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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This opening chapter sets the stage by introducing the study. It gives a brief background of the study, discusses the statement of the problem and rationale for the study, and articulates the research questions and aims and objectives of the study. It will also give a brief overview of the research strategy and design, methodology used and limitations of the study.

Corporate social responsibility is the set of management practices that strives towards maximizing the positive impacts of a company's operations on the development and well-being of the society in which they operate. The spotlight is increasingly turning on the role of business in social development more so because society's needs have exceeded the capabilities of the government to fulfil them. Although the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) or corporate social initiatives (CSI) has been advocated for decades and is commonly employed by corporations globally, agreement on how CSR should be defined, implemented and evaluated remains a topic of debate. This gap is problematic for corporations because they are increasingly being required to align with societal norms while generating financial returns. It is against this backdrop that the aim of the study was to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of the Sanlam Foundation in the Western Cape, South Africa

1.2 BACKGROUND ON CSR INITIATIVES OF SANLAM FOUNDATION

The Sanlam Foundation was established in 2011 with the vision to contribute to the transformation of broader South African society through shared value initiatives that fulfill both societal and business needs. Thus the Sanlam Foundation is Sanlam's primary corporate social investment (CSI) conduit. It's main activities are aligned with Sanlam's core business objectives – investments that enhance their business while contributing to the positive change within the communities they serve. The Foundation's strategy has been focused on ensuring that their investments provide a meaningful contribution to alleviating poverty, promoting development, and creating employment in the poorer communities that they serve in.

Aligning their social issues with Sanlam's core capabilities of financial management and planning, Foundation's chief focus is on financial literacy and education. Enterprise development, and environmental awareness and protection programmes also form part of its key investments.

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

As rightly pointed out by Davids, Theron & Maphunye (2009), the private sector's role as an institutional player in social development has gained importance on the realization that the government alone cannot meet the developmental goals of society. According to Struwig (1994) in Davids et al. (2009, p.78), corporate social responsibility (CSR) is defined as "the voluntary behavior undertaken by organizations in the private sector which directly benefits the wider society of which these organizations are part. This behavior should be undertaken as a voluntary obligation which extends at least partially beyond the legal boundaries laid down by the wider society and which does not necessarily have a direct economic (or other benefit) to the organizations." While CSR is largely a voluntary concept, there is increasing pressure on organizations to make a positive contribution to the society (Davids et al., 2009). Thus the world over companies are facing greater pressure that they look beyond their own interests and stand by those of the societies in which they operate. It is apparent that organizations actions will have an effect not just upon itself but also upon the surrounding environment within which that organization operates.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Zerk (2006) has rightly drawn attention to the change in the nature of CSR debate from 'why?' be socially responsible to 'how?'. "In the last decade, directional signals point to increased corporate giving, increased corporate reporting on social responsibility initiatives, the establishment of a corporate social norm to do good, and an apparent transition from giving as an obligation to giving as a strategy" (Kotler & Lee, 2005, p. 4). Thus it can be noted that there is increased importance being accorded to the need of strategically managed CSR activities.

Project evaluation is becoming one of the important components of a well-run CSR programme. Yet according to Kotler and Lee (2005, p. 252) "of all best practices related to corporate social initiatives, evaluation strategies remains the least fully developed". It is a topic of major concern

among corporates as they struggle to have robust monitoring and evaluation structures not only within their organization but also within the programmes being supported.

CSR related performance assessment and rankings play an important role particularly in the case of South Africa, where a company's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) rating depends on the programme assessment data produced by them, thereby affecting their business opportunities. Idowu and Filho, (2009, p. 435) argue that "there is a need for context specific assessments that take into consideration the complexities of sustainable development at the local level. It may also require indicators that consider the extent to which companies integrate CSR into core business decision making and the extent to which they are able to approach sustainable development challenges in a collaborative manner". Thus, while we do understand the importance of having effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, we also understand that companies do face challenges in practically having it in place.

Against this background the study explored the nature of CSR practices of Sanlam Foundation in its CSR/CSI activities in Western Cape. The study contributes to our understanding of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of corporate social responsibility initiatives in the Western Cape, South Africa. The research findings can be of use to Sanlam Foundation and other organizations in their efforts to strengthen and sustain their CSR initiatives and making informed decisions on their CSR practices. Moreover the research may provide the groundwork for further research on CSR initiatives and particularly monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of organizations undertaking CSR activities in South Africa.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives?

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of the Sanlam Foundation in the Western Cape, South Africa.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study had the following objectives:

- To explore the extent to which the CSR initiatives of Sanlam Foundation are participatory.
- To examine the nature of monitoring and reporting mechanisms that have been put in place in the CSR initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation.
- To establish the views of the officials of the implementing partners of the Sanlam Foundation about the challenges associated with implementing CSR initiatives.
- To elicit suggestions on ways of enhancing the effectiveness of CSR initiatives.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by the social development theory. Social development is defined by Midgley (1995, p. 25), “as a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development”. Thus it emerges as a people centred process. “Social development is also defined as an approach to social welfare which offers an effective response to current social problems” (Midgley, 1995, p. 12). Thus we understand that the most distinguishing characteristic of social development is to link social and economic development efforts. According to Patel (2005, p. 203) the social development approach to social welfare “refers to policies and programmes that meet needs, promote rights, manage social problems, and facilitate the maximization of opportunities to achieve social wellbeing and the promotion of human empowerment and social inclusion”.

“While theory is of obvious importance in the field, social development primarily involves tangible programmes, policies and strategies for achieving specific goals” (Midgley, 1995, p.

102). There are three major types of social development strategies as discussed by Midgley (1995). Social development by individuals is based on the understanding that the welfare of the whole society is enhanced when individuals strive to promote their own welfare. Social development by communities is a communitarian approach that believes social development can best be promoted by people themselves working together harmoniously within their local communities and social development by governments is the statist approach to social development that believes that social development can best be promoted by governments, their specialized agencies, policy makers, planners and administrators (Midgley, 1995).

Patel (2005, p. 32) argues persuasively that the goals of social development are “to promote social and economic development, participation of socially excluded in development efforts, achieve tangible improvements in the quality of life of the people, promote human development and social well-being”. Patel (2005) and Midgley (1995) both are of the view that social development is a planned change process and does not occur on its own. Patel (2005) believes that social development can be achieved by employing different modes of intervention interweaving into each other. Thus it is understood that development issues are not the sole responsibility of the government, but can be achieved better as a tripartite coalition of institutional players in development namely, public sector, private sector and the civil society. In this light the role of the government should thus be seen as that of an enabler or facilitator. This understanding gave rise to the private sector social responsibility or corporate social responsibility (CSR). Even UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon identified the need to leverage the role of private sector towards achievement of the MDGs during the ‘UN Private Sector Forum held to promote the private sector role in achieving the MDGs’ in 2010 (Third UN Private sector forum, 2010).

Furthermore contemporary CSR is a concept whereby business corporations consider the interests of society by being accountable for the influence their activities have on customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, communities and other stakeholders as well as the environment. This obligation shows that organizations have to comply with legislation and voluntarily take initiatives to improve the well-being of their employees and their families as well as for the local community and society at large. Also implied in the debate is the idea that

the private sector is the dominant engine of growth – the principle creator of value and resources – and that it has an obligation to contribute to economic growth and opportunity – equitable and sustainable, thus linking economic growth and social well-being.

CSR activities are devised to accomplish a number of outcomes which include addressing issues ranging from health to public safety, to education, to community development, to protecting animal rights to sustaining the environment. These outcomes are consistent with the objectives of social development. Thus, it is evident that CSR initiatives contribute towards achievement of social developmental goals. In this study the CSR initiatives were benchmarked against the objectives and ideals of social development.

1.9 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STRATEGY AND DESIGN

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. Adopting the qualitative approach “allows you to identify issues from the perspective of your study participants and understand the meanings and interpretations that they give to behavior, events or objects” (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011, p.9). The study was exploratory in nature and a case study design was adopted. The study used semi structured interview schedules with open ended questions around the topic of the study. There were two separate interview schedules used for participants and for key informants as presented in Appendix (F) and Appendix (G). Purposive sampling was used to draw 8 participants from the implementing organizations of Sanlam Foundation. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is also possible the participants provided socially desirable responses in the belief that it would please the funders.

1.11 ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

The report is organized into chapters as follows:

Chapter one: This chapter introduces the study, gives a brief background of the study, and discusses the statement of the problem and rationale for the study, and articulates the research questions and aims and objectives of the study. It also gives a brief overview of the research strategy and design, methodology used and the limitations of the study.

Chapter two: This chapter reviews literature on corporate social responsibility from both global and South African perspectives.

Chapter three: This chapter discusses the methodology used in the study.

Chapter four: This chapter presents and discusses the findings that emerged from the study.

Chapter five: This chapter gives a summary of the main findings of the study, the conclusions that can be drawn from the study and the recommendations arising from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) applies to a company's attempts to bring about a positive social change through actions in addition to what is legally mandated. While CSR may have been practiced in different forms since the Victorian era, many writers believe it is a fairly new concept in South Africa. The post 1994 government of South Africa has acknowledged the role corporations can play to address the development challenges of the country as a whole. This chapter will review literature on CSR from both global and South African perspectives. The chapter will locate the beginning of CSR in South Africa and the current trends. This section also discusses how companies have started to realize that they must have a three tier approach to return on investment – Financial return, social impact and environmental sustainability. And finally, the chapter examines the challenges organizations face while implementing CSR initiatives. While many believe CSR is external to business, the chapter shows how it is integral to the business, operations and company's strategies. Thus the various aspects surrounding the practice are discussed below.

2.2 CONCEPT OF CSR

There is no standardized definition of corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) or corporate social initiatives (CSI) as the words are interchangeably used for defining the corporate's voluntary initiatives towards social development has been defined by Kotler and Lee (2005, p.3) as "a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources". The term community well-being as defined here includes human conditions as well as environmental issues. The key element of the mentioned definition is the word "voluntary". Thus it can be argued that this definition is about moving beyond business activities that are legally mandated or that are morally or ethically expected. Rather by a voluntary or a free willed commitment this definition refers to the pledge a business makes in electing and carrying out these practices. There is however no agreed definition of CSR and so this raises the questions as to what exactly can be considered to be CSR. One of the earliest and noteworthy definitions of CSR came from the

Committee for Economic Development (1971, p.11), in its publication *Social Responsibilities for Business Corporations* which defined CSR as “business functions by public consent and its basic purpose is to serve constructively the needs of society – to the satisfaction of society”. Thus definition regards the society and the public as the most important stakeholders.

The most longstanding and definitive voice on this topic is that of management professor Archie Carroll. Carroll (1999) presented CSR as a multi layered concept, which can be differentiated into four intertwined aspects – economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibilities. He presents these responsibilities as ensuing layers of a pyramid, in a way that true social responsibility requires meeting all four levels consecutively. First, consistent with the capitalist economic view, a corporation must provide goods and generate profits in order to continue to operate. The second layer is concerned with the legal aspects. Thus the corporations must function within the legal boundaries of the country it operates in. Carroll believed that operating within the legal framework was not enough and that corporations have an obligation to society to be ethical as well. Lastly at the top of the pyramid the definition focuses on societal impacts, which he referred to as discretionary responsibilities such as philanthropy. He believes business corporations have a societal responsibility and need to be good corporate citizens. The World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD) defines CSR as the management practices comprising of the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve their quality of life (Boeger, Murray & Villiers, 2008). This reflects the council’s focus on economic development. It can be argued further that the fact that CSR appears to be concerned with behavior that goes beyond legal requirements suggests that CSR adds a positive contribution to improving a company’s relationships with its workers, its consumers, the environment and the community. It goes beyond what law and regulations expect of companies.

At the core, the aim of CSR is to examine the role of business both in society and also to maximize the social impact of it’s activities (Ward et al., for UNDESA, 2007 as cited in Boeger et al. 2008). Thus it can be understood that CSR is concerned with the relationship between the business and the local society in which it operates and that it is about viewing business as a part of the society, not somehow separate from it. “In recent times pressure groups with widespread popular support have successfully targeted companies that have broken no laws but rather have

offended modern norms and standards, particularly with regard to human rights and employment practices, for instance the use of sweatshop labour by Nike and Gap in Indonesia and Cambodia, the campaign against Nestle's marketing of powdered milk in developing countries and criticism of Shell's disposal of the Brent Spar oil platform and conduct in Nigeria" (Hancock, 2005, p.p.6-7). Thus it can be concluded that such campaigns reflect a sharp increase in the expectation about the role of companies in society and the diminishing faith or expectation from the governments to be able to tackle such problems. It can also be argued that society's needs have exceeded the capabilities of the government and thus the increased role and responsibility of the corporates to handle such issues. Another force at the heart of the CSR debate is that organizations must transition from a state of mere compliance to a mode of engagement, from harm minimization to value creation (Novak, 1996). "On top of that an entirely new area is the increasing governance vacuum on the global level, where institutions such as the UN, the EU, and others now increasingly involve private, most notably corporate, actors in addressing the most urgent social issues of our time" (Boeger et. al. 2008, p.41). It cannot be ignored that CSR has immense potential to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the more recent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Due to the limited amount of funding and reach of the government, further funding and involvement of a range of stakeholders is required to accelerate the achievement of these internationally recognized developmental goals. In this scenario, CSR holds tremendous potential to synergize and work towards the achievement of the MDGs & SDGs. Thus it can be concluded that though business corporations cannot solve world problems, but it can be assumed that it is in their power either to ameliorate or aggravate these problems through the manner in which they conduct their operations. This capacity of business corporations has now been openly identified and accepted. It also emerges that it has been openly accepted that various sectors of the society need to be involved in addressing social issues. "Corporate social responsibility is defined as the ongoing commitment by businesses to behave ethically and contribute to economic development, while improving the quality of life of its employees and that of the community within which it operates as well as society at large" (ICCA 2005, cited in Boeger et. al, 2008, p.52). Thus it can be understood that CSR is the responsibility of a company for the totality of its impact and that the business contribution to society is inseparable from its profit earning activities. Davis (1960, p. 70) set forth his definition of social responsibility by arguing that it refers to "businessmen's decisions and actions taken for reasons

atleast partially beyond the firm's direct economic or technical interest". Furthermore Davis (2006) persuasively argues that some socially responsible business decisions have a good chance of having important implications for bringing long run economic gain to the firm, thus paying it back for its socially responsible outlook. "The so called business case for CSR has generated a huge amount of research, and a number of reports and articles have appeared which purport to demonstrate that companies which adopt socially responsible policies are better run, more attractive to investors, employees and consumers, more efficient and therefore more profitable" (Zerk, 2006, p.33). As noted in many definitions of CSR this involves corporations taking a broader perspective of company performance than merely concentrating on the short term maximization of shareholder value while ignoring everything else. It suggests that a corporate executive has a social responsibility in his capacity as a businessman. "Even the most vehement opponents of CSR admit that certain voluntary initiatives to meet the interests of groups beyond immediate owners of the firm can have a long term positive impact for owners themselves" (Hennigfield, Pohl & Tolhurst, 2006, p. 11).

The stakeholder theory is considered to be one of the main drivers of CSR and is probably the most popular and influential theory to emerge in the CSR area (Stark, 1994, cited in Hennigfield et al., 2006). The assertion that businesses must operate in the interest of a range of their stakeholders and not in the interests of their shareholders alone is the base of the stakeholder theory. "As to who or what constitutes a stakeholder, Freeman's original definition is perhaps the most widely used: A stakeholder in an organization is....any group or individual who can affect or is affected by, the achievement of the organization's objectives" (Hennigfield et al., 2006, p.16). Stakeholders here include consumers, employees, shareholders, suppliers, NGOs, governments and business partners - all those that have a "stake" in a company's operations. Thus stakeholders of a corporation can be either an individual or a group which directly or indirectly is either harmed by, or could benefit from the operations of the corporation. The purpose of the organization is thus to create value for its stakeholders. The Brent Spar Oil disposal at sea was clearly a case of Shell disregarding the interests and involvement of stakeholders (Lindgreen, Kotler, Vanhamme & Maon, 2012). It was infact a case of deliberate exclusion of stakeholders. Though ultimately Shell was pressurized to consider various stakeholder interests, had that been considered right from the beginning, it would have been saved from the substantial damage that the company suffered. This case thus highlights the fact

that the various stakeholders like the government, the media and the general public played in reversal of Shells decision of deep sea disposal of Brent spar oil rig. “This observation leads to another implication for businesses which operate on an international level. Even operations or procedures which are technically or legally limited to one country can easily gain an international dimension and involve stakeholders abroad, which in turn can enact significant pressure on multinational businesses” (Lindgreen et al., 2012, p.71). It also highlights that the stakeholders interests cannot be considered in isolation. Thus a dynamic and network

2.3 OVERVIEW OF CSR

Hancock (2005) argues that the traditions of corporate philanthropy date back to the Victorian era with activities of business families like Cadburys, Rowntree and Lever brothers who sought to improve their employees’ standards of living as well as enhancing the communities in which they lived by providing decent housing, community facilities and libraries. Trends and statistics are evidence to the fact that more and more organizations are moving from giving as an obligation to adopting giving as a strategy. Hess, Rogovsky & Dunfee (as cited in Kotler and Lee, 2005, p.8) suggest that “another force driving this shift is the new moral marketplace factor, creating an increased importance of perceived corporate morality in choices made by consumers, investors and employees. They point to several examples of marketplace morality, including investors choosing socially screened investment funds, consumers boycotting Shell Oil because of its decision to sink the Brent Spar oil rig and employees desire to work for socially responsible firms”. Thus consumers are beginning to reward or punish companies that they believe are either socially responsible or irresponsible. Catering to more informed and morally conscious customer base puts further pressure on companies to act morally. The shrinking role of governments can be accorded as one of the key reasons for the growth of CSR in the last decade in most industrialized democracies. This holds true for the birthplace of CSR, the US, where traditionally the state has assumed far less responsibility for social issues and where corporations are expected to cater to social demands (Boeger et. al, 2008). Thus it can be argued that the contemporary CSR picks up social issues as a result of governments gradually distancing itself from the administering these issues. Furthermore Porter and Kramer (as cited in Hennigfield et al., 2006, p.13) argue that “companies can do certain jobs better than governments, because they

have the skills for specialized tasks, meaning that strategic philanthropy by companies would also contribute to making society competitive in a far more effective manner than government money could". Thus it emerges that development issues are not the sole responsibility of the government, but can be achieved better as a collaborative partnership of institutional players in development namely, public sector, private sector and the civil society.

"CSR activities have been characterized as running in developed markets such as Canada, the United States and Western Europe, while in other parts of the world, including Central and South America, it has been characterized as walking" (Haslam, 2004, cited in Louche et. al. 2010, p.199). Thus, the degree of understanding and adoption of CSR throughout the global marketplace is varied and could depend on the rewards or penalties for companies engaging or not engaging in CSR. Zerk (2006, p. 7) argues that "the underlying philosophy that favours 'voluntary' approach to CSR is that the drivers for companies to act ethically and to do good, above and beyond minimum legal requirements, should come primarily from employees, investors, consumers and the general public, rather than from further governmental intervention". Proponents of the voluntary approach believe that it encourages best practice and the urge to continuously improve by the companies by self-generated commitment (Picciotto, 2003, cited in Boeger et al., 2008). However, it can be argued that "voluntary approaches are generally implemented, not out of altruism, but in response to consumer and community pressures, industry peer pressure, competitive pressures or the threat of new regulations or taxes" (Haufler, 2001 as cited in Boeger et al., 2008, p. 98). This is particularly true in places where the state indirectly controls what companies must do in the field of CSI through the state lead measures put in place. Thus in 2013, in South Africa, companies that cited 'licence to operate obligations' as their main driver, spent three times more than those motivated by any other driver (Trialogue, 2013). Jones (1999) also highlights the importance of the national socio cultural environment and the level of economic development as important variables influencing CSR understanding and practices. Thus it can be argued that the conceptions, perceptions, practices and the extent of CSR in the context of a developing country could be different from those in a developed country. Moreover, varying cultural and legal traditions predictably mean that no two states will approach CSR related issues in exactly the same way. It is also a matter of concern for CSR to note how differently big corporations behave in developed countries like USA and the way they break rules in developing countries like South Africa or India. For instance the Shell oil spills in

Nigeria and the Coca cola controversy of creating acute water shortages by extracting excessive ground water and creating water pollution in several districts of India. This brings us to the point that a corporate may behave responsibly in certain countries with highly regulated environments whereas will take undue advantage of weak rules and regulations in certain developing countries thus in reality complying just as a formality and not practicing what they preach.

While most countries follow the voluntary approach to CSR, in 2014, India has become the first country to write CSR into legislation thus forcing companies to make social contributions. It is mandatory for companies with an average profit of atleast 50 million rupees over a period of three years, to spend atleast 2% of their average profits each year towards CSR activities. This is born out of the fact that while following the voluntary approach, organization have failed to take the responsibility of the real cost of their functioning in the society. This legislation emerges out of the necessity to take the country on a path of equitable and sustainable growth. The government has recommended high priority areas in line with the MDGs where companies can direct their CSR spending. While CSR is not new to India and we have seen companies like Tata and Birla engaging in social activities since time immemorial, this new mandate will definitely bring more companies to take it to the next level or pulling together what they are already doing. “To look at it positively; this will lead to an inflow of more than \$2 million in the social sector in India by bringing about 8000-10000 companies under this Companies Act 2013 in the first year” (Impact of CSR mandate on Indian companies, 2014).

Yet, critics warn that this rule could fail by enforcing corporate entities to take up only certain activities for their CSR spend and ignoring the sustainability of a CSR activity (Kapoor, 2013 cited in Impact of CSR mandate on Indian companies). Hotly debated, business leaders are split over the effectiveness of this strategy. Thus it can be argued that the success of this new move will finally boil down to how seriously, responsibly and effectively companies manage their CSR spends.

Each corporate has their own set of ideas about undertaking CSR and hence the focus areas differ which also leads to a difference in the approach taken by each company towards achieving their social goals. An effective CSR agenda depends on a clear understanding of the nature of business corporation itself (Boeger et al. 2008). The modern day CSI followed by companies is to align their CSI activities with the company’s activities, for example: A bank or an insurance company

undertaking projects on financial literacy amongst the rural poor. Implementing CSR does have potential benefits for the implementing organization like increased sales and customer loyalty and enhanced brand image and reputation to name a few. The increase in the fund flow from the corporate sector has also made the recipient organizations to heave a sigh of relief.

“Put into practice, CSR is the practical steps developed out of a company’s set of values, beliefs and norms – namely its corporate culture. To make a meaningful contribution and have an effective approach to CSR, companies need to understand that CSR is inextricably linked to the company’s corporate culture” (Hennigfield et. al., 2006, p.52). Thus the cultural make-up of the firm is also an important internal factor to affect CSR. Firm culture is defined as the “personality or feel” which influences behavior of the firm (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1991, p.46). Thus the companies not only need to incorporate the social approach both into the policies and strategies of the company but also need to understand their cultural make up. Hancock (2005, p. 1) argues that “the largest and most powerful global corporations now embrace corporate social responsibility as a core business principle”. Hence it needs to become a part of the DNA of the organization. Thus organizations are facing the challenge of transforming from within. “Furthermore following the Enron, Anderson and Worldcom scandals, there is a greater recognition by businesses that CSR can help restore public trust in the corporate world” (Hancock, 2005, p.7). Thus it can be understood that companies are resorting to CSR as a tool for damage control to make up for their tarnished image for example in the case of Walmart. Walmart was accused of engaging in child labour in two of their factories in Bangladesh following which they came up with an extensive CSR report covering people, planet and profit based primarily on gender equality and diverse workforce which did work in their favour. This gives rise further to the topic of influence that CSR initiatives can have on consumer’s perception of the products and companies by taking into account consumers’ perception of the socially responsible nature of the brand. Increased competition in markets has sealed the possibility of brand differentiation based on traditional attributes such as price and quality (Aaker 2005, cited in Louche, Idowu & Filho, 2010); in this context CSR has proved to be a very effective positioning strategy giving the brand symbolic value and becoming an attribute of competitive differentiation (Kotler & Lee, 2005). Thus it can be argued that companies are becoming increasingly interested in strategically linking their brands to social causes as they seek to generate a socially responsible brand image. “Strategic CSR promotes a long term vision

of business accountability to a wide range of stakeholders, including investors, employees, customers and community members” (Snider et al. 2003, cited in Louche et al. 2010, p. 200).

2.4 TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

The triple bottom line (TBL) concept emphasizes the fact that financial bottom line is an inadequate evaluation and that organizations create value in multiple dimensions (Elkington, 1997). The framing of sustainability as a goal for business is encapsulated most completely in the notion of a ‘triple bottom line’ (TBL), a term coined by John Elkington, the director of the Sustainability Strategy Consultancy (Boeger et al. 2008). His view of TBL is that businesses have extended goal set adding environmental and social value and not just to focus on adding economic value (Elkington, 1998, cited in Boeger et al., 2008). “The working group of the ISO COPOLCO noted in its Final Report that ‘all definitions of CSR seem to revolve around the concept of the ‘triple bottom line’ (TBL), which is a framework for measuring and reporting corporate performance against economic, social and environmental parameters” (Villiers, 2008, p.p. 92-93). Savitz & Weber (2006) assert that companies pursuing growth in the triple bottom line tend to display superior stock market performance. There is ample evidence to suggest that shareholders have started realizing that it is important for companies to demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility and not just to focus on maximizing their returns. Thus businesses need to report their success on their impact on social environments in which they operate and not only on financial parameters. Company’s reports are thus shifting focus from merely quantifying spends to the long run impact of investments (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Thus it can be understood that sustainability in its broader sense is about interdependence. A sustainable corporation is one that creates profit for its shareholders while protecting the environment and improving the lives of those with whom it interacts. Thus the primary reason for the existence of business enterprise is to create value. Traditionally the concept of value was viewed narrowly as financial value for shareholders. This has evolved into the notion of value in terms of the triple bottom line: social, economic and environmental performance. This is also reinforced in the King III Report of corporate governance. “Today commentators talk of the triple context in which companies operate or simply the ‘context’, which embraces all three aspects – people, profit and planet” (King III, 2009, p.31).

Thus it can be argued that businesses are being forced to respond to social, economic and environmental changes around them as companies are being held accountable not only for their own operations but also of their suppliers, communities where they are located and the people who use their products. .

2.5 SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT FOR CSR

The painful and complex history of South Africa has significant influence in the designing and implementation of its CSR programmes. Davids et al. (2009, p.76) argue that “corporate social responsibility is a fairly new concept in South Africa”. A drive towards greater corporate social responsibility developed in 1976 after the Soweto uprisings resulting in, for good measure the acceptance of codes of employment practice by companies. The establishment of the Urban Foundation in 1977 gave further impetus to the growth and formal recognition of Black trade union movement in 1979 and the acceptance of the Sullivan Code in 1976 by American companies. The purpose of the Global Sullivan Principles was to aid the social upliftment of the disadvantaged communities in South Africa to end the apartheid regime (Davids et al., 2009). Thus the history of CSI in South Africa dates back to the 1970s during the time of Apartheid, when businesses recognized that the poor living conditions of the Black community were a hindrance to the social and economic development of the country as a whole. As a business response to this key challenge facing the country, the Urban Foundation was established with a goal to improve the quality of life of the Black communities. The field of CSI has grown aggressively since then in South Africa. More companies are engaging more than ever before in managing and integrating CSI into their businesses.

CSR in South Africa has increased over the years, with involvement in the areas of education, health and HIV/AIDS, social and community development, food security and agriculture, and the environment (Triologue, 2010). South Africans prefer to use the term Corporate social investment as against the term corporate social responsibility as they believe that the term ‘Responsibility’ implies obligation and hence prefer the term ‘Investment’ (Fig, 2002, cited in Davids et al. 2009). However, it can be argued that by using the term corporate social investment South Africans try to imply that they were going beyond their responsibility of paying tax, portraying that it is an investment in the community (Hamman 2009, cited in Idowu & Filho, 2009).

In order to examine the role of the board of directors in South African firms, the King Committee on Corporate Governance was established in 1993. Unlike other similar initiatives in various other countries, the first King report surpassed the financial and regulatory concerns to accommodate propositions such as good financial, social, ethical and environmental practice in various stakeholders' interests. The King II report went a step further highlighting the triple bottom line. It also provides recommendations to companies on how to respond with a focus on triple bottom line. It also espouses that South African businesses must display willingness for good governance in order to be able to attract global investors. Though these recommendations are not legally binding, non-adherence calls for an explanation for omissions. Thus it can be argued that the governance codes are non-legislative and are based on principles and practices. It suggests that leaders should direct the company to achieve sustainable economic, social and environmental performance thus focusing on the triple bottom line as against just the financial achievements.

The Sullivan Principles are considered as the “turning point” in the “vocabulary” of CSR in South Africa and described as a set of principles targeting nondiscrimination at workplace (Alperson, 1995 cited in Hamman 2009). Another development was the adoption of the King II code in part as a listing requirement by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Following the trends set by other stock exchanges around the world, the JSE established a Social Responsibility Index in 2004 with an aim to identify companies incorporating the principles of triple bottom line within their businesses (Njenga & Smit, 2007).

The Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Act of 2003 is considered to have a major influence in shaping the character of CSI in South Africa. The South African Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has developed a balanced generic scorecard to measure the extent to which enterprises contribute to BBBEE (Njenga & Smit, 2007).

Table 1: Broad based black economic empowerment – balanced generic scorecard

Code	Element	Weighting
100	Ownership (measures effective ownership of enterprises by black people)	20 points
200	Management control (measures effective control of enterprises by black people)	10 points
300	Employment Equity (measures initiatives to achieve equity in the workplace)	15 points
400	Skills development (measures the extent to which employers carry out initiatives designed to develop the competencies of black employees)	15 points
500	Preferential procurement (measures the extent to which enterprises buy goods and services from BEE-compliant suppliers as well as black owned entities)	20 points
600	Enterprise development (measures the extent to which enterprises carry out initiatives contributing to enterprise development)	15 points
700	Socio economic development (measures the extent to which enterprises carry out initiatives contributing to socio economic development)	5 points
TOTAL		100 points

The table indicates that forcing corporates to comply with BEE and incorporate the interests of all stakeholders is an effort to address the social and economic inequalities born out of the Apartheid era. Thus the core of the BEE strategy remains an effort to transfer ownership of productive assets to black South Africans, and ensuring that a degree of management of these assets is controlled by black people. Accordingly, ownership and management control represents the top tiers of the BEE Code of Good Practice, carrying 20% and 10 % weightings respectively. Noncompliance with the BEE scorecard can result in negative ratings thereby creating difficulties in the company's operations in the country. "CSI falls under socio economic development as one of the seven measurable aspects of BBBEE" (Njenga & Smit, 2007, p. 11).

Furthermore the introduction of the 2007 Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Codes of Good Practice which requires companies to allocate 1% of their net profit after tax (NPAT) on socio economic development spawned companies to go beyond that which was required by law and allocating an average of 1.3% of NPAT in 2009-10 financial year (Trialogue, 2010). This increased to 1.4% (of NPAT) in the year 2013 (Trialogue, 2013). Thus in the case of South Africa, it can be argued that there is no clear distinction between voluntary business initiatives and state led interventions. Although participation is voluntary, a business risks its reputation by not complying. It can be argued that BEE has been adopted atleast publicly, by most companies as a component of CSR and is characterized by some business leaders as being in their enlightened self-interest (Hamman, 2009, cited in Idowu & Filho, 2009, p. 458). It is evident that CSI in South Africa, is now framed by a company's core business, national priorities and industry charters. However, while CSI has contributed a great deal towards social development in South Africa, it can be argued that it still focuses on the company's interests.

“Total Corporate social investments expenditure has risen to R.7.8 billion in 2013, a growth of 8% when adjusted for inflation” (Trialogue, 2013, p.36). The education sector received an average of 43% of CSI budgets, with the next closest sector, social and community development, garnering an average of 15% of CSI spend (Trialogue, 2013, p. 36).

2.6 CHALLENGES FACED BY ORGANISATIONS IMPLEMENTING CSR

CSR has faced challenges at all stages and in all forms. The major current challenges to doing good as faced by managers and programme planners as pointed out by Kotler & Lee (2005, p.18) are – “decisions related to choosing a social issue, selecting an initiative to support this issue, developing and implementing programme plans, and evaluating outcomes”.

CSI is no longer viewed as something that is peripheral to business whereas it has become an integral part of it. Though most common reporting patterns of CSI focus on the outputs, the general public now seeks an answer to the more important question on the impact of the funding (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Thus while companies find it much easier to report on project outputs, on the impressive amounts that they have spent on a particular project and how the social spend measures up against the company's pre/post tax profit, it is a different story to report on long term value added to communities as a result of their initiatives. One of the challenges that most

CSI practitioners face is the poor record keeping and reporting structures of smaller or needier NGOs, consequently making it difficult to take proper and timely decisions (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Thus the lack of consistent record keeping poses a serious challenge in the measurement of impact. It is little wonder therefore that many corporates often voice their concerns about the lack of professionalism and the poor quality of reporting that characterize many NGOs. “In their quest for professional implementation and reporting on projects many CSI initiatives provide more funding for the more established national NGOs that have systems in place to provide the kind of accountability demanded by the corporates. As a result less funding is channeled to the smaller initiatives that are much closer to the ground and are often formed in response to real and felt needs” (Njenga & Smit, 2007, p. 43). The other big challenge that companies face is designing sound systems for monitoring and evaluation of their CSI initiatives. Monitoring and evaluation practices facilitate impact assessment and help in identifying relevant issues timely so as to be able to address them better. Having effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can be used as a tool to empower the stakeholders better besides building their capacities.

While the emergence of a more regulated operating environment in South Africa has worked positively to an extent by forcing companies to become involved in social investment, on the downside it can be argued that this has led companies to channel money to supply driven social investment without reflecting on its long term consequences. “The experience, indicates that there are many companies that continuously look for means to beat the system and to score highly on their BEE scorecards while attempting to contribute as little as possible” (Njenga & Smit, 2007, pp. 122-123). Thus it can be argued that some companies pursue CSR objectives for covet and selfish motives rather than for the good of the societies they operate in. The issue of transparency is also of great concern.

The next big challenge for many companies is the incremental improvement their projects have. Consistent but slow improvement. Most CSR typically means setting up of policy, programmes, targets, monitoring, auditing and reporting. However the problem comes in when you compare the scale of the problems and the size of the efforts being put in. It also remains a topic of debate as to whether the really substantive issues can be addressed by CSR initiatives.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The huge role of businesses in influencing the income inequalities, in improving levels of education, healthcare and in caring for the planet cannot be ignored. Companies that understand the need for more sustainable ways to operate and grow; those that acknowledge the broader responsibilities society now demands from business are the ones considered visionary (Trialogue, 2008). There is enough evidence to suggest that the focus is now shifting from quantifying company's CSR spend to measuring how sustainable that investment is. Njenga & Smit (2007, p.138) further argue that "the key to business achievement will not lie in the ability to foretell and control the future, but more importantly in building dynamic CSI practices which, while remaining connected to core business, will be socially significant". It is evident from CSR practices that it has both a social component as well as a business component (Carroll, 2007). Most corporate social initiatives fall within one of the following distinct categories: cause promotions, cause related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate philanthropy, community volunteering and socially responsible business practices (Kotler & Lee, 2005). In the last decade, there has been increasing evidence of the fact that companies have moved beyond accepting CSR as an obligation to strategically managing their giving. Thus it can be noted that there is increased importance being accorded to the need of strategically managed CSR activities. Striking a balance between the social initiative and the values of the brand can make a strategic CSR initiative work as a strong brand building tool. Corporate social responsibility has gone mainstream; there is an increased awareness among companies that their ability to establish trust with a new generation of consumers and citizens depends on the perception people hold of the companies role in the society. CSR has become a strong and indispensable part of corporations.

In spite of the common presupposition that CSR is primarily about discretionary initiatives and market based drivers, national legislation plays a vital role in development of South Africa's CSR agenda. Thus it can be argued that in a country like South Africa, CSR cannot be defined as a purely voluntary activity as it is often done in the context of certain other countries and regions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research methods used in the study. Specifically it focuses on the research approach adopted, research design used, how the study population was chosen, the sampling procedure employed, the data collection and data analysis process adopted. Finally it also discusses the ethical considerations and the issues of trustworthiness that guided the study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach was appropriate for the study as it helps in understanding the meaning participants attach to events, situations, experiences, and actions they are involved with or engage in (Maxwell, 2013). Qualitative research enables researchers “to study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3). Bryman (2008) insists that qualitative research is adopted when words are to be given more importance than mere quantification in the data collection and analysis process. For Creswell (2009) a qualitative research facilitates establishing the meaning of the phenomena from the participants’ point of view. However qualitative research has been criticized for being too subjective in terms of heavily relying on the researcher’s point of view of what is important or significant and the rapport that the researcher establishes with the interviewee (Bryman, 2008).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Bryman (2008, p.31), “a research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data”. A case study design was used in this study. According to Yin (2003), a case study design is recommended when the study pays particular attention to ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions. For Creswell (2009, p13), “case studies are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals”.

Thus a case study design enables one to conduct an in depth study of a particular situation in order to understand it better. The study was exploratory in nature. However according to Yin (2009) exploratory case studies have a notorious reputation as they may follow intuitive paths often considered as disorganized and haphazard by many.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION

“Population is basically the universe of units from which the sample is selected” (Bryman, 2008, p. 168). The study population consisted of project managers in the implementing partners of Sanlam Foundation in the Western Cape and key informants drawn from the senior officials of the Sanlam Foundation. Sanlam Foundation is Sanlam’s Corporate Social Investment arm and spearheads Sanlam’s corporate social and environmental investment activities. They achieve this through shared value initiatives that fulfill the needs of both the society and the business, with the intention to achieve sustained, long term positive impacts. Since the study was based in Cape Town and Sanlam Foundation was also based in Cape Town, the researcher arranged to meet with the officials of Sanlam Foundation where a discussion on what the study was broadly concerned with was held. Following this a formal approval was obtained from Sanlam Foundation to go ahead with the study.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Purposive sampling was used to select a sample of eight participants for the study. Participants were selected based on their availability, willingness and ability to answer the questions relevant to the study. In purposive sampling, “researcher samples on the basis of wanting to interview people who are relevant to the research questions” (Bryman, 2008, p. 458). Purposive sampling also facilitates choosing of sample on the basis of known characteristics which could be social, demographic or could relate to factors like experience, behavior, roles etc. relevant to the research topic (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005). This type of sampling enables choosing members of a sample with a ‘purpose’ to represent a location or type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005). One project manager from each of the implementing partners was chosen. The benchmark for their selection was that they were appointed project managers as per the protocol and been involved with the implementation, and monitoring of the projects with Sanlam Foundation. The participants came from different organizations that Sanlam Foundation works

with and brought diverse responses and experiences from their field of work. Purposive sampling was also used to select two key informants from the senior officials of Sanlam Foundation who are instrumental in making important decisions pertaining to CSI activities. The key informants were selected based on the value they would add to the study and their availability and willingness.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The study used semi structured interview schedules with open ended questions around the topic of the study. This allowed the researcher the freedom to make changes to questions in response to the progress of the interview. Two separate interview schedules were used for participants and key informants (*see Appendix F*). A semi structured interview schedule is considered flexible as it allows the interviewer to ask questions out of the guide as well while picking up points of interest and trying to probe more on the interviewees' responses (Bryman, 2008). This ensures room for clarification of views.

3.8 PRE TESTING

Pre testing of the research instrument is an important step to ensure authenticity as it helps to resolve any inconsistencies and can test run the flow of the questions and how they are being understood by the subjects (Silverman, 2010). This step ensures that the questions are being correctly understood by the participants and yielding relevant information for the study. A pre test was conducted prior to commencing the study on two participants and a key informant who were not a part of the final study. It was noticed that many questions needed further explanation to participants and key informants. The necessary changes were then made to the semi structured interview schedules.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

“The data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi structured observations and interviews, documents and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information” (Creswell, 2009, p. 178). The data was collected using face to face interviews. Interviews lasted between 20-45

minutes. All interviews were recorded using audio recorder and later transcribed. “Tape recorded interviews, like texts and tapes of naturally occurring action, allow you to return to your data in their original form as often as you wish” (Silverman, 2010, p.225). Recording and transcribing interviews is important for detailed analysis required in qualitative research and to ensure that responses are captured in their original form (Bryman, 2008).

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

“Data analysis involves collecting open ended data, based on asking general questions and developing an analysis from the information supplied by participants” (Creswell, 2009, p.184). This involves getting deeper into the collected data to be able to make sense and interpret the data. According to Neuman (1994, p. 324), “a qualitative researcher interprets data by giving them meaning, translating them, or making them understandable”.

In this study data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. Upon completion of the interviews the data was transcribed to enable analysis. This stage involves reading each phrase, sentence and paragraph in fine detail and deciding ‘what is this about?’ and which theme it will apply to” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). This leads to familiarization with the data. Raw data was then organized into conceptual categories and themes were created which were used to analyze data. The major themes that emerged from the data were used to examine and make sense of the findings. Data was then read, reread, to reflect on what is read and make comparisons based on logic and judgement (Neuman, 1997). Finally, conclusions were drawn and a final evaluation of the research findings was done.

3.11 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Trustworthiness of the research is concerned with: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The participants were encouraged to share honest and detailed responses and this was done by striking a rapport with them before the interviews commenced. However there was no guarantee that their responses were honest and unbiased.

3.11.1 Credibility

“Credibility refers to the degree to which findings, and by implication the methods that are used to generate the findings, can be trusted” (Rossouw, 2003 as cited in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011, p.428). Participants’ responses were cross checked with them while interpreting its meaning. This ensured the correct meaning of what was said was being recorded.

3.11.2 Transferability

“Transferability is the external validity and refers to the degree or extent to which the findings of the research data may be transferred to other groups other than the original study” (De Vos, et al., 2002, p.352). A detailed account of the methodology is provided to ensure transferability and for others wishing to conduct a similar study.

3.11.3 Dependability

“Dependability is related to reliability and is the criterion for consistency” (Krefting, 1991, p.217). A detailed description of the data analysis procedures followed is provided to ensure dependability. A detailed account of how the findings have been arrived at is given in the analysis. The collected data was transcribed and later cross checked for spelling and accuracy before starting with the analysis.

3.11.4 Confirmability

“Confirmability refers to the objectivity or neutrality of the research” (De Vos et al., 2002, p. 352). This means that no prejudice is evident in the research process and results. It is assured that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher thus maintaining confirmability.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations ensure not violating people’s rights while carrying out the research (Henning, Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Research involves synergy with other people, beings and collecting data and information from them and has potential for conflict of interests (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Since social research involves to a certain extent getting into the private space of the participants in order to obtain information for the study it is important to understand and

follow the proper conduct of inquiry. The following is a summary of some of the most important ethical considerations that guided the study:

3.12.1 Voluntary participation and informed consent

According to Rubin and Babbie (2005), voluntary participation and informed consent are obtained when all participants are fully aware of what they are part of, must be informed of the ramifications of the study and must consent to be a part of it without being forced. Participants were informed that their participation is completely voluntary (*see Appendix A & C*) and that they must not expect any special rewards or benefits for being a part of the study. They were informed that they could opt out of the study at any given time without prejudice.

The study commenced only after the participants and key informants consented by signing the consent forms for participating in the study and audio taping of the interviews. The consent forms and information sheet provided full information about the features and nature of the study that affected their decisions to participate.

3.12.2 No harm to the participants

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), social research must never injure the participants irrespective of whether they participate voluntarily or not and this involves revealing all relevant information that could embarrass or endanger their home life, friendships, jobs and so forth. The researcher therefore ensured that the study did not expose the participants to any kind of physical injury, psychological stress or abuse or loss of self-esteem as a result of participating in the study. Interviews were conducted in safe environments and locations most convenient to the participants.

3.12.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity is maintained when the researcher does not link responses with a respondent and confidentiality is maintained when a researcher promises not to publicly identify given person's responses (Rubin & Babbie, 2005). Accordingly the participants' identities were protected at all stages of the research and the responses given are not linked to specific individuals and this was conveyed to them before commencing the study. To further ensure anonymity and confidentiality, the names of the organisations they work for are not included in the study.

Records of the interview and shared information will be securely kept at all times and only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to this data. Also the tapes and interview schedules will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Participants were informed of this.

3.12.3 Deception

“Deception and covert research may increase mistrust and cynicism, and diminish public respect for social research” (Neuman, 1997, p. 449). Thus there was no misrepresentation of any information or researcher’s actions to participants. Participants and key informants were not told half-truths or lies in order to encourage their participation or to obtain certain information.

3.12.4 Feedback to participants

An electronic copy of the research findings emanating from the study shall be shared with the participants.

3.12.5 Ethics clearance

The research was carried out after receiving the ethics clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical). (*See Appendix G*).

3.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is quite possible that the responses from participants could have been biased or based on personal views thereby affecting the outcomes of the study. It is also possible that the participants provided socially desirable responses as against the true and honest responses. There was no means of verifying the truthfulness and authenticity of the data being shared by the respondents. Participants might have been concerned about sharing any negative responses for the fear of facing any unfavorable consequences in the future.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings emanating from the study. The central themes emerging from the findings are discussed according to the research objectives. The aim of the study was to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of the Sanlam Foundation in the Western Cape, South Africa. The chapter begins with a brief discussion about the profile of the participants and the key informants.

4.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

There were 5 men and 3 women who participated in the study thus ensuring a fair mix of men and women. The time they had spent with the organization ranged between 6 months to 16 years so that the period was long enough spent for them to be able to answer the questions pertaining to the study.

4.3 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CSR INITIATIVES OF SANLAM FOUNDATION ARE PARTICIPATORY

The first objective of the study sought to explore the extent to which the CSR initiatives of Sanlam Foundation were participatory. This involved asking partners their involvement in identification of the need and designing of the programme and in finalizing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms pertaining to the project. Other questions involved asking how responsive Sanlam Foundation was to their programme needs. Under this objective the following themes emerged:

4.3.1 Partnering with ongoing projects

Most participants explained that they had complete involvement in the identification of the need and designing of the programme. This is because these projects were already in existence when Sanlam Foundation decided to join and fund the projects. So the identification of the need and designing of the programme was done solely by the partner organization and that Sanlam

Foundation had joined them mid-way. They believed Sanlam Foundation did foresee that their projects could serve to fulfill their objectives and hence decided to partner with them.

Referring to their role in the identification of the need and designing of the programme one participant mentioned that:

“We had complete identification, we identified it in the beginning ourselves and the programme was designed by our organization”

Another participant said:

“So the drive I would say came from our organization and Sanlam looked at the proposal and saw that it was in line with their goals”.

These views were corroborated by one of the key informants who noted that:

“We will put together our objectives right at the beginning, we would then sit with the service providers and negotiate how best to reach those objectives. It’s very much around how do we collaborate rather than how do we direct, tell and instruct. Before, as well as during, as well as after”

One of the participants mentioned that the need and the design of the programme were jointly identified along with Sanlam Foundation. So it was a need identified and programme designed to meet the needs of the partner as well as Sanlam Foundation jointly.

One can then argue that perhaps management interests shape Sanlam’s project focus which in turn results in greater focus towards areas seen as important and in line with the objectives. This also means that while the choice of projects of Sanlam Foundation is influenced by their objectives, they also involve the partner organizations to collaborate and to be able to achieve them together. This is an important stage to ensure that both partners work well together towards the set objectives in the partnered project. Such partnership involves a lot of risk, hence by partnering with organizations which had existing projects meant they had reasonable experience of what was wanted from them thereby increasing the likelihood of success of the partnership. Partnering with ongoing projects seems to be one of the dominant reasons for the partner organizations involvement in identifying the need and designing of the programme.

4.3.2 Collaboration in finalizing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Most participants mentioned that while they came up with the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the project, there were meetings or workshops held at the beginning of the project to mutually agree upon the mechanisms with Sanlam Foundation. These discussions then lead Sanlam to agree, disagree or give suggestions to perfect these mechanisms.

One of the participants said that:

“So basically we have workshops at the beginning of each year that the programme runs for. Where we discuss what the outcomes we would want to see in the programme so it’s decided concurrently between there is a steer com and the officers of Sanlam”.

Another participant said:

“They actually perfected the structure like for instance we used to just get reports from the provinces and when Sanlam came on Board they said we should assist in organizing the provincial structures so that we are able to get feedback”

Echoing this sentiment one of the key informants mentioned that:

“We sit together and we decide together and say this is how we are going to do it”

Thus it is a collaborative effort to finalize the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the project.

Although they appear at the end of the programme, the topic of performance measurement, monitoring and programme evaluation are an integral part of effectiveness based programme planning and management (Kettner, Moroney & Martin, 1999). Today, organizations realize they must identify upfront, at the beginning of a programme, the type of performance measurement, monitoring and programme evaluation data and information that will be needed to conduct these assessments. Participation of the partners in finalizing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is an indispensable area as they are the ones that are closest to the ground. Monitoring and evaluation relies heavily on their involvement in understanding what needs to be monitored and evaluated. Building of a corporate and NGO partnership at implementation stage is important and involves building and maintaining partnership, governance mechanisms and

managerial requirements (Selsky & Parker, 2005). Involving the partners increases the ability to consult, engage and coordinate with each other. It is not only important to understand the common goals but also to understand that each of the partners bring value to the partnership offering something to each other and an opportunity to learn from what they have to offer.

4.3.3 Responsiveness to programme needs

Participants were asked about the responsiveness of Sanlam Foundation to their programme needs. All but one participant mentioned that Sanlam Foundation is very responsive to their programme needs. Most participants also mentioned that the team at Sanlam Foundation is very approachable.

One of the participants added that:

“They are really open to having a conversation and understanding. They are very open to and they are prepared to entertain change and that possibility, so we feel very supported.”

Another participant said that:

“I must say, Sanlam has been very fantastic. Very hands on. Easy to contact and get a hold of to bounce off ideas so it’s actually been nice to have involved stakeholders because it makes a world of difference. Because we have those monthly steer coms there is always communication between us who are on the ground versus the sponsors who invest the money and want to see results. But it is very much a hands on approach so they know exactly what’s happening in the programme, who the businesses are who the people are so it’s actually quite nice.”

The monthly interactions through the face to face meetings ensure there is continuous communication between the partners who are on the ground as well as the investors. Having a valuable dialogue is fundamental to ascertain each other’s expectations and needs and facilitates in partners defining the problem, aim of the partnership and understand each other’s’ expertise (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). Thus a dialogue is instrumental in a common understanding of where they want to be together.

The responses provided indicate that the CSR initiatives of Sanlam Foundation provide an opportunity for the partners to be involved in the identification of the need and designing of the

programme as well as in finalizing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms pertaining to the project. Thus the partners are a part of the process right from the beginning. This creates a sense of ownership and thus increases the chances of the success of the programmes.

4.4 THE NATURE OF MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISMS THAT HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE IN THE CSR INITIATIVES OF THE SANLAM FOUNDATION

The second objective of the study attempted to understand the nature of monitoring and reporting mechanisms that have been put in place in the CSR initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation. According to Kettner et al. (1999, p.3) “one of the benefits of performance measurement, monitoring and programme evaluation is in dealing with the political environment”. Having effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms enables organization to learn from their past experiences, improve the existing processes, allocate resources better and measure impact effectively to be able to document and report it elsewhere. Participants and key informants were asked to explain the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The themes that emerged from the discussion were as follows:

4.4.1 Project specific reporting

The current monitoring and evaluation mechanisms seemed project specific. While the smaller projects were managed internally, the bigger or the flagship projects had more rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluation and also involved external agencies for the assessments.

While discussing the frequency of their reporting one of the participants working on enterprise development mentioned that:

“We do monthly on the businesses that we work with but right at the end of the programme, we do a month of just doing surveys, questionnaires, reaching out to all stakeholders getting their feedback as to what went well and what didn’t work, rating the service providers, checking SME information, it all feeds through into this fixed scorecard”.

Another participant mentioned that:

“We report on a monthly basis. We have monthly steer coms. But the measurement and evaluation only happens at the end of the programme. So if the programme is running for 12 months, at the end of the 12 months we will do the measurement and evaluation. Just to capture the data. Then there is a final report. For the final M&E. I think because we are working with businesses, it is hard to check like halfway. It is not enough time to actually check. So you need a longer period of time to actually get results. So that is why we choose at the end of the programme to actually review the entire business and the programme”.

While mentioning about their reporting structure another participant added that:

“And that is how we engage with the entrepreneurs and the mentors will submit a monthly report in terms of where are their entrepreneurs in terms of their growth and that we use them to combine when we submit our mid-year report and our end of year report to Sanlam”.

One of the key informants mentioned that:

“Then they have to report to us on a monthly basis on particular projects, so we know exactly where the loopholes are and how we can fix that”.

With the evolving nature of CSR, monitoring and evaluation needs to move beyond tracking the expenditure on projects to be able to assess the impact and output of the programmes. The monitoring and evaluation process boosts impact assessment so that probable obstacles can be predicted and averted and benefits optimized (Warhurst, 2000).

Having formal structures, norms and boundaries to monitor actions while considering various approaches to governance and structures does considerably increase the likelihood of the partnership’s success (Selsky & Parker, 2005).

What emerges is that while some projects have monthly reports, some others have quarterly reports, the rest have bi annual or annual reports. Thus it can be understood that particular projects depending on the nature or scale of the project need more attention for reporting and monitoring and evaluation.

4.4.2 Meetings or workshops

Developing and sustaining NGO and corporate partnership can be regarded as a complex and a dynamic process especially since both parties come from different backgrounds, cultures and philosophies (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). It emerged that apart from having reporting structures in place, Sanlam also engages in monthly meetings and steercoms with the partners. This kind of interactions is one of the key ingredients for effective collaborations. It keeps the core team informed about the progress of the programmes and also helps in identifying issues at an early stage. What also emerges is that monitoring and evaluation is not just supposed to be discussed at the beginning or at the end of the programme, rather is an ongoing process.

On asking about the reporting structure a participant mentioned that:

“Yes we send annual reports to Sanlam. Yeah but it’s not once a year per say as we have a cup committee, that comprises of ourselves and Sanlam so as the cup committee reports. So continuously during the year they get feedback but at the end of the year we are able to give a comprehensive final report for that year”.

Another participant mentioned that:

“We can meet with Sanlam four times or five times it depends on what they are needing on their side and usually it's born out of the miss alignment or the lack of understating maybe I shouldn't say the lack of misunderstanding but the misalignment of what they need from us in terms of the CSI reporting and what it is that we do, so I think sometimes we have to meet more than once to just get on the same page and understanding what it is that”.

A key informant supported this by saying that:

“So you are not just getting a quarterly report you are getting a monthly kind of discussion and verbal feedback on how things are going you know where the challenges are, where the success has been and how one can possibly improve on what we are currently doing within a particular programme”.

Another key informant added that:

“For most of the projects and we have monthly meetings with all our monitoring and evaluating agents and the monitoring and evaluation agents sit in on the meetings that we have with the project partners”

Open and constructive communication, developing inter personal relations and tracking of progress along the previously agreed dimensions are few of the factors fundamental to a partnership’s success (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). Thus while having written reports sent in from the implementing partners is an important element, having regular face to face interactions via meetings and workshops can go a long way in improving the compatibility between partners thus increasing the likelihood of the partnership succeeding. Such interactions also give the comfort to the recipient organizations that the donors are not just superficially involved in the projects but are very much interested in the way they achieve the projects achieve the impact they have set out for achieving.

4.4.3 Involving external agencies

Evaluations carried out by anyone other than the donor and the recipient organizations can be referred to as external evaluation. Few of the participants highlighted that external agencies are identified by Sanlam Foundation or by themselves to guide them through the monitoring and evaluation process.

One of the participants said that:

“Yes there is an outside organization that the foundation works with who they have referred to us and we have been working with them”.

Another participant mentioned that:

“The lady who is doing our monitoring and evaluation at the moment is very experienced. She has been studying on evaluating but she worked for many years abroad, and she is doing monitoring and evaluation in other non-profits, so she has brought that experience with her”

One of the key informants added:

“It’s an external organization, so we’ve got external service providers because externally if somebody comes on as a stranger to the project they’re going to give you better feedback, it’s good to get unbiased feedback. So we make sure that we get external contracts to do the monitoring and evaluation for us”.

Supporting this claim another key informant added that:

“Some of the projects are managed internally. The smaller ones are probably managed internally in our fairly small team, others are managed by external service providers. So the way that we would try an engage with our external service providers would be a very kind of interactive collaborative sort of one. Uhm a while ago what corporate would have done is, corporate would have paid a certain amount of money to an agent or to an NGO and then they would step away they wouldn’t be involved in the actual programme itself. Our approach is very different because I think we are trying to get very involved in the details, we want to be able to shape and direct and kind of be there in terms of the actual implementation of all of our projects”.

“The primary purpose of programme evaluation is to provide feedback on results, accomplishments, or impacts (outcomes) and to inform policy makers and planners about the effectiveness of programmes and the appropriateness of the social intervention hypotheses that underline them” (Kettner et. al., 2013, p.231). Considering that most CSR initiatives are now transitioning from a grant based initiative to being more systemic it is important to have effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place. CSR related disclosures are a way in which companies demonstrate their legitimacy to their stakeholders (Dawkins & Ngunjiri, 2008). Having a third party to do the monitoring and evaluation can bring in new and fresh perspective. In cases where the NGOs are disinclined to measure due to lack of capacity or skills, the funders as a part of their long term commitment to the project must provide the necessary support to ensure better assessment systems (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Involving external agencies to do the monitoring and evaluation adds credibility to the findings. “Transparency requires willingness to have actions evaluated by others” (Fort & Schipani, 2004, p.125). Thus external evaluations enhance credibility and ensure transparency of the corporate’s CSI interventions. However its success will depend on the quality of the interaction and information sharing that takes place between the partners and the agencies. The organizations must not view the agencies as someone

who has been employed to find errors in the way they operate. Finally, success will also depend on the openness of the organizations to learn from what the agencies have to offer.

4.5 CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING CSR INITIATIVES

The third objective of the study aimed to establish the views of the implementing partners of the Sanlam Foundation about the challenges associated with implementing CSR initiatives. Research indicates that since the evolution of CSR as a corporate practice there are several challenges associated with the practice. Participants were asked about their views on the challenges associated with the monitoring and evaluation practices in the project. Other questions involved asking key informants the obstacles they face in the designing, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of their CSI initiatives and whether the existing systems were meeting the needs of their CSI initiatives. The challenges discussed shed some light on the obstacles they face in the successful implementation of CSI initiatives. The themes that emerged through the discussion are as follows:

4.5.1 Meeting the timelines and collection of quality data

Meeting the timelines and collection of relevant and quality data was identified as a challenge by participants. Meeting the time frames is almost as important as meeting the objectives (Kettner et. al., 2013). Exceeding the set time frames may make costs incurred to shoot up or may reduce the impact of the project. Data collection is important to be able to report and evaluate progress. “All the effort put into the development of a programme hypothesis, goals and objectives, and design will mean little if the correct data are not collected, aggregated, analyzed, and reported” (Kettner, et. al., 2013, p.22)

When asked to elaborate on the challenge of meeting the reporting timelines one participant had this to say:

“So the only major challenge we have there is in terms of the turnaround times that the entrepreneur takes in order to give us the information. Some of the entrepreneurs are dependent on book keepers because they don’t want to keep records themselves they might not have the

necessary skills and also for the compliance of the business there is a wait period, it's with the accountants so we have to wait for the accounts."

While talking about collecting quality data on time one of the participants said:

"I think you would wait for a really long time to get the data. Then the data would come back in incomplete or you can see something missing or two things here and that's where we struggle we keep going backward and forward in trying to get the data."

While discussing the relevance of data collected a participant said that:

"I think in terms of our evaluation processes we need to make sure that the information that we are collecting is what we need to collect in order to show our impact and for some time traditionally what we have been collecting we go why do we need to know that stuff actually we don't need to know that question and so it's making sure that we align the data that we collect with being able to show the impact that's been our big challenge".

Another participant added that:

"Collecting of data. It is actually quite a big struggle to get that. Businesses are doing a lot of different things. So it is actually quite difficult to try and pin them down to actually get the information, so that we really struggle with. And some of the businesses didn't even have proper financials. So we scramble to put their financials into order, get results and then feed it into our measurement and evaluation. Because if we don't have accurate data we can't report accurately. But we also have completely skewed results. So that is one of the biggest challenges".

The above quotations highlight the challenges that programmes face in collecting relevant data from their entrepreneurs in time. This in turn delays their reports that need to be submitted to their funders. Going back and forth in trying to extract the required information means a lot of time is wasted in the routine work which could have been otherwise utilized for other more important tasks. This also means that turnaround time is increased in situations when partners are dependent on information to come in from further down.

Lack of consistent record keeping by nonprofit organizations and unavailability of data makes it difficult for funders to take proper and timely decisions (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Getting accurate and relevant data to be able to document and present it further is a big challenge that NGOs face. Programme outcomes can be evaluated and measured only when the relevant data is collected and presented. For this it is important to involve the relevant people and explain the importance of maintaining and presenting data as and when required for the purpose of reporting and evaluation.

4.5.2 Impact data

Another challenge identified by participants was impact assessment.

One participant mentioned that:

“We know that our programme has changed lives, the lives of many principals and changed a lot of community schools. We’ve seen the change happening and we’ve heard our programme has really impacted the lives of many of our business partners, a lot of that is qualitative and stories rather than hard evidence and we need to be able to find a way of taking these stories because that’s how you create data, taking the stories and be able to show that quantitatively, it will quantify the impact especially when we are not counting how many people got shoes or how many people got fed, we are trying to show leadership development improvement and so that is a difficult to measure and so I suppose that our challenge have been being able to quantify our story for our impact and to get funders to understand some of the stuff is difficult to quantify.”

While discussing the challenges in measuring the effectiveness of what they are doing rather than the activity another participant mentioned that:

“Yeah I think that, I think this is where we are moving to now at the moment is all your activities need to be outcome based rather than activity based.”

One of the key informants said that:

“I think sometimes we still caught up on reporting on numbers of beneficiaries and not necessarily reporting on what is the impact beyond the numbers of beneficiaries. I think we still have a lot of difficulty measuring and reporting on that. Numbers of beneficiaries in easy, it’s

straightforward but I think everybody is having a lot of difficulty how to measure and monitor systemic stuff”.

“Impact programme evaluation differs from other types of evaluation in that the focus here is on changes in programme participants and not on changes in organizations and communities” (Kettner et. al., 2013, p. 242). This kind of evaluation is important to understand whether the programme is actually having a positive outcome or not. Quantifying impact will provide science based information that will demonstrate the extent to which the programme has achieved measurable impact upon the beneficiaries. The data reported must focus on the long term impact the project has had on beneficiaries.

4.5.3 Difference in points of view on monitoring and evaluation

Another challenge identified by participants was reaching a consensus with the funders on understanding and agreeing on what needs to be reported. Thus while monitoring and evaluation are integral aspects of projects, there is a difference in the NGO’s and the funder’s understanding of the data that needs to be reported.

One of the participants mentioned that:

“Ya, so the monitoring and evaluation that Sanlam has is different from what we have, so the questions don't match what we have, but we do fill it in as best as we can to be able to give them the kind of information and detail they need. Because for them it's very standard, it's not per project it doesn't take into account what the project is and what it does and I can understand that because majority of what they will fund its easy to do that we are just an anomaly, so they've got a template they've got a standard thing that you've got to fill out and we have to think about how do we because it's not really what we do but we then try to extrapolate and say this is the best way we can answer it. “

Corroborating these views another participant added that:

“I read the requirements of the report and the first report and the second report asks the same questions and I am not sure I don't have much experience in M & E to be able to tell whether or not they are using an external person or not, if they are not I feel like they should be. The questions are a little bit removed from the reality of actually doing the work, I think that is where

an implementing organization such as ourselves and funders we sometime miss each other because they ask question from a funders point view, whereas we want to answer questions from an impact or from an outcomes point of view and the two sometimes don't meet. Ya, I feel their questions aren't all applicable to the real work that gets done”

While discussing the challenges in collecting the data required by external agencies for monitoring and evaluation one of the participants mentioned that:

“Because ideally the monitoring and evaluation from an outside company was like get us all the names and contact numbers of the students upfront and we will register them before you start, now the universities are not allowed to supply you with that information”.

A key informant noted the reluctance of partners to have projects evaluated by external agency and had this to say:

“Uhm we get a lot of challenges because the project partners it's almost like you're having an auditor there or an inspector there. So the project partners are not thrilled to have an M & E person there on board. So they do give them flack and they do give them a hard time you know so we've got that as well. And especially when a monitoring and evaluation agent has to give us a negative feedback. Then automatically the project partner gets upset.”

While the NGOs feel that the funders think like a corporate without understanding the ground realities, the funders believe the NGOs are reluctant to change and are averse to adopting new and modern methods of monitoring, reporting and evaluation. Significant differences exist in the way both parties approach project evaluation and monitoring. Several interactions suggest that nonprofit organizations struggle with reporting and are hesitant to spend time on detailed evaluation (Njenga & Smit, 2007). The project partners believe that some of the information demanded by the funder may be irrelevant and may not reveal the correct impact of the projects. However in the case of South Africa, it needs to be understood that a lot of the information that the partners provide on projects need to be furnished further while reporting on the BBBEE to the relevant authorities. Hence it could be possible that the funders demand certain information from the partners which may be relevant to the BBBEE reporting requirements.

4.6 SUGGESTIONS ON ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CSR INITIATIVES

The fourth objective of the study was to elicit suggestions on ways of enhancing the effectiveness of CSR initiatives in Sanlam Foundation. While CSR has gained significant attention in large firms, putting effective CSR practices in place is much more complex than it seems and does not follow a one size fits all approach. This involved asking participants about how in their view the challenges be addressed and what can be done to have robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the projects. The themes that emerged from discussion of this objective are as follows:

4.6.1 Clarity on monitoring and evaluation since inception

Participants acknowledge the need to focus on effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for their projects.

On the need to have outcome based activities one participant mentioned that:

“I think once we start moving into that, our M&E will become more robust because now it is a matter of let’s measure the effectiveness of what we are doing and not the regularity of how we are doing it”.

While suggesting how to resolve the differences with the funder on monitoring and evaluation data, another participant mentioned:

“I think it's literally sitting down with the project and saying "what do you do, how do you measure your progress or your success or lack thereof and that taken to then create a monitoring and evaluation form so it should be specific to the project”.

While suggesting the involvement of Sanlam in the monitoring and evaluation one of the participants had this to say:

“So what you find happening now is that there is starting to be more involvement from Sanlam in terms of evaluation. But initially this wasn’t the case. Now it is a case of we want to see how this particular thing is doing and how can we assist and if we are going to give them any particular help or any particular intervention”.

There is increasing pressure from various stakeholders on companies to report on matters pertaining to corporate governance (Njenga & Smit, 2007). This calls for companies to provide an account of their activities pertaining societal improvements making monitoring and evaluation of their interventions an important task. Monitoring and evaluation must be looked at as an opportunity to take stock of things and make amendments to achieve the best results. For this it is very important for partners and funders to understand right at the beginning what kind of data needs to be collected and maintained.

“What is important is that measuring and reporting need to be seen as an integral part of any project or programme and should not be carried out merely for the sake of the donor” (Njenga & Smit, 2007). Although it generally appears at the end, performance measurement, monitoring and evaluation must be an integral part of a programme right from the beginning. The focal point here is to be able to specify right at the beginning the types of data to be collected in order to have the necessary information available to conduct performance measurement, monitoring and programme evaluation (Hatry, 2010 as cited in Kettner et. al., 2013). It is very important that a constructive dialogue takes place between parties at inception and at all stages of the programme. The later you devise mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, the more difficult it will be to incorporate it within ongoing programmes. More so there will be reluctance from partners to adhere to the needs and demands then. It also emerged that choosing the right partners at the outset, will also ease a lot of potential problems that may arise at a later stage. It is also important to have well trained M&E specialists as a CSI practitioner within the CSI space.

4.6.2 To be able to measure and present impact

While CSR is gaining attention and popularity, more and more organizations are engaging in CSR, the challenge that corporates continue facing is to be able to say that they are making an impact. Are people’s lives improving because of their intervention? Participants suggested that they need to understand and devise ways of how to measure and present the actual impact that their projects make. Qualitative data must be used in a way that brings out the actual impact of the programme.

On being asked to suggest robust evaluation and monitoring mechanisms one participant said that:

“How do you quantify behavioral change outside of the qualitative measure? So we need to look at ways of evaluating the impact of our programme the qualitative way that can respond or speak to the quantitative response that our corporate partners want, so that's an area of improvement that we are looking at, how do we take that qualitative aspect and report on it on a quantitative manner that will appease to our corporate partner where they feel that their investment is making great impact and what they have to show of their project, I don't know if they are looking for a number of reached but the level of impact will still come through or the evidence through the feedback that we provide them so that is what we are working on now, we are able to provide quantitative feedback”.

While suggesting robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms another participant suggested that:

“And so for example probably about a year ago the business was geared at chasing numbers. So it was about saying to Sanlam we've got 50 SME's that are currently being incubated where as now we may only have 20 but this has been the growth in the business, this has been the growth in the employment, this has been the performance. So I think it has moved from having that, outcome based and also what is interesting from the perspective of the business is that in order to create it more and make it robust and in order to make us a valuable partner to Sanlam and in order to ensure the ongoing funding from Sanlam it's got to be a situation where that we provide evidence for all our M and E. And that we have an evidence based management approach. So in other words we are not saying we've got a great programme, this is the reason why we've got a great programme because of the following”.

“While the requirements for reporting as regards CSI spend generally focus on outputs, the more important questions that seem to emanate from the general public relate to the issue of impact” (Njenga & Smit, 2007, p. 70). Thus, it is easy to report and assess the impressive numbers that the project has achieved, it is difficult to present the systemic impact that the projects make. In order to establish whether the project has created the intended impact or not, the report must then present what would have happened to those individuals in absence of the intervention (Kettner et. al., 2013). In order to make a larger collective impact it can be suggested that corporates come together and make consolidated efforts to work collectively towards a cause instead of making

parallel efforts in similar initiatives and making comparatively smaller impact. “Collective corporate action provides a powerful mechanism, which enhances the ability of the business community, working closely with broader civil society, creating and supporting inclusion and a socially beneficial economic context” (OECD, 2001, p.78). The need of the hour is that various entities work together to commonly address societal problems. The advantage that this will bring along is that resources and expertise will be pulled together to make a greater impact enhancing the corporate’s image in the community.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of the Sanlam Foundation in the Western Cape, South Africa. The study explored the extent to which the CSR initiatives of Sanlam Foundation are participatory, the nature of monitoring and reporting mechanisms that have been put in place in the CSR initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation, the views of officials of Sanlam Foundation about the challenges associated with implementing CSR initiatives and suggests ways of enhancing the effectiveness of CSR initiatives. This chapter provides the main findings from the study and draws conclusions from the findings. It also presents the recommendations that emanate from the study and implications for future research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The main findings are presented according to the objectives of the study.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CSR INITIATIVES OF SANLAM FOUNDATION ARE PARTICIPATORY

Partnering with ongoing projects, collaborative finalizing of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and responsiveness to programme needs were the main factors pointing to the participatory nature of Sanlam Foundation's CSR initiatives. The main findings were as follows:

Partnering with ongoing projects

Partners played a vital role in the identification of the need and designing of the programme. This was mainly because the projects were already in existence when Sanlam decided to support the interventions. It is important to note that the Sanlam Foundation chooses to partner with projects that did not just start off but had the experience of what they wanted them to do. They looked for partners who understood their rationale and had the experience in what was expected from them. It was ensured that the interventions were aligned to Sanlam Foundation's strategy and focus areas.

Collaboration in finalizing of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

It was discovered that though in most cases monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were identified and decided by the implementing partners, regular meetings and workshops were held with the officials of Sanlam Foundation. These interactions served as an opportunity for both parties to mutually agree, disagree or make amendments to the existing mechanisms. In some instances the partners continue without making any changes as long as it serves the needs or expectations of the funders.

Responsiveness to programme needs

Sanlam Foundation came across as being very responsive to the programme needs of the partners. The majority of the participants mentioned that while budget and financial issues are decided right at the beginning and no changes are made during the project. They positively indicated that Sanlam Foundation came across as being very approachable and responsive to the rest of the programme needs. The regular meetings and interactions with the partners ensure continuous communication between both parties and keeps the officials of Sanlam Foundation updated about the progress happening at the field.

THE NATURE OF MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISMS THAT HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE IN THE CSR INITIATIVES OF THE SANLAM FOUNDATION

The natures of monitoring and reporting mechanisms that have been put in place in the CSR initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation are as follows:

Project specific reporting

The frequency of reporting structure varied across projects. While some report monthly, others report quarterly, bi-annually or annually. Thus it can be understood that depending on the nature of the project, the frequency of the reporting is finalized.

Meetings or workshops

It emerged that apart from the reports, the Sanlam Foundation engaged with the organizations through regular meetings or workshops. They believe that receiving reports was not enough and that meetings and workshops help them understand the status of the projects better. It allows them a platform to take stock of things and understand the success, failures and matters which need attention. This way Sanlam Foundation prefers to be deeply involved with the project.

Involving external agencies

Though some of the projects were managed internally, many of the participants mentioned that they had external agencies helping them with the monitoring and evaluation of their projects. The participants identified the advantages that external evaluators bring along with them. It was also noted that external evaluators bring along with them the varied experience that they gain while working on various other projects. Clearly, external evaluators bring along with them a fresh perspective and an unbiased evaluation of the concerned intervention. They bring objectivity and provide independent judgement on the programmes.

CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING CSR INITIATIVES

The challenges associated with the effective implementation of CSR initiatives were identified as follows:

Meeting the timelines and collection of data

It was discovered that on time collection of relevant data was a major hindrance in meeting the reporting timelines. Participants mentioned that they struggle in collecting data from the field. It is a major challenge to get the relevant and correct data to be able to compile it into reports. Poor record keeping makes them go back and forth to get the accurate data which increases the turnaround time thereby delaying their reporting to the funders. Thus participants also added that they struggle to ensure that they collect the information required to show their real impact. Thus they have to go the extra mile to align the data collected with the actual impact.

Impact data

Another challenge that participants face is quantifying the qualitative impact that their projects make. They mentioned that while numbers are easy to report and present, they struggle with reporting on how the intervention changes the lives of people. A lot of this data can be episodic. The participants noted that they find it a challenge to report on the effectiveness of their interventions rather than the regularity. Systemic impact is considered more difficult to report as against reporting on numbers which is more direct.

Difference in points of view on monitoring and evaluation

There are visible signs of discord between both parties in the agreement on the content that needs to be maintained and reported to showcase the progress of programmes. Few of the partners believe the kind of data that Sanlam demands in their reporting templates does not necessarily portray the real impact of the programme. They also feel some of the requirements of the reports are very standard and not modified as per the needs of their particular project. They believe some of the questions in the template are too much from the funder's point of view as against the outcomes achieved by the intervention. The funders also believe that the partners are generally reluctant to have the programmes evaluated by external evaluators. They get upset to have external evaluators on board and look at it negatively.

SUGGESTIONS ON ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CSR INITIATIVES

Clarity on monitoring and evaluation since inception

Participants acknowledge the need to strengthen the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. In resolving the differences pertaining to the disagreement on the content in reporting, they suggest having face to face discussion for understanding each other's perspectives on parameters for measuring success and then create monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and reporting templates around it which are project specific and not general.

While the participants do appreciate Sanlam Foundation's involvement in the monitoring and evaluation aspect of the project, they believe it is a recent development. They suggest this must be an integral part and it is better to have discussions right at the initial stages.

Measuring impact

Participants have pointed out that there is a need to transition from measuring input to measuring outputs. Thus aspects pertaining to the impact the programme creates need to be given more attention. Funders understand and demand for quantitative data whereas the NGOs feel that behavioural and other qualitative changes cannot come across in such reports. Thus they feel together with funders they need to devise a way in which such data which meet the needs of both the funders and the projects.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The partners admit that Sanlam Foundation is responsive to their programme needs.

It is important for both partners and funders to understand the implications of having effective monitoring and evaluation of programmes. However this may not be applicable to all types of initiatives. It may be possible that sometimes the nature of the programmes also makes the monitoring and evaluation process complicated. For the funders, effective monitoring and evaluation will facilitate better reporting of their activities. This will enable the company to market their products and brand will also enable them to align their initiatives to their core business. Overall for both funders and the partners, it will enable to understand the bigger picture and identify the factors that influence the natures and success of the initiatives.

While NGOs do adhere to the reporting templates of the funders, they believe important details pertaining to the impact are lost in such templates. They also believe one size does not fit all and hence reporting templates must be designed keeping in mind the nature of each project justifying the impact the project actually makes.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Management should understand that M&E is the most challenging aspect of project management and that it needs to be given top priority.
- Professionally trained M&E personnel need to be identified within the CSI space.

- There is a need to place emphasis on simplified discussion on understanding Sanlam Foundation's views of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms which is crucial for partners understanding.
- There is a need to pay attention to smaller projects and their challenges as well.

5.5 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Considering that the study focused only on Sanlam Foundation and its partners, future research can focus on the following:

- Establishing views of funders on M&E practices within projects
- Investigating views of external evaluators/agencies on the M&E practices of funders and funded CSR initiatives within NGOs
- Exploring challenges that NGOs and funders face in measuring qualitative impact of programmes and how to address them

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APENDIX A

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET

Good day!

My name is Shubhra Rao and I am a postgraduate student registered for the degree MA in Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1, Jan Smuts Avenue, Braamfontein, 2000, Johannesburg, South Africa. As part of the requirements for the degree, I wish to conduct a research into exploring Corporates social responsibility initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation. The aim of the study is to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility practices of Sanlam Foundation in Western Cape. The study will seek to understand the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives. It is hoped that this information may be useful to organizations engaged in similar initiatives to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

I therefore wish to invite you to participate in my study. The information provided by you shall help me to understand the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives. Your participation is entirely voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. If you agree to take part, I shall arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The interview may last about two hours. You may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you may feel uncomfortable with answering.

With your permission, the interviews will be tape recorded. No one other than my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and interview schedules will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

Please contact me on +27 747598170 or my supervisor, Prof. Edwell Kaseke on 011 717 4477 if you have any questions regarding the study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request.

Thank you for taking time to consider participating in the study.

Yours Sincerely,

Shubhra Rao.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION SHEET FOR KEY INFORMANTS

Good day!

My name is Shubhra Rao and I am a postgraduate student registered for the degree MA in Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1, Jan Smuts Avenue, Braamfontein, 2000, Johannesburg, South Africa. As part of the requirements for the degree, I wish to conduct a research into exploring Corporates social responsibility initiatives of the Sanlam Foundation. The aim of the study is to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility practices of Sanlam Foundation in Western Cape. The study will seek to understand the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives. It is hoped that this information may be useful to organizations engaged in similar initiatives to strengthen their monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

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With your permission, the interviews will be tape recorded. No one other than my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and interview schedules will be kept in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study. Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

Please contact me on +27 747598170 or my supervisor, Prof. Edwell Kaseke on 011 717 4477 if you have any questions regarding the study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability. Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request.

Thank you for taking time to consider participating in the study.

Yours Sincerely,

Shubhra Rao.

APPENDIX C**PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM**

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that the aim of the study is to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility practices of Sanlam Foundation and the information I provide will enable you to understand the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular items or withdraw from the study at any given time without any negative consequences. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

Name of the participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of the Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX D**CONSENT FORM FOR KEY INFORMANTS**

I hereby consent to participate in the research project. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me. I understand that the aim of the study is to explore the nature of corporate social responsibility practices of Sanlam Foundation and the information I provide will enable you to understand the approach of Sanlam Foundation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular items or withdraw from the study at any given time without any negative consequences. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential.

Name of the participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of the Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX E**CONSENT FORM FOR AUDIO TAPING OF THE INTERVIEW**

I hereby consent to tape recording of the interview. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained at all times and that the tapes will be destroyed two years after the publication arising from the study or six years after completion of the study if there are no publications.

Tick to agree. ☐

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of the Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. Explain your involvement in identification of the need and designing of the programme.
2. Explain your involvement in finalizing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms pertaining to the project.
3. Explain the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in your project.
4. What are the conditions for continued support from Sanlam Foundation?
5. How has the support from Sanlam Foundation been responsive to your programme needs?
6. What challenges do you face in your monitoring and evaluation process for programmes?
7. How do you think these challenges can be resolved?
8. What can be done to have robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms?

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR KEY INFORMANTS

1. How long have you been associated with the organization?
2. What is the rationale for Sanlam Foundation's choice of initiatives?
3. What is the nature of CSR initiatives implemented by Sanlam Foundation?
4. Describe the rationale for selection and the process of design and implementation of your CSR initiatives.
5. Explain the involvement of the implementing organizations in finalizing the project deliverables.
6. What existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for CSR initiatives are put in place by Sanlam Foundation?
7. Explain whether the existing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are meeting the needs of your CSR initiatives?
8. What are the challenges faced by Sanlam Foundation's team in designing, implementing and monitoring and evaluation of its CSR initiatives?
9. How do you propose to address these challenges?
10. How do you propose to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of Sanlam Foundation in order to strengthen your CSR initiatives?

APPENDIX H

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Rao

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: H15/07/48

PROJECT TITLE

Exploring corporate social responsibility initiatives in Western Cape: The case of Sanlam Foundation

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Ms S Rao

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

Humanities/

DATE CONSIDERED

24 July 2015

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved unconditionally

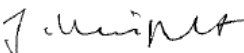
EXPIRY DATE

15 September 2018

DATE

16 September 2015

CHAIRPERSON


(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor E Kaseke

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10005, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature _____

Date / /

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES