

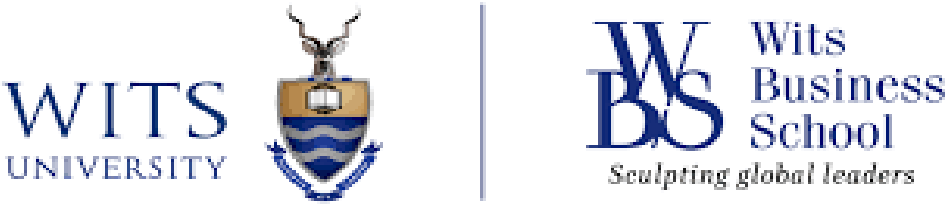
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Expressions of Solidarity and Decolonisation of Philanthropy in Southern Africa

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MM in African Philanthropy

Research Topic

Expressions of Solidarity and Decolonisation of Philanthropy in Southern Africa

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A Research Report submitted to fulfil the requirements of the course.
BUSA 7500A: Research Report

Supervisor
Prof. Bhekinkosi Moyo

ABSTRACT

Solidarity is not a new phenomenon; however, the emergence of new or revived forms of reciprocity, giving and sharing based on the principle of solidarity has reignited discussions within philanthropy. This research report explores expressions of solidarity and the decolonisation of philanthropy within the context of six study countries: Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These countries are interconnected geographically, economically, and culturally, forming a vital region in Southern Africa. The research study is grounded in social capital and social justice theoretical framework. Through a qualitative research approach involving interviews, focus groups and document analysis, the research explores the experiences and perspectives of stakeholders that include selected philanthropy organisations, funding partners, community initiatives, and local communities. The study examines how ACT Ubumbano contributes to expressions of solidarity and advances the decolonisation agenda within philanthropy in response to the question: *How does ACT Ubumbano's approach contribute to expressions of solidarity and advance the decolonisation agenda within philanthropy?* ACT Ubumbano was jointly established by European and Southern African organisations in 2019 as a social justice initiative. ACT Ubumbano works to centre solidarity as communities resist dehumanisation and injustice. The findings highlight the complexity of solidarity and decolonisation definitions, with diverse interpretations among stakeholders. Solidarity is expressed through informal networks, movements, community-based actions, and partnerships. Decolonisation efforts promote equitable power dynamics in funding, challenge dominant relationships, and support collective action. ACT Ubumbano initiatives support solidarity and decolonisation through resource allocation, partnerships, and networking platforms, fostering

collective action and bridging gaps. The research study findings present solidarity as a tool for decolonisation.

Key Words: Solidarity, Decolonisation, Philanthropy, Social Capital, Social Justice, Interconnectedness, Reciprocity, Equitable

DECLARATION

I, Zanele Makombe, declare that this research report entitled **"Expressions of Solidarity and Decolonisation of Philanthropy in Southern Africa"** is my own unaided work. I have acknowledged, attributed, and referenced all ideas sourced elsewhere. I am hereby submitting it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management – African Philanthropy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.



_____

Zanele Maphosa-Makombe

Signed at Johannesburg on the 28th of March2024

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I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me throughout the journey of completing my master's research study, titled **Expressions of Solidarity and Decolonisation of Philanthropy in Southern Africa"**

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Okuhle, kuyabongwa.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research study to my father, *Umunt'omnyama*, Anthony Samuel Maphosa, for his embodiment of "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*", a statement that means 'you are because we are'. He modelled African philanthropy and anchored the family in the values of Ubuntu.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the expressions of solidarity in philanthropy and the decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa, focusing on the intersection between these two phenomena. The intersection between expressions of solidarity and the decolonisation of philanthropy is crucial because it highlights how philanthropy can either perpetuate or challenge existing power dynamics for greater equity and justice. Solidarity emphasises collective action and mutual support, which are fundamental principles in addressing systemic injustices (Douwes, Stuttaford, & London, 2018; Hooks,1994). Decolonising philanthropy involves acknowledging historical injustices and redistributing power to marginalised communities (Villanueva, 2021). Therefore, examining how solidarity informs philanthropy and understanding the role of decolonisation in reshaping these practices enables the development of more effective strategies for philanthropy that are transformative and aligned with principles of justice and equality (Mahomed, 2023)

This study investigates the expressions of solidarity in philanthropy and decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa. In an effort to comprehend the concept of solidarity, two Latin-derived ideas surfaced: *solidum*, which denotes security and totality, and *solidus*, which refers to something that is massive or entire (Arnsperger & Varoufakis, 2003,p157) Additionally, solidarity can be interpreted as a state in which two or more individuals share equal responsibility for an action or organisation and are held accountable collectively - all for one and one for all (Durkheim,1893). Solidarity can also be viewed as a mutual bond between multiple entities, in which each one depends on the others, as well as a commitment in which individuals or organisations pledge to assist the less fortunate in their

community. As solidarity calls for interconnectedness and mutual support, the importance of addressing inequality and systemic issues that undermine these connections becomes evident, highlighting the importance of decolonisation. The foundations of decolonisation are rooted in acknowledging historical injustices and power imbalances (Fanon, 1963; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mbembe, 2001). This recognition forms the basis for building alliances across diverse communities (Anzaldua, 1999) and challenging systemic oppression (hooks, 1994). Moreover, decolonisation requires a commitment to amplifying marginalised voices and centering their experiences in the struggle for justice (Sultana, 2019) By fostering connections grounded in shared values, resistance and collective action (Sandoval, 2000), decolonisation offers a transformative vision for dismantling colonial structures and fostering inclusive, equitable societies.

This study explored the dynamics of solidarity within philanthropy with the aim of deepening understanding of solidarity as a significant contributor to the ongoing decolonisation agenda in Southern Africa. The study positioned solidarity as a dynamic force capable of challenging entrenched power structures and colonial legacies within philanthropy. Solidarity, as defined in this research, involves a shared commitment among individuals or organisations to address societal challenges collaboratively, shared struggle, pooling resources, expertise and efforts for the greater good (Laitinen & Pessi, 2014; Sandoval, 2000). Key components of solidarity include mutual support, a common purpose, and a recognition of interconnectedness, where the success of one initiative contributes to the overall advancement of shared goals. Furthermore, as articulated by Arnsperger and Varoufakis, (2003, p.157) solidarity lies in the hypothesis that people can respond sympathetically to (or empathise with) a condition afflicting ‘others’, irrespective of who those others are or whether one cares for them personally. Solidarity manifests differently across societies depending on the perspective and discipline, resulting in shifting forms of solidarity (Laitinen & Pessi, 2014)

Decolonisation, as conceptualised in this study, involves challenging and dismantling entrenched structures that perpetuate historical injustices and unequal power relations (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mbembe, 2001). The study recognises that true decolonisation requires more than symbolic gestures; it demands a fundamental restructuring of power dynamics. While reframing narratives is an important step, the research examines the deeper complexities of decolonisation, emphasising the need for dismantling oppressive systems and redistributing power and resources to marginalised communities.

A significant gap in the scholarly discourse lies in the understanding of solidarity and decolonisation, particularly in the context of partnerships and power dynamics within the sector. A specific organisation, ACT Ubumbano, was used to respond to the third study question of how ACT Ubumbano's approach contributes to expressions of solidarity and advances the decolonisation agenda within philanthropy. The research scrutinised the expressions of solidarity in ACT Ubumbano's initiatives, exploring factors that influenced practical solidarity approaches and evaluating the potential of solidarity as a decolonisation tool. ACT Ubumbano, a Southern Africa-based philanthropy organisation established in 2017, occupied a central focus of this research. Emerging groups such as ACT Ubumbano have positioned themselves to be a link between existing philanthropy and communities (Green-Thompson, 2017). The organisation has been cited as actively collaborating with other groups in actions and movements associated with decolonisation as societies strive for interconnectedness and mutual support (Sigamoney, 2022). ACT Ubumbano was identified as a philanthropy organisation drawing from Salamon's (2015) definition of philanthropy. Philanthropic organisations, including Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), and foundations, were central actors in philanthropy. The research

situated these organisations as pivotal agents in promoting solidarity and driving decolonisation efforts.

The theoretical social capital and social justice theories informed this study. Social capital theory was particularly relevant for understanding how marginalised groups accessed resources, networks, and support systems within philanthropy (Coleman,1988, 2000; Fraser, 2019; Putnam, 2000). Social justice theory provided a lens through which the study aimed to confront and rectify systemic obstacles and disparities present in philanthropy (Crenshaw, 1989; Sen,1999). The research utilised qualitative methods to analyse expressions of solidarity, organisational factors shaping practical solidarity approaches, and the impact of philanthropy on decolonisation agenda. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT TO THE STUDY

According to Gibson (2018), there is a trend in which emerging players in philanthropy have declared the centrality of solidarity in their gifting and support to community organisations. Solidarity continues to be a central element in exploring pathways for more equitable people-led development (WACSI, 2021). Solidarity is defined as deep and enduring attachments between individuals in a society, which lead to socially acceptable ways of living and social order (Laitinen & Pessi, 2014). Solidarity is a context-dependent phenomenon that influences how people behave toward individuals with whom they have relationships and towards others (Börner, 2013; Kozlowska, 2024). Solidarity in the context of this study is based on the concept of rights since it stipulates that people can expect to be helped, and solidarity entails obligations because people are expected to help each other (Fernandez, Lahusen, & Kousis, 2020). Fernandez, Lahusen and Kousis (2020) posit that solidarity is one of the recurrent missions of civil

society organisations and social movements. Central to solidarity actions are altruism, helping individuals in need, claiming rights for the excluded and amplifying the voices of the marginalised (Fernandes, Lahusen, & Kousis, 2020).

Garrafa (2014) posits that debates are ongoing regarding understanding and expressions of solidarity by civil society organisations in the development sector. Debates highlight the limitations around expressions of solidarity as influenced by top-down approaches, trade-offs between short-term impact and long-term sustainability, external influence, and the need for cultural sensitivity in interventions (Barkan, 2013; Moyo & Imafidon, 2021). Moksnes and Melin (2012) observe that civil society actors are often instruments in a neo-colonial exertion of power over countries and people in the global South. The international civil society industry pushes for globally driven priority focus areas and other development traditions that exacerbate global-local inequality and the global North/South divide. The question, therefore, is how solidarity is expressed in a society where hierarchies and power relations are already defined, embedded, and continuously reproduced (Sotiropoulos, 2016).

As expressions of solidarity and the decolonisation of philanthropy are explored, it becomes evident that funding and grant-making are critical components shaping these processes. Angara and Francour (2020) elucidate how funding and grant-making practices often reflect colonial legacies, perpetuating predetermined outcomes, top-down decision-making, and a lack of community leadership representation. This underscores the urgency highlighted by Gibson (2018) and Thige and Adly (2020) to shift grant-making approaches towards disrupting power dynamics and decolonising philanthropy. Moreover, as articulated by WACSI (2021), the decolonisation agenda necessitates flexible funding mechanisms and equal recognition of Southern-based organisations as partners, underscoring the pivotal role of funding practices in fostering

genuine solidarity and empowerment. During the State of African Philanthropy, Setting the Agenda conference held in May 2019, delegates emphasised the importance of bringing back dignity and solidarity in philanthropy (Akyeampong, Moyo, & Sall, 2019). In this context, the study aims to explore the understanding and discussion of how funding and grant-making practices can align with principles of equity and justice.

Judge (2017) and Gibson (2017) highlight that for the expression of solidarity a paradigm shift is needed in how funders approach development due to the complexity and the lack of involvement of local communities and institutions in the development process. They often lack power, despite their local contextual knowledge and understanding of local realities. Stirling, Wilson-Prangley, Hamilton, and Olivier (2016) recommend shifting practices from transactional linear approaches to transformational community-driven and intentional solidarity practices. Solidarity, shifting power and bottom-up approaches, despite being the most common narratives of the mainstream philanthropic community, were further highlighted during the global COVID-19 pandemic and emphasised the importance of a paradigm shift in philanthropy (Ahmad & Khadse, 2021; Harrison, 2020). The pandemic led to funding partners and philanthropic organisations reflecting on their practices and assessing whether they were sufficiently responsive to community needs. What emerged is the need for agile collaborative organisations that can respond innovatively and rapidly to shifting local contexts and stand in solidarity with the most marginalised communities (Thige & Adly, 2020). While funding mechanisms are crucial, the broader aspects of solidarity and decolonisation extend beyond mere financial support. Solidarity and decolonisation acknowledge the complexities and nuances involved in fostering genuine empowerment and shifting power dynamics and embracing bottom-up approaches to development.

ACT Ubumbano was conceptualised in 2014, when four Protestant European development agencies were reviewing their funding strategies and presence in Southern Africa in response to global political changes and shifts in funding priorities (Judge, 2017). Local partners were experiencing and questioning the resultant uncertainties of funding and support for their actions (Sigamoney, 2022). Southern African partners raised questions on why European organisations were leaving, and the implications of their exit on the support and partnerships cultivated over the years. Peres (2017) states that funders and grantees do not always acknowledge exiting or defunding as a part of a natural process of philanthropy and investment life cycle. European and Southern African partners,[1] mostly former grantees of the four European funders, discussed the realities of exiting and the importance of engaging in another form of partnership, that of North-South solidarity (Green-Thompson, 2017). The strategic discussion shifted to the continued presence of development agencies and partnerships through notions of solidarity and shifting power to the global South (Judge, 2017).

Through examining African philanthropy, it becomes apparent that the concepts of giving and sharing resources transcend cultural boundaries and have deep historical roots, as emphasised by Fowler (2010), Mati (2011), Moyo and Ramsamy (2014), and Murisa (2018). Solidarity has been expressed differently across diverse spaces and contexts, including in African communities, religious communities, and movement building. Scholars (Aina & Moyo, 2013; Mati, 2016; Murisa, 2018) highlighted solidarity as a primary form of African philanthropy. The horizontal approach of gifting is based on organic grassroots-based responses and processes and a platform of giving by communities to many other people (many-to-many) as well as a community to an individual (many-to-one) (AGN, 2013). African practices like *ilima* in Ndebele and *letsema* in Setswana (working the land collectively) demonstrate how people stand together to give their time and support towards the well-being of others. African forms of solidarity

[1] Consent to name specific organisations is awaited, as some have withdrawn from the process.

are expressed as giving and caring in response to another community member's needs. Notions of solidarity and reciprocity among African societies are also identified, accompanied by relational building (Moyo, 2011).

Regional and sectoral expressions of solidarity have been highlighted in literature, demonstrating the various ways in which solidarity is translated and manifests in different contexts, reflecting historical, cultural, and geopolitical dynamics. In examining Latin America, Sibechi (2004) highlights the importance of community movements and indigenous communities in forging solidarity against economic injustices. In Asia, writings underscore the role of NGOs and grassroots activism in expressing solidarity on issues ranging from environmental concerns to labour rights (Piper & Uhlin, 2004; Alagappa, 2004). Asia's solidarity is shaped by Confucian values and regional collaborations like ASEAN, while the Pacific emphasises oceanic interconnectedness and regional organisations like the Pacific Islands Forum. These regional discussions emphasise the necessity of context-specific analyses to understand the unique dynamics of solidarity movements. Moreover, the influence of different actors in shaping solidarity is a central theme explored by scholars. In Africa, Pan-Africanism and regional organisations like the African Union embody solidarity in opposition to colonial legacies and for economic development (AU, 2002). Scholars analyse solidarity within the European Union, considering how it balances economic cooperation with challenges like the refugee crisis (Habermas, 2001; Sangiovanni, 2013). The United States demonstrates solidarity through civil rights movements, labour activism, and debates on social issues (Civil Rights Movement 1954-1968). Each region expresses solidarity uniquely, navigating challenges and fostering unity in diverse social, economic, and political contexts.

Solidarity manifests uniquely across various sectors, reflecting shared goals and collective efforts. In feminist movements, scholars like Hooks

emphasise intersectionality, seen in global movements like #MeToo and International Women's Day (hooks, 2000). Political solidarity involves unified advocacy for rights, evident in historical women's suffrage movements and contemporary battles for reproductive and LGBTQ+ rights (Young, 1990). Education sees solidarity in initiatives for equal access and collective learning (Freire, 1970). Labour movements showcase solidarity through strikes and global efforts to address unfair labour practices. Black feminist movements focus on the intersections of race and gender, evident in movements like #SayHerName (Crenshaw, 1989; Davis,1981). Across these sectors, solidarity emerges as a powerful force driving social change and challenging systemic inequalities.

Solidarity activities are to some degree 'organised' or facilitated by 'organisations', even though the types of organisations involved may differ (Fernandez, Lahusen & Kousis, 2020). Through engaging in the expressions of solidarity in the different spaces, what has been highlighted is the need for organisation and mobilisation for collective action (Sotiropoulou, 2016). Southern-based intermediary organisations, which are the ideal players to organise for collective action and solidarity, are increasingly being constrained by the resource dependency of the Global South on the Global North and/or on European partners (WACSI, 2021). Southern NGOs maintain the status quo of having transactional funding arrangements when people contend that transactional funding must evolve into transformational funds that enable responsiveness to local contexts (Judge, 2017). Moyo and Imafidon (2021, p.6) further assert that "structurally, international development funding arrangements favour Western intermediary organisations at the expense of local African CSOs, in particular, NGOs". This further perpetuates power imbalances and skews funding approaches that reduce funding to traditional approaches rather than providing direct funding to local CSOs (WACSI, 2021).

This research, therefore, explored practically how an organisation expresses solidarity and how this is contributing to decolonisation. ACT Ubumbano was utilised to respond to the research question: “How does ACT Ubumbano’s approach contribute to expressions of solidarity and advance the decolonisation agenda within philanthropy?” The research examined the extent of ACT Ubumbano’s solidarity expressions. ACT Ubumbano, as an organisation, introduced innovative approaches to support and amplify social justice struggles in Southern Africa. Significantly, ACT Ubumbano positioned itself as a proponent of “doing” development differently by centering communities facing injustice, addressing root causes, and actively demonstrating solidarity with struggles for social justice (Anthony, 2019). The study explored the multifaceted manifestations of solidarity within ACT Ubumbano’s historical operations, aiming to assess the depth and impact of its expression.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Amongst the consequences of colonisation and globalisation, Southern Africa experienced unequal power structures that continue to underpin inequality, marginalisation and injustice. Almost half of the population lives on USD1.00 per day, even on land and territories rich in natural resources such as gold, diamonds, silver, copper, timber, gas and oil (Pritchett, 2006; Ravallion, 2007; WOMIN, 2020;). These resources are generally exploited by multinational corporations in concert with governments and members of the ruling elites, largely for-profit and typically without the consent of those living on, and being sustained by, the land, waterways and forests.

Philanthropy has been essential in African-European relations (Thomsson, 2006). Many European organisations participated in the liberation movements of various African countries, basing their operations on solidarity with African people. Furthermore, at the “end” of colonialism, many European partners opposed injustice and supported efforts to increase the

standard of many people's living conditions (Thomsson, 2006). However, criticism has been directed at the European solidarity operations for being paternalistic and based on colonial institutions of dominance and oppression (Matthews & Nqaba, 2016). Dambisa Moyo's "Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa" (2009) underscores the perception that donors were often seen as superior to recipients. However, the rhetoric on development aid has shifted with an increasing focus on partnership, collaboration, cooperation, solidarity, equity, community engagement, inclusivity, and participatory approaches (Gibson, 2018). This new language and related paradigm shift nonetheless continue to be informed by colonial structures and require further significant shifts, challenging attitudes toward aid, disrupting power, addressing effectiveness, and demonstrating solidarity.

Although solidarity is not a new phenomenon, the emergence of new or revived forms of reciprocity, giving, and sharing based on this concept have reignited several discussions within philanthropy. Conversations on how to stand effectively in solidarity are ongoing, and questions are being raised as to whether philanthropy is solidarity, what the value of solidarity is, whether solidarity empowers communities, and who informs the kinds of solidarity. Questions arise regarding how the discourse on solidarity contributes to advancing the decolonisation of philanthropy, amid concerns that focusing on solidarity may divert attention and resources from addressing systemic issues and structural inequalities perpetuating injustice within philanthropy.

The gap in research lies in the lack of understanding regarding how expressions of solidarity influence philanthropy and how these expressions can be restructured to address colonial legacies within the sector in Southern Africa. This gap represents an area where further exploration and analysis are needed to develop a comprehensive understanding of alternative models of philanthropy that prioritise equitable relationships and

empower local communities in the region. This area remains relatively unexplored in current discourse and practice. Breeze (2016), Edwards (2008) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) have highlighted the need for research to explore how philanthropy can be reshaped to address power imbalances and historical injustices, particularly in post-colonial contexts like Southern Africa. This study aims to investigate expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy. Moreover, the study examined collaborative efforts between Europe and Africa aimed at fostering solidarity and decolonising. Drawing on various expressions of solidarity, the research explores how adopting decolonial approaches in the sector can facilitate transformative change, nurture trust, and cultivate a deeper sense of solidarity.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In this research study, the primary objective is on deepening the understanding of solidarity within philanthropy as a significant aspect of the ongoing decolonisation agenda in Southern Africa.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To explore the expression of solidarity in the context of Southern African philanthropy.
- To analyse decolonisation forms and approaches emerging in the context of philanthropy; and
- To assess ACT Ubumbano's expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study explored the following questions:

- What are the existing expressions of solidarity within philanthropy in Southern Africa?

- What are the forms and approaches that emerge within philanthropy as a response to decolonisation efforts?
- How does ACT Ubumbano's approach contribute to expressions of solidarity and advance the decolonisation agenda within philanthropy?

1.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

The research contributes to literature, theory, and methodology within philanthropy. Gibson (2018) contends that various participatory approaches and frameworks have been developed in fields such as health, democracy, and education, yet the philanthropy sector is not fully developed processes. This deficiency underscores the need to evaluate participatory approaches from other industries and formulate frameworks applicable to philanthropy, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge.

The study expands theoretical frameworks and concepts, including "Expressions of Solidarity" and the "Decolonisation of Philanthropy", enhancing the understanding of social dynamics, power structures, and historical legacies. Introducing solidarity as a pivotal tool for decolonisation within philanthropy is critical. This perspective views decolonisation as a transformative process requiring practical changes within philanthropic practices. Decolonisation challenges the prevailing paradigms by underscoring the significance of local agency and knowledge in philanthropic efforts, countering historical Western-centric approaches. The research brings to light marginalised narratives by focusing on expressions of solidarity and decolonial approaches often overlooked in traditional philanthropic studies.

The analysis seeks to generate insights into the dynamics of solidarity-based interventions and their effectiveness in addressing local challenges. It advocates for decolonial research methodologies respecting local knowledge systems and incorporating the voices of marginalised

communities, thereby contributing to more equitable research practices. The integration of social capital and social justice theories provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how marginalised groups access resources and navigate systemic obstacles within philanthropy.

Methodologically, the research employs qualitative analysis to explore expressions of solidarity, organisational factors, and the impact of philanthropy on decolonisation efforts. The case study approach using ACT Ubumbano enriches the study by providing specific and contextualised examination of a philanthropic organisation, allowing for a deep exploration of how solidarity is embodied and how decolonisation is actively pursued in philanthropy. The research findings will advocate for policy changes, promoting shifts in philanthropic practices towards fairer and more locally driven approaches. Moreover, it has the potential to inspire policy changes fostering cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, and the recognition of historically marginalised perspectives within philanthropy.

1.7 REPORT OUTLINE

The research report comprises six chapters, as explained below.

Chapter 1: The introduction to the study provides the objectives and significance of the study and ends with an overview of the study thereby outlining the layout of the research report.

Chapter 2: The literature review and theoretical framework discuss social capital and social justice theories as the foundations of the research report. A review of related literature on African Philanthropy, interpretations of solidarity, decolonisation, provide conceptual clarifications of key terms and a discussion of insights, positions, and arguments.

Chapter 3: Research methodology discusses the research design and process used in the study. It offers information on the qualitative methods employed and includes the ethical statement that guided the researcher and the study's limitations.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents empirical findings of the research.

Chapter 5: The chapter discusses empirical research findings and analysis of the findings.

Chapter 6: The final chapter provides the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws on critical literature examining philanthropy, particularly within the African context, alongside concepts of solidarity and decolonisation. It explores how notions of solidarity, particularly in response to local and global challenges, intersect with practices in philanthropy. Analysing philanthropy through the lens of both solidarity and decolonisation, this chapter highlights pathways towards more inclusive, equitable, and transformative approaches to addressing societal issues and promoting positive social change. Social capital and social justice theories were used as the theoretical foundations of the research. The review sought to establish a theoretical foundation for understanding the social dynamism that shapes giving practices in the region and how philanthropy can contribute to addressing systematic inequalities and promoting social justice in Southern Africa. Examining social capital theory shed light on how the social connections, networks, and trust within communities play a crucial role in philanthropy (Putnam, 2000). The discussion on social justice theory expanded understanding of how philanthropy can be a tool that challenges existing power structures and assists in addressing the underlying causes of inequality in Southern Africa (Sen, 1999).

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 African Philanthropy

According to Payton and Moody (2008, p.27), philanthropy is “voluntary action for public good”. The conventional understanding of philanthropy is about charity and voluntarism (Wilkinson-Maphosa & Fowler, 2004). Moyo and Ramsamy (2014) assert that the simplest meaning of philanthropy is

the love for humanity. Murisa (2018) elaborates that in Western expressions, philanthropy is referred to as “practical benevolence”. Until recently, the Western or global narrative of philanthropy was the most well-known approach (Fowler & Mati, 2019). Despite significant advocacy and knowledge building on the continent, the African form of philanthropy has remained largely invisible and obscured by Western notions and normative interpretations (Everatt, Habib, Maharaj, & Nyar, 2005). This invisibility and obscurity have resulted in a limited understanding of African philanthropy’s unique characteristics and contributions. However, there is a growing recognition of the need to shift the narrative and acknowledge the diverse forms of philanthropy and the potential impact and transformative power of African philanthropy in addressing the continent’s developmental challenge (Brooks & Millstone, 2009).

Mohamed (2023, p.4) asserts that, “the dominant global narrative of philanthropy – top-down, transactional, professionalised and monetary based – remains unchanged; and African philanthropy narratives continue to remain marginalised”. Western philanthropy may be questioned because of beliefs that it benefits the privileged, creating a divide where the giver is in the global North and the recipient is primarily presumed to be in the global South. For example, Judge (2017) states the importance of relationships in dealing with poverty and injustice in discussions on relational theology. This resonates with the emphasis placed on preserving the humanity and dignity of every human in confronting poverty. Moyo and Ramsamy posit that, “…at the heart of Africa’s development trajectory, development ought to be transformative, sustainable, and essentially based on Africa’s institutions, informed by its knowledge systems, and supported by its resources” (2014, p.657). To uphold and sustain African philanthropy beyond financial approaches and focus on building strong relationships and partnerships within Africa is emphasised (Johnson, 2007). This relational theory recognises that true development cannot be achieved solely through monetary means but requires a deep understanding and respect for African

cultures, traditions, and values. In prioritising the preservation of humanity and dignity, and by championing Africa's own institutions and knowledge systems, sustainable and transformative development can be achieved on the continent. Through these holistic approaches, African philanthropy can thrive and make a lasting impact in addressing poverty and inequality (Osili, 2019). African philanthropy is a value-based system of giving and gifting for social good (Johnson, 2007; Moyo, 2011). African philanthropy includes norms and forms of reciprocity, trust, and solidarity (2019). Furthermore, giving emerges across socioeconomic classes and formal or informal individual and collaborative approaches beyond financial support. Moyo and Ramsamy (2014, p.656) explain that African philanthropy is premised on "notions of solidarity, interconnectedness, interdependencies, reciprocity, mutuality, and a continuum of relationships". According to Fowler and Mati (2019, p.22), "African philanthropy is positioned in two forms, relational and transactional. It is driven by unwritten social norms and morals that call on giving from a place of building relationships with minimal expectation of returns or repayments". The transactional aspect is based on the social expectation of returning the favour and helping when support is required (Mahomed, 2020).

African philanthropy, rooted in the interconnectedness of individuals anchored in the philosophy of "Ubuntu" underscores the importance of communal well-being as the foundation for individual prosperity. "Ubuntu" provides a fertile ground for understanding African philanthropy. According to Moyo and Ramsamy (2014), as a phenomenon, Ubuntu highlights the ties and connections between people-expressed through the statements *'umuntu, ngumuntu, ngabantu'* or *motho ke motho ka batho* which means 'I am because we are'. Scholars, such as Mogobe Ramose note, 'Ubuntu" or "botho' understood as being human (humanness/humanity) and a humane (respectful and polite) attitude towards other human beings which constitute the core or central meaning of the aphorism; motho ke motho ka batho-recognition of a person's humanity through the recognition of another's"

(Ramose, 2015, p.70). Philanthropy is deeply ingrained in African customs, culture and traditions, characterised by communal support, reciprocity, and social cohesion (Dandala & Moroka, 1990). The practice of giving back and helping others is thus not seen as an individual act, but rather as a collective responsibility (Sarkis & Daou, 2013). African philanthropy serves as a powerful tool for strengthening communities and promoting social development (Akyeampong, Moyo, Layode, & Sall, 2019).

This section provides valuable insights into the landscape of African philanthropy, offering a nuanced perspective on its relational, reciprocal, transactional, locally and culturally embedded nature. The absence of explicit connections to expressions of solidarity and decolonisation, central to the study, raises questions about how the discussed elements relate to the broader theme of challenging historical power dynamics and fostering collaborative culturally sensitive practices in philanthropy within Southern Africa. Literature on African philanthropy reveals how initiatives that leverage existing social capital can foster more effective community engagement and sustainable development. Putnam (2000) observes that in recognising and enhancing social connections within communities, philanthropy becomes a catalyst for positive change. Coleman's (1988) emphasis on community networks and trust and leveraging existing social capital can foster more effective community engagement and sustainable development. Furthermore, Putnam's (2000) perspective on associational life as a form of social investment resonates in the African context. Viewing philanthropy as an investment in building social capital aligns with the goal of strengthening community ties and fostering collective action for positive social change. Sen's (2009) argument that philanthropy should enhance the capabilities of individuals and communities aligns with the broader goal of addressing systemic injustices. In the context of African philanthropy, this means focusing on initiatives that not only provide immediate relief but also empower communities to access resources and opportunities, promoting sustainable development. Freire's (1970) ideas on participatory

development resonate in African philanthropy discussions. Freire emphasises the importance of empowering local communities through participatory decision-making processes. This approach aligns with social justice theory, ensuring the agency and voice of beneficiaries in philanthropy.

2.2.2 Solidarity: Interpretations Manifestation, Expressions

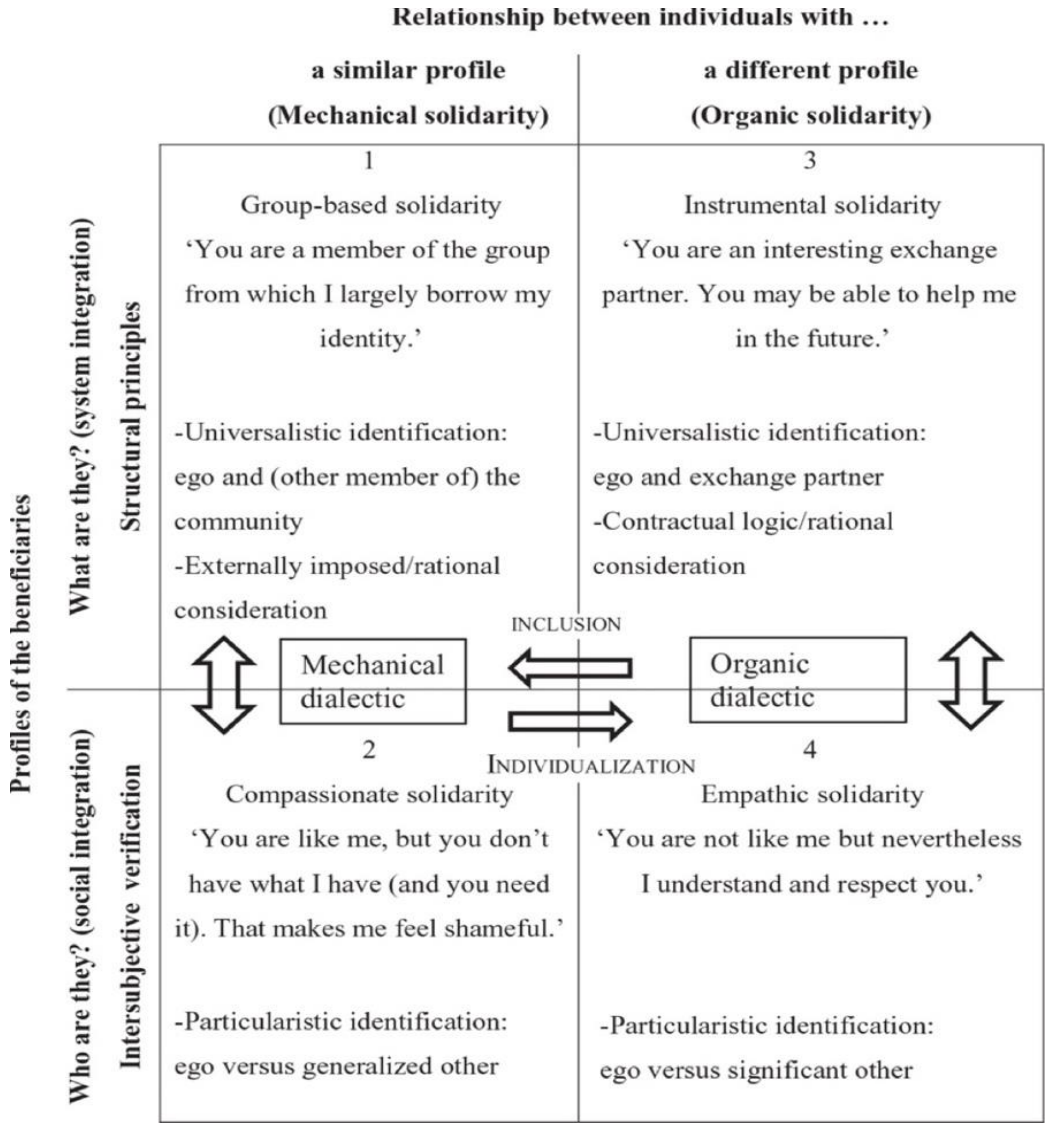
Solidarity is defined as deep and enduring attachments between individuals in a society, which leads to a socially acceptable way of living and social order (Douwes, Stuttaford & London, 2018). Solidarity is a context-dependent phenomenon that influences how people behave toward individuals with whom they have relationships and those without them (Borner, 2013). The original meaning of the word “solidarity” is acting together or “togetherness” (Freire, 1993). The law of obligations is where “solidarity” first appeared. An early example of such an obligation was common in the Roman Empire, where those in debt would rely on others in the community to assist them. Family members were required to provide the total amount, and the group was responsible for meeting the person’s obligation. Walzer (1983) in his seminal work “Spheres of Justice”, discusses solidarity as grounded in shared experiences and a sense of collective responsibility. Taylor’s (2003) concept of solidarity emphasises the importance of a shared narrative that fosters a sense of belonging and mutual understanding.

Durkheim (1979) presents solidarity in two forms, mechanical and organic. Mechanical solidarity emphasises the linkage based on similarities and interrelatedness. This means that solidarity is an inherent element of society. The unifying power of the group, together with their norms, traditions and practices, is highlighted as a central component in Durkheim’s social solidarity theory as it generates mechanical solidarity (Alfirdaus, Hiariej & Adeney-Risakotta, 2015; Parsons,1937). Organic solidarity

emphasises differences between parties who are in accord. Thijssen (2012) criticises Durkheim's theory of solidarity as unable to demonstrate integration with modern organic solidarity. Thijssen (2012) further articulates that mechanical solidarity was reportedly successful in pre-modernity; organic solidarity emerged as much more individualistic based on interrelated differences and interdependence in modernity.

Drawing from Durkheim and merging with recognition and redistribution contemporary commentators, Honneth and Fraser (2003) and Thijssen (2012) highlighted the importance of feedback of dialectic mechanisms which enabled four types of solidarity: group-based, compassionate, instrumental and empathic. Group-based solidarity, collective attribution, group pressure drives individuals: "You are a member of the group from which I largely borrow my identity". Secondly, compassionate solidarity is driven by individual and collective representation: "You are like me, but you don't have what I have (and you need it). That makes me feel shameful". Thirdly, instrumental solidarity is called the instrumental solidarity, where rational self-consciousness and individual choice drives individuals to be in solidarity: "You are an interesting exchange partner. You may be able to help me in the future". Lastly, the emphatic solidarity is driven by the belief in the dignity of the individual and principle of mutual and unconditional respect: "You are not like me but nevertheless I understand and respect you" (Thijssen, 2012, p.459). Table 1 below presents the topology of solidarity.

Table 1: A Topology of Solidarity (Thijssen, 2012, p.459)



Honneth and Fraser (2003) discuss the conditions that enable manifestation of solidarity. They argue that solidarity arises when individuals reciprocally recognise each other's worth and dignity. They conceptualise solidarity to be closely tied to the idea of mutual recognition among individuals within society. In this sense, solidarity is not merely a moral or altruistic sentiment, but a social and political force deeply embedded in the dynamics of social relationships. Honneth identifies three spheres of recognition that contribute to the formation of solidarity: 1) love and intimacy in the personal sphere, 2)

legal and political rights in the societal sphere, and 3) social esteem in the cultural sphere. Solidarity, according to Honneth, involves the collective struggle for the establishment and protection of these spheres, ensuring that individuals have the conditions necessary for their self-realisation. Fraser (2000) posits that struggles for justice involve various actors, including marginalised communities, NGOs, and political institutions, each contributing to the formation and success of solidarity movements.

Literature offers a rich tapestry of insights on expressions of solidarity from different sectors. Faith, feminist and black feminist movements, and political spaces offer diverse perspectives on expressions of solidarity. For instance. in religious settings, More (1961) states that religion is the mother of all philanthropy. The Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI) highlights how Africa is the world's most religiously devout continent, with Islam and Christianity being significant role-players (Akyeampong, Moyo, Layode & Sall, 2019). The Association of Evangelicals in Africa has expressed solidarity as the members joining in common concern to live and proclaim their faith amongst all nations and peoples, seeking holiness, justice and transformation at every level: individual, family, community and culture and their approach to standing with the most marginalised (AEA, 2023). Solidarity, as experienced in faith communities, is the embodied norms of care and support as instructed in their sacred texts. Christian churches traditionally assist the poor, sick and destitute individuals through support funds using donations, voluntary work or service, as well as philanthropy actions facilitated by their members (Garrafa, 2014).

Feminist movements around the world have demonstrated many forms of solidarity in resisting women's socio-economic inequalities, power and the pursuit of gender equality (Wickström, et al., 2021). Global movements such as #MeToo have demonstrated solidarity by providing a space for survivors of sexual harassment to share their stories and push for structural change

(Hussen & Shefer, 2023). Flexible feminist funding and support has also been highlighted as a form of solidarity for it enables collective action. The Global Fund for Women provides flexible funding intended to act as a vehicle that cultivates a groundswell of socially conscious activists who challenge the power and privilege afforded to the relatively few into equity and equality for all (GFFW, 2021). Solidarity in feminism movements encompasses a collective commitment to unity and support among individuals and communities in the pursuit of gender equality and social justice. Central to this concept is the recognition of intersectionality, understanding that women's struggles are interconnected with various factors such as race, class and ethnicity. The notion involves mutual support, where diverse voices are amplified, and the diverse challenges faced by women are acknowledged and addressed collectively. It emphasises collaborative action to challenge and transform societal norms and institutions that perpetuate gender-based discrimination. The GFFW centres empowerment, particularly economic, social and political empowerment, aiming to uplift women and contribute to broader societal development. GFFW upon realising that only 1,6% of the traditional philanthropy funds are distributed to women and girls' programmes, deliberately developed a flexible fund to support social justice work which covers operational costs and provides multi-year unrestricted funds (GFFW, 2022). The grantees are encouraged to lead in defining priorities and their direction for action (GFFW, 2021).

Similarly, the Black feminist movement has expressed solidarity by advocating for the rights of Black women while acknowledging the interconnectedness of their struggles with other marginalised groups (Sheehy & Nayak, 2020). Hooks (1997) investigated the intersectionality of feminism, emphasising the significance of solidarity in addressing the interconnectedness of race, class, and gender. The movement has promoted intersectionality, recognising the simultaneous experiences of oppression based on race, gender, sexuality and more (Crenshaw, 2013;

Junco & Limonta, 2020). Through coalition building, they have collaborated with various social justice movements to amplify marginalised voices and address systemic inequalities. Black feminists have encouraged allyship, amplifying marginalised voices, advocating for policy changes, raising awareness about specific challenges, making cultural contributions, engaging in grassroots activism, and challenging patriarchal norms (Jones, 2019; Tamala, 2006). Flexible funding has been ensured through diverse strategies, including grassroots organising and collaboration with other organisations and movements, allowing the movement to address the unique needs of marginalised groups and foster solidarity cuts across communities regardless of race, social status or ethnicity (Crenshaw, 2013; Kagal & Latchford, 2020; Sudbury, 2005). This reflects their commitment to social justice and the interconnected liberation of all marginalised groups.

The African Grantmaker's Network (AGN) framework provides for "fundamental structures around the essential act of giving and focuses on the nature of the giver and the beneficiary" (AGN, 2013, p.7). Philanthropy and solidarity can intersect but are not identical; while philanthropy often involves giving resources to address social issues, solidarity implies a deeper connection and collective action in support of a cause or community, The AGN framework provides a structured approach to giving. While the AGN model can contribute to solidarity efforts by facilitating coordinated giving, solidarity is a broader concept that encompasses a deeper and more holistic approach to social change and community empowerment. Expressions of solidarity can be observed through the same model of giving approaches including one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-one and many-to-many interactions. These expressions of solidarity reflect the interconnectedness and shared struggles among the region's individuals, communities, and social movements, as depicted by AGN (AGN, 2013, p.8).



Figure 1: Framework for Considering African Philanthropy Models (AGN, 2013, p.8)

One-to-One as a component of philanthropy and solidarity involves personal connections and direct support between individuals. It can include empathy, mutual assistance and collaboration between people who share everyday experiences or goals. Murisa (2013, p.273) terms these the "underground forms of solidarity which tend to be more organically embedded in everyday practices".

Many-to-Many solidarity involves networks, alliances and collaborations among multiple groups or organisations. It recognises the power of collective efforts and shared goals. Many-to-many solidarity can foster broader social movements, coalition-building, and collective action for transformative change. It allows for exchanging knowledge, resources and experiences among diverse actors.

One-to-Many forms of solidarity refer to collective action or support where a single individual or a small group takes the initiative, such as activism,

advocacy, allyship and philanthropic efforts to address historical inequalities and empower marginalised communities. It involves a sense of responsibility, empathy and a desire to address systemic issues or promote social change.

Many-to-One solidarity occurs when multiple individuals or groups come together to support or advocate for a single cause or individual. It often involves collective action and mobilisation to challenge oppressive systems or address specific injustices. Examples include mass protests, social movements, or campaigns demanding political change, social justice or human rights (AGN,2013, p.8).

This study draws extensively from discussions on solidarity, revealing it as a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon rooted in deep social attachments. The exploration leverages key terms such as togetherness, reciprocal behaviour, mechanical and organic classifications, and the pivotal roles of reciprocal recognition, intersectionality, and coalition building. The exploration of spheres of recognition reveals the collective struggle inherent in solidarity, while flexibility in funding mechanisms and a commitment to mutual respect emerge as crucial components. Across diverse contexts, from faith communities to feminist and Black feminist movements, expressions of solidarity manifest in unity, amplification of voice, shared narratives, individual and collective commitment to social justice, emphasising the interconnected liberation of all marginalised groups. In weaving through these terms, the research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of solidarity's commitment to building social capital, social justice, collective well-being, and shared values in societal interactions.

2.2.3 Decolonisation in Philanthropy

The postcolonial landscape of Southern Africa continues to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, not just in the political and economic realms, but also in the sphere of philanthropy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mbembe, 2001; Tilston, 2014). Decolonising philanthropy seeks to dismantle historical power imbalances, shift away from Western-dominated practices, and empower local communities. Decolonisation is defined as a transformative process aiming to dismantle power structures and practices within philanthropy that perpetuate colonial legacies and undermine local agency. This entails challenging the dominance of externally imposed agendas, top-down approaches, and dependency-breeding relationships, ultimately paving the way for a more equitable and self-driven development paradigm (Breeze, 2021; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mbembe, 2001; Villanueva, 2021; Dlakavu, Mathebula, & Mkhize, 2022). The decolonisation agenda extends beyond individual initiatives but aims for systemic change within philanthropy.

Decolonising philanthropy is an evolving concept with active contributions from diverse voices and new perspectives continue to emerge (Breeze, 2021). A prominent scholar in post-colonial studies and African studies, Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013) offers insightful perspectives on decolonising philanthropy in Africa and challenging neo-colonial legacies. Central to Ndlovu-Gatsheni's approach is the need for African agency, critiquing donor-driven agendas and promoting ethical partnerships. Echoing Rodney's (1972) and Nyang'anyi's (2018) calls for reckoning, Ndlovu-Gatsheni insists on acknowledging colonial resource extraction, cultural erasure, and imposed development models. Reparations and dismantling structural inequalities are crucial steps towards equitable future trajectories. Ndlovu-Gatsheni's vision prioritises "deprovincializing" Africa by elevating local knowledge systems and indigenous practices. This is in contrast with top-down, donor-driven models that perpetuate dependency. Ndlovu-Gatsheni advocates for ethical partnerships, rooted in

respect for local wisdom and agency. Ndlovu-Gatsheni highlights the imperative to address historical injustices, demanding acknowledgment of colonial impacts and reparations. However, decolonisation demands confronting past injustices. He calls for a critical analysis of development narratives, exposing power imbalances and neocolonial influences. In essence, his vision charts a transformative path toward equitable and sustainable development in Africa, centered on justice, self-reliance, and authentic progress.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2013) vision resonates with broader decolonial scholars and contributes to the various debates on the precise implications and mechanisms for decolonisation. Biko (1972) and Mamdani (1996) call for the need to redefine legitimacy and expertise, challenging the prevailing notion that expertise solely resides with external actors and fostering recognition of local knowledge and capacities. Fanon (1961) and Mbembe (2010) emphasise reclaiming agency and self-determination, shifting power dynamics and promoting community-driven initiatives that prioritise local priorities and decision-making processes. Scholars Rodney (1972) and Nyang'anyi, (2018) posit that addressing historical injustices and inequalities is critical in reckoning with the impact of colonialism on resource distribution, development trajectories, and cultural hegemony. Amadiume (2016) and Mkandawire (2005) champion cultural sensitivity and context-specific approaches, acknowledging the diverse cultural realities and histories of African communities and moving beyond one-size-fits-all solutions.

Localisation and shifting power are areas that keep emerging as part of the decolonisation discussions (Alliance, 2022; Gibson, 2018; WACSI, 2021). Localisation emphasises the importance of placing decision-making, resource allocation, and implementation processes in the hands of local communities (WACSI, 2021). Localisation rejects the model of Western-centred interventions and instead champions the primacy of local communities in shaping their own development trajectories. Escobar (2011)

and Shutt (2016) advocate for moving beyond tokenistic participation and towards genuine, community-led development initiatives. Escobar (2011) argues that true decolonisation demands a shift from development ‘done for’ communities to development ‘done with’ communities. In the first instance, power must shift from distant donors to local communities. This means placing decision-making authority, resource allocation, and project design firmly in the hands of those most affected by development initiatives (Freire, 1970). Top-down externally imposed agendas give way to bottom-up processes that actively listen to and respect local voices. Building local capacity is essential for self-reliance and sustained progress. Skills development, knowledge sharing, and institutional strengthening within communities provide the foundation for effective and long-term initiatives. Furthermore, collaboration with grassroots organisations, NGOs, and indigenous knowledge holders is necessary. These actors possess invaluable expertise and understanding of their contexts (Dinbabo, 2003).

The concept of shifting the power or shifting port within the decolonisation agenda involves a fundamental reconfiguration of authority and influence. Shifting power focuses on reconfiguring the traditional hierarchical relationships within the philanthropic landscape. Shifting power embodies the acknowledgment that colonial legacies have perpetuated unequal power structures, particularly within philanthropy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). This shift recognises the need to redistribute power dynamics in various realms, including international relations, philanthropy, and governance. Shutt (2016) argues for a power shift in international development, emphasising the importance of empowering local communities and organisations rather than perpetuating top-down approaches. This paradigm challenges traditional hierarchical structures and fosters more equitable partnerships. Shifting power involves challenging donor dominance by reassessing traditional power dynamics between funders and recipients, promoting greater accountability and transparency (Moyo, 2019; Fernandes, 2017). Amplifying local voices is important in ensuring that

communities have influence in determining their development priorities and shaping philanthropic interventions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Ratele, 2020; WACSI, 2021). Investing in social capital recognises the importance of local networks, trust structures, and traditional governance systems in driving sustainable change (Mbeki, 2020; Bourdieu, 1986).

Shifting the power dynamics within philanthropy requires rethinking how funding is allocated and managed (Daniels & Buhles, 2020). Decolonising this sphere challenges ingrained power imbalances, shifting away from Western-dominated funding streams and externally imposed agendas (Ibrahim, 2015; Narayan,2002). The Brundtland Commission, formally known as the World Commission on Environment and Development, was convened by the United Nations in 1983 with the aim of addressing pressing global environmental and developmental issues (Brundtland Commission, 1987). The Commission's seminal report, "Our Common Future", released in 1987, introduced the concept of sustainable development to the global discourse but also shed light on the disparities and power differentials between various actors in the global development arena. The Brundtland Commission Report (1987) clarified how capital deficit, developing economies, and underdeveloped nations, mainly in Africa and the global South, are weaker or peripheral partners who receive funds and have limited privileges, power and access. The stronger core partners are mainly funders in the global North and have greater access and define global development's priorities.

Moyo and Imafidon (2021, p.24) state how donor practices remain tied to the "historic coloniality of access" as the use of intermediaries from the West remains widespread. This is demonstrated by the 2015 report produced by the Foundation Center in cooperation with the African Grantmakers' Affinity Group, which emphasises that "overall, 12 of the top recipients of Africa-focused giving in 2012 were headquartered outside Africa. All but three of these 12 organisations were global in focus, led by the World Health

Organisation" (Lawrence, Koob, & Mutima, 2015, p.7). The assertion on historic coloniality of access is further affirmed by the OECD (2020) view that in 2018, 93% of the funding to civil society was allocated to International NGOs and donor-country-based civil society, while only 7% was given directly to partner country-based organisations. This indicates how the decolonisation agenda needs to be challenged as funders' interests are frequently at the centre of philanthropy (Sakue-Collins, 2021).

Colonisation represents a historical legacy marked by dominance, cultural imposition and injustice. Rooted in social justice theory, Rodrigues (2019) argues that philanthropy must actively address historical injustices, acknowledging and rectifying the impacts of colonial legacies on marginalised communities. This perspective aligns with Sen's (2009) notion of social justice as a foundational principle, calling for equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Localisation and shifting power also aligns with the broader discussions on social justice and ethical philanthropy. Scholars like Rob Reich, author of "Just Giving", highlight the ethical considerations in philanthropy, emphasising the need to reevaluate power dynamics and ensure that philanthropic practices contribute to societal well-being. This ethical lens reinforces the essence of shifting the power in promoting fairness and justice. Mbeki (2020) advocates for the recognition of social capital as a catalyst for community-driven development within the decolonisation framework. Drawing from Bourdieu's (1986) social capital theory, Mbeki highlights the potential of social networks and community relationships to drive sustainable change.

2.2.4 ACT Ubumbano

The study sought to derive insights from ACT Ubumbano on its initiatives that contribute to solidarity and decolonisation of the sector in Southern Africa. Scholars acknowledge the critical role of the CSOs in facilitating people and communities to know and claim rights, contribute to the

discourse, and implement pro-social approaches (Brown & Ferris, 2004; Dinbabo, 2003; Fowler, 2014; Gibson, 2018). ACT Ubumbano emerged from a process of reflection brought about by reduced aid, funding pressures, and new local and global developments; these provided the impetus to review the traditional development paradigm and partnerships where money has been the central focus of collaboration (Judge, 2017; Sigamoney, 2022). The four European Protestant development agencies are faith-based and the Southern African members[2] consist of faith-based and development CSOs, most of whom have historically been funded by their European counterparts (Sigamoney, 2022).

Donor exit strategies refer to the planned withdrawal of financial and organisational support by external funders from philanthropic projects or organisations (Hayman, 2016). The development and implementation of these strategies have implications for power dynamics, local ownership, and the continuity of efforts towards decolonisation (Cochrane, 2021). External funding can have positive and negative implications for grassroots organisations and social movements in Southern Africa. While it provides necessary resources, it can also reinforce power imbalances and dependency on external actors. European and Southern African partners sought ways of responding to a changing reality and reviewed the current practice, as the Kopanong Principles were developed and adopted as a partnership framework. The Kopanong Principles provide an agreed framework for engaging in solidarity-based social justice work between European and Southern partners (Green-Thompson, 2017). Through the

[2] There was never a formal and finite list of local partners, but the space was open to any one of the local organisations supported by the European 8 (E8), later European 4 and then later European 3. A consolidated list is attached as the annexure of partners who participated and represent moments in the process. There were participants in the October 2017 consultation that ensured local partners stayed in the process and Advisory Group (AG) that was selected at the Solidarity Platform 2017. The Advisory Group comprised Benchmarks Foundation, Churchland Programme, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association, Southern African Faith Communities Environmental Institute; Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa, Ecumenical Service for Socio-Economic Transformation, Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action, and We Will Speak Out Southern Africa.

Kopanong Principles, the organisations sought to foster solidarity partnerships collaborative relationships between actors in the North and South based on mutual respect, equality, and shared responsibility. North and South solidarity partnership agreement was to prioritise local agency, knowledge exchange, power-sharing, and accountability, ultimately pursuing sustainable development through joint efforts. In 2017, European partners formally adopted the Kopanong Principles based on the firm belief that solidarity and unequal power relations are incompatible (Green-Thompson, 2017). The principles were termed “Kopanong” due to the venue at which they were discussed and formally adopted. Kopanong is a Sesotho word which means a “meeting place or where people are invited”. The principles send the broad message that solidarity is about a) dismantling the mechanics of this power, and b) producing new relations built on more equitable terms. The two main principles speak to solidarity and power: “We build our future partnership on solidarity, with a strong commitment to change the power dynamics and being more accountable to partners”, and the second is to move beyond transactional relationships: “We commit to promote a strategic and transformative relationship with Southern African partners, which go beyond transactional funding” (Kopanong Principles, 2017, p.1).

To conclude the literature review on African philanthropy, solidarity, and decolonisation, it becomes evident that common themes underscore the interconnectedness of power dynamics, community empowerment, intersectionality, cultural relevance, and transformative justice within philanthropic and solidarity efforts in Africa. However, significant gaps persist, including insufficient representation for marginalised groups, challenges in securing sustainable funding, unheard voices of the marginalised and limited exploration and amplifying solidarity efforts. Additionally, there is a need to address the tensions between traditional philanthropy and grassroots solidarity, while also considering the long-term impacts of interventions and the complexities of navigating diverse African

contexts and identities. Addressing these gaps requires ongoing commitment to centering the voices and priorities of marginalised communities, fostering meaningful collaboration, and reimagining philanthropy and solidarity approaches to challenge colonial legacies and advance social justice in Southern Africa.

2.3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Despite the valuable discussion, debates, critiques and aspirations driving the discourse on solidarity and decolonising philanthropy, gaps remain that call for the integration of social capital and social justice frameworks. As Escobar (2011) argues, current discussions often prioritise top-down interventions and fail to fully embrace the complexities of local agency and dynamics. This overlooks the crucial role of community-based networks of trust and reciprocity, a point echoed by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012) who emphasises the need for endogenous development models rooted in local social capital. Furthermore, Wing (2018) critiques the lack of attention to racial and colonial legacies embedded within funding practices, highlighting the need for social justice perspectives to address existing power imbalances and promote equitable partnerships. Integrating social capital and social justice frameworks may allow for movement beyond these gaps and, as Acharya and Shrivastava (2011) envision, forge a path towards “philanthropy with justice” that empowers communities, fosters genuine solidarity, and builds sustainable development on the foundations of shared agency and equitable social relations.

Social capital and social justice theoretical frameworks emerge as invaluable tools for driving the discourse on solidarity and decolonisation, towards meaningful, transformative action. The researcher therefore used the social capital and social justice theory. The social capital theory emphasises the importance of social networks, trust and reciprocity in promoting community development and addressing power imbalances

(Putnam, 2000). Rebuilding social capital also promotes a sense of belonging and inclusion, fostering a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and supported. Additionally, it encourages collaboration and cooperation among community members, leading to the development of innovative solutions to shared challenges (Pfefferbaum, Van Horn, & Pfefferbaum, 2017). It is important to recognise that social connections alone may not be sufficient to address power imbalances and systemic issues. A more comprehensive approach that focuses on social justice, structural change, or empowerment may be necessary to fully address the root causes of powerlessness within communities.

2.3.1 Social Capital Theory

In seeking to interrogate solidarity in philanthropy, this research commenced with an examination of social capital. Social capital, a concept rooted in sociology and political science, encompasses the social networks, norms, and trust that enable cooperation and collective action within societies (Bourdieu, 1983). Social capital was introduced by scholars like Émile Durkheim, who emphasised the role of social cohesion in maintaining societal order (Durkheim, 1893), and further developed by Pierre Bourdieu, who conceptualised social capital as part of a broader framework of capital, including economic and cultural forms (Bourdieu, 1986). James S. Coleman expanded on this by highlighting the importance of social networks and trust in achieving collective goals (Coleman, 1990). Robert D. Putnam's influential work, notably "Bowling Alone", brought attention to the decline of social connectedness in modern society and its implications for civic engagement and democracy (Putnam, 2000).

Field (2003) emphasises that central to the theory of social capital is that "relationships matter". Field's idea was that social networks are an asset, based on the assumption that through interaction, people can develop communities, build standard norms and values, morally commit to each

other, and define norms and beliefs. This will result in established networks of trust and support, issues of belonging and being part of a community and trust. Adkins (2011) observes that Bourdieu argued against a purely economic understanding of capital within a broadly Marxist framework, thus suggesting that economic, human/cultural, and social are the three related forms. The term indicates that access to social capital, including physical, financial and human/cultural resources, results in advancement or development (Brown & Ferris, 2004). Rose (2000) and Kassahun (2010) observe that the prominence of social capital stimulates community development in the African context. Investing in social capital, intermediary players, and civil society have shown results in meaningful change, and this supports the core of community development.

Social capital's bonding, bridging and linking features are the most common distinctions of social capital when discussing the theory. Bonding social capital has been viewed as being a result of relationships among people who are closely connected, between people with comparable situations, for instance, neighbours, kinship, families and extended families (Bayat, 2005). This form of social capital enables people to "get by". Field (2003) states that bridging social capital creates connections and networks between disparate groups. These may be considered more fragile but are more likely to foster social inclusion and cohesion. Briggs, Holzamann and Jorgensen (1998), cited in Woolcock and Narayan (2000), note that bridging social capital is extensive and is mainly used to "get ahead". Linking social capital connections is about relationships between people in different hierarchies where other groups access various individuals, social standing, influence, resources and assets outside the community. Bayat (2007) maintains that central to linking social capital is the ability of the community to leverage resources and help from institutions outside their localities.

Fukuyama's (1999) assertion is that one of the primary weaknesses of the concept of social capital lies in the ongoing lack of consensus regarding its

measurement methodologies. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) explain that the failure of consensus on measuring it is primarily due to the multidimensional nature of social capital, which includes various levels and units of analysis. Dale and Newman (2008) assert that social capital is insufficient to ensure progress. However, intermediary players are presented as catalytic in the social capital debate. Proponents of this school of thought believe that for development to occur, capable intermediaries must use available social capital. This approach introduces key intermediary actors as the significant distinction between communities that "get by" and those that "get ahead". Intermediaries, such as community leaders, NGOs, and local government officials, play an important role in mobilising and leveraging social capital for the collective benefit of the community. They are seen as bridges between individuals and organisations, facilitating the exchange of resources, knowledge and opportunities. Effectively harnessing social capital, these intermediaries can empower communities to overcome challenges, address social issues, and achieve sustainable development. In contrast, communities without such intermediaries may struggle to effectively utilise their social capital and remain stagnant in their progress.

Social capital plays a role in building solidarity and disrupting colonial legacies. Through shared resources, collective action, and bridging divides, while also disrupting colonial legacies by challenging power dynamics, reclaiming agency, and shifting power through equitable partnerships. Understanding this duality is important for harnessing social capital's potential to build a future where solidarity thrives as well as for pushing back against the remnants of colonialism. Traditional philanthropic models rely on uneven networks of social capital, where knowledge, trust, and resources flow primarily from North to South. This reinforces dependency and limits the agency of local actors. To fully decolonise philanthropy, such networks must be analysed and reconfigured identifying existing forms of social capital within communities and leveraging them to build self-reliance

and endogenous development models. Building strong social capital empowers communities to fight for social justice.

Applying social capital theory to the study, all three elements of social capital theory—bridging, bonding, and linking—are relevant and interconnected. Bridging social capital is essential for fostering cooperation and collaboration across diverse groups within Southern African philanthropy, enabling different segments of society to come together in pursuit of common goals. Bonding social capital plays a key role in building trust and reciprocity within homogeneous groups, such as local communities or grassroots organisations, strengthening their capacity to mobilise resources and advocate for their interests (Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2000);. Additionally, linking social capital is vital for connecting these groups with institutional and organisational structures, such as government agencies or international NGOs, to access resources, support, and opportunities (Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2000). Understanding how bridging, bonding, and linking social capital operate within Southern African philanthropy provides valuable insights into how solidarity is cultivated, decolonisation efforts are advanced, and philanthropy transformed to address systemic inequalities and promote social justice (Portes, 1998; Woolcock, 2002).

2.3.2 Social Justice Theory

In the 19th century during the Industrial Revolution, social justice emerged as a basis for redistributing wealth, property and resources. Social justice is a political and philosophical theory with its departure points being based on fairness in relationships and access to resources and opportunities. Rawls (1999) posits that social justice is primarily based on fairness. It can be applied from birth throughout one's life, across the institutional structure, accessing rights and duties, social and economic benefits and addressing the issue of people born into different societal positions, which may contribute to unequal opportunities in life. In analysing the Rawlsian

approach, Sen (2007) formulates a demand for justice that deals only with institutional arrangements for society, not just in terms of principles of justice. For Sen (1999), the critical components are: (i) people, available resources and how they choose to use those resources; (ii) individuals and their agents, with particular attention given to injustices and how these injustices limit people's ability to be free; (iii) social justice as enabling the capability of people to do what they have inherent power to do as they define their development.

Social justice theory serves as the conceptual foundation and ethical framework guiding social justice philanthropy, informing its core principles and operational efforts (Hasan, 2024). Social justice theory, which is firmly rooted in philosophical and ethical foundations, establishes the principles of fairness, equality and the equitable distribution of resources (Capeheart & Milovanovic, 2020). Social justice philanthropy is characterised by the implementation of these principles through philanthropic practices that seek to tackle systematic disparities and injustices (Morris, 2002). The application of social justice theory in philanthropy enables the discernment of societal issues, the formulation of intervention strategies, and to advocate for policy reforms that align with the broader goals of fostering a fair and equitable society.

For this study, the following five social justice principles were analysed (Gibson, 2018; Mahomed, 2020; Thige & Adly, 2020):

1. A focus on systemic change addressing root causes of injustice.
2. Self-determination and centrality of individuals and communities as they make decisions about their needs.
3. Accountable, transparent and responsive grant-making approaches.
4. Solidarity as a critical pillar in support of movements and communities beyond finances with other resources.
5. Support for progressive social change as communities define and act on their development agenda.

Social justice theory was applied to the study by examining how principles of fairness, equity, and human rights shape philanthropy and solidarity efforts aimed at confronting colonial legacies and advancing social justice (Fraser, 1998; Rawls, 1971; Young, 1990). This entails examining how social justice principles influence resource allocation, opportunities access, and decision-making processes within philanthropy, alongside investigating how these efforts address systemic inequalities and uphold the rights and dignity of marginalised communities (Platz, 2020). Furthermore, the application of social justice theory explores existing power dynamics and advocates for transformative changes within philanthropy and expression of solidarity to prioritise the needs and amplify the voices of those most marginalised.

2.3.3. Social Capital and Social Justice − Theoretical and Conceptual Framing

In this discussion, the theoretical framework combines insights from social capital and social justice theories. Social capital theory underscores the importance of social networks and relationships in accessing resources, while social justice theory centres on addressing power imbalances and systemic inequalities. Conceptually, this research framework explores the elements of social capital in the context of philanthropy, illuminating how acts of solidarity and cross-sector collaborations can support community-led initiatives and contribute to positive social change. It also engages with the conceptual framing of decolonisation in philanthropy, emphasising the need to shift power dynamics, recognise local knowledge, and promote self-determination.

The theoretical framework made up of social capital and social justice has been utilised recognising the limitations of existing literature and a shift towards a holistic approach to social change emerged. The initial step was a critical examination of existing conceptual frameworks that predominantly

focused on solidarity, decolonisation, localisation, and shifting power. While these concepts laid a formidable foundation, it became evident that a more holistic approach was required to address the complexities of inequity and power imbalances within philanthropy.

There was an inherent link between social capital and the potential for transformative change. Understanding how networks of trust, reciprocity, and shared norms function within and between communities became a pivotal insight. The analysis of social capital allowed for the identification of opportunities to build bridges and foster co-creation. By unveiling existing power imbalances within partnerships, strategies for equitable power-sharing and collaborative decision-making began to emerge. The lens of social justice was central in guiding the trajectory of this exploration. Social justice perspectives directed attention towards marginalised communities, emphasising the need to amplify their voices in decision-making processes. This lens facilitated the identification and elevation of voices often excluded from the development narrative. Social justice facilitated the construction of more inclusive and participatory development trajectories. The integration of social capital and social justice was necessary as social capital highlights existing power imbalances and social justice empowers marginalised voices, the combination of these frameworks formed a robust approach. This synthesis unveiled a transformative potential where genuine partnerships could flourish, and communities could reclaim agency. Through the intricate interplay of social capital and social justice, both are crucial for achieving a more equitable and just society.

2.3.4. Visualisation of Conceptual Framework – Floorplan

Figure 2 is a visualisation of the conceptual framework. The conceptual and theoretical framework depicted in the visualisation represents the nature of philanthropy, drawing from diverse global practices while acknowledging the foundational influence of African Philanthropy. At its core, African Philanthropy's ethos, deeply embedded in the cultural, social, and historical

fabric of the continent, reflects values such as interconnectedness, solidarity, reciprocity, and Ubuntu, which resonate globally. Positioned at the centre of the diagram, the foundation of philanthropy symbolises its fundamental importance in guiding philanthropy. Surrounding this foundation is a bridge of decolonisation, emphasising the imperative to challenge colonial structures within philanthropy for genuine solidarity and justice, bridging African Philanthropy's principles with broader social justice goals. Emerging from the intersection of the foundation and the bridge are five pillars of social justice, including access to resources, equity/equality, participation, diversity, and human rights, serving as guiding principles for philanthropy. Interwoven throughout the framework are connections of social capital, representing intricate networks, relationships, and trust within communities, essential for facilitating collective action, empowerment, and meaningful social change within philanthropy. Arrows originating from both social capital and social justice frameworks play crucial roles in fostering solidarity by facilitating connections, enabling resource mobilisation, promoting inclusivity, and amplifying marginalised voices. Together, social capital and social justice empower communities to actively participate in solidarity actions, fostering trust, reciprocity, and cooperation among diverse stakeholders, ensuring that philanthropic initiatives are grounded in meaningful relationships, inclusive practices, and a commitment to social justice, ultimately leading to more impactful and sustainable outcomes.

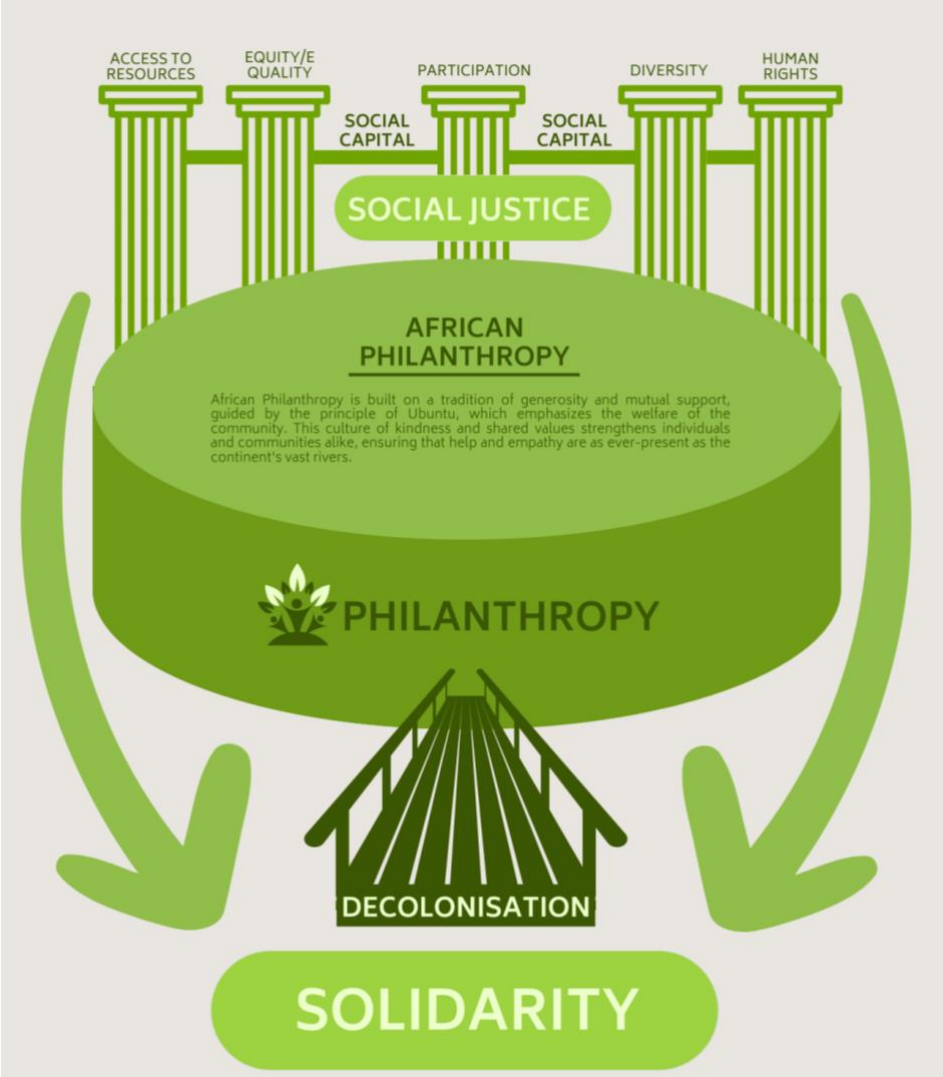


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework
Source: Authors Compilation from Data Collection

2.4 CONCLUSION

Philanthropy, traditionally viewed as a top-down intervention, is undergoing a transformation. The literature review on solidarity, decolonisation, social capital, and social justice within the context of philanthropy offers a comprehensive exploration of alternative approaches to address societal inequalities and injustices. Ubuntu-driven solidarity approaches are emerging as powerful tools for tackling long-standing issues of inequality, marginalisation, inequality, and injustice to move beyond transactional

giving, to reimagine philanthropy as a shared journey. The imperative of decolonisation calls for a critical re-evaluation of power dynamics and a commitment to rectifying historical imbalances. Literature highlights the important roles of social capital and social justice in sustainable and equitable development. The integration of social capital into the discourse introduces a valuable analytical tool, highlighting the importance of trust, reciprocity, and shared norms in fostering equitable collaboration and co-creation. Concurrently, the lens of social justice underscores the necessity of amplifying the voices of marginalised communities, ensuring their active participation in shaping inclusive development trajectories. The interconnected nature of social justice and social capital is discussed, suggesting a synergistic relationship that has the potential to reshape philanthropy. The collective insights from solidarity, decolonisation, social capital, and social justice push philanthropy beyond conventional paradigms, urging a shift towards structures grounded in principles of justice, equality, and shared agency.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology employed to investigate the concept of solidarity within philanthropy. Methodology serves as the guiding framework that shapes the research process, from the formulation of research questions to the collection and analysis of data. This chapter provides a detailed examination of the research design, methodology, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques utilised in the study. Drawing on insights from prominent scholars such as Babbie and Mouton (2008) and Sridhar (2010), the chapter explores the significance of a well-defined research design in addressing research questions and solving complex problems systematically. Adopting a structured approach to research methodology, this study aims to reveal insights into the dynamics of solidarity and contribute to the broader discourse on decolonisation philanthropy.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research methodology was used for this study. Qualitative research is effective for understanding complex phenomena, and offering a holistic view (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Its adaptability and flexibility, including methods like interviews and focus groups, allow researchers to tailor their approach to specific questions and cultural contexts. Qualitative research values participants' voices, especially for marginalised groups, and is particularly beneficial for investigating subjective experiences or emerging trends in society (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013; Qu & Dumay, 2011). Qualitative research offers valuable insights that extend beyond the reach of quantitative methods by exploring the depths of an individual's perceptions, as well as "subjective experiences and meaning making" to understand and describe social phenomena (Flick, 2009). Moreover, this

approach enables researchers to uncover nuances and explore the intricacies of human behaviour, revealing the underlying reasons that inform certain patterns of behaviour.

In the context of this study, the interpretive method or approach was embraced to explore the expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa, and to understand its realities of the world and the meaning attached to it. The interpretative research paradigm is suitable for exploring subjective meanings and understandings within the research context (Babbie & Mouton, 2019; Noor, 2008). A paradigm is a fundamental belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about: 1) ontology; 2) epistemology; 3) methodology; and 4) methods. In other words, it is a way of understanding and studying the world's reality (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The choice of a qualitative research methodology was justified based on its alignment with the study's objectives, the need for flexibility, interactions with participants and its ability to capture depths of the phenomenon under discussion in different contexts (Belzile & Öberg, 2012). Alternative approaches like quantitative research may not have provided the same level of insights into the highly subjective experiences and meanings associated with both solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy.

3.3 RESEARCH PROCESS

Bourke (2014) observes that research should be seen as a process and not merely a product. Research is directly linked to the notion of the research process, which develops theoretical and conceptual viewpoints (Ngulube, Mathipa & Gumbo, 2015). According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2001), the research process is a comprehensive collection of actions that scientists conduct to pursue knowledge and is a paradigm of scientific inquiry. Kothari (2004) suggests that the research process comprises a set of closely connected actions required for the practical completion of

research and the intended sequencing of these activities. For this research, the following steps were utilised:

i. Documentation and literature review, and analysis of solidarity and decolonisation in philanthropy.
ii. Primary data was collected from respondents through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, as explained further below.
iii. Data, analysis and discussion of findings assisted in making meaning of the results.

3.4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

A methodological approach in research refers to the systematic and organised plan guiding the researcher's actions and decisions throughout the research process. It encompasses the overall research design, the selection of data collection methods, sampling strategies, data analysis techniques, instrumentation, ethical considerations, and resource allocation. The chosen approach must align with the research objectives, questions, and the nature of the phenomenon being studied. A well-defined methodological approach enhances the study's rigor, transparency, and validity, and it is typically outlined in the methodology section of a research paper.

For this study a qualitative research design was employed. According to Anthony and Jack (2009); Brown (2008); Creswell (2014); Gerring (2004); Merriam (2009); Simons (2009); Stake (1995; 2006); Stewart (2014); and Yin (2014), qualitative data involves data sorting, filtering and searching for patterns. In essence, qualitative data consists of in-depth data generally presented in form of words and involves reading many texts, looking for connections and finding themes that relate to the study being carried out. Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as an approach aimed at exploring and understanding the meaning persons or groups ascribe to

human or social problems. Moreover, according to Creswell (2014, p.32), the approach consists of the collection of data from participants in their accepted setting. The researcher then strives to interpret the data which are informed by logically occurring themes that emerge from the data. Anthony and Jack (2009) are of the view that the focus of qualitative research is to have an understanding of the lived experiences of individuals who are identified through a sampling method which is relevant to the study.

Flyvbjerg (2011) argues that qualitative research attempts to analyse and explore issues such as solidarity and decolonisation of Philanthropy in the Southern African context. Qualitative research uses methods such as in-depth interviews, semi-structured interview guides, focused group interviews and observations (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Johansson, 2003; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to conduct semi structured interviews through which the participants were invited to participate and respond to numerous open-ended questions that were informed by the interview questions. In identifying qualitative research interviews as the ideal method to collect the data, participants were given an opportunity to provide information from their perspectives as to how they experience and perceive the phenomena in their normal setting and their everyday realities (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

The research approach for this study followed a structured interview guide and focus group discussions. For convenience and practicality, the respondents for the research were primarily drawn from ACT Ubumbano. This systematic approach involved engaging with stakeholders closely affiliated with ACT Ubumbano, including its nine board members, seven Advisory Committee members, and 29 Solidarity Support Grant recipients from Eswatini (1), Malawi (5), Mozambique (2), South Africa (6), Zambia (6), and Zimbabwe (8). Additionally, three staff members and five sector experts who have collaborated directly with ACT Ubumbano were included, in total 43 participants.

This comprehensive selection of participants aimed to provide a holistic understanding of expressions of solidarity and decolonisation efforts within the context of philanthropy in Southern Africa. The selection of ACT Ubumbano as the primary source of respondents was based on several factors aligning closely with the research study's focus on philanthropy, solidarity, decolonisation and social justice efforts. Firstly, ACT Ubumbano's active engagement and presence in these areas made it an ideal source for gathering insights and perspectives relevant to the study. Secondly, access to potential respondents within the organisation was facilitated through established connections and networks. Leveraging existing relationships with key stakeholders, such as organisational leaders, allowed the researcher to gain permission and support for the study. This targeted approach ensured that respondents were easily identifiable, willing, and accessible, thereby minimising logistical challenges associated with recruiting from a broader pool of organisations or contexts. Additionally, focusing exclusively on ACT Ubumbano enabled the study to maintain a cohesive and homogeneous sample, facilitating more effective comparison and analysis of findings. Table 2 below shows the breakdown of respondents by data collection method.

4.2.3. Respondents by data collection method

Two data collection methods, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, were used during this study. Table 2 below represents the breakdown of respondents by the data collection method.

Table 2: Respondents by data collection method and number

Participants' Description	Data Collection Method	Number
Act Ubumbano staff members	Semi-structured interview	2
Board members	Semi-structured interview	2*
Funding partners	Semi-structured interview	5
Experts in the field of philanthropy	Semi-structured interview	5
Advisory committee members	Semi-structured interview	1*
Solidarity support grant partners	Four focus group discussions	29**
Total number		**43**

**Counted once as they have dual roles: ACT Ubumbano Advisory Committee and Board member.*

*** Four focus group discussions with a total of 29 respondents*

3.4.1. Research design

This study utilised the exploratory and descriptive research design which was seen as a credible method for attaining an understanding and meaning of solidarity in philanthropy that has not been explored broadly and where the information about solidarity in philanthropy is not extensive (Creswell, 2014). Neuman (2014) describes exploratory research approach as a means of gaining knowledge and becoming more aware of the realities experienced by the research participants. In addition, it helps to get broad understanding of the research participant environment, and to inform future studies as well as defining the viability of the research and, to improve methods and practices (Du Toit, 2014). The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of solidarity within philanthropy and the ongoing

decolonisation agenda in Southern Africa, and therefore, an exploratory qualitative research approach was considered appropriate to reach the objectives of the study. Qualitative research is buttressed by three research assumptions: positivist, social construction, and interpretive (Du Toit, 2014). For instance, the positivist approach assumes that science is the way to discover the truth and understanding of reality. Reality in this case is understood through one way and the purpose of a positivist approach is to explain what will occur in the world through causal relationships (Goduka, 2012).

The study output includes a comprehensive description of solidarity and decolonisation within philanthropy (Goduka, 2012). The descriptive research design permits the description of participants relevant for the study (Goduka, 2012). Moreover, descriptive research design focuses on providing answers to 'what' questions (*ibid*.). For instance, the interview questions began with open introductory question like: "Can you share with me your understanding of solidarity within philanthropy in South Africa"? The interview proceeded based on the initial answer using the data collection procedures to inquire further. The descriptive design method allows for an inclusive and comprehensive depiction of research questions to what the study intends to answer (Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, 2010).

3.4.1. Population

The term 'population' is defined by Gilham (2000, p.22) as "the total number of the units of analysis." For convenience and accessibility, respondents were drawn from the ACT Ubumbano constituency. As of the end of 2023, ACT Ubumbano comprised 142 solidarity grant recipients, eleven advisory committee members, nine board members, and three staff members. The programme collaborated directly with 18 sector experts in its development. Additionally, it has received consistent support from five funding partners over the past two years. Solidarity grant partners include activists, CBOs

and FBOs working across themes such as gender, sexual reproductive health and rights, economic, environmental/climate fields, and human rights. Advisory group and board members are selected from Southern African CSOs, including NGOs and faith institutions. Sector experts, drawn from CSOs with experience in philanthropy, have also contributed to the programme's development.

3.4.2. Sample

Sampling is selecting a section of the population that can represent the whole population. Leedy (1993, p.147) defines a sample as "a section of the population used to gather information in a particular issue". Leedy emphasises that sampling requires care, precision, consideration and careful population selection to attain valid results.

The study sample consisted of 29 Solidarity Support Grant recipients from Eswatini (1), Malawi (5), Mozambique (2), South Africa (6), Zambia (6), and Zimbabwe (8), along with three staff members and individuals who have directly worked with ACT Ubumbano, totalling 43 participants. Table 3 presents the percentage of the sample size.

Table 3 Population and Sample

Participants' Description	Total Number	Sample
ACT Ubumbano staff members	3	2
Board members	9	2
Funding partners	5	5
Experts in the field of philanthropy	18	5
Advisory committee members	11	1
Four FGD (Solidarity support grant partners)	142	29

3.4.3. Sampling Method

For this study, a non-probability sampling method was utilised. Non-probability sampling methods are employed when probability sampling may be considered either inappropriate or difficult to implement (Babbie & Mouton, 2019). Non-probability sample is used for convenience and economy (Welman & Kruger, 2001). Non-probability sampling methods do not rely on random selection, unlike probability sampling methods such as simple random sampling or stratified sampling. Instead, non-probability sampling methods involve the researcher's judgment or deliberate selection of specific individuals or groups (Welman & Kruger, 2001).

A purposive or judgmental sampling technique was employed. This sampling method was selected because the researcher intended to identify specific individuals, groups and experts that could offer essential information for the study (Welman & Kruger, 2001). This intentional sampling approach aligns with the study's qualitative objectives, ensuring that the study captures in-depth insights from individuals or organisations actively engaged in philanthropy within the Southern African (Patton,2002). Forty-three (43) respondents were drawn from ACT Ubumbano staff, board members, advisory committee members and Solidarity Support Grant partners. The research sample was drawn from participants from the following countries: Britain, Eswatini, Germany, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Sweden, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Table 4 illustrates the number of participants from each country, with South Africa contributing the highest number of respondents. The decision reflects a deliberate choice to capture targeted perspectives specifically related to solidarity and decolonisation, rather than seeking a representative cross-section of the entire population or resorting to convenience sampling based on participant availability or accessibility (Patton, 2002).

According to Bernard (2002), purposive sampling does not require a predetermined number of participants or respondents if essential data is gathered. Although Walliman (2005, p.279) acknowledges that it is difficult to determine the ideal sample size, a small sample will reasonably accurately represent the population. Notable scholars endorsing these considerations include Patton (2002) and Morse (2009) in qualitative research methodologies, providing guidance on aligning sampling strategies with the nature and goals of the research. Furthermore, Bryman (2016) and Creswell (2013) emphasise the appropriateness of purposive sampling in qualitative studies, reinforcing the rationale for its application in this research.

3.4.4. Respondents by Country

Table 4: Overview of respondents by country

Country	Number of Respondents
Eswatini	1
Malawi	5
Mozambique	2
South Africa	15
Zambia	6
Zimbabwe	10
Sweden	2
German	1
United Kingdom	1
Total	**43**

Source: Author's compilation from data collection

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

This study utilised qualitative data collection methods which included literature review, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and

document analysis (Asky & Knight, 1999; Babbie & Mouton, 2019). An extensive literature review was conducted to synthesise existing knowledge and theories related to philanthropy, African philanthropy, solidarity, and decolonisation. This provided a foundational understanding and theoretical grounding for the study. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were utilised for data collection (Asky & Knight, 1999; Babbie & Mouton, 2019). Semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives and experiences (Smith, 2003), while focus group discussions facilitated collective dialogue and interaction among participants (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Document analysis involved examining existing reports, organisational records, and relevant literature to augment the insights gained from primary data collection (Johnson et al., 2018). This comprehensive approach to data collection ensured triangulation of data, enabling cross-verification and validation of findings across different sources and perspectives. Using multiple methodological approach sought to enhance the credibility, reliability and validity of the research results.

3.5.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews guides were used to collect data from ACT Ubumbano staff, board members and funding partners. Semi-structured interviews were selected for this group because they were a limited number, and all the required respondents could easily be reached. Kidder and Judd (1986, p.519) observe that interview guides are concerned with "collecting standardised data directly from people about occurring incidents, events or instances in varying situations and circumstances." Babbie and Mouton (2001, p.289) state, "A basic individual interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering within the qualitative approach. It differs from most other types of interviews in that it is an open interview that allows the object of study to speak for him/her/itself rather than to provide our respondents with a battery of our own predetermined

hypothesis-based questions" When providing a structured framework of questions and topics, an interview guide allows researchers to guide discussions, ensuring that relevant information is obtained. Babbie and Mouton's (2001) and Fink (1995) perspective aligns with the recognition of interviews as a powerful qualitative research tool for generating rich context-specific information to describe, compare and predict attitudes, opinions, values and behaviour data that contributes to a deeper understanding of social phenomena. A pre-test of the semi-structured interview guide was done with five respondents before final administration.

Fifteen (15) semi-structured interviews were conducted. The semi-structured interview method enabled the interviewer to adapt the discussion to the interviewee's knowledge, background, experiences and perspectives (Yamasaki, Sharf, & Harter, 2014). Most participants referred other individuals for more information or clarification of some questions. The purposive approach snowballing effectively identified new interviewees who provided rich insights and strengthened the collected data quality (Babbie & Mouton, 2019). The interviewees actively contributed to the discussion, sharing their perspectives and expressing their ideas (Colom, 2022). Furthermore, the way in which the interviews were conducted enabled the interviewer to ask questions that the previous interview might have raised, thereby building on knowledge (Williams, Clausen, Robertson, Peacock, & McPherson, 2012).

Table 5: breakdown of semi-structured interview participants

Interview type	Funding Partner	Sector Expert	Act Ubumbano Staff	Board Member	Advisory Committee Member	Grand Total
Semi-structured Interview	5	5	2	2	1	15

3.5.2. Focus Group Discussions

Babbie and Mouton (2019) explain that focus group interviews are spaces where a small group of five to ten people gather and create meaning as a collective instead of individually, as is the case with interviews. Morgan, as cited by Babbie and Mouton (2019, p.292), states that, “the main advantage of focus groups in comparison with participant observation is the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period based on the researcher’s ability to assemble and direct focus groups”.

Four (4) focus group discussions of between 60 to 90 minutes one-per session took place with a minimum of five and a maximum of ten individuals in each session. They formed the basis for data collection amongst ACT Ubumbano Solidarity Support Grant recipients and partners who had worked with the organisation in the preceding five years. Focus group discussions were highlighted as an appropriate data collection tool. Focus Groups discussion respondents in this research represented 29 solidarity grant partners. Due to the geographical spread of Solidarity Grant partners, the Focus Group Discussions were both online and face-to-face. Table 6 indicates the Focus Group respondents by country: Eswatini (1); Malawi (5); Mozambique (2); South Africa (6); Zambia (6); Zimbabwe (9).

Table 6: Focus Group Discussion Respondents by Country

Focus Group	Country	# of participants
A	Eswatini (1-3%); Malawi (5-17%) Mozambique (2-7%)	8
B	South Africa	6
C	Zambia	6
D	Zimbabwe	9

Face-to-face Focus Group discussions enabled active engagement and offered enhanced non-verbal communication, dynamic interactions and stronger personal connections, which led to deeper and more collaborative discussions. The conversations were much more dynamic and created the space for spontaneous interactions. Participants could immediately clarify or ask questions during the discussion, fostering better understanding and reducing the potential for misinterpretation.

Scholars highlight two types of Online Focus Group Discussions (OFGD), namely synchronous and asynchronous (Colom, 2022; Oringderff, 2004; Stewart & Williams,2008). Synchronous focus groups employ virtual or internet-based software, chatrooms or focus group software instead of actual classrooms. They are comparable to traditional face-to-face focus groups, involving real-time interaction between the moderator and participants (Colom, 2022). Oringderff (2004) explains that participants in asynchronous groups log in and respond to discussion questions using list-serves, email lists or discussion groups at their convenience. For this research, both synchronous and asynchronous OFGD were used. The synchronous was in the initial formation and the main form of discussion. Technical issues, connectivity and availability, were a challenge for participants, which could disrupt the flow of the debate. Therefore, participants were organised per country and added to a country-specific Whatsapp Group; Mozambique and Eswatini teams were included in the

Zambia WhatsApp. WhatsApp provided a convenient option for this study, allowing additional participants to be included and further discussion within this platform. The OFGD offered increased accessibility and cost-effectiveness, enabling participants from different locations to join without travelling, making it more convenient and accessible for a geographically diverse range of individuals (Williams, Clausen, Robertson, Peacock, & McPherson, 2012). There was also the reality of limited observation of non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions and body language, due to cameras being turned off because of limited bandwidth (Colom, 2022).

3.5.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis was employed as a research method for this study. Document analysis allows for the examination and interpretation of various written materials, such as reports, letters, and documents, providing valuable data for qualitative research (Bowen, 2009). In the case of this study, analysing documents related to ACT Ubumbano offered insights into its history, formation, principles, and practices, which are integral to understanding its role in fostering solidarity and addressing inequalities in Southern Africa. Additionally, analysing these documents provided valuable data for qualitative research, offering insights into the context within which ACT Ubumbano operates, its principles, practices, and evolution over time. This document analysis contributed to the development of the research instrument and data collection. This study reviewed ACT Ubumbano documents that shared the history of formation and model of the organisation, and included:

- Inequality And The Struggle For Humanity In Southern Africa Documenting A Process Of Solidarity (Judge, 2017)
- The Kopanong Principles (2017)
- ACT Ubumbano Participatory Evaluation Report The Imperative Of A Solidarity That Deconstructs, Re-Imagines And Reconstructs For The Period February 2017 To November 2018 (Anthony, 2019)

- ACT Ubumbano Two-pager (Green-Thompson, 2018) and
- The Origins, Identity, Practice Of ACT Ubumbano: Documenting And Learning From Our Evolving Solidarity-Based Practice (Sigamoney, 2022).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a means of generating and validating interpretations and formulating and drawing conclusions (Scherman, 2007). Basit (2003) highlights that qualitative data analysis is often viewed as an arduous and difficult process as it is not a technical or mechanical process but rather a "dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning" (Basit, 2003, p.144) A semi-structured interview questionnaire, in-depth focus groups response sheet, and participant observations formed the basis for analysis. Basit (2003), Liamputtong (2009) and Morgan (1996) highlight how the analysis of qualitative data is an ongoing process that involves constantly revisiting and refining the research questions and objectives; and that data analysis continues throughout the research and is not a separate self-contained phase. Conducting this research, data analysis occurred during and between interviews and the data collection processes.

The interviews and Focus Group Discussions were conducted in the English language. Following the conclusion of the 15 semi-structured interviews and four (4) focus group discussion, the raw data underwent transcription. Manual data analysis ensued, involving coding to enable the subdivision of the data and assigning categories. The collected data, included FGD transcriptions, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents, were carefully organised to prepare for analysis. This process involved transcription, data categorisation to ensure accessibility and manageability. Three matrices were developed: one for ACT Ubumbano Board, staff, and advisory members; another for Focus Group discussions; and the third, a combined matrix for sector experts and funding partners. The participant

opinions and views were systematically captured and organised, grouped together into broader thematic groups, facilitating a more structured and comprehensive understanding of the data. Analysis also involved identifying patterns and themes and interpreting their findings in relation to existing theories and conceptual frameworks (Babbie & Mouton, 2019). Throughout the analysis process, the researcher engaged in journaling, documenting insights, reflections, and ideas that emerged during the analysis. These journals served as a valuable tool for capturing researcher insights and guiding further exploration of the data. Finally, interpretation of the findings was conducted in the context of the research objectives, considering how the identified themes contributed to understanding solidarity, decolonisation and what implications they held for theory, practice, or further research.

3.7 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

In accordance with Babbie and Mouton (2019, p.122), validity in the present study refers to the extent to which the empirical measures adequately reflect the true essence of the concepts under investigation. This is pivotal for ensuring legitimate assessment results and scientific measurement accuracy (Bond, 2003; Messick, 1989). As highlighted by Bond (2003), validity encompasses the alignment of theoretical justifications and empirical data to support the adequacy and suitability of interpretations and actions based on the study's results. The study comprising 43 respondents involved in semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, aimed to ensure validity by meticulously aligning the data collected with the research objectives and theoretical frameworks.

Reliability, as defined by Welman and Kruger (2001), evaluates whether a specific method would yield consistent outcomes when applied repeatedly to the same object. Davis (2007) emphasises that reliability is contingent upon the rigor with which researchers conduct data collection and analysis tasks, as well as the transparency in reporting the methods used and the

critical decisions made during the process. In this context, reliability equates to methodological accuracy (Davies, 2007). However, with purposive sampling, there exists a significant risk that the sample size within the population may be numerically insignificant, and the sample selection may lack representativeness, making it challenging to assess the study's validity (Babbie & Mouton, 2019). To address this risk, the study employed saturation, which involves selecting a sample and increasing the number of respondents until it becomes evident that the collected data are consistent and repeatable enough to adequately address the research question. Saturation thus enhances the credibility of small samples comprising unrepresentative members of society (Saunders et al., 2018). Through the meticulous application of both validity and reliability measures, the study aimed to ensure the trustworthiness and accuracy of its findings.

3.8 POSITIONALITY AND SELF-REFLEXIVITY

The researcher, an employee of ACT Ubumbano and part of a three-member staff team, grapples with the dual advantages and disadvantages inherent in the insider position within the organisation (Smith, 2015). While the researcher benefits from first-hand knowledge of the organisation and unfettered access to its resources (Jones & Brown, 2018), they must contend with potential pitfalls such as power differentials, subjective biases, and limited perspectives (Roberts et al., 2019). To navigate these complexities, the researcher adopts a proactive approach, acknowledging personal biases and maintaining transparency about their positionality from the outset (Johnson, 2020). Ethical considerations loom large, with meticulous attention given to obtaining informed consent and safeguarding participants confidentiality (Garcia & Martines, 2017). Furthermore, the researcher aims to mitigate the influence of their insider status by actively seeking diverse perspectives, engaging with literature from a range of sources, and soliciting input from participants throughout the research process (Brown & Clark, 2021; Patel, 2016). This comprehensive approach

serves to enhance the credibility and rigor of the study while fostering a more inclusive and ethical research environment (Thompson, 2018).

Reflexivity, commonly understood as an ongoing internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of the researcher's positionality, plays a crucial role in this study (Berger, 2013). It involves establishing a personal relationship with the subject under scrutiny, necessitating observation, contemplation, interaction, and reaction on the researcher's part (Popoveniuc, 2013). In response, the researcher adopts a reflexive approach to mitigate bias and partisanship, maintaining a journal of observations and feedback and sharing transcripts with respondents for confirmation of discussion points before analysis. The researcher also engages in self-reflection and introspection to address the potential influence on respondents and remain aware of subjective tendencies throughout the research process. This proactive stance ensures a rigorous and ethical approach to the study's methodology and analysis.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher complied with the required academic ethics and the dignity of the respondents by ensuring that the identities and confidentiality of all interviewees and respondents were safeguarded (Johnson, 2017). Interviewees were provided with a detailed description of the purpose of the research, primary questions, and data protection systems (Smith & Brown, 2018). Consent was provided in writing, and respondents were informed that they could withdraw such consent at any point during the interview (Garcia & Martinez, 2019). The recordings of their discussions, both audio and transcribed in English, were made available to the respondents, and respondents were assured that the completed research would similarly be available to them (Patel, 2016). Additionally, all information would be adequately safeguarded. Access to the recordings and transcripts would be restricted to the researcher, ensuring confidentiality and privacy (Roberts et

al., 2020). Digital files would be encrypted and stored securely on a password-protected site to prevent unauthorised access (Thompson, 2018). Physical copies of transcripts would be filed and stored in a secure location, with limited access (Brown & Clark, 2020). Finally, strict protocols for data handling and dissemination would be established to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines and regulations regarding the protection of information (Berger, 2015). These measures collectively aimed to safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of the data while upholding the trust and privacy of the respondents.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Addressing the limitations arising from focusing solely on respondents from ACT Ubumbano, the study integrated strategies recommended by scholars in qualitative research methodology. Firstly, by diversifying data collection beyond ACT Ubumbano, including literature from various sources, the study aimed to mitigate the risk of overlooking diverse perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2014). Incorporating external perspectives through interviews with philanthropy sector experts aligns with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) emphasis on capturing a range of viewpoints to enrich qualitative research. Furthermore, the researcher's commitment to critical reflection and transparency, openly discussing the study's limitations, echoes Denzin and Lincoln's (2018) recommendation for maintaining reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process. These strategies collectively aimed to enhance the richness, depth, and applicability of the study's findings within the broader context of philanthropy and decolonisation efforts.

3.11 CONCLUSION

The researcher obtained insights into solidarity and decolonisation by engaging with literature on African philanthropy, solidarity and

decolonisation. The qualitative research methodology was deemed the most appropriate method to explore the intersection between solidarity and decolonisation. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions provided the instruments the researcher used to draw primary data from 43 respondents. Thematic analysis was conducted to organise the respondents' responses, to draw patterns, derive conclusions, and present recommendations. The researcher adhered to ethical considerations and conduct throughout the process.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research findings on the expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa. The research was based on the study objectives: 1) To explore the expression of solidarity in the context of Southern African philanthropy; 2) To analyse decolonisation forms and approaches emerging in the context of philanthropy; 3) To assess ACT Ubumbano's expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy.

The chapter presents the study's findings drawn from semi-structured interviews, FGD, and literature review. The emerging findings are underpinned by the complexity of definitions of solidarity and decolonisation with various interpretations and understandings among stakeholders. Findings indicate that solidarity is expressed through informal networks of interconnectedness, movements and movement building, community-based collective action initiatives, and collaborative partnerships and networks. In decolonisation efforts, emerging forms and approaches promote equitable power dynamics in funding, address decision-making and agenda-setting, challenge dominant funding relationships and power relations, support collective voice and action and acknowledge and challenge issues of power, position and privilege. An analysis of ACT Ubumbano presents findings on initiatives that build solidarity and contribute to decolonisation through resourcing solidarity initiatives, collaborative partnerships and platforms for networking, learning and reflection. The convened spaces also enable the bridging of gaps by creating networks, linkages, and connections for collective action.

4.2. RESPONDENTS' PROFILES

The study comprised 43 respondents drawn from ACT Ubumbano solidarity support grant partners, funding partners, experts in the field of philanthropy, advisory committee members, staff members, and board members. Respondents included activists, members of INGOs, NGOs, FBOs, and funding. Table 7 represents the profiles and details of the respondents. Participants represented a diverse group in terms of race, gender and nationality. The findings are presented with respect to the themes that emerged from focus group discussions and interviews. Respondents' demographics were classified according to age, gender, country and data collection methods.

The codes are referenced as follows:

- **FGD-A** refers to Focus Group discussion with the corresponding letter per group. The four are coded FGD-A, FGD-B, FGD-C and FGD-D
- **FP-1** refers to Funding partner with corresponding number per respondent.
- **ACM-1** refers to an Advisory Committee Member with corresponding number per respondent.
- **SE-1** refers to sector experts with corresponding number per respondent.
- **BM**-1 refers to Board Member with corresponding number per respondent.
- **SM-1** refers to Staff Member with Corresponding number per respondent.

Table 7: Respondents Profiles and Codes

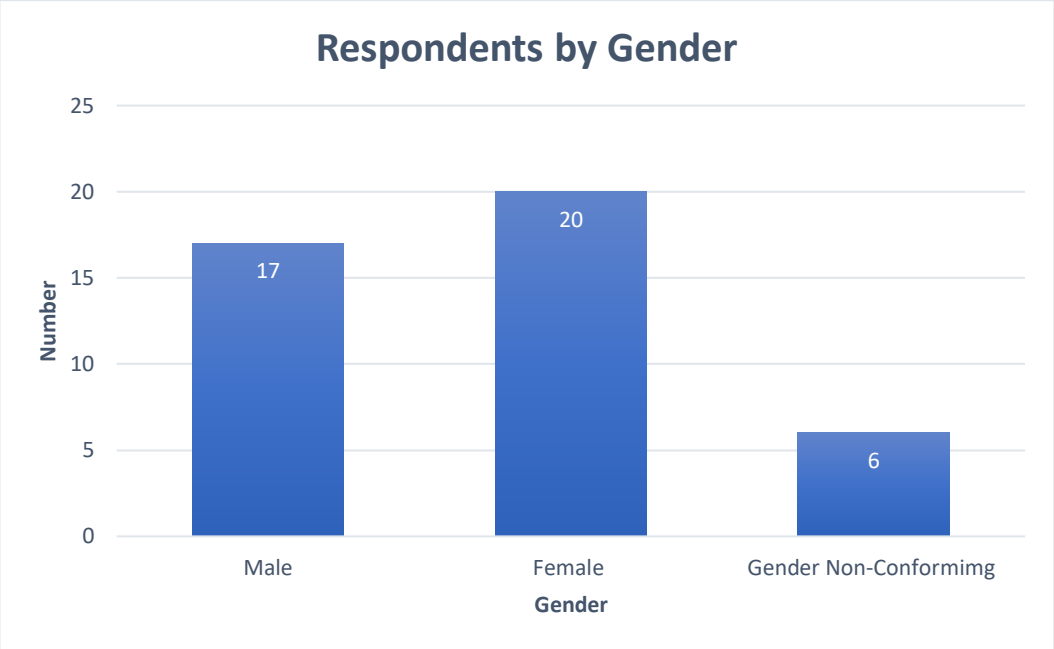
Codes	Respondents
FGD-A	Eight representatives from Solidarity Grant partner organisations in Eswatini (1); Malawi (5) Mozambique (2).
FGD-B	Six representatives from Solidarity Grant partners in South Africa
FGD-C	Six representatives from Solidarity Grant partners in Zambia
FGD-D	Nine representatives from Solidarity Grant partners in Zimbabwe
FP-1	Female - Southern Africa Officer, Funding partner based in Europe
FP-2	Funder - main contact, partners in South Africa based in the South
FP-3	Contact for Southern Africa Partners, based in Europe
FP- 4	Funding partner based in the UK with oversight role for Southern Africa partners.
ACM-1	Local foundation head and work on Environmental Justice
BM-1	Female - Director of Debt and Development programmes
BM-2	Female oversight and accountability for NGO
SE-1	Social Justice Actor and Individual Activist
SE-2	Innovator on programme funding for NGO with INGO
SM-1	Male - Organisational Innovator
SM-2	Male - CBO grant oversight
SE-3	Female - Religious leader and Faith Activist
SE-4	Female - Researcher and Activist
FP-5	Grant manager for a partner based in the United States with an oversight role for Southern Africa partners
SE-5	Funding partner in the United States with oversight role for Southern Africa partners

Source: Authors Compilation from Data Collection

4.2.1. Respondents by Gender

The respondent pool reflects a diverse spectrum of gender identities, categorised into three distinct groups: 37% (17) Male, 49% (20) Female, and 14% (6) gender non-conforming. Figure 3 indicates the breakdown according to gender.

Figure 3: Respondents by Gender



Source: Author's compilation from data collection

4.3 EXPRESSION OF SOLIDARITY

This section examines existing initiatives that promote or are based on the expression of solidarity, as provided by the respondents/participants. Respondents were asked to share initiatives on how they express the notion of solidarity and their understanding and perspectives on the meaning of solidarity to frame the discussion on the existing expression of solidarity. The research findings reveal the diverse expressions of solidarity in Southern Africa. The following are the emerging findings how solidarity is manifested through informal networks, movements, community-based

actions, and collaborative partnerships In the pursuit of decolonisation, findings indicate that newly emerging forms and strategies aim to establish equitable power dynamics in funding, address decision-making and agenda-setting, contest prevailing funding hierarchies and power structures, advocate for collective voices and actions, and recognise and confront issues related to power, position, and privilege. An analysis of ACT Ubumbano presents findings on initiatives that build solidarity and contribute to decolonisation through resourcing solidarity initiatives, collaborative partnerships and platforms for networking, learning and reflection. The convened spaces address potential lacunae by creating networks, linkages and connections for collective action.

4.3.1 Complexity of Defining Solidarity: Defining and Framing

Findings highlight the complexity of defining solidarity. Respondents described solidarity in two broad areas: solidarity as altruism and solidarity as a strategic tool for organising. Respondents who highlighted solidarity primarily from an altruistic lens see it as a genuine expression of compassion, empathy, and interconnectedness among individuals or groups. In this view, solidarity emerges from a sense of moral duty or ethical responsibility to support others in need, irrespective of personal gain or strategic advantage. This is evidenced by the response from a respondent FGD-B: “Solidarity is about people, acting together. Solidarity, at its core, involves people coming together to support each other in their struggles and assist each other to be in a better place” (FGD-B, Johannesburg, 13 March 2023). This is further articulated by a funding Partner: “Solidarity is sharing similar values, perspectives, visions and goals and supporting and standing in for each other. It is the sense or feeling of belonging” (FP-03, author interview, 30 March 2023).

On the other hand, other respondents perceive solidarity as a strategic tool for achieving common objectives, particularly within political or social

movements. In this perspective, solidarity is seen as a means to mobilise collective resources, leverage power dynamics, and advance shared interests or agendas. A respondent articulates this, FGD-B: “Solidarity involves standing with or supporting marginalised or vulnerable communities that may be unable to find solutions independently. It requires mutual support within a group with a unified purpose, where there is dedication and commitment to a common interest to lobby and advocate for change of circumstances” (FGD-B, Johannesburg, 13 January 2023).

Several definitions emerged from this study. The main ones are as follows: A) Solidarity is an act of accompaniment as an ally in action or deed in ways that support the partner’s activities or amplify their voice. B) In activism, solidarity means joining different movements that address intersectional issues in the same community and sharing resources, including strategies and ideas to achieve their mandates. C) Interlinked struggles need to mobilise and organise; D) It is about mutual support within a group with a unified purpose and working towards change in circumstances, fighting for social justice and improving people’s living standards is essential. The findings suggest solidarity links organisations, governments, individuals, and sectors to work towards community change.

Figure 4 below indicates the most common phrases and words as presented by respondents. The responses indicate consensus around collectivism and connection, inclusion and recognition, mutual support and action.

Figure 4: Common Phrases and Words defining Solidarity.



Source: Author's compilation from data collection

4.3.2. Informal Networks of Interconnectedness

The study findings indicate that solidarity is expressed through informal networks of interconnectedness, everyday acts of kindness, support, and reciprocity among individuals, families and communities. The findings show that solidarity is not an occasion but an everyday practice, as articulated by a FGD-A respondent who noted that there are, "informal acts of kindness" or "small gestures of compassion and generosity" towards others and can be seen as extending a helping hand to a stranger who is someone in need" (FGD-A, Online, 06 January 2023). The informal acts include sharing resources, extending support, and providing mental and emotional support. This is further articulated by respondents, FGD-C who highlighted that

solidarity is “the way of life” or “natural” solidarity as the primary form (FGD-C, Online, 13 January 2023). FGD-A highlighted: “We are in solidarity in our everyday work and engagement. Our location within communities makes us exercise solidarity in all our work, we are part of community celebrations, we cannot keep quiet when a community member needs help” (FGD-A, Online,06 January 2023). FGDs consistently emphasised the significance of solidarity as more than just a concept but as a lived experience intricately woven into the fabric of interconnectedness. Indicating its role in fostering unity, shared values, and collective efforts for the betterment of humanity.

4.3.3. Movements and Movement Building

Solidarity is expressed through movement and movement-building efforts mobilising diverse groups around common values and goals. Movements were highlighted as bringing together diverse communities or movements to address common issues beyond social class, gender, ethnicity, and geography. These movements often aim to create social change and address systemic issues such as inequality, injustice, and discrimination. This is evidenced by the FGD-A respondent’s feedback: “In the context of activism, solidarity is coming together of different groups to form a movement. Movements addressing intersectional issues in the community and sharing resources including strategies and ideas to achieve their mandates and wellbeing of people” (FGD-A, Online, 06 January 2023).

A compelling finding emerged, namely that movements create powerful platforms to amplify voices that would otherwise be silenced. Respondents highlighted how, through movements, there are spaces to amplify voices that may otherwise go unheard and would include those in fear of persecution. Amplifying voices was referenced as integral to the South African Apartheid period, LGBTIQ+ spaces, and in contexts of human rights violations and political unrest. Respondent FGD-D highlighted, “Through collective action and a shared commitment to justice and equality, solidarity movements have the power to bring about lasting change and build a

society where people have dignity and enjoy their human rights" (FGD-D, Online, 10 January 2023).

The Southern African People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN) was mentioned as a prime example of this kind of movement (BM-02, author interview, 19 April 2023). SAPSN's mission is to coordinate and energise solidarity efforts led by ordinary people in response to the impact of rampant neoliberal policies and systems in Southern Africa. The organisation provides opportunities for critical dialogue and popular mobilisation, uniting diverse civil society groups around a common social and economic justice goal. SAPSN's work is grounded in a steadfast commitment to these principles. Local organisations and thematic clusters throughout the region drive SAPSN's efforts from the grassroots level. In addition, solidarity partners from academia and global movements support SAPSN's regional initiatives and help to connect them to international solidarity efforts. Every year, SAPSN hosts the SADC People's Summit, which brings together popular forces to develop a unified response to shared concerns.

4.3.4. Community-driven Mobilising and Organising for Collective Action

This study finds that solidarity is most effectively expressed through community-driven organising for collective action. Respondents emphasised that solidarity is expressed through community-driven organising for collective action. Respondents highlighted how community-driven solidarity manifests through individuals and groups actively mobilising individuals to confront shared concerns and advocate for joint rights. FGD-B highlights that, "…solidarity entails communities standing together and supporting each other to speak out and stand against an injustice or for a common cause or vision. It comes from communities in which common cause and target for particular social justice issues they mobilised around. For instance, communities can be in solidarity with survivors of gender-based violence survivors as they struggle for justice".

(FGD-B, Johannesburg, 13 January 2023). The term community was elaborated upon as "what constitutes a community", and it was highlighted that in today's interconnected world, a community is not confined to a physical location or shared identity. However, what constitutes a community has evolved to become a global network of individuals who come together based on shared interests, passions and values. Online communities, such as social media platforms, enable people from different social classes, ethnicities, and geographies to connect and be in solidarity.

An illustrative example of the expression of solidarity through community-driven action was cited in the Abahlali baseMjondolo Movement in South Africa, where shack dwellers collectively address housing rights, land tenure, and access to essential services (SE-01, interview, 24 April 2023). It was further elaborated upon that this grassroots movement actively mobilises and organises shack dwellers in informal settlements, uniting them in a collective effort to address issues related to housing rights, land tenure, and access to essential services (ACM-01, author interview, 03 April 2023). Moreover, FP-04 narrated how other partners in Kenya, Brazil and other countries support Abahlali baseMjondolo advocacy as they have identified similarities with their realities (FP-04, author interview, 10 March 2023). Moreover, Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST) has established solidarity partnerships with land reform movements in Southern African countries like Zimbabwe and Mozambique using similar initiatives. Through exchanges of experiences and knowledge, they support each other's struggles for agrarian reform and social justice.

4.3.5. Collaborative Partnership and Networks

A key finding from the research is that expression of solidarity is most effective when achieved through collaborative partnerships or coalitions. The research reveals that expression of solidarity exists through the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships or coalitions. Emphasis was made on the importance of transnational collaborative partnerships, particularly in North-South and South-South. A funding partner (FP-03) defined this collaboration as “initiatives that challenge injustice by enabling locally driven action and community voices to be amplified at a global stage” (FP-03, author interview, 30 March 2023). The importance of transnational collaborative partnerships, FGD further affirmed the importance of this solidarity as it amplified voices and connected people globally for a common cause. This is evidenced by an FGD-A respondent: “In the sphere of shrinking civic space, partnerships become critical spaces that provide cover for individuals or groups who might be vulnerable as solo voices and move away from isolated efforts towards a powerful collective force challenging powerful interests” (FGD-A, Online, 06 January).

The respondents’ examples included The Plough Back the Fruits Initiative (PBTF) and Tertiary Education Support to Tertiary University Students (ACM-01, author interview, 03 April 2023). PBTF works to forge solidarity in resource justice and collaborates with grassroots organisations like Benchmarks Foundation and affected communities in Marikana. Partnerships with groups like Fairwatch and SOMO raised European awareness of the South African struggle by influencing consumer behaviour and pressuring corporations within their backyards. The education support to tertiary university students was reported as a European and Southern African expression of solidarity beyond financial resources or extracting individuals for education in northern universities in building skills, human capital, knowledge and expertise, fostering capacity building and mentorship for lasting impact within local universities. Feminist and political

organisations were cited as critical, for they amplify voices that might otherwise be marginalised or ignored. The African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) is cited as facilitating South-South solidarity among women's rights organisations across Southern Africa and the continent. FEMNET supports capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and joint advocacy efforts to advance gender equality and justice.

4.4 DECOLONISING PHILANTHROPY

This section explores emerging findings on forms and approaches to decolonisation within philanthropy in Southern Africa. Respondents clarified that the focus of decolonisation is seen in formal institutionalised forms of philanthropy. This aspect is further explored in this chapter. Respondents offered definitions of their understanding of decolonisation, acknowledging its complexity similar to defining solidarity to provide context. Findings indicate that decolonisation efforts promote equitable power dynamics in funding, address decision-making and agenda-setting processes, challenge dominant funding relationships and power structures, amplify collective voice and action and acknowledge and challenge issues of power, position and privilege.

4.4.1 Decolonisation, Framing and Defining

The findings from discussions on the decolonisation of philanthropy reveal several prominent framings of the concept. In the main, the common thread was acknowledging that, through philanthropy, a system has oppressed and further marginalised Southern Africa with limited power of the community to address the oppression. As evidenced by respondent SE-01, "It is important to banish the notion of global North/powerful saviours who jet in to save the poor perishing Africans. We must appreciate the historical factors that have led many to be in vulnerable situations (not to imagine that those with fewer resources are "poor and stupid"); we need to understand the ideological-

political consequences of framing certain individuals and groups as having and therefore to be in perpetual need of financial assistance (SE-01, author interview, 24 April 2023). Decolonisation is highlighted as a means of challenging unequal power relations ingrained in institutional philanthropy, with respondents emphasising its complexity and buzzword status as articulated by FP-04: “It has become the new buzzword with #shiftthepower and #powersharing.” (FP-04, author interview, 10 March 2023). Respondents stressed the need to acknowledge and disrupt colonised systems that perpetuate aid dependency and exploitation of Africa’s resources. Further articulated by SE-01, was that “decolonising philanthropy in Southern Africa involves challenging and transforming the power dynamics inherent in philanthropy” (SE-01, author interview,24 April 2023). Decolonisation was also viewed as wealth redistribution; FP-05 states: “For me; decolonising is about decolonising wealth. I take it as a distribution of wealth, but decolonising wealth means giving back the money to those it belongs to. Suppose you look at who is rich and how they got rich. In that case, there is a power dynamic” (FP-05, author interview, 03 May 2023). Decolonisation is viewed as a way to reclaim dignity, resist re-colonisation, and challenge narratives of Africa as a perpetual recipient of aid.

4.4.2 Decolonisation of institutionalised forms of philanthropy

Findings highlighted the need to decolonise institutionalised forms of philanthropy. Horizontal philanthropy was reported to have always been grounded in solidarity, as expressed by an FGD-C respondent: “Our African cultures have been built on generosity and self-sustaining” (FGD-C, Online, 13 January 2023). Respondents provided horizontal or indigenous philanthropy examples, such as burial societies, stokvels, and diaspora remittances. Institutionalised or vertical philanthropy was reported to be the area where power resided, hence the need to address power imbalances perpetuated by colonial systems. Respondents highlighted that the current

philanthropy holds western perspectives and frameworks which do not address the culture, traditions and beliefs of local communities. The response from SE-04 demonstrates this: “When we talk about philanthropy, let us just be clear that institutional and organic everyday philanthropy happens on the continent. Everyday philanthropy was never colonised, and when people say decolonisation, they mean institutional philanthropy” (SE-04, author interview, 11 May 2023). The call to decolonising institutionalised Western forms of philanthropy was viewed as an opportunity to shift the power dynamics, centering the voices, values and self-determination of communities traditionally side-lined in decision-making. This aligns with broader efforts toward social justice, equity, and sustainable development, acknowledging the inherent dignity and agency of all individuals and communities involved.

4.4.3 The centrality of fostering relationships

A key finding is that fostering relationships is essential for effective philanthropy. Respondents highlighted that fostering relationships is central to decolonisation. This view emphasises the importance of philanthropy in shifting its approach from transactional relationships and focus on building solidarity and trust across communities previously divided by colonial power structures. Establishing meaningful connections between funders, grantees and communities was viewed as necessary for dismantling colonial power dynamics inherent in traditional philanthropy. The importance of having the starting point being a relationship engaging with communities directly affected by funding decisions, understanding grantees’ values, cultures and traditions and their culture, valuing their expertise and perspectives, and co-creating solutions that address systemic inequities was emphasised as a critical part of the decolonisation process in philanthropy. Respondent SE-03 expresses this: “People must recognise that in African societies we are not materialistic people, but we are deeply spiritual and relational people - relationships matter” (SE-03, author interview, 17 May 2023). An FGD

respondent, FGD-D, further articulated that: "…partnership rests on the relationship. It does not rest on the contract only; we need to minimise the time spent analysing and interrogating and spend more time building a relationship between people on that basis; investing in each other is not always about money. It is making investments on a clear understanding of who we are and how we want to move things forward similarly (FGD-D5, Online, 10 January 2023).

4.4.4 Equitable Power Dynamics in Funding

The finding of equitable power dynamics in funding was consistently highlighted. Respondents expressed that power dynamics in funding acknowledges the historical imbalances and power structures inherent in traditional funding models, which often perpetuate disparities and reinforce colonial legacies. The power dynamics are reported to have been imposed; SE-01 articulates this: "It's a new form of struggle imperialism. It is not necessarily framed in the same way, but what I am trying to get people understand the conversation around decolonisation is that it is about power and the persistence of superiority coloniality found on a sense of superiority because we are superior colony can detect your life so they hand out rules and orders they define systems and structures to work with" (SE-01, author interview,24 April 2023).

Philanthropy committed to decolonising funding has been recognised for its efforts in supporting initiatives led by marginalised communities and implementing transparent and inclusive resource allocation processes. This is evidenced by FGD-B who raised the importance of funding support that takes into account community priorities raised that: "Communities know what they want, but most of the time, donor funding comes labelled already with little room to deviate to address communities' gaps. Ultimately, they become passive recipients of whatever is brought into the community. Instead of hearing what the communities need and tailor-making

programmes to suit that, we often find programmes being brought into communities because that is what the donor wants. It ends up mostly for the donors to tick the boxes rather than address pressing issues" (FP-04, author interview, 10 March 2023). The identification of new models of how funding can be done without raising issues of power and further marginalising communities.

4.4.5 Decision-making and Agenda-setting

The centrality of decision-making and agenda-setting in decolonisation efforts within philanthropy was highlighted by the study. Respondents explained that presently the partner with more funding or influence may shape the agenda, potentially marginalising the concerns and priorities of local voices. This reinforces the dominant partner's interests and perpetuates the power dynamics. In all four FGD, the solidarity grant partners grappled with the question of who defines priorities, as was shared by one of the respondents FGD-D: "Whose interests are we upholding? We need to redefine or address the power relations between the giver and the receiver" (FGD-D, Online, 10 January 2023). In addition, the call was to re-orient the focus of philanthropy with "an emphasis on Global South leadership and participation, reaching out to the most vulnerable, and respecting local knowledge and wisdom" (SE-01, author interview,24 April 2023. This was further alluded to by FGD-D1, who noted that: "I think philanthropists should involve the communities they work with in decision-making rather than creating ready-made plans and strategies. The communities should be hands-on in designing and implementing activities by donors. Help should be customised to suit the community" (FGD-D, Online, 10 January 2023).

4.5 NOTIONS OF SOLIDARITY AND DECOLONISATION EXPRESSED BY ACT UBUMBANO

The results and discussion in this section highlight ACT Ubumbano's initiatives that they reported as forming part of a solidarity-centred model and practice of decolonisation. These initiatives represent efforts to foster connections, support marginalised communities, and challenge existing power dynamics in pursuit of decolonisation. ACT Ubumbano's analysis highlights initiatives that facilitate solidarity and contribute to decolonisation by funding solidarity efforts of CBO. Through convening platforms, power dynamics are challenged, and participants reflect on their positions and privileges. These spaces also serve as bridges, creating networks and connections for collective action, ultimately strengthening efforts towards decolonisation and social justice. This section presents the respondents' assessment of what they considered ACT Ubumbano's notions of solidarity and efforts of decolonising philanthropy. The following findings are discussed:

- Funding solidarity initiatives
- Convening platforms
- Networks and connections for collective action.

4.5.1 Funding Solidarity Initiatives

The research on ACT Ubumbano reveals that their primary expression of solidarity involves grant funding to empower organisations and support their social justice work. Respondents highlighted that ACT Ubumbano's expression of solidarity often came in the form of providing grants to organisations, enabling them to support their work. These grants were particularly valued because they allowed partners to define their own priorities and respond to community needs with the support they received. FGD-B stated: "Our organisation got its first ever grant and support [for a] sexual and gender-based violence intervention workshop with traditional

healers in the Eastern Cape. It was us who decided our focus area and priority, we saw the need and ACT Ubumbano supported this work" (FGD-B, Johannesburg, 13 January 2023). Respondents emphasised that these grants provide resources and enable them to expand their programmes, address urgent community needs, and continue their work during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, many respondents noted that these grants offer smaller organisations the opportunity to build their profiles and credibility, which is essential for securing larger grants in the future. As explained by FGD-A: "This is our third year working with ACT Ubumbano, since we partnered in 2021. Our organisation has received two grants for two projects, namely empowering girls through menstrual hygiene solutions and another one called the Bridge" (FGD-A, Online, 06 January 2023).

However, a consensus emerged among respondents that while these short-term grants have been beneficial, there is a need for sustainable, long-term funding to further support their work and enable their growth beyond the limitations of micro-grants. Respondents explained that they outgrow the micro-grant, and their growth opportunities are limited by the short grants. Overall, respondents expressed the importance of ongoing and robust funding mechanisms to sustain their efforts in the long term.

4.5.2 Platforms and spaces: Learning and Reflection

Research revealed that convening spaces for reflection, learning, and collective action were highlighted as a strategy through which ACT Ubumbano expresses solidarity. These spaces serve as critical platforms for individuals and communities to come together, share experiences, engage in collective learning, and collaboratively take action towards social justice goals. These spaces include learning hubs, solidarity hubs, critical conversations, inter-faith dialogues, and thematic spaces, all of which serve as platforms for fostering solidarity initiatives. These spaces are reported to

be critical spaces for mutual learning, collective organising and collaboration. A respondent FP-02 highlighted, “The discussions in the solidarity hub and the learning hub are unique as they point out to enable conversations without hindrance, limitation or silencing. There is no pre-determined agenda” (FP-02, author interview, 19 April 2023).

In an effort to contribute to decolonisation efforts, ACT Ubumbano convenes conversations amongst funding partners, community-based organisations and the broader philanthropy sector. The purpose of the critical conversations as highlighted by a respondent, SM-01, is to “examine how funding organisations can support local struggles more effectively. In these spaces, ACT Ubumbano challenges funders to listen more attentively to the lived experiences of communities and to trust that those who resist dehumanisation are the authentic authorities on how best to wage these struggles” (SM-01, author interview, 24 January 2023). These initiatives allow individuals to reflect on their work and examine their practices. FGD respondents, FGD-D, FGD-D5 and FGD-A, shared how the critical conversations offer them a chance to engage directly with funding partners and share their work and the realities of their communities. A respondent FGD-D indicated: “These spaces humanise us, funders see us and we see them and we share our lived realities” (FGD-D Online, 10 January 2023). A funding partner FP-01 reported, “…the space can be uncomfortable, it has hard conversations, but when we leave, we reflect on our own practice and we see how we can do better” (FP-01, author interview, 31 March 2023). These spaces facilitate the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and skills among participants, and encourages self-reflection and personal growth, empowering individuals to critically examine their own perspectives and assumptions while learning from others.

4.5.3 Bridging Boundaries: Networks, Linkages and Connections

One significant finding of the study was the effectiveness of ACT Ubumbano's networks and platforms in establishing meaningful connections and facilitating access to national, regional, and global platforms. ACT Ubumbano's networks and platforms serve as a powerful tool for amplifying social justice efforts. The research highlights how these networks provide partner organisations with access to national, regional, and global platforms, enabling them to elevate their voices and advance their social justice agenda on a wider scale. This leveraging of ACT Ubumbano's network has enabled partners to expand their reach and engage with a broader audience, facilitating collaboration and knowledge exchange on a larger scale. Through these connections, partners have been able to amplify their voices, expand their reach, and contribute to the collective pursuit of social justice and decolonisation efforts on both local and international levels. This is evidenced by FGD-D, who expressed that: "Our organisation has gained access to learning spaces. It has helped our organisation to make an intersectional approach to work. We learn from other organisations across the SADC region, how they mobilise and organise especially on difficult topics" (FGD-D, Online, 10 January 2023).

A critical need emerged in the research: clear purpose and objectives for linkages and partnerships. Funding partners and Board members noted that ACT Ubumbano had emphasised the establishing of linkages and connections with communities and other partners. However, they pointed out the necessity to "clarify the 'outcome' of these linkages or partnerships. FP-04 emphasised that, "…it is insufficient to merely state that we are creating links and connections; rather, it is imperative to consider the purpose and objectives behind these connections" (FP-04, author interview, 10 March 2023). This highlights the importance of clarifying the purpose of linkages and how these contribute to building of solidarity and contributing to decolonisation efforts.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented reflections and perspectives of Solidarity Grant Partners, Funding Partners, Sector Experts, Advisory Committee and Board Members, and ACT Ubumbano Staff. Through this analysis, expression of solidarity is discussed and how int manifests in the within Southern Africa. This has prompted important questions regarding how solidarity can be effectively expressed to bring about meaningful change and improvements in people's lives, while also advancing decolonisation efforts. Decolonisation forms and approaches that ensure equitable partnerships, challenge unequal power balance and funding approaches was presented. Furthermore, there was a notable emphasis on the importance of reframing vocabulary to reimagine a different system for philanthropy, one that is rooted in local knowledge, culture, and identity, as part of the broader decolonisation agenda. Chapter 5 provides a comprehensive discussion of these findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research findings and explores expressions of solidarity and decolonisation within the realm of philanthropy in Southern Africa. The research used ACT Ubumbano to respond to one of the research questions examining the role of the civil society organisation in building solidarity and decolonising philanthropy.

The chapter examines the transformative potential of philanthropic practices when grounded in principles of solidarity and decolonisation. The study results were intended to address three questions:

- To explore the expression of solidarity in the context of Southern African philanthropy.
- To analyse decolonisation forms and approaches emerging in the context of philanthropy.
- To assess ACT Ubumbano's expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy.

5.2 EXISTING EXPRESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY

5.2.1 Ubuntu or Horizontal Philanthropy

The findings of this study confirm that solidarity in Southern Africa is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of African societies and is expressed as "Ubuntu" or natural solidarity (Murisa, 2018; Moyo, 2011). Scholars have pointed out that solidarity is inherent and has historically played a crucial role in overcoming adversity within communities. Communal work projects, mutual aid, extended family networks, and collective decision-making processes are some of the various ways in which solidarity can be

expressed (Herzog et al., 2020; Mahomed, 2023; Mati, 2016; Moyo, 2013; Murisa, 2013). Stokvels, burial societies, rotating savings clubs and cooperatives are identified as forms of philanthropy where members of these groups are protected by social capital and forms of solidarity (Moyo, 2011). Murisa (2013, p.273) posits that these are “underground forms of solidarity which tend to be more organically embedded in everyday practices. These expressions of solidarity are essential for fostering resilience, building social capital, and challenging dominant power relations to pursue more equitable and just societies (Thomas-Slayter & Fisher, 2011). In essence, solidarity reflects the shared struggles, aspirations and efforts of individuals, communities, and organisations working to address social, economic, and political challenges (Freire, 1970).

Drawing from the works of Durkheim (1979), as well as Honneth and Fraser (2003), the study discusses the conditions that enable the manifestation of solidarity. They argue that solidarity arises when individuals reciprocally recognise each other's worth and dignity. The findings of this study indicate the importance of sharing stories and lived experiences, which enable linkages and connections across sectors and geographies. This further validates that solidarity involves connections, networks, alliances, and collaborations between individuals, among multiple groups or organisations, and direct support between individuals or groups. Similar to recognition or redistribution, solidarity includes empathy, mutual assistance, collaboration responsibility, and a desire to address systemic issues or promote social change. An example may include regional networks of activists working on common issues such as gender equality, environmental justice, or migrant rights. Interview respondents from funding partners highlighted how faith congregants contributed resources to stand in solidarity with the communities in Southern Africa. Social justice has directed attention towards marginalised communities, thus emphasising the need to amplify their voices (Gibson, 2018; Mahomed, 2020; Thige & Adly, 2020).

5.2.2 Solidarity AGN's framework for categorising African philanthropy

Respondents to the study further reinforced the importance of solidarity in philanthropy, explaining how it encompasses various forms of engagement at different scales, from micro to macro, time-bound, short-term and long-term and is necessitated by crises such as natural disasters. Solidarity in Southern Africa can be expressed within the African Grantmaker's Network (AGN) framework for categorising African philanthropy, which is One-to-one, Many-to-Many, One-to-Many, Many-to-One (AGN, 2013). The AGN's framework for categorising African philanthropy analogy collaborates with what is termed as bonding, bridging, and linking features of most common distinctions of social capital when discussing theory (Bayat, 2005). It is emphasised that bonding as a currency of social capital has been viewed as a common denominator for relationships among people who are closely connected for a specific purpose (Bayat, 2005). This form of social capital enables people to "get by", Field (2003) describes this kind of solidarity as one creates connections and networks between disparate groups. These may be considered more fragile but are more likely to foster social inclusion. It is important to note, that these authors ignored discussing the issue of philanthropy. For example, on one-to-one solidarity, individuals may support each other during times of crisis, share resources, or engage in mentorship relationships. One respondent spoke of the solidarity offered during the COVID-19 period: "The other thing we overlook as an act of solidarity is checking in, picking up the phone and saying, 'How are you?', not because I am worried about you; how are you doing? Those are important forms of solidarity when you check on the human and not the programme or expectation of programme results".

5.2.3 Shared Struggle and Collective Action

The concept of shared struggle, rooted in the history of collective action, is a powerful driver of solidarity movements in Africa. Literature on solidarity underscores the critical role of networks in fostering a sense of shared identity and purpose (Hernandez-Castillo, 2018). Networks can cultivate solidarity by creating spaces for dialogue and understanding between communities facing similar challenges. Rojas and Ude (2012) observes that formalising civic spaces significantly influences the expression of solidarity. The root of solidarity is what it is to be a civic society and be able to speak together freely and collectively on what affects communities and forms movements. Rojas and Ude (2012) observes that formalising civic spaces significantly influences the expression of solidarity. The fear is the need to adhere to organisational messaging and fall within the policy requirements on who speaks or acts. Sista II Sista (Burrowes, Cousins, Rojas, & Ude, 2012) explain how NGO-isation and NGOs taking over movements may weaken solidarity movements and social action in the global North and global South. However, national and global solidarity actions that have been reduced or weakened due to formalising or institutionalising action were discussed. It is observed that CBOs and community members prioritising issues or causes over others could lead to divisions and challenges in maintaining a unified front (Judge, 2017). For example, some community members may prioritise addressing economic inequality as the primary focus while others prioritise racial justice or gender equality. In such a situation, tensions may arise, potentially undermining collective action and solidarity. It thus becomes necessary to navigate and address these differences through open dialogue, intersectional approaches, and recognising that multiple dimensions of injustice are interconnected (Judge, 2017). Actively engaging in discussions and finding common ground, communities can strive towards inclusive solidarity that addresses diverse concerns and promotes a more comprehensive and equitable social justice movement.

NGOs can shift focus from solidarity and grassroots movements towards service delivery and expert-driven approaches. Burrowes et al. (2012) suggest that funders align their interests based on the solidarity action that is a priority in their strategies. Funding is further pulled back due to fear of controversy associated with social justice actions and/or movements. Mati (2012) posits that intricate and continual networks influence fund allocation for specific priorities, and that funding, especially in activities, can contribute to an erosion of solidarity.

Judge (2017) further emphasises the importance of navigating differences within solidarity movements. While prioritising specific issues like economic inequality, racial justice, or gender equality can lead to divisions open dialogue and intersectional approaches are crucial for building inclusive solidarity (Judge, 2017). This resonates with the concept of social capital, as explored by Field (2003). Strong social capital, built through networks and connections, fosters trust, resource sharing, and a shared vision, all of which are essential for effective collective action. Social capital via networks and connections become important instruments for ensuring shared struggle and collective action (Field, 2003). Through fostering relationships, building trust, and accessing resources, social capital strengthens solidarity and empowers communities to work towards a common vision of decolonisation and social justice. Through social capital, individuals can leverage their networks and connections to mobilise others towards a common goal (ibid). In fostering relationships and building trust, shared struggles can be acknowledged and addressed collectively. This collective action is essential for driving social change and achieving meaningful outcomes, as it brings together diverse perspectives, resources, and expertise to address complex challenges. Ultimately, social capital strengthens the fabric of society by empowering individuals to unite and work towards a common vision. This aligns with the view of Brown and Ferris (2004) regarding social capital encompassing access to various

resources – physical, financial, and human – all of which empower communities to pursue development goals. Studies by Rose (2000) and Kassahun (2010) further demonstrate the positive impact of social capital on community development in Africa, highlighting its potential to drive meaningful social change.

5.3 DECOLONISATION OF PHILANTHROPY

Collaboration and partnership have become prominent topics in academic discourse and practice due to their potential to drive social change, encourage innovation and address complex global challenges (George et al., 2016). However, it is important to examine how different forms of collaboration and partnership intersect with dominant funding relationships and power dynamics, as this can significantly influence the outcomes and impact of social change initiatives (Moyo, 2013). This section discusses how various forms of collaboration and partnership reproduce or challenge dominant funding relationships and power relations. By critically examining the intersections of collaboration, partnership, funding and power relations, philanthropic actors and practitioners can work towards fostering more inclusive and empowering collaborations. This may involve re-thinking traditional funding models, embracing more participatory approaches, and cantering the voices and needs of marginalised communities and organisations (Fowler, 2016; Moyo, 2013; Mohamed & Moyo, 2013).

5.3.1 Transforming systems.

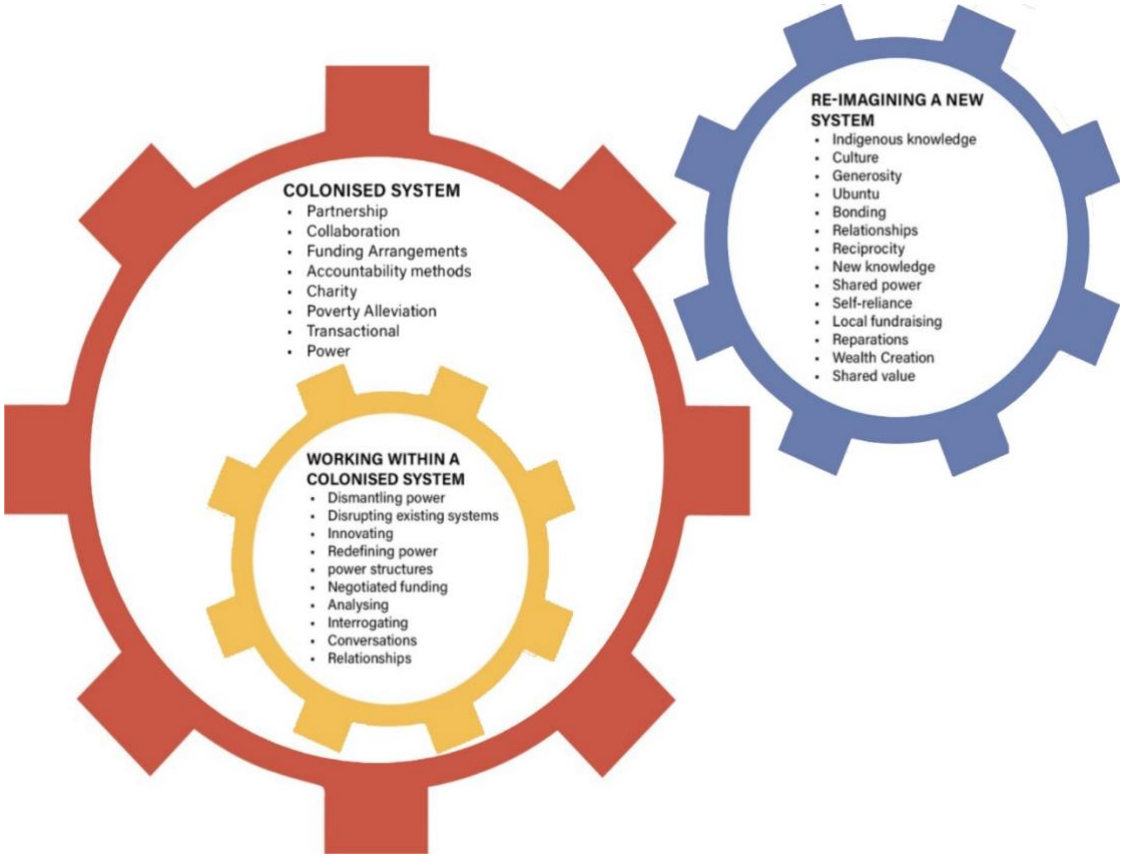
A reimagined system has been proposed. The proposed reimagined system emphasises principles of equity, inclusivity, and community voice and empowerment. A particular component in the reimagines system is orientation towards indigenous knowledge systems, traditions and culture. However, as was highlighted by research participants, glimpses of these components are in play but still need to be fully supported. Through

innovative approaches and transformative practices, there is an opportunity to reshape collaboration, partnership, funding, and power relations to be more equitable and inclusive, as stated by SE-03, who observed that it should be “philanthropy that equips grantees to step-up and step-out and enjoy their God-given dignity” (SE-03, author interview, 17 May 2023). While the analysis of social capital allows for the identification of opportunities to build bridges and foster co-creation, there are also existing power imbalances within partnerships, requiring strategies for equitable power-sharing and collaborative decision-making (Sotiropoulos, 2016). This aligns with the reimagined system’s focus on fostering genuine partnerships based on mutual respect and shared decision-making. However, Sotiropoulos (2016) also highlights the challenge of existing power imbalances within partnerships. These imbalances echo the concerns raised about current philanthropic practices, which often reflect and perpetuate colonial dynamics of marginalisation and exploitation (Figure 5).

Decolonising philanthropy offers a framework for addressing these power imbalances. The work of scholars like Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), Mbembe (2001), and Tilston (2014) emphasises the need to dismantle these influences and create alternative systems. This involves: 1) Empowering marginalised voices: Decolonised philanthropy prioritises the voices and perspectives of historically marginalised communities in decision-making (Mbembe, 2001); 2) Promoting genuine partnerships: Moving beyond paternalistic approaches, decolonised philanthropy fosters collaboration and equitable power-sharing within partnerships (Sotiropoulos, 2016); 3) Ensuring fair distribution of resources: Decolonised philanthropy prioritises equitable access to resources, empowering all members of society for growth and development (Tilston, 2014). These principles align with the reimagined system’s emphasis on fostering agency and resilience within communities. Only by dismantling colonial influences can Southern Africa foster genuine partnerships and co-create a future that benefits all (Mbembe, 2001).

Figure 5 depicts the form of partnerships, collaboration, funding and power relationships. The current partnership is within the colonised systems, and engagement within this system aims to change the type of partnerships. In the current system, partnerships often reflect and perpetuate the dynamics of colonialism, with power imbalances, exploitation, and marginalisation of groups and communities. Engagement within this system aims to challenge and transform the existing partnerships, recognising that they are built on foundations of historical oppression and exploitation. Instead of perpetuating these harmful dynamics, efforts are focused on creating new types of partnerships that are rooted in principles of justice, equity, and sustainability. The reimagined or envisioned new narrative seeks to transcend the limitations of traditional systems, by embracing principles of equity, empowerment, and sustainability. At the core of the reimagined system are the social justice principle which draw a narrative about redefining partnerships, collaboration, funding, and power relationships to foster genuine inclusivity, agency, and resilience. In this narrative, partnerships are no longer defined by hierarchical structures or asymmetrical power dynamics but rather as informed by social capital principles, mutual respect, reciprocity, and shared decision-making.

Figure 5: Collaboration, Partnerships, Funding and Power Relations



Source: Author's compilation from data collection

5.3.2 Promoting equitable power dynamics in funding.

The need to promote equitable power dynamics in funding as a decolonisation approach was raised by respondents. Results showed how there was significant influence of colonial systems on collaboration, partnership, funding, and power relations due to the enduring legacy of unequal power dynamics, wherein dominant actors retain control and decision-making authority, perpetuating existing inequalities. These power imbalances shape collaborative efforts, partnerships, and funding mechanisms, often perpetuating existing disparities. This unequal distribution of power and resources has been argued to have shaped collaborative efforts, partnerships and funding mechanisms, often favouring

the interests of the colonisers or perpetuating existing inequalities (Shutt, 2016). In this case, shifting power in international development emphasises the importance of empowering local communities and organisations rather than perpetuating top-down approaches (Shutt ,2016). This reflects the efforts to amplify local voices to ensure that communities have a say in determining their development priorities and shaping philanthropy (*ibid*). Decolonisation of philanthropy is important to banish the notion of "global North/powerful saviours who jet in to save the poor perishing Africans". However, since the research also emphasises the potential for "reimagined" systems that challenge the colonial structures, studies have shown that the postcolonial landscape of Southern Africa continues to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, and also in the sphere of philanthropy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Mbembe, 2001; Tilston, 2014). Decolonising philanthropy is basically about dismantling the historical power imbalances from the Western-dominated practices. Besides, its entails challenging the dominance of externally imposed agenda such as top-down approaches, and dependency-breeding relationships which is ultimately a precursor of a more equitable and self-driven development paradigm (Breeze, 2021; Mbembe, 2001; Villanueva, 2021; Dlakavu, Mathebula, & Mkhize, 2022).

5.3.3 Position, Power and Privilege

The study highlights a level of reproduction of colonial systems as partnerships were developed between the North-South partnerships. Reproduction occurs when collaborations and partnerships reinforce established power structures, privileging certain actors and perpetuating inequality. This is supported by scholars (Gibson, 2018; Moyo & Imafidon, 2021; Paige, 2020; WACSI, 2021) who posit that through the localisation agenda, there is a reproduction of systems which lead to a concentration of resources and decision-making authority among a select few, privileged "localised" organisations sustaining the existing power status quo.

Position, power and privilege profoundly influence the dynamics of collaboration and partnership within philanthropy, thereby shaping funding relationships and power dynamics. Inherent in the philanthropy ecosystem, these factors intersect to create complex interplays that can enhance or hinder positive development outcomes (Fowler, 2016; Moyo, 2013; Mohamed & Moyo, 2013). Individuals and organisations with social and economic influence have a greater capacity to initiate and shape collaborations, leveraging their networks, reputation, and resources (Paige, 2020). Their elevated standing provides legitimacy, attracting partners and supporting philanthropic initiatives (Gibson, 2018). Power dynamics play a central role, as actors with financial or political power shape the direction and impact of collaborations, potentially reinforcing existing hierarchies (Huxham, 2003). Privilege, arising from social, economic or political advantages, significantly influences collaboration in philanthropy (Mahomed, 2023). Privileged entities can establish and sustain initiatives, influencing resource allocation and funding priorities. However, it is necessary to recognise that privilege may inadvertently marginalise communities and perpetuate inequalities due to a limited understanding of their diverse needs and realities (Paige, 2020). These dynamics within philanthropy can perpetuate or challenge existing funding relationships and power dynamics.

Power in philanthropy presents a complex duality. While resources and influence can be harnessed for collaborative action and achieving shared goals (Grant, 2013), they also hold the potential for manipulation and furthering existing inequalities (Andre & Waddock, 2010). However, collaborative partnerships can serve as a catalyst for disrupting these entrenched power dynamics (Fowler, 2008). Philanthropy actors with significant resources can promote equity by fostering genuine engagement with diverse perspectives. This includes forging partnerships with grassroots organisations and community-led initiatives, which are often closer to the issues and possess valuable contextual knowledge (Edwards

& McCarthy, 2004). A transformative approach necessitates acknowledging and dismantling existing power imbalances within the funding relationship (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This requires striving for inclusivity and representation within decision-making structures, ensuring that the voices of those most affected by social injustice are heard (Milstein, Eikenberry, & Prakash, 2013). Furthermore, prioritising frameworks rooted in social justice ensures that philanthropy addresses the root causes of systemic inequalities (McCarthy, 2010).

Social capital and social justice are influential forces in shaping the dynamics of collaboration and partnership within philanthropy. Social capital, rooted in networks and relationships, can either facilitate or impede collaboration, depending on who possesses it, potentially reinforcing existing power and privilege dynamics (Putnam, 2000). Meanwhile, social justice principles demand a more equitable distribution of power, resources, and decision-making, calling for a conscious effort to mitigate the influence of privilege and to ensure that philanthropic efforts prioritise inclusion and address systemic inequalities (Sen, 1999). These factors collectively impact who gets a seat at the table, how resources are allocated, and the overall effectiveness of philanthropic initiatives in advancing equitable and just outcomes. The findings reflect what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013); Mbembe (2001) and Tilston (2014) describe as dismantling the historical power imbalances, shifting away from Western-dominated practices, and empowering local communities.

5.3.4 Towards Solidarity, Shared Power and collective action

Traditional philanthropy has been a one-way street, with wealthy donors dictating priorities and often silencing marginalised communities (Kirk & Shutte, 2004). This approach clashes with core social justice principles that emphasise dismantling power imbalances (Patton, 2016). Decolonisation of philanthropy offers a solution, fostering social justice through shared

struggle and collective action (Villanueva, 2018). Decolonisation of philanthropy proposes a paradigm shift, where funding is driven by the expertise and needs of marginalised communities, not by external actors. This is the essence of decolonisation (Villanueva, 2018). It promotes democratic decision-making, empowering these communities. Shared struggle emerges as these groups work together to address the root causes of marginalisation and achieve lasting change (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007). This fosters solidarity, a key ingredient for social justice movements.

Solidarity depends on a deep understanding of the challenges faced by marginalised communities (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007). Through shared understanding, communities can collectively define goals and take meaningful action. Decolonisation of philanthropy aligns with this concept by ensuring resources are used effectively to address these challenges. Recognising the unequal distribution of power and promoting democratic decision-making in philanthropy empowers marginalised groups and increases solidarity. Social justice demands challenging such power structures (Patton, 2016), and decolonisation of philanthropy puts this ideal into practice within the realm of giving.

5.3.5 The centrality of relationships in philanthropy

Ritter (2007) explains the interconnectedness of relationships and how they do not exist independently. Solidarity is rooted in recognising general interdependence as human beings. This is further elaborated in the term “ubuntu”. According to Moyo and Ramsamy (2014), as a phenomenon, Ubuntu highlights the ties and connections between people, with *‘umuntu, ngumuntu, ngabantu’* which means ‘*I am because we are’*. Globalisation has demonstrated that social linkages or connectedness are between individuals at a micro level and linked at a global level (Djelic & Quack, 2003). Moallin, Hargrave and Saez, (2023) explain that global events, for instance, the Ukraine War in the North, have had profound effects, including

on food supplies and the economy, displacements and geopolitics across the globe, including the global South. The Bible refers to the connectedness of all into one body. In the New Standard Version Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:14-27 states, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ”. This therefore means acknowledging that human destinies are linked, and that the well-being of any one person or group is connected to the well-being of others.

The finding on the importance of relationships and partnerships in philanthropy aligns with social capital theory which highlights how relationships of solidarity and cross-sector collaborations can support community-led initiatives and contribute to positive social change (Bourdieu, 1983). Field (2003) affirms that through interaction, people can develop communities, build standard norms and values, morally commit to each other, and define norms and beliefs, all of which could result in establishing networks of trust and support, issues of belonging and being part of a community and trust. Similarly, Acharya and Shrivastava (2011) observes that partnerships are in many ways a path towards “philanthropy with justice” that empowers communities, fosters genuine solidarity, and builds sustainable development on the foundations of shared agency and equitable social relations.

5.4 NOTIONS OF SOLIDARITY AS EXPRESSED BY ACT UBUMBANO

5.4.1 ACT Ubumbano’s Positionality

ACT Ubumbano’s positioning as a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) jointly owned by partners from both the Global North and South offers a unique vantage point to engage with the complex interplay of social capital, social justice theory, and the conceptual framework of African philanthropy (Musau, 2014). ACT Ubumbano has the opportunity to deconstruct

prevailing development approaches and re-imagine new paradigms centered on principles of social solidarity and participatory grant-making, thereby contributing to the decolonisation of philanthropy. Drawing on the insights of Moyo and Imafidon (2021), it becomes evident that addressing the challenges faced by the civil society sector necessitates a fundamental shift in donor practices towards amplifying diverse voices and fostering the reimagination of systems and approaches. This entails moving beyond traditional models of funding that prioritise a select few partners and instead embracing new methodologies that channel resources directly to communities, thereby enhancing social capital at community level.

Within the discourse of African philanthropy, the principle of solidarity – emphasising collective action, mutual support, and shared responsibility – takes centre stage (Musau, 2014). ACT Ubumbano, an organisation facilitating connections between Northern development agencies and Southern actors, embodies this principle by fostering solidarity among diverse stakeholders in the development ecosystem (Sigamoney, 2022). However, a critical analysis through the lens of social justice theory reveals deeper complexities within this ecosystem, highlighting the need for ACT Ubumbano's continued efforts. Social justice theory provides a framework for analysing power dynamics and resource allocation within development landscapes (Smith, 2009). ACT Ubumbano acts as a crucial intermediary, bridging the gap between well-resourced Northern development agencies and Southern NGOs, movements, and formations. This intermediary role facilitates connections and amplifies the voices of Southern communities. This aligns with Fraser's (1995) concept of social justice as participation, ensuring marginalised voices are heard in decision-making processes that directly impact their well-being. ACT Ubumbano promotes reciprocity within the development ecosystem. This concept resonates with theories of distributive justice, which emphasise a fair distribution of resources and benefits (Rawls, 1971). ACT Ubumbano strengthens social capital within the development ecosystem in facilitating connections between diverse

stakeholders. This collaborative approach aligns with the principles of social justice, promoting a sense of shared responsibility and empowering Southern actors to collectively address development challenges.

Discussing findings regarding position and power dynamics within community development, it becomes imperative to engage with partners collaboratively to effectively address the struggles faced by marginalised communities. This engagement is not merely symbolic; rather, it has tangible impacts as evidenced by the transformative outcomes resulting from the sharing of struggles leading to meaningful change at the community level. However, while individual transformations have been observed, there remains a gap in explicitly capturing the linkages to broader community-level change (Coleman, 1988; Dasgupta, 2005). This is where the convergence of social capital and social justice theory becomes apparent, emphasising the necessity of confronting power disparities and systemic injustices within philanthropy and community development initiatives. Social justice theory emphasises the need to centre marginalised voices and promote cross-sector collaborations to support community-led initiatives and catalyse positive social change (Gibson, 2018; Mahomed, 2020; Thige & Adly, 2020). Within this context, it is increasingly recognised that ACT Ubumbano, given its unique position and configuration owned by European and Southern Partners, must embrace its power and positionality to benefit the communities it supports. This entails leveraging its collaborative ownership structure to foster inclusive decision-making processes, amplify marginalised voices, and prioritise community-driven solutions that challenge existing power dynamics and contribute to more equitable and sustainable development outcomes.

In the current discourse, intermediary NGOs play a central role in linking grassroots community development organisations, supporting movements, fostering capacity development, amplifying community needs, promoting group formation, and facilitating resource allocation to the local level

(Abdullahi, 2011; Carroll & Rosson, 2003; Moyo & Imafidon, 2021). ACT Ubumbano, as an emerging intermediary actor, operates within a development landscape marked by funding constraints, linear funding models, and entrenched power dynamics between Northern development agencies and Southern NGOs and movements. Linear funding frames prevalent in this environment impede transformative and emancipatory approaches, lacking the ability to assess the quality of processes and progress towards transformational social change. Despite these challenges, ACT Ubumbano's intermediary role presents an opportunity to disrupt linear funding models, advocate for participatory grant-making, and promote community-driven solutions. In prioritising social justice and solidarity, fostering collaboration, and amplifying marginalised voices, ACT Ubumbano can contribute to the emergence of a more inclusive and equitable approach to community development, bridging divides between Northern donors and Southern grassroots organisations.

5.4.2 Decision-making and Agenda setting

The finding emphasises the critical role of decision-making and agenda-setting processes in philanthropy, illustrating how they influence the alignment of initiatives with community needs and the advancement of solidarity and decolonisation objectives in Southern Africa. Decision-making and agenda-setting in philanthropy emerge as crucial elements, shaping the trajectory of initiatives and their resonance with community needs and the objectives of solidarity and decolonisation in Southern Africa (Escobar, 1995; Mohan & Stokke, 2000; Sen, 1999). Dependency on Northern donors can often lead to an imbalance where the agenda of initiatives may not adequately prioritise community needs or long-term sustainability, undermining efforts towards decolonisation. ACT Ubumbano, reliant on donor funding, grapples with these dynamics, as external funding can both provide necessary resources and reinforce power imbalances, potentially distorting the goals and values of community organisations.

To navigate these challenges, it becomes necessary for external funders to engage in transparent partnerships with local actors, ensuring alignment with community aspirations (Putnam, 2000). Only through genuine collaboration and empowerment can external funding truly contribute to decolonisation efforts in Southern Africa. ACT Ubumbano addresses donor exit strategies by forging partnerships with local communities and organisations, leveraging resources to achieve objectives and mitigate the impact of donor withdrawal. Robust exit strategies are necessary in enabling localisation and fostering a Southern grant-making infrastructure, emphasising capacity-building, network establishment, and meaningful community engagement (Moyo & Imafidon, 2021; Sigamoney, 2022).

While fostering solidarity and promoting transformative change, organisations like ACT Ubumbano face a crucial challenge: ensuring the long-term sustainability of their initiatives. Donor funding, although crucial, can be volatile (Eifert & Gelb, 2005). A proactive approach to donor exit strategies becomes essential for safeguarding progress and empowering local communities. ACT Ubumbano's emphasis on long-term sustainability planning aligns with theories of social justice that advocate for self-determination and dismantling power imbalances (Adams, 2012). Donor dependence can perpetuate a cycle of external control, hindering local ownership and long-term impact. Planning for eventual donor exit, ACT Ubumbano prioritises the empowerment of local agencies. This aligns with concept of empowerment, which emphasises building the capacity of local actors to address their own challenges (Eyben & Cornwall, 2008). Diversifying funding sources strengthens resilience and reduces reliance on individual donors or agencies (Mitchell, 2013). This strategy resonates with theories of social justice, which promote a fair and equitable distribution of resources (Rawls, 1971). Pursuing diverse funding streams, ACT Ubumbano ensures that resources are not concentrated in the hands of a

few powerful donors, promoting a more balanced and just funding landscape.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings highlight that solidarity is a fundamental principle that seeks to empower marginalised individuals and communities by promoting collective action and mutual support. Moreover, solidarity manifests differently, depending on the perspective and discipline, resulting in continually shifting forms of what is considered solidarity and how this is expressed. For instance, solidarity in the horizontal ecosystem is widespread, deeply embedded, morally grounded, and necessary for survival and progress. In this sphere, solidarity is organised and part of the social fabric.

Decolonising philanthropy involves challenging and transforming the power dynamics inherent in philanthropic practices. This can be done through working within the current colonised systems or re-imagining a new narrative or systems suited for Southern Africa. Intentionality is important to build trust and transparency, address historical and structural inequalities, centre community voices and leadership, prioritise long-term, sustainable solutions and support intersectional approaches.

ACT Ubumbano has presented enclaves that could begin to address power and build community agency. Through locally led initiatives, amplifying community voice and agency, creating linkages and connecting struggles, the work disrupts systemic top-down approaches and strengthens solidarity between partners.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This study explored the expression of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa. The primary objective is on deepening our understanding of solidarity within philanthropy as a significant aspect of the ongoing decolonisation agenda in Southern Africa. Qualitative research using an interpretivist approach to achieve the objectives was used. The specific objectives were:

- To explore the expression of solidarity in the context of Southern African philanthropy.
- To analyse decolonisation forms and approaches emerging in the context of philanthropy
- To assess ACT Ubumbano's expressions of solidarity and decolonisation of philanthropy.

This chapter presents the conclusions and implications for future research regarding expressions of solidarity and decolonising philanthropy in Southern Africa. This study advances the understanding of philanthropy in Southern Africa by shedding light on the complex interplay between solidarity and decolonisation. Expressions of solidarity play a central role in decolonising philanthropy. Actively engaging with and amplifying the voices of marginalised communities, philanthropy can promote more inclusive and equitable practices. Solidarity should be based on mutual respect, shared power, and a commitment to dismantling oppressive systems. It is essential to build genuine partnerships and collaborations that prioritise the voice, agency and self-determination of local communities.

6.2. STUDY CONCLUSIONS

Through the examination of initiatives in philanthropy and the voices of local communities, this research shed light on innovative approaches to fostering solidarity as a tool for decolonisation. Key findings reveal that collaborative models of philanthropy, rooted in mutual understanding and respect, can significantly enhance the impact of philanthropy in Southern Africa. These insights underscore the importance of recognising and addressing historical power imbalances and colonial legacies, thereby contributing to the discourse on philanthropy and solidarity in the region. The significance of these findings lies in their potential to inform philanthropy, practices and policies, offering a fresh perspective on how solidarity can be harnessed to promote decolonisation and more equitable development in Southern Africa. Scholars have extensively explored the role of African philanthropy in reshaping power dynamics and addressing privilege within the sector (Moyo, 2013). They argue that African philanthropy has the potential to challenge traditional models of philanthropy dominated by Western actors and ideologies, thereby expressing solidarity with marginalised communities and contributing to the decolonisation of philanthropy. Additionally, scholars have discussed how African philanthropy can leverage its unique position to promote social justice and equity while addressing power imbalances inherent in traditional philanthropy practices (Mohamed & Moyo, 2013). These perspectives emphasise the importance of African philanthropy in reshaping the narrative on position, power, and privilege within the sector and advancing efforts towards decolonisation and solidarity.

The discussions on solidarity in philanthropy within Southern Africa highlighted the complexities of defining and operationalising solidarity within the context of development efforts. Anheier and Daly (2007) have underscored the importance of understanding solidarity as a dynamic concept that goes beyond mere acts of charity or altruism. Rather, solidarity

entails a commitment to shared values, collective action, and mutual support, particularly in the face of systemic injustices and inequalities. Through this research, it is evident that defining solidarity in philanthropy requires a nuanced understanding of power dynamics, historical legacies, and cultural contexts (Alliance, 2022). While initiatives like ACT Ubumbano exemplify efforts to centre solidarity as a guiding principle in community-driven development, debates persist regarding the extent to which philanthropy truly embody solidarity in their practices (Banks, 2007; Edwards & Hulme,1995). Furthermore, the questions are raised on “How to articulate the benefits of solidarity, in the broader decolonisation agenda?” Solidarity is a significant contributor to decolonisation in philanthropy. Decolonisation of philanthropy in Southern Africa requires a fundamental shift in power dynamics and the redistribution of resources (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Philanthropy, traditionally dominated by Western perspectives and power dynamics, has often perpetuated colonial legacies through its funding priorities, approaches, and practices. Solidarity has the potential to dismantle harmful narratives and stereotypes perpetuated by traditional philanthropy, leading to a more accurate representation of diverse perspectives and experiences. Moving forward, it is essential for stakeholders to engage in ongoing dialogues and critical reflections to refine and expand our understanding of solidarity in philanthropy, ensuring that interventions are rooted in principles of equity, empowerment, and social justice. Through embracing a holistic and inclusive definition of solidarity, philanthropy in Southern Africa can contribute to building more resilient, cohesive, and equitable communities for the future.

Findings from the study closely align with the calls made by scholars such as Abubaker (2019), Biko (1972), Fanon (1961), Mamdani (1996), Mbembe (2016) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), urging a redefinition of legitimacy and expertise within philanthropy. They highlight the importance of recognising and valuing local knowledge, reclaiming African languages and cultural heritage, and asserting intellectual sovereignty by drawing upon capacities

within local communities. This resonates with the imperative for local capacity-building and institutional strengthening advocated by Gibson (2018) and Moyo and Imafidon (2021). Investing in training, mentorship, and organisational development empowers local actors to take leadership roles and shape solutions tailored to their communities' specific needs and aspirations. Furthermore, the scholarship of Rodney (1972) and Nyang'anyi (2018) underscores the necessity of confronting historical injustices and inequalities perpetuated by colonial hegemony, particularly in resource distribution and development trajectories. To address these deep-seated inequalities, it is important to recognise and challenge the existing hierarchies and privileges within philanthropy, as highlighted by these scholars. This requires a thorough examination of the historical and structural factors shaping philanthropic practices in the region.

The insights from Amadiume (2016) and Mkandawire (2005) emphasise the importance of cultural sensitivity and context-specific approaches in philanthropic endeavours. Acknowledging the diverse cultural realities and histories of African communities and moving beyond one-size-fits-all solutions, is necessary for effective and sustainable philanthropy. Embracing these principles enables efforts in philanthropy to better align with local contexts, values, and aspirations, ultimately contributing to more meaningful and impactful outcomes for communities across Africa.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has the potential to contribute to both academic knowledge and practical efforts to promote solidarity and decolonisation within philanthropy in Southern Africa. It provides valuable insights to deepen understanding on the intersection of solidarity and decolonisation within philanthropy. These findings not only reveal the current landscape but also point towards potential avenues for further exploration and action. Future research could investigate the long-term social, cultural, and economic impacts of

expressions of solidarity and decolonisation in Southern Africa. A central research question emerges for further research: Is solidarity adequate for sustainable development in Southern Africa? What are the long-term social, cultural, and economic impacts of expressions of solidarity and decolonisation in Southern Africa, and how can these be measured and evaluated? Considering the implications for future research, key areas emerge as crucial for future investigation:

Cultivating Solidarity-Based Partnerships: Future research should dig deeper into models for building strong, equitable partnerships that centre the voices and expertise of marginalised communities (Manicom, 2017). This includes examining mechanisms for ensuring shared decision-making throughout the philanthropy. One approach could be to study models for collaborative grant making, where communities have a voice in how resources are allocated and projects are designed (Fowler, 2000). Additionally, research could explore mechanisms for holding all partners accountable to achieving mutually beneficial goals. This could involve developing frameworks for monitoring and evaluation that prioritise the perspectives of marginalised communities (Dart, 2004; Sidel & Levy, 2018). Drawn from respondent feedback, this broad question can be put forward for future research: What are the barriers and opportunities for Southern African philanthropy to collaborate with international donors and institutions in advancing expressions of solidarity and decolonisation?

Engaging with Contextual Knowledge Systems: Research is needed to understand how best to integrate contextual knowledge into philanthropy, as emphasised by African philanthropy scholars (Fowler & Mati, 2019; Mati, 2012; Mohamed & Moyo, 2013; Moyo, 2013; Moyo & Imafidon, 2021; Murisa, 2018). It goes beyond simply understanding the context to actively incorporating the knowledge and expertise of local communities, as advocated by scholars like Edwards and Hulme (1995) and Moyo (2013). This approach involves studying methodologies for respectfully integrating

indigenous knowledge into project design and implementation (Edwards & Hulme, 1995). Additionally, it explores strategies for supporting and strengthening traditional institutions, aligning with the importance of social capital for philanthropy (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Understanding the role of cultural practices in fostering social cohesion and collective action (Collins, 2000) is also crucial for building solidarity within these contexts. The following question can be investigated further: How can philanthropy effectively engage with local knowledge systems, cultural practices, and traditional institutions in ways that promote expressions of solidarity and decolonisation?

Addressing Colonial Legacies through Intersectionality: Future research should explore how philanthropy can dismantle colonial power structures and empower marginalised communities. This can be achieved by incorporating intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 2000) to understand that marginalisation is often experienced at the crossroads of various identities (race, gender, class). Research could focus on effective strategies to dismantle these interlocking systems of oppression, while also supporting community-led efforts for agency and autonomy that consider the diverse needs within these communities. Additionally, developing methods to identify and address the unique challenges faced by individuals based on their intersecting identities is necessary for achieving a more just and equitable future.

Critical Self-Reflection and Continuous Assessment: Future research should explore best practices for continuous evaluation and reflection within philanthropy, as advocated by scholars like Brest and Born (2013) and Martin (2016). This could involve studying methods for identifying and mitigating existing power dynamics and biases within philanthropic interventions.

Supporting Networks and Coalitions: Research is needed to understand the impact of networks and coalitions in fostering collaboration and systemic change (Anheier & Daly, 2007; Chandler & Kunreuther, 2016). This could involve the exploration of building and supporting these networks effectively to amplify the voices of marginalised communities (Fowler, 2000).

Collaboration and Power Dynamics: Building upon the call for decolonisation in philanthropy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013), future research should examine the challenges and opportunities that arise when Southern African philanthropy collaborates with international donors and institutions (Anheier & Daly, 2007). This could involve studying power imbalances between Southern and Northern actors (Fowler & Mati, 2019) and mechanisms for ensuring co-creation and shared decision-making in projects (Dart, 2004).

Local Voices and Decolonisation: Research is necessary to understand how local communities and organisations in Southern Africa perceive and define expressions of solidarity and decolonisation within the context of philanthropy. This aligns with the emphasis on African philanthropy scholars for contextual understanding (Fowler & Mati, 2019). Conducting participatory research with diverse community stakeholders (Moyo, 2013) could reveal how these perspectives differ from traditional top-down approaches (Moyo & Imafidon, 2021). Identifying opportunities to integrate local voices into shaping philanthropic initiatives (Sidel & Levy, 2018) is crucial for decolonisation efforts.

6.4 CONCLUSION

To conclude, as much as questions have been raised on how the discourse on solidarity contributes to advancing the decolonisation of philanthropy, and there are concerns that conversation around solidarity may divert attention and resources away from addressing systemic issues and

structural inequalities that perpetuate injustice within philanthropy, it should nonetheless be noted that conversation around solidarity serves as a critical avenue for furthering the decolonisation of philanthropy. In recognising and challenging colonial legacies embedded within philanthropy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013), solidarity discourse prompts donors and philanthropy to reconsider power dynamics, redistribution of resources, and centre the voices and agency of marginalised communities in decision-making processes (Alliance, 2022). Moreover, solidarity conversations foster collaboration and partnership-building across diverse stakeholders, facilitating collective efforts to dismantle structures of oppression and foster transformative change within philanthropy (AGN, 2013; Moyo & Imafidon, 2021). Thus, solidarity discourse not only complements but also catalyses the broader movement towards decolonising philanthropy, ultimately paving the way for more equitable and just forms of giving and resource distribution.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE 1: THE KOPANONG PRINCIPLES3

1. We commit to promote a strategic and transformative relationship with southern African partners, which go beyond transactional funding.
2. We build our future partnership on solidarity, with a strong commitment to change the power dynamics and being more accountable to partners.
3. Our new model will be jointly owned, but driven by southern partners, and we do not subscribe to the top-down models driven by many INGOs.
4. Our new model has a regional advocacy focus and include both South African and Southern African partners with a regional focus and/or national programmes that links to regional priorities.
5. We engage in strategic partnerships with both ACT Alliance members and faith-based organisations, but also organisations, networks and movements without a direct affiliation to the church.
6. Whatever model, we strongly commit to instate a local independent advisory committee consisting of national and regional partners.
7. We will start from an evolving organisational model (possibly a NCA hosting model) and may over time move into a new localised organisational model, if agreed upon by E4 members and partner organisations.
8. The Board will consist of core funding partners, e.g. Heads of Africa departments plus minimum three independent southern African members.
9. We commit to sustain funding levels during change process (2017-2018)

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[3] Adopted by Christian Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, Church of Sweden, Bread for the World on the 10th of March 2017

10. We commit to secure funding for the change manager and change process (2017-2018)

This section is included in a 2018 MOU between the European partners and is an updated commitment from the original one in 2017.

Our commitment as signatories (based on the Kopanong principles)

1) We commit to promote a strategic and transformative relationship with southern African partners, which go beyond transactional funding.

2) We build our future partnership on solidarity, with a strong commitment to change the power dynamics and being more accountable to partners.

3) Our new model will be jointly owned, but driven by southern partners, and we do not subscribe to the top-down models driven by many INGOs.

4) Our new model has a regional advocacy focus and include both South African and Southern African partners with a regional focus and/or national programmes that links to regional priorities.

5) We engage in strategic partnerships with both ACT Alliance members and faith-based organisations, but also organisations, networks and movements without a direct affiliation to the church.

6) Whatever model – we commit to support the formation of a local independent advisory committee consisting of national and regional partners.

ANNEXURE 2: SOUTHERN AFRICA PARTNERS

1. Benchmarks Foundation (BMF)
2. Botswana Council of Churches (BCC)
3. Church Land Programme (CLP)
4. Diakonia Council of Churches
5. Economic Justice Network (EJN)
6. Ecumenical Service for Socio-Economic Transformation (ESSET)
7. Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA)
8. Mozambique Council of Churches (CCM)
9. Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (PACSA)
10. Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC)
11. Southern African Faith Communities Environment Institute (SAFCEI)
12. Studies in Poverty & Inequality Institute (SPII)
13. We Will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA).
14. Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (SIMCODD)
15. Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (SELA)

ANNEXURE 3: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Introduction

My name is Zanele Makombe; I am a student at the Wits Business School-Centre for African Philanthropy and Social Investment. My research is titled: Interrogating Solidarity in philanthropy. Expressions, power, decolonisation. I appreciate your willingness to participate and share your experience and views.

The researcher's code of ethics will be discussed with the respondents. The researcher will emphasise the confidentiality of the information gathered using the interview. The discussions will be approximately 30 -45 minutes. The researcher will ask permission to take notes, photos and videos recording during the interview.

Name of Respondent _____Code Number _____

1. What is your gender? ☐ Male Female ☐ Other specify _____ ☐
2. Age of respondents? Less than 20 ☐ 21–30 years ☐
   31-40 years ☐ 41-50 years ☐
   51 years and above. ☐

Length of time participating in Act Ubumbano Initiatives?

- Fewer than 1 year ☐
- Between 2 and 5 years ☐
- More than five years ☐

What is your role in Act Ubumbano……

Section 1: Conceptualisation of ACT Ubumbano

- What was the process that led to the origins of Act Ubumbano?
- Which other role players participated in the origins of Act Ubumbano?
- How have community members been involved in the development of ACT Ubumbano?
- How have partners shaped/contributed to the concept and programme of Ubumbano?
- How is ACT Ubumbano contributing to a vision and practice of an alternative? If so, how?
- Summarises the progress, gains, and positives made by ACT Ubumbano and how they can be consolidated and advanced.

Section 2: interpretations of Solidarity and Social Capital building

- What is your understanding of Solidarity?
- How is ACT Ubumbano contributing to a deeper understanding of solidarity?
- What contributions of ACT Ubumbano do you consider to be solidarity initiatives? If so, how?
- How have you supported linkages, collaborations and partnerships with other partners and communities?

Section 3: Resource Mobilisation, Grant-making and Social Justice

- Where does ACT Ubumbano get most of the funding? How?
- What other sources of funding exist?
- How has Act Ubumbano funded solidarity Actions?
- What makes Act Ubumbano's funding approach different? Have there been shifts regarding funding that is more conducive to social justice

work and systems that are more conducive to planning, reporting, learning and measuring social change?

- How has Act Ubumbano challenged funding approaches?

Section 4: Decolonisation

- What is your understanding of decolonisation?
- What strategies can be employed to decolonise philanthropy in Southern Africa?
- What role should the communities being served by philanthropic activities play in designing and implementing those activities?

Section5: Approaches, community development

- What strategic issues have Act Ubumbano focused on implementing, delivering and supporting?
- How has act Ubumbano implemented the initiatives?
- What are the potential strategies going forward for ACT Ubumbano?

Any Other information you would like to share?

Thank you for your co-operation and participation. The information will be kept confidential and used only for this research.

ANNEXURE 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

The researcher will introduce herself to the Act Ubumbano Solidarity Support Grant recipients - respondents. A letter from Wits University, ethical consideration and consent forms will be discussed with the respondents. The researcher's code of ethics will be produced so the respondents understand the process. The topic and purpose of the interview will be explicitly discussed to help guide the process. The researcher will emphasise the confidentiality of the information gathered using the interview. The discussions will be approximately 45-90 minutes. The researcher will ask permission to take notes, photos and videos during the discussion.

1. Participants Present: Questions for Discussions

1.1. Community Support

- How did you get to know about Act Ubumbano?
- What support have you received from Act Ubumbano?
- Why is that support important for you or your organisation?
- Which ACT Ubumbano initiatives or programmes have you been a part of?

1.2. Interpretations of Solidarity

- What is your understanding of Solidarity?
- How is ACT Ubumbano contributing to a deeper understanding of solidarity?
- What contributions of ACT Ubumbano do you consider to be solidarity initiatives? If so, how?

1.3. Approaches, actions and building solidarity.

- Which initiatives do you think Act Ubumbano should continue doing and why?

- Have you accessed opportunities for collaborations and partnerships with other partners and communities? How? Why do you think this is important?

1.4. Decolonisation

- What is your understanding of decolonisation?
- What strategies can be employed to decolonise philanthropy in Southern Africa?
- What role should the communities being served by philanthropic activities play in designing and implementing those activities?

Any Other information you would like to share?

End of discussion

Thank you for your co-operation and participation. The information will be kept confidential and used only for this research. Transcripts and materials will be available to all participants.