Towards Equality

- Oppressed Non-White Women in Cape Town, South Africa

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Nkosi sikeleli Afrika
Malup hakanyiswuphondolwayo
Yiswa imithanda zo yethu
Nkosi sikelela thina lusapolwayo

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso
O fedise dintwa le matshwe ne ho
O seboleke, O se boleke, Setjaba sa heso,
Se tjaba sa, South Afrika, South Afrika,

Uit die blou van onse hemel,
uit die diepte van ons see,
oor ons ewige gebergtes
waar die kranse antwoord gee,

Sounds the call to come together,
and united we shall stand,
let us live and strive for freedom
in South Africa our land!
ABSTRACT

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Prior to the first democratic election in 1994, South Africa experienced the racist and sexist legislation of apartheid. The democritisation was surrounded by violent struggles amongst the non-white population and the issue regarding gender had to step aside in favour of the struggle against racial discrimination.

This study focuses on how the lives of the underprivileged non-white women in Cape Town are affected by the post-apartheid changes. This area will be divided into four more specific topics: civil society, human rights, collaboration between civil society and the Government and power structures that affect the development and lives of the women.

Our methodology is based on interviews with women with insight in the problem area, participant observation, and secondary material constituted by legal sources, reports and statistics.

The main findings can be summarised with mentioning that the deprivation are based upon five different dimensions: poverty, isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability and powerlessness. They are all closely linked to violations of human rights, and in order to create a complete picture power is of great significance. There are three different views on power, all of which are surrounded by a complexity of problems. This can be wrapped up in the statement that the society as a whole is permeated by underlying power structures that makes the non-white women of South Africa doubly exposed.

Keywords: Development, South Africa, apartheid, women, race, human rights, deprivation, legislation, civil society, power
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*Sara Haugbøl & Jenny Thomsen

Växjö
ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALN - Adult Learning Network
ANC - African National Congress
ANCWL - ANC Women’s League
CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CBO - Community-based Organisation
CGE - Commission on Gender Equality
FSAW - Federation of South African Women
HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus
JMC - Joint Monitoring Committee
OSW - Office of the Status of Women
NGO – Non Governmental Organisation
SAHRC - South African Human Rights Commission
SALGA - South African Local Government Association
SANGOCO - South African NGO Coalition.
TRC - Truth and Reconciliation
WHEAT Trust - Women’s Hope Education and Training Trust
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1 INTRODUCTION

Having a historical view on any sociological research topic is of great value, this becomes especially evident when leaving one’s home country. In doing so, you are leaving a historical knowledge, which is more or less implied through everyday life, in favour of studying social institutions and social structures in a country where its backgrounds might not be implicit in the same way (Mills 1997:144). Hence, this understanding needs to be created in order to fully understand the social relations that permeate the structure of the society (Mills 1997:143).

Prior to the 10th of May 1994 when Nelson Mandela was sworn in as South Africa’s first democratically elected black president, the South African history has been characterised by 342 years of white domination – some under Dutch and British colonisation and some under the Afrikaner-led apartheid. The South African democracy was preceded by much bloodshed, violence, and social turmoil. The social and political violence facing the country during the change has its direct antecedents in the black armed struggle for liberation that began in the 1960s. Thousands of lives (predominately lives of black people) were lost during this struggle. Still today, South Africa is a deeply divided society, characterised by ethnic, class, social, race, linguistic and religious divisions, where the non-white society continues to struggle (Venter 1998:3), despite the fact that the population consists of a non-white majority.

1.1 The women’s liberation and struggle against oppression

The South African (black) women played a great part in the participation in the liberation struggle. As early as in 1913 the Bantu Women’s League was launched within the ANC, the African National Congress, and the women were challenging the order of gender relations and breaking into politics. It did not take long before the women’s protesting bore fruit; in the 1930s thoughts regarding that women should work side by side with men in the struggle against oppressive racial structures were developed (Nilsson 2004:41).

1. Apartheid meaning apartness or separateness in Afrikaans, authors’ comment.
2. See appendix II for details about the population.
In 1943 the ANCWL, the ANC-Women’s League, was launched, and at the same time women were granted full membership status within the organisation. It is, nevertheless, important to notice that the ANC-women since the 1950s defined separate goals and agendas (Nilsson 2004:41). In 1954, another important organisation was launched: FSAW, the Federation of South African Women. Its work focused on pursuing non-racial alliances amongst South African women of all colours opposed to the apartheid system (Lewis 2003). However, the female involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle was not exclusive for the non-white women. For example, in 1955, a white women’s resistance organisation was established in South Africa. This organisation, called the Black Sash, was a non-violent NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, focusing on human rights and women’s rights, and its main agenda was the empowerment of the non-white female population of South Africa. After the fall of apartheid, the organisation was reformed and it is still active as a non-racial women’s humanitarian organisation (Black Sash 2005).

Despite the organisations and alliances formed during the apartheid era, it was really during the 1980s that specific attention to gender oppression increased in importance. The activities in the late 1980s draw attention to women’s issues in national political agendas and laid the ground for what was to come in the 1990s, where gender as well as racial injustices started to be systematically confronted (Lewis 2003).

During the apartheid years, the non-white women were subjugated because of their race under the apartheid system, and concurrently they had to carry the burdens of patriarchy that existed within their own culture (Meer 1985). Still today South African women are disproportionately bearing the burden of poverty, unemployment, and disease (Butler 2004:68). They have poor access to health services and justice, they lack productive opportunities, and they are subject to violence and sexual harassment. At the same time, they have the primary responsibility for household and family. 71 percent of the black South African women live below the poverty line, while less than half of the total population falls below this line (Butler 2004:83). In the case of black women the gendered boundaries create a particular form of exclusion, which is reinforced by further exclusions on the basis of class and race (Binns 2000:6). This becomes evident when it comes to the situation of today’s South Africa.
1.2 Post-apartheid South Africa

When ANC took over the power after the fall of apartheid, a new structural adjustment program was imposed on South Africa. For example, taxes on the rich were cut and exchange controls dropped. Every year, after the establishment of the new democracy, hundreds of thousands of jobs were lost – in 2001 alone one million jobs. At the same time electricity, water, housing and healthcare facilities were taken away from those who could not pay. These changes resulted in mass unemployment and escalating poverty rates. At the same time a very small black elite of around 300 families became incredibly rich (Desai 2002:10). The poverty and inequality that exist in current South Africa, have presented enormous challenges. Poverty affects the masses, not merely the individual, and these masses are stuck in poverty, hence the greatest task of development work is to break the cycle of poverty. The people in this situation must be given the chance to look after their own wellbeing in a self-reliant way (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:9).

Statistics carried out for 2002 shows the miserable situation amongst a large group of people:

- 6 million South Africans HIV$^3$-positive and without access to necessary medicine.
- A majority of the population living on less than R140 (15 dollars) a month.
- One in four black children does not have enough food to eat on a daily basis.
- 40 000 children dying from diarrhoea.
- Over one million people disconnected from water supply because of poverty.
- People starving in rural areas causing street kids to beg and prostitute themselves, leading to jails reaching 170 percent capacity.

Desai 2002:11

Looking at these statistics and the current situation of the country, it becomes evident that despite a democratisation with a goal to create an equal country, this is not the reality of the population of today, important to notice is that these statistics are including the total population, whilst this study will focus on the women. As mentioned above, the situation amongst the women have, historically, been characterised of oppression and a complex situation. This leads us in to our research problem, which is to clarify how the

$^3$ HIV/AIDS may seem like a gender neutral disease, but the fact is that it particularly affects young women and children (The DAC Guidelines, Poverty Reduction:43).
democratisation process has affected the underprivileged non-white women, and why the changes in the legislation have not improved the situation of the oppressed women.

1.3 The aim of the study

While conducting this study, it is indeed important to bear in mind the basis of it all: human rights and how these are reflected in the poorer communities. In a country such as South Africa, with a history of a segregating and discriminating political system, it is interesting to look at the modern situation through human rights-glasses. In order to understand the underlying structures and the social systems that have led to the situation of modern life South Africa it is important to understand its history of oppression. In connection to this, we will ask ourselves; How does South Africa respond to the Human Rights Declaration?

Both internationally and nationally, the civil society takes a responsibility to supervise the state’s undertaking of the human rights and it has the potential to promote human rights within the society (Gunner 2005:32). Through organisations included in civil society, individuals can debate and try to influence decision makers. Civil society can be described as the very process through which individuals can make their voices heard (Kaldor 2003:79). It is included in one important aspect in the current changes in South Africa; development work, which is a sector with many role players. The most relevant stakeholders in this study, are the following: governmental organisations; this group refers to councils and their committees and these actors are of great importance, taking part in civil action. NGOs, Non-governmental organisations: organisations outside the sphere of the government, created to serve some civil duty (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:89). In contrast to governmental organisations, NGOs are voluntary organisations including associations, foundations or professional societies. The forms of organisations range from bureaucratic and formal to informal and small-scale. They are generally professional and usually registered with the role to influence the state and civil society (Kaldor 2003:86). However, it is important to remember that civil society is not equivalent to NGOs, they are merely a part of what constitutes civil society. In South Africa there are numerous non-profit organisations, which are a part of civil society, among which there are 50 000 led by women working at a community level, with little or no funding. The main emphasis of this study will be put on these organisations within civil society; hence,

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4 Information CD, Seedy Rom, WHEAT TRUST, Where dreams are grown
they serve as a foundation when researching *how the civil society contributes to a positive development.*

The nation’s legislation and the changes it has gone through during the last decade is the basis of how the development sector is working today. This does not necessarily mean that when the legislation changes, so will the whole society, its problems and attitudes. This is not to say that legislation is not of any use, but there are several more aspects that need to be taken into consideration in order to create a sustainable change in the lives of the oppressed non-white women. What is of interest in this study when it comes to state legislation and its efforts towards a more egalitarian society is *how its collaboration with the civil society is characterised.*

According to Birgitta Sevefjord and Berit Olsson (2001) there is a growing awareness regarding the importance of shifting focus in development practise; from the symptoms of inequality towards efforts to address the structural factors that cause inequality. Factors can be based upon different qualities such as gender, ethnicity, and class, and all of these aspects are relevant while analysing the current situation of the non-privileged women as well as the situation of the developing sphere in South Africa. In the work towards a more equal and developed country the relationship between gender equality and sound economic development becomes more visible (Sevefjord & Olsson 2001:10). These are the basis of power structures that might be of relevance when exploring different societies; hence our final area of interest will be regarding *how the underlying power structures affect the daily lives of South Africa’s non-white women.*

To conclude, the aim of this study is to clarify *how the democratisation process has affected the underprivileged non-white women, and why the changes in the legislation have not improved the situation of the oppressed women.* This overall research problem is divided into four more specific topics:

- How does South Africa respond to the Human Rights Declaration?
- How does the civil society contribute to a positive development?
- How can the collaboration between the Government and civil society be characterised?
• How do the underlying power structures affect the daily lives of South Africa’s non-white women?

2 A METHODOLOGICAL JOURNEY

The aim of this qualitative study is to clarify how the democratisation process has affected the underprivileged non-white women, and why the changes in the legislation have not improved the situation of the oppressed women. This will be analysed with the help of Chambers deprivation trap as well as with theories concerning power structures. In order to complement the secondary sources used, we will present the result of interviews we performed and outcomes of meetings we attended.

The 28th of March 2006 we left Sweden for Cape Town, South Africa where we were to carry out our empirical research for this study. This turned out to be a trip that would differ, in many ways, from what we had expected. In addition to this, our methodology also changed along the way and this turned out to be a very interesting journey that took us to places we never expected.

As we have established, the non-white women in South Africa are more vulnerable than other groups. However, it is impossible for us to base this study on the situation of the entire country; hence, we have limited this study to the Cape Town-area. It will focus not only on the people living in central Cape Town, but also the ones (and most specifically) living in the townships. Some of the townships in Cape Town are Langa, Athlone, Bouteheuwel, Phillipi, Khayelitsha, Guguleto and Heideveld.

2.1 Analytical approach

While doing this qualitative interpretative study we have considered possible methods and strategies suitable for this specific topic. Considering that our purpose was to enhance the understanding of the situation amongst the non-white women in South Africa, our approach turned out to be complex and interpretative. We have based our research on methods of ethnography, that is gathering data by personal interaction, as well as methods of record-based
analysis in terms of official print, publications and statistics (Abbott 2004:14). We are also inspired by a historic narrative approach, which has helped us to see the current situation from a different perspective (Abbott 2004:17).

This study consists of two main approaches with two different functions. The first approach, the deprivation trap model, is used to give structure to the content of our empirical material, that will help us to give an overview of the situation. The other one, focusing on power structures, serves the purpose of analysing the situation described with the help of the deprivation trap.

2.1.1 Deprivation Trap

As explained previously, the situation of the majority of the non-white population has not changed in post-apartheid times, the poverty level is still strikingly high, and oppression and inequality continue to be a fact. In fact, the situation a large number of the non-white population find themselves in has become more burdensome than during the apartheid years (Terreblanche 2002:27). The situation of these people can be illustrated by using the deprivation trap:

Figure 1. The Deprivation Trap

This deprivation trap shows how the different aspects of the trap interact together, hence each of the five clusters affect and reinforce each other (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:4). The deprivation trap represents the people behind the cold statistics, people doing daily battles for survival in this trap. The majority of these people live in rural areas and in squatter
settlements (the so-called townships) in the outskirts of cities or towns (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:4). People living in the squatters, also called the urban poor, are less isolated than the rural people but still they are removed from the centre of activity, as a result of distance from job opportunities and lack of access to communication means, suffer from isolation (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:5).

When using Chambers deprivation trap it will be valuable to relate this to the Declaration of Human Rights, hence this will also be a part of the analysis of the situation in South Africa. By doing so, all of the five dimensions will become of interest while looking at apartheid as well as post-apartheid times:

- **Poverty** – the situation of the non-white women where, amongst other components, unemployment plays an important role.
- **Isolation** – the women in the townships of Cape Town are finding themselves segregated from the rest of the society, in terms of factors such as economy and living arrangements.
- **Physical Weakness** – the women of South Africa are living in a world where one of the big threats to their health is HIV/Aids and other diseases that can be seen as a consequence of their living environment.
- **Vulnerability** – the townships are, to a large extent, consisting of shacks in an unsafe environment, an environment that makes the women even more exposed to factors such as criminality.
- **Powerlessness** – After the fall of apartheid, several laws were passed, whether or not these affect the women in our study will be the question.

2.1.2 Power structures

According to Temma Kaplan (1997) the South African apartheid era was not only characterized by racism, it was also a deeply sexist system (1997:127). Looking at the South African women of today, the dichotomy between white and non-white women is important to bear in mind in order to understand the democracy process that is still under development in South Africa. This is a development where several areas are in focus and where gender, race, and class are closely linked to each other, a link that is caused by South Africa’s history of
segregation and oppression. It is, hence, of great importance not to limit the power analyse to say that it is merely an issue about race; all power relations consist of more than one aspect, such as gender, ethnicity and class, that together create a system of hierarchy. These different personal qualities will, together as well as separate, create a hierarchy that affects the social positions and the interaction between the individuals (de los Reyes & Mulinari 2005:24). To be able to fully understand the inequality and hierarchy it is of great importance to comprehend the underlying causes and the possibilities of change. If there is a lack of deeper understanding, there is a risk that these disproportionate power relations will turn into something ‘natural’ and constant (de los Reyes & Mulinari 2005:25).

To be able to understand how the power structures are reinforced, Steven Lukes (2005) and his discussions about three different views of power will be used. These views deal with questions regarding powerlessness and domination, and how they contribute to maintain the oppression that the non-white women of South Africa find themselves in. These three views conduct themselves different to this matter. The one-dimensional view of power has the aim to identify the individual or group that succeeds in decision-making. This approach will be used while explaining the road to democratisation, through a governmental and juridical perspective. The two-dimensional view will, in this essay, be used when discussing the collaboration between the state and the civil society, something that will be emphasised as a method of reaching a society no longer characterised by an oppressive structure. The three-dimensional view regards what permeates the daily life on a more abstract level. This will be used in order to elucidate the more hidden oppression, which is based upon norms, tradition, socialisation et cetera.

2.2 Sociology of development

When it comes to sociology of development, it is important to have an interdisciplinary approach in order to understand the whole body of the subject (Foster 1986:1). According to C Wright Mills (1997), it is of outmost relevance to shift between different perspectives while doing sociological research. These perspectives stretch from economical and social structures towards history and social psychology (Mills 1997:17). History is of particular importance and he claims that any analysis of empirical material needs to be carried out in relation to the historical and social reality of those affected (Mills 1997:19), which we believe to be correct. To be able to fully understand the situation in focus in our study we need to first understand
the underlying structures and the social systems that have led to the situation of modern life in South Africa; that is a history of oppression. Hence, this study will include several arenas such as economics, politics, gender, history, race et cetera, in order to create an understanding of the complexity of the situation that is in focus in this study.

2.3 Ethical considerations

During the process of gathering our empirical data, interviews and participant observations, we worked according to the praxis of informed consent. Since this is a key principle in social research ethics (Bryman 2004:540), it was evident that we would inform our research participants about the study in order for them to be able to decide whether they wanted to participate. Hence, we introduced ourselves to our informants and made sure they understood that we were Swedish sociology students and what our field of interest and aim of the study was.

As a foundation in this study we have carefully considered the positions of trustworthiness and authenticity, important matters that will ensure the reader that the study consists of credible and dependable material (Bryman 2004:273). Throughout the interviews, we have considered the confidentiality of our informants (Mikkelsen 1995:342). Due to the personal and sensitive level of the life story interviews, we have chosen to present these women by pseudonyms in order to protect their personal integrity. This matter of confidentiality is considered throughout the study and the only times we will use the informants real names are regarding the interviews with the women representing organisations. Since we mention the organisations names it would be easy to identify them by their working roles even if we were to use fictive names hence, after getting their approval, we have chosen to use their real names.

According to one of our informants the classification of the South African citizens according to race is problematic to use. Many people, including her, find it offensive due to its roots in the apartheid system. Even though, in post-apartheid times, this is not an official classification system it is still being used actively. It is especially common in statistics, research and while discussing the demographic segregation of the country. Due to this we will, at times, use this classification with the purpose of clarifying how the situation is today compared to during the apartheid era. We wish, however, to stress that we will not put any values into the use of these
classifications; it is merely of practical use while discussing the situation amongst the South African population. However, there are problematic aspects in this classification, particularly when it comes to coloured and Asian. The Population Registration Act made reclassification possible in cases where the descriptions were considered inaccurate. In the late 1980s around 1 000 people each year were seeking reclassification. Most frequently, this reclassification was sought by blacks wanting to become coloured or coloured or Asian wanting to become white (Cristopher 2001:103). Due to this, it is not really possible to know for sure which racial groups the people belonged to during the apartheid era, and since the question ”what racial group do you belong to?” felt not only completely absurd but also offensive, this was not an option. Hence, we will distinguish our informants by using the terms black, white, and coloured/Asian.

2.4 Selection
When it came to gaining access to relevant data and informants it turned out to be far less problematic than we had expected. Before travelling to Cape Town, we were discussing different scenarios, various NGOs and organisations that would be of interest in our study, and our thoughts went to SANGOCO, the South African NGO Coalition. We also had SANGONeT, a development information portal for NGOs in South Africa (SANGONeT 2005) in mind while developing our MFS-application, which is the foundation of this essay. These two organisations were considered with the purpose of facilitating contact with relevant NGOs in the region. However, our strategy changed immediately after arriving in Cape Town. Shortly after we settled in our new environment, we decided, in order to get an insight in the situation of the country, that it would be a good option to meet people involved in developmental work. Thus, we decided to try to get in contact with women who worked within the civil society, and to complement this we wanted to talk to women personally affected by the struggle who could tell us their life stories.

The place we stayed at in Cape Town was owned and managed by a middle-aged female activist who turned out to be of great help for us in our research. With her assistance we got in touch with several other women, hence she served as an important gatekeeper (Bryman

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5 This umbrella organisation emerged in 1995 in order to coordinate NGO input into the Government policy and it is working on various issues affecting South Africa’s development (South African NGO Coalition 2005)
6 The application for the SIDA Minor Fields Study scholarship, authors’ comment.
2004:518). Since being involved in the issues surrounding work regarding women’s empowerment in Cape Town she had knowledge about different organisations and where to find them. She also knew about meetings that were relevant to our study, as well as to our understanding of the situation of the country. Another important gatekeeper was our taxi driver, a middle-aged coloured/Asian man. In his youth he served as a child soldier and a member of the armed guerrilla that fought against the racial oppression during apartheid. Still today, he is active in different human rights and grassroots organisations, however, non-armed these days. He was very eager to show us the heritage of apartheid and how people live today, in the townships and poor communities. He also presented us to the four women that we carried out life history interviews with, to which it would have been difficult for us to gain access without a gatekeeper of any kind. The visit to the nursery school was also made possible through contacts we had in Cape Town.

To a certain extent we also used the method of snowball sampling. This is a form of convenience sampling meaning that we made initial contact with a small number of people that was relevant to our study and then used them to establish contacts with the other informants (Bryman 2004:100). In this case, this method was essential when interviewing the activists, since they helped us to get in contact with other informants.

2.4.1 Interviews
The interviews undertaken are of different characters. Some of them are focused on women active in the civil society and some of them have more of the character of life story interviews.

The interviews carried out were mainly semi-structured. We constructed one interview guide\textsuperscript{7} that was used as a pointer while conducting our interviews with the women active in the organisations and the activists. While performing the life story interviews another guide was created to be more suitable for them. The purpose of these guides was to cover the different areas and themes that we were planning to present in this study. However, depending on the interaction between the informants and us, the character of the follow-up questions was very individual, hence the results of the interviews are slightly different from each other. The use

\textsuperscript{7} See appendix I
of the interview guide also varied between the different interviews, depending on the circumstances and the amount of time given for the interview. Despite the variations in time we made sure that we, in all cases, managed to cover the main issues.

The decision on the amount of life story interviews carried out was based on the fact that it is not possible to tell the stories of every struggling woman, neither is this the purpose of our study. However, to provide depth to the study and to gain better knowledge about the lives and histories of the women in focus, we ended up on the number of four women. These women will only represent themselves and there are so many more stories yet to be told. The fact is that everyday you meet and see people who struggle. Poor people on the streets, people in the townships living in shacks and in tiny houses in bad conditions. People with stories from times of apartheid, people who lost their families and people affected by violence and HIV/Aids. As to quote a young female doctor, working at the clinic in Heideveld, during an informal conversation:

> Everyone knows someone who has HIV, who has been raped, stabbed or killed. They all know people who suffered and in many cases, the person suffering is the person right in front of you

2.4.2 Informants

The following women served as our informants and they were interviewed separately at different occasions and settings.

The first four women were interviewed in their roles as South African women and activists who have experienced the changes from apartheid years to the current state of post-apartheid. Since they were deeply involved in the civil society movements, they also served as informants when it came to the development within the voluntary sector and NGOs, with a different view than the grassroots women who, themselves, were personally affected by the struggle. Hence, they were able to give us a more academic and, in some ways, political view on the changes and development occurring in the country.

*Sheryl* was interviewed the 1st of April, 2006. This psychology therapist is a white middle-aged woman who has lived in exile in Canada since 1976, where she works at a university.
However, she frequently returns to South Africa where she, amongst other things, works with different women’s groups and NGOs. During her visits to South Africa she works for the universities in Cape Town, mainly the University of Western Cape. She also works with spiritual healing and leadership training with women in poor communities in Cape Town.

_Yvette_ was interviewed the 9th of April, 2006. She is a white female in her late 50s who has been an activist since the 1960s when she was a member of the Black Sash. After her university studies she worked as a social worker and later on opened up a day-care centre where children of all colours were welcome, which meant breaking the separation laws of apartheid. She also formed an organisation that worked with freeing imprisoned non-white children. She is still an activist working with several projects regarding children with HIV/AIDS and children and women exposed to trauma.

On the 21st of April, 2006 we interviewed Thembeka, a black Xhosa woman in her 30s, working at a nursery school in Langa. This was done with the purpose of creating a picture of how a working woman in a township understands and feels about the situation of the country.

On the 4th of May, 2006, we interviewed _Sophia_, a coloured/Asian woman active in several NGO’s in Cape Town. She has been working abroad for 42 years since she felt that she could not settle in South Africa during these years, due to the apartheid system. During these years she worked as a teacher, as well as in the health profession, management, and psychology. She has a master’s degree in educational psychology and, except for her involvement in different NGOs, she is working at the university as a teacher and doing private work where she is mentoring troubled children.

The following women were interviewed in their position of work, the organisation they represented:

On the 6th of April, 2006, we met the manager of the non-profit organisation ALN, Adult Learning Network, _Jasmina_. This trust organisation was established in 2002 when the need for a national civil society organisation in the adult basic education, learning, and development sector was identified. In May 2004 it registered with the Department of Social
Services. The ALN agenda has lately expanded to include other areas, such as research and HIV/Aids.8

On the 28th of April, 2006, we met Nomvuyo, the director of WHEAT Trust, Women’s Hope Education and Training Trust, at their office in Mowbray, Cape Town. WHEAT Trust was established on Women’s Day 1998 and is the only women’s trust in South Africa, working nationwide. Its purpose is to work with identifying and assisting women whose initiatives within their communities have a clear potential to transform and promote a culture of giving towards women’s development initiatives. The trust fund is established to strengthen South African women’s commitment to community development.9

On the 10th of April, 2006, we met Masina for an interview at the office of Trauma Centre, at the Saartjie Baartman Women’s Centre in Athlone. Masina is working for this organisation that focuses on survivors of violence and torture. The organisation came out of a partnership with various mental health organisations that were established in the 1990’s to address the need of the many victims of repression and human rights abuse by the apartheid regime. The Trauma Centre was launched in 1993 to provide for mental health needs of ex-political prisoners, returned exiles and other victims of political violence and repression. Since then, the organisation has grown and is now developed as an answer to the changing needs of the people; today a greater range of requests falls within the human rights abuses area10.

The final category of interviews had the character of life story interviews and the following four women served as our informants.

An interview with a 58-year-old Xhosa woman, Phuti, was carried out in Langa on the 16th of May, 2006. She lives in a shack in very poor conditions and she has devoted her life to community work, even though she does not get any money out of doing it. She is a grassroots woman who is involved in different issues, such as crime prevention, abused children, women’s abuse, HIV/Aids and matters surrounding the TRC, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission11. The only income she has is a disability grant, R 800/month.

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8 Information leaflet, Profile of the Adult Learning Network
9 Information CD, Seedy Rom, WHEAT TRUST, Where dreams are grown
10 Information leaflet, The Trauma Centre; Services
11 President Nelson Mandela launched the commission in 1996 under the leadership of Archbishop Desmond Tutu with the goal to promote racial reconciliation. The Commission gave the possibility of amnesty for those
On the 16th of May, 2006, we met with Roshieda, a 37 year old coloured/Asian housewife in a Muslim family. The interview was carried out in the family’s house in Bouteheuwel, where she lives together with her husband and her three children. She has been participating in a community centre course in women and leadership, but spends most of her time taking care of the family and the household.

An interview was carried out on the 16th of May, 2006, with Khanyisa, a 76 year old Xhosa woman who lives in the township Bouteheuwel. The interview took place in the living room of the two-bedroom house where she lives together with her husband and daughter. She has been in contact with the TRC, since her son was shot dead by the police during the apartheid years. She is now active in Khulumani, an organisation working with victims of apartheid.

On the 16th of May, 2006, we met Nontobeko, a middle-aged black Zulu woman who lives in a shack in Phillipi, a township with mostly black inhabitants. The interview was carried out in her home. Outside of the shack stood an unfinished house that was supposed to become her home, but she has been waiting for four years for the Government to complete the building of her house. She is working in an organisation called Khulumani that focuses on victims of the apartheid time, for example people who have been tortured or detained.

In addition to these women, with the purpose of gaining understanding of the social climate of the city in terms of criminality and safety, we talked to a detective at Rondebosch police station in Cape Town. The conversation with Crime Detective Dadoo took place the 19th of April, 2006, and served a complementary purpose.

2.4.3 Meetings and visits

Other important sources of information were a number of meetings and visits that we got the opportunity to attend. We also visited places that helped us to gather information and to understand the situation better. Even though not all of these are of direct use in this study they have been of great importance to us in our understanding of the situation, hence we find it important to mention them in our methodology.

who admitted that they had committed human rights’ violations as long as they had occurred with political objectives. It also provided financial compensation for the victims of human rights violations (Mangcu 2003:107).
On the 10th of April, 2006, we were invited to attend to an AGM\(^{12}\) meeting of the NGO Khululeka\(^{13}\). The meeting took place at the Saartjie Baartman Women’s Centre in Athlone, a centre for different women’s rights activities\(^{14}\). Khululeka was formed in 2005 and focuses on different issues regarding underprivileged non-white women and children in poor communities and townships. The organisation works with grief and loss support and the work is carried out with the help of workshops where they are training women to start up groups and learn how to deal with issues surrounding trauma. The practical work of Khululeka is based in different townships such as Athlone, Khayelitsha and Masiphulele\(^{15}\).

On the 19th of April, 2006, a Women’s Only meeting was held at the Community House in Salt River, Cape Town. It was arranged by the ILRIG, International Labour Research and Information Group, and the public forum was on the theme of building women’s activism. At the meeting, there were participators from different NGOs, the domestic workers union, women working with sex workers, HIV/Aids coordinators, and women working against abuse of women and children, local government and women with a general interest in women’s movement. On the 24th of May, 2006, a second public forum, Building women’s activism: part 2, took place at the Community house. At that time we had already left South Africa, but we were able to get the notes from the meeting via email. Approximately 25 women attended the forum, including women from unions, social movements, and local government.

On the 20th of April, 2006, TRC, held a public meeting at the Iziko South African Museum in Cape Town in order to celebrate ten years of work. The headline of the meeting was “The TRC: Ten Years on” and it was organised by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation together with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The main attraction was a debate, led by Alex Boraine, where the people in the spotlight was Yasmin Soolca\(^{16}\), Archbishop Desmond Tutu\(^{17}\) and two of the first witnesses of the TRC. The public was also encouraged to participate and questions and statements were being made from the crowd.

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\(^{12}\) Annual General Meeting, authors’ comment.
\(^{13}\) Khululeka meaning be free in Xhosa, authors’ comment.
\(^{14}\) Information leaflet, Saartjie Baartman Centre, for women and children, Violence ends here
\(^{15}\) Information leaflet/newsletter, Khulaleka
\(^{16}\) Representing the TRC process, authors’ comment.
\(^{17}\) Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu was the chairman of the TRC, today he is the patron of the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (Institute for Justice and Reconciliation 2004:2).
On the 21st of April, 2006, we visited a nursery school in Langa. This was done with the purpose of getting a sense of what kind of support women can get with their children and also to gain an understanding of the situation and to talk to the women working at the nursery school. During this day one interview was done with one of the women working with the children.

2.4.4 Legal sources, statistics and research documents
South Africa is a country where the people historically have been segregated by law, and still today the apartheid structure affects the society and the people. Therefore, it is of importance to take the apartheid legislation into consideration to be able to fully understand the situation of the people in focus of the study. Since the study is focusing on the women, and particularly the non-white poor women, it is also of interest to look at how the country has taken on to abolish the problems of inequality and human rights in the society. Hence, legislation and reports that follow up the work with human rights, women’s rights in particular, are used in the study to get a sense of the existing goals that the society as a whole and different NGOs work to achieve.

In the study, we also used statistics as a complement to illustrate the situation of the people in South Africa. The tables are used to show the division amongst the people in the country and the fact that the most vulnerable group is the black majority with the women suffering the most from unemployment and poverty.

2.5 Language and cultural differences
At times when performing the interviews it got slightly problematic, especially the life story interviews. Initially we were worried that the cultural differences between the women and us would complicate the interview situation. However the fact that we were young, white women from a privileged Western European country and they were poor underprivileged women with a history of racial oppression from white South Africa, did not seem to bother them. Instead, we got the feeling that we were bonding over our womanhood rather than feeling separated due to the other attributes of our being. It was relatively easy to get the women to open up; we all belong to the ancillary gender, which proved to create a feeling of trust between us.
At times, however, we could not help but wonder if there was a certain power-relation between us. We got the feeling that some of our informants believed us to be far more influential and powerful than we are. Especially one woman pleaded with us to “let the world know” so that there could be a change in her life situation. This also made us consider if maybe some of the stories we were told were exaggerated in order for them to get a stronger reaction from us and thereby make sure they got help. However, we have to assume that the essence of their stories were truthful.

All the undertaken interviews, with one exception, was made with women who spoke English, even though their native language was not English but rather Xhosa, Zulu or some other language spoken in South Africa. The exception was one of the life story interviews, a Xhosa-speaking woman. She did understand English but was not comfortable speaking it, hence, we used an interpreter. The man who helped us was the same man who introduced us to her, he was also on a friendly basis with this woman; both of them being engaged in activism. With this in mind, and the fact that she did understand everything that was said, we have no reason to believe that the translation was not made in a truthful manner.

2.6 Outline

In order to understand the problems discussed in this essay, an overview over the situation of the women, apartheid and post-apartheid times, as well as the state of the nation in general, is essential. Hence, this will be described in the Introduction before introducing The aim of the study with its main research problem and its four underlying areas. The research is focused on the situation of South African women, with its democratisation and legislations. Important aspects are human rights, state work, civil society and power structures, which will all be crucial when discussing how and why the situation has not changed, despite democratisation. This chapter is followed by our methodological description, where our empirical sources will be described together with our analytical approach. Our analysis that follows, will start with a discussion surrounding Human Rights. The Human Rights declaration serves as a background in order to create understanding regarding women’s rights and how they are neglected in South Africa. This is being done in connection with a more systematic presentation of the historical background, in order to be able see how the state of the nation has changed. This will lead us in to the following chapter, Towards Equality, where a discussion surrounding the deprivation trap, one of our analytical tools, will be made in order to unravel the lives of the
non-privileged women in Cape Town. To complete the picture, the problematic power-relations that exist in society will be discussed. The National Gender Machinery will be mentioned, as well as the civil society, collaboration within the developmental sphere and the more hidden structures that affect the struggle towards an egalitarian society. All being done with Lukes views of power in mind. Our findings will be further discussed in Conclusion, before the Summary will bring this essay to an end.

3 SOUTH AFRICA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN 2006a). “Human rights are recognized as fundamental by the United Nations and, as such, feature prominently in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations; ‘... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small...’ The Organization’s prominent role in this area is carried out by a number of human rights bodies, some of which date back to the very foundation of the United Nations”(UN 2006b).

3.1 History

It is important to remember that the racial issues in South Africa did not just suddenly appear with the apartheid system. They existed long before the actual formation of the apartheid state, during the colonisation and the British empire (Mabin 2001:14). Several segregation laws were passed prior to the implementation of apartheid in 1948. The two most significant were the Native Lands Act of 1913 and the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. Following the National Party’s assumption of power in 1948, the doctrine of apartheid, as racial separation legislation, was introduced. One function of the apartheid laws was the intention to inextricably bind up with urbanization, which was being done by the creation of the so-called homelands (also referred to as Bantustans) (Smith 2001:1f). All Africans would become citizens of a homeland created for their own ethnic group, and work in white

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18 See appendix III for a more detailed description of these acts.
19 Bantu meaning People in Xhosa, authors’ comment.
South Africa only as migrant labour. Methods to control the segregation were, amongst others, the notorious pass laws that controlled entries to the cities to keep the levels of migration consistent with the demand for labour (Fick 2002:177). African women were even more restricted from entering urban areas than African men were. Their entering was dependent on the qualifications of their husbands; women were only allowed to live outside the homelands if their husbands had been in service of one employer for at least ten years. Women who attempted to join their husbands or to seek employment in the cities were arrested and forced back to the homelands where they became isolated and conditioned to raising children and caring for the sick (Meer 1985). However, since it became difficult to stop the urbanisation of African people working in the cities, the constructions of townships were emerging. This sought the benefits of accelerated urbanisation but without beaming any enormous costs. As a result there was (and still is) a spread of shack settlements around the major metropolitan areas\textsuperscript{20}, which in 2001 were accommodating a quarter of the African population (Smith 2001:1f). Very little effort was put into constructing any kind of housing in the African locations, which led to the areas being overcrowded (Mabin 2001:17), hence the development of the so called townships.

The apartheid era differs from segregation and racial hatred that have occurred in other countries by the systematic ways in which the National Party formalised the segregation through the juridical system (About Inc. African History 2006a). Methods of imposing the system of segregation were the local and regional political structures of the apartheid state\textsuperscript{21}. Two major pieces of legislation were performed in 1950 in order to create the new apartheid city\textsuperscript{22}; the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act. The Group Areas Act required a strict demographic segregation between the four groups that were recognised (McCarthy 2001:28). Group areas were separated by strips of open land at least 30 metres wide, which served as barriers to movement between the areas in order to reduce social contact between the four groups (Cristopher 2001:105). The Population Registration Act provided a restrictive classification of the people into these racially defined groups. Hence, the racial classification of the South African population occurred and the people were divided into the following four groups; \textit{blacks, whites, coloured,} and \textit{Asian}. The African population was officially termed black and the racist authorities referred to them as Bantu. This large

\textsuperscript{20} Such as Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, Pretoria and Johannesburg to mention a few, authors’ comment.

\textsuperscript{21} See appendix IV for details of the apartheid-legislation

\textsuperscript{22} See appendix V for details of the apartheid-city
group was divided into ten tribal groups, the most numerous being Zulu and Xhosa. A small majority of the black people lived in the ten homelands existing in different parts of South Africa, whereas the others lived in cities, towns, suburbs, communities or townships surrounding “white South Africa”. The white South African population was divided into two groups; Afrikaners, using the Afrikaans language (a derivative of Dutch) and people of British decent. The coloured population was predominately of mixed European and African ancestry, but there was also a small group of Malays. Finally, the fourth group, the Asians, consisted of descendents from immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, as well as a small number of Chinese people (Smith 2001:4). These two laws, amongst many others, created a society of total segregation.

During the 1960s ANC, was making more loud protests than ever before, which led to some turbulence in the South African apartheid state. Demonstrations occurred more and more frequently and were considered a big threat by the Government. The Government, however, managed to keep its power by, amongst other things, violence, banning all public meetings and arresting many black leaders (Mabin 2001:20). By 1976, the black population was exasperated with their living environment and black rioting spread all over the country throughout the townships. This was a reaction against black people not being allowed to own their own homes in urban areas, and the lack of services and facilities in most black townships. However, the Government’s answer to these riots was not to meet the needs but to outlaw most Black Consciousness movements and coming on very hard on the black activists (Soni 2001:43). Thus, the oppression and the struggle continued, from both a racial and a gender perspective.

3.2 Making sense of human rights

When discussing South Africa and the changes that have occurred during the last century, the term “human rights” easily comes to mind. So what exactly does the term human rights indicate? Human rights have, in its development, gone through different stages, which are generally called “generations”. Today there are three generations; the first one consists of civil and political rights; the second comprises social, economic, and cultural rights, and the third generation includes so called group rights (Fisher 2005:14). The first generation is liberty

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23 The ten homelands were Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei, Gazunkulu, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa, QwaQwa (Ross 1999:117).
oriented and gives the individual the right to participate in self-government, right to life, right to security, right to freedom of opinion, conscience, religion and thought, and the right to freedom of association. The second generation is security oriented and presents the right to work, right to maintain one’s culture and language, right to receive adequate education, and the right to cover the basic needs (water, housing, and food). The third generation focuses on development and includes the right to peace and the right to a healthy environment.

When looking at these generations with Chambers (1983) deprivation trap in mind, it becomes clear that they are strongly linked to each other. If what is represented in these generations gets violated certain consequences will follow, such as those presented in the different clusters in the deprivation trap. When the right to participate in self-government, right to freedom of opinion, religion et cetera is violated, powerlessness will emerge. Closely linked to this dimension is vulnerability, which will emerge when, for example, there are violations against the right to security and peace, amongst others. Physical weakness can be affected by several different components, but some of the most noticeable are the violations against basic needs such as water, and violations against rights to healthy environment. Isolation is, just as the previous three clusters, affected by several aspects; lack of rights to education can for example lead to isolation due to latter affects of this violation, thus can violations of freedom of opinion and association. When it comes to the fifth and last dimension, poverty, this is reinforced by all the other aspects: hence, violations against all the aspects in the three generations can, in the long term, lead to poverty. Common to all categories is that they involve the basis of what human rights refer to:

- Human rights are inherent – they belong to you because you are born human
- Human rights are universal – they belong to all the people
- Human rights are inalienable – can not be taken away
- Human rights are indivisible – all human rights are inter-related with each other
- Human rights can be limited – under certain circumstances, in terms of the law

Values and Human Rights in the curriculum, Department of Education, Republic of South Africa, 2006:5

3.3 Women’s rights

According to the human rights agenda, human rights belong to all people regardless of race, class, gender, sexual orientation or disability. When it comes to women’s rights, a large
number of declarations have been proclaimed during the last decades, with the Beijing Platform for Activism of 1995 being one of the most significant international gender mechanisms. It has been ratified by 189 states all over the world and it addresses twelve areas of action regarding women’s development; poverty; education and training; health including reproductive health; violence; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanism; human rights; media; environment; the girl child (van der Westhuizen 2005:16). The South African Government used the platform as a reference guide when outlining an equality clause that prohibited discrimination based on gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, or sexual orientation. The Beijing Platform is a complement for CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, of 1979, which the South African Government ratified in 1996 (South Africa Country Report 1996). By accepting the convention, the State undertook to abolish all discrimination of women through, for example, changing discriminating legislation. Such discrimination shall be counteracted by authorities, courts, organisations, and individuals (Fisher 2005:35).

These two declarations are merely two amongst a larger number of declarations, goals and international projects that have started up during the last decades. However, despite all these good intentions discrimination against women remains a serious problem (South Africa Country Report 2005). Many women are worse off now than they were a decade ago: more women are living in both absolute and relative poverty, experiencing cumulative effects of HIV/Aids, food insecurity, low or no income, low levels of education and an upsurge in sexual violence (van der Westhuizen 2005:17). This was also confirmed by our informants; the women working with civil society, the activists, as well as the poor women living in the townships, expressed concern and frustration over the fact that the development, post-apartheid, was not necessarily only positive. When discussing the changes that have occurred in the South African society since the fall of apartheid, Masina pointed out that politically things have changed for the better, but there is still a lot of poverty, which brings along high levels of crime, drug and alcohol abuse and violence. She said that the problems today are not of a political character, but rather in a human rights context. As a result of this, the civil society has had to evolve in response to the changing needs of the population.

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24 Absolute poverty measures the number of people living below a poverty threshold, which is independent of time and place. Relative poverty measures the extent to which a household’s financial resources falls below an average income threshold for the economy (Noble et al 2004).
The concerned expressed by our informants was also shared by Archbishop Desmond Tutu when he exclaimed, while talking about the South Africa of today with all its poverty, crime and despair:

Is this what we were fighting for?

20060420, Iziko South African Museum, Cape Town

3.4 Violations of human rights

Apartheid was a system based on excluding black people from the political process, denying them effective civil and political rights, suppressing dissent, and distributing and spending state resources in a racially discriminatory manner to optimally promote the interests and rights of white people whilst limiting and retarding the development of black people. According to Kathy Govender (2006), the apartheid system was characterised by the following treatment and structures (Govender 2006:95f):

- Breaking the developing norms of human rights
- Dissent and opposition of apartheid were met with repression and persecution;
  - Banning of individuals and organisations
  - Detention without trial
  - Suppression of opposition voices
  - Extra judicial killings and violence used in a vain attempt to shore up apartheid and emasculate resistance to it
  - Apartheid policy = a violation of human dignity, supported by means and measures that directly violated basic and fundamental rights.

The apartheid system constituted crime against humanity through systematic murder, torture and enslavement committed with the intention of sustaining the hegemony25 of the dominant racial group (Robertson 2000:237). The life of a black (man) during the apartheid-era can be summarised with the words of the former ANC-leader and president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela:

25 The term hegemony had previously been used by Gramsci who, by using this, was analysing the class society. In his discussion, hegemony is tied to the ruling power, but it can just as well be seen from a bottom-up approach and change social power relations. Hence, the term is regarding a desire to find a tool which can enable a possibility to level out social heterogeneity as well as create an ideological unity (Nordberg 2000:38).
When he grows up he can hold Africans Only jobs, rent a house in an Africans Only township, ride Africans Only trains and be stopped at any time of the day or night, and be ordered to produce a pass, which without he can be arrested and thrown in jail. His life is circumscribed by racist laws and regulations that cripple his growth, dim his potential and stunt his life.

Mandela 1994:109

4 TOWARDS EQUALITY

As mentioned earlier power and power structures consists of several aspects, so does the status of black/non-white women. It is placed at the intersection of all forms of subjugation in society: racial oppression, sexual oppression and economic exploitation. Consistent to this the female non-white population is involved in many different struggles, as black/non-white people as well as women (Mama 1995:4).

The situation of today’s South Africa is causing annoyance and protests amongst the citizens, especially the ones of the black community. For example, in August and September, 2001, there were massive protests in Durban against the South African Government. This was during the time when the showpiece World Conference against Racism was held in the city. This is just one of many protest movements that has started out during the recent years, which serves to prove that the resistance is indeed vibrant. Struggles and protests have been causing a response from the Government that, according to Ashwin Desai (2002), has been brutal and uncompromising, causing vicious assaults and arrests amongst other things (Desai 2002:13).

As a part of the new social movements community based organisations can be found (Jenkins 2001:185). Usually these social movements, when existing in a developing country such as South Africa, are formed around fundamental issues of survival or struggle to gain access to the basics of collective consumption. Thus, they are rarely focused on issues involving state power or economic structures (Jenkins 2001:186). Instead, these movements tend to focus on redefinition of social roles and consumption, for example issues surrounding gender or ethnicity (Jenkins 2001:187). These community movements are taking place all over South Africa, also in the area where the research for this study was carried out, the townships of Cape Town. The movements and struggles have been referred to as ‘South Africa’s new revolution’, which is a result of the injustice the non-white townships and communities are
sensing. Injustice that still exists, despite the fall of apartheid and the official end of a period when whites ruled over the non-white part of the population.

As mentioned in *Analytical approach* the Deprivation Trap serves as a tool when it comes to analysing the situation amongst the deprived people, in this case amongst the non-white women of South Africa. While using this, the five different dimensions need to be taken into consideration, by doing so a fuller picture of the life of the oppressed women can be shown.

### 4.1 Poverty

The injustice that exists today in the South African society is not based on a race-system but merely on free-market economic policies that have come to exist after the elections of ANC (Desai 2002:13). Apartheid created inequality in economic opportunities and public services with income concentrated in a small segment of the population. Because of the growing unemployment rate over the last decade, inequality is becoming deeper. The public services are unequal with the poor benefiting the least from public health, education, and water. The availability of those services has been extended since 1994, but the poor households can still not afford paying the charges to access them (Butler 2004:66). Inequalities in South Africa in the past were based on race while today they have gained a class character as can be seen in the following table (Terreblanche 2002:32).

Table 1. The share of the poorest 40% of households and the three other quintiles of total income in 1975, 1991, 1996 and 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Share of total income %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poorest 40% (50% of the population)</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41%-60% (16.6% of the population)</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%-80% (16.6% of the population)</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81%-100% (16.6% of the population)</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Terreblanche 2002:33

In 1975, the share of the poorest 40 percent of the households of the total income was 5.2 percent, which is a significantly low percentage, and in 2001, the share had declined further to
3.3 percent. At the same time, the share of the top 20 percent of the households increased from 70.9 percent to 72.2 percent. This category consisted of 16.6 percent of the total population in 2001, out of which 50 percent were white and 50 percent black. 67 percent of the total population received 10.6 percent of the total income. This category included only 2 percent white people (Terreblanche 2002:33), which demonstrate that even though it is not simply a black and white issue, the very poor are still overwhelmingly black. The fact that there is a big gap between the top 20 percent and the rest of the population is further established by one of our informants, Nomvuyo, who said that the rich people are better off today than during the apartheid years. Many of the women she is working with have been poor for the past ten to twenty years, and some of them are worse off today than they were before the fall of apartheid. The poverty and the class differences was something that, very soon, became obvious to us. The white privileged part of the population was deeply segregated from the non-white in many ways; very rarely did we see any white people on the local transports and they were living in luxurious houses with great big walls surrounding them (in order to lock themselves in or lock other people out). Surely, there were non-white people who seemed to be well off as well; on the streets, restaurants as well as at the universities. Nevertheless, the poverty was strikingly high amongst the non-white people, with street children, starving people on the streets and people living under miserable circumstances.

Several factors indicate the poverty rate and living standard. Rates of unemployment, the main determinant of poverty, are extremely high in South Africa, with the highest rate amongst the black African population. As can be seen in the table below, the unemployment rate of the black African population was, in 2006, 26.6 percent against the rate of the coloured population on 20.6 percent, Indian and Asian 14 percent and white only had a rate of 3.6 percent. The unemployment rate amongst women is significantly higher than amongst men irrespective of population group (Labour force survey, September 2005, iv).
Table 2. Unemployment rate by population group and sex, September 2001 to September 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male 2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
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Labour force survey, September 2005, iv

Unemployment plays a double role when it comes to poverty. It is causing poverty in the sense that without a job there is no income, which leads to further problems regarding housing, food, medical care, education et cetera. It is also a result from the mentioned factors, since these (which all are indicators of poverty) prevent a person from finding employment. Hence, unemployment is linked to all five clusters in the deprivation trap, not only poverty. Unemployment is also an important part in isolation, thus, isolation and poverty are deeply linked together (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:4).

The significant role that unemployment plays in people’s lives becomes very apparent in the case of non-white South African women. As mentioned in *The Aim of the Study* there are 50,000 non-profit organisations led by women at community level. According to Sheryl, this engagement, so frequently occurring amongst these women, is caused by several factors. The most obvious one is of course the need for change, a struggle for a better life. However, it is also based on unemployment. Due to the mass unemployment in the country, people have to fight hard to find employment and women, she said, are desperate for work. This is where the NGO-sector comes in. Carrying out unpaid voluntarily work gives them a small possibility to find work afterwards. Several of the organisations hand out certificates to the women taking part in their work or in their workshops (which we experienced during the Khululeka AGM-
meeting where certificates where handed out to participators in their workshops) which they can show potential employers as documentation on their attempt to keep themselves out of unemployment. This, stated Sheryl, proves that they are desperate for work, as well as have a hunger for learning.

4.2 Isolation

As mentioned above unemployment can cause isolation. This is especially severe when it comes to women who, by tradition, are depending on their husbands. Sheryl mentions that in the South African society where women traditionally are caretakers and men are providers, the unemployment has severe effects on the personal sphere as well as from a financial aspect. She said that the unemployment causes frustration, which brings about alcohol abuse, especially amongst the male population, a problem that leads to other consequences in the marriage and family home, such as abuse et cetera. This is, she claimed, a very severe problem and she believed the NGOs and grassroots organisations to be helpful when it comes to acknowledging this matter and change the situation of the women of today. Roshieda, on the other hand, thought that women should be more patient with their husbands and they should not leave them if they are not good enough. She said it is better to bear with the husband and be patient:

After all, I am better off with my husband than without him

As mentioned earlier race has always served as an important factor when it comes to segregation, even though it, in post-apartheid times, is considered to be a class-system rather than anything involving race. Looking at the legislation, this becomes evident, due to the deracialisation of public policy and by the removal of different forms of employment discrimination, racial division has decreased. Access to education, removal of controls on the free movement of labour and the fact that black South Africans are able to enter into the professions and business have contributed to the emergence of a black middle class (Butler 2004:69). This is consistent with what one of our informants, Yvette, stated. She claimed that

26 During this meeting the words of Sheryl was confirmed, since a majority of those involved were women who have been experiencing the struggle themselves, and some of them were still fighting for their empowerment. Several of those involved had, previously, been receiving help from the civil society, now they were a part of it.

27 Something that we will discuss further in following chapters.
the lives of a small group of black people have improved creating class differences even amongst the non-white population:

…the rich is getting richer and the poor is getting poorer which has created great class differences that reflect the apartheid days…

William Julius Wilson studied the ghettos of Chicago in the late seventies and early eighties where the conditions were similar to the ones that exist in the South African townships today. Due to decreasing racial discrimination on the labour market in Chicago, a black middle class emerged which made it possible for the individuals to move between different areas. However, Wilson argues, this did not lead to improvements for the black underclass since they did not have the same possibilities of moving. Consequently, the truly disadvantaged of the black urban population were left behind, resulting in a growing proportion of exposed individuals and families in the areas (Wilson 1987:56). The conditions of the people in these areas are considerably different from the conditions individuals in other areas experience, which becomes evident when looking at the townships of South Africa. Wilson uses the term concentration effects to describe the situation of the people in the ghettos of Chicago and refers to the disproportionate concentration of the most disadvantaged urban black people, creating a significantly different environment from other areas of the city (Wilson 1987:58). The term can also be used when discussing the situation of the people in the townships, where a big proportion of the poor non-white people lives in the townships and are excluded from the economic opportunities and public services in society.

The phenomena with the South African private schools are an example of how concentration effects are sustained. These are, according to Sheryl, reinforcing the class differences and complicating the struggle towards equality. The families with money will pay for their kids to go to expensive private schools, while the children from underprivileged families stay in bad schools where no money is put in for improvement. The children who attend these low standard and low-status schools in the poor communities and townships also become excluded from possibilities provided children from families with money. Wilson argues that due to the movement of the middle- and working class the basic institutions in the poor areas lose their financial support from the more economically stable families (Wilson 1987:56). Unemployment becomes a way of life to the residents, and therefore the children are not interested in going to school to get an education that may lead to employment. Teachers in
such areas become frustrated and have lower demands on the students or they start teaching elsewhere. A vicious cycle arises, which results in students not finishing their studies, and hence it is hard for them to find work later on. Since the middle- and working class have abandoned the neighbourhood, it is only the underprivileged children who go to the schools where they become trapped since there are no other alternatives. Thus, even the children who want to get educated are affected as a consequence of the low level of education in the schools (Wilson 1987:57). The difficulties of getting out of the poor communities are further established with what one of our informants, ThembeKA, told us during an interview:

People who are born in areas such as Langa will stay there for the rest of their lives. It is hard to get away.

Wilson argues that because of the diminishing opportunities of work, people in the ghettos find other alternatives such as welfare or the underground economy to survive, which becomes a way of life that further isolates the individuals from the rest of the society (Wilson 1987:57). This is also the case in the South African townships where the exceptionally high unemployment rate causes people to rely on other alternatives resulting in high crime rates, something that was confirmed by Crime Detective Dadoo. Since these areas are characterised by unemployment, low-quality schools and criminality, individuals from other areas avoid moving there. As a result, the individuals and families in the poor areas become socially isolated. This social isolation is shown in a lack of contact with individuals from other areas of the city and institutions that represent the society (Wilson 1987:58).

The social isolation that exists in today’s South Africa is of a different character than the isolation that the non-white people experienced during the apartheid years. Back then, it was due to the apartheid legislation and its notorious laws that prevented the people from leading a normal life. Today, there is similar isolation, only it is not the result of legislation but rather of the social climate that is existing today, where crime and violence is part of every day life. This, and the women’s fear of the crime situation, will be examined further in Vulnerability.

4.3 Physical Weakness
Physical weakness is caused by many different factors, poverty being the most obvious one due to the fact that this hinders people affected to keep a balanced diet. As mentioned earlier,
unemployment can also be a contributing factor to this, since a lack of income prevents people from buying the food they need. Physical weakness, in terms of hunger, leads to vulnerability to other diseases, where for example tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS are claiming many victims, especially amongst the non-privileged part of the South African population (Swanepool & de Beer 2006:4).

South Africa has the fastest growing epidemic of HIV/AIDS in the world with the largest number of people living with the disease. This becomes evident when visiting the country, since the disease is constantly present in everyday life. It is in the media and whenever socialising with people, the fear of the disease is there. There are many reasons for the rapid spread with some of the most important ones being the legacy of apartheid, poverty, lack of knowledge, gender inequality and male domination, violence and sexual violence. The HIV/AIDS epidemic started in South Africa during the end of the apartheid era, which resulted in the leadership being distracted by the struggle towards democracy. Parts of the apartheid system, such as the homeland system, the Group Areas Act and migrant labour, led to poverty, gender inequality et cetera, which in turn affected, and continue to do so, the spread of the disease (Health24 2006). This is something that several of our informants, such as Thembeka, confirmed when she talked about how the problems with HIV/AIDS have worsened since the fall of apartheid, when the Government had to focus on the democratisation-process rather than the HIV/AIDS work. The situation that the Government was finding itself in after the fall of Apartheid can be compared to how the people affected by the disease are reacting on it today. The widespread poverty makes the people living with it more concerned about the daily struggle for survival than about protecting themselves from HIV/AIDS. When the disease is only one of many threats to life and health the motivation to protect oneself is low (Health24 2006).

Poverty brings along low levels of education and literacy. In the poor communities, knowledge about HIV/AIDS is low, as is access to schools. Especially women have high rates of illiteracy since many of them do not have the possibility to attend school. Much of their time is devoted to taking care of the household and the family and due to this isolation, some of them are unaware of the risks of getting affected (Health 24 2006). Closely linked to this is the access to clinics and medical treatment. The women, at times, had to travel great distances to get to them, which is problematic due to local transports and travelling expenses. This was confirmed by the female doctor we befriended, working at a clinic in Heideveld as well as
with HIV/AIDS treatment. We were told that many of the women visiting the clinic had travelled far and were experiencing a sense of isolation towards adequate medical treatment. Many of the women suffered from severe diseases as well as from oppression caused by being women, leading to abuse from their spouse or other males in their surrounding.

There was also a deficient knowledge amongst these women, which was confirmed by Sophia who said that there is a lack of information in many areas about diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. However, even when people have knowledge about the diseases and they know how to avoid getting sick there is a big problem for the women because they can not dictate protected sex, since it is not culturally accepted. If the women refuse to have sex or want to use a condom they run the risk of losing their partner and consequently their source of financial support. Women gain respect in the traditional roles of wife and mother and they are supposed to satisfy their husbands irrespective of their own wills. Another major problem in South Africa, which is linked to the male-dominated culture of the society, is violence against women. Living in a physically abusive relationship limits the women’s abilities to protect themselves against the disease, since negotiating safer sex may result in violence (Health24 2006).

The problem with education not being the only solution to the HIV/AIDS problem was mentioned by Thembeka. She claimed that the increasing problems with HIV/AIDS are not merely about education:

> Everyone knows how HIV is transmitted but they don’t care

She continued telling us that most clinics hand out free condoms, but they (at this stage she is mainly referring to the younger generations) still do not use it. As a cause of this, they get pregnant at a very early age, which prevents them from further education. She claimed that ‘everyone sleeps around without using condoms’. This is caused by a miserable view on the future and where death is defused amongst the people and since HIV/AIDS is so widespread, everyone is affected by the disease in some way. The development regarding the spread of

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28 This is also deeply connected to poverty, authors’ comment.
HIV/Aids and the turbulent political situation surrounding the matter\(^29\) became evident to us during our stay. Our experience shows that the miserable view expressed by Thembeka was of great concern and raised strong feelings amongst activists and NGOs. For instance, at several times there were demonstrations in Cape Town regarding this matter, which was also pointed out by Yvette. Being an activist, she participated in these demonstrations and one of this was concerning the acceptance and necessity of condom use, which gathered women (mainly) from different organisations and racial groups, exclaiming their concern over the situation, demanding safe sex and promoting women’s sexual health.

Once again, unemployment can play an important part in the physical weakness dimension. When talking to Thembeka she said that with unemployment many other problems follow, such as an unhealthy lifestyle. Unemployment creates a sense of frustration and despair, which, she claimed, leads to other problems such as smoking and drinking. There is nothing else to do, she stated out, so when they receive their grants\(^30\) they spend it on a self-destructive lifestyle, which will cause bad health. It is all a vicious circle.

The fact that, amongst many poor, the health facilities, access to medical care and medication, are inadequate and very limited is contributing to their physical weakness. This, in combination with their isolated situation, leads to difficulties gaining access to medical care since the distances can be considerable and the transport facilities are of insufficient character (Swanepool & de Beer 2006:6). Considering these aspects of the lives of the underprivileged non-white women of South Africa, it once again reinforces the vulnerable situation in which they find themselves.

4.4 Vulnerability

*Your home is your haven,* is an old saying, which refers to the conception of ones home being the safe and secure place in life. The lack of such a haven, a proper house to live in, are most likely contributing to people’s sense of security and vulnerability. This is the case of many of the people living in the poor non-white areas in South Africa. Many urban people live in

\(^{29}\) The South African Government have received massive critique regarding its statements and view on the disease and treatment, placing itself in opposition towards medical science, authors’ comments.

\(^{30}\) Unemployment grants and other financial support from the Government, authors’ comment.
squalor, in poorly built houses and shacks\textsuperscript{31}. When going to the townships in Cape Town to undertake our life story interviews, this became very evident. While some people in these areas, such as Roshieda and Khanyisa, lived in rather neat, but yet small, and safe houses in the good parts of the townships, others were worse off. Filthy little shacks that due to overpopulation are built almost on top of each other, with leaking walls and roofs that can not stand a chance against rain and dust. These tiny shacks, which are usually too small for the number of people living in them, have bad or inadequate foundations and lack of heating and electricity.

The setting for the interviews with Nontobeko and Phuti was their homes, shacks in bad conditions as described above. Nontobeko’s shack was placed in the very heart of Fhillipe. It was cold, draft, and surrounded by countless other shacks without proper toilets. There was one building not far from her house that was used as toilet, with a distinct smell surrounding it. Right outside of her shack was an unfinished small house, which was supposed to become her home. However, the roof was still missing and, she told us, it had been like that for four years. According to Nontobeko the house-building was part of a governmental project with the aim to improve the living standard in the area, but it was never fully completed. Hence, her option was to live either in her shack or in a house without roof. She expressed a strong sense of frustration over the fact that she had to continue living in such a condition, which left a feeling of vulnerability as well as powerlessness, since there was nothing she could do to improve her situation.

Phuti was experiencing a similar situation. She lived in a shack in Langa\textsuperscript{32}, which lacked a complete set of walls. The walls did not reach all the way up to the roof, which caused her a lot of grief. Not only did this not protect her against bad weather, but it also made her fear for her life. Since she worked actively, on a grassroots level, with crime prevention she was well known in the community. She collaborated with the police and was frequently reporting the criminals to them, as well as working with protection and helping victims of crime. Her work within this area had made her well known and detested by the gangsters and criminals. She had received threats several times, hence she feared for her life. The fact that she did not have a safe house with protecting walls left her extremely vulnerable and she often suffered from sleepless nights since never knowing if this would be the night they would come for her.

\textsuperscript{31} See appendix VI for more information on the quality of the housing in South Africa.
\textsuperscript{32} One of the oldest townships in Cape Town, authors’ comment.
Not only did these living arrangements leave both of the women in vulnerable situations, with a feeling of being exposed and powerless, it also affected their physical health. Both of them suffered from various diseases, such as arthritis and high blood pressure, as a result of their living situation.

As mentioned above, a part of the vulnerability that these women are subjugated to is caused by crime, or rather the fear of being exposed to crime. A fear that, according to Crime Detective Dadoo is justified, since the crime rate in Cape Town, and all over South Africa is strikingly high, with gangs, gangsters, violence, prostitution, sexual violence, robberies and drugs as part of everyday life. The fact that high levels of crime are existing in the Cape Town area was something that we experienced during our visit in the country. There was a gathering of drug dealers, gangs and prostituted, both women and children, at the local communication centres across the city. According to Phuti, the crime level is deeply linked to poverty since many poor people have to engage themselves in criminal activities in order to get food for survival, which according to our own experiences seems to be a correct analysis. Regardless of reasons for the high crime rate, it is affecting the everyday life of the women interviewed. According to Khanyisa, whose son was killed 15 years ago in the township revolt in Cape Town, the conditions of the society scares her:

…people don’t even walk outside anymore when it’s dark. They are frightened, everyone is scared. There is too much criminality on the streets.

This fear was expressed by Roshieda, who compared the situation with the apartheid years, when her life was very isolated. During that time, she said, they could not go outside the house since there was so much violence in the streets, especially in the townships and the non-white communities. However, at the same time she said that the apartheid legislation did not affect her life significantly. She still leads a rather isolated life and she is very dependent on her husband. Even though she said that she lives in a proportionally safe area she very rarely leaves the house even though she believed it not to be as dangerous any more. She is still very scared of the environment and all the violence, and feels very vulnerable in her situation.
It seems to be a common view amongst women, since all of our informants mentioned the problems with crime; they felt limited and vulnerable in their everyday life. The violent social climate makes people scared, feeling insecure and exposed, making them isolate themselves in order to protect themselves.

The non-white women of South Africa are positioned in a very vulnerable situation, as discussed earlier with the continuing oppression and poverty. This vulnerability and exposure that they are finding themselves in are contributing to the lack of positive development. As Jasmina told us, there have been many positive changes since the fall of apartheid in terms of laws that are created in order to protect women and children, better access to healthcare, electricity-, water-, and social services. However, even though the intentions are good, she predicted that all the exposed women would tell us that it has not become better and that life is still a struggle. This proved to be correct, and the reason, she said, is that these women are the poorest and most vulnerable in society, hence they can not take part of the positive changes. When you are at the bottom of the poverty scale, you usually have none or very limited education, which means that the possibilities to gain meaningful employment are equally limited. So, she finished, when you are stuck in poverty where the struggle surrounds issues such as getting food and basic survival matters, you will not be personally affected by positive reforms and laws on a governmental level.

4.5 Powerlessness

As mentioned previously the apartheid legislation was both a racist and sexist system, which left the non-white women doubly exposed. As a result, they were left with hardly any power, which is something that was evident in our interviews. A feeling of powerlessness, frustration, and an eagerness for transition was expressed by several of the women. Phuti told us about how the apartheid legislation left the women very powerless, they were not allowed to walk on the streets, to work or have other basic rights as an adequate citizen. In post-apartheid times life has become much easier, she explained that ‘now you can sing, dance, be free, and be on the streets’.

Even though the legislation promotes women to be a part of the power-elite, the right to vote et cetera, this is not something that the oppressed women are affected by. They claim that they still lead a life with a feeling of powerlessness constantly present. In this case, it is regarding
basic things such as the power over your own body, which is something that in most households is not an option. Sophia mentioned that many women are suffering in their home due to the patriarchal structures that prevent them from living the life they want. Their husbands are not in favour of them working, they do not have the right to demand condoms et cetera, hence they are powerless in their own home. This was a significant issue that was addressed during the AGM-meeting of Khululeka, where it was said that this is a big problem in the rural areas. An issue that has raised critique against the urban civil society, since it has been claimed that they are neglecting this issue. Nevertheless, this problematic situation surrounding condoms are something that several other informants addressed, which we will come back to later.

However, one thing that has been giving the women a greater sense of power is the right to make themselves heard. There are demonstrations taking place all over the country, women are gathering to demand control over their own lives. Yvette, amongst others, was on several occasions participating in demonstrations regarding women’s rights. Another person that commented on demonstrations and the sense of power that they were infusing was Phuti, when she mentioned that now they can not force the women to work without getting paid:

> It is legal to protest so now your employer has to pay you, otherwise you can go to the union since it’s illegal

This area is characterised of great complexity: the poor people being exploited by employers and people in positions of power is problematic since, as to quote Swanepool & de Beer (2006:4) [...] *they have nothing to bargain with, the poor are powerless.* Still, the law is supposed to protect the exposed and when giving them rights to express their discontent, they at least have the possibility to demonstrate and protest on the streets. However, this demands a certain level of knowledge, which many of the oppressed women do not have access to. Knowledge about simple things such as what their rights are. Phuti talked about this when she explained what kind of work she was carrying out, for example helping people to get sick grants when needed, something that is impossible when not knowing how the system works. Regardless if the laws are there to help empowering people, when the knowledge is not there, there is little or no possibility to take advantage of what has been created in order to improve the power-situation in the country.
According to Sheryl, the women who seek help from, or are engaged in, civil society are experiencing (and quite rightly so) feelings of powerlessness. She claimed that they need to be listened to before they can be empowered, in order to improve self-confidence. This is where her, and other, NGOs play an important role since their workshops gives them the opportunity to talk and listen to each other. This is of great value in order to create a feeling of solidarity and make the women believe that they are right and have rights, which will encourage them to change and improve their situation. This will, Sheryl explained:

...create the power of feeling empowered and do something about the situation...

She continued with establishing that encouragement and awareness create change. ‘Strong women can create change together’ and this is one of the reasons why gatherings such as workshops within the civil society or Women’s Only meetings similar to the ILRIG- meeting are of great value for the positive changes amongst the women. Sheryl was not the only one who believed this to be a good tool towards limiting the powerlessness that is affecting the underprivileged female population. According to WHEAT Trust33, the most effective mechanism for social change lies in the empowerment of women within communities. Hence, this is of great importance in order to create positive changes for the exposed women. Even though empowerment is primarily about gaining decision-making power it does not mean that it is solely about politics. It is rather a mixture between the right to decision-making and the ability to make decisions. It is arguable that having skills are crucial in order to perform any form of decision-making, however this is not the key ingredient of empowerment, but merely a tool of enablement. An other aspect that needs to be taken into account in order for changes to occur is knowledge. People can only make enlightened decisions if they possess correct information, thus empowerment includes information or knowledge. This is something that often is regarded as one of the primary tasks of community development workers, or civil society. The organisations in the poorer communities functions as reservoirs of information to provide those in need (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:30).

33 Information CD, Seedy Rom, WHEAT TRUST, Where dreams are grown
Worth mentioning while discussing powerlessness and empowerment is the problems surrounding the fact that the situation regarding poverty has not, improved during post-apartheid times. Yvette talked about this very issue and mentioned that since now there is an existing black middle-class and black politicians in ANC, which could lead to the conclusion that this would improve the situation amongst the poverty-stricken black communities. Since, she claimed, this is not the case it has created a feeling of frustration and a notion of ‘they have turned their backs on us’. She exemplified with following:

For instance, even though there are plenty of black women in Parliament they don’t raise matters and questions that are important for the female black population.

According to Yvette, this has caused a large part of the population not to vote at all, which has its consequences on the democratic arena. In Cape Town, for instance, ANC is no longer in power but the Democratic Party.

4.6 The nexus between the five dimensions

As shown above, one aspect in the deprivation trap can hardly exist without the other. This was something that Nomvuyo, the director of WHEAT Trust, proved to be aware of. She believed the situation in South Africa to be far too complex to be able to tell what the main problem was. However, she believed poverty to be one of the main factors that leads to other problems such as unemployment (which, as said earlier is an important indicator of poverty), HIV/Aids (physical weakness), domestic violence (vulnerability) et cetera. The fact that one cluster reinforces the other and that poverty is a very strong determinant is confirmed by Robert Chambers (1983), and in his discussion of the deprivation trap he states following:

Poverty is a strong determinant of the others. [It] contributes to physical weakness through lack of food, small bodies, malnutrition leading to low immune response to infections, and inability to reach or pay for health services; to isolation because of the inability to pay the cost of schooling, to buy a radio or a bicycle, to afford to travel to look for work, or to live near the village centre or a main road; to vulnerability through lack of assets to pay large expenses or to meet contingencies; and to powerlessness because lack of wealth goes with low status: the poor have no voice.

Chambers 1983:111
However, all five components are strongly linked to each other; isolation, powerlessness, and physical weakness leave people vulnerable in a physical sense as well as in a psychological and economical way. Poverty on the other hand leaves people voiceless and powerless (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:7).

The problematic reality of the female non-white population in South Africa has several grounds. The historic view is a cause that can not be neglected, but the complexity of the situation is deeper than that. Structures of the society, power, gender, and race are all contributing to the oppressive situation, hence these factors are of outmost relevance in order to understand and create an adequate stage where the development sphere can generate a positive change.

5 POWER

The deprivation trap is an important tool in order to create understanding of the oppressed non-white female population. However, this exclusively will not explain the situation and the changes, or lack of changes and positive development, in post-apartheid times. To be able to see the complete picture it is of great relevance to, in addition to this, also look at the power structures that permeate the South African society.

According to Charles Tilly (2000), the apartheid system was one of the nineteenth century’s most spectacular and brutal systems of inequality (2000:129). The South African State reinforced the racial categories created by earlier regimes, which were to be the ground of unequal rights within the society. The racially defined categories were built in to the country’s legal and economic structures, creating a system that unfairly affected some categories, the non-white people in particular (Tilly 2000:135). Tilly continues by stating that since it was a highly unjust system the non-white people protested which led to a revolt. The problem is that in many systems of inequality the people lack the knowledge, the capacity to organise, and the power to change their situation since the system that creates the categories deprive the people of these qualities (Tilly 2000:138). Efforts have been put into reforming the legislation, with the purpose to step away from its history of oppression.
5.1 A national gender machinery

Lukes (2005) argues that there are three different views of power, the first one being the most incomplete of them; the one-dimensional view of power. It focuses on decision-making by political actors and the task is to identify who succeeds in the decision-making. By doing this, the individuals or groups that possess more power than the others in the process can be determined. This view presupposes that there is a visible conflict that is exposed in political participation. In looking at such conflicts the actors reveal their abilities to influence outcomes. Thus, it presumes that decisions involve actual conflict (Lukes 2005:18). According to this view, South Africa has made a lot of progress since the fall of apartheid as pieces of legislations have been adopted in order to reduce gender inequality in the country, which this chapter attempts to show.

5.1.1 Legislations and visions

With the implementation of democracy in 1994, several gender activists as well as prominent leaders of the WNC\textsuperscript{34}, the Women’s National Coalition, were absorbed into the parliament. Another important step towards a change was the inception of a national machinery working in the direction of gender equality and the establishment of the CGE, the Commission on Gender Equality, in 1997 (Nilsson 2004:45); an institution that is collaborating with several different NGOs in the country. This establishment is one of six institutions\textsuperscript{35} that were created as a step in the new democratic constitution that initially (during 1994-1999) was led by Nelson Mandela. One purpose with the CGE is, amongst others, to promote gender equality by collaborating with the Parliament, the Government and other powerful institutions in South Africa (Commission on Gender Equality 2006). Its main vision is as follows:

\begin{quote}
A society free from gender discrimination, and all forms of oppression, in which people will have the opportunity and means to realise their full potential, regardless of race, class, sex, religion, sexual orientation, disability or geographic location.
\end{quote}

Commission on Gender Equality 2006

According to Amanda Gouws (2006:149), the South African Constitution can be described as one of the most women-friendly constitutions in the world, embodying the principles of non-

\textsuperscript{34} Formed in 1991 with the purpose to work towards a women’s charter ‘which would guarantee effective equality’ (IISDnet 2006).

\textsuperscript{35} The other five are the Public Service Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Public protector, the Land Commission and the Truth Commission (Women’s net 2006).
sexism and non-racism, which is something that we recognised while studying their legislations regarding equality. It has an equality clause that is interpreted to provide not only formal but also substantive equality. Over the past decade, the Government has adopted a ‘gender mainstreaming approach’, which seeks to place a gender perspective on any policy or programme. Before a policy is taken on, an analysis is made of the policy’s effects on both men and women (Butler 2004:83). Looking at what Lukes refers to as a one-dimensional view of power, these changes in legislation should have lead to an immediate improvement in the society and within peoples lives. However, according to Anthony Butler (2004) South Africa has progressed a very short way towards gender mainstreaming. People are guaranteed equality before the law, the Government is committed to the development of a non-sexist country, employment equity has been targeted at women, but mainstreaming is still very far away from the reality (Butler 2004:84). Hence this view of power does not seem to show the complete solution to the problem. This is something that becomes evident while, as a visitor in the country, observing the climate and structure of the society as well as listening to other women, informally as well as while attending meetings such as the Women’s Only meeting.

This complex of problems is something that Nomvuyo pointed out to us when discussing the situation of the governmental changes of the country. She said, which also was confirmed by Sophia as well as by Sheryl, that the State does acknowledge the problematic situation of post-apartheid South Africa. They do want change to occur, she said, and they have been creating several pieces of legislation in order for this to happen. Jasmina believed that, in addition to all the reforms that have taken place, the emotional situation of the women has improved. ‘They know that the law is on their side.’ Sophia was more critical and meant that not enough is being done and that she did not get the impression that the people’s lives are improving. Some of the women that she is working with are depressed by the fact that the changes that they are waiting for are not coming fast enough. Despite the fact that, as Nomvuyo pointed out, there are several good pieces of legislation in South Africa that are created in order to promote gender equality, this is not a guarantee for changes to really occur. The legislation does not necessarily mean that there are possibilities to implement these legislations in a satisfactory way. She claimed the Government to be the policymakers while civil society is the implementer; hence, she inquires a more extensive collaboration between them. Everybody knows what the problems are, the Government is well aware of it, but solving these problems are not mainly a governmental task. The people themselves, the grassroots, have to be the ones to confront the problems in order for changes to really arise.
No matter how much energy and effort being invested in legislation it does not seem to contribute to change the basic structures in the society, something that Nomvuyo wrapped up in following words:

…it makes you wonder, in the bill of rights, if all people are equal. You start wondering as whether women are real people or if they are half people? And are they equal before the law?

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The problems with positive changes was confirmed by Thembeka when she talked about how the situation in South Africa in general, and Cape Town in specific, are deteriorating and how people are struggling in poverty. Adding to this the racism, which several of our informants mentions, that is still permeating the South African society. Not only is there racism between white and black, but also between black and coloured and even between different groups of black people, for instance between Xhosa and Zulu. Thembeka wraps up the problematic situation in following quote:

You can change the rules and the laws but not people’s mentality.

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The institutionalisation of state mechanisms to enhance gender equality in South Africa was a part of the negotiated settlement that led to a democratic South Africa. The acceptance of the need to establish a national gender machinery followed a long and hard struggle by South African women to put gender on the political agenda. Previous to this, gender had been made subordinate to the struggle for racial equality for many decades (Gouws 2006:143). According to Gouws this model of national gender machinery is of great use for the work with gender issues in South Africa, where collaboration between different organs is in focus. However, there is no collaboration between civil society and the other components (Gouws 2006:148).
The situation in South Africa is very conflict ridden when it comes to the relationship between civil society and the State, which according to Jenkins (2001), is a result of the country’s history and the legacy of apartheid that left a widespread social exclusion with a large unskilled, poor population (Jenkins 2001:181). The NGO sector in South Africa is unique in the matter that it was created as a reaction to the conditions shaped by the apartheid structure. The nature of the apartheid system resulted in women being faced by struggle against both gender inequality and racial oppression. Women were divided along race and class lines, which shaped their perceptions of achieving gender equality (South Africa Country Papers, 160).

As shown, changing legislation is necessary and shows a will to improve the state of the country. However, legislation is not the only solution, more has to be done. This is where the civil society comes in, with its mission to improve the lives of those not able to let their own voices be heard.

5.2 Civil Society

According to Lukes, the two-dimensional view of power states that in addition to study decision-making, ‘ways in which the political agenda is controlled’ has to be taken into
account. The nondecision-making has to be examined, that is the fact that people with power fail to act upon certain issues and therefore a non-event arises (2005:22). ‘It is crucially important to identify potential issues which nondecision-making prevents from being actual’ (Lukes 2005:23). This view, just as the one-dimensional view, assumes that there is a concrete conflict, in this case between the people who are engaging in nondecision-making and the ones excluded from the political process (Lukes 2005:24). Due to a lack of collaboration between the State and the civil society difficulties arise for the NGOs when it comes to putting important issues on the political agenda. Nomvuyo pointed out that the civil society has to be the implementer, and hence without cooperation with the State this becomes a hard task to fulfil.

5.2.1 Collaboration between the State and civil society

According to Figure 2, the collaboration between the civil society sector and the other organs are non-existing. In the case with civil society in Cape Town this model seems to be applicable to a large extent. Thus, it is important to remember that generalisations never reflect the whole truth, even though there are tendencies to a deficient collaboration between these different spheres. This became clear during our interviews and conversations with activists and people engaged in the civil society.

According to Michael Carley (2001) one of the main criteria to be able to create a positive change in sustainable urban living is to have a broad-based, democratic participation, reaching right down to the neighbourhood level (Carley 2001:11). Without this, it is unlikely that change will occur. Carley also claims that one positive aspect with today’s situation in the development sphere is that there is a growing recognition towards the shortcomings with a top-down approach, regardless if it is led by public or private sector. This approach, he claims, will always be weak compared to stronger, more sustainable development initiatives combining a bottom-up community involvement with integrated and guided development. One of the reasons why community self-development is looked upon as something positive and an essential process is because people need to analyse their own problems. They need to fashion their own solutions in order for the development process to be effective (Carley 2001:12).
There are usually several different stakeholders involved in community development; they can be identified at the different levels of government, private sector, non-governmental organisations, and community stakeholders (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:17). It is important to remember that community development workers never work in isolation, there is always more than one stakeholder presenting the development environment. However, according to Swanepoel & de Beer (2006:23), many of the problems surrounding development are caused by the view of the stakeholders that the development project belongs to them. Even if they all agree that the project belongs to the people affected by it, it still seems like it is very difficult to establish collaboration in order to improve the development work (Swanepoel and de Beer 2006:24). The feeling of 'we own the project' becomes interesting when listening to what our informants had to say about the collaboration with the Government. Several of the informants were inquiring collaboration and believed that the development sphere would improve if only civil society and the Government could collaborate. Nomvuyo was one of those who thought that the efficiency would improve if only they could form a partnership with the Government, however she still believed that civil society by itself needed to be the implementers. As she said:

People are sick of getting help from professionals, it has to be the people themselves that are encountering these problems.

Yvette agreed on the fact that there is a need for governmental support, when she claimed that they get hardly any support from the State, neither in financial nor supportive terms. Therefore, even though many are positive to receiving governmental support this does not necessarily mean that they want to work side by side. As Sheryl said, the NGOs she was working with had little or no contact with politicians and she liked it that way. According to her the most efficient way of dealing with the problems was by working directly with the women, ‘grassroots organisations are more important and a better tool for change’. This view, however, is not necessarily representative. Looking at Jasmina, she was very positive towards the Government and what it did for the developmental sphere. However, as many others, she pointed out that, when it comes to financial support, this is more or less non-existing. The fact that so many of our informants talked about funding indicates that this is an important part of the collaboration between the two stakeholders and that non-existing support from the Government is yet an other sign of the power structures that Lukes talks about. By neglecting the civil society in an economic matter, they are being exposed to power and it
becomes evident that they are disadvantaged in the development sphere. Since finding themselves in this power-situation, they get very dependent on the good will of the Government.

5.2.2 Funding

According to Lisa Bornstein (2003) the funds that constitute the aid chain, which NGOs and civil society are depending on, are involving many different role players, such as government departments and private consultants (Bornstein 2003:396). By using the example of the United Kingdom, the following figure shows what an aid chain, involving international funding, can look like:

Figure 3. South African aid chain

This is, however, a problematic area. Many of our informants talked about the lack of financial support from the Government. Jasmina, for example, mentioned that their organisation existed more or less with financial support from countries overseas, mainly from Germany. This was confirmed by the other representatives from organisations who mentioned countries such as Germany, Sweden and Canada as very important for their survival. Apart from this, private donors are vital for the civil society, and Nomvuyo mentioned how the fundraising they carried out in order to be able to financially support women in grassroots organisations were a crucial part of their work. Thembeka talk about how, not only the civil society was financially dependent on donors, but also the nursery school she was working at. Previously this had been financed by the Government, but since a few years back the Government stopped supporting institutions such as nursery schools. Now they were
completely dependent on outside donors, such as the church and overseas funding from Sweden.

Generally speaking, a fair amount of the practical work in the developing part of the world, women’s NGOs as well as feminist research, is only made possible with help from donor organisations (Arnfred 2001:85). At least one third of the funding for the NGO sector in South Africa is provided by foreign sources (Heinrich 2001:7). This means that a lot of effort is put into learning how to navigate in donor-dominated waters, taking advantage and using both the money and contacts according to their own agendas (Arnfred 2001:85). Today, the Government is seen as legitimate by donors and consequently some donors prefer funding the Government directly. The donors that still provide funding for the NGOs have stricter criterions of efficiency and accountability than during the apartheid years. Hence, the NGOs are forced to use other strategies for their financial sustainability (Ballara et al 1997:7). Ways of raising funding can be, as Sophia told us, offering a service or fundraising through events like having a bazaar or a cake sale.

During the interviews with the women who represented organisations, we found out that a majority of the funding comes from international donors. The Government only funds specific projects or provides funding only for certain NGOs, which leads to a lot of competitiveness between different NGOs, something that hinders the organisations to develop partnerships. Competing over territory and resources create difficulties for the NGOs when it comes to convincing the Government to provide them with funding (Ballara et al 1997:7).

5.3 Female oppression

According to Lukes the one-dimensional and two-dimensional views are incomplete in the sense that they do not take into account ‘the various ways of suppressing latent conflicts within society’ (2005:59). He argues that the most effective use of power is to avoid actual conflict from occurring at all. This can be done in various ways of shaping the people’s perceptions and preferences so that they accept the situation they find themselves in. Through processes of socialisation, control of information, and media (Lukes 2005:27) people are made to see their situation as natural and consistent (Lukes 2005:28).
As mentioned in the *Introduction* the non-white women of South Africa are the ones who suffer the most from poverty and oppression, hence they are the ones who, to the largest extent, are exposed to the violations of the human rights. To be able to comprehend this situation it is of great relevance to consider the fundamental structures that affect the everyday life of the citizens. These structures are based upon the dichotomies between superiority and subordination, which are constantly present. These power structures are based upon different aspects, such as gender, ethnicity and class and it is important to implement these features while analysing a certain situation where structural subordination is to be found (Mulinari 2003:21).

### 5.3.1 Power of domination

According to Michael Kevane (2004), the grinding poverty of African countries falls especially heavy on the shoulders of women. This owing to several aspects; men and women make different choices in life owing to the fact that they are presented with different opportunities, shaped by social structures. Structures that include traditions of dead generations as well as legal rules, norms of behaviours, ongoing institutions, hierarchies et cetera (Kevane 2004:29). A big part of the situation is due to traditions passed on from generations. Traditions that turn into rules and norms without actually being written down (Kevane 2004:30). This combined with the fact that many African countries have treated women as legal minors (which includes the non-white women of South Africa) in the past. Oyèrónké Oyewùmí (1997) argues that to understand the situation of the African women the colonisation has to be taken into account. She states that the racially distinct categories, the colonial and the native, have to be expanded to four hierarchical categories, starting at the top; men (European), women (European), native (African men), and Other (African women). Hence, the African women occupied an unspecified category and were considered invisible. These women were colonized and dominated as Africans along with the African men and subsequently separately marginalized as African women (Oyewùmí 1997:122). Still today, women, to a certain extent, are denied the right of personhood with a lack of control over their own lives (Kevane 2004:31).

Women’s subordination has cultural, political, and economic aspects. This is especially true in Third World societies, which today are influenced by a mix of traditional and modern, internal and external influences. This is very clear in a country such as South Africa and it is
important to stress that all of these components can be sources of inequality (Foster 1986:105). Every society has a system of culture, referring to standardized customs and regular behaviours that include customs of marriage, food habits, taboos and much more. It is closely associated with ideology, which includes religious beliefs and practices, values, myths, moral codes and general approval of certain ways of behaving. Culture and ideology influence the relations between people and the politics in the society (Leftwich 1983:16). Article 5 of the CEDAW (1979) impose on the state members to take all appropriate measures to ‘modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women’.

However, this article does not always reflect the reality. During the meeting prior to the Women’s Only meeting, for example, the women felt attacked by the males’ participation, and as a consequence they felt that even at the meetings men wanted to dominate. Due to this the Women’s Only meeting were held in order to let the women have their say without interference of the men’s opinions of what women should or should not do. Sophia said that in some ways she felt that the fact that there are mostly women in civil society reinforces the patriarchy. This goes in line with what a local counsellor for the ANC said during the Women’s only meeting. She meant that it is good with such meetings for a while but eventually the women need to break through to the men. In the long run these meetings only create aggression between men and women if one part is excluded from them.

Khanyisa said that men do not want to be bothered with the work that women do in the organisations, they are not interested. Kevane (2004) claims that the situation of the South African women is of no interest for men since they are disinterested in altering the male-favouring structures that are very present in today’s South Africa. This is something that became clear to us during our interviews and visits at different meetings, since there were never any men present, and while talking to different random men about this very issue, they never seemed to be concerned or care. Some men had the opinion that the situation of women has improved to an extent that they can no longer be considered oppressed, a view that led to a lack of support towards those women participating in women’s groups and women’s meetings. We believe this to be a result of the previous racial oppression; the non-white men
are still more engaged in problems concerning race, which leave no room (or interest?) for them to participate in women’s liberation struggle.

**5.3.2 Socialisation resulting in oppression**

According to Jean Davison (1997), development as a process has historically been male. This due to the fact that men within development organisations and major donor agencies have dominated the thinking and knowledge disseminated about development as well as due to men having the key decision making positions in these organisations, that influence the way development is conceived (Davison 1997:193). As stated by Shireen Hassim (2004) the South African women’s movement had to prioritise the democratisation of the public sphere rather than dealing with social and cultural norms. This is the reason why the country has a highly developed constitution and protection for women’s rights but the women have seen little or no improvement in real life. The patriarchal views in civil society made it difficult to transform the women’s rights into practice (Hassim 2004:7).

Women are seen as child bearers and nurturers, not as activists or leaders. Sophia told us that the husbands do not appreciate that their wives participate in meetings and organisations. She also believed that the reason why there are mostly women working in the civil society sector is because of the caring role that women possess. The women engaged in civil society are quite often away from home, which means that they are not taking care of the household. This was further stated by a quote from one of the men who had participated in a previous meeting arranged by ILRIG:

> If women are activists, they are neglecting their homes and families

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The women at the Women’s Only meeting agreed on that through cultural beliefs and traditions children are raised with the idea that males are superior to females. It is not just a problem of men’s attitudes, but also the fact that women are socialised into being women, which is one of the points with Lukes arguments regarding how an unequal power structure can be maintained through the socialisation process. *You become what your surroundings expect from you.* Hence, a lot of unequal behaviours and attitudes are regarded as normal. One of the women that we interviewed constitutes a good example of how women are socialised into their roles of nurturers. Roshieda has been a housewife for fifteen years and prefers being
at home with the children, since her opinion is that they need someone to be around, especially their mother. She told us that many of the women in the area where she lives are housewives; something that she thinks is the best for the children and the family. One speaker at the second Women’s Only meeting, Shereen Essof, argued that it is of importance to understand the mechanisms that make it possible for some to dominate over others in order to come up with strategies to deal with sexism. She said that discrimination in schools, cultural and traditional beliefs, religious scriptures, an unequal justice system, and the media are all parts of the society that help reinforcing the notion that men are superior to women. Therefore, organisations need to address all of these areas of action in order to improve the situation of women in society.

Lukes offers a critique of the one-dimensional and two-dimensional views of power stating that they fail to reveal the less visible ways in which one group is dominating over another. This is exactly the way in which Lukes argues that power has to be defined; seeing the concept of power as domination (2005:108). He argues that the main topic, when using the three-dimensional power, is ‘*the capacity to secure compliance to domination through the shaping of beliefs and desires, by imposing internal constraints under historically changing circumstances*’ (Lukes 2005:144). As stated earlier, there are various ways in which people’s perceptions are influenced to accept their conditions, such as socialisation and control of information. This is something that the women at the Women’s Only meeting seemed aware of and to quote the words of one speaker at the meeting, Sheeren Essof:

> But for how long are we going to mitigate the effects of living in the master’s house, for how long are we going to accept the tokens of equality and freedom for women. When are we going to decide that it is enough! When are we going to tell the master that the roof is leaking, the door needs changing and the sewage stinks…

To summarise Lukes dimensions and their applicability we want to enhance that we believe the third view of power to be the most useful since it is including several aspects of power that need to be taken into consideration.
6 CONCLUSION

The non-white women of South Africa have a history of oppression, due to the racist and sexist apartheid-system. This has led to a struggle towards an egalitarian society where all women should possess the same rights and privileges.

With this in mind, the meaning of human rights has historically played a crucial part of the development in South Africa. The apartheid-legislation, with its vicious separating ideals, was an obvious violation against all aspects of human rights. Thus, during the input of democracy 1994, it is presumable that these violations would come to an end. This is not the case, and it becomes evident when looking at the situation of the non-white women who still suffer from poverty and exposure. Looking at the environment where they live, with a constant fear from aspects that surrounds their everyday life; crime, HIV/AIDS, poverty, living conditions, unemployment, isolation and sexual oppression, it becomes all too clear that this is not a dignified way of life. They are refused basic rights due to lack of knowledge and education (something that they did not have access to during the apartheid era). They are also deprived of the right to their own life and body, due to cultural and traditional values that are permeated by a strong patriarchal sense.

The Government has put great effort into improving the situation of the citizens. This has been done with several pieces of legislation and governmental institutions, such as the CGE which works towards equality and justice. However, which is confirmed by Lukes, this does not erase the power relations that exist in the country, which strike especially hard on the oppressed women. In 2000 President Thabo Mbeki held a speech in Havana entitled *The North Does Not Have All the Answers*, where he outlined the development objectives:

- The permanent elimination of poverty
- Sustained improvement in living standards
- Enhancement of human dignity
- Protection of the environment
- Respect for culture and social cohesion

Carley 2001:4
During the very same speech he inquired a broad sense of what civil society represents. *a strong spirit of communal, human solidarity* (Carley 2001:4). This shows that there is awareness in the governmental sphere that something needs to happen in order to change the situation, which only has become worse since the fall of apartheid. This is necessary in order to improve the situation; the Government cannot work alone, but needs help from other instances in the society. Civil society serves as a complement to this, however it becomes evident that there is a great distance between these stakeholders. Both when it comes to their views of ways to implement improvements and their (lack of) collaboration. A collaboration that some people inquire while others have a more reluctant view on the other role player. However, a collaboration between the two stakeholders would facilitate the reduction of power relations that exist everywhere. The civil society would get the opportunities to deliver the needs and views of the oppressed non-white women to representatives from the Government and the State. If these demands would be taken seriously this might contribute to a more equal society. Not only does the civil society need to be acknowledged by the sources of power, they also need to be supported financially as well as have a practical collaboration.

According to Hassim (2004), during the democratic period of the South African society there has been a focus on changing existing laws and policies in favour of women, and to implement the concept of equality in new structures. Focusing on reforming the State had unexpected consequences for the women’s movement. The issues of gender inequality were shifted from the area of politics and in to the policymaking sphere due to the constructing of institutions with the focus on gender topics. Since the focus has been on transforming the State, not enough women’s organisations deal with social and cultural norms, and as a result there has only been a partial implementation of the reforms. In addition, the majority of the activists who started working for the State presupposed that the Government would target its resources to reduce the inequalities that still existed after the fall of apartheid. It has been shown that policies to reduce the inequalities have been ineffective; the non-white women still have a higher unemployment rate, they get lower salaries than men, and they are more likely to carry out unpaid work (Hassim 2004:19). There has not been enough resources put into changing structural forces that create inequality and as long as this is not being done there will not be any real changes for the women in South Africa (Hassim 2004:18). These structural and cultural aspects can not be neglected, which were proven during the Women’s Only meeting, where many of the participants were more concerned with the issues surrounding their daily lives than issues on the current political agenda. Hence, during the present situation
it is of utmost relevance to focus on the oppression that happens in homes of these women, rather than on getting more women into parliament.

If putting effort into aspects surrounding Government and civil society would change the unjust situation, the problem would be far less complicated than the reality shows for. Underlying structures, attitudes, norms and socialisation-processes can be blamed for many of the existing inequalities. These are signs of a patriarchal view where non-whites get undermined by whites, hence according to this the power relations where the non-white women are placed at the bottom of the poverty scale, becomes evident. Power and power relations occur with and within social interaction between individuals. These interactions can be found in all different levels of the society; hence power and equality will be created and recreated. However, it is important to bear in mind that the character of these power relations is not of a constant nature that will run peoples lives, it is changeable (Reyes, de los & Mulinari 2005:23).

Something that becomes evident is that it is always easy to blame the situation facing the women on the culture, on the African culture, in order to preserve the existing oppression – violations of basic human rights. However, as Patricia McFadden (2001) points out:

...we have a choice, and I hope that we will choose the path of cooperation in making the world a place of dignity and justice for all human beings. Then culture can become what it was meant to be, and aesthetically, life-enhancing artefact in the service of all those who craft and use it as a source of pleasure.

McFadden 2001:70

However, the women themselves raised issues regarding culture and traditions, and they showed anger due to the fact that the male part of the population blamed the existing inequalities on these traditional values, where women should stay at home and not participate in working life or organisational life. To them it was important to make plans while standing in the kitchen and when doing so take small steps towards a better life. Once again, having powerful women in parliament and having the right to vote is naturally important for the country as a whole, but it does not necessarily affect the ordinary women living in the poverty-stricken townships in the outskirts of Cape Town. The primary tasks of development, when it comes to people in these deprived situations, should be concerned around the immediate fulfilment of basic needs such as water, food, shelter, clothing, drinking water,
health, education and job opportunities. Even though decision-making also is of great relevance and an important aspect when it comes to human rights, for the women in focus in this study this becomes secondary.

All these problems and negative aspects became evident to us, and the things mentioned and discussed by our informants was becoming increasingly clear to us. At times the negative aspects of the development in the society could be slightly overwhelming. However, despite the miserable situation amongst the non-white women living in the townships surrounded by poverty, disease and violence, there was still a strong spirit of struggle and a willing to keep fighting towards positive changes. This, we believe, shows that there is hope towards a better life for these women and the generations of women growing up.
7 SUMMARY

The aim of this study is to clarify how the democratisation process has affected the underprivileged non-white women, and why the changes in the legislation have not improved the situation of the oppressed women. This overall research problem is divided into four more specific topics:

- How does South Africa respond to the Human Rights Declaration?
- How does the civil society contribute to a positive development?
- How is collaboration between the Government and civil society characterised?
- How do the underlying power structures affect the daily lives of South Africa’s non-white women?

This research problem is being explored by using the deprivation trap, which is closely linked to the Human Rights declaration, and it plays a vital part in the lives of the oppressed non-white women. The five dimensions that the deprivation trap consists of are reinforcing one another, and they are therefore equally present in this study. However, despite this the dimension of powerlessness has a very strong emphasis, due to the history of South Africa when power was removed from a large part of the population.

The legacy of the apartheid legislation, with its racial and sexist discrimination, has affected post-apartheid South Africa to a large extent and its heritage lives on when it comes to segregation and an oppressed female non-white population. Despite democratisations the society is still deeply divided, where race-segregation has been replaced by a strong class society, where women are struggling the worst, and where racism and crime still seem to be constantly present. Not only are there existing gaps within the population, there is also a huge gap between the policy and its legislation and the reality.

In order to explain why the situation does not seem to improve for the exposed women, several aspects need to be taken into account. Not only is it the Government that is responsible for positive changes to occur. The problem goes deeper than that, which becomes clear when discussing the arguments of Lukes. The civil society and the Government should have a collaboration in order to improve and make the development process more efficient,
however the problem does not end here. Constant power structures are permeating the society on every level, grassroots as well as governmental and the non-white women are, according to different hegemonic dichotomies, finding themselves at the bottom of the hierarchical scale. This assumption will not change with legislation and a state-collaboration with civil society; hence it is a difficult problem to come to terms with.

The methodology that has laid the foundation for this study has been empirical field work in Cape Town, South Africa, where women representing activism and civil society have been interviewed, as have the poor women living in non-white townships. As a complement to this a crime detective has been interviewed and meetings have been attended. In combination with our experiences and impressions in the country, these have served as our primary sources, whilst our secondary sources have been legislation, reports and statistics.
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APPENDIX I

Interview guide 1

- What background are you from?
- When did you start engaging yourself in activism?
- How has this changed your view on development work?

- What kind of work does this organisation focus on?
- When did it start out?
- Who initiated it?
- How big is the organisation?
- Where does your work take place?
- How do you reach out the women in need of help?

- Financial support and funding?
- Volunteers and/or employed?
- Enough economic resources to carry out the work you want?
- Collaboration or support from the Government or politicians?
- Do you believe the Government is acknowledging and encouraging the work that civil society carries out?

- How has the situation for the non-white society changed after the fall of apartheid?
- The situation for the non-white women, in particular?
- How have the post-apartheid reforms and legislations changed the situation amongst the women your organisation are working with, the underprivileged non-white women?
- Have you seen a positive change in the lives of the women your working with, during post-apartheid times?

- Has the work your organisation carries out changed after the fall of apartheid (if it existed during apartheid)?

- What is the main problem in the South African society today?
- In an ideal way; How would this be addressed?

- Does the white South Africa acknowledge that there still is a problem?

- How do you look upon the future?
- Will there be changes towards equality?
Och dessa frågor stod längst ner i dokumentet av nån anledning, kanske de inte ska vara med…?

- Background
- Work
- We have got the perception that a majority of those involved in civil society are women. Why is that, do you think? What consequences do you think this has for the development in South Africa?
- How do you, via your organisation, target the women in need of your help? Do you manage to reach all, or is it just a certain group of women that manages to receive help?
- There are thousands of NGOs and community organisations around? What is the main purpose of starting up so many? Since some of them are so small? Does the really small once manage to achieve any changes?

Interview guide 2

- Background
  - How long have you lived here?
  - How does your days look like?
- Family
- Work/support
  - How has your life changed during the last decade, since the fall of apartheid?
- Have you ever been in contact with civil society?
  - How?
  - Did it make any difference in your life?
- How do you look at your future?
### APPENDIX II


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>1 122 002</td>
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</table>

APPENDIX III

Pre-apartheid segregation legislation

Black (or Natives) Land Act No. 27 of 1913, commenced 19 June 1913
Black Africans were no longer able to own or rent land outside of designated reserves (which amounted to approximately 7% of South Africa's land, although the promise was made to increase the amount). The Cape Province was the only province excluded from this act due to the existing Black franchise rights which were enshrined in the South Africa Act. During the apartheid era the reserves were converted to Bantustans, and later into 'independent' states within South Africa.³⁶

Native (Black) Urban Areas Act No 21 of 1923, commenced 14 June
This act divided South Africa into 'prescribed' (urban) and 'non-prescribed' (rural) areas, and strictly controlled the movement of Black males between them. Each local authority had responsibility for the Blacks in its area and 'Native advisory boards' were set up to regulate the inflow of Black workers and to order the removal of 'surplus' Blacks (referring to those not employed). As a result of this towns became almost exclusively white and the only Blacks allowed to live in town were domestic workers.³⁷

³⁶ http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheidlaws/g/No27of13.htm
³⁷ http://africanhistory.about.com/od/apartheidlaws/g/No21of23.htm
APPENDIX IV

The apartheid legislation

**Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, Act No 55 of 1949**
Prohibited marriages between white people and people of other races. Between 1946 and the enactment of this law, only 75 mixed marriages had been recorded, compared with some 28,000 white marriages.

**Immorality Amendment Act, Act No 21 of 1950; amended in 1957 (Act 23)**
Prohibited adultery, attempted adultery or related immoral acts (extra-marital sex) between white and black people.

**Population Registration Act, Act No 30 of 1950**
Led to the creation of a national register in which every person's race was recorded. A Race Classification Board took the final decision on what a person's race was in disputed cases.

**Group Areas Act, Act No 41 of 1950**
Forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races. Led to forced removals of people living in "wrong" areas, for example Coloureds living in District Six in Cape Town.

**Suppression of Communism Act, Act No 44 of 1950**
Outlawed communism and the Community Party in South Africa. Communism was defined so broadly that it covered any call for radical change. Communists could be banned from participating in a political organisation and restricted to a particular area.

**Bantu Building Workers Act, Act No 27 of 1951**
Allowed black people to be trained as artisans in the building trade, something previously reserved for whites only, but they had to work within an area designated for blacks. Made it a criminal offence for a black person to perform any skilled work in urban areas except in those sections designated for black occupation.
Separate Representation of Voters Act, Act No 46 of 1951
Together with the 1956 amendment, this act led to the removal of Coloureds from the common voters' roll.

Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, Act No 52 of 1951
Gave the Minister of Native Affairs the power to remove blacks from public or privately owned land and to establishment resettlement camps to house these displaced people.

Bantu Authorities Act, Act No 68 of 1951
Provided for the establishment of black homelands and regional authorities and, with the aim of creating greater self-government in the homelands, abolished the Native Representative Council.

Natives Laws Amendment Act of 1952
Narrowed the definition of the category of blacks who had the right of permanent residence in towns. Section 10 limited this to those who'd been born in a town and had lived there continuously for not less than 15 years, or who had been employed there continuously for at least 15 years, or who had worked continuously for the same employer for at least 10 years.

Natives (Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents) Act, Act No 67 of 1952
Commonly known as the Pass Laws, this ironically named act forced black people to carry identification with them at all times. A pass included a photograph, details of place of origin, employment record, tax payments, and encounters with the police. It was a criminal offence to be unable to produce a pass when required to do so by the police. No black person could leave a rural area for an urban one without a permit from the local authorities. On arrival in an urban area a permit to seek work had to be obtained within 72 hours.

Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act of 1953
Prohibited strike action by blacks.

Bantu Education Act, Act No 47 of 1953
Established a Black Education Department in the Department of Native Affairs which would compile a curriculum that suited the "nature and requirements of the black people". The author of the legislation, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd (then Minister of Native Affairs, later Prime
Minister), stated that its aim was to prevent Africans receiving an education that would lead
them to aspire to positions they wouldn't be allowed to hold in society. Instead Africans were
to receive an education designed to provide them with skills to serve their own people in the
homelands or to work in labouring jobs under whites.

Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, Act No 49 of 1953
Forced segregation in all public amenities, public buildings, and public transport with the aim
of eliminating contact between whites and other races. "Europeans Only" and "Non-
Europeans Only" signs were put up. The act stated that facilities provided for different races
need not be equal.

Natives Resettlement Act, Act No 19 of 1954

Group Areas Development Act, Act No 69 of 1955

Natives (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act, Act No 64 of 1956
Denied black people the option of appealing to the courts against forced removals.

Bantu Investment Corporation Act, Act No 34 of 1959
Provided for the creation of financial, commercial, and industrial schemes in areas designated
for black people.

Extension of University Education Act, Act 45 of 1959
Put an end to black students attending white universities (mainly the universities of Cape
Town and Witwatersrand). Created separate tertiary institutions for whites, Coloured, blacks,
and Asians.

Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act, Act No 46 of 1959
Classified black people into eight ethnic groups. Each group had a Commissioner-General
who was tasked to develop a homeland for each, which would be allowed to govern itself
independently without white intervention.

Coloured Persons Communal Reserves Act, Act No 3 of 1961
Preservation of Coloured Areas Act, Act No 31 of 1961

Urban Bantu Councils Act, Act No 79 of 1961
Created black councils in urban areas that were supposed to be tied to the authorities running the related ethnic homeland.

Terrorism Act of 1967
Allowed for indefinite detention without trial and established BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, which was responsible for the internal security of South Africa.

Bantu Homelands Citizens Act of 1970
Compelled all black people to become a citizen of the homeland that responded to their ethnic group, regardless of whether they’d ever lived there or not, and removed their South African citizenship.

http://africanhistory.about.com/library/bl/blsalaws.htm
APPENDIX V

The apartheid city model

Cristopher 2001:107
**APPENDIX VI**

**Standard of South African households**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Living in shack (%)</th>
<th>Households with piped water inside 1996</th>
<th>Households with piped water inside 1999</th>
<th>Households without toilet (%) 1996</th>
<th>Households without toilet (%) 1999</th>
<th>Households reporting hunger (%) 1999</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Cape</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>23.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free State</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>23.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gauteng</td>
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<td>67.7</td>
<td>58.8</td>
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<td>0.8</td>
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<td>34.6</td>
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<td><strong>South Africa in total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>44.7</strong></td>
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<td><strong>12.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.9</strong></td>
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October Household Survey of 1999, 1999:97