

THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN LOCAL
SERVICE DELIVERY: THE NATIONAL ARTS
FESTIVAL'S SOCIAL EMPLOYMENT FUND (SEF)
PROGRAMME IN THE MAKANA MUNICIPALITY

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Abstract

Throughout South Africa, municipalities struggle to provide citizens with adequate services, often due to limited resources and dysfunctional government structures. Consequently, non-governmental organisations often take on a role in service delivery. This thesis examines the National Arts Festival's implementation of the Social Employment Fund (SEF) Programme and its contribution to addressing service delivery issues in the Makana municipality. In the context of local municipal service delivery failures, the thesis investigates how the partnership arrangement between the National Arts Festivals' SEF programme and the Makana Local Municipality operates in terms of delivering public services. Using a qualitative case study design, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 17 participants, an analysis of news reports on NAF's SEF programme, and a sample set of reports provided by NAF management. Key findings indicate that the NAF-SEF programme contributes to improving the provision of some services, such as refuse removal and the maintenance and beautification of public spaces. The findings also reveal that, in the context of infrastructure-related service provision, the state or private contractors are better suited to address such issues than non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as NGOs may lack long-term sustainability and are not always adequately resourced. Additionally, the findings demonstrate the NAF-managed SEF programme's contribution to providing part-time employment to citizens of Makhandla, while also creating a space for skills development and community empowerment. The findings also highlight the various challenges faced by the NAF-SEF programme, such as funding for the programme, and how these may hinder its ability to consistently and sustainably support the Makana Local Municipality in service provision. This thesis advances the understanding of non-governmental service provision and shows how an employment programme can be utilised as an alternative method of service provision through partnerships with public and private actors. Additionally, this thesis contributes to addressing the lack of research on the Social Employment Fund and how programmes like it can be envisioned as a means of supplementary service provision. It also emphasises the importance of collaborative efforts in service delivery to tackle the inequitable service provision experienced across South Africa.

Key Words:

Service Delivery, PPP, Non-governmental Service Provision, SEF, NAF, NGO.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CWP	Community Works Programme
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DTIC	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
IDC	Industrial Development Corporation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSP	Municipal Service Partnerships
NAF	National Arts Festival
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NNGO	Northern Non-governmental Organisation
NPC	Non-profit Company
NPO	Non-profit Organisation
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSAM	Public Service Accountability Monitor
SANRAL	South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited
SEF	Social Employment Fund
SIP	Strategic Industrial Partnership
SIU	Special Investigations Unit
SNGO	Southern Non-governmental Organisation
UPM	Unemployed Peoples Movement
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Service delivery deficits represent a considerable challenge globally, with a pronounced impact in developing countries. This phenomenon is primarily attributable to insufficient financial resources and the presence of weak or dysfunctional governmental structures (Besley and Ghatak, 2017; Bano, 2019). Historically, the provision of public services involved an interplay of responsibilities between governments and markets. Contemporary discourse and practice related to service delivery have extended to include a third sector, the non-profit sector, which includes non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (Tshiyoyo, 2022). The inclusion of the non-profit sector in public service provision can potentially alleviate pressure on governments (Tshiyoyo, 2022). Many governments struggle due to reduced budgets, limited resources and market failures (Tshiyoyo, 2022). It is within the government's best interest to ensure consistent cooperation between the public, private and non-profit sectors for the successful provision of services (Tshiyoyo, 2022). Across South Africa, communities continue to experience inadequate service provision, especially in smaller communities. In response to the inadequate service provision, new forms of collaboration have emerged between state and non-state actors, such as non-governmental organisations, to provide public services.

The city of Makhanda in Eastern Cape, South Africa, is one of the many cities in South Africa with inadequate service provision. Makhanda, which is situated within the Makana municipality, has experienced service delivery issues for many years, from inadequate water provision, inconsistent refuse removal and unmaintained pothole-ridden roads. To attempt to alleviate the ongoing service delivery issues, the National Arts Festival (NAF), an arts organisation based in Makhanda, identified a way to help address these issues. NAF has been embedded in Makhanda for 50 years, showcasing different art forms each year for an 11-day festival. NAF wanted to do more to help the city that hosts the festival and ensure the continuation of the festival in Makhanda. The Social Employment Fund (SEF) is an employment programme that was introduced, in collaboration with NAF, to alleviate the loss of employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of this programme allowed NAF to realise how an arts festival may help address service delivery deficits, upskill individuals and provide part-time employment through the SEF programme. The collaboration between the Makana Local Municipality and the National Arts Festival's Social Employment

Fund (SEF) Programme is an example of such a collaboration for service provision. Despite the growing presence of these collaborations, there remains limited research on the functionality of these collaborations, what challenges arise, how the roles are distributed as well as the sustainability and outcomes of such collaborations. This study analyses how NAF's SEF project and the Makana Local Municipality collaborate in delivering public services and explores what this reveals about new forms of cooperation between public and private actors regarding service delivery. Specifically, this study examines the implications of non-state actors, like NAF, taking on the role of service provision and assesses the success of the NAF-managed SEF programme in addressing service delivery deficits in the city of Makhanda.

1.2 Justification for the Study

In South Africa, persistent service delivery problems at the municipal level have sparked debates about the effectiveness of local governments in providing basic services (Reddy, 2018; Kanyane, 2014). This situation has resulted in a more prominent role for NGOs and private actors in partnerships between governments and non-state entities to provide services. These partnerships between the state and private actors are important as they provide an alternative way of providing basic services, ensuring a better distribution of services in some cases in South Africa. Including such partnerships in service provision can enable a more balanced distribution of risks and costs, which may lead to improved service delivery as partners might manage risks and expenses more effectively. Partnerships between the state and private actors are crucial because they can help ease the burden the state faces in ensuring equitable service delivery in struggling municipalities. This study offers insights into how this type of partnership can supplement basic services, create part-time jobs, and uplift communities.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aims to analyse how the partnership between the NAF-managed SEF programme and the Makana Local Municipality works in terms of delivering public services. To achieve the objectives of this research, this study will ask the following main question and subsequent sub-questions:

What does the partnership arrangement between the NAF-managed SEF programme and the Makana Municipality suggest about whether and how private and public actors work together to provide public services?

Sub-questions:

- What occurs when NGOs take on the responsibility of providing services where governments cannot?
- In what ways, if any, has the SEF programme worked in Makhandha to address service delivery deficits?

1.4 Methodology

This study used qualitative research methods to collect data. The research will take the form of a single case study. The term case study is defined by Robert Yin (2014) as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.” A case study can be used to study a specific setting or context (Creswell, 2007). This research examined the SEF programme, carried out by the National Arts Festival, which serves as a Strategic Implementing Partner (SIP) to deliver temporary work opportunities in Makhandha, Eastern Cape, as a case study (IDC, 2022). These temporary work opportunities sometimes entail working with the local municipality to aid in delivering municipal services. This case study seeks to analyse partnerships between non-state actors and state actors in delivering services where state actors fail to deliver.

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data for this study as the information obtained from these interviews varied among stakeholders and will allow for comparison of the data (May, 2011:134). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to assess stakeholder views on aspects relating to the partnership model of Strategic Implementing Partners (SIP) in the SEF programme, more specifically looking at NAF as a SIP and the feasibility of this partnership model in service delivery. Four stakeholder groups were interviewed, namely representatives from NAF, members of the local municipality, individuals who have insight into the SEF programme, and interns employed by NAF through the SEF Programme.

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for this study. Purposive sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique based on specific characteristics, with participants chosen

based on their ability to purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2007:125). Purposive sampling was used to target individuals who are knowledgeable about the SEF Program, including those who are the implementing partners in Makhanda, as well as the interns who are employed by this program in Makhanda. A range of stakeholders were interviewed for this study. These stakeholders include officials from the local municipality, the chief executive officer (CEO) of NAF, the project manager from NAF who runs the various SEF-funded projects, and local experts on service delivery and social employment. Additionally, several interns were also interviewed to gain insight into their experiences of the SEF program. These interns were chosen based on the various roles that they hold at various levels. The general interns, the timekeepers and team leaders of some of the groups were interviewed. All interviews were conducted in the interviewee's language of choice. The interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the interviewees and later transcribed for analysis. Several of the interviewees are public figures who hold senior positions. These include municipal officials, the CEO and the project manager of NAF, as well as academics with knowledge of the SEF programme. These participants are not anonymised as their positions make them identifiable; this was stipulated to them before their interview. The SEF interns who were interviewed are anonymised and will not be described in a way that makes them identifiable. This was made known to them before conducting the interviews.

The responses from the interviews have been transcribed and were analysed through inductive thematic analysis. Thematic analysis can be defined as “a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set” (Braun and Clarke, 2012:57). Inductive thematic analysis was used as it allows for a bottom-up approach in which themes emerge from the data itself, enabling a deeper understanding and interpretation of participants personal experiences (Braun and Clarke, 2012:59). Inductive thematic analysis was used as the method of data analysis for this study due to its flexibility. The flexibility of thematic analysis allows for adaptability in its application of various data sets and sizes as well as different theoretical frameworks (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). This strength makes thematic analysis suitable for this study as it is able to address both the personal experiences of the interviewees and the broader social context of the study (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Thematic analysis has been used in the study as it captures the experiences of the local municipality, the various representatives from the National Arts Festival, the employed interns, and the various individuals with insight on the SEF programme implemented by the National Arts Festival. In addition to interviews, weekly and monthly reports and

documentation provided by NAF's SEF management have also been used as data for analysis. News reports and articles on NAF's SEF programme in Makhanda, which can be accessed in the public domain, have also been used. As the data collected for this study involves human interactions, steps have been taken to ensure that ethical standards are maintained. The participants were provided with a consent form, the contents of which were explained to them, and in the case where participants were not fluent English speakers, arrangements were made to explain the contents in their language of choice. The participants were also asked to sign a copy of the consent form. The interviews were conducted in a public place of the participants' choice. Gatekeepers' permission was required to access information regarding participants and various data for this study. Gatekeepers' permission was received, and ethical clearance was granted by Rhodes University before the collection of data. The study adheres to Rhodes University's ethical guidelines for academic research.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This first chapter has introduced the context of the study, the research objectives and the methodology. Chapter Two conducts a review of the literature on non-governmental service provision, which addresses NGOs and their role in service delivery, as well as public-private partnerships and NGO-government collaborations and South Africa as a developmental state. Chapter Three provides context and background on the city of Makhanda, the National Arts Festival and the Social Employment Fund. Chapter Four presents the findings of the research based on media reports, documents and interviews that were conducted with the various research participants. Chapter Five discusses and analyses the research findings utilising thematic analysis to deduce the findings. The chapter also provides a brief conclusion of the study, a section on recommendations for the SEF programme, a discussion of potential further research and a section identifying the study's limitations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The Social Employment Fund (SEF) was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic to address the increase in unemployment levels during the pandemic while also providing meaningful work to address issues of service delivery, health, gender-based violence and education within communities. The SEF programme forms a part of the South African government's desire to function and be perceived as a developmental state by addressing the above issues through their programmes that promote development. The Social Employment Fund and its origins will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three. The literature review will begin with a discussion and definition of a developmental state. The review will also focus on South Africa as a developmental state and how this has influenced the nature of service delivery within the country. The review will analyse the service delivery and public-private partnership literature with a focus on alternative methods of service provision. This set of literature will be reviewed as the SEF programme, which is the case study used in this research, is a non-state actor that receives state funding. While the SEF programme was created principally to address unemployment, in some contexts – such as Makhanda – those employed by the SEF have been involved in projects which address service delivery deficits on a local municipal level. This unusual method of service provision allows an alternative service delivery model in which state and non-state actors form a partnership to deliver services.

2.2 A Developmental State: The Case of South Africa and its Impact on Service Delivery

A developmental state can be defined as “a state whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development” (Mkandawire, 2001:291). Mkandawire's definition of a developmental state is driven by a “developmentalist” ideology where the goal of the state is to ensure economic growth through rapid industrialisation and accumulation (Mkandawire, 2001:290). Mkandawire's definition also highlights the state's ability to execute policies efficiently, which requires institutional, administrative, technological and political strength (Mkandawire, 2001:290). Castells (1992:56) explains that:

A state is developmental when it establishes as its principle of legitimacy its ability to promote and sustain development, understanding by development the combination of steady high rates of growth and structural change in the productive system, both domestically and in its relationship to the international economy ... Thus, ultimately for the developmental state, economic development is not a goal but a means.

Caldentey (2008) describes a developmental state as one that steps in to negotiate the course and speed of economic growth. This suggests that there is no universal definition of a developmental state, but rather numerous definitions that allude to some form of developmental goals, specifically economic development, whether that be locally or internationally (Ayee, 2013).

Due to much commentary on the term “developmental state” and its meaning, it is important to understand where this term originates from. The term “developmental state” was first used by Chalmers Johnson (1982) for his study on the growth and industrialisation that took place during the period of 1925 to 1975 in Japan, where he named Japan a “developmental state” (DPME, 2017:6; Bresser-Pereira, 2019:36). The term is often commonly linked to the most popular developing states and their economic policies in East Asia, which include Japan and the four Asian Tigers, namely Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore (Abe, 2006; DPME,2017:6; Caldentey, 2008:28). The term “developmental state” emerged during the Cold War as part of the debate about whether capitalism or communism was the better economic system to use (Burger, 2014). The developmental state was one of the first viable routes to emerge as a rival growth ideology from more underdeveloped countries, and it represented a clear break from the traditional growth strategy of the Global North (DPME, 2017:6). The developmental state model was an alternative strategy that did not conform to a capitalist state such as that of the United States of America (USA) or the communist state of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR); it was a new model that was adopted by numerous East Asian states (Burger, 2014). The developmental state model focuses on economic growth where the state plays a large proactive part in the economic sphere, mostly supporting private-actor industries rather than favouring a market-based or completely state-controlled system (Burger, 2014). Fine (2010) argues that the ideology of the development state peaked around the 1980s and 1990s. It declined towards the late 1990s as the ideology empowered key social groups through economic growth, which then allowed these groups to resist state interventions and minimise the states control. Thus, Fine argues that developmental states are constrained by

their own achievements and limited to efficiency mainly during the middle stages of the development process (Fine, 2010).

In South Africa, the idea of a “developmental” state was first identified in the late 1990s by the African National Congress (ANC) government. At that time, the term “developmental state” was not yet used, but the idea of human-driven and centred processes was found throughout policy documentation. This documentation included the Freedom Charter and Ready to Govern document (which is a set of policy guidelines developed by the ANC for a democratic South Africa), which relates to a democracy-oriented developmental state (Mohale, 2019:325). The concept and idea of a developmental state was officially introduced in 2007 in the ANC’s Strategy and Tactics document, which emphasised the need for an adaptation of the economic structure to be more financially and socially inclusive (DPME, 2017). According to Spector (2013), South Africa is distinctive in that it initially self-identified as a developmental state prior to adopting and comprehending the requisite policies that would facilitate the establishment of a developmental state. The South African case is very different to that of the East Asian Tigers that had gone through a period of rapid economic growth and had the label “developmental state” attached to it by academia (DPME, 2017:18). The East Asian Tigers achieved this economic growth and classification of a developmental state by establishing a comprehensive development plan and executing the relevant policies (DPME, 2017:18). Despite South Africa's attempt to be labelled a “developmental” state, there are several hindrances to its progression, such as being an extremely unequal society where unity in the decision on the policies and strategies of the state is unlikely (DPME, 2017:18).

The ANC government, which gained power in 1994, was dedicated to addressing and transforming the unequal economy by rectifying issues of class and racial discrimination from the apartheid era through development and reform (Seekings, 2015). A major part of this development and reform focused on service delivery, ensuring a restructuring of public resources for the benefit of the impoverished black citizens of South Africa (Seekings, 2015). The need for a more equal developmental state was crucial, as public services had been set up in a way that excluded most citizens. In the ANC’s Reconstruction and Development Plan of 1994, there were promises of a balanced economy with equality that would develop the human resource capacity to ensure high wages and skills to achieve more constructive employment opportunities for all South African citizens (Republic of South Africa, 1994: 79). Seekings (2015) states that the ANC set out to promote development in the following ways: an infrastructural programme, land reform and the promotion of a mixed economy. The ANC’s

infrastructural programme would provide access to water, electricity, health care, transportation and education to all South African citizens (Republic of South Africa, 1994: 6). Within this framework land reform was designed to redress the injustices of apartheid and to generate employment and higher rural incomes (Republic of South Africa, 1994: 6). Finally, by involving the country in a mixed economy through various policies such as industrial and trade policies the ANC sought to increase job creation and the economy by a five-percentage per annum (Republic of South Africa, 1994: 6). However, Seekings (2015), Fine (2010) and Ringson (2023) argue that the South African state did not achieve its goal of becoming a developmental state. This failure can be seen in its inability to provide jobs, as the unemployment rate increased. Furthermore, the government was unable to direct the economy towards more equitable growth and “[t]he simplest task of a developmental state – to keep the electricity on – has not been achieved” (Fine, 2010: 178). South Africa suffers from several developmental and service delivery-related issues. One of the major issues experienced by many South Africans is loadshedding. Loadshedding is a strategy employed when there are frequent intentional power outages to avoid a complete collapse of the power system (Shi and Li, 2015). Loadshedding is achieved by intentionally cutting power to certain areas for a specific duration of time to avoid collapsing the power system. This further explains what Fine (2010) was arguing, as he claims South Africa cannot be seen as a developmental state, as the state cannot provide consistent electricity.

In more recent scholarship on the developmental state, Ringson (2023) and other scholars such as Daniels et al. (2022) argue that despite the inclusion of policies such as the National Development Plan (NDP), the South African government has failed to achieve this policy, specifically regarding the youth. In 2012, the National Development Plan was adopted as national policy to mitigate challenges related to poverty, inequality and unemployment (Ringson, 2023). The NDP was established to further the ANC’s position of establishing South Africa as a developmental state. The NDP seeks to create a future in which all individuals are unified and collaborate to develop South Africa (Ringson, 2023). One of the main goals of the NDP is to eradicate poverty by 2030 (Ringson, 2023). Daniels et al. (2022) argue that the post-apartheid South African government has failed dismally in the creation of a developmental state and in mitigating poverty, unemployment and inequality. Ringson (2023) argues that a developmental state is “not achievable nor attainable” in South Africa due to the country’s political ideology, economy and societal structure. The developmental state model, as coined by Chalmers Johnson (1982) is characterised by an emphasis on economic growth,

authoritarianism, state-centric industrial policy and a capable professional bureaucracy (Ringson, 2023). According to Maela et al. (2024) and Ringson (2023), the term developmental state is most often used to refer to authoritarian regimes and thus may not be a suitable term to describe a constitutional democracy like South Africa. Despite South Africa identifying itself as a developmental state, it has not been able to put the appropriate institutional measures in place. The ideas of a developmental state were present in early ANC documentation, and the government has had ambitious plans to ensure development in the case of the NDP. However, South Africa has still been presented with several challenges, such as high unemployment, loadshedding and service delivery deficits, which have hindered the country's development.

2.3 South Africa, Service Delivery and Protests

Authors such as Fine (2010) and Seekings (2015) have critiqued South Africa's execution of the developmental state, noting that the state has struggled on numerous levels. Some of the most notable of these shortcomings is in providing employment and service delivery despite the large focus that is put on service delivery in policy. Service delivery is the provision of essential services such as electricity, water and sanitation, land, housing, and infrastructure (Reddy, 2016:1). These services are typically provided by local municipalities directly to the residents. Chapter Seven of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, section 152 (1) states that the objective of local government is to ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable way. In line with Section 152 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), municipalities are constitutionally obligated within their monetary and administrative capacity to attain the objectives. Though, the responsibility for service delivery also lies with both the provincial and national governments to ensure the provision of services based on South Africa's model of service delivery. According to scholars such as Reddy (2018) and Kanyane (2014), South African municipalities have been unable to adhere to their constitutional mandate and provide basic services to their communities. This is because of several issues such as mismanagement of funds from the state, corruption within municipalities, the appointment of incorrect and inexperienced managers within local government, and poor infrastructure and planning (Reddy, 2018:710; Kanyane, 2014: 90). Reforms to improve municipal service delivery were introduced by the ANC government to address the injustices of apartheid as service delivery was something that should be available to all citizens not only a few (Kanyane, 2014).

The ANC inherited an almost bankrupt state, according to Maserumule and Kondlo (2010) and Kanyane (2014). In response to the inheritance of a bankrupt state, the new government under the ANC aimed to introduce new policies and reforms. One of these policies was the ANC's cadre deployment policy, which involves appointing individuals to positions of management within local government due to political loyalty rather than expertise or education (Kayane, 2014:98; CDE, 2009). This policy was intended to align the state with the ANC's political and developmental goals however, it sometimes resulted in the lack of skills in municipalities to address and ensure service delivery to their residents (Kayane, 2014:98; CDE, 2009). Another key issue relating to service delivery in South Africa is the lack of accountability and an overall insensitivity to the needs of the communities by municipalities (Kanyane, 2014). By the mid-2000s, these consistent issues in service delivery created dissatisfaction among citizens. According to Kondlo (2010:8), during Jacob Zuma's administration, which began in 2009, some South African citizens were initially hopeful as they perceived this administration as the "service delivery administration" because they were promised there would be a focus on service delivery-related issues. Instead, Zuma's term began with an influx of service delivery protests by citizens demonstrating their dissatisfaction with service delivery (Kanyane, 2014). Reddy (2016) argues that service delivery protests first came about during the apartheid era to express discontent with racial inequality and structures of apartheid as well as the lack of services, but as seen above, according to Kanyane (2014), these service delivery protests continued post-apartheid.

According to Peter Alexander's (2010) work titled *Rebellion of the Poor: South Africa's Service Delivery Protests - A Preliminary Analysis*, a prominent reason for service delivery protests post-apartheid are not only caused by lack of service but also the lack of maintenance. While services are more equally distributed post-1994, there still remains a large population of poor citizens who do not receive equitable public services. An example of a post-apartheid service delivery protest is that of the 2004 Phumelela Local Municipality where citizens from the Vrede, Warden and Memel, which are small towns within the municipality, protested an influx of migrants in their towns and the poor policies on housing provision and the improvement of living conditions for the poor (Alexander, 2010:30; CDE, 2007: 26). The protests were also regarding poor service delivery specifically bad roads, unclean water supply and inadequate sports facilities as well as dissatisfaction with the local government due to lack of transparency and incompetent officials (Alexander, 2010:30). The protest in 2005 in Port Elizabeth on issues

of housing and unfulfilled promises by local government is another example of service delivery protests (Botes et al., 2007; Alexander, 2010:31).

The Makana municipality has also seen many service delivery protests. A very relevant example is the protest that occurred in Makhanda in response to the lack of waste collection. In 2014, residents marched to the mayor's office to dump their waste outside due to a two-week strike by municipal workers, which halted the collection of waste (Kalina et al., 2023). Another example of a service delivery protest in Makhanda occurred in 2019 when several civil society organisations and the Unemployed Peoples Movement (UPM) engaged in protest and ultimately applied to have the Makana Local Municipality dissolved by the high court (Kalina et al., 2023). The high court in Makhanda then ordered Makana Local Municipality to be dissolved and placed under administration (Kalina et al., 2023).

The literature on service delivery protests post-apartheid often alludes to the same issues of poor service delivery and dissatisfaction with local municipalities (Alexander, 2010:31). Many municipalities have failed to provide basic services like electricity, water and sanitation and refuse removal despite the constitutional commitments by local, provincial and national governments to ensure equitable service provision. Systemic issues such as lack of management, poor infrastructure, cadre deployment and corruption are contributing factors to ineffective governance and service delivery failures (Alexander, 2010; Seekings, 2015; Fine, 2010). These challenges have led to widespread discontent across provinces, leading to service delivery protests (Reddy, 2016). These challenges highlight the necessity of exploring alternative models of service provision, through non-state actors and the use of public private partnerships (PPPs).

2.4 Alternative Approaches to Service Delivery: Public-Private Partnerships and Non-State Service Provision

After reviewing the various challenges to service delivery in South Africa, as argued by authors such as Reddy (2016) and Kanyane (2014), it is necessary to explore alternative approaches to service delivery. There are three ways in which the state can provide public goods and services: the first way is to provide the services themselves; secondly, the state can provide services through procurement; and lastly, they can provide services by engaging in a partnership with non-state actors. This study will focus on the third way of providing services.

2.4.1 Defining Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

This research will be situated within the debates about non-governmental service provision and the broader scholarly discussions about public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can be defined as “working arrangements between the state and any organisation outside of the public sector based on a mutual commitment for the provision of assets and delivery of services that have been traditionally provided by the public sector” (Besley and Ghatak, 2017: 357). Van Ham and Koppenjan (2001) define PPPs as the “cooperation between public-private actors in which they jointly develop products and services and share risks, costs and resources which are connected with these products and services”. These and other definitions emphasise the sharing of responsibility and the sharing of costs and resources to achieve a more significant outcome where the workload has been equally distributed. Public partners may engage in PPPs to acquire private funding, increase effectiveness, implement cost-reduction strategies or bring in management expertise (Rybnicek et al., 2020). Private partners may engage in PPPs to mitigate and share risks as well as get involved in the public sphere, which they wouldn’t be able to sustain on their own (Rybnicek et al., 2020; Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2011). From the definitions provided, some conclusions can be drawn regarding PPPs; the primary conclusion highlighted above is the notion of risk. Risk sharing is an important aspect of defining and understanding PPPs, and risks should be shared based on the following: the financially dominant party should carry more risks. Both public and private parties should assess and be aware of all risks involved and have access to necessary risk-mitigating tools (Lia, 2018; Hodge and Greve, 2017). Another aspect to consider is that both partners should have a good relationship with one another and both work towards achieving a common goal (Hodge and Greve, 2017). PPPs can be beneficial in broadening access to essential services, which may include water and electricity (Fabre and Straub, 2023:74). PPPs have been especially effective in developing countries (Fabre and Straub, 2023:74). PPPs may also be successful in contributing to improvement in efficiency of the project which then results in savings on costs due to increased innovative and efficient processes (Fabre and Straub, 2023:6). The increase in efficiency can be seen in examples such as education PPPs as well as infrastructural PPPs (Fabre and Straub, 2023).

2.4.2 The Contestation of PPPs

The concept of PPPs has been widely contested by scholars from various perspectives for different reasons. Looking at the contestation of PPPs in the non-profit sector, scholars such as Salamon (1995: 103;) and Taylor et al. (2023) argue that when non-profit organisations engage

in PPPs, their autonomy, adaptability, and local control may be diminished (Bovaird, 2004:200). Another difficulty that arises in understanding the concept of PPPs is conceptualising an alternate institutional reality that upholds both the private and public actors in the arrangement while ensuring and serving the public interest (Mitchell-Weaver and Manning, 1991:56). According to authors such as Kroukamp (2005) and Cranko and Khan (1999), PPPs can be challenging when creating partnerships with local government as there are often constraints on financial resources and administration which diminish support for such partnerships. This inevitability makes it increasingly difficult to engage and ensure successful PPPs due to the various constraints and limitations of local government. There are often issues regarding the planning, monitoring, and implementation sectors when engaging in such partnerships, as well as political conflicts and conflicts among communities (Kroukamp, 2005: Cranko and Khan, 1999). Another major challenge to PPPs is a lack of community support for these types of partnerships. This comes into play when citizens are critical of the way the project is being carried out, such as the delivery procedure, or are unhappy with the PPP policy (Hodge and Greve, 2017). There are both benefits and contestations in the use of PPPs and it is important for this study to understand how PPPs came to be in South Africa and how they work.

2.4.3 PPPs in South Africa

According to Sanni and Hashim (2014), PPPs were first introduced in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1970s. The authors highlight that when comparing sub-Saharan Africa to other developing regions, the investment in infrastructure by private investors is much lower (Sanni and Hashim, 2014). Due to a greater awareness by the public of their rights, an increase in democratic governments and population size in sub-Saharan Africa, there has been an increase in demand for public services in the region. Developing countries face financial restraints and often do not have the funding to keep up with the increased demand for services (Sanni and Hashim, 2014; Fombad, 2014; Bovaird, 2004). According to Sanni and Hashim (2014) and Fombad (2014), South Africa and other developing countries have looked to PPPs as an alternative to address the lack of funding for public works and service provision, which may enhance accountability and cost-effectiveness. In 1999, the National Treasury published a manual on PPPs, which was the initial introduction of PPPs in South Africa. The National Treasury also established a PPP unit to ensure the application of the manual (Sanni and Hashim, 2014). The role of this unit is to assist in the procurement, planning and implementation of large infrastructure and service delivery improvement programmes (GTAC, 2021). The PPP unit was established to improve

efficiency and access of basic services as well as attain development goals under circumstances of strained funding (Sanni and Hashim, 2014.) The South African government is often confronted with pressure for greater public infrastructure and social services (Sanni and Hashim, 2014; Fombad, 2014). Many South African citizens do not have access to basic needs such as potable water, electricity, adequate sanitation and transportation (Sanni and Hashim, 2014). The use of PPPs could help address the lack of basic services. There are, however, some challenges that inhibit the use of PPPs in South Africa. Firstly, there is a lack of knowledge, capacity and policy direction from the government. Secondly, the commitment from the government is sometimes unreliable and affects the long-term execution of PPP projects. Lastly, governments continue to favour and rely on traditional public provision in existing policies (Sanni and Hashim, 2014). These challenges are not unique to South Africa, as seen in the literature above.

2.4.4 NGOs and PPPs

This research will look specifically at what happens when NGOs work in partnership with the state to provide public services. Historically, public services were typically delivered solely by governmental departments, but this has changed more recently. In some cases, non-state actors have stepped in to provide services where the government has failed to do so or, alternatively, non-state actors work in conjunction with the government through partnerships to provide these services (Kroukamp, 2005). One example of this is discussed in scholarly work on Municipal Service Partnerships (MSPs), which were introduced as a tool for municipalities to receive help with service delivery issues (Mamokhere et al., 2022). These MSPs include partnering with the private sector, community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGO) to help provide services where municipalities may be falling short. MSPs and PPPs were encouraged in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to assist with service delivery challenges and backlogs (Mamokhere et al., 2022). Similar to the NAF-managed SEF programme, which is the focus of this study, MSPs are not designed to replace municipal service provision but rather to facilitate an improved level of service delivery (Mamokhere et al., 2022).

According to Liebman (1984), Mpofu and Govender (2022) and Nyabvudzi and Nkwana (2024), the NGO model of PPPs and donor-NGO partnerships typically involve a delegatory type of relationship wherein the government or donors control the financial, material, and organisational resources, and the NGOs carry out their objectives with direction from the government on a policy level. The type of roles that can be carried out by NGOs in a PPP may

include service delivery, investment, research, development, poverty alleviation and human rights promotion (Brogaard and Peterson, 2018; Mitchell-Weaver and Manning, 1991: 58). Some NGOs may engage in PPPs to acquire government funding and within these partnerships, NGOs may prioritise building positive relationships with funders (i.e. government) to secure ongoing funding, which may not benefit the communities they serve unless the NGOs ensure that they prioritise the community (Gazley and Brudney, 2007; Ginsburg 2012). The prioritisation of the relationship with the government is often true when looking at NGOs in the Global North. However, these partnerships play out differently in the Global South. According to Solana (2014) and Besley and Ghatak (2017), in the Global South, NGOs often step in to deliver services when there is a lack of financial resources and management ineffectiveness within the government.

Despite the contestation of PPPs shown by scholars such as Salamon (1995), Bovaird (2004) and Brooks (1984), NGOs engaging in PPPs can be beneficial for a number of reasons. One advantage is that NGOs are not profit-driven, unlike other private partners. Furthermore, their focus regarding service delivery partnership is on the recipients receiving the public service and their interests, thus allowing for a more focused and cost-effective approach to service delivery (Solana, 2014:262; Besley and Ghatak, 2017:358). PPPs can aid in local economic development and empower local communities due to their effectiveness regarding services and costs, their ability to create public participation and specialised skills (Van Niekerk et al., 2001:256–257; Kroukamp, 2005:78).

The role played by non-state actors varies greatly in service delivery depending on the type of service being provided as well as the capacity of the state in which it is providing services (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). Many of the smaller private providers work independently from the government and avoid any attention from the state. These organisations are competing with public service providers or trying to fill in the gaps in service provision (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). On the other hand, there are many NGOs that work with and alongside the state to help either enhance or supplement public service provision (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010:134). This chapter focuses on literature discussing the role of NGOs who play a parallel or supplementary role in service delivery as such NGOs are more relevant to my study. The reason for this focus is that the study explores a non-state actor who works with the municipality to provide supplementary assistance in public service delivery.

As articulated above, partnerships between NGOs and state actors can be understood or defined as PPPs. There are both benefits and contestations to these types of partnerships, but they allow for an alternative way of thinking about the provision of services and how to better address the needs of the public. A key text on the topic of alternative provision of services in the Global South is David McDonald and Greg Ruiters' (2012) edited book titled *Alternatives to Privatisation: Public options for essential services in the Global South*. In this book, the editors and contributors identify criteria for the success of alternatives to privatisation. Contributors to the book identify and discuss different ways of providing and ensuring service delivery in the Global South without using privatisation as an alternative for the provision of services. The criteria for assessing the success of alternatives to privatisation include equity, participation, efficiency, quality of service, accountability, and sustainability, among others. (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). The alternatives to privatisation defined in the above book include the delivery of services through alternative methods of provision by public entities, non-profit entities as well as partnerships between the various entities. The partnerships discussed in the book include partnerships between public entities, partnerships between non-profit organisations and partnerships between non-profit organisations and the state (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). The section of the book most relevant for this study is the section that is focused on partnerships between public and non-profit entities.

The first criterion for assessing the success of alternatives to privatisation is equity (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). A primary objective of alternative service provision is to ensure more equitable access to basic services, as it is argued that inequality is one of the main concerns about the privatisation of service delivery (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012; Equinet, 2007; McIntyre and Mooney, 2007). According to McDonald and Ruiters (2012), alternative forms of service delivery need to be provided in a way that prioritises equitable service provision. This means alternatives to service delivery should ensure that the availability, quality, quantity and pricing of services are equitable across all social groups and that equity is institutionalised in policy at a national level (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012).

A second criterion for assessing the success of alternative forms of service-delivery is efficiency (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012:31). A key reason for the rise of alternatives to service provision is the widespread view that public service provision systems lack efficiency (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). This can be true in some cases as public service delivery can be efficient in many ways. It is important to assess the efficiency of public and alternative service delivery not only by similar criteria but also by criteria that are specific to the form of

service delivery efficiency (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). Efficiency can also be measured by the quality of services, as well as the quality of the workspace, which is an important criterion for success. A third criterion for assessing the success of alternatives to privatisation is the quality of service (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). An alternative way of delivering services can be beneficial if the quality of services being provided is of a good standard, arguably better than that provided by public service institutions (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). Alternative service providers should also consider the workspaces in which their employees are working and the relationship between the workers and communities in which they work (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). The relationship between workers and communities is a crucial factor that can enhance service delivery (Hall and Lobina, 2006).

A fourth criterion for assessing the success of alternative forms of service delivery is participation (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012: 30). The participation of citizens and non-governmental organisations has been highlighted in service delivery literature (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). It is important to note that participation remains a difficulty due to power dynamics and the hierarchical layout of the state. Participation at a local level rarely influences policy and decision-making at a national or regional level, while participation at a national or regional level does not always result in meeting the needs of individuals at a local level (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012:30; Murthy and Klugman 2004). Participation raises questions about the extent of influence individuals can exert and significantly impacts the engagement of marginalised groups, typically due to financial status or their lack of access to specialised knowledge (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012:30; Nakhoda et al., 2007).

Another criterion used in McDonald and Ruiters's (2012) book for assessing the success of alternatives is accountability. Accountability can be defined in several ways but according to a number of scholars, accountability encompasses more than merely demanding explanations or justifications (Murthy and Klugman, 2004; Montemayor, 2005; Nakhoda et al., 2007; Gomez and Terhost, 2005). These scholars argue that the multifaceted concept of accountability that should encompass systems that combine community monitoring and participation, enforceability and transparency (Murthy and Klugman, 2004; Montemayor, 2005; Nakhoda et al., 2007; Gomez and Terhost, 2005).

Sustainability is one of the most important criteria to consider, as alternative forms of service delivery can be beneficial but are not always sustainable long-term. Financial sustainability is a crucial aspect of the overall sustainability of alternative forms of service provision as being

financially sustainable allows for access to resources (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). A large number of alternative forms of service delivery are funded by donors, who have specific ideologies and political restrictions that are attached to them. According to Balanyá et al. (2005), funding focused on advancing societal objectives is more essential than adhering to specific ideologies and political restrictions stipulated by the funders. An alternative to relying on government or donor funding is the reliance on volunteerism, which is used by several non-state organisations (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012: 35). A concern that comes with relying on voluntarism is the question of sustainability. In practice, volunteering is greatly welcomed within the non-state actors, but it is not a long-term solution as individuals are not reaping any economic benefits from volunteering and may not be able to continue volunteering for extended periods of time (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012).

The criteria for success discussed in McDonald and Ruiters' (2012) book provide insight into ways in which alternatives to service delivery can be successful without privatisation on numerous fronts, particularly the advancement of societal objectives and benefits to those that the government has failed to provide for. PPPs are often associated with privatisation, but as McDonald and Ruiters (2012) show, there are ways of involving non-state actors in service delivery without privatisation. Their discussion of these alternatives is relevant to an exploration of the work of the SEF programme, in some ways, an unusual alternative as it is a partnership between public and non-state actors. The case study does not look at the privatisation of service delivery but rather provides an alternative and supplementary service provision method, which is in line with the main focus of McDonald and Ruiters' (2012) book.

2.5 Challenges to Partnerships

According to scholars such as Tadesse (2017) and Bell and Hindmoor (2009), through their strong relationships with non-state actors, governments can often strengthen their capacity, mostly by expanding on their mutually beneficial exchange. Many developing countries are often unable to ensure the provision of basic services, thereby compelling governments to provide more through partnerships than they would normally be able to. However, the nature and value of these partnerships is often dependent on factors such as the political conditions of the country; states which are democratic are more likely to engage in such partnerships as opposed to states that are more authoritarian (Bratton 1989; Tadesse, 2017:2). The literature on non-state actors also focuses on the type of control states hold over non-state actors. The type of controlling mechanism used differs depending on the non-state actor as there are different types of non-state actors ranging from NGOs to private for-profit entities (Tadesse, 2017: 5).

Some states perceive non-state actors as a threat to their stability, as they want to be recognised as the primary entities responsible for driving development. Scholars suggest that non-state actors are often more able to address the grassroots level of communities and more aware of the daily struggles of the communities (Tadesse, 2017: 5; Bratton, 1989). Non-state actors are also perceived as having flexibility and being better equipped to bring forward unique development solutions as they work more closely with communities (Lewis and Opoku-Mensah, 2006: 666). Thus, numerous scholars suggest that non-state actors may mobilise resources and provide advantages to communities where state capability is restricted (Batley & Mcloughlin, 2009; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Clark, 1995). This would therefore enable the state to do more (Batley & Mcloughlin, 2009; Brinkerhoff, 2002; Clark, 1995).

However, there are several challenges that arise when non-state actors get involved in service delivery. Some scholars argue that if states do not engage in collaboration with NGOs that are already delivering services, this could lead to damaging effects on the state's legitimacy and ability to provide public services, which could result in disorganised and fragmented service delivery (Mcloughlin, 2011:241; Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). Therefore, when delivering services to reduce the risks associated with NGO service delivery, states are advised to collaborate and take on roles of coordinating, assisting and regulating within and between services (Mcloughlin, 2011:241; Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). A substantial body of literature on collaboration between state and non-state actors in service delivery highlights that such collaboration is often characterised by rivalry and mistrust, with “inevitable” tension between the parties (Mcloughlin, 2011; Baruah, 2007). This could be due to a redirection of funds to non-state actors, which governments may resent, as well as opposition regarding the interests, resources and objectives of the parties (Mcloughlin, 2011; Bebbington and Farrington, 1993).

2.6 Partnerships and the Role of NGOs

When looking at the literature on the role of donors in service delivery and the nature of partnerships, Lewis (1998) discusses both northern development NGOs and local southern NGOs. Northern development NGOs originate in industrialised countries in the Global North whereas Southern NGOs originate in the Global South (Lewis, 1998). Prior to the 1980s, Northern NGOs (NNGOs) working in the Global South executed their own developmental initiatives, such as agricultural programmes and health clinics, and their programmes in the Global South were mostly run by expatriates (Morse and McNamara, 2006; Lewis, 1998). From the 1980s onward, there was a shift from an approach whereby programmes were designed in the Global North and implemented in the Global South to an approach which

emphasised “partnerships” between Northern and Southern NGOs (SNGOs). In such partnerships, NNGOs took the form of a donor-type role, providing organisational and financial assistance to SNGOs (Morse and McNamara, 2006; Lewis, 1998). As seen above, problems often arise in partnerships, even though the nature of these partnerships differs from that of state and non-state partnerships. SNGOs often deem partnerships with NNGOs as being unequal, as NNGOs hold more power and have a financial hold over SNGOs (Lewis, 1998). This usually fosters a relationship that is more reliant as opposed to cooperative relationships (Lewis, 1998). However, this is not to say that the southern partners hold no power or are unable to contest stipulations given by their northern counterparts (Morse and McNamara, 2006). Partners in the south are closer and more localised than their northern partners; they may have better relations with local communities and may be more aware of the situation of the people whom they are trying to help (Morse and McNamara, 2006). According to Lewis (1998), a more appropriate redirection of such partnerships would be for south-south relations to be prioritised in which SNGOs could learn from each other and NNGOs could help facilitate these relations. This will create an environment that ensures mutual capacity-building rather than the traditional hierarchical relationship that often exists between NNGOs and SNGOs (Lewis, 1998). Partnerships should encompass a set of values such as trust, transparency, reciprocity, respect and responsibility to have a cooperative relationship that has been developed over time by mutual learning, commitment and voluntary participation (Schaaf, 2015).

Partnerships are vital for realising development goals and ensuring the delivery of basic services in the developing world (Bano, 2019). According to Bano (2019), based on empirical evidence, it is not solely the state or non-state actors that are responsible for the provision of services but rather a collaborative effort by both parties. This is not to say that these partnerships are always welcomed and enforceable (Bano, 2019). There is often resistance to such partnerships on the part of governments which may be reluctant to engage in such partnerships or only seek to do so when they gain directly from the collaboration (Bano, 2019). The commitment shown by those in leadership roles within NGOs to low-cost alternatives and the community in which they work fosters a partnership of longevity and success. Bano (2019) argues that when these leaders are focused on financial gain, partnerships are less likely to occur.

Since the early 1980s, leading development agencies have favoured NGO involvement in service provision due to the increasing concern about state-led development models (Bano, 2019). Authors such as Hulme and Edwards (1997) and Joshi and Moore (2004) state that

developing states were perceived as unable to provide services in addition to being top-down, corrupt and ineffective in their duties. NGO involvement has been favoured by developing agencies because it arguably provides a more democratic bottom-up approach to service provision that is not an economically incentivised private organisation (Bano, 2019). There is contestation amongst scholars that surrounds the partnerships between the state and alternative service providers. Some scholars argue the importance of the involvement of the state to ensure successful service provision (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). Other scholars emphasise the importance of autonomy from the state to ensure success, as those in leadership roles will be decided by the community and not government officials (Murthy and Klugman, 2004).

The inclusion of NGO-government partnerships in service-delivery ideally would create a greater, more engaged response from the community; however, this is not always the case in donor-supported partnerships as the community may remain antagonistic towards the state (Teamey, 2007). In practice, these partnerships may prove to be contractual, with minimal collaboration and trust between stakeholders rather than mutually beneficial partnerships (Bano, 2019; Teamey, 2007).

2.7 Conclusion

As shown in the summary of the literature above, there is much contestation in the literature about the role of NGOs in the provision of public goods. The literature above also identified various alternative models for service provision, one of the more prominent being the use of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to provide services. The literature also identified why there is a need for NGOs in service provision and the gaps that they might fill. This section also explored why the gap in service provision exists due to states not being able to provide equitable services to their citizens. The reasons that were identified include, lack of development, corruption, mismanagement, a lack of funding and poor infrastructure.

My study will look at a non-state actor that receives state funding through the SEF programme and has used that funding to partially address local municipal service delivery deficits, thus allowing for an alternative service delivery model in which a non-state and state actor form a partnership to deliver services. Given that the SEF is a new and innovative approach to addressing unemployment and service-delivery deficits, it is important to study the way it works on the ground. The following chapter will provide background information on the SEF programme. It will also provide context on the partners, namely the National Arts Festival

organisation, which is managing the programme, and the Makana Local Municipality which governs the area which hosts this project.

Chapter 3: Background

3.1 Introduction

Makhanda, a city located in South Africa's Eastern Cape province, has faced long-standing issues related to service delivery, particularly concerning infrastructure, water provision, and refuse management. Local, national, and civil society actors have endeavoured to address and respond to these issues. One of these initiatives stems from the National Arts Festival (NAF), a key contributor to the economic and tourism sector and a well-known arts festival in Makhanda. The National Arts Festival, through its partnership with the state in the Social Employment Fund Programme, seeks to expand employment opportunities while delivering community-based initiatives that help address persistent service delivery challenges. This chapter contextualises the local municipality and its service delivery shortcomings, introducing NAF as a cultural and developmental actor. It offers an overview and explanation of the framework and goals of the SEF. Lastly, this chapter examines the implementation of the SEF programme in Makhanda and how it is managed by NAF.

3.2 Makana Local Municipality and its Service-Delivery Shortcomings

The focus region of this research lies within the Makana Municipality, more specifically, in the small city of Makhanda. Makhanda is situated in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The size of Makhanda is about 65 square kilometres, which makes it the biggest town in the Makana Municipality (StatsSA, 2022). The Makana municipality has a population of 97,815 people of which the majority live in Makhanda (StatsSA, 2022). Makhanda is governed by the Makana Local Municipality, which constitutes a part of the Sarah Baartman District Municipality. The City of Makhanda was previously known as Grahamstown. The Former Minister of Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa, announced that Grahamstown's name was officially changed and published in the Government Gazette on 29 June 2018 (Department of Arts and Culture, 2018). The reason for the name change is that Grahamstown was named after Colonel John Graham, who was a British commander known for his brutality (Department of Arts and Culture, 2018). The city has now been named after a Xhosa warrior and prophet,

Makhanda ka Nxele, to recognise his contributions and address the unjust past of South Africa (Department of Arts and Culture, 2018).

Makhanda has experienced a range of issues over the years, one of the most severe being a drought, which has led to water restrictions sometimes being implemented (Pamla et al, 2021:4). These restrictions limited residents to 50 litres of water per person per day, with many citizens often going without water for a week or more (Pamla et al, 2021:4). Another issue faced by the city is the local government's failure to address sewage spills, maintain the outdated water supply system, and ensure proper infrastructure upkeep on the roads and throughout the city (Hoefnagels et al., 2023). Coupled with the above issues, the small city of Makhanda suffers from high rates of unemployment. In 2020, the unemployment rate within the entire Makana Municipality district was 38.3% (Makana Local Municipality, 2021).

The city of Makhanda is a very divided city due to the apartheid geospatial planning, where the west of Makhanda was previously a white area and the east was the black township and coloured area (Hoefnagels et al., 2023; Kota, 2021). The remnants of the apartheid geospatial planning are still very visible today, with most black and coloured residents still living in the east while most white residents live on the west side of the town. This divide was also as prominent in the delivery of services in the past as it is currently. While such divides continue to exist, the whole city faces service delivery issues (Kota, 2021). The residents of Makhanda have expressed their concerns through service delivery protests. One of the most recent protests was due to not having water from 23 to 30 August 2024 (Velaphi, 2024). The South African Human Rights Commission subpoenaed the Makana Local Municipality and gave the municipality 14 days to provide interventions to address its service delivery issues (Velaphi, 2024). Citizens of Makhanda, Rhodes University and a number of independent schools in Makhanda marched to the City Hall to express their grievances and demand improvements in water access and service delivery (Velaphi, 2024). Another incident that occurred on 1 November 2024 was when the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), with the assistance of the Directorate for Priority Crimes Investigation, commonly known as the Hawks, raided the Makana Municipality (SIU, 2024). The purpose of the raid was to collect evidence for an ongoing investigation regarding the allegations of maladministration on the part of the Makana Local Municipality (SIU, 2024). In a Daily Maverick article, Ellis (2024) stated, "There have also been five years of almost daily water outages, electricity issues and sewage spills. Despite millions of rands spent on a bulk water project, the town still does not have a consistent water supply." This investigation received authorisation from President Cyril Ramaphosa due to

allegations of poor service delivery in the past five years leading up to the SIU and Hawks raid (Ellis, 2024; SIU,2024).

The Makana Local Municipality, which Makhanda falls part of, has for several years seen dissatisfaction from the residents specifically regarding service delivery. Scholars such as Kalina et al. (2023) allude to this dissatisfaction of residents with the mismanagement and poor governance of the Makana Local Municipality. The scarce and often non-existent service delivery provision, such as solid waste removal, in Makhanda is felt considerably more by residents on the eastern side of the city, who are unable to store their refuse or outsource the collection to private entities, as many residents in the west of Makhanda can do (Kalina et al., 2023). There is a visible difference between the east and west of Makhanda and the socioeconomic status of residents in the respective areas, which in turn affects the overall inequality and economy of Makhanda (Kalina et al., 2023). The inequality and economic environment of Makhanda factor into the lack of service provision. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for 2023-2024, published by the Makana Local Municipality, indicated the Gini coefficient for the Municipality was 0.618 for 2021 (Makana Municipality, 2024). The Gini coefficient measures income inequality between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating equality and 1 indicating extreme inequality (Hasell, 2023). A Gini coefficient of 0.5 and above indicates high inequality. The IDP for 2023-2024 also indicates the Human Development Index (HDI), which is a measure of decent standard of living, knowledge and a long and healthy life (Makana Municipality, 2024). The Makana Municipality had an HDI score of 0.624 for 2021, which was lower than the National average score of 0.639 for South Africa, which further shows the high levels of inequality as well as poverty in the Makana District. This measure indicates that citizens of Makhanda have lower life expectancy, poor health and accessibility to health care and are less educated. These measures all contribute towards a lack of development and persistent societal issues.

3.3 The National Arts Festival (NAF)

The National Arts Festival (NAF) is an organisation that is based in Makhanda, Eastern Cape, South Africa, and is responsible for organising the annual National Arts Festival. The National Arts Festival is a non-profit company (NPC), which entails that the company is a registered company under the Companies Act, 2008 (Act No. 71 of 2008) and is characterised by its purpose to work not-for-profit but rather to serve a specific group or a public benefit. The National Arts Festival, in its capacity as an NPC, can be considered to be a non-state actor. The National Arts Festival is the name of the annual arts festival held in Makhanda, as well as the

name of the organisation that organises the festival. The city of Makhanda is home to the National Arts Festival and has been for the past 50 years. The festival hosts numerous creative individuals and groups, spanning performing arts to visual arts, and ranks among Africa's most diverse annual art celebrations. (National Arts Festival, 2025). The festival brings in a great deal of tourism for Makhanda, specifically for the arts and culture that is displayed during the festival (Hoefnagels et al., 2022).

The tourism and educational sectors are vital in Makhanda and bring about economic activity, which is important for the development of the city. Due to the various issues faced by Makhanda and the large presence the National Arts Festival has in the city, the National Arts Festival organisation deemed it necessary to get involved to help supplement the service provision and provide temporary employment and skills development opportunities through the Social Employment Fund (SEF). The National Arts Festival's operations are directly affected by failures in service provision, as NAF depends on the city's infrastructure and basic services to host participants and visitors during the festival. The lack of service provision in Makhanda has large implications for the credibility and sustainability of the National Arts Festival. Former National Arts Festival CEO Tony Lankester (2016) stated in a piece originally written for *Grocott's Mail*, "if we do nothing, we will have a Festival that has decayed and shrivelled to a shadow of its present self. If it exists at all". This comment was in response to the lack of service provision, specifically the lack of water distribution during the 2016 National Arts Festival. The issues presented by the lack of service delivery, whether that be the lack of refuse removal and water or the vast number of potholes that cover the roads in Makhanda, make it challenging to run a successful festival (Lankester, 2016). Festival goers are less likely to attend the National Arts Festival in a town whose infrastructure is failing. In addition to the large educational sector that brings a great amount of economic activity to the town, the festival also contributes every year to economic activity in Makhanda and the greater Eastern Cape province (Lankester, 2016). If the National Arts Festival is no longer running at full capacity or at all, it could negatively affect the already weakened economic climate of Makhanda. Yearlong, Makhanda is faced with service delivery challenges, but prior to and over the festival, service provision functions at its peak for the festival goers, often at the expense of the citizens of Makhanda (Lankester, 2016). Short-term fixes are done, but the longstanding infrastructural problems remain after the festival period.

The National Arts Festival is a major contributor to economic activity and tourism in Makhanda and has been for the past 50 years. However, the city's failing infrastructure and service delivery

deficiencies put the sustainability of the National Arts Festival and the local economy at risk. Through programmes such as the SEF, the organisation can contribute to employment and help alleviate service delivery deficits in Makhanda. This would allow the festival to continue each year and contribute to the city of Makhanda beyond the ten-day festival.

3.4 The Social Employment Fund (SEF) Programme

To combat both service delivery deficits and the lack of employment opportunities in South Africa, social employment programmes have been put in place. One such programme, which is the focus of this research, is the Social Employment Fund (SEF). The SEF was first introduced during the COVID-19 crisis as part of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan that was launched in October 2020 by President Cyril Ramaphosa (IDC, 2022). The SEF was established by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) operating as the fund manager. The SEF forms part of the Presidential Employment Stimulus and is a component of the DTIC's mission to assist in the broader social economy (The Presidency, 2023). The Presidential Employment Stimulus programme was launched in response to the economic effects and loss of employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic (The Presidency, 2023). The motivation for the creation of the Social Employment Fund was to address unemployment (IDC, 2022). According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for quartile 1 in 2024, there were just over eight million people unemployed in South Africa, which was an increase from the 7.9 million unemployed in 2023 (StatsSA, 2024). Unemployment has long been a pressing issue, which became even more concerning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unemployment not only has major effects on living conditions, nutrition, health and access to education but also has social ramifications such as social exclusion, issues of self-esteem and lack of access to networking, which pose a different range of challenges on top of the economic challenges that are presented (IDC, 2022).

The SEF aims to address unemployment and poverty in South Africa by providing “social employment”, which the IDC defines as work for the common good (IDC, 2022). The SEF not only provides a form of temporary employment, but it also provides interns with a range of skills and responsibilities while doing work that not only benefits the interns financially but benefits the communities in which they work whether that is providing early childhood development services, cleaning streets or starting food gardens for low-income communities (IDC, 2022). In an interview, Kate Philip, who is the program lead on the Presidential Stimulus in South Africa, stated that SEF is about supporting communities' local and social challenges

in a way that complements existing mandates and services.¹ The Presidency (2023) describes social employment as going beyond the mandate of public employment, which is directly managed by the state. Alternatively, social employment identifies the role that the non-state actors play in providing work that already exists to serve the common good (The Presidency, 2023). One of the aims of the programme is to create and support partnerships with non-state actors, both those in the private sector and civil society organisations, in order to allow for collaboration in relation to strengths and assets which will help achieve better results for the economy and society (The Presidency,2023).

The SEF programme is implemented through contracted partnerships with Strategic Implementing Partners (SIPs), which include civil society organisations and grassroots community-based organisations, to provide fifty thousand participants with part-time employment to do work for the common good of society (Libala et al., 2023:22). The SEF is implemented exclusively by non-state actors. Therefore, the National Arts Festival can be identified as a non-state actor, as all SIPs are required to be non-state actors and not private organisations, since the work being done through the SEF project serves the public interest. There is currently more than one SEF programme being run in Makhanda. The other SEF programme that is based in Makhanda is implemented through Awarenet, which has been subcontracted by The Learning Trust (The Learning Trust, 2024). Awarenet is an educational initiative that employs technology to improve knowledge and educational outcomes for disadvantaged learners and community members in Makhanda (The Learning Trust, 2024). Awarenet also employs a number of interns to do various work such as data capturing or assisting in aftercare school programmes (Abdoulahi, 2024). In this study, the SIP concerned is the National Arts Festival, which uses the SEF to address unemployment and provide auxiliary support to service delivery in Makhanda.

The government contracts SIPs throughout South Africa due to their strong managerial and administrative abilities as well as their longstanding relationships with community organisations and their networks which allows the public sector to direct resources into informal and grassroots programmes (Libala et al., 2023:23). SIPs are required to recruit a minimum of a thousand interns to work 8 hours a day, 7 days a month at a rate of R29.63 an hour² (IDC, 2022). The purpose of this internship is to provide support by enabling interns to earn an income while also gaining skills and exploring future employment opportunities (The

¹ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

Presidency, 2023). The SIPs are required to adhere to rigorous reporting, accountability and screening procedures to meet the strict audit requirements to ensure funds are correctly managed throughout the various levels of the programme (IDC, 2022). SIPs have the freedom to decide what their project will focus on, provided that their projects are centred around doing work for the common good of the community in which they are working (IDC,2022). These projects can include a focus on education, gender-based violence, health, maintenance and any other social or community need (IDC, 2022).

3.5 NAF-led SEF Programme

This research aims to study the role of non-state actors stepping in to provide services through partnerships with the municipality in cases where the local government's provision of such services is inadequate. In an interview, the CEO of the National Arts Festival, Monica Newton, stated that it was crucial to find some way of helping and contributing more to the town where the arts festival is hosted, as the complexities of the town began to affect the festival as well.² The SEF programme was a way in which the National Arts Festival could get involved in helping to address some of these problems.³ According to Newton, “The SEF provided a very unique tool to begin to imagine what an arts festival could do to assist a city, beyond obviously doing our 11-day festival.”⁴

The National Arts Festival (NAF) runs several internship programmes in Makhanda through their SEF project, such as maintenance of schools, creating vegetable gardens in schools, refuse removal, cleaning out streams in and around the city, and filling and tarring potholes that need to be fixed. NAF employs both unskilled and semi-skilled workers who get paid a minimum wage from the SEF to work a maximum of 8 days a month. NAF works in conjunction with the local Makana municipality and not in opposition to them. It is crucial for NAF to maintain a good relationship with the municipality as it is in their interest, considering the help NAF requires during the months leading up to and during the festival. Monica Newton, CEO of the National Arts Festival, stated in an interview, “Our festival is synonymous with the city of Makhanda, and whenever the National Arts Festival is spoken about, the city is spoken about almost in the same breath”⁵. According to Newton, due to the large involvement of the National

² Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

³ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁴ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

Arts Festival in Makhanda and the severe service delivery problems that have affected the city and the future of the National Arts Festival, something had to be done.

The National Arts Festival applied for the SEF programme in 2021, but due to an 18-month delay of the SEF programme as a whole, NAF only received confirmation in March 2022 that their proposal had been accepted and they could start the first phase.⁶ According to Hilton Haakenson, NAF's project manager, the project was delayed due to uncertainty about whether the presidential employment stimulus would implement the SEF programme or not. The project's first phase was to be rolled out for 12 months, and NAF was required to have a minimum of 2000 interns for Phase 1, although in the end they had only 1967 interns.⁷ The end of Phase 1 brought about turmoil for NAF as the interns, despite having signed contracts stipulating the duration of their contracts, were unhappy with their termination at the end of the 12 months.⁸ NAF was granted Phase 2 of the project, but was unable to start due to the unhappiness of Phase 1 interns whose contracts had been terminated. From the project's second phase, to ensure better management of the intake of interns, the interns were required to fill out a form at the labour department with their details, which would be relayed to NAF for hiring purposes. In an interview with some interns, one of the interns said, "We went to Labour, got the forms and signed the forms. Then they called us and told us to come to the Fiddlers Green [a public area in Makhanda used by NAF] so that we can sign the contracts."⁹ As of 2024, NAF is in their third phase of the SEF programme with 1608 interns working on the project.¹⁰ The number of interns has dropped due to a drop in national funding for the Social Employment Fund. As a result, the various SEF programs received less funding and could not employ as many interns.¹¹ The reduction in funding was due to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, as SEF was initially created as an emergency programme due to high unemployment and job losses. It was decided that the funding would be reduced due to a reallocation of funding as the pandemic had come to an end.

3.6 Conclusion

As this study is focused on the question of the involvement of non-state actors in service delivery, I will focus specifically on the SEF projects related to service delivery. This study aims to make sense of how and why non-state actors can play an important role in service

⁶ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁸ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁹ Intern B, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

¹⁰ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

¹¹ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

delivery. This chapter provided the relevant background information and introduced the city of Makhanda, the National Arts Festival (NAF) and the Social Employment Fund (SEF). This chapter also provided important information on the workings of the SEF as an employment programme centred around “work for the common good”. This chapter explains the reason for the emergence of the SEF programme and NAF’s reasoning for joining the programme due to the employment and service delivery issues that Makhanda continues to face. Chapter Four consists of the research findings based on interviews, news articles and reports and work plans relating to NAF’s SEF programme. Chapter Four will present and describe these findings while also touching on the relevant literature.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the research findings of this study based on semi-structured interviews and documentation related to the NAF-run SEF. I conducted interviews with seventeen interns working for NAF’s SEF programme, the CEO and project manager of the National Arts Festival, the programme lead of the Presidential Employment Stimulus, Makana Municipality employees and various other knowledgeable individuals in Makhanda (see Table 4.1 below for a detailed list of interviewees and the various roles they play). This chapter will also draw on various reports that have been published in the public domain as well as a sample of monthly and weekly reports and work plans provided by NAF on NAF’s SEF programme and service delivery reports in Makhanda. This chapter will be organised along the lines of themes which have been identified through analysis of the interviews and news reports. Five main findings emerged from the analysis. These findings relate to how the SEF Programme is perceived in addressing service delivery deficits, its influence on the lives of interns, its impact on service delivery in Makhanda, the challenges and sustainability of the programme, and the nature of the partnership between the Makana Municipality and the SEF. All participants were chosen based on their knowledge and experience of the SEF and NAF’s SEF programme. Aside from this knowledge, no other characteristics were required to participate in this study. The methods section, in Chapter One, provides an in-depth explanation of the methods that were used in this study.

This chapter is focused mainly on the description and some discussion of the interviewees' perceptions and news reports on SEF and non-governmental service provision. I will also discuss the barriers to service delivery in Makhanda that have been deduced from the various interviews and news reports. The second section of this chapter will discuss the impact of

NAF's SEF programme, specifically the impact the programme has had on the interns employed by the programme, as well as the impact the programme has made on service provision in Makhanda and how the community has been impacted. The third section will discuss sustainability and challenges. This section will look at the opinions of the interviewees on how to ensure the longevity of NAFs' SEF programme, as well as discuss if the interviewees think that this programme could complement and supplement traditional service provision in Makhanda. The fourth section will discuss the nature of partnerships present in this program, how these partnerships were formed, how they have worked, what has not worked and how they can be maintained. Each section will first analyse and discuss the research findings and then briefly relate these findings to the relevant literature. Chapter Five will build on the descriptions and discussions of the findings in this chapter to provide a longer analysis in order to answer the research questions posed at the outset of this study.

Table of Interviewees, Workplace and Respective Roles

Name	Workplace	Role
1. Monica Newton	National Arts Festival	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The National Arts Festival
2. Hilton Haakonsen	National Arts Festival	Project Manager for The National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project
3. Kate Philip	Presidential Employment Stimulus	Programme Lead for The Presidential Employment Stimulus
4. Jay Kruise	Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM)	Director of The Public Service Accountability Monitor
5. Rod Amner	Rhodes University Journalism Department	Senior Lecturer in the School of Journalism and Media Studies
6. Intern A	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Social Employment Fund (SEF) Intern who works at the Brick Factory that creates bricks using recycled plastic and glass
7. Intern B	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Social Employment Fund (SEF) Intern who works at the Brick Factory that creates bricks using recycled plastic and glass
8. Intern C	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Team leader for Social Employment Fund (SEF) Interns at the Brick Factory that creates bricks using recycled plastic and glass
9. Intern D	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Timekeeper for Social Employment Fund (SEF) Interns who are part of the Roads Team

10. Intern E	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Social Employment Fund (SEF) Intern who is part of the Roads Team that fixes potholes, cleans storm water drains and collects rubbish on the roads
11. Intern F	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Team Leader for Social Employment Fund (SEF) Interns who are part of the Roads Team that fixes potholes, cleans storm water drains and collects rubbish on the roads
12. Intern G	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Team Leader for Social Employment Fund (SEF) Interns who are part of the Roads Team that fixes potholes, cleans storm water drains and collects rubbish on the roads
13. Geoffrey Embling	Makana Local Municipality	Municipal Ward Councillor
14. Phumzile Smile	Makana Local Municipality	Municipal Official: Acting Manager of Refuse and Cleansing
15. Michelle Lowry	National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Project	Team Leader for Social Employment Fund (SEF) Interns who are part of the Refuse collection and Recycle team
16. Mzobanzi Nkwentsha	Makana Local Municipality	Municipal Ward Councillor
17. Former SEF intern	Unemployed People's Movement (UPM)	Former National Arts Festival Social Employment Fund Intern and current Unemployed People's Movement member

4.2 Perceptions of the SEF Programme and its Role in Addressing Service Delivery Deficits

As discussed earlier, the Social Employment Programme, managed by the National Arts Festival, has been ongoing in Makhanda since 2022. The Makana Local Municipality and NAF have a long-standing relationship with one another, specifically regarding matters of the arts festival that occurs each year in Makhanda; these relations are often connected by those who hold executive positions in their respective organisations. During the initial stages of the programme, NAF was met with scepticism from the community and local government.¹² This

¹² Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview; Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

scepticism was highlighted in an interview with Michelle Lowry, who is a Team Leader for SEF interns working on recycling. According to Lowry:

So initially, uh, there was a lot of resistance, uh, just from people in general, the public. Yeah. And then, um, and also within [the municipality], they didn't take us [SEF] seriously, I don't think. But then, when they actually started to see that we were making a difference, things slowly started to change.

Part of the initial resistance that was experienced by NAF's SEF programme was in relation to refuse bag collection. The bags that the SEF interns collect rubbish in are red, unlike the regular black bags that are collected by the municipality. Michelle Lowry stated that in the initial stages, the municipality would only collect black bags, and those in the SEF project would only collect their red bags to take to the municipal dump.¹³ This is no longer the case three years into the SEF project. According to Lowry, the SEF and the Municipality now have a good partnership, and both collect all refuse bags, as they both want to achieve the same goal of having a cleaner Makhanda.¹⁴

The residents of Makhanda had reason to be sceptical, according to Hilton Haakonsen, the project manager for the SEF programme, in that they had seen many projects that were started to address various issues, but these projects were often unsuccessful and short-lived.¹⁵ During an interview with ward councillor Geoffrey Embling, he mentioned the scepticism shown by local residents towards the programme. The residents think there are too many interns working in a small section of the community, which causes many of the interns to appear idle while others are seen to be working.¹⁶ Residents' scepticism about the SEF interns resulted in a comment related to SEF on a local Facebook page in which a resident asked, "How many people does it take to fill a pothole?". Responding to this question, NAF CEO Monica Newton, said,

Well, lots, actually. First, because we have many people [interns], we need to create employment. But also, the pothole needs to be edged, the pothole needs to be cleaned, and then it needs to be sealed. Water is the enemy of pothole repair. There is a slurry

¹³ Michelle Lowry, Grahamstown Riding Club, 15 November 2024, Interview

¹⁴ Michelle Lowry, Grahamstown Riding Club, 15 November 2024, Interview; Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024

¹⁵ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

¹⁶ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

that goes into the hole that seals it off. And then there's a kind of a tarmac packed into the hole (cited in Amner and Ginya, 2022).

According to Haakonsen and Embling, many residents had shown scepticism and discontent and were unable to support the project during the initial stages, as they witnessed a number of failed projects over the years before the SEF programme was implemented by NAF.¹⁷

Based on my interviews with Geoffrey Embling and one of the SEF interns, some of the scepticism expressed by residents stems from the misconception that the interns working throughout Makhanda are municipal workers.¹⁸ An SEF team leader who is part of the Roads team indicated, "Some other people don't even know who these people [the SEF interns] are doing this. They only think they were from the municipality." Geoffrey Embling supported this claim as he explained, "[The scepticism of some residents] is also because the residents think sometimes that that's the municipality. They mistake that it's SEF and they think it's the municipality." Embling also explained that residents are often frustrated with the SEF workers, "A lot of residents complain because they see a lot of people sitting idle. So, they think it's their tax money that's going into... Well, I mean, it is ultimately [their tax money] because the government pays SEF, but I mean, on a much lesser diluted scale."¹⁹ Project manager of NAF, Hilton Haakonsen, also revealed, "That whole first phase was very difficult because especially with the citizens, the people that live in Grahamstown [Makhanda] just didn't see it."²⁰ Haakonsen suggests that the citizens of Makhanda did not see the value in the programme and were not supportive of the programme at first. In a later interview, he explained that residents had been sceptical of SEF as Makhanda had numerous projects that had started but had not been completed. Haakonsen explained, "There were a lot of naysayers, to say you are not going to succeed, things won't happen and so when we did show that we could, we would succeed."²¹

Upon review of other interviews conducted for this study, it is clear that there were also negative perceptions from some interns and not only the residents. The Acting Manager of Environmental Health and Cleansing from the Makana Municipality, Phumzile Smile, stated in his interview that he often assists the management of NAF concerning the SEF interns. Smile would brief the SEF interns, reassuring them that they were not performing the municipality's

¹⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview; Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

¹⁸ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview; Intern F, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

¹⁹ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

²⁰ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

²¹ Hilton Haakonsen, via telephone, 6 February 2025, Follow-up Interview

duties, and assist in ensuring that they understood the work they were doing and the reasons behind it.

Elaborating on the above statement by Smile, during the initial stages of the programme, both NAF and the Makana Municipality received resentment from the interns working on the SEF project. The interns felt as though the work that they were doing, such as collecting refuse, recycling waste, fixing potholes, planting gardens, cleaning up litter and stormwater drains, was work that should be done by the municipality. The resentment did not last long as the municipality and NAF presented a united front, which showed the interns that the work they were doing was a result of a partnership to address the various issues Makhanda faces.²² Both those associated with the NAF SEF programme, such as Hilton Haakonsen and Monica Newton and those working for the municipality, such as Phumzile Smile, insist that the work done by the SEF in Makhanda is not intended to replace the municipality in service delivery-related issues but to supplement the services provided by the municipality to better serve the community.²³ In response to a question on whether the SEF programme could facilitate a partnership in service delivery between state and non-state actors, Hilton Haakonsen stated, “We said we are not here to take over your [i.e. the municipality’s] work. We are here to work alongside you, and wherever we can help in any area to make the city better. So, we work with the municipality.”²⁴ In an interview with municipal official Phumzile Smile, the Acting Manager of Environmental Health and Cleansing stated, “You spoke of SEF, yeah, that I’ve said it’s good, yeah. Because in the main, it assists us, partly in town because we have relations with them. We request them in some other areas that we think that they can make a difference and help us”²⁵ Both NAF and the municipality want to be perceived by the interns and residents as being in alliance so there would be less of an opportunity for the community to show discontent but rather support the project and its purpose of “work for the common good”.²⁶

²² Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

²³ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview; Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview; Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

²⁴ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

²⁵ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

²⁶ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview; Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview; Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

The type of scepticism identified in this section of the research findings can often be true for non-state actors when in the initial phases of their project roll-out. Drawing from the literature on public-private partnerships (PPPs) in Chapter Two, one of the major challenges to PPPs that was identified was regarding community support or the lack thereof (Hodge and Greve, 2017). Lack of support may occur when citizens are dissatisfied with the execution of the programme (Hodge and Greve, 2017). Other non-state actors have also faced challenges when working in partnership with local government. According to Kroukamp (2005) and Cranko and Khan (1999), partnerships are less likely to be successful when there is a lack of administrative and financial resources within local government. These partnerships also give rise to conflicts within the community and issues of implementation, planning and monitoring (Kroukamp, 2005; Cranko and Khan, 1999). Partnerships can also be crucial in addressing local government shortcomings, and engaging in partnerships enables local government to provide services effectively (Tauté, 2020; Tadesse, 2017; Bell and Hindmoor, 2009). The way the community of Makhanda and the SEF interns perceive the SEF programme based on the findings, shows the importance of partnership. The solidification and clarification of the partnership between NAF and the Makana local municipality was intended to provide the interns and community a better understanding of the programme which it was hoped would alter their perceptions of the programme.

4.3 The Impact of the SEF Programme on the lives of the interns

The impact of this programme on the individual experience of the interns, was shown through a range of interviews that were conducted for this study. Understanding the impact of the SEF programme is important to later assess and discuss how this SEF programme, in partnership with the Local Makana Municipality, can suggest new ways for public and private actors to work together for the delivery of services. In interviews that were conducted for this study, the interviewees were asked questions about the impact the programme has had on the city of Makhanda concerning service delivery, as well as the impact on the community. The interns who work on the SEF programme are employed on a contractual basis to play various roles, such as team leader, timekeeper or general intern, which affects their perception of the impact the programme had. In response to a question on what they think about the work the National Arts Festival is doing through the SEF programme, the various interns all had very positive

responses, such as, “It's making a lot of difference”²⁷, and “A lot of households are being fed with the little money they receive. Yeah, I think it does make a difference.”²⁸ One of the timekeepers who is part of the group that fixes and cleans the roads stated,

It is making a difference because since I left school, I think it's been 10 years, I didn't get a job. I've been sitting in the location waiting, handing out CVs but with nothing. But since this project came now, now I'm a better person.²⁹

During the interns' interviews, it was observed that their initial reaction when asked about the work NAF was doing through the SEF programme was personal, describing how it had improved their lives and allowed them to provide for themselves and their families.³⁰ The SEF programme was created to provide temporary employment and upskill individuals, equipping them with the skills, connections, and experiences needed to pursue permanent employment (IDC, 2022). In an interview, Monica Newton, CEO of NAF, explained,

Hundreds of thousands of people are paid every month for short-term work in a non-grant-focused way. So, it's not a handout. And it's not perfect, hopefully, it's a tool that moves people from point A to point B, not everybody. It's the nature of working at scale. You're going to have dropouts, and you're going to have drop-offs. But hopefully, this fills the gap of what do we do in the immediate term, while we are trying to figure out the bigger question of youth unemployment, which is, as you know, crisis proportionate.

Based on the interviews that were conducted with various interns working on the NAF's SEF programme, they noted a significant impact on the quality of their livelihoods.³¹ The interns who were previously unemployed are now receiving a basic income. The interns also noted the wide range of skills that they have learnt during their time as an intern. One of the team leaders for the roads group stated, “One thing I like about them, whatever it is that we are doing here, we are getting to gain something from that.”³² The team leader stated how they have learnt to

²⁷ Intern A, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

²⁸ Intern C, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

²⁹ Intern D, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³⁰ Intern A, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern C, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern D, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³¹ Intern A, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern C, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern D, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview, Intern G Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³² Intern G, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

mix tar and fill potholes, which he stated is a very valuable skill and thought this would only be able to be done by big tar companies.³³ This programme has not only impacted the livelihoods of the individuals but it has also provided part-time employment for over 2000 residents of Makhanda (Amner, 2022). In an interview with the refuse collection and recycle team leader for SEF, Michelle Lowry expressed:

It's not just a work programme; it's a rehabilitation programme. And then the impact it has on people because one person's going home to a house full of people, and maybe they're the only breadwinners, and now it's impacting the family, at least they can bring food home. And then you've got healthier children at school.

Team Leader Michelle Lowry expressed how this programme is one of rehabilitation and not just a means of part-time work. The SEF programme has empowered individuals who are employed in this programme, which has subsequently empowered their families and further than that, it has empowered Makhanda. A former SEF intern and current member of the Unemployed People's Movement expressed gratitude for the programme,

It helped us a lot because some of us were sitting at home doing nothing although the money is not enough because we are parents, we have kids, we have household things. And then to us it helped us a lot although it's smaller money in a really short time.

Phumzile Smile, Acting Manager of Environmental Health and Cleansing at Makana Local Municipality, reported how the SEF programme played a supplementary role in helping address service delivery in Makhanda: "In many ways, yeah, because it creates jobs as well, yeah, because those young people weren't there or weren't active economically, but because of the SEF programme, they are."³⁴

Throughout the several interviews that were conducted with the SEF interns, it was emphasised how the SEF programme has benefitted and made an impact personally on their lives. These findings resonate with similar findings by other studies of social employment programmes in South Africa (Dladla, 2020; ILO, 2020; Ditlev et al; 2009). Social employment programmes are mechanisms by the South African government to address the high poverty and unemployment rates in South Africa. The Social Employment Fund (SEF) is one of these programmes. Due to the SEF programme being recent, there is very little literature on this specific programme however, there are similar programmes such as the Expanded Public

³³ Intern G, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³⁴ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

Works Programme (EPWP). Studies on the EPWP and similar programmes show that longer participation increases the likelihood of meaningful skills development (Dladla, 2020; ILO, 2020; Ditlev et al., 2009). Unlike Dladla (2020) and Ditlev et al. (2009), who identify that participants are more likely to gain experience the longer they remain in a programme, SEF interns expressed that they've gained a large amount of experience in a short period. Another study also indicated that these short-term programmes have been impactful but programmes that impact society more permanently are needed, such as programmes that promote entrepreneurial prospects and long-term employment (Nzimakwe, 2008). Another study on employment programmes identified several reasons why employment programmes can be impactful (Kluve et al, 2019). The first thing that was identified is that employment programmes are seen to be more successful in low and middle-income countries (Kluve et al, 2019). Another identification that was made is that employment programmes that incorporate several services and interventions are more likely to be impactful specifically in low- and middle-income countries (Kluve et al., 2019). As seen above in the findings the impact of the SEF programme has been greatly beneficial for the interns and community, bringing a sense of social stability to Makhanda.

4.4 The Impact of the SEF Programme on Service Delivery in Makhanda

The SEF programme that is managed by NAF has not only been impactful on the unemployment rates in Makhanda and the livelihoods of the interns but has had a great impact on the city itself. Based on the interviews conducted, municipal officials, programme coordinators and public service experts are of the view that the SEF programme has had a positive impact in Makhanda and, specifically, on service delivery in Makhanda. Phumzile Smile expressed how impactful the SEF programme has been: "It's helping the community, yeah. It's helping the municipality, yeah, because we had to clean the drains, we had to cut some bushes, we had to clean the riverbeds, which they [SEF interns] all do that, yeah." The work being done by the SEF workers, who are managed by NAF, has helped lighten and distribute the load of work that the municipality has previously fallen short on. Drawing from the findings and the literature on service delivery, the SEF programme works alongside the municipality to supplement service delivery in Makhanda. This is an unusual model of service provision that individuals may not be familiar with. Service delivery is traditionally facilitated by the government; however, where the government has been unable to provide services, non-

state actors may step in to provide services in collaboration with the government (Kroukamp, 2005). Although the NAF-managed SEF programme is a unique model of service provision, it is similar to other models which involve partnerships between non-state actors and the state to supplement or enhance public services (Batley and Mcloughin, 2010). This model of service delivery is especially similar to the Municipal Service Partnerships model discussed in Mamokhere et al. (2022).

It was also communicated through the interns the difference and impact the programme is having on the city of Makhanda. While conducting interviews with the various interns, most of them spoke about how the SEF programme, which is managed by NAF and funded by the South African Government, is improving the town of Makhanda by cleaning up the streets and stormwater drains, collecting refuse, planting gardens and fixing potholes around the town. An intern who works in the brick factory that recycles glass and plastic to create bricks stated, “In this small time that we are working here, it's making a difference.”³⁵ Another intern who works in the brick factory expressed the programme's potential impact in response to how the programme is helping service delivery in Makhanda: “Yeah, I think it's starting a little bit. I think in a couple of years, there's going to be a huge change if it carries on.”³⁶ In an interview with the team leader for Social Employment Fund (SEF) interns who are part of the Refuse Collection and Recycle team, Michelle Lowry, she noted the impact the programme has had on Makhanda, “It's just exponential. We've cleaned the earth. Literally, this town was dirty. It's much cleaner.”³⁷

Tshuma (2024) reported in a *Grocott's Mail* article on the achievements of the SEF programme during Phase 2 of the project, which ran between August 2023 and August 2024. The achievements included maintenance work being undertaken in eighteen schools, three Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres, three clinics and two police stations; the removal of an average of 250 tons of waste of which 20% is recycled; potholes in over 50 roads across the city were repaired with more than 360 tons of tar laid; two tons of green waste is converted into compost each month; and twenty-seven food gardens were created and maintained which served roughly 500 people per garden (Tshuma, 2024).³⁸ This information was also provided by NAF in a close out report, the report also alluded to the potential of the SEF programme in

³⁵ Intern A, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³⁶ Intern B, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

³⁷ Michelle Lowry, Grahamstown Riding Club, 15 November 2024, Interview

³⁸ Monica Newton, Close out Report SEF Phase 2 (August 2023 – May 2024)

collaboration with the Municipality and the community could lead to alternative ways of sustaining service provision in Makhanda.³⁹ According to Monica Newton (2024), as stated in a *Grocott's Mail* article, since the inception of the SEF programme in Makhanda, there has been a significant amount of success in resolving some of the pressing issues faced by the city of Makhanda. These issues included cleanliness, waste management and potholes.⁴⁰ As reported in the SEF close-out report for Phase 2 of the NAF-managed programme, an 88.6% target performance was achieved, with twenty-three out of the twenty-six targets met. In a monthly report for March 2025 provided by NAF for the Roads team, it was noted that 2,375 tonnes of hot asphalt were laid for road repairs, including the removal of debris from various roads in Makhanda. The roads team accomplished 100% of the tasks outlined for road repairs in March 2025. These are just a few of the achievements of the NAF-SEF programme in Makhanda. The SEF programme has directly impacted the community and overall service delivery in the city. During an interview, Monica Newton, CEO of NAF, shared a detailed list of all the work being done through NAF's SEF programme, which has contributed to the overall service provision in Makhanda:

We clean 80 streets, we maintain public parks, we move about 250 tonnes of waste a month. Most of that is not the waste that people put outside that municipal waste collects, unless there's a reason. But we go into gullies, open spaces, those kinds of things, and clear. We work with a cluster of about 18 schools to help them do ground and building maintenance and upgrades. We've created 27 food gardens, including a big market garden with Umtati Training Development Project in Joza. We grow seedlings in seedling nurseries that feed those gardens. So, making this bigger contribution, we're removing invasive species that block up gullies. When the gullies are blocked, the stormwater drains don't unblock. And when stormwater drains overflow, and there's water on the road, you get potholes.⁴¹

Monica Newton explained in an interview how it was important for NAF to intervene on many different levels of service provision as they are all interlinked, as Newton described above in relation to potholes. Monica Newton also reported in an interview that one of the objectives of the SEF programme managed by NAF is to step in where needed and help⁴². A big aspect of this is working alongside and in partnership with the municipality. In an interview, Monica

³⁹ Monica Newton, Close out Report SEF Phase 2 (August 2023 – May 2024)

⁴⁰ Monica Newton, Close out Report SEF Phase 2 (August 2023 – May 2024)

⁴¹ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁴² Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

Newton explained how there is waste constantly blowing away from the municipal dump site and getting stuck in trees and fences near the dumpsite:

Those are all the symptoms of an unmanaged dump; an unmanaged dump is a symptom of a municipality that's struggling. And so, if we all just stand and yell at each other and go, well, you should have, and you could have, and you must have, and I've paid for the service, where do we go? Nothing changes.⁴³

The perspective and approach NAF takes is crucial in determining the impact and the scope of its work in Makhanda. As seen above, the CEO of NAF, Monica Newton, is focused on helping where needed and refrains from shifting blame but instead takes the initiative where necessary. Mr Smile, Acting Manager of Environmental Health and Cleansing, has noted the impact of the work NAF is doing and explained how the SEF programme through NAF has become the municipality's extra hands, "I'm positive around them, yeah. Because we can't reach each and every corner as we would want to, whether it's education, reaching out for services."⁴⁴ Additionally, Mr Smile clarified that the municipality is not adequately resourced and that the SEF initiative allowed the municipality to reach and better serve more residents of Makhanda.⁴⁵ However, other interviews that were conducted pointed towards the problem being a poor use of resources by the municipality and not just that they are inadequately resourced. The Director of the Public Service Accountability Monitor at Rhodes University, Jay Kruise, explained in an interview that while the municipality claims to have funding constraints, he does not accept this excuse for poor services as the municipality often does not spend all the money that it has been allocated from national government. This comment points out how resources, in this case, funding is provided to the municipality by the national government, but it is not used in time, which reflects a poor or lack of use of the resources that are provided to the Makana Local Municipality.

Since the rollout of the SEF programme managed by NAF in Makhanda, the programme has seen improvements in service provision, which has been noted by the municipality and reported on by Monica Newton and local news outlets such as *Grocott's Mail* as seen above. One of the SEF interns has also noted the impact, "the streets are getting cleaned. Kids don't go around playing with dirty things anymore in the streets. So, yeah, it's making a huge impact."⁴⁶ It has

⁴³ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁴⁴ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

⁴⁵ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

⁴⁶ Intern A, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

also been elaborated in an interview with municipal ward councillor, Mzobanzi Nkwentsha on the impact the programme has had on service delivery in Makhanda,

They [non-state actors] are a part of supplementary work that needs to be done in the provision of services, in particular in local government. For example, the issue of roads. SEF has been playing a critical role in the beautification of the city and all of that.⁴⁷

Overall, throughout a range of interviews conducted for this study, the interviewees have alluded to the positive impact of the SEF programme on service delivery in Makhanda. The interviewees spoke to the physical differences seen in Makhanda such as roads being fixed and cleaner streets, the increase in scope of reach of services as the SEF in Makhanda has a large labour force to assist in areas not always reached by the municipality.⁴⁸ Lastly, the interviewees and news reports have addressed the various types of service delivery work being undertaken by the SEF programme to help supplement the Makana Local Municipality. It is critical to consider how these findings relate to or differ from the relevant literature that is available on this research to better contextualise these findings.

NGOs have been commended and recognised in some areas of work, especially those such as social justice, healthcare, education and community development (Abiddin et al., 2022). This is not to say that they are beneficial in all areas (Abiddin et al., 2022). The two factors that often hinder NGOs' efforts and ability is inefficient governments and resource restraints (Abiddin et al., 2022). The SEF programme in Makhanda was beneficial in contributing towards improved service delivery, however, only to an extent, as the NAF-managed SEF programme was also met with resource constraints due to limited funding as well as issues from the state regarding the continuation of the whole SEF programme countrywide. The non-profit sector is included in service provision in situations where the government is not able to provide for all its citizens, creating a gap that is often filled by NGOs (Tshiyoyo, 2022). This is specifically prevalent in the Global South as governments have proved to be incapable of meeting citizens needs and providing citizens with high quality services (Tshiyoyo, 2022). This aligns with NAF's reasons for applying for the SEF programme as they identified that the community's needs were not being met and the citizens of Makhanda were extremely unhappy with the level of services being provided to them. NAF identified the gap that they could fill

⁴⁷ Mzobanzi Nkwentsha, Rhodes University, 18 November 2024, Interview

⁴⁸ Mzobanzi Nkwentsha, Rhodes University, 18 November 2024, Interview; Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

and a programme that would allow them to fill such a gap while also providing employment and skills development.

4.5 The Sustainability and Challenges of the SEF Programme in Makhanda

A prevalent theme and important aspect to consider is the sustainability of the SEF programme. Is this programme able to continue and help supplement service delivery long-term? In addition to the challenges the programme may encounter, there are significant concerns regarding the unpredictability of the annual rollout of a new phase of the SEF programme from the Presidential Employment Stimulus and the funding that will be allocated each year. Furthermore, the programme has faced various difficulties, as revealed through discussions with interviewees. This section of the chapter will address the above and present the findings on the suggestions for improvements by interviewees. This section will also discuss how this programme could complement traditional service delivery in Makhanda based on the findings from the interviews.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the Presidential Employment Stimulus was introduced in October 2020 as part of the government's economic recovery measures to generate jobs in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused a significant loss of employment among individuals in South Africa.⁴⁹ The SEF programme is not incorporated into the baseline budgets of the national government because of the manner in which it was initiated; it is additional to the baseline budget. In an interview, Dr Kate Philip, who is the Programme lead of the Presidential Employment Stimulus, mentions:

In a context of severe fiscal stress, where we don't have enough money to do all the things we need to do as a country, they [the SEF programme] were first in line to be chopped because they weren't embedded in existing core budgets. So, our budgets have been confirmed almost year on year, which is a terrible way to implement programmes. It's put enormous stress on everybody involved. And my hats go off to all of those who have managed to sustain energy and enthusiasm and delivery in a context of huge budget uncertainty.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁰ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

Despite the uncertainty of the programme's continuation, as each phase is renewed yearly, the SEF project has reported positive results since its rollout. In an article published by the IDC (2022), the SEF programmes are described as having been beneficial in job creation and the upskilling of individuals, as well as benefiting the communities in which these programmes are running. Dr Kate Philip stated in her interview that the SEF is a high-quality programme and one of the best-performing programmes in the Presidential Employment Stimulus.⁵¹ Dr Kate Philip and her colleagues have advocated for the continuation of this programme, and they have only now seen the recognition and acceptance at a policy level of the programme's good quality and benefits.⁵²

As shown above, the SEF programme managed by NAF in Makhanda has had some successes, but it has also had its challenges. Upon review of the interviews, there was a range of challenges that arose, including challenges with intern intake, funding challenges, challenges with the municipality and the community as well as internal administrative challenges faced by NAF. Interview participants discussed challenges that arose but also provided what they thought could be possible improvements to the programme based on the challenges they discussed.

Each phase of the SEF programme currently runs for a 10-month period before the start of a new phase. Each phase of the programme requires a new intake of interns with the interns being required to work for a total of 70 days during the 10 months (IDC, 2022). Due to this programme not being a full-time employment programme, challenges have arisen with the termination of interns at the end of the 10-month period. Hilton Haakonsen, the Project Manager for NAF, expressed that the National Arts Festival received a significant amount of backlash from interns whose contracts had come to an end.⁵³ According to Hilton Haakonsen, “We had a huge problem, and people didn't want to leave the project; they didn't want to go, even though they had contracts, everything was signed.”⁵⁴ These issues arose during the first phase of the project, which halted the start of the second phase of the SEF project.⁵⁵ Hilton Haakonsen stated that NAF was accepted for Phase 2 of the SEF project, but due to the issues regarding interns not accepting their termination at the end of the fixed-term contract, NAF was unable to start Phase 2 of the project on time.⁵⁶ In an interview, Monica Newton, NAF's

⁵¹ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵² Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵³ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁴ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁵ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁶ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

CEO, reported on the difficulty of ending Phase 1 as participants were extremely unhappy.⁵⁷ Monica Newton also discussed how managers were being harassed, NAF staff were being accosted, and there were sit-ins and marches to the 1820 Settlers' National Monument, which is where NAF's offices are based (Mankayi, 2023).⁵⁸

Mankayi (2023), a reporter for the *Grocott's Mail*, interviewed the disgruntled participants, who claimed they had been unfairly dismissed because they had not signed any contracts outlining the project's phases. An SEF intern expressed in the *Grocott's Mail* article, "We don't understand how the system works because not all of us from the previous phase of participants were dismissed. There are still some participants working" (Mankayi, 2023). Some interns continue to work on NAF's SEF project because they are recognised for their leadership and hard work and are given an opportunity to work on the project in a different capacity.⁵⁹ During an interview, Monica Newton expressed the challenge of identifying participants who stand out from the rest as everyone expects to be treated the same way.⁶⁰ When interviewing Monica Newton, she pointed out "So part of what we tried to do, and that was part of what caused the drama, which was to say, okay, you've done incredibly well. What we'd like you to do is now become a supervisor on the project", Monica Newton said that this had caused issues and restricted NAF's ability to create pathways of employment for interns beyond the fixed-term contract of the SEF programme.⁶¹

According to Hilton Haakonsen, the Project Manager, NAF tried to accommodate the disgruntled interns by meeting with them to hear their concerns and answer to the best of his ability (Mankayi, 2023).⁶² Upon negotiations with both the interns as well as the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), who are the paymasters for the SEF project, a three-month extension on Phase 1 was granted.⁶³ Monica Newton expressed during an interview that NAF had a number of Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) cases against them.⁶⁴ The CCMA is an independent body that assists in preventing and resolving workplace disputes. In relation to the unhappiness of interns whose contracts have come to an end, Makana Ward Councillor Mzobanzi Nkwentsha pointed out that "there's that labour

⁵⁷ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁸ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁵⁹ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁶⁰ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁶¹ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁶² Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁶³ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁶⁴ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

relations challenge that needs to be addressed going forward so that there's no hiccups on the good work that is being done.”⁶⁵ Monica Newton noted that NAF had received help during this time from the IDC, Local Makana Municipality and community members, which helped NAF persevere and establish a principle by which things were to be done in future if any of these challenges were to arise.⁶⁶ This was one of the first challenges NAF faced when implementing the SEF project, but it has now been partially resolved as participants are now required to follow a different recruitment process. They fill out a form at the labour department with their information prior to recruitment.⁶⁷ One of the interns explains “They put you in the database so that everything, all your information, can be there.” To further explain the above quote, NAF now works through the labour department. If any issue arises regarding the contracts or with the employees, it can be better managed and dealt with by the labour department.⁶⁸ As explained earlier, to prevent this situation from arising again, in Phase 2, the SEF management made it very clear that interns were on fixed-term contracts⁶⁹ The first intake of interns had also received a letter and it was stated that they had a fixed-term contract but due to the issues that arose during the first phase of the programme, this information was emphasised more clearly in subsequent phases so that new interns would be less likely to misunderstand the nature of the contract.⁷⁰

Working through the labour department has helped to reduce any issues; Hilton Haakonsen stated in an interview that NAF communicates with the labour department to request participants possessing various skill sets, after which NAF will reach out to the participants to offer them fixed-term contracts.⁷¹ The challenges NAF faced during the first phase of the SEF project regarding intern rollout and intake had been resolved, but throughout the phases of the project, there were other minor challenges that had to be overcome. Another challenge that emerged regarding the SEF programme during an analysis of the interviews was centred around the community and how they viewed and responded to the programme.

Another challenge was identified when discussing the National Arts Festival's SEF programme in Makhanda with the Presidential Stimulus programme lead, Dr Kate Philip. The SEF programme was created to combat the high unemployment rates in South Africa by establishing

⁶⁵ Mzobanzi Nkwentsha, Rhodes University, 18 November 2024, Interview

⁶⁶ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁶⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁶⁸ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁶⁹ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁷⁰ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁷¹ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

collaborations with a range of social and civic partners, which allows for the establishment of impactful initiatives across South Africa (IDC,2022). Each Strategic Implementing Partner (SIP) has the freedom to choose, based on their community, what work they will be doing to benefit the community (IDC,2022). Based on Makhanda's history of a dysfunctional municipality and poor service delivery, NAF plugged in where the community needed it most, cleaning up refuse, recycling, fixing potholes and maintaining schools, among other social change work (Tshuma, 2024).⁷² In an interview, Dr Kate Philip stated that the intention of the SEF programme is not to provide service delivery but rather it is intended to provide auxiliary support to a range of social needs.⁷³ Dr Kate Philip explains,

Communities face a situation where service delivery is not happening, where they look for alternative mechanisms to make it happen. So, I would think there's a difference between organisations like SEF contributing to service delivery as a contingency in a context of crisis. I would see that as different from that being a design feature of their purpose and from that becoming institutionalised as the way service delivery happens. So, I definitely wouldn't see it as an alternative for fixing service delivery problems.

In discussion with Dr Kate Philip, it was identified that there are issues regarding what is institutionalised and intended to be the purpose of SEF at the top and what is being done on the ground.⁷⁴ The inability to institutionalise the NAF-managed SEF model of service provision in Makhanda highlights the program's unsustainability in relation to service delivery. The SEF program in Makhanda cannot achieve long-term sustainability if it lacks institutionalisation. Although NAF does not present itself as an alternative to municipal service delivery, the work carried out through NAF's SEF programme is directly related to service provision, particularly in the collection of refuse and the repair of potholes that the SEF interns perform.⁷⁵ NAF's SEF programme does work that supplements service provision by the municipality; it is not a contingency plan but a decision made by NAF to focus on areas related to service provision as such provision was identified as a core need for the community.⁷⁶ According to the project manager of NAF, Hilton Haakonsen, when deciding on what 'work for the common good' to do, the National Arts Festival's main concern was the Arts festival: how the festival might bring

⁷² Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview

⁷³ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁷⁴ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁷⁵ Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview

⁷⁶ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

more people to Makhanda, and how NAF could improve the infrastructure of Makhanda.⁷⁷ NAF's main objective in deciding what work to do for the common good was how they might be able to improve the city, the look of the city and how the city works through a partnership with the Social Employment Fund.⁷⁸ Through the SEF programme, NAF has been able to supplement service delivery in some ways in Makhanda as it was an area of concern in the running of the arts festival every year and an area of concern for the residents of Makhanda.⁷⁹

This analysis of the findings raises a question on the sustainability of supplementing service delivery in Makhanda. As seen above, the sustainability of the SEF programme is also in question due to the yearly renewal of the programme, which, based on the findings, poses a challenge to how sustainable supplementing service delivery is for the NAF-managed SEF programme in Makhanda. In an interview, Rod Amner expressed concern that,

It's nice to have some people clean up, you know, tons and tons of refuse from our town and try and fix some holes in roads and so on, but my goodness, you know, that is not sustainable. It's not what's supposed to happen.⁸⁰

Rod Amner's comment was in response to the following question: "What is your view on non-governmental service provision?" The NAF-managed SEF programme, according to Rod Amner, is not sustainable, characterising the model as exploitative on some levels and that it lacks thorough development consideration. He also alluded to all the good the programme has done for the city of Makhanda, but the implementation of the programme still does not address the root cause of municipal service delivery failure.⁸¹ Jay Kruuse, Director of The Public Service Accountability Monitor, supports Amner's concerns as he stated during an interview that,

Whether it should be systematised [non-governmental service provision] in such a way that it becomes the norm, I don't think is appropriate. We have a legislative framework, and we have roles and responsibilities that should be performed. And there are certain services that require expertise, that have consequences or legal obligations, which are

⁷⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁷⁸ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁷⁹ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview; Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁸⁰ Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview

⁸¹ Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview

best served by people in government and provided by people in government. And so, yeah, it's a difficult situation.⁸²

A number of interviewees welcomed the SEF programme and the benefits it has brought in creating employment and enhancing service delivery in Makhanda. However, these interviewees also alluded to how the SEF model is not a sustainable approach, and that service delivery should be provided by the municipality.⁸³

The function of a local municipality in South Africa is to ensure the provision of services among other functions but municipalities are not always able to reach its residents due to certain constraints or shortfalls. The Makana Local Municipality has suffered several challenges, some of which were identified by various interview participants when asked a question on the barriers to service delivery in Makhanda. Mzobanzi Nkwentsha, a Makana ward councillor, alludes to one of the challenges of the Makana Municipality being budget constraints and revenue generation.⁸⁴ Nkwentsha explains,

local government has got funding, conditional grant funding from the national fiscals, and also relies on its own revenue through rates and taxes. Now, when there is no rates and taxes that are being paid by the residents, your budget does not correspond with the project that you want to do.

In an interview, Geoffrey Embling, a Makhanda ward councillor, discussed that overemployment in the municipality was a barrier to service delivery in Makhanda.⁸⁵ Embling explained that majority of the municipality's budget was going to paying staff, which results in a tight budget to address service delivery.⁸⁶ A range of interviewees also expressed barriers to service delivery and the overall dysfunction of the municipality. A former SEF intern remarked in an interview, "Our municipality, they don't give us a full-service delivery"⁸⁷ and Monica Newton, CEO of NAF, said, "Ageing infrastructure, your 100-year-old water articulation and sewerage systems are not where you want your heritage."⁸⁸ In an interview

⁸² Jay Kruise, The Public Service Accountability Monitor Office, 26 July 2024, Interview

⁸³ Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview; Jay Kruise, The Public Service Accountability Monitor Office, 26 July 2024, Interview

⁸⁴ Mzobanzi Nkwentsha, Rhodes University, 18 November 2024, Interview

⁸⁵ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

⁸⁶ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

⁸⁷ Former Intern, Unemployed people's movement offices, 19 August 2024, Interview

⁸⁸ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

with the director of the Public Service Accountability Monitor, Jay Kruise he expressed his view on the barriers to service delivery in Makhanda,

[The municipality has] failures at multiple levels. The governance systems are broken and that then creates opportunities for staff to not be at work, not deliver on their responsibilities. So yeah, that would be my take in a nutshell.⁸⁹

The interviewees all highlighted a different issue when asked the question of what the barriers to service delivery are in Makhanda, but all the answers were related in some way to issues of finance and overall lack on the part of the municipality. The challenges experienced by the SEF are similar to challenges experienced in other similar attempts to address service delivery deficits through partnership with non-state actors

One of the challenges identified in the findings was regarding the design of the SEF programme and what it was intended to achieve based on policy and what was being implemented on the ground. According to the literature on policy intent and policy implementation, there is often a gap, which is due to a greater focus on the formulation of policies rather than the implementation of the policies (Abdullahi and Othman, 2020). Research indicates that the execution of policy poses difficulties due to its attempts to address complex social issues characterised by inherent conflicts (Abdullahi and Othman, 2020). The SEF programme was created to address the vast unemployment post-COVID-19 by creating jobs and strengthening livelihoods (President Ramaphosa, in Presidency 2023). Based on the accounts offered by individuals interviewed for this research, it has achieved those objectives in Makhanda. The SEF's objectives were not intended to supplement service delivery but in the case of Makhanda the work being done through the NAF-managed SEF programme is in many ways supplementing service delivery. This indicates that what is intended does not always fully align with what is being implemented.

Drawing from the literature review in Chapter Two, McDonald and Ruiters' (2012) criteria for success, identify sustainability as one of the most important criteria to consider. When looking at alternatives to service provision, financial sustainability is a large determining factor. Often these alternatives are financed by donors or governments (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012: 35). The SEF programme is funded by the South African Government with the funding provided and renewed on a yearly basis. As the funding of the SEF is not included in the baseline budgets

⁸⁹ Jay Kruise, The Public Service Accountability Monitor Office, 26 July 2024, Interview

of the government, this arrangement poses a threat to the sustainability of the SEF programme and, furthermore, to the sustainability of service delivery in Makhanda. The SEF programme has been supplementing services in Makhanda; consequently, if there were no renewal of funding, this would threaten the service delivery supplementation by the NAF SEF programme.

Another challenge identified in the findings relates to the barriers to service delivery in Makhanda; barriers to service delivery are not unique to Makhanda but are often a widespread issue in South Africa. In an article by Ndevu and Muller (2017), they argue the importance of performance management in local government. Performance by local government signifies the advancement towards achieving goals which allow municipalities to be more efficient, sensitive and responsive to the needs of the community and be efficient in utilising limited resources to achieve the needs of the community (Ndevu and Muller, 2017; Turk, 2016:18). The focus on performance management in municipalities would improve service provision and the quality of services being provided (Mofolo, 2014; Ndevu and Muller, 2017). The Makana Municipality in certain areas may lack performance management. It was noted by a range of interviewees that the municipality faces financial constraints, which could often be due to the mismanagement of funds that are being received from the national government, as suggested by Jay Kruuse in comments quoted earlier in the chapter.⁹⁰ This can be supported by the SIU case on the Makana Municipality as the raid provides evidence of suspected mismanagement of funds (SIU, 2024; Ellis, 2024). There are further reasons to suspect the Makana Local Municipality of mismanagement due to the repeated disclaimer audit opinions based on no or lack of progress and non-accountability (Mjekula, 2024). Programmes such as the SEF engaging in supplementing service delivery in Makhanda may potentially mask the inability of the municipality to provide services, allowing residents to assume that the municipality is doing better when the SEF is picking up the shortfall.

Governments may be able to expand their capacity and broaden their scope when in partnership with non-state actors; these partnerships often allow governments to provide more services than they originally would be able to (Tadesse, 2017; Bell and Hindmoor, 2009). Sacks (2012) argues that the provision of services by non-state actors or donors has the potential to weaken or strengthen citizens' respect for the government. When citizens attribute the provision of services to non-state actors, they may be less inclined to adhere to the laws and regulations of the state, which could lead to citizens not wanting to adhere to paying taxes as they believe

⁹⁰ Jay Kruuse, The Public Service Accountability Monitor Office, 26 July 2024, Interview

their services are being provided by a non-state actor, and not the government (Sacks, 2012). Sacks' (2012) argument on tax adherence or lack thereof aligns with the comments made by ward councillors Embling and Nkwentsha on residents not paying their taxes. However, unlike Sacks (2012) who found that the lack of adherence to pay tax was based on the belief that non-state actors were doing the state's work, the residents of Makhanda had mistaken SEF workers for municipal workers further leading to resentment of the municipality as seen earlier in this section. Sacks (2012) also explains that if citizens perceive the state as being crucial in managing and utilising the non-state actors, then the provision of services by non-state actors may enforce citizens' respect for the state.

The NAF-managed SEF programme has dealt with a range of challenges throughout its initial phase and the subsequent phases that have followed. These challenges have also presented an issue on the sustainability of the SEF programme in Makhanda and the SEF programme as a whole. As discussed earlier there is no guarantee that the programme will be renewed each year, nor that the necessary funding that will be received as it is dependent on the national government's budget and how many interns are employed per phase. Currently, the future and sustainability of the NAF-managed SEF initiative is unclear; yet, despite the uncertainty, it has contributed to advancements in service delivery and the livelihoods of residents of Makhanda.

4.6 The Nature of Partnership between the Makana Municipality and the SEF

One of the most prevalent themes that emerged from an analysis of the interviews and is one of the main focuses of this research is partnerships. The study explores how the Social Employment Fund (SEF) and Makana Local Municipality have worked in partnership to ensure the SEF programme is able to function and how this partnership has assisted in resolving challenges pertaining to service delivery in Makhanda. From the SEF programme's inception in Makhanda, NAF has sought to ensure a good relationship with the municipality.⁹¹ The municipality and NAF's relationship existed prior to the roll-out of the SEF programme, as NAF has run the National Arts Festival every year for the past 50 years. NAF's relationship with the municipality is crucial to the running and execution of the festival every year. It is therefore in NAF's best interest to uphold a good relationship with the Makana Local

⁹¹ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview; Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

Municipality. The pre-existing relationship between NAF and the municipality made it easier to collaborate with the municipality on NAF's SEF programme. Dr Kate Philip, Programme Lead for The Presidential Employment Stimulus, expressed the importance of partnership for the SEF programme, "the communication with local authorities, the partnership with local authorities becomes absolutely crucial if organisations like the Social Employment Fund are to play a role."⁹² While conducting interviews, both the project manager of the NAF-run SEF and the CEO of NAF highlighted their good relations with the municipality.

We do everything that we do in partnership with the municipality. We've never set ourselves up to be the counterpoint, to be the, well, we're doing it because you're not. Right from the initial stages, as we developed the proposal, the municipality was involved.⁹³

This claim by Monica Newton was supported by Hilton Haakonsen, NAF's project manager, "We are here to work alongside you [i.e. the municipality], and wherever we can help in any area to make the city better. So, we work with the municipality."⁹⁴ The senior management of NAF appears to have established a resilient partnership with the municipality. This account of the relationship between the SEF and the municipality was confirmed during an interview with the Makana Municipality's Acting Manager of Environmental Health and Cleansing, Phumzile Smile: "We collaborate, we've got relations, we're talking, we redirect one another, we ask for help when we are in need of that."⁹⁵ The Makana Local Municipality issued a press release announcing its collaboration with NAF's SEF programme on road repairs in Makhanda, emphasising the importance of collaboration to achieve success (Matshuisa, 2023). Executive Mayor Councillor Yandiswa Vara stated, "Collaboration will be the main theme in addressing future road infrastructure challenges" (Matshuisa, 2023). Both parties in the partnership expressed the value of having good relations with each other and identified the importance of collaborative help.

A partnership is necessary in some cases, but it is not without challenges. Despite the existing partnership between NAF and the Makana Municipality, challenges, as well as risks, were identified through an analysis of the interviews. Some risks arise for employment programmes such as SEF, especially when in partnership with a dysfunctional or defunct municipality. The

⁹² Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁹³ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁹⁴ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁹⁵ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

risk that arises, and one that was noted earlier in this chapter by Kate Philip, Programme Lead for the Presidential Stimulus, is that the SEF may undertake responsibilities that the municipality is expected to do but fails to do, which leads to a duplication of funding by the national government.⁹⁶ In addition to the risk of duplication of funding is the risk of the municipality not taking up responsibility and doing the work, as it is already being done through a public employment programme or taking credit for work they did not do. The SEF programme is being funded by the national government to do “work for the common good” and the municipality is being funded by the national government to provide services to its constituents. There is a distinctiveness of this model in that the South African National Government is not outsourcing the work done through the SEF programme to a private contractor through a tender. Through the SEF, the national government is employing people but paying an NGO 20% of the allocated funds to run the programme in which state employees are working. The SEF programme in Makhanda, managed by NAF, is engaged in cleaning up the streets, refuse collection and pothole repair, activities which are typically the responsibility of the municipality.⁹⁷ This is potentially a great risk, but both the Makana local municipality and NAF do not interpret the work the SEF programme is doing as a duplication but rather as supporting and supplementing the work of the municipality.⁹⁸ Municipal Official Phumzile Smile indicated several times during his interview how the municipality has a relationship with NAF, one that assists and supports the work the municipality does.⁹⁹ Both the Project Manager, Hilton Haakonsen and the CEO of NAF, Monica Newton spoke on how they never intend to work over and above the municipality or in opposition to the municipality, but are focused on supplementing and supporting the work done by the municipality where it is needed.¹⁰⁰

Sustaining this partnership is essential for the SEF programme to run well, for service delivery to be maintained and for unemployment to be reduced. Clear and open communication between partners is fundamental for a successful partnership and the running of the SEF programme. Monica Newton, CEO of NAF revealed in an interview that NAF is fortunate to have a direct

⁹⁶ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁹⁷ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

⁹⁸ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview; Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview; Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

⁹⁹ Phumzile Smile, Makana Local Municipality, 12 November 2024, Interview

¹⁰⁰ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview; Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

line to the municipality.¹⁰¹ She explained this in relation to community members who reach out to Hilton Haakonsen or the various project leaders on the ground regarding issues in and around the city of Makhanda. Where the NAF is unable to assist, the municipality will address the service delivery issues. Monica Newton stated, “When Hilton makes the call [to the municipality], the service delivery happens.”¹⁰² Open communication and responsibility by both partners to address problems to the best of their ability and help where possible suggests a good partnership. In an article published by *Grocott’s Mail*, The Technical Director of NAF, Nicci Spalding explained during an engagement meeting at City Hall in Makhanda that the NAF-managed SEF programme is not trying to take over anyone’s work (Amner, 2022). Nicci Spalding, as quoted in the *Grocott’s Mail* article said,

We have tried as much as possible to work with the Municipality. We don’t want it to be seen as confrontational. At the moment, we can see tasks we can fix, and we have an MOU [Memorandum of Understanding] with the municipality to outline the scope of work and what we’re capable of doing. We have very competent people working with us, but we know the scale of the budget and what it can tackle.

A Memorandum of Understanding is a type of agreement between two or more parties to outline the purpose of the partnership, the goals and duties of each party and the overall common intention and structure for collaboration. The MOU is not legally binding, but the establishment of this agreement shows good understanding and grounds for a good partnership between NAF and the municipality. Nicci Spalding reiterated in the *Grocott’s Mail* article that the municipality is informed and participates in every step taken in the NAF-managed SEF programme (Amner, 2022).

The findings in this research highlight the significance of the partnership between the National Arts Festival’s SEF programme and the Makana Local Municipality in addressing service delivery challenges in Makhanda. Makhanda has faced service delivery challenges for many years. In 2021, one year before the introduction of the SEF programme in Makhanda, the city was facing terrible service delivery problems and several service delivery protests (Kota, 2021). The decline of public services and infrastructure is a city-wide problem with unreliable access to dependable refuse collection, water supply and other essential services (Kota, 2021). These service delivery issues constantly affect the lives of the residents of Makhanda. The

¹⁰¹ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

¹⁰² Monica Newton, 1820 Settler’s National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

introduction of the NAF-managed SEF programme in Makhanda and NAF's partnership with the local municipality brought about some hope for the residents of Makhanda. In a *Grocott's Mail* article titled "Makhana's New Deal", Amner (2022) explained how this programme is helping to rejuvenate the city of Makhanda through the work of the SEF programme. As quoted in a *Grocott's Mail* report, Monica Newton claimed, "We have made great strides since the project launched initially, working at scale across the City to resolve some of the most pressing issues in partnerships with communities, local businesses and Makana Municipality" (Tshuma, 2024).

The MOU between NAF and the Makana Municipality is not perfect nor legally binding, although some MOUs can contain legally binding elements. Both parties have tried to consistently maintain a good understanding of each other and keep one another informed at every step of the process. NAF and the Makana Local Municipalities' relations extended beyond the Social Employment Fund programme. The economic impact of the National Arts Festival on Makhanda is estimated to be 4.5 million US dollars each year, over and above the artistic and social impact the festival has on the town (Snowball, 2024). It is in the municipality's best interest to maintain and uphold relations with the arts festival as the economic impact and tourism that is brought to Makhanda each year are fundamental in bringing about economic development to the city.

As discussed in Chapter Two, scholars such as Batley (2010) and McLoughlin (2010; 2011:241) argue that a state's legitimacy could be severely damaged if the state does not engage in partnership with non-state actors who are already providing services, as it may lead to fragmented and inefficient service delivery. The literature brings out the importance of collaboration in service delivery. Although Makhanda has experienced poor service delivery for several years and is still attempting to improve service provision, the NAF-managed SEF supplementation in service provision would not be able to succeed without the municipality's collaboration. It was further asserted by Bano (2019) that partnership is crucial in assuring the provision of basic services and achieving development objectives. Non-state and state actors should engage in collaborative efforts of service provision (Bano, 2019). Non-state actors may work in collaboration with governments to provide services or may take over the role of service provision where governments have failed to do so (Kroukamp, 2005). In the case of Makhanda, NAF has utilised the SEF programme to step in and support the provision of services, as the Makana local municipality has been unreliable in the scope and consistency of service provision.

The duplication of funding and efforts can cause significant risks for service provision and partnerships. This may lead to issues of accountability and the duplication of responsibilities that may result in ineffective resource consumption. This also poses a risk related to who citizens perceive to be providing services and a possible lack of respect towards and undermining of the local municipality (Sacks, 2012). This is why both parties must have a common understanding and interpretation of how the partnership plays out and the roles each partner plays in the collaboration (Hodge and Greve, 2017). In addition to this, both partners should have access to risk-mitigating tools and be aware of all risks (Lia, 2018; Hodge and Greve, 2017).

4.7 Conclusion

Chapter 4 presents the research findings generated from a diverse range of data. This data includes 17 semi-structured interviews with various interns, stakeholders, community members, and municipal officials. It also encompasses news articles related to the NAF-managed SEF programme and a sample set of weekly and monthly progress reports provided by NAF management. This chapter outlines the insights gained from the interviews and reports and briefly touches upon the literature related to the findings. It examines the perceptions of the SEF programme and the role it has played in addressing service delivery based on the interview responses. Furthermore, it describes the impact of the SEF programme in Makhanda, focusing on the lives of the interns and service delivery in the area, as narrated in the interviews and reports. Additionally, the chapter details how interviewees portray the sustainability of the programme and discusses the challenges that have arisen. Lastly, it describes and illustrates the findings on the nature of the partnership arrangement between the Makana Municipality and the NAF-managed SEF programme. The following chapter will further discuss the data and delve deeper by using the findings presented in this chapter and the relevant literature to address the research questions and objectives of this thesis.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Drawing from both the literature review chapter and the research findings chapters, this chapter will answer the main and sub-research questions set out in Chapter One. The preceding chapter presented and discussed the collected data obtained through semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the analysis presented thus far provides a foundation for discussing and addressing the primary research question. This chapter will initially address the sub-questions pertinent to this research paper and provide answers that will facilitate the discussion and response to the primary research question:

What does the partnership arrangement between the National Arts Festivals' SEF programme and the Makana Municipality suggest about new ways for private and public actors to work together to provide public services?

In addition, this chapter will also discuss what occurs when an NGO takes on the responsibility of providing services where governments cannot and how the SEF programme has worked in Makhanda to address service delivery deficits. This will be achieved through an interpretation of the results found and the implications of these results. This chapter will also discuss the limitations of this study and recommendations for further research. This chapter will not only discuss the research questions but will also serve as the concluding chapter of this thesis.

The National Arts Festival is one of many Strategic Implementing Partners (SIPs) within the Presidential Employment Stimulus's SEF programme, which was presented in previous chapters. The SEF programme aims to provide part-time employment and do work for "the common good" through the SIPs, which are required to be non-state actors. As indicated in previous chapters, the work being done for "the common good" through NAF's SEF programme partly focuses on service delivery-related work, such as refuse removal and pothole repair. As this study is focused on the supplementary service delivery aspect of the SEF, it is important to understand what occurs when NGOs take on the responsibility of providing services where governments cannot. In addition to this, it is also important to understand in what ways, if any, the SEF programme in Makhanda effectively addressed service delivery deficits. These two questions form part of the sub-research questions for this study.

To answer the respective research questions and discuss how the findings may or may not relate to the literature, this chapter will begin by briefly discussing some of the benefits and challenges related to NGO involvement in PPPs. The next section of the chapter will be organised into themes that were identified through an analysis of the research findings and literature. These themes will directly address and answer the research questions that were set out for this study. The first theme that will be discussed is how the NAF-SEF programme has bridged gaps in service delivery in Makhanda. The second theme will discuss how the NAF-SEF programme has facilitated an environment for skills development, community empowerment and job creation through supplementary service delivery. The third theme will discuss how the NAF managed SEF programme has provided an alternative way of thinking about how private and public actors may work together to provide services traditionally provided by the government.

5.2 The Benefits and Challenges of NGO Involvement in PPPs

This section will briefly discuss the various benefits and challenges of NGO involvement in PPPs and how this relates to the case study on the National Arts Festivals' SEF programme. The SEF programme of the National Arts Festival and its collaboration with the Makana Municipality are focused on a shared objective: enhancing the city of Makhanda through service provision. Hodge and Greve (2017) bring out a key aspect in their paper that aligns with the findings: the importance of working together to achieve a common purpose. Hodge and Greve (2016) identified this as one of the various key aspects that are found in a range of definitions on public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are one of the ways in which the state may collaborate with non-state actors to provide services. A collaboration between state and non-state actors can also take place via a memorandum of understanding (MOU). This type of agreement is less formal than a PPP, as MOUs are often not legally enforceable. Yet, an MOU facilitates sharing risks and responsibilities among the parties involved.

5.2.1 Benefits of NGO Participation in PPPs

Several benefits arise out of collaboration between state and non-state actors. The benefits discussed in Chapter Two encompass the distribution and alleviation of risks and expenses through the sharing of resources and responsibilities, hence enhancing effectiveness (Rybnicek et al., 2020). Most of the definitions included in Chapter Two on PPPs emphasise that achieving a substantial output with an evenly distributed workload, collective responsibility, and the equitable distribution of resources are necessary when participating in PPPs (Besley and

Ghatak, 2017: 357; Van Ham and Koppenjan, 2001). Risk sharing was identified through a review of the literature in Chapter Two on PPPs as an important aspect in understanding PPPs. The sharing of risks, resources and responsibilities can help maintain and strengthen the partnership between the parties and contribute to a more equitable distribution of services (Lia, 2018; Hodge and Greve, 2017).

While the partnership between the NAF-managed SEF programme and the Makana Local Municipality is not a typical PPP, the literature on PPPs is relevant and applicable. The SEF programme in Makanda has sought to keep the municipality informed in every process that unfolds. As indicated in Chapter Four, NAF's technical director, Nicci Spalding explained that the municipality is informed of and participates in every step taken by NAF, indicating a good understanding between the parties and a sharing of responsibility (Amner, 2022). The Makana Local Municipality assisting and being present in each step taken by NAF has helped to reduce some risks. Mcloughlin (2011) and Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) state that reducing risks associated with non-governmental service provision requires state actors, in this case the Makana Local Municipality, to assist, regulate and coordinate with NGOs, such as the NAF-managed SEF programme, in service provision. For example, the Makana Local Municipality reduced the risk of poor road maintenance by collaborating with the NAF SEF project in their attempts to repair roads. During the first phase of the NAF SEF project, only cold tar was utilised. In Phase 2, the municipality helped provide hot tar for the project. Hot tar is significantly more durable, water-resistant, and can withstand extreme weather conditions, allowing for the potholes that are fixed with it to be a long-term solution rather than a temporary fix¹⁰³. Another risk that has been mitigated is the NAF SEF project's opposition from the municipality. This opposition would create challenges related to the municipality, making the NAF SEF's work more difficult, such as restricting access to certain areas. Additionally, the risk of lacking local credibility was reduced. Without collaboration on this project and a strong partnership, the NAF SEF project could face poor community engagement and support.

When NGOs engage in PPPs, they may also contribute to local economic development, improve public participation, and empower communities while effectively providing services (Van Niekerk et al., 2001:256–257; Kroukamp, 2005:78). Including NGOs in PPPs can be beneficial as NGOs tend to prioritise public well-being over profit and are more willing to take risks than private actors. Their participation in service delivery frequently results in a recipient-

¹⁰³ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

focused, cost-effective approach (Solana, 2014:262; Besley and Ghatak, 2017:358). Besley and Ghatak (2017) also argue that NGOs are seen to be more efficient in targeting recipients and providing services, particularly within local government, where decentralisation initiatives have led to an increased involvement of NGOs (Besley and Ghatak, 2017). Due to NGOs' recipient-focused approach, they may better mobilise public participation.

The National Arts Festival (NAF) managed Social Employment Fund (SEF) programme has contributed to both public participation and empowering the community in Makhanda by employing interns to work on the project and help contribute to improving service delivery. Interns are provided with a basic income during the contract period and can develop skills during the contract that may lead to more permanent employment post-internship, while improving the city of Makhanda for the benefit of all community members. The team leader for the brick factory team stated, "It's not about one person, it's about the community."¹⁰⁴ Empowering unemployed individuals in the community by providing part-time employment while doing "work for the common good" empowers the broader community. The SEF programme in Makhanda has enhanced service provision, allowing the municipality to target a much broader range of residents. As a result, the services reach more community members and are centred around the community, with the work being carried out by the interns who are residents.

5.2.2 Challenges of NGO Participation in PPPs

The above section discussed the various benefits of NGOs participating in PPPs, such as the importance of sharing risks, resources and responsibilities as well as how these partnerships can contribute to community empowerment, improved public participation while ensuring recipient-focused service delivery. There are several benefits of NGOs participating in PPPs but there are also a range of challenges that may arise in these types of partnerships. NGOs' participation in PPPs may be hindered by weak commitment from local government. Engaging in PPPs may also lead a lack of autonomy for the NGO and may also lead to community conflict. This section will discuss these challenges in more depth by addressing the literature on PPPs and how the NAF-SEF experienced these challenges.

Challenges related to engaging in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) with local governments often stem from weak government commitment, financial and administrative limitations, and difficulties in implementation, planning, and monitoring (Kroukamp, 2005; Cranko and Khan,

¹⁰⁴ Intern C, Victoria street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

1999). Referring to the PPP literature, PPPs are widely contested, particularly within the non-profit sector. Scholars argue that although PPPs can help address service delivery shortages, they may also diminish NGO's autonomy and local control (Bovaird, 2004:200; Salamon, 1995:103).

Some of these challenges were present in the partnership between the Makana Local Municipality and NAF. The SEF programme receives its funding from the national government. This funding, as indicated in Chapters Three and Four, is not included in the government's baseline budget, and the programme is renewed after each phase, therefore providing financial constraints on the amount and continuation of funding for this programme (IDC,2022).¹⁰⁵

Cranko and Khan (1999) and Kroukamp (2005) identify community conflict as a challenge of PPPs, which was also noted by a range of interviewed participants regarding the National Arts Festival's SEF programme. As mentioned in Chapter Four, NAF received some criticism and lack of support from the community during the initial stages of the project, which was challenging as the community of Makhanda did not initially support the programme .¹⁰⁶ These conflicts were present due to previously failed projects in an attempt to address service delivery related issues within Makhanda leading some community members to believe the SEF project would not be successful.¹⁰⁷ Many residents had mistaken the SEF interns for municipal workers and had a general disinterest in the project initially.¹⁰⁸ The community became much more forthcoming and provided assistance to NAF in their SEF programme once they saw the work that was being done and how it would benefit the community. According to Hodge and Greve (2017), PPPs are considered successful when there is support from the community and the project is seen by the community as being well delivered. Conversely, PPPs that lack community support and are criticised for their delivery methods or policies are regarded as ineffective and less successful.

5.2.3 Summary

The purpose of this section is to summarise the benefits and challenges of NGO participation in PPPs and provide an overall perspective on NGOs' participation in PPPs. When NGOs take on the responsibility of providing services where governments cannot, there are both benefits

¹⁰⁵ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

¹⁰⁶ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

¹⁰⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

¹⁰⁸ Geoffrey Embling, Recreation Hall, 11 November 2024, Interview

and challenges to this type of collaborative service provision. This has been identified above in both the research findings and in a review of the literature. It is essential to understand the benefits and challenges of such a collaboration, but it is also crucial to understand what occurs in this specific case study when NGOs take on the responsibility of providing services where governments lack the capacity to do so. The National Arts Festival's involvement in the SEF programme is not a typical collaboration as by nature NAF is not a typical NGO but rather an organisation that hosts an arts festival every year, showcasing creativity, performances and art in Makhanda. The National Arts Festival has been embedded in Makhanda for the past 50 years and has a good understanding of the city, making the organisation a good fit to engage and partner with the Social Employment Fund to address social challenges and provide work for the common good (IDC, 2022). The National Arts Festival has provided part-time employment to many unemployed individuals in Makhanda and allowed them to acquire knowledge and skills through the SEF programme and empowered the citizens of Makhanda. NAF has also assisted in the provision of services in Makhanda in areas of refuse removal, road repairs and the beautification of the city to name a few. However, the next section will explain why these organisations may not be best suited to address infrastructure-related service provision.

5.3 NAF-SEF intervention in service-delivery: key lessons learnt

This section analyses and explores the various roles that the NAF-managed SEF programme has played and the key lessons that have been learnt so far in addressing service delivery issues. It examines how the NAF-SEF programme has filled gaps in service delivery in Makhanda, particularly in areas where the Makana Municipality has fallen short, such as waste removal and road repairs. The section also considers how NAF, through the SEF programme, has empowered individuals in Makhanda through part-time employment and skills development. Additionally, it looks at how this programme has contributed to community upliftment. Finally, the section reflects on how the SEF programme run by NAF in Makhanda exemplifies a community-focused response to service delivery challenges.

5.3.1 Bridging the Gap in Service Delivery: Possibilities and Limitations

The first theme that I have looked at to understand what occurs when NGOs assist in providing services where governments are unable, is how has this collaboration affected the access to service delivery in Makhanda. This section will also discuss the various service delivery-related work done through the NAF-SEF programme and discuss how some areas of service delivery provision are more attainable than others for the NAF-managed SEF programme. A large portion of the work being done through the NAF-managed SEF programme involves refuse

collection, waste removal and pothole repair in Makhanda. It was reported in a *Grocott's Mail* article in 2024, that on average 250 tons of waste is being removed each month by the SEF project (Tshuma, 2024). This is a significant amount of waste that is being removed, over and above what the Makana Local Municipality is removing each month. The roads in Makhanda are full of potholes which affect not only vehicle owners in Makhanda but also public transport providers that transport individuals to and from work as the potholes make it more challenging for individuals to commute to work each day.¹⁰⁹ This also poses a threat to businesses in the city, if individuals are not able to commute to work due to the poor road infrastructure, businesses cannot operate at full capacity. The NAF-managed SEF programme has fixed potholes in over 50 roads across Makhanda by laying 350 tons of tar (Tshuma, 2024). The addition of the NAF-managed SEF programme in Makhanda has improved the ease of access, allowing for all populations of Makhanda including vulnerable populations to have improved access to dispose of their waste and travel on safe roads. According to Tshiyoyo (2019), the inclusion of NGOs and non-profit organisations (NPOs) in service delivery, specifically in failed, fragile or weak municipalities or states, significantly improves communities' access to service delivery. This is because the non-profit sector can raise additional funding and provide better support to citizens in a failed, fragile or weak state (Tshiyoyo, 2019). Tshiyoyo (2019) highlights the necessary role NGOs play in bridging the gap between citizens and governments in service provision.

As argued above, the NAF-managed SEF programme has improved service delivery in Makhanda. However, it is important to stress that NGOs may not always be best suited to engage in large infrastructural projects related to service delivery, such as filling potholes and road maintenance. The NAF-SEF project's process of fixing potholes is done by unskilled workers who are supervised by a more skilled worker or the team manager to repair the roads. Repairing potholes is a technical job that requires specialised knowledge of how to lay the tar, what tar is required, as well as structural understanding of the road (Lai, 2024). This is why residents in Makhanda would often see several interns working on one section of the road, as many of the unskilled workers are learning how to correctly fix potholes so that no further maintenance is required (Lai, 2024). In cases where there is extensive damage to large sections of road, this may be a very time-consuming and challenging process for smaller groups such as the NAF-SEF roads team. Hence, state actors or large private actors may best do this type of service provision regarding infrastructure. NAF's SEF programme has not been the only

¹⁰⁹ Rod Amner, Rhodes University Journalism Department, 22 July 2024, Interview

project that has been contributing to road maintenance; the Makana Local Municipality has made provisions for and subcontracted private actors to engage in two road-repair projects in Makhanda (Mjekula, 2024). The one project has begun the processes for paving a 4.2 kilometre stretch of road in the township through a private contractor (Mjekula, 2024). The municipality had also approved thirty million rand of grant funding to repair roads severely damaged by the floods in 2023 and the upgrading of the municipality's internal roads (Mjekula, 2024). These projects will help repair many roads in Makhanda, specifically in the township and provide temporary employment for residents of Makhanda (Mjekula, 2024). The South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd (SANRAL) is an organ of state and receives its funding through the South African Government (Lai, 2024). Through the SANRAL social responsibilities programme, the company has committed to repairing around ten kilometres of road in the Makana Municipality and contracting small to medium-sized businesses to produce the materials used to do the repairs (Lai, 2024). As outlined in Chapter Four, NAF's SEF programme has also helped contribute to the repair of roads in Makanda. However, NAF receives limited funding from the state as a large allocation of the funding (80%) is to pay the interns employed through the SEF programme. NAF must rely on contributions from local businesses or other collaborators, which limits significant achievements in infrastructure-related service delivery projects, such as road repairs.

Referring to scholars such as Kroukamp (2005), Cranko and Khan (1999) and McDonald and Ruiters (2012) reviewed in Chapter Two, NGOs may not always be best suited to engage in service delivery that is infrastructure-based, such as road repairs and water provision. This can be due to several factors, namely, the lack of sustainability on the part of NGOs, as NGOs often rely on donors for funding, which can include state funding, international funding or local funding (McDonald and Ruiters, 2012). This funding is not always sustainable and often comes with stipulations, as in the case of SEF, where 80% of the funding is allocated to pay the interns and 20% of the funding is used for resources, materials, and to pay additional staff for the project (IDC, 2022). A significant amount of materials and equipment is required for infrastructure-related projects, such as filling potholes. NAF is an NGO that typically directs an arts festival, and it is now working with unskilled workers to fill potholes; this approach is neither ideal nor sustainable for conducting road repairs. NAF relies on the Makana Municipality and other actors for materials and equipment. In a progress report for SEF issued for the roads team, it was noted that there was a delay in repairing the roads because the NAF-managed SEF roads team was lacking sufficient materials from the Makana Municipality. The

team also depended on other donations, such as refuse bags, which were essential for clearing road debris, but they are no longer receiving these supplies. The same report highlighted further delays in their progress due to the lack of vehicles to transport their equipment from one site to another.¹¹⁰ The NAF-managed SEF programme relies on external actors, such as the Makana Municipality, to carry out infrastructure-related work, rendering this initiative for road repairs neither suitable nor sustainable for infrastructure-related service provision. Another issue that arises with the state funding the SEF programme receives, as stated in Chapter Three, is that the programme is renewed yearly, and funding for the SEF programme is not included in the South African government's baseline budget (IDC, 2022). These factors are all contributing factors to why state actors or those subcontracted by the state may be better suited to address infrastructure-related service provision.

NGOs may not be best suited to address infrastructurally reliant services, as their work is not sustainable in the long term. However, this does not mean that NGOs cannot assist in bridging the gap in other aspects of service delivery. There is evidence in both the literature and the interviews conducted for this study that the NAF-managed SEF programme has significantly contributed to bridging the gap in service delivery, particularly concerning refuse removal, clearing illegal dump sites, cleaning streets, and removing invasive plants that obstruct road drainage systems (Lai, 2024). These aspects of service provision, such as invasive plant removal, refuse collection, and street cleaning, are much more achievable since they require less time to acquire the necessary skills and yield results much quicker than road repairs. These types of tasks only require labour and minimal tools or vehicles, which is much more achievable for the NAF SEF programme due to time constraints on the duration of the SEF programme. These time constraints are a result of only employing interns for ten to twelve months at a time (IDC, 2022). This is not a significant time to learn more complex skills such as road repairs but is sufficient time to learn skills such as identifying invasive plants or learning how to recycle refuse that has been collected. The other issue regarding time constraints is that the SEF programme is only renewed after each phase due to national budget constraints, as discussed in Chapter Four.¹¹¹ Therefore, the NAF-managed SEF programme can only plan a year in advance of what and how they will tackle service delivery-related issues. This proves

¹¹⁰ Dagmar Kirk, Progress Report SEF Roads Team (1 March 2025 – 31 March 2025)

¹¹¹ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

challenging with regards to infrastructurally related services, like road repairs as they are much more intensive in nature and time consuming to complete successfully.

The NAF-SEF programme in Makhanda reflects a unique way of addressing service delivery deficits in a city where the local government has failed to meet basic needs due to mismanagement and resource constraints. The desire to address service delivery deficits and improve the city of Makhanda was an important motivation for NAF in applying for the SEF programme. Monica Newton, CEO of NAF, explained in an interview that, “as the city's complexities and difficulties started to become the master narrative, so it impacted substantially on the festival”.¹¹² NAF saw a great need to improve the city and create more employment opportunities in a city riddled with unemployment and service delivery deficits, so when the opportunity presented itself to apply for the SEF programme and use it as a tool to address these issues, the organisation did not hesitate.¹¹³

The NAF-SEF programme was able to supplement the Makana Local Municipality in service provision through employing unemployed youth and community members in Makhanda and mobilising the interns to assist in addressing service delivery deficits such as refuse removal, recycling and road repairs. The NAF-SEF programme's community-based emphasis and flexibility have allowed the programme to respond to the needs of the community at a grassroots level, providing an analysis of how a unique supplementary model of service provision may be useful in a context where local government is not able to achieve its service delivery responsibilities.

As indicated in Chapter Three, while the Industrial Development Committee (IDC) are the paymaster, the Strategic Implementing Partners (SIPs) have autonomy to choose the focus of the programme, ensuring that their programme is centred on a “whole of society” approach (IDC, 2022). The requirement by the IDC to employ local unemployed individuals to upskill these individuals is a great stipulation as not only are the SEF programmes providing short-term employment and upskilling individuals, but it is members of the community that are doing work that benefits “the whole of society” (IDC, 2022). This community-driven focus has been beneficial in the case of NAF's SEF programme, which operates in a city faced with high unemployment rates and failing service delivery, as the interns are not only able to receive employment but also to identify areas within their community that require assistance regarding

¹¹² Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

¹¹³ Monica Newton, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 2 August 2024, Interview

services. This fosters a bottom-up approach to service delivery, which is consistent with the work of Tadesse (2017). They argue that non-state actors are more aware of the livelihoods of the community and can better address issues at a local level as opposed to the state (Tadesse, 2017; Bratton, 1989). In this way, the local SEF programme has worked out in a way that aligns with Libala et al.'s (2023) expectation about the working of the SEF. Libala et al. (2023) explain that the way the SEF programme is structured is crucial as the SIPs can act as intermediaries between the state and grassroots initiatives, allowing for the state to fund such initiatives where the help is needed most. These are areas where the state faces challenges in providing support due to state regulations. The SEF programme in Makhanda has allowed for an alternative supportive role in service delivery.

The SEF programme can be seen as a distinctive service provision model. The model of the broader SEF programme is original because it does not fall under the conventional service provision frameworks which typically involve three possibilities: municipal service delivery, private actors contracted by the state, or NGOs that typically operate independently from the state (Wilkins, 2003). Instead, it represents the collaborative efforts between state and non-state actors. This unconventional approach has created an environment conducive to employment, knowledge development, community upliftment, and enhancement of certain aspects of service delivery.

Presented in Chapter Four, the findings indicated how the NAF-SEF programme has not sought to work against the municipality but rather to function in a supplementary role, supporting the Makana Local Municipality in service provision. Earlier on in this section, I discussed a *Grocott's Mail* article which highlights how the NAF-SEF programme has contributed to service provision in Makhanda (Tshuma, 2024). The programme has effectively supported the municipality in service provision by raising awareness of best practices within the communities and educating residents about the importance of recycling and maintaining a clean city. An example of this is reflected in an interview with team leader Michelle Lowry, who discussed how Makhanda residents have, over time, shifted their attitudes toward taking care of the city they reside in. The Team Leader for Refuse Collection and Recycling stated,

The more we clean, and we go back and we start talking to people, you can slowly see that dump sites that were really bad are improving. We've also planted gardens, which helps. Yeah. Because it's very hard to throw rubbish in a garden.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Michelle Lowry, Grahamstown Riding Club, 15 November 2024, Interview

The shift in mindset among not only the interns but also the community illustrates how the work being done through initiatives like SEF and other employment programs benefits the community as a whole, rather than just the interns (Philip and David, 2025). These programs enhance social inclusivity and equity while contributing to local sustainable development, along with social and economic enhancements (Philip and David, 2025). The NAF-SEF programme, highlighted throughout this study, has played a vital role in offering short-term jobs to unemployed residents in Makhanda while also enhancing their skills. The experience gained through the programme may better prepare the interns to seek permanent employment after their contracts end and enter the mainstream economy. Consequently, a city with a more active workforce can subsequently provide the municipality with greater financial resources to improve services and maintenance infrastructure. Poor service provision can indirectly contribute to unemployment, as the lack of infrastructural development and inadequate education systems can be a contributing factor to unemployment (Matyana and Thusi, 2023). Adequate infrastructure is an integral component of development, which is crucial for creating an optimal environment for investment and livelihoods, which will allow for the enhancement of services, the reduction of poverty and the promotion of economic growth (Matyana and Thusi, 2023:221).

5.3.2 Skills development, job creation and community empowerment

The second theme focuses on how through the SEF programme, NAF was able to foster and contribute towards individual capacity through job creation and skills development, while also contributing to community empowerment. The SEF programme, while focusing on work for the common good, is also a social employment programme to upskill unemployed individuals and provide part-time employment (IDC, 2022). The SEF programme has given contracts and employed around one hundred and seventeen thousand unemployed individuals throughout South Africa which has significantly contributed to job creation in the country (Botha, 2024). As reported in a wage report provided by NAF for March-April 2024, it was recorded that 3.6 million rand was paid in wages to individuals who were part of the NAF's SEF project.¹¹⁵ As discussed in the previous chapter, the interns who were interviewed for this study indicated the various skills developed and knowledge they have gained during the duration of their fixed contract as an SEF intern. The skills identified from the interviews include teamwork, punctuality, identifying invasive species, mixing tar to fill potholes, recycling, and public

¹¹⁵ NAF 2024, SEF Wage Cycle 21 March – 20 April 2024.

speaking.¹¹⁶ These are all valuable skills and knowledge that can be carried forward to seek permanent employment after the intern's fixed contract with the NAF-managed SEF contract ends. According to Kobedi et al. (2022:3), the objective of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) was to provide short-term employment to unskilled individuals, thereby enhancing skills development (Department of Corporate Governance and Traditional Affairs [CoGTA] 2019c). The SEF programme is not part of the EPWP; however, it is a similar programme whose objectives align with the literature on EPWPs. According to the literature on EPWPs and Community Works Programmes (CWP), participants were found to be better off after their involvement in the programme, having gained valuable skills (Kobedi et al., 2022; Mogagabe, 2016:90). The programmes were also found to enhance the lives of those individuals involved while benefiting the community as well (Kobedi et al., 2022). This study supports the research conducted by Mogagabe (2016) and Kobedi et al. (2022) in showing that the interviewees spoke about how the programme has made a positive difference in their lives through the development of new skills. The SEF programme also provided them with a basic income and part-time employment, which they noted helped improve their lives and enabled them to provide for their families. Similar to the observations made by Kobedi et al. (2022) regarding the positive impact of programmes such as the EPWP and CWP on individuals, the SEF interns interviewed reported improvements in their lives that resulted from the NAF-managed SEF programme.

5.4 Rethinking Service Delivery: Insights From NAF-SEF Programme

This section discusses how we can rethink PPPs and service delivery by learning from the NAF-SEF programme and how NAF collaborated with the Makana Municipality to supplement the service provision in Makhanda. This section discusses how the NAF-SEF programme differs from traditional PPPs in structure, financing and management. Lastly, this section discusses how NAF has positioned itself as an NGO.

As discussed earlier in Chapter Two, PPPs are defined as cooperation between the state and non-state actors through the sharing of resources, risks and costs for the provision of services which are typically provided by the public sector (Besley and Ghatak, 2017: 357; Van Ham and

¹¹⁶ Intern A, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern B, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern C, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern D, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern E, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern F, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview; Intern G, Victoria Street, Makhanda, 29 August 2024, Interview

Koppenjan, 2001). In the case of the NAF-SEF programme and its collaboration with the Makana Local Municipality, this partnership is not a typical PPP, as the National Arts Festival has collaborated with the Makana Local Municipality to supplement the provision of services through a state-funded employment initiative, the Social Employment Fund programme. This collaboration includes two different sectors of the government, namely the national government and the local government, wherein the non-state actor, which is the National Arts Festival, receives its funding through the national government. This partnership challenges the traditional model of PPPs in several ways.

The NAF-SEF programme has provided alternative perspectives on collaboration in service provision. PPPs have varied financial structures; an example of one of these structures is through PPPs the government is sometimes able to avoid some of the initial costs associated with the project concerned as the private actor may cover costs in the investment stage (Sarmiento and Renneboog, 2016). This allows the government time to address these costs during the service stage of the PPP (Sarmiento and Renneboog, 2016). The SEF programme is structured in a way that all financing comes from the state; non-state actors, such as NAF, do not fund the programme. Instead, the SIPs merely act as implementers (Libala et al., 2023). This implementation requires the SIPs to recruit, train, and manage interns to contribute to social development (Libala et al., 2023). Although the SIPs do not fund the programme, the state relies on the SIPs greatly in the SEF programme as they have existing networks, skills and connections to the local community. If the state were to implement the SEF programme without using SIPs, it would be much more costly as the state would have to recruit and train individuals to run the various SEF programmes. The costs usually associated with PPPs are costs that are utilised to finance the resources needed for services regarding roads, water infrastructure or electricity. The NAF-SEF partnership with the local municipality is unconventional as most of the funds supplied by the state are used to pay the interns for their services. In the case of Makhanda, the work being done by interns is mostly labour-intensive and related to service delivery

When engaging in PPPs, the contracts may be rigid and require a significant number of third-party contracts for operations and management, insurance contracts and financial contracts (Sarmiento and Renneboog, 2016). These contracts usually have strict rules and regulations attached to them, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each actor. In the case of the NAF-SEF partnership with the Makana Local Municipality, a contract is not in place, but rather a memorandum of understanding (MOU), as indicated earlier in Chapter Four (Amner, 2022).

The absence of a formal contract can introduce significant risks and challenges in the partnership, some of which NAF encountered during the programme's three phases. The longstanding relationship between the Makana municipality and NAF before the SEF programme, has facilitated the resolution of various challenges faced by NAF. This partnership is founded on values like trust, transparency, and respect, which Schaaf (2015) identifies as vital for fostering a cooperative relationship grounded in mutual learning and commitment, as reviewed in the literature in Chapter Two. The NAF-SEF programme is also in the municipality's best interest, as it contributes to improving services, beautifying Makhanda, and reducing the unemployment rate by upskilling residents and providing them with part-time employment opportunities. In some ways, as indicated above, there are aspects of the NAF-SEF programme that do not fit the traditional role of a PPP. However, it can provide us with an alternative perspective on how PPPs can function in certain contexts.

The National Arts Festival, in its capacity as an NPC and through the SEF programme, has taken on the role of an NGO in several ways. NGOs specifically in the Global South often assume the role of filling gaps, whether that be in service delivery, education, or medical care (Batley and McLoughlin, 2010). The NAF-managed SEF programme has assisted in filling gaps within service delivery and employment in Makanda by assisting with refuse removal, fixing potholes and providing part-time employment.¹¹⁷ Referring back to the review of literature, Balanyá et al. (2005) argued the importance of funding that is focused advancement of societal objectives. With the SEF being a state-funded initiative, it comes with stipulations from the donor, which is not uncommon within the NGO sphere. The SEF programme is founded on “work for the common good” and social development, which aligns with the work of Balanyá et al. (2005). Although there may be stipulations to the funding from the state, they are centred around development and employment creation (IDC, 2022). The SEF initiative also remains flexible enough that SIPs have the autonomy based on their local knowledge and commitment to “work for the common good” to decide what their programme will focus on and how to manage their programme, so that it may be most effective for the community in which they are working (IDC, 2022).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Hilton Haakonsen, 1820 Settler's National Monument, 26 August 2024, Interview

¹¹⁸ Kate Philip, Microsoft teams, 2 August 2024, Interview

5.5 Limitations and Recommendations

5.5.1 Limitations

This study was presented with several factors that impacted the findings and execution of this research. One of the limitations of this study is that it is one case study amongst a number of examples of the implementation of SEF programmes, which limits the generalisation of the findings. Another limitation relates to the difficulty in including the views of municipal officials who were unavailable for interviews due to administrative issues, time constraints and lack of communication from the municipality. Despite multiple attempts to contact the municipality and secure interviews with relevant officials, only one employee from the Makana Local Municipality ultimately made himself available to be interviewed. Thus, the views of only one municipal official were presented, and this cannot represent the broader views of the municipality on the NAF-SEF programme or non-governmental service provision. To mitigate these limitations, which arose due to the poor communication and coordination of the Makana Local Municipality, municipal councillors were also interviewed to get the perspective of other actors associated with the municipality. Furthermore, some communications issued by the Makana Local Municipality were also used to better understand their perspectives and provide a necessary amount of information, considering the challenges that were presented when persisting to contact the municipality for interviews. Interviewing more municipal officials would better represent their views on non-governmental service provision and the NAF-SEF programme. Interviewing more municipal officials would provide a better perspective of the municipality's involvement in the NAF-managed SEF programme.

This study solely focused on views, perspectives and execution of the NAF-managed SEF programme. This research study's findings do not represent all the Social Employment Fund programmes. This research is also not representative of all the strategic implementing partners and how they conduct their various projects, but rather only focuses on how the National Arts Festival conducted and managed its project. This study was also limited to a single municipality, the Makana Local Municipality and does not represent how partnerships would work in any other municipality

5.5.2 Recommendations for the SEF

The following recommendations are made concerning the SEF programme and its potential improvements. The SEF programme offers short-term contracts to previously unemployed individuals, enabling them to enhance their skills in specific areas and gain experience to facilitate a smoother transition into the job market. However, due to the programme's limited duration, interns can only acquire a certain number of skills, which is compounded by the unemployment crisis in South Africa. The current short-term contracts are illogical as the economy cannot absorb former interns.

It is recommended that the state should prioritise the creation of employment programmes that provide pathways to longer-term sustainable employment. Therefore, interns can be employed for a longer period to ensure a broader range of skills are learnt and can be applied to future job opportunities. This extension will also enhance the sustainability and impact of the work accomplished through the SEF, as the interns' efficiency will increase with longer employment, and retaining the same interns will provide greater stability to the project, making it more sustainable in the long run. Additionally, it is advised that the Strategic Implementing Partners (SIPs) connect SEF interns with future employment opportunities, either by employing them full-time or collaborating with the municipality and other institutions to establish an exit strategy and full-time job prospects once their contract in the SEF project concludes.

The interns employed for 10 months during the SEF programme gain skills in public service delivery but often face unemployment after their contract term is up. This was presented earlier in the study, where interns were disgruntled after being dismissed from the NAF-managed SEF programme. It is recommended that the Makana Local Municipality should attempt to find ways to absorb former interns who have been trained in public service delivery programmes into municipal structures. Lastly, due to the short-term nature of the SEF programme, it is recommended that funds be allocated to longer-term initiatives with higher prospects of employment beyond the 10 months. The government should perform a cost-benefit analysis of short-term employment programmes such as the SEF to assess if these costs would be better directed at longer-term initiatives which could guarantee more permanent employment.

5.5.3 Recommendations for further research

The following recommendations are made considering future research on non-governmental service provision. To build on this research, it is suggested that additional research be conducted to examine other NGOs and their roles in service provision. Further research could

provide a more in-depth understanding of non-governmental service provision and how employment programmes could provide supplementary service provision.

It is also recommended that additional participants involved in SEF programmes be interviewed for a larger sample of data. Increasing the number of interviewees would allow for a more diverse understanding of how community members, knowledgeable individuals and interns employed through the social employment fund view non-governmental service provision.

This study was limited to one case study of the SEF programme; further research could explore multiple case studies of where the SEF programme has been implemented to provide “work for the common good”. This would expand on the limited research done on SEF projects as mechanisms for supplementary service delivery.

This study only explores the South African perspective on supplementary non-governmental service provision. It is recommended that, for further research, additional developing countries should be explored to allow for a comparative analysis of non-governmental service provision.

5.6 Concluding Summary

South Africa identifies itself as a developmental state, where growth, sustainability, and economic development are crucial. Post-apartheid South Africa, through the ANC, focused largely on service delivery and the restructuring of resources for the benefit of the previously disadvantaged black South Africans as one of the main steps towards the realisation of a developmental state. Yet, 31 years later, South Africa still suffers from persistent service delivery failures and is unable to adequately provide services to all citizens.

This study sought out to assess what the partnership arrangement between the National Arts Festivals’ SEF programme and the Makana Municipality suggests about new ways for private and public actors to work together to provide public services. This study also focused on understanding what occurs when NGOs take on the responsibility of providing services where governments cannot, and in what ways the SEF programme has worked in Makana to address service delivery deficits.

The main findings of this study indicate that the NAF-managed SEF programme successfully provided services in refuse removal, invasive species removal, and the beautification of the city of Makhanda. However, it was identified that larger organisations contracted by the state

or state entities would be better suited for infrastructure-based service provision, such as the repair and maintenance of public roads. The NAF-managed SEF programme has been effective in offering part-time employment in Makhanda and supplementing certain areas of service provision. However, this type of collaboration for service delivery is not sustainable for long-term needs. The NAF-SEF programme has faced challenges, including financial constraints and community conflict, which impact the programme's ability to consistently support the Makana Local Municipality in service delivery.

This study found that utilising a public employment programme to supplement municipal service provision can be a new way for public and private actors to work together to provide certain public services. This kind of collaboration does not fall under the traditional ways of service provision, such as through state provision or providing services through procurement, but rather through partnership by engaging with a non-state actor, more specifically an NGO, to provide service provision. This study also provides a greater understanding of the benefits and challenges that occur when an NGO takes on the responsibility of providing services where governments have failed. Lastly, this research has shown how the SEF programme has worked to address service delivery deficits, but it has also shown how the SEF programme has not been successful in some areas of service provision and suggested other avenues for better success in addressing service delivery deficits.

These findings enhance our understanding of non-governmental service provision and demonstrate how the Social Employment Fund programme could be utilised in specific scenarios to supplement service delivery. This study also expands the existing research on public-private partnerships, highlighting innovative ways for public and private actors to collaborate in delivering public services, particularly in under-resourced municipalities. It significantly enriches the knowledge surrounding the Social Employment Fund in South Africa, addressing the existing gap in scholarly work on the SEF. Moreover, this study underscores how a strategic implementing partner, such as the National Arts Festival, can identify community needs and leverage an employment programme to meet those needs, while simultaneously fostering employment and skills development among unemployed community members.

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List of Documentation

1. Sample of Close-out Report, SEF Phase 2, August 2023 – May 2024, completed by Monica Newton
2. Sample of NAF SEF Workplan Exercise, Consolidated Responses, January – May
3. Sample of SEF Wage Cycle, 21 March 2024 – 20 April 2024
4. Sample of Progress Report, SEF Roads, 1 September 2024 – 30 September 2024, compiled by Dagmar Kirk
5. Sample of Weekly Report, Makana Revive, NAF SEF, 15 January – 18 January
6. Sample of Progress Report, SEF Roads, 1 March 2025 – 31 March 2025, compiled by Dagmar Kirk