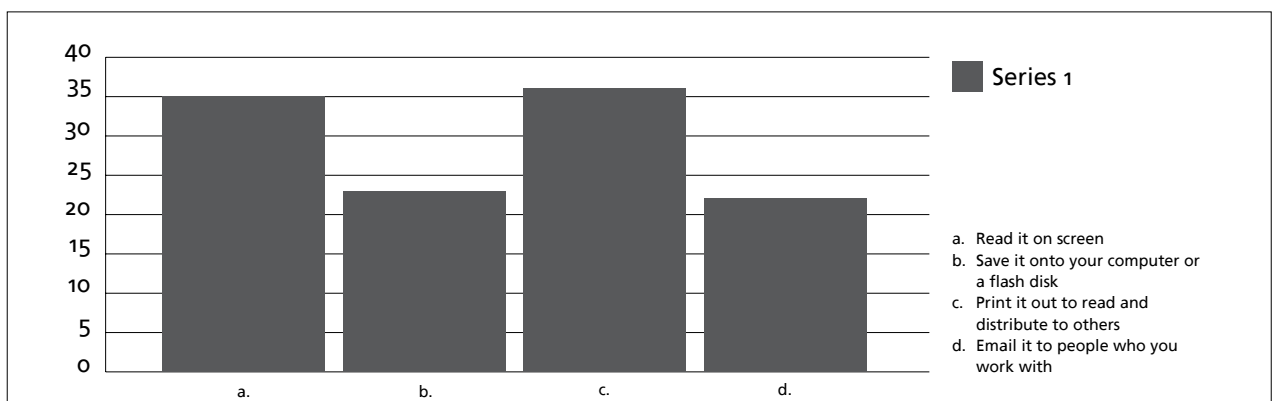A total of 97 organisations answered this question and 56 (60%) reported using the internet for work purposes.

Figure 27: CSO internet research use

7.20 If yes, what do you do with this information?

Respondents from 56 organisations answered this question where multiple answers were possible. Of the respondents, 36 (64%) reported printing out information from the internet while 35 read on screen. There was also a significant portion of respondents who saved or emailed information to others.
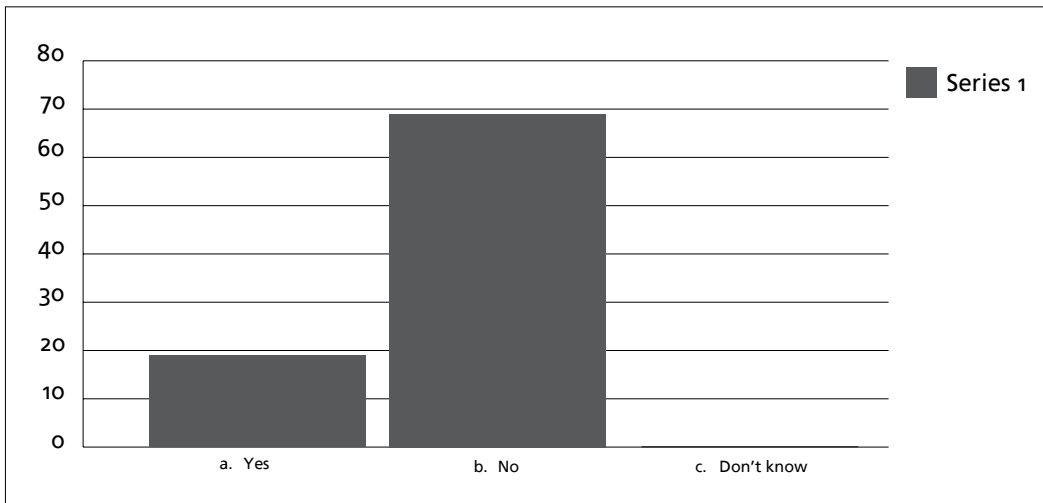
Figure 28: CSO online-information uses

a. Read it on screen
b. Save it onto your computer or a flash disk
c. Print it out to read and distribute to others
d. Email it to people who you work with

7.21 Does your organisation have a website?

Of the 87 organisations that answered this question, only 19 (22%) reported having a website.

Figure 29: CSO web presence

7.22 Does your organisation use Facebook for work purposes?

Of the 90 organisations that answered this question, only 14 (15%) reported making use of Facebook for work purposes.

Figure 30: CSO Facebook use for work purposes
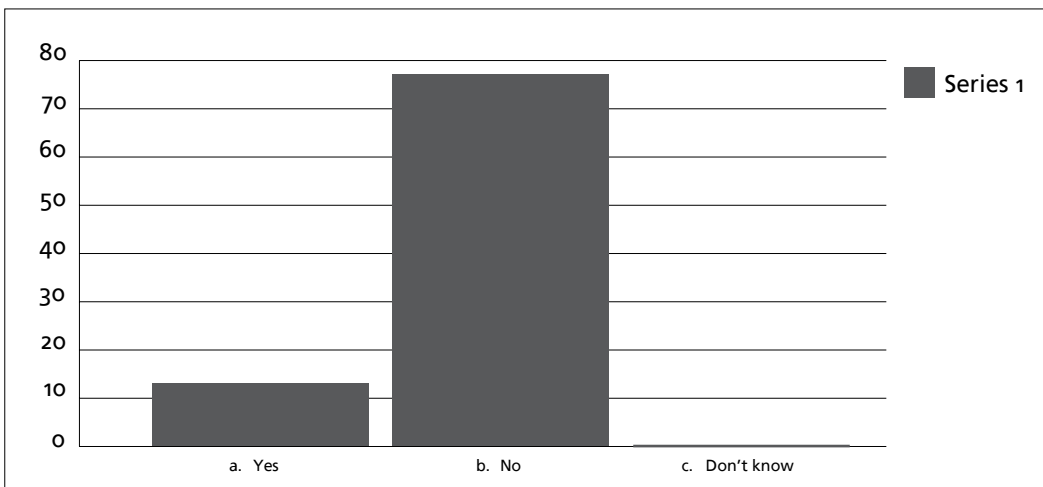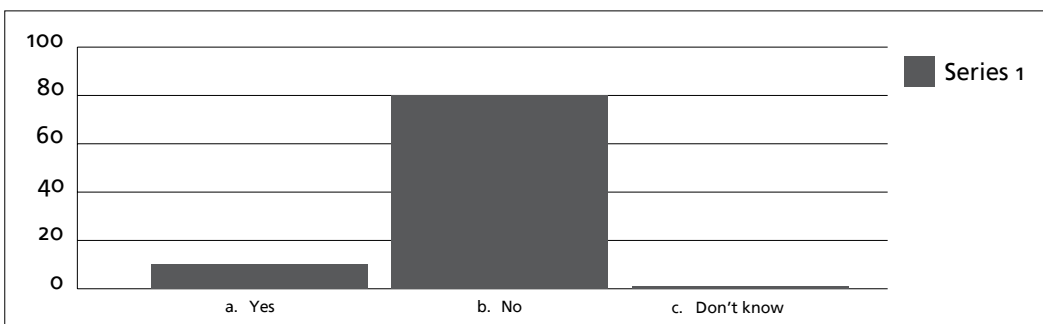

7.23 Does your organisation use Twitter for work purposes?

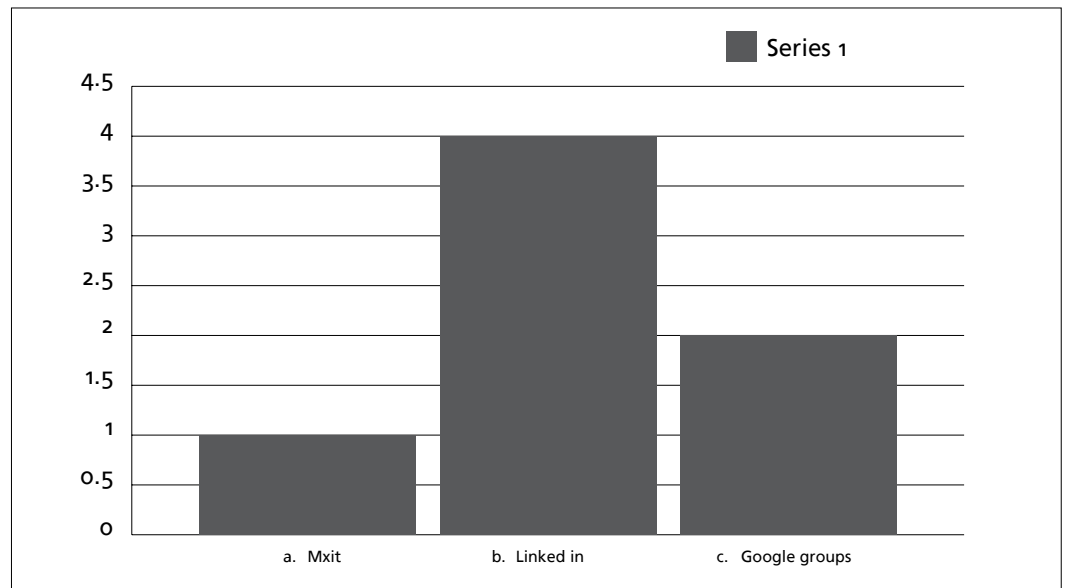Of the 91 organisations that answered this question, only 10 used Twitter for work purposes.

Figure 31: CSO Twitter use for work purposes

7.24 Does your organisation use other types of social media?

Very few organisations reported making use of any other social media.

Figure 32: CSO use of other social media

7.25 What type of internet connection do you use?

Respondents from 66 organisations answered this question. Of these, 24 respondents did not know what type of internet connection was used by their organisation. Respondents report that wireless/3G was the most used connection, followed by ADSL and a dial up connection, which are used in equal measures. Very limited smart phone use was identified.

Figure 33: CSO comparative internet connection
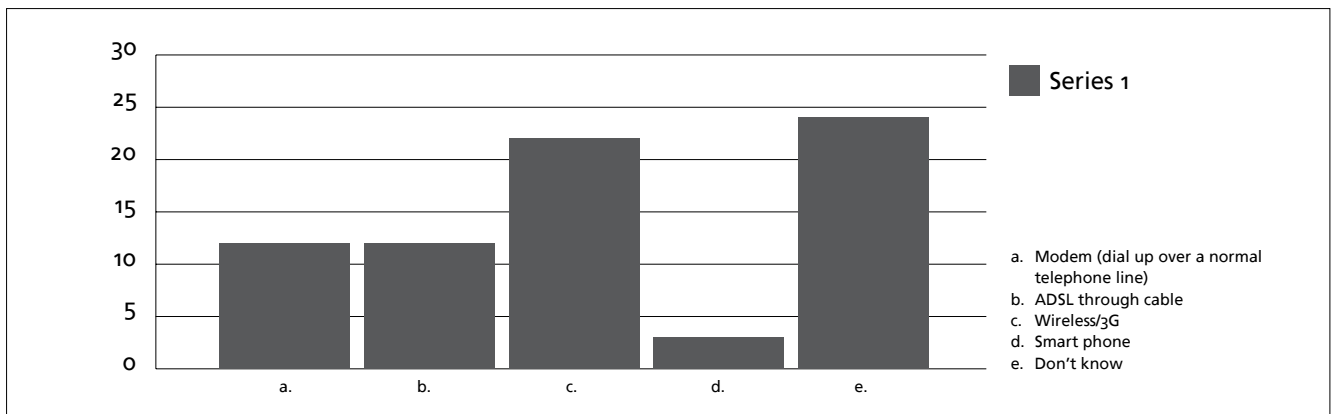
7.26 In what form would information be most useful to you?

This question was answered by 93 organisations. As might be expected from the internet use statistics, the internet was identified as the information delivery mechanism of choice. Almost half of the respondents (43) ranked this as their preferred method. However, SMS notifications, printed papers and CD compilations also scored reasonably high.

Figure 34: CSO preferred form of information dissemination

Legend:

- a. Printed papers and booklets
- b. Downloadable from the internet
- c. Documents on CD or flash drive which can be viewed on a computer
- d. Information which I could listen to on a media player or the phone via a toll-free number
- e. SMS sent to your phone
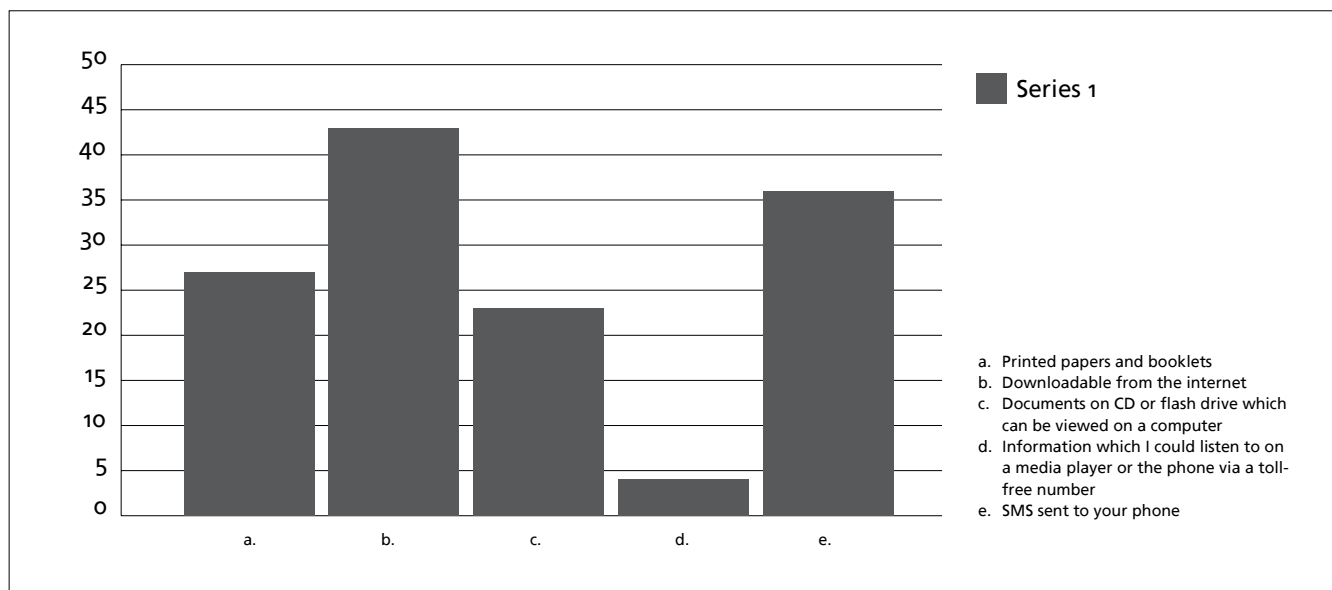
7.27 Observations on organisations making up the survey sample

7.27.1 Cooperatives

Cooperatives constituted 35% of all interviewees. Most of the cooperatives interviewed had been registered but were not operational. Some had not started operating as they were waiting on funding while others had stopped operating due to a lack of funds. Most have applied for funds from government bodies such as the DTI, DAFF and DRDLR. The few that reported being operational noted that they were operating below full capacity and are encountering problems relating to market access, transport, lack of information and shortage of capital.

Purposive selection identified cooperatives involved in activities relating to land, agriculture and rural development. All cooperatives interviewed are fully or partially funded by government and those that are not funded by government are not funded at all and rely on voluntary contributions. Those who are funded by government listed government officials as their main sources of information. While those that were partially funded or not funded at all used other sources of information, including the internet.

Few of the cooperatives interviewed engaged with the state, other than to seek funds. Consistent with the analysis in section 4.7.1 it seems that many of these cooperatives have been formed because of government initiatives. Many people have registered coops, not because they are necessarily interested in or supportive of cooperative forms of organisation but because the formation of a coop is required if members are to leverage a government grant. Government pledges assistance to those who organise themselves in the form of cooperatives. This means that from the start these entities are dependent on government for their information and funding. The cooperatives interviewed fall into Quadrant 2, but in some respects are artificially created social formations of which the majority have very little chance of surviving.

Cooperatives as a sector appear poorly organised and fragmented because, as an example, there is the South African National Apex Co-operative (SANACO), which is registered with the Registrar of Cooperatives at Cipro (now CIPC or Companies and Intellectual Property Commission) in terms of the Co-operative Act, (Act No. 14 of 2005). It is supposed to be a national representative body for cooperatives in South Africa but none of the primary cooperatives interviewed mentioned this body when asked about interactions with non-governmental bodies.

Most members of cooperatives interviewed were not satisfied with their interaction with government and the majority did not have any interaction with any entity beyond gov-

ernment, reflecting their total dependency on the state. For many of the cooperatives assistance from, access to and knowledge of NGOs appears limited.

7.27.2 Associations

This group accounted for 13% of the groupings that we attempted to contact for the survey. Most associations and SACCOs have been in existence for more than three years. Most of the associations which responded were fishing associations located in the Western Cape.

Major concerns in the fishing industry related to the issuing of permits. Concerns range from who receives the permits to the scope of the permits. The fishers associations were all primarily rural. Most were engaged in artisanal fishing with the association playing a representative function rather than providing direct support or services to members. Similar to the cooperatives, fishing associations were primarily interested in their core business. Many of these associations are organised through or network with Masifundise. Contact with government departments was limited and mostly revolved around the issuing of fishing permits. Masifundise represents and acts on behalf of fishing associations and in the interests of artisanal fishers.

The fishing associations reported that they were funded via voluntary contributions. As a result none have employees – the representatives are volunteers. The dominant language here was Afrikaans, followed by IsiXhosa with some English. This is because most of the data was sourced from the Western Cape. Most fishing associations requested all the information, but had little need for technical information. Here the dominant source of information was from local people and advice from NGOs (Masifundise conferences and workshops). Less than five of the fishing associations have access to computers and not all of those five were able to use the computers. Internet access for the most part was restricted to mobile phones and internet cafes. None of the associations have websites and use members' personal emails for work. None of them used social media for work.

The National Wool Growers Association (NWGA) and Cotton SA have close relationships with government extension workers.

The listed representatives of the different associations were often government extension workers whose salaries were paid by the government but who work with and through the associations. The representatives, though full-time employees, work alone in their respective regions. The language depended on location, with IsiXhosa being dominant in the NWGA because it is located in the Eastern Cape. All information was considered vital, with the representatives stating that they would be able to use all sources of information. All had computer access with wireless internet access. None used social media for work. Members with internet access make use of the NWGA or Cotton SA website.

7.27.3 SACCOs

The SACCOs only function was member savings and credit. Contact with government departments was limited as they are member-driven groups. In addition, there was very little interaction with NGOs. The funding of activities was done via voluntary contributions and membership fees and subscriptions. Depending on the size of the provincial SACCOL, the number of employees varied with most SACCOLs having at least five employees. The language used depended on where the SACCOL was located. Information which SACCOLs regarded as vital was varied. With access to computers and internet SACCOLs drew on numerous and varied sources of information. None however had websites or used social media.

7.27.4 NGOs, NPOs and CBOs

This cluster included NPOs, for example Section 21 companies, as well as CBOs. These groups formed 52% of the entities we attempted to contact. However, there was a 53% contact failure rate in this category because of dated data entry or limitations of the database.

Most of the organisations contacted have been in existence for more than three years. Only 6% worked in urban areas. The others, regardless of location, worked in rural areas. The main work of this group was greatly varied.

Interactions with NGOs differed significantly from the other groups. Few NGOs reported accessing funds or information from govern-

ment. Some NGOs claimed to be providing input into policy while others saw themselves as providing information to government from the ground, which could improve implementation. Many NGOs see themselves as watch dogs of government, monitoring government activities and holding government to account. This included engaging in protest action and making demands of government where performance was poor or government officials were acting in ways which undermined the interests of poor rural people. Many NGOs state that they aim to fill the gaps where state services do not adequately meet local needs. There was a general dissatisfaction with government development activities and, while the question was not asked directly, most NGOs expressed disappointment in their workings with government. NGOs in the Northern Cape spoke about how government's engagement with NGOs and civil society was problematic. Informants noted that civil society was poorly organised in the Northern Cape, which exacerbated this problem.

Most NGOs reported that they did not work alone and would often engage with govern-

ment as part of a network of like-minded organisations. A number of organisations in this group were funded by international donors, with some reliant on local donors and others accessing grants through government departments. Most NGOs had full-time employees although the numbers tended to vary according to the number of years that the organisation had been operating and the diversity of funding sources that they were able to access. The predominant language used by NGOs is English.

While many NGOs were involved in localised research and information gathering they also indicated that they made use of research reports. Given that NGOs often provided information through workshops, some noted that research information could have added value if it was presented in a workshop-friendly format.

All NGOs had access to computers, internet and email. However, not all those interviewed had websites or used social media. Most office-based NGOs use ADSL while some still rely on dial-up services for an internet connection.

8 Reflections on the key research questions

8.1 Who is out there? How are rural people currently organising themselves; in what organisational forms?

The literature and the survey highlight a diverse array of organisations, some formal, visible and influential knowledge producers (Quadrant 1) that actively engage with the state and each other. These include NGOs, worker organisations and others operating in the rural sector.

There is also a whole array of organisations with a legal identity but little social impact or presence (Quadrant 2). A large number of these organisations could be said to be notional – registered coops and land-holding entities, many of which are little more than imaginaries of the state. Others, such as traditional authorities, may exercise significant authority over rural people's lives as they seek to arrest change. Then there are other NPOs that keep a low profile and remain locally focused and immersed in practice, but which have little engagement in knowledge production or the policy process.

The bulk of rural civil society remains contained in local informal social formations – faith-based groups, burial societies, stokvels, cultural and sports associations and the like. The diversity and strength of these organisations seems to vary considerably from place to place. However, the case studies highlight how organisations in Quadrants 1 and 2 can link with and support local, informal organisations by establishing webs of mutual support and reciprocity. The relationships between formal and informal organisations remain precarious. Experience shows how in the land sector, as elsewhere, formal NGOs frequently share a 'will to improve' with the state which employs a different rationality to that of the 'will to survive and thrive' (*Murray Li, 2007*), which drives the poor and the informal.

The context in which rural people live together with their close network of links with the urban areas seem conducive to the formation of broader rural-social movements. However, as *Pieterse (2003)* points out, the realpolitik of power and the local patronage networks which shape the local livelihood opportunities of the rural poor frequently results in predominance of locally situated strategies of accommodation and engagement.

8.2 How do they engage with the organs that govern them?

Two types of relationship contests:

- One is a dependence on organs of the state for information and access to government resources and grants.

- The other involves mobilisation to contest spaces of power and challenge dominant discourse. However, grass roots rural CSOs in this mode are often linked to Quadrant 1 NGOs, which are reasonably well resourced and connected. This may invoke a reverse dependence of the sort that was highlighted by the LPM discussed above.

8.3 What is the role (or the potential role) of information, knowledge and research in strengthening the position of the rural poor in their interactions with the state and other developmental actors?

At present it would appear that the research outputs of an institute like PLAAS are primarily made use of by the Quadrant 1 NGOs and in the networks which link these organisations with rural social formations in different settings. If PLAAS research is to reach different constituencies then a different research paradigm might be required – one that draws on a participatory action-research approach and which engages more strategically with the messy and contingent politics of actual policy processes.

8.4 Where does absence of knowledge, or a lack of ability to make use of available information and knowledge, hamper or disempower poor rural people?

The survey highlights a hunger for knowledge and information but, contrary to received wisdom, information is not power. Information has to be animated by strategy and underpinned by organisation if it is to contribute to change. Some of the case studies explore how different formations are attempting this in practice.

8.5 How do rural organisations and people currently use information in the pursuit of their goals?

The digital divide remains real but there are some signs that it is being eroded. The rapid penetration of cell phone technology and the increasing capabilities of even the most basic cell phones have implications both for information sharing and for organisations. The Arab Spring highlights some of these potentials. However, exorbitant cell phone and data costs significantly limit this potential in South Africa at present. SMS and instant messaging applications such as MXit, WhatsApp and Twitter have the potential to communicate information at a relatively low cost but how these practically link with the communication of research findings beyond the usual catchment remains an area for investigation and experiment.

8.6 What forms of media or information are most appropriate to reach organisations operating in different rural settings?

Digital media shows great potential, but high-end media such as podcasting and online videos are so bandwidth-hungry and costly to download that it remains beyond the reach of the majority of rural people and organisations. Language is also a significant constraint for dissemination strategies. Print remains important but is also expensive and insufficiently adaptive.

However, dissemination involves much more than the technologies of transmission. It requires information literacy skills to identify credible resources and frameworks for interpretation of research content in digital form.

9 Conclusion

This scan of the literature and survey of a 100 rural CSOs highlights the diverse nature of rural civil society which is at once visible and formal; inferred and informal. Many forms of informal organisations remain illegible to the state and beyond the reach of many formal NGOs. The state has provided the impetus for a wide variety of new formal organisational forms, but these remain something of an imaginary with a registration number but little social traction or relevance.

Despite government espousal of the evidence-based policy making paradigm there appears to be a limited intersection between research and the 'real world' of policy making. This is particularly true with regard to policies in the land and rural development sector, which consistently and determinedly ignore the findings of research and the lessons from experience to date.

Research outputs produced by PLAAS tend to serve CSOs that are equipped to engage with the academic research canon. It is these organisations that are able to connect research findings with local knowledge and the particularities of context.

Perhaps the bigger questions for PLAAS is how it will engage with the changing patterns of scholarship and how it will manage the transition from traditional scholarship to digital scholarship and the potential of open scholarship, all of which contain within them opportunities for new research designs and knowledge sharing with diverse social actors.

References

Alexander, A. 2006. Rights Beyond the Urban-rural Divide: South Africa's Landless People's Movement and the Creation of the Landless Subject. *Conference on Silencing Human Rights.* University of Sussex.

Anderson, J. 1975. *Public Policy Making,* New York, Praeger.

Andersson, G. 1999. Partnerships Between CBOs, NGOs and Government in South Africa: Insights Derived From Experience. Paper No 2. Pretoria: USAID, South Africa.

Bendana, A. 2006. *NGOs and Social Movements: A North/South Divide?* [Online]. Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Accessed in February 2012 at: http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/(httpAuxPages)/4F7CC72852DD23EBC12571D1002B45AD/$file/Bendana.pdf.

Berger, J. 2001. *The Shape of a Pocket*, New York, Vintage Books.

Blair, H. 2000. Participation and Accountability At The Periphery: Democratic Local Governance In Six Countries. *World Development*, 28, 21–39.

Bosch, D. & Hirschfeld, E. 2004. Legal Analysis of Communal Property Institutions Used in Land Reform. CSIR.

Boyte, H. 2004. Seeing Like a Democracy: South Africa's Prospects for Global Leadership. *African Journal of Political Science, Vol 9.*

Bratton, M. 1994. *Civil Society and Political Transition in Africa* [Online]. Institute for Development Research. Accessed on 30 January 2012 at: http://worlded.org/docs/Publications/idr/pdf/11-6.pdf

Carney, D. 1999. *Introduction to Sustainable Livelihoods: What Difference Can We Make?*, London, DFID.

CASAC. 2011. *The Impact of Corruption on Governance and Socio-economic Rights* [Online]. Cape Town: Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution. Accessed on 31 January 2012 at: http://www.casac.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/IMPACT-OF-CORRUPTION.pdf

CASE 2005. Assessment of the Status Quo of Settled Land Restitution Claims with a Developmental Component Nationally. Community Agency for Social Enquiry.

Chambers, R. & Conroy, G. 1992. Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century. *IDS Discussion Paper No 296.* Brighton: Institue for Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Chatterjee, P. 2001. On Civil and Political Society in Postcolonial Democracies. In: Kaviraj, S. & Khilnani, S. (eds.) *Civil Society: History and Possibilities.* Cambridge University Press.

Clay, E. & Shaffer, B. 1984. Room for Manoeuvre: *An Exploration of Public Policy in Agricultural and Rural Development*, Heinemann, London.

COGTA 2009. Local Government Turnaround Strategy: Working Together, Turning the Tide in Local Government. Pretoria: Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

Cook, F. 2001. Evidence-based Policy Making in a Democracy: Exploring the Role of Policy Research In Conjunction with Politics and Public Opinion. *Paper presented at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*. San Francisco.

Cousins, T. 1999. Legal Entities in Land Reform: Lessons for Policy and Practice. *Paper presented at the Land & Agrarian Reform Conference LEAP.*

CSIR 2005. A Review of Communal Property Institutions.

Czerniewicz, L. 2011. Opening Scholarship. University of Cape Town.

Dhunpath, R. & Paterson, A. 2004. *The Interface Between Research and Policy Dialogue: Substantive or Symbolic?* [Online].

Available: http://www.ukzn.ac.za/joe/JoEP-DFs/joe%2033%20dhunpath.pdf [Accessed 21 July 2009].

DRDLR. 2010. *Briefing to the Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform* [Online]. Pretoria: Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. Available: http://www.pmg.org.za/files/docs/100303CPA-edit.pdf [Accessed 17 October 2011].

DTI. 2010. *The DTI Integrated Strategy on the Development and Promotion of Co-operatives: Promoting an Integrated Co-operative Sector in South Africa 2010–2020* [Online]. Pretoria: Department of Trade and Industry. Accessed on 1 February 2012 at: http://www.dhet.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=AuTvXguFqKg%3D&tabid=479&mid=1377

Edigheji, O. 2005. A Democratic Developmental State in Africa? A concept paper [Online]. Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies. Accessed on 21 July 2009 at: www.cps.org.za/cps%20pdf/RR105.pdf

EOS. 2011. Enabling Open Scholarship [Online]. Accessed on 8 November 2011 at: http://www.openscholarship.org/jcms/j_6/home

Esteves, A.; Motta, S. & Cox, L. 2009. 'Civil Society' Versus Social Movements. *Interface* [Online], 1. Accessed on 9 February 2012 at: http://www.interfacejournal.net/category/volumes/volume-12/

Friedman, S. & Chipkin, I. 2001. A Poor Voice? The Politics of Inequality in South Africa. *Research report no. 87.* Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies.

Greenberg, S. 2004. *The Landless People's Movement and the Failure of Post-apartheid Land Reform* [Online]. Durban: Centre for Civil Society, School of Development Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Accessed on 21 October 2011 at: http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/files/Greenberg%20LPM%20RR.pdf

Greenstein, R. 2003. *State, Civil Society and the Reconfiguration of Power in Post-apartheid South Africa* [Online]. Durban: Centre for Civil Society Accessed on 3 February 2012 at:http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/files/Greenstein%20report%208.pdf

Jacobs, P.; Aliber, M.; Hart, T. & O'donovan, M. 2008. Review of Rural Development: 15 Year Review of Economic and Social Sector Programmes. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Jeffrey, A. 2009. *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa*, Johannesburg and Cape Town, Jonathan Ball.

Landless People's Movement. 2011. *Revival of the Mass Struggle for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa* [Online]. Johannesburg: Abahlali baseMjondolo. Accessed on 9 February 2012 at: http://www.abahlali.org/node/8318

Marais, H. 2000. To the Edge: An Examination of South Africa's National AIDS Response 1994--1999. Pretoria: Centre for the Study of AIDS.

Mills, S. 2003. Michel Foucault. London: Routledge.

Moore, K. & Cisse, S. 2005. Social Capital And Improved NRM. In: Moore, K. (ed.) *Conflict, Social Capital and Managing Natural Resources: A West African Case Study*. Walingford: CABI Publishing.

Murray Li, T. 2007. *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development and the Practice of Politics*, Duke University Press.

National Planning Commission. 2011. *Diagnostic Overview* [Online]. Pretoria: Government of South Africa. Accessed on 25 October 2011 at: www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=147192

Oomen, B. 2005. *Chiefs in South Africa: Law, Power and Culture in the Post-apartheid Era*, Durban, University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Pieterse, E. 2003. Rhythms, Patterning and Articulations of Social Formations in South Africa. *Development Update*, 4, 101-136.

Putnam, R.; Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Reitzes, M. & White, F. 2010. *Positioning Civil Society Post-Polokwane: Coming to Terms with ANC Political Leadership Changes* [Online]. Johannesburg: Centre for Policy

Studies. Accessed on 11 February 2012 at: http://www.cps.org.za/cps%20pdf/RR124. pdf

Robinson, M. & Friedman, S. 2005. *Civil Society, Democratisation and Foreign Aid in Africa* [Online]. IDS, University of Sussex. Accessed on 9 February 2012at: http://www. ids.ac.uk/files/Dp383.pdf

Robinson, M. & White, G. 1997. *The Role of Civic Organisations in the Provision of Social Services: Towards Synergy* [Online]. Helsinki: The United Nations University, World Institute for Development Economics Research. Accessed on 9 February 2012 at: http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/ working-papers/previous/en_GB/rfa-37/

Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. 2001. *Community Organising and Development, 3rd Edition*, Boston and London, Allyn and Bacon.

Satgar, V. 2007. *The State of the South African Co-operative Sector* [Online]. Johannesburg: Cooperative and Policy Alternative Centre. Accessed on 1 February 2012 at: http://www.copac.org.za/files/State%20 of%20Coop%20Sector.pdf

Scoones, I. 1998. *Sustainable Rural Llivelihoods: A Framework for Analysis* [Online]. Sussex: Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex. Accessed on 18 March 2012 at: http://www.ids.ac.uk/files/dmfile/ Wp72.pdf

Shore, C. 2011. Espionage, Policy and the Art of Government: The British Secret Services and the War on Iraq. In: Shore, C., Wright, S. and Pero, D. *Policy Worlds: Anthropology and the Analysis of Contemporary Power*, Oxford: Berghahn: 116-3.

Wright, S. & Pero, D. (eds.) Policy Worlds: *Anthropology and Analysis of Contemporary Power*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Smith, T. 2008. *The Role of Ward Committees in Enhancing Participatory Local Governance and Development in South Africa: Evidence from Six Ward Committee Case Studies* [Online]. Cape Own: Community Law Centre. Accessed on 1 February 2012 at: http://tinyurl.com/9cxmkkz

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM 2007. A Settlement and Implementation Support Strategy for Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa. Pretoria: Commission on Restitution of Land Rights.

Sutton, R. 1999. The Policy Process: An overview. *Working Paper 118*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

UNDP. 1994. *Good Governance and Sustainable Human Development* [Online]. Rome: United Nations Development Programme. Accessed on 20 January 2012 at: http://mirror.undp.org/magnet/policy/chapter1.htm

Walzer, M. 1991. The Idea of Civil Society. Dissent, 38.

Woolcock, M. 1998. Social Capital and Economic Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis and Policy Framework. *Theory and Society*, 27, 151-208.

Zikode, S. 2006. *We are the Third Force* [Online]. Durban: Abahlali baseMjondolo. Accessed on 9 February 2012 at: http://www. abahlali.org/node/17