# Developing a financial framework for community engagement financial function(s) within a higher education institution

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# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted to any institution before. I declare that this work has not been plagiarised, nor did I violate any copyright restrictions. Declare that I gave due references to all the sources used in the dissertation and that the sources are completely and accurately referenced in the list of references.

Cornelia Hart                                                                    2018-11-13

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**Cornelia Hart**                                                                    **Date**

# PREFACE

This dissertation is presented in the format of a mini-dissertation. This is the format approved and recommended by the North-West University (NWU). The dissertation consists of a motivation, literature study, data analysis chapter using document analyses on a case study, and a concluding chapter that summarises the main findings and recommendations.

**The layout of the dissertation is as follows:**

**Section 1:** An introduction to the research including a background of the case study, which leads to the problem statement. The methodology is motivated, and the validity, credibility and ethical considerations are proposed.

**Section 2:** A literature review to inform the reader of the theoretical origins of the concept of community engagement. The review focuses primarily on community engagement at Higher education institutions, the community engagement programme and the challenges of community engagement. The literature also focuses on financial and performance reporting for community engagement.

**Section 3:** The results of the document analysis are presented, starting with a description of the collection and analysis of the documents, followed by a discussion of the seven themes identified by the analysis.

**Section 4:** The conclusion of the research ends with an evaluation of the proposed methodology. Limitations are identified, and recommendations formulated to propose a financial framework for community engagement.

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"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow. When you rise in the morning, give thanks for the light, for your life, for your strength." - Anonymous

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# ABSTRACT

Community engagement (CE) became a formal task of Higher Education when the Higher Education Act (no 101 of 1997) identified CE as a function of all South African Universities (South Africa, 1997). CE entails the reciprocal, beneficial collaboration between communities and Universities. The Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR) coordinates a large-scale community engagement programme for the Faculty of Health Sciences, North West University (NWU). This programme is known as the Well-being INnovation (WIN) platform. Its goal is to create sustainable livelihoods and promoting healthy lifestyles for communities accessible to the NWU. The WIN platform was activated in 2011, is situated in Vaalharts and focuses on vulnerable communities. Various models of community engagement exist in South Africa, such as the silo model, the intersection model and the cross-sectional model. Community engagement is a costly activity and requires multiple resources such as travel cost, time and field workers. The resources can be underestimated when dealing with communities that are far away and require travel and accommodation costs. In 2017, AUTHeR activated a National Research Foundation (NRF)-funded Community Engagement project to develop a reciprocal community-university engagement framework, which is applied to the WIN platform. One objective of this project was to explore and understand the actual financial activities within the WIN platform based on researchers' experiences of the costs of community engagement. A second objective was to inform the framework to include the critical financial functions within community engagement projects. The study identifies a gap in literature highlights the lack of evidence required to propose a financial framework for reciprocal university-community engagement.

This research aimed to critically analyse the financial functions of community engagement within the WIN platform in order to propose a framework for the financial function of the CE activities in Higher Education. A holistic, single-case case study of the WIN platform was conducted, and documents were analysed through a qualitative approach. After ethical clearance, access to the documents was obtained and an all-inclusive sampling was conducted from all the WIN platform documents related to financial functions, included all budgets, funding applications, grant approval letters, project plans, strategic plans and project reports (n=88). Document analysis was done according to a predetermined checklist based on key performance objectives, which included inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact elements. ATLAS.ti was utilised to support the thematic analysis, which identified seven (7) main themes. Field notes were kept, and a consensus discussion was conducted.

The research confirms that inputs for CE are a high priority because of the various resources that are channelled into a CE project at its start. However, activities are not documented in sufficient detail and therefore under-reporting on projects within the larger platform exists. Various

expenses that form part of activities were identified, of which the greatest are travel and accommodation cost and field workers. Outputs were divided into research outputs, the number of research articles and the output of CE. Generally, project outputs were insufficiently reported. As a whole, CE outcomes were reported in terms of finances and activities' performance measured as budgets against actual expenditure, as well as superficial reporting on performance outcomes. Despite the comprehensive effort related to CE projects, the impact of CE was not identified nor reported.

The research concludes with a proposed financial framework for CE at Higher Education institutions in South Africa. This proposed framework may assist in the governance of CE between the various stakeholders. This framework includes the various reporting, regulations and governance requirements for various CE projects and activities. The main limitation of this study was that fact that it was based on a single-case study within a specific context.

**Keywords:** Financial framework, community engagement, financial functions, Higher Education, case study, document analysis

# ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|---|---|
| AUTHeR | Africa Unit of Transdisciplinary Health Research |
| BBBEE | Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment |
| CE | Community engagement |
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| CHESP | Community Higher Education Service Partnerships |
| CIR | Community Integrated Research |
| CSIR | Council for Scientific and Industrial Research |
| DoH | Department of Health South Africa |
| F&A | Facilities and Administration |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HEI | Higher Education Institute |
| IAS | International Accounting Standard |
| IFRS | International Financial Reporting Standard |
| MBA | Master of Business Administration |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MS EXCEL | Microsoft Excel |
| NCT | Noticing things, Collecting things and Thinking things |
| NRF | National Research Foundation |
| NWU | North-West University |
| PhD | Doctor of Philosophy |
| RDGC | Research Data Gatekeeper Committee |
| SMART | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-Bound |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| USA | United States of America |

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

## 1.1   INTRODUCTION

Community engagement (CE) was a relatively unfamiliar concept in South African Higher Education until the late 1990s. In 1997, the White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education (Lazarus *et al.*, 2008:58) called for "feasibility studies and pilot programmes which explore the potential of community service in Higher Education".  In response, the Joint Education Trust launched the Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative in 1999 (Lazarus *et al.*, 2008:58). CE was established as a pillar of Higher Education, alongside research and education. The South African Council on Higher Education identified it as one of the functions of a University in terms of the Higher Education Act (no 101 of 1997) (South Africa, 1997).

Consequently, CE is driven within Universities and requires specific resources. This research presents an appropriate financial framework for financial activities within a specific CE project as positioned in the Faculty of the Health Sciences of the NWU and set within a larger research project titled "*A reciprocal exploration towards a University-community engagement framework*", which is funded by the NRF. Researchers within the AUTHeR, a research unit within the Facility of Health Sciences involved in CE activities, conducted this research funded by the NRF's CE research grant to provide empirical evidence able to inform a reciprocal university-community engagement framework.

## 1.2   BACKGROUND

Community engagement (CE) refers to a collection of activities that include problem-based teaching, research focused on identified needs and wants in order to create alternative forms of knowledge as well as service-learning (CHE, 2010). The Centre for Higher Education Transformation defines CE as "a systematic relationship between Higher Education institutions and their ecological communities that is characterised by mutually beneficial interaction in the sense that it enriches learning, teaching and research and simultaneously addresses societal, issues and challenges" (Mtawa *et al.*, 2016:126). With this definition in mind, CE features a two-way interaction of which the most important interaction is mutually beneficial goals, that addresses a need identified by the community through an intellectual activity of importance with the outcome of enhancing community capacity through student learning and/or research studies (Driscoll, 2008:39). Council of Higher Education (CHE) (2016:245) describes engagement as a commitment to working with external social partners in ways that result in and build mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships between University and society. A University itself consists of a community of communities. These loosely coupled communities are held together by the university as a single organisation (Volpert, 2016). As previously mentioned, CE is one of three

(3) functions of Higher Education institutions, together with education and research. Higher education institutions can address the needs of communities and have a positive impact on communities (Mtawa *et al.*, 2016:129). Clear policy mandates emphasise CE as an important task, but the CHE indicates that CE as a function has been neglected and does not stem from a strategically planned, systematic focus (CHE, 2010). This might be because institutions have different meanings and scope of CE activities. Furthermore, even though CE has been identified as a priority activity, there is a lack of national policy on CE to facilitate this function (Favish, 2005), especially on an organisational and enterprise level. There is, therefore, a need for research to guide policy creation to position CE within Higher Education.

There is a shift from CE focusing on supporting communities towards a mutually beneficial relationship of knowledge creation through teaching and research activities (Mtawa *et al.*, 2016:127). CE features a two-way relationship, where the community and students benefit from each other, the needs of the community are being addressed and students obtain a learning experience. The challenge is embedded in the inclusion criteria to classify activities as CE (Mtawa *et al.*, 2016). Favish (2005) provides elements that can guide the definition of a field of practice for CE, although these activities vary between different institutions. From a South African perspective, CE activities mainly revolve around service-learning activities with limited participatory action, driven with the community as a partner in the knowledge creation process (Wood & Zuber-Skerrit, 2013:5).

Even though community engagement is a core function of Universities in South Africa there is a limitation to researchers' capacity to engage in significant CE activities (Wood & Zuber-Skerrit, 2013:5). This type of engagement can assist in South Africa's development needs and, with the intellectual knowledge gained from students, it can be applied to the needs of various South African communities. Bhagwan (2017:35) describes the transformation of CE as breaking down the boundaries between academia and the wider context in which it is positioned. It is an opportunity for both the community and Higher Education institutions and their students to help transform South Africa into a better country.

Teaching, research and CE are not only the three main pillars of a University but also interact with each other. Engaged scholarship offers a continuum of activities where teaching, research and service intersect (Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010). Figure 1 below (referred to as the integration model) illustrates how CE, along with teaching and research, forms part of Universities' core operations and how teaching and research are utilised in terms of CE.

**Figure 1: Sharing of expertise – the integrated model (Glass & Fitzgerald, 2010)**

CE is an integrated and non-negotiable part of social justice in South Africa. Universities are required to be the voice of communities and CE can enable the institutions to own this responsibility fully. Community-based research at Universities has value in strengthening the voice of rural communities by enabling access to experiences outside of their own and by providing Universities the opportunity to engage in first-hand research (Kamando & Doyle, 2013:27). Through CE, staff and students can become active agents for social change, contributing to broader educational, social opportunities and improvements to the quality of life of individuals and communities (CHE, 2016:270).

The NWU initiated one of South Africa's larger CE programmes in 2011 as part of its CE initiative. According to Coetzee (2011) this programme was implemented in an area identified as highly vulnerable by the President's office during 2011-2013. The area identified was the Vaalharts region of the North West and Northern Cape provinces. The programme commenced with a comprehensive "integrated needs assessment" done by Coetzee (2011) that identified employment, agriculture, health, food, education and training as major issues. The community development drive and activities were supported by increased financial investments. Based on

the needs assessment, the Faculty of Health Sciences of the NWU (through AUTHeR), initiated the Well-being INnovation (WIN) platform with the 'Creating sustainable livelihoods and promoting healthy lifestyles' programmes in the Vaalharts area. This was done with the assistance of seven schools and units within the Faculty of Health Science.

The various CE projects within the WIN platform aim to improve public health and well-being in rural, resource-poor communities. The focus is on making these improvements within the field of health sciences, focusing mainly on resource-poor communities in Vaalharts. However, the NWU could not have started the project without the help of stakeholders outside of health sciences like Vaalharts Water and the Phokwane municipality.

In 2014 the University's extended involvement in the WIN platform included nine disciplines and three research units including nursing, psychology, consumer sciences, biokinetics, recreation and sports sciences, urban and regional planning, economics, and environmental science. It received funding from the NWU and grants from the NRF (Claasen, Niesing & Bester, 2016:3).

Projects are grouped into the following three domains within the WIN platform (Claasen *et al.*, 2016:5):

- community engaging research or interventions;
- service learning and work-integrated learning; and
- skills development projects.

Various other faculties have joined the WIN platform since its inception, including the Faculties of Economics and Management Sciences. The WIN platform acts as a mediator between the University and the communities. It offers a unique, centralised coordination and management structure, which enable access between researchers and communities and addresses the needs of the communities. The WIN platform keeps communication open between various community stakeholders as well as within the University. In 2012, the Meraka Institute of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) afforded the WIN platform the status of a LivingLab (referred to as the WINLab). A WINLab is classified as an environment for research, development and implementation where new services, products, applications and improvements are created, tested and refined in a collaborative, multiple and evolving 'real-world' setting (Claasen *et al.*, 2016:5). The WINLab's aim is to integrate the knowledge of different scientific disciplines and technology to ensure health and healthy lifestyles for community members and to empower communities to take responsibility for their own health.

The success of the various projects within the WINLab has been measured in an informal way through feedback sessions from the community. However, AUTHeR's aim is to move forward with strategies of more participatory and collaborative approaches that increase the agency of the

community within the university CE. A reciprocal exploration to reveal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the WIN platform as perceived by the community and university participants has not yet been applied. Open conversations about the suitability of existing strategies are urgently needed between the community and NWU, as well as the collaborative identification of suitable indicators (qualitative and quantitative) to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the WIN platform for communities and academia (Claasen *et al.*, 2016:5). The WIN platform has various programmes in the Vaalharts community, but not all stakeholders know how beneficial the programmes are to the community, because there is no formal framework to measure the outcomes.

Previous studies at Higher Education institutions in South Africa indicated that there is a general lack of a structural, functional framework and model for the conceptualisation of CE in Higher Education institutions in South Africa (Bender, 2008:85). Consequently, there is a need for clarity on the responsibilities and roles of Universities. The CHE (2016:269) also recommends establishing a unit to help promote the institutionalisation of CE within the core of Universities with reporting requirements.

Community engagement (CE) projects are funded by various sources like grants, Universities funds and private sector funding. Funding strategies include the establishment of earmarked funds that institutions can bid to receive. Other examples of support mechanisms include financial support for regional structures that broker partnerships around research and teaching between Higher Education institutions, business and government (CHE, 2016:268). While financial funding is important, CE also requires various other resources like time and commitment from university staff and student participation in projects. Stakeholders like the NWU and municipalities, are also seeking additional resources in the form of funding and technical assistance to support community improvement activities (Cox, 2000:16). Without a framework and measures in place for the resources required for CE, it is not possible to do a cost-benefit analysis. In South Africa, the lack of funding for CE projects has had a negative impact on the growth of CE and there is, therefore, a need to establish a sustainable funding model (CHE, 2016:268).

## 1.3    PROBLEM STATEMENT

Community engagement (CE) was only established on a Higher Education level in South Africa after 2008 (Lazarus *et al.*, 2008:58) and, although is an integrated part of Higher Education, it is costly and requires multiple resources. Nonetheless, there is a lack of empirical evidence about the actual costs of CE and there is a need to propose a financial framework for reciprocal university-community engagement. The problem statement is in a form of a research question and these needs led the researcher to ask, "*What are the critical financial functions within the WIN platform that can assist to propose a financial framework*?"

## 1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.4.1 Research aim

This study was part of the NRF Community Engagement (NRF CE) research grant obtained by AUTHeR. The overall aim of the NRF CE grant is to create conversations between community (including participants and non-participants, government and other stakeholders) and the University (including research and support staff and students) to explore the perceptions, networks, adequacy and impact of the university CE strategies applied within the WIN platform to develop a framework for CE.

The aim of this study was to critically analyse the financial function of CE within the WIN platform to establish a framework for the financial function of CE activities in Higher Education.

### 1.4.2 Research objectives

The following objectives were formulated:

**Objective 1:** Identify all the various reporting, regulations and governance requirements for a CE programme.

**Objective 2**: Critically review existing WIN platform documentation to establish the various financial components of a CE programme and how these components influence a CE programme in terms of having to establish a financial framework.

**Objective 3:** Propose a framework for the financial functions of the CE activities in the WIN platform, which would also relate to CE within Higher Education.

## 1.5 DELIMITATIONS

The study focused only on information, regulations and requirements related to the WIN platform; it did not include any other CE projects and activities done within Higher Education.

## 1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

The study was based on the WIN platform within the Faculty of Health Sciences of the NWU. This research takes into account the principles of the South African government to ensure responsible spending and value for money. The use of National Treasury guidelines (South Africa, 2010) on performance information links CE projects to resources with specific outcomes. Figure 2 below describes the key performance information concepts.
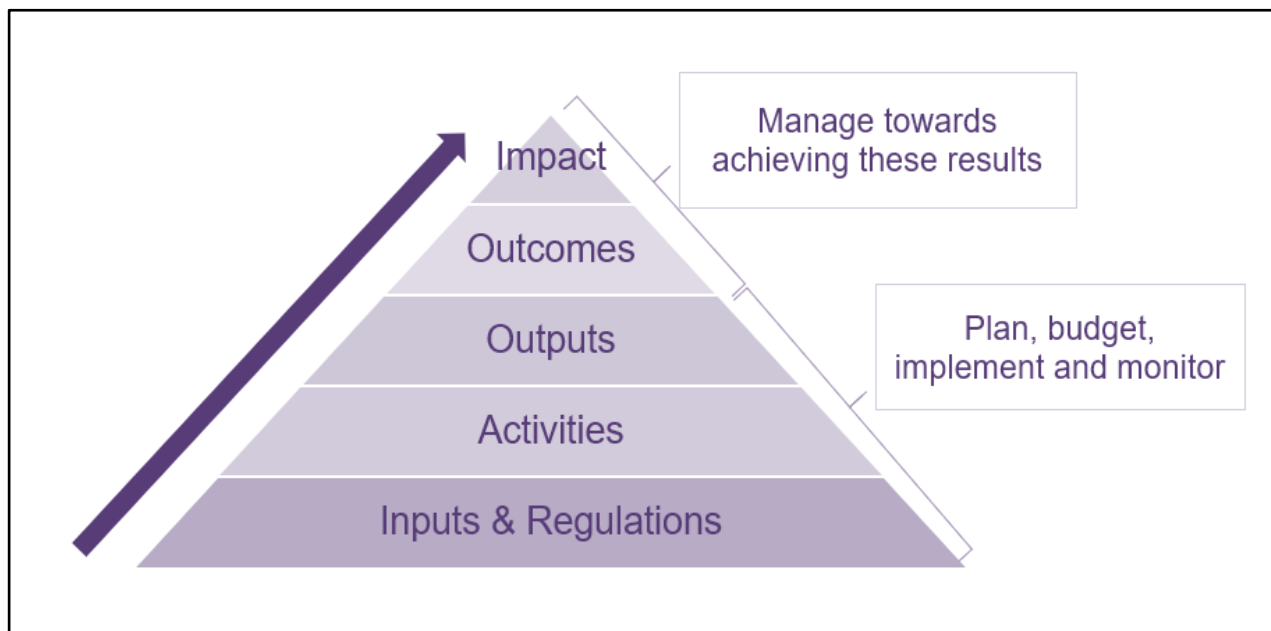
**Figure 2: Key performance information concepts (South Africa, 2010)**

The requirements and principles of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) are the core theoretical framework for this study. In terms of International Accounting Standards (IAS) 1, the main objective is to provide a fair representation of financial information. Fair presentation requires the faithful representation of the effects of transactions, other events and conditions in accordance with the definitions and recognition criteria of IFRSs (Deloitte Global, 2018). A financial framework can be defined as the policies, procedures, regulations and standing orders we use to make sure we are taking proper care of funds received (Powys, 2018). Deloitte Global (2018) defines the financial framework as addressing the following:

- the objective of general-purpose financial reporting;

- qualitative characteristics of useful financial information;

- financial statements and the reporting entity;

- the elements of financial statements;

- recognition and de-recognition;

- measurement; and

- presentation and disclosure.

## 1.7   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 1.7.1   Research design

Every type of empirical research has an implicit, if not explicit, research design. In the most elementary sense, the design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions (Yin, 2017:24). A case study has five components to consider when creating a research design: questions, propositions, unit(s) of analysis, the logic linking the data to the propositions, and the criteria for interpreting the findings. The research design adopted was a case study design based on the WIN platform. Yin (2017:2) defines a case study in two parts:

- Approach as an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident.

- The situation where there will be many more variables of interest than data points, thereby relying on multiple sources of evidence and benefiting from the development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

Consequently, a single, holistic qualitative case study design was followed and included a single unit of analysis with the aim to study the global nature of the phenomenon when no logical sub-units can be pinpointed (Yin, 2017:3). According to Yin (2017:24), a single-case design is akin to a single experiment. Single-case studies are appropriate when the case is special (in relation to established theory) for some reason. This might arise when the case provides a critical test to a well-established theory, or where the case is extreme, unique, or has something special to reveal. Single-case studies are also used as a preliminary or pilot in multiple case studies (Rowley, 2002:16).

This research used documents as the main sources of information. Documents were from the WIN platform from 2011 (since the activation of the WIN platform) to 2016. After 2016, there was a dramatic decrease in CE activities in the WIN platform due to decreased strategic funding.

Document analysis is a qualitative research method that follows a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents (Bowen, 2009:27), and as a research method, it is applicable to qualitative case studies — intensive studies producing rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, programme, organisation, or event. Documents of all types can assist the researcher to uncover meaning, cultivate understanding, and develop insights relevant to the research problem (Bowen, 2009:29).

### 1.7.2 Context of the WIN platform

The Vaalharts irrigation scheme is situated on the border of two provinces, the North West and the Northern Cape. It is part of the Phokwane municipality and consists of various small towns (Jan Kempdorp, Vaalharts, Ganspan, Hartswater and Pampierstad), and various ethnic groups work and farm in the area. The building of the Vaalharts Water Scheme started in 1934 (Van Vuuren, 2010:22) with unskilled labourers and provided work to soldiers after the first world war (WW1) developing into various towns and settlements. Today, farmers grow pecan nuts, cotton, olives and citrus in the area.

The WIN platform was started after the collaboration and partnerships between the NWU, Vaalharts Water Association, and the Phokwane Municipality in the Northern Cape and North West Provinces. This partnership was termed the Water Innovation Network (South African Planning Institute, 2014). In February 2010 and 2011 a comprehensive, integrated needs assessment in the broader social, economic and political context of this rural area was done by the NWU in the municipalities of Greater Taung and Phokwane. One of the main needs that were identified was employment since this region had an average unemployment rate of 76% (Coetzee, 2011:7). Subsequently, various research programmes, workshops and interventions have been implemented within these communities since 2011, such as the glass recycling programme in Ganspan and sewing project in Jan Kempdorp. CE was activated through the WIN platform to uplift, empower and sustain these vulnerable rural areas through a multi-level sustainable livelihood and transdisciplinary research approach.

The WIN platform has various projects running in the Vaalharts area, focusing on uplifting the community in this area and is coordinated by AUTHeR from the Potchefstroom campus of the NWU. Students and researchers need to travel the 290 km to Vaalharts and therefore a large portion of the funding for the WIN platform was spent on travel costs and accommodation relating to CE in Vaalharts.
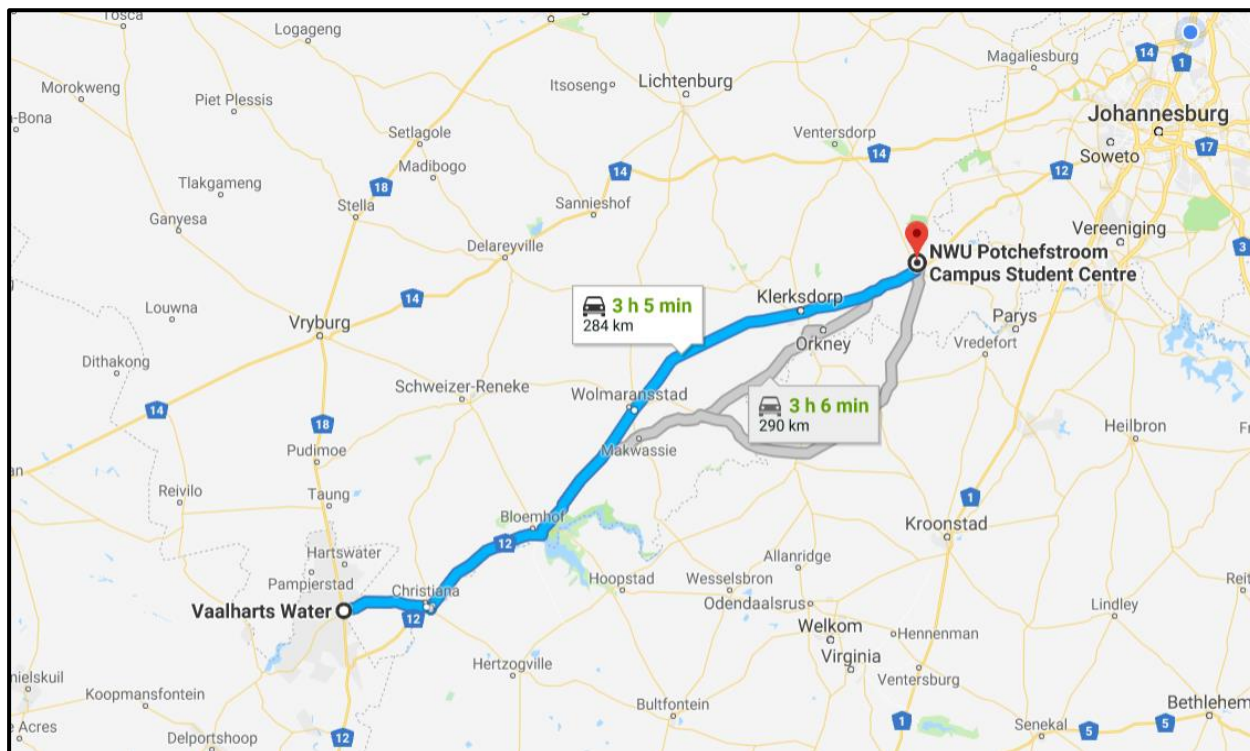
**Figure 3: Distance between NWU and Vaalharts (Google Maps, 2018)**

### 1.7.3 Research methods

### 1.7.3.1 Population and sampling

The research was based on a single, specific case. Silverman and Marvasti (2008:162) describe a case study as a detailed study in which there may be a variety of specific purposes and research questions and the general objective was to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible.

Document analysis was used as the main source of information for this case study and was based on all the projects conducted by the WIN platform ranging from 2011 to 2016.

### 1.7.3.2 Types of documents

The documents related to the WIN platform from 2011 to 2016 were accessed and included:

- financial records of the WIN platform prepared by the NWU;

- budgets on Microsoft Excel from the WIN project manager;

- grant applications for funding;

- funding documents from private funders;

- CE strategic plans;

- minutes of meetings;

- non-scientific publications;

- memoranda of understanding;

- institutional and national policies on CE; and

- project reports.

All documents were kept by AUTHeR in accordance with the record management policy of the NWU.

### 1.7.3.3 Uses of documents in research

Documentation plays an important part in research and can be used as a source of information for data collection in qualitative research but can also be a standalone research methodology. Bowen (2009:30) describes the purpose of documents in research as follows:

- Documents can provide data on the context within which research participants operate.

- Documents can suggest some questions that need to be asked and situations that need to be observed as part of the research.

- Documents provide supplementary research data. Information and insights derived from documents can be valuable additions to a knowledge base.

- Documents provide a means of tracking change and development.

- Documents can be analysed to verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources.

Documents were, therefore, a critical part for this research.

### 1.7.4 Data collection

Data was collected from the financial records of the WIN platform dating from 2011 to 2016. The research relied on archival records as mentioned under types of documents. Archival data can

be subjected to their own biases or shortcomings and steps had to be taken to counteract this, such as using additional resources (Yin, 2017:117).

Hancock and Algozzine (2016) suggest that the following question should be asked when using documents in a case study:

- Where has the document been and what is its history?

- How did the document become available (public domain, special considerations)?

- What guarantee exists that the document is appropriate, accurate, and timely?

- Is the integrity of the document without concern?

- Has the document been changed in any way?

- Is the document representative under the conditions and for the purposes it was produced?

- Who created the document and with what intention (potential bias)?

- What were the sources of information (original source, secondary data, other) used to create the document?

- Do other sources exist that can be used to confirm the information in the document?

All these questions were considered when documents were collected for the case study to ensure the reliability and accuracy of data.

The following avenues were accessed to search relevant documents on the WIN platform:

- WIN platform office: media involvement and marketing material; project reports; annual research dissemination presentations.

- Community Engagement Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences and on an institutional level: CE strategic plans; meeting agenda and minutes; memoranda of understanding and memoranda of agreement; institutional and national policies on CE.

- Participating research entities conducting work-integrated learning or research from the WIN platform: research and project proposals; funding applications and funding streams.

- National and international databases: academic publications and searched by using the keywords WIN platform and CE.

AUTHeR forms part of the NWU and has a financial system where all transactions are recorded. The financial system forms part of the information that is audited annually by an external auditor, giving the data more credibility.

## 1.7.4.1 Document analysis protocol

Document analysis must be reflective of emergent sources, meaning, activities, and relationships. Document analysis required putting a specific protocol in place to ensure the reliability and validity of this study (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010:131). Documents only related to CE projects in the WIN platform. The process of document analysis conducted is graphically depicted in Figure 4 below. The realisation of the document analysis was as follows:

**Step 1:** Documents were split into two categories: financial and other.

**Step 2:** Financial information was measured in terms of IAS requirements:

- Revenue was measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, and recognised when prescribed conditions were met, which depended on the nature of the revenue (Deloitte Global, 2018).

- Expenses were decreases in economic benefits during the accounting period in the form of outflows or depletions of assets or incurrences of liabilities that resulted in decreases in equity, other than those relating to distributions to equity participants (Deloitte Global, 2018).

**Step 3:** Other information was linked to compliance of funding requirements or other legislative requirements.
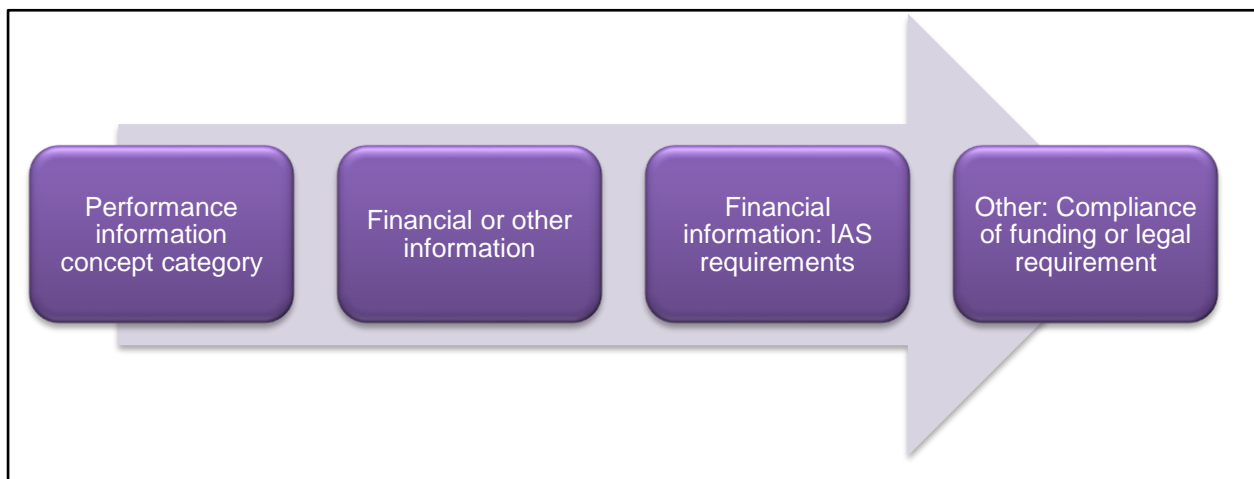


**Figure 4: Categorising the documents for document analysis**

Figure 4 is the process how the researcher sees documents being categorised during the document analysis process.

During the process of data collection, a case study database was developed. The development of a case study database involved the systematic sorting and storing of documents selected as data sources for this research. The database was developed in ATLAS.ti, computer-aided, qualitative data analysis software and was a supportive tool for the process of qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2014:1). ATLAS.ti provided the infrastructure to the researcher to use the model of "Notice things, Collect things and Think about things", referred to as the NCT model. Figure 5 below describes the process followed in ATLAS.ti.
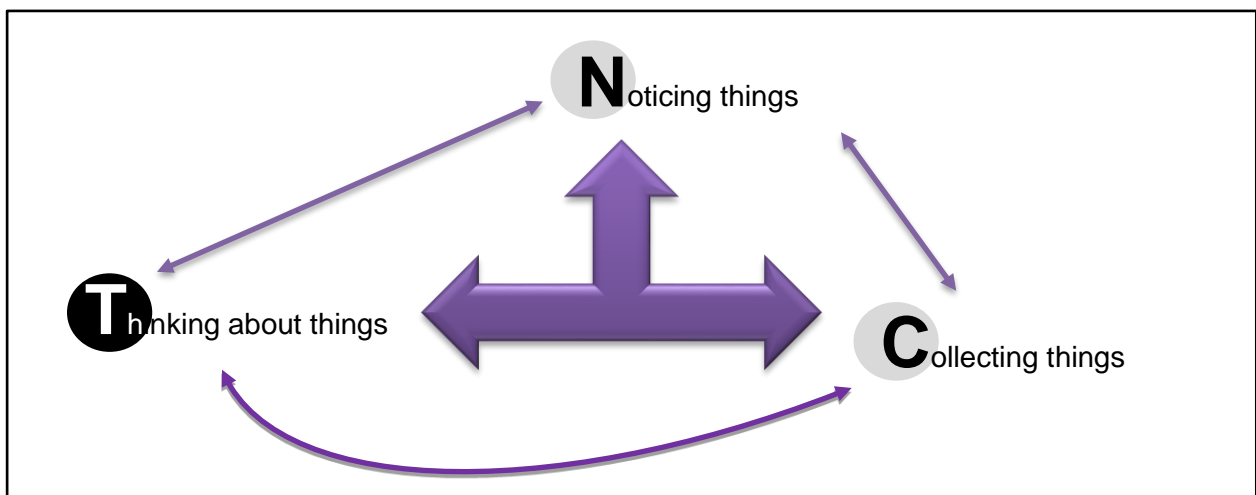


**Figure 5: The NCT model of qualitative data analysis (Friese, 2014:12)**

The researcher noticed things in the data, collected these things, thought about them and then formulated insightful results in order to conclude on the data. ATLAS.ti enabled better organisation of the data, assisted in searching the data, retrieving specific data based on criteria. Coding of data could easily be adapted through an iterative process of inductive and deductive thinking. ATLAS.ti helped to systematically analyse large data from various sources and types of sources that would have been less controlled if done manually. One of the most important benefits was that steps of analysis can be traced and the entire process is open to review (Friese, 2014:2).

### 1.7.5   Data analysis

Data analysing is a process of analysing the various documents in order to obtain information from it and to make sense of the data. Creswell (2014:185) describes data analysis as a process with four steps that were realised in this research as follows:

- Step 1: Organise and prepare the data for analysis: data was organised in a case study database in ATLAS.ti.

- Step 2: Get a general sense of the documents: read the various documents and identify the documents to be included in the database.

- Step 3: The data needs to be coded: specific codes were added to the documents in the case study database. Coding refers to the process when data was captured into categories and those categories were labelled.

- Step 4: The data was analysed and interpreted using the database from ATLAS.ti and the performance objectives with IAS.

The data from the analysis, along with the interpretations against performance objectives and IAS, delivered results for the financial framework. The procedures assigned various kinds of codes to the data, each code representing a concept of potential (Yin, 2017:168).

Linking data to propositions can be done in various ways such as pattern-matching, explanation-building, time-series analyses, logic models and cross-case syntheses (Yin, 2017:174). This case study used explanation-building to link the data to the propositions. Because of the various projects conducted within the WIN platform, each project presented with different types of documents. The data was analysed by using ATLAS.ti and linking specific funding and expenses to specific outcomes of performance information.

When designing the case study possible rival explanations should be considered in order to include these questions from the data collection phase (Yin, 2017:172). The rivalry should be eliminated by only focusing on documents that have an impact on the financial aspects of the WIN platform. The type of transaction should have occurred more than once, or if only once the transaction only occurred once, the materiality of the transaction was evaluated.

## 1.8 RIGOUR

Creswell (2014:185) describes qualitative reliability as an approach followed by researchers to ensure the responsible management of data through accurate and comprehensive data documentation, by thoroughly checking transcripts and the coding process, and by cross-checking the codes to make sure that the codes are reliable. The reliability will be obtained from using various sources of documents and comparing the results with triangulation. This research was logical and procedurally correct. Four tests have been commonly used to establish the quality of this research (Yin, 2009:40), as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Case study tactics for four design test (Yin, 2017:43)**

| Test | Case study tactic | Phase of research in which tactic occurs |
|---|---|---|
| Construct validity | Used various sources of evidence, documents from various sources. | Data collection |
|  | Exercised care when using data from social media, cross-checked information to other sources, only use data sources that are reliable, like academic databases. | Data collection |
| Internal validity | Did pattern-matching, used ATLAS.ti coding for pattern-matching. | Data analysis |
|  | Used performance objectives and IAS with data to build up the framework. | Data analysis |
|  | Addressed rival explanations, only focused on data with relation to financial aspects of the WIN platform. | Data analysis |
|  | Used logic models, looked for a reoccurring transaction over a period to identify specific expenditure patterns. | Data analysis |
|  | Pressed for a high-quality analysis, ensured all evidence was attended to in the analysis, attended to rivalry analysis, and addressed all aspects of the case study. | Data analysis |
| External validity | Used theory in single-case studies, specific research objectives were set. Only information from the WIN platform was included. | Research design |
| Reliability | Used case study protocol, the case study was based on the WIN platform, the data was collected from historical records, and analysed with ATLAS.ti, IAS and performance objectives, the research finding was to deliver a financial framework. | Data collection |
|  | Developed a case study database, with the use of ATLAS.ti, with various sources of documents and coded these documents. | Data collection |
|  | Established a chain of evidence, each finding was supported by a document and was easily traceable. | Data collection |

## 1.9   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher ensured that the research was conducted according to the ethical principles of business research: there is no harm to participants, there was informed consent, privacy was

respected and there was no deception involved (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:120). The study only involved document analysis and therefore no participants were involved. The study only started once ethical clearance was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University (see Addendum A), research data gatekeeper permission from the NWU and authorisation from the director of AUTHeR. The Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) further highlights these broad ethical principles: beneficence and non-maleficence, distributive justice (equality) and respect for persons (dignity and autonomy).

### 1.9.1    Gatekeeper permission

The NWU is the gatekeeper of all the information. A formal application was made to the NWU gatekeeper, conducted through the services of the Registrar, to comply with the Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (South Africa, 2000)  and Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (South Africa, 2013). Since the NWU has a certain policy and process for NWU information, if a researcher would like permission to access the NWU to include the University's staff or students as participants in their research study or if they would like to gain access to data (held by the NWU) for research purposes, a specific process has to be followed. All such requests are reviewed by the research data gatekeeper (RDGC) under the guidance of the Registrar (NWU, 2017). This application was made after ethical clearance (see Addendum B).

### 1.9.2    Beneficence and non-maleficence

This refers to the ethical obligation to maximise benefit and to minimise harm and requires that the risks of harm posed by the research must be reasonable considering anticipated benefits; that research design must be sound, and that researchers must be competent to carry out the proposed research activities (DoH, 2015:14). Financial information can be sensitive and in the wrong hands can cause harm. No financial information was not shared with any person outside the research team. Identities of employees receiving funding for CE were protected by only referring to information as employee A.

### 1.9.3    Justice, distributive justice and equity

The DoH (2015:14) distinguishes justice as distributive justice or equality. Interpreted, it means a "fair balance of risks and benefits among all role-players involved in research, including participants, participating communities and the broader South African society" (DoH, 2015:14). No participants were selected since the research was only a document analysis.

### 1.9.4 Respect, dignity and autonomy

The DoH (2015:14) states "a person capable of deliberation about their choices must be treated with respect and permitted to exercise self-determination". No participants took part in the study but due to the nature of the data, data containing financial information, the researcher respected the privacy of the information by not sharing the information without consent.

### 1.9.5 Relevance and value

This research was conducted as part of a research objective of the outcomes of the NRF Community Engagement (NRF CE) research grant obtained by AUTHeR. The overall aim of the NRF CE grant is to create conversational spaces between community (including participants and non-participants, government and other stakeholders) and the university (including research and support staff, and students) to explore the perceptions, networks, adequacy and impact of the university CE strategies applied within the WIN platform to develop a framework for CE.

### 1.9.6 Scientific integrity

This research design was approved by the Scientific Committee of the NWU Business School and therefore it can be confirmed that the proposed methodology was appropriate to address the research questions. The researchers all had the necessary skills, knowledge, and qualifications to ensure that the research adhered to the scientific integrity.

### 1.9.7 Favourable risk-benefit analysis

A risk-benefit analysis should done before the commencement of the research. A desirable ratio is one where, at a minimum, the potential risk of harm to a participant is outweighed by the likelihood of benefit (DoH, 2015:14). The research risk was low since there were no participants in the research; only historic documents were analysed to identify cost behaviour of CE in the WIN platform.

### 1.9.8 Direct and indirect benefits

There were no direct benefits for participants. Indirect benefits are evident in the knowledge that will be obtained through document analysis and proposing a financial framework that can be applied by various units conducting CE within Higher Education.

### 1.9.9 Permission and informed consent

The aspect of permission and informed consent underpins the requirement that a person must choose voluntarily whether to participate in research based on the information given, which provides the participant with the knowledge enabling them to make an informed choice (DoH,

2015:23). Approval for the study was obtained from the director of AUTHeR (see Addendum C) for the use of the WIN platform data. The research only started once ethical clearance was obtained from the NWU and permission granted by the Registrar.

**1.9.10 Privacy and confidentiality**

Having respect for persons also required the researcher to pay attention to the issues of privacy and confidentiality. *"Privacy describes the person's interest in controlling access to her personal information"* (DoH, 2015:22). On the other hand, confidentiality relates to *"whether and how research data might be disclosed carelessly or inadvertently"* (DoH, 2015:22). No sensitive financial information was disclosed; the data were only used for the research. No identifying detail was disclosed during the process of data collection, data analysis and the reporting of the research results.

**1.9.11  Researcher expertise and competence**

The researcher was supervised by Doret Kruger with an MBA, Dr Christi Niesing with exceptive knowledge on CE and a Ph.D. in Business Management; both supervisors have sound knowledge of case study research. Prof Petra Bester has supervised close to forty (40) Masters' degree students and holds a strong interest and practical experience in qualitative research methodologies and the strengthening of health systems.

**1.9.12  Data management**

The collection and storing of digital data and the practice of data sharing raise new concerns about confidentiality and other ethical issues (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:124). In South Africa, the Protection of Personal Information Act of 2013 regulates the manner in which personal information may be collected and processed. The data was safeguarded and only used for the intention and specifics of the research. Documents and data were stored in a lockable office of the supervisor on the premises of the NWU. The NWU is the gatekeeper of the information. The financial data was treated with discretion and protected with a password-protected computer. Electronic information was stored on Wrike, a web-based project management software solution utilised within the Community Integrated Research (CIR) office in AUTHeR and safeguarded as per AUTHeR's data management policy.

**1.9.13  Role of the members of the research team**

The primary researcher obtained the documents for analysis. The analysis of the documents was done by the researcher with ATLAS.ti in the seminar room at AUTHeR. The supervisors were involved in an advisory role and provided guidance in the research.

## 1.9.14 Conflict of interest

The research was only relating to the WIN platform and no other documents; therefore, no conflict of interest existed.

## 1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter provided background to the study and the WIN platform that is situated in the Vaalharts community. The research problem and objectives for this study were discussed, explaining the need for a financial framework. The study will aim to fulfil the objectives with the use of the document analysis as the research methodology. The case study design concept was discussed as well as the data collection method. This chapter concluded with the ethical considerations.

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Community engagement (CE) is part of enhancing the relationships between the people of the community so that they can learn to co-exist in a peaceful way. Most of the time people are not able to discuss their issues properly leading to difficulties within the community. This dilemma could be solved by introducing programmes that help in promoting CE through the assistance of the community members (Brunton *et al.*, 2017:8). Proposed plans like these include programmes for neighbours to mingle, programmes for the people from the community to assist with the clean-up of the society as well as marathons in which the people could participate. However, it must be kept in mind that there are a few financial aspects concern CE programmes.

The NWU established the WIN platform to perform one of the key functions of a university, namely, to be part of CE. The literature review was compiled from various sources by starting with what is CE, how was it established in South Africa, what other Universities in South Africa and other countries are doing in terms of CE, the WIN platform and AUTHeR at the NWU, all focusing on the financial aspects of CE.

Articles were sourced from various journals using Google Scholar and EBSCOhost. The search strategy included community engagement/community engagement at Higher Education institutions/frameworks on community engagement. Financial statements of the university were obtained to gain an understanding of the criteria and legislation for the reporting requirements for the university.

Various parties are involved in CE, each with its own requirements. This engagement also has obstacles it has to overcome in order to be successfully implemented at Universities and to carry the same weight as teaching and research, to form part of the three pillars of a university. One of the reasons why CE needs a proper financial framework is because it assists in ensuring that all the financial aspects are covered thoroughly. It could be understood that even if only one financial aspect were left out of the framework, the whole plan would not work properly.

## 2.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effective CE is not just about a fundraiser or charity event hosted by a company or organisation. The corporate world describes CE as a significant activity within the firms' broader stakeholder management programmes, but with a narrower scope: while community members are often firm stakeholders, not all stakeholders are communities (Bowen *et al.*, 2010:2). Its strategy addresses

communities that are drawn together by shared social well-being, and no other stakeholders such as 'the financial community' or 'the institutional investment community' (Bowen *et al.*, 2010:2).

Engagement is no longer just a one-sided process; Universities, communities and corporates each have an impact on each other. In order to successfully operate in an environment, decisions and policies must be made in collaboration since it is about working together and being productive together. Co-production means that service users and professionals must develop mutual relationships in which both parties take risks - the service user has to trust professional advice and support, but the professional has to be prepared to trust the decisions and behaviours of service users and the communities in which they live rather than dictating them (Bovaird, 2007:856).

In the United States of America (USA), Higher Education leaders began using the term engagement to describe a "two-way" approach to interacting with community partners to address societal needs. The new philosophy emphasises a shift away from an expert model of delivering University knowledge to the public and towards a more collaborative model in which community partners play a significant role in creating and sharing knowledge to the mutual benefit of both institutions and society (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008:74). Universities have gone from only educating to delivering services to the community and the community engaging with Universities to develop product and services. Therefore, there is a two-way interaction.

## 2.3   COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The concept of CE has been around for years; however, it was only in the early 2000's that it changed from a one-way to a two-way stream, with CE becoming formally part of Universities, where both parties could benefit from the engagement. In South Africa, the concept of CE was only established as part of a function of Universities with the establishment of the Higher Education Act 101 of 2007 (South Africa, 2007). Internationally, the field has also been contested and defined very differently in diverse contexts with terms or concepts like outreach, CE, community service, regional engagement, civic engagement, public service, public engagement, knowledge exchange, third mission, triple helix, and social innovation being the most common (CHE, 2016:242).

Community engagements (CEs) at Higher Education institutions in South Africa, however, are all differently defined, there is no unified definition. CE has many names and little research has as yet been done on the scholarship of engagement in South Africa (Bender, 2008:81). According to Pienaar-Steyn (2012), the reason is that academics have difficulty defining their contribution because the concept is so vague and lacks the framework and standards against which the impact of CE activities can be measured. At various Universities, pre-existing practices such as

experiential education, community service, community development, community-based education, clinical practical's, community outreach, and even service-learning have simply been renamed CE (Bender, 2008:86). CE is, however, a two-way process in which each party plays an active role, and forms a part of the decision-making process. Bender (2008:87) defines communities as those specific, local, collective interest groups that participate, or could potentially participate, in the community service activities of a Higher Education institution. They are regarded as partners who have a full say in the identification of development challenges and service needs.

In South Africa, there is no formal policy to support CE with Higher Education stating that it should be part of the core functions of Universities and while various Universities in South Africa have community outreach programmes, there is still a perception that CE and service are merely add-ons and nice-to-have, philanthropic activities. There is also resistance to integrating CE as a core function in the academic field (Bender, 2008:83). The dilemma of CE activity at Universities is common enough to justify further pursuit. If one highlights or separates CE for emphasis and funding, it risks becoming an add-on activity carried out by individuals on a voluntary basis rather than a core activity. If one integrates it with other forms of scholarship, then it risks losing its identity (CHE, 2016:54).

The Higher Education Quality Committee (2006:12) defines CE initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the institution in the areas of teaching and research are applied to address issues relevant to its community. CE typically finds expression in a variety of forms, ranging from relatively unstructured activities and informal to formal and structured academic programmes addressing community needs (service-learning programmes). While some projects might be conducive to the creation of a better environment for CE, others might be directly related to, learning, teaching and research. In South Africa CE has three concept models, namely the silo model, the intersection model and the cross-sectional model; each is presented in the following figures.
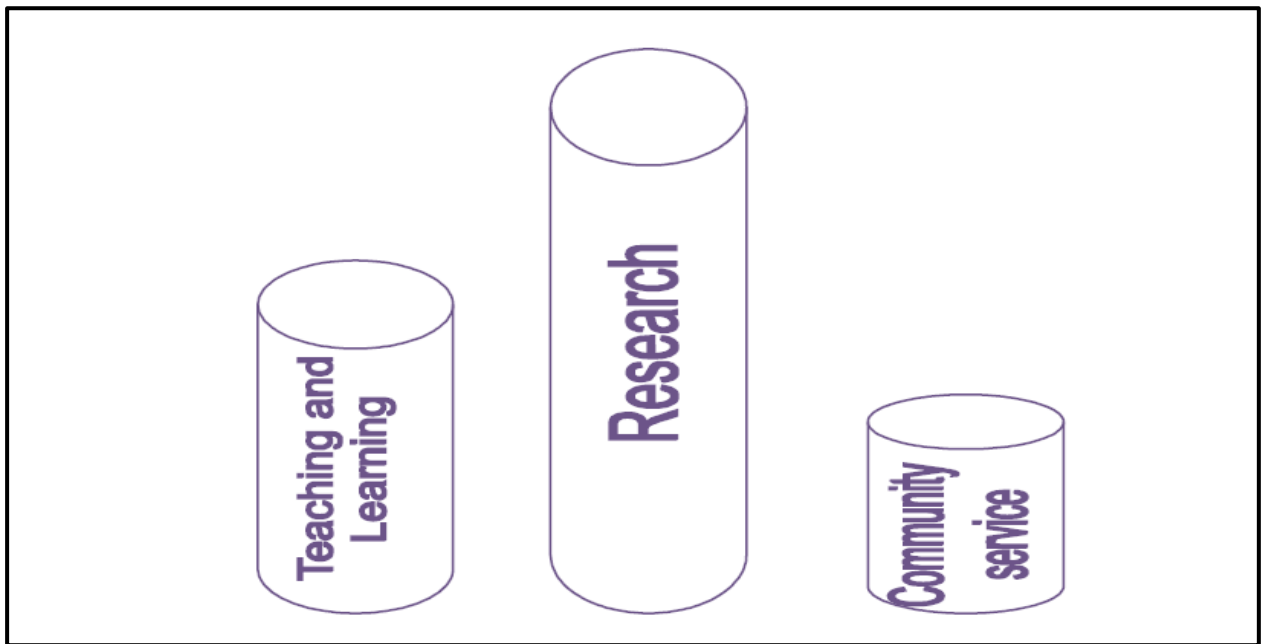
**Figure 6: The silo model of community engagement (Bender, 2008:88)**

In the silo model, teaching, research and CE operate independently from one another. CE is seen as merely an optional or add-on service. It tends to make CE voluntary and service-focused and seen as the traditional model (CHE, 2016:243).The second model (below) is an intersecting model (Bender, 2008:89) where the University has three separate roles which, unlike the silo model, intersect at certain points. Service-learning and community-based research take place at the points of intersection of with teaching and learning and research respectively, with service and community, where all three meets, but volunteerism and service continue where there is no intersection. In this model, CE is already taking place and there is no need for a drastic change in structure and operations.
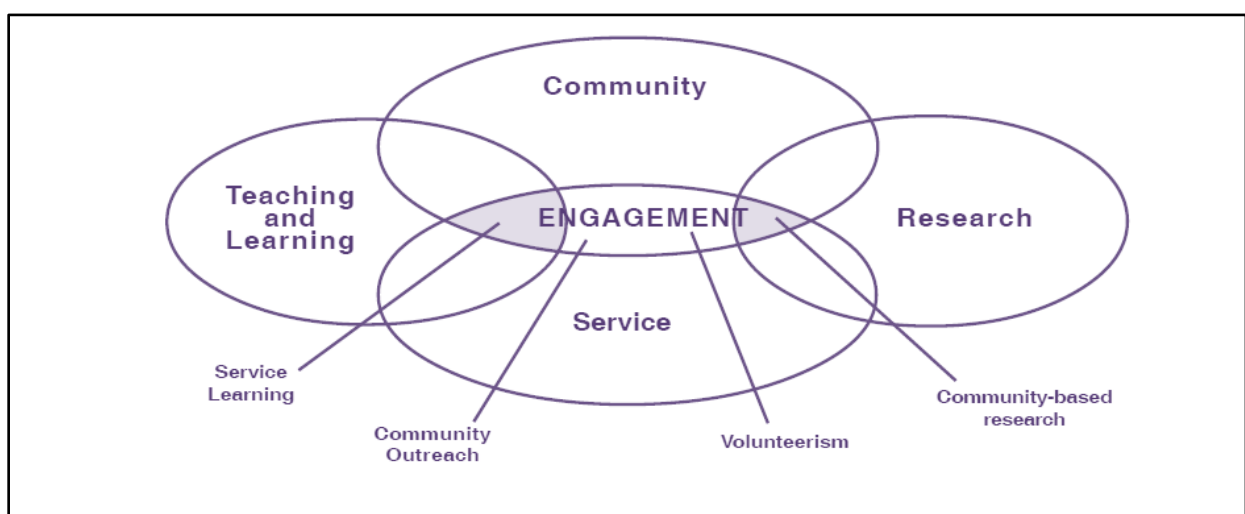


**Figure 7: The intersecting model of community engagement (Bender, 2008:89)**

Figure 8 below represents the cross-cutting or the infusion model of community engagement (Bender, 2008:89) in which CE forms part of research and teaching and s integrated into research and teaching. This model is closely linked to the engaged scholarship approach discussed in Figure 9 below and leads to the so-called community-engaged university ((CHE, 2016:243).
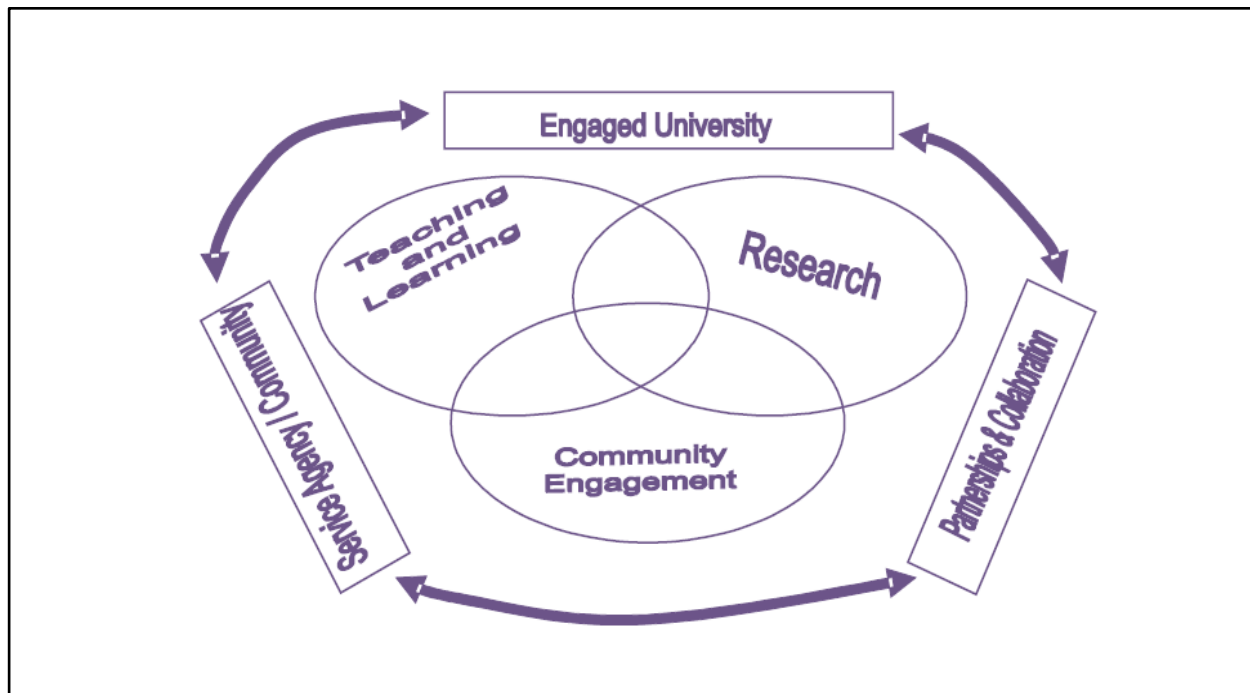


**Figure 8: The cross-cutting model of community engagement (Bender, 2008:90)**

While CE can consist of various levels of interaction, from students helping the community, to a university doing research for a business, it can also incorporate students learning from the community. One example of engagement where students learn from the community is student teachers going to schools and teaching for a few weeks in order to gain practical experience. Vickers *et al.* (2004:132) believe that when multiple beneficial and two-way engagement is correctly implemented, service-learning combines strong ties among the partners involved in the activities, and fluid and reciprocal forms of learning and reflection among all participants takes place. The interaction can be described with the below figure.
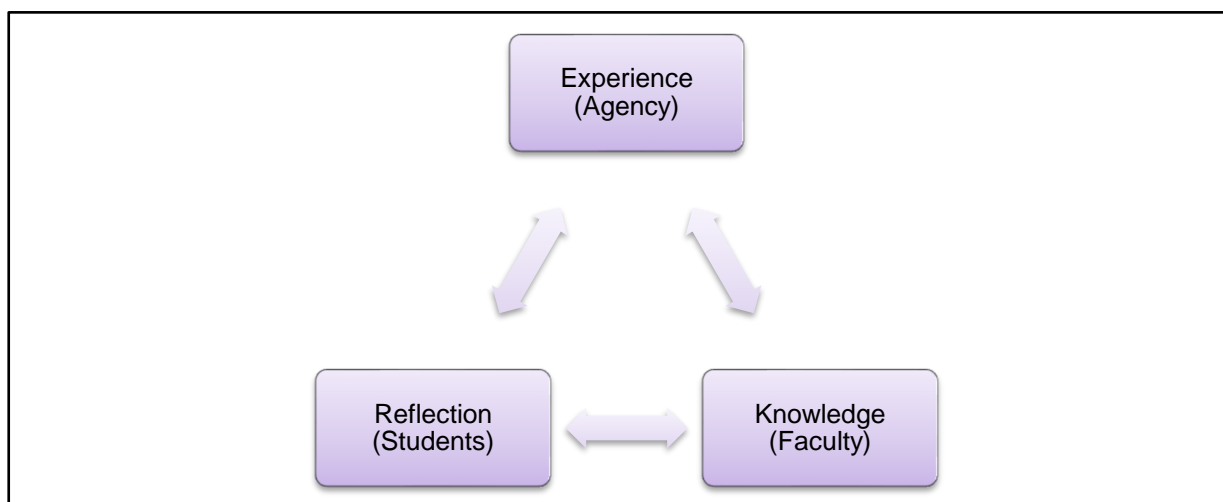
**Figure 9: Student, agencies and faculty engagement (Vickers *et al.*, 2004)**

A beneficial relationship is one in which student teachers learn how to be teachers in a real-life environment, older teachers can learn the latest teaching methods from the student teachers, and vice versa, and the university, as part of the process, can identify and learn what aspects are required in terms of educating its students.

There are various definitions of CEs, each with its own strategies, frameworks and views. Some view it as applications of the dissemination of research and transfer of knowledge and meaningful engagement with communities (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:238). However, CE can also be seen from an entrepreneurial perspective in which Universities engage in external activities with the aim of generating income during difficult economic times (Mtawa *et al.*, 2016:127). Thirdly, there is also the two-way stream where communities and Universities interact with each other, and results in a beneficial relationship as described above. Engagement with communities can, and does, result in benefits for communities while enhancing the academic project through enabling access to information and drawing on different ecologies of knowledge (CHE, 2016:242).

## 2.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The NWU defines CE as per its policy activities performed by the staff and students, primarily aimed at uplifting or supporting society and/or individuals in need of assistance or engagement (NWU, 2016). The NWU sees CE as part of its core function and has established the various CE programmes including the WIN platform in AUTHeR.

Since 2011, AUTHeR of the NWU has managed and coordinated the Well-being INnovation (WIN) platform, including seven schools and research units of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The WIN platform consists of 18 projects in poor communities in the Vaalharts area (Claasen *et al.*, 2016:4), although it works currently in a one-way approach, where the interaction is limited. This, of course,

needs to change to a two-way approach in which a partnership is established between the university and the community of the Vaalharts. The two-way approach framework for WIN can be established by various research initiatives with the collaboration of stakeholders. The framework has specific strategies for target groups and a specific outcome to secure and sustained the livelihoods of this community. The framework with its interactions is presented by Figure 10 below.
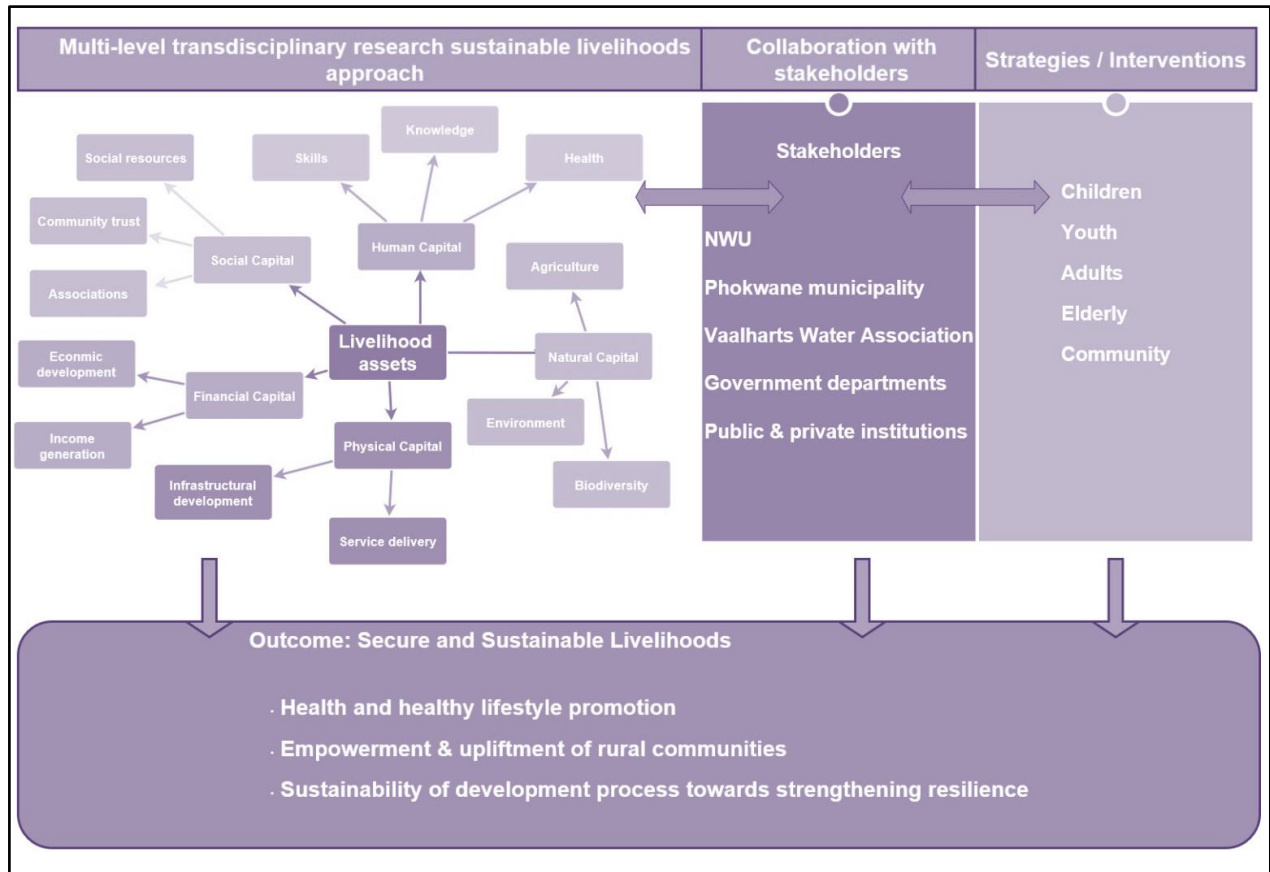


**Figure 10: Framework for the WIN platform (AUTHeR, 2013)**

## 2.5   CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

South Africa does not have existing policies or frameworks in place to support and assist CE to be a significant part of Universities' core functions. Some of the challenges identified by the CHE (2016:264)  include:

- difficulty in developing mechanisms for evaluating the quality of CE;

- lack of funding;

- competing priorities impacting academic workloads;

- difficulty in changing mindsets about the nature of CE, particularly with respect to its interconnections with teaching and research; and

- a lack of genuine executive support and understanding of the CE mandate and its potential.

The lack of funding and sources for funding are important for the development of a financial framework since the success of CE depends on the funding allocated to support these functions. In the United Kingdom (UK) the funding model includes:

- the establishment of earmarked funds that institutions can bid for;

- the establishment of centres of excellence in the field of public engagement;

- the provision of national awards; and

- the widening of criteria used for measuring the quality of research to include consideration of the impact of research, where applicable, on wider society (CHE, 2016:268).

Another funding option is the use of the triple helix model, a partnership with government, Universities and the industry. The triple helix thesis is that the potential for innovation and economic development in a knowledge society lies in a more prominent role for the university and in the hybridisation of elements from university, industry and government to generate new institutional and social formats for the production, transfer and application of knowledge (Etzkowitz & Ranga, 2015:238).

There is also no mechanism in place to evaluate the success of CE since while Universities receive funding and expenses are incurred for CE, the success of CE is not measured. The growing importance of CE activities in Universities has led to an increased emphasis on auditing and evaluation (Hart & Northmore, 2011:34). The aim of benchmarking is to capture community activities that are conducted over and above the university's core purposes of research and teaching. In addition to systematic monitoring to inform strategic planning, it provides quantifiable evidence to demonstrate the value of CE (Hart & Northmore, 2011:40).

While there has been considerable progress in developing indicators and benchmarking systems, the rigorous and comprehensive incorporation of community perspectives in auditing and benchmarking is almost entirely absent across the Higher Education sector, both within the UK and beyond (Hart & Northmore, 2011). The evaluating and measuring of CE activities is also absent in South Africa.

Despite the importance of engagement between Universities and communities, academia have been reluctant to become involved in research partnerships for a range of reasons that include (Ahmed *et al.*, 2004:144):

- lack of respect for community knowledge;

- a view of community members as objects, rather than partners, for research;

- the perception that collaborative research may lack rigour;

- inadequate understanding of the benefits that collaboration may offer;

- lack of research mentors conducting and informing collaborations; and

- lack of incentives, grants and rewards for conducting collaborative research.

These challenges are also experienced by South African Higher Education institutions with CE still a relatively new concept and not fully implemented.

Another barrier for CE is culture since Universities and communities have been operating in certain ways for years, and it is difficult to change the operation and behaviour of the various parties. According to Bender (2008:85), University culture and structure poses a challenge to CE because of a University's relative isolation from the surrounding communities. Community perceptions of the university is that of an ivory tower, literally "above" and "over" the surrounding communities. The culture of academia, embedded in institutional structures and beliefs, is in many ways opposed to the vision that academics support. The success of CE programmes between Universities and the community will require a cultural change and a change in structure for the programmes to be successfully implemented.

## 2.6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

CE has various parties and processes involved and planning is critical for the success of a CE programme. According to Fitzgerald *et al.* (2016:231), the budgeting and planning process should reflect the centrality of public engagement as a core institutional mission. A CE programme goes through various stages from planning to completion. A framework by Sargent and Waters (2004:311) suggests that CE programmes can go through various cycles that consist of phases. Figure 11 presents these various cycles and phases.
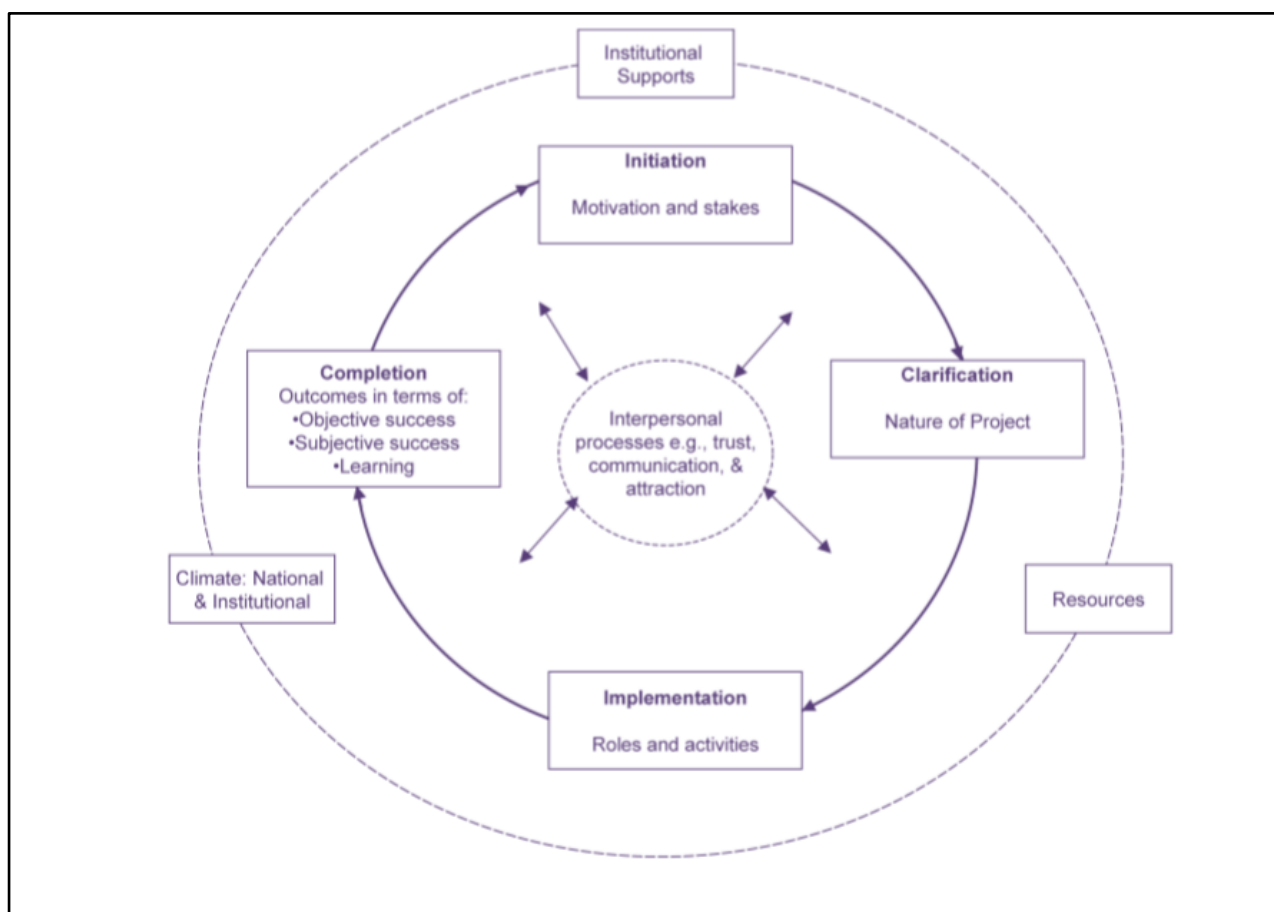
**Figure 11: An inductive process framework of academic research collaborations (Sargent & Waters, 2004:311)**

The initiation phase focuses on the motivation of the various participants, and why they want to be part of the collaboration. In the clarification phase participants clarify the nature of the project, issues relating to the duration of the project(s), the scope of the project(s), the number of collaborators, and goals. A financial framework for a CE project starts with a budget that will be influenced by the goals the project has set. The financial framework will be part of the clarification process. In the implementation phase, the various roles and responsibilities of each party will be outlined. The fourth phase, namely the completion phase, refers to how collaborators rate the success of their project in terms of objective outcomes, subjective outcomes, and learning outcomes. The financial framework will also be part of the completion phase in terms of reporting on the financial aspects and the governance reporting. The financial framework forms part of the cycle of the overall framework for CE.

A plan regarding the financial aspects must be developed and a budget must set up so that the funds could be methodically divided. By doing so, the community itself would be assisted and the people would be engaged in all the processes of the community. This would help in the betterment of the community since people who are at a disadvantage could be helped through the financial

funds that are collected (Cyril *et al.*, 2015). Throughout the process, it could be seen that the financial plans are quite an important aspect of developing any CE projects because it would assist in ensuring that all the aspects are covered, and nothing is missed. Ranging from the big projects to the small ones, each project would need to be developed thoroughly so that any person including outsiders, can get an understanding of the project by only looking at the planning documents.

The financial aspects will be divided into two parts. Firstly, the budgeting process and, secondly, the reporting process. The aim of the budgeting process as part of the planning process of a CE project is to identify the various types of expenses, the sources of funding required for these expenses, and to identify the goals the project wants to achieve. The reporting section will look at the actual expenditure versus the budgeted expenditure, and if these goals have been met. The financial framework should be seen as an integration into the CE framework.

## 2.7   FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Fitzgerald *et al.* (2016:234) discuss how the organisation's categories of expenditures such as that, total expenditures do not exceed total revenues over time. The types of expenses are justified and brought in line with the types of revenue earned. Managers of Universities need to link the revenue and expenditure streams of a CE project as part of a critically important managerial responsibility. Financial alignment becomes operational through two types of interrelated management tactics, namely differential allocation across units and/or functions, and cross-subsidisation. Differential allocation occurs when senior managers distribute funds that are not directly earned by specific functions and units (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:234). The funds received are allocated to a specific cause, objective or project. Universities receive funding from government and private donors for CE for different purposes.

Funding for different sources can, however, be used to fund the same project or, alternatively, projects can be cross-subsidised. Cross-subsidisation (using excess earnings from one type of activity to offset deficits in another) commonly occurs and certainly can be appropriate in well-run organisations. Cross-subsidisation occurs when funding from the government is delayed or cut back on due to budget constraints. However, Universities do not necessarily have the information systems to deal with such complex management. Existing financial accounting systems tend to be geared towards documenting that funds were spent appropriately but not necessarily whether the expenditures were, organisationally, most effective (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:235).

According to (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:236), at Universities in the USA managers should take four things into consideration in order to balance the allocation of funding for CE programmes, namely:

- the history of the Universities past heritage of service;

- efforts within the engagement function demonstrate to stakeholders in the state that the public funding provided to the university is delivering value to taxpayers, beyond those who are parents of students currently attending the university;

- whether the university has a role as a good neighbour, like the concept of corporate social responsibility within the private sector and, lastly;

- achieving the overall purpose of the university, which is focused on the knowledge enterprise.

The above should be part of the financial framework to ensure that the allocation of funding is balanced.

In South Africa, financial statements must be prepared and reported in terms of the International Accounting Standards (IAS). The Accounting Standards Board in South Africa defines a financial framework as one which sets out the objectives, and concepts, which underlie the preparation and presentation of financial statements (Accounting Standards Board, 2004). The accounting process consists of various steps from planning to reporting. A financial profile will start with the budget process, where the objectives of the project will be matched with the various costs associated with the project. The community projects need to be funded by various sources like grants, Universities directly, and private sector funding.

CE is complex and very widely described, with various activities and parties involved. A study was conducted by Cox (2000:9) to understand the complex relationships between HEI, community's partnerships and the integrative framework that supports these partnerships. The study begins with key concepts and aims to answer the following three questions:

- What types of activities or programmes are implemented to improve neighbourhoods?

- Who are the parties involved in or affected by those activities?

- What are the individual interests of those parties in the community improvement activities?

Answering the above questions for each CE project will help develop a CE framework. The question of the requirements of each party in terms of financial expectations, and the reporting and governance requirements are also relevant.

## 2.8    FUNDING AND REPORTING

CE activities are funded by various sources of funding including direct funds from the university, or from grants such as the NRF. Funding from private institutions can present as donations or funds for specific research as part of CE. Universities in South Africa are governed by the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (South Africa, 1997). Section 40 of the Act (amended) states that funds of the national institute for Higher Education consist of:

(a) funds allocated by the minister in terms of section 39;

(b) any donations or contributions received by the institution;

(c) money raised by the institution;

(d) money raised by means of loans and overdrafts;

(e) income derived from investments;

(f) money received for services rendered to any other institution or person;

(g) money payable by students for Higher Education programmes provided by the institution, although the council may discriminate in a fair manner between students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the Republic and students who are citizens or permanent residents of the Republic when the amount payable is determined;

(h) money received from students or employees of the institution for accommodation or other services provided by the institution; and

(i) other receipts from whatever source.

All the funds of a Higher Education institute have to be reported in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act of 101 of 1997 (amended):

(1) The council of a public Higher Education institution must in the manner prescribed by the Minister, namely

  a. keep records of all its proceedings; and

  b. keep complete accounting records of all assets, liabilities, income and expenses and any other financial transactions of the public Higher Education institution as a whole, of its substructures and of other bodies operating under its auspices.

(2) The council of a public Higher Education institution must, in respect of the preceding year and by a date or dates and in the manner prescribed by the Minister, provide the Minister with such information, in such format as the Minister prescribes.

In terms of this Act, regardless of the source of the funds, the funds are being described as funds of a national higher institution and therefore need to be reported in terms of Section 41 of the Higher Education Act 101 of 2007 (amended). CE funds will be part of university funding and are therefore subject to the same Act. Consequently, such funds are governed by the Higher Education Act.

Universities are governed by good corporate governance and legislation in South Africa. Corporate governance can be defined as the set of laws, rules and procedures that influence a company's operations and the decisions its managers make (Brigham *et al.*, 2016).

## 2.9    PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

CE programmes need to be set up in such a way that the success of the project can be measured. Measuring the success or shortcomings will help to improve future projects or improve the current project. In South Africa, the National Treasury designed the Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information, with various stages and types of evaluation processes. Figure 12 below shows the stages from input to impact and the types of evaluations.
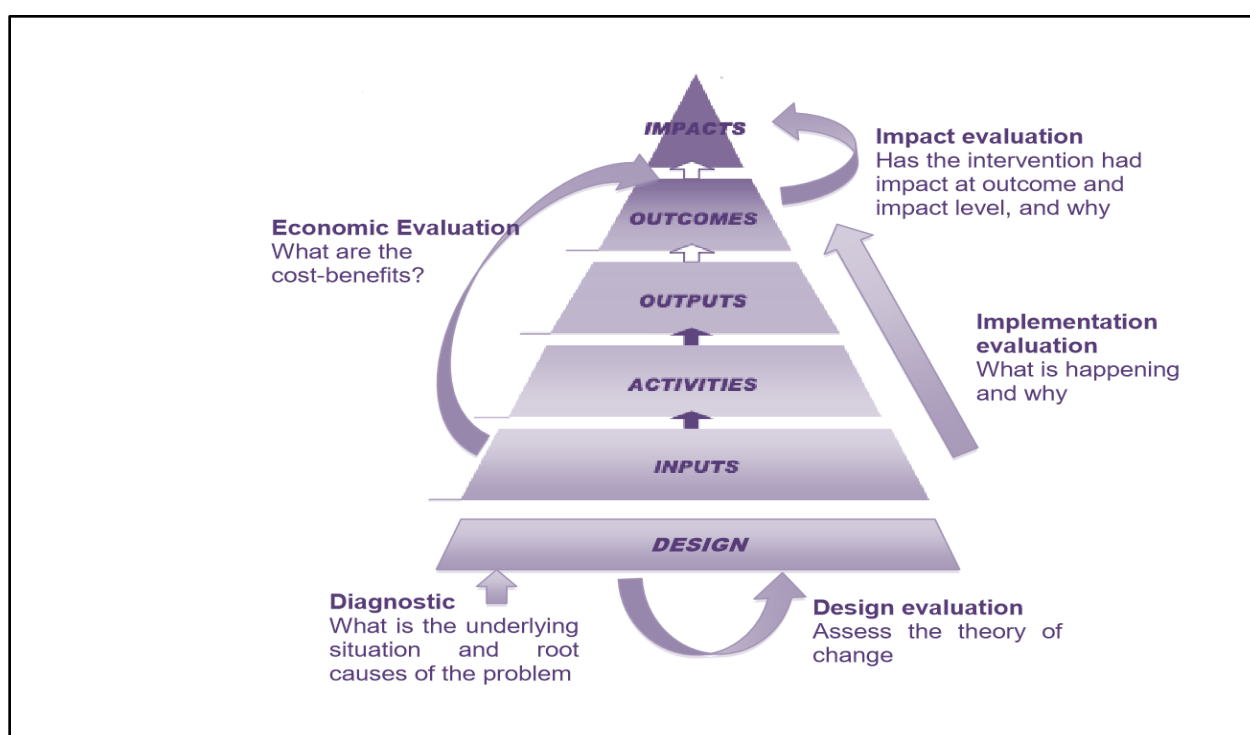


**Figure 12: Types of evaluations (South Africa, 2011:8)**

Using the Framework from the Treasury with the various types of evaluation processes and applying the processes to a CE programme, the table below describes the various evaluations and timeframes it needs to be completed.

**Table 2: Evaluations across a community engagement programme**

| Type of evaluation | Covers | Timing |
|---|---|---|
| Diagnostic evaluation | This is the start of CE, with initial research done to identify the problem, opportunities, causes and | At key stages before design or planning. |

| | consequences. The various stakeholders are identified, and the main theme of the CE programme. | |
|---|---|---|
| Design evaluation | Assess if the objectives of the CE programme are addressing the problem or needs identified. Only uses secondary data. The aim is to identify possible flaws and to assess if the current organisation policies are sufficient or need to be adapted. This will help to increase the success of the programme. | After an intervention has been designed, in the first year, and possibly later. |
| Implementation evaluation | Evaluates the various processes by looking at the activities, outputs, and outcomes, use of resources and the causal links. It measures the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme to identify possible weakness in the programme. | Once or several times during the intervention. |
| Impact evaluation | Measuring whether the programme is working or not, by measuring the change in the population or the degree and impact of the programme on the population. Evaluation is implemented in a case-by-case situation. | Designed early on, baseline implemented early, impact checked at key stages. |
| Economic evaluation | Measures whether the costs of a policy or programme have been outweighed by the benefits. Types of economic evaluation include cost-effectiveness analysis, which values the costs of implementing and delivering the programme and relates this amount to the total quantity of outcome generated to produce a "cost per unit of outcome" estimate and cost-benefit analysis, which goes further in assigning a monetary value to the changes in outcomes as well. | At any stage. |
| Evaluation synthesis | Overall evaluation of the success of CE for the entire University. | After several evaluations are completed. |

Using the various evaluations in the CE programme, the impact and success of the programme can be measured. The biggest measuring instrument in terms of the financial aspects will be the economic benefits added, the funds that were spent making the impact and addressing the problem, and what the benefits are from spending these funds.

## 2.10  SUMMARY

In this chapter a literature review was done on the various concepts and factors of CE, specifically focusing on CE at the university level. The various models of CE were discussed using the literature, showing that there is not a consensus on the definition of CE at the university level. Finally, the financial framework and performance objectives evaluation process, and how it needs to be done was tackled as part of the literature review.

# CHAPTER 3: REALISATION OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS AND PRESENTING THE RESEARCH RESULTS

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 provided a literature review that highlighted the following concepts: CE, CE at Universities, the financial framework of CE and the funding, reporting, and performance objectives. The literature review provided insight into the functioning of CE in Higher Education. In Chapter 3, the realisation of data collection and analysis is described. Yin (2017:15) describes a case study as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear. The data analysis phase of the case study commenced with the development of a case study database in ATLAS.ti. The development of a database is one of the tactics described by Yin (2017:43) to enhance reliability in the study. The following data sources were included in the database: documents from Wrike (2018) compiled by the WIN platform's programme manager and additional documents requested from the project manager. Chapter 3 concludes with recommendations and leads to a proposed framework in Chapter 4 of this study.

## 3.2 DATA COLLECTION

After ethical clearance, gatekeeper permission and permission from AUTHeR's director were obtained, and the CIR office in AUTHeR developed a repository on Wrike for the researcher, containing all the various documents that were gathered from 2011 to 2016 relating to the WIN platform. Wrike is an online electronic project management and collaboration platform where projects can be uploaded and accessed by various authorised users (Wrike, 2018). The researcher received a username and password for Wrike to access the various relevant documents stored on it. The types of documents on Wrike obtained were in three folders, namely the WIN platform budget, WIN platform presentations and minutes, and WIN platform research outputs:

**Folder 1: WIN platform budget**

- 2012: Three (3) MS Excel documents containing the WIN platform project expenses for 2012.

- 2013: Three (3) MS Excel documents with WIN platform expenses and budget requests, one (1) MS Word invoice for catering.

- 2014: Six (6) MS Excel documents containing templates for WIN platform transport request, payment of field workers, and 2014 budget and one (1) grand approval document in pdf.

- 2015: Three (3) documents, a fund report in pdf format, two (2) MS Word documents for payment approval and projects for possible further collaboration.

- 2016: one (1) budget in MS Excel.

**Folder 2: WIN platform presentations and minutes**

A total of 30 documents were in this folder consisting of:

- Four (4) MS PowerPoint presentations on the WINLab Framework and the WIN projects on sustainable livelihoods.

- Four (4) pdf documents of minutes of WIN platform management meetings.

- Twenty-two (22) MS Word documents of minutes of WIN platform management meetings.

**Folder 3: WIN platform research outputs**

- 2014 WIN platform annual report in pdf.

- 2015/6 WIN platform annual report in MS Word.

- 2011 Vaalharts report (needs assessment) in pdf.

- 2013 AUTHeR annual report.

- 2015 AUTHeR annual report.

- 2017 WINLab – two (2) MS Word documents, a dissertation and a WINLab report.

- 2012 WIN platform motivation letter in MS Word.

- 2014-2016 dissertations and articles on Jan Kempdorp.

The first step of the analysis process was to go through the documents and get an understanding of the context of the type of information in the documents. Part of the process was to organise the documents in an understandable manner by using the eights steps of Tesch as described by Creswell (2014:185), the detailed eight steps were discussed in Chapter 1 under 1.7.5 data analysis. The documents were taken from various projects from 2011 to 2017. A total of eighty-eight (88) documents were analysed and included financial statements, minutes of meetings, budgets, expense documentation, presentations on frameworks, planning documents, memoranda of understanding (MOU) and various reports. The documents were in various formats, mostly Excel, Word and PowerPoint. Excel documents were first converted to PDF to

make it possible to import the documents into ATLAS.ti. Additional documents were requested from the project manager and ten (10) additional documents were received, mostly MOUs, to get an understanding of the relationship between the NWU and the various stakeholders of the projects.

The document information was compared with various other documents, example budget figures were compared with the reports of budgets against actual expenditure, and MOU compared with minutes of meetings, triangulation was formed. The triangulation helped to identify codes and to link codes to form the various themes.

## 3.3   DATA ANALYSIS

After the development of the database in ATLAS.ti, codes were assigned according to the framework of inputs: activity; outputs; outcomes and impact as per the key performance concepts in Figure 2. The first step of Tesch as described by Creswell (Creswell, 2014:185), was applied, commencing with the organisation and preparation of the documents.

A checklist was used to assign codes to the documents according to the below explanation of each criterion. The checklist was developed using Figure 12, the Treasury Evaluation diagram as a basis. The components from Figure 12 were used to set the units for measuring the documents. Each component had a specific definition describing the unit. This definition was used to first identify the types of documents that would support the definition. The types of documents and a broader description were added as criteria in the checklist. The various components, input, activities, output, outcomes, and impact were used as the different units for this checklist.

- **Input**: resources used to do the work that will contribute to the production and delivery of outputs.

- **Activities**: actions or processes performed in a CE programme.

- **Output**: the final products or services delivered in a CE programme.

- **Outcomes**: what role-players wished to achieve.

- **Impact**: what role-players aimed to change.

The evaluation processes of all the various units were considered and regulations were added to identify the specific regulations for CE.

**Table 3: Document checklist**

| UNIT | DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF UNIT WITHIN DOCUMENTS | ✓ |
|---|---|---|
| **Input** | **What resources are used to do the work that will contribute to the production and delivery of outputs?** | |
| | These are documents relating to the start of a CE activity are then allocated to the input code. | |
| | Budgets. | |
| | MOUs. | |
| | Grant applications. | |
| | Grant approvals. | |
| | Minutes of meetings. | |
| | Without these documents, the project will not be able to start. | |
| **Activities** | **What actions or processes are performed in a CE project?** | |
| | These are the documents that use the inputs to produce the desired outputs and will lead to the outcomes. | |
| | In a CE programme, there are various projects running and these projects are activities that are performed to reach certain outcomes. | |
| | The various types of expenses were also classified as an activity. | |
| **Outputs** | **What are the final products or services that delivered?** | |
| | Outputs are a report of all the various activities the delivered. | |
| | In CE the outputs are details of the number of people attending a workshop on healthy living, the kg of glass that was recycled in a month. | |
| | Other outputs are the research articles and dissipations that was produced. | |
| **Outcomes** | **What we wish to achieve?** | |
| | Specific results and consequences of achieving the specific outcomes. | |
| | Difference made by the outputs (Mills-Scofield, 2012). | |
| | Financial outcomes: relating to the reporting and the requirements of IAS; for example, financial statement or expenses measured against budgets. | |
| | Performance outcomes: based on objectives that are being reported on or required by stakeholders. | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Impact** | **What we aim to change?** | |
| | The developmental results of achieving a specific outcome. | |
| | Describe the impact you hope to have on your issue area after the activities are completed, but further into the future. | |
| | Describe what you hope will change because of your activities. | |
| **Regulations** | **What are specific regulations required for a CE project?** | |
| | Any regulations required for a specific CE activity to take place. | |
| | Specific regulatory requirements that form part of the input for CE, these regulations are identified in the input stage of a CE programme. | |
| | The regulations can be internal such as policies or external example specific laws. | |
| **Evaluation** | **Evaluations involve deep analysis of issues such as causality, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value for money and sustainability (South Africa, 2011:2).** | |
| | Various evaluation processes that take place at various times. | |
| | The process starts with a needs analysis and is the basic process of check and balances to ensure the project is reaching its objectives and that the activities are still relevant. | |
| | All documents with criteria, monitoring and evaluation were allocated the evaluation code. | |

During the coding process, relationships between the various codes were identified. Exploring the relationships between codes and themes strengthened the development of a framework (Friese, 2014:133). Regulations and evaluations were also added to the framework in Figure 2 to ensure that specific regulations for a CE project could be identified and evaluated as part of measuring the process and success of a CE project.

The codes were grouped together in coded groups and networks were explored. The network view option in ATLAS.ti was used to display the relationships among the different codes and the relationships among the themes and the codes, as indicated by the data analysis procedure (Friese, 2014:33). Exploring these relationships strengthened the theory development process (Friese, 2014:133). These network views are included in this chapter to enable a visualisation of these relationships. Using the framework in Figure 2, codes and analysing the data specific themes were identified. The researcher had a consensus discussion with the director of AUTHeR to get a detailed understanding of the documents and the history of the WIN project. The NCT model of Friese (2014:1) as previously discussed in Chapter 1, was applied to analyse data. Specific results were obtained for each theme from the data analysis. A total of 123 codes were

assigned to the various documents based on the checklist. The codes were grouped into seven themes. A checklist was utilised in document analysis.

## 3.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the data analysis, seven (7) themes were identified with the application of the checklist. The results of the main codes were as follows for each theme:

- The "input code" had five sub-categories namely: structures, funding, MOUs, budgets, and needs analysis.

- The activities code had the various sub-categories under it: mobile clinic, glass recycling, sustainable diets, consumer science, urban and regional planning, kinder kinetics and marketing. The types of expenses were classified and added to activities as a separate code to identify the various types of expenses in CE.

- The output code had two sub-categories, namely: output CE activities, and output research.

- The outcomes codes were divided into two sub-categories, namely: financial for reporting on finances, and outcomes performance for reporting on outcomes of activities.

- No documents on impact reporting were found, and therefore no impact code could be allocated.

- The regulations code explored the internal policies of the NWU and the legal requirements specifically relating to CE.

- The evaluation code looked at the various evaluation processes in CE.

The figure below presents the various themes that emanated through the data analysis combined with Figure 12, the Treasury Evaluation diagram.
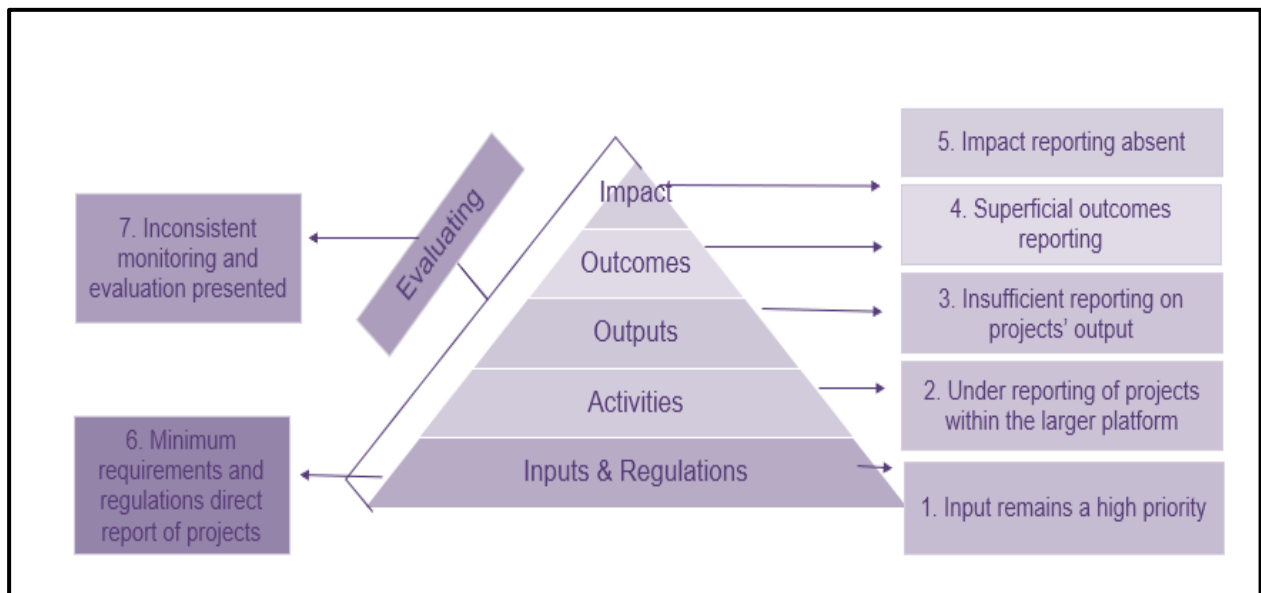
**Figure 13: Themes identified from data analysis combined with key performance information concepts (South Africa, 2010)**

### 3.4.1 Theme 1: Input remains a high priority

Input describes resources that are used to do the work that will contribute to the production and delivery of outputs. Input is the financial, human, and material resources used for the development of an intervention (Zall Kusek & Rist, 2004:226). An input evaluation includes inventorying and analysing available human and material resources, proposed budgets and schedules, and recommended solution strategies and procedural designs. Key input evaluation criteria include a proposed plan's relevance, feasibility, superiority to other approaches, cost, and projected cost-effectiveness (Zhang *et al.*, 2011:65). The documents allocated to this code were specific and described how the project was initiated or used in the planning phase of the project. These include the agreements, MOUs, budgets and minutes of meetings. Most of the documents analysed formed part of this theme, indicating that a lot of time and energy is spent on the inputs of a project; it is therefore seen as a high priority by staff. The success of a project can be determined by the inputs given; therefore, inputs should remain a high priority.

Thirty-five (35) of the eighty-eight (88) documents related to inputs. Inputs codes were divided into five (5) groups, consisting of:

- Inputs MOU: MOU between NWU and various stakeholders consisting of the criteria and agreements between the stakeholders and minutes of meetings discussing the progress of MOUs. A total of ten (10) codes and eighteen (18) documents related to Inputs MOU.

- Inputs need analysis: documents were given in which the various needs of the stakeholders were identified as well as a background of the Vaalharts area. Only one document and one code was assigned to this group. Only one needs analysis was done in 2011, at the beginning of the project.

- Inputs structures: Six (6) documents and six (6) codes were coded with inputs structures, documents like a strategic plan, criteria required for a programme, committee structures for the WIN platform, and conditions for students and temporary workers. These were all documents that gave structure to the programme, resulting in successful operations.

- Inputs funding: Funding inputs relate to funding documents for specific WIN platform. Four (4) codes were created with funding to four specific stakeholders, funding projects of the WIN platform. Eight (8) documents were included in the input funding code, the documents included funding agreements and minutes of meetings discussing the progress of the funding process.

  Inputs budgets: Sixteen (16) documents related to various budgets for various programmes and ten (10) codes were assigned to this group. Budget documents included Excel budget sheets and minutes of meetings discussing budget status.

Figure 14 below is a diagram from ATLAS.ti presenting the network relationship of the various input groups.
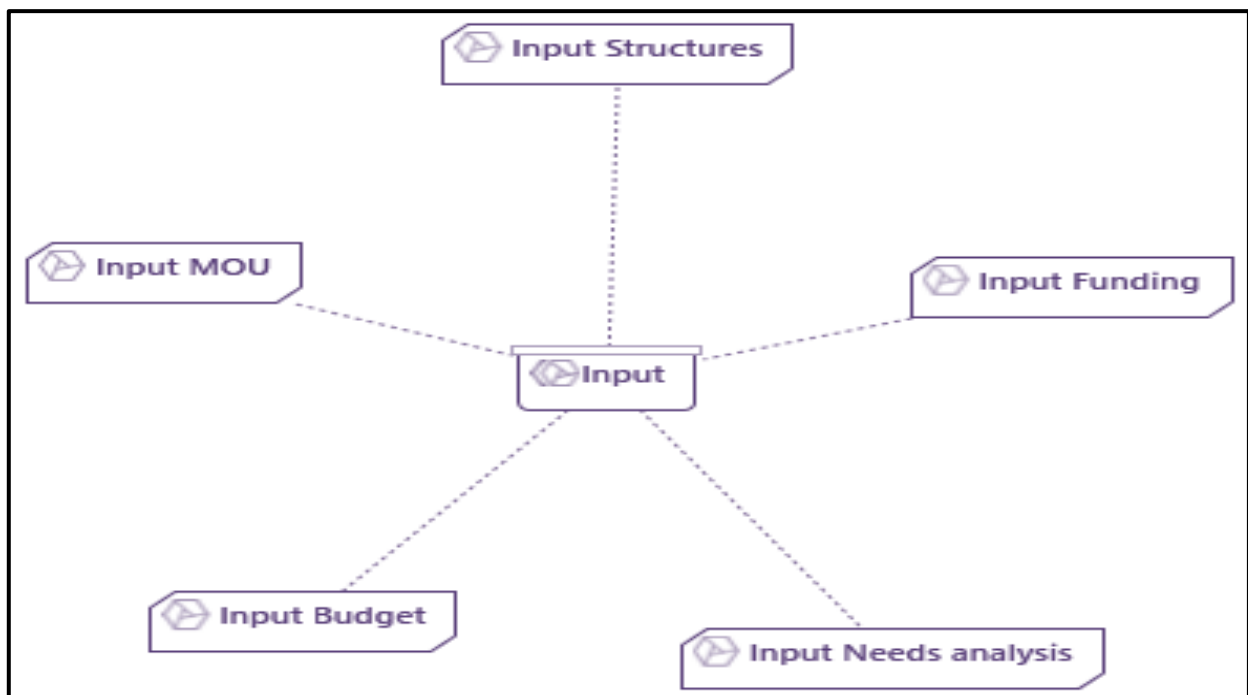


**Figure 14: Different types of input in the WIN platform document analysis from ATLAS.ti**

Starting a CE programme requires various inputs from the various stakeholders to make it successful. The input process is the core beginning of a CE programme, and the success of the programme depends on the inputs at the start. Achieving clarity concerning financial arrangements, budgets, and contracts is a key process in creating and maintaining long-standing, effective research partnerships (Begun *et al.*, 2010:56). The following aspects were noted with regards to the document analysis:

- Input budget: Only one budget had specific objectives matched to the various budget items. Other budgets had no objectives matched. Budgets were put on Excel sheets with descriptions like "overhead" without a description of what are the specific overhead cost. No formal budgeting process could be identified. One budgeting factor identified as a possible risk factor relates to the "cost return," "indirect," or "F&A" (facilities and administration) costs that are attached to budgets (Begun *et al.*, 2010:61).

- Inputs MOU: Basic MOUs are in place and changes of MOUs were made, with updated addendums. The MOUs were, however, not kept in a single place and because various people were responsible for various projects, the MOUs were not filed with a single person. It is critical to establish who has the legitimate authority to enter into the agreement at both the university and the community partner sites because those individuals actually conducting the work may not have the authority (Begun *et al.*, 2010:60). A formal process needs to be put in place to establish the legal authority.

- Inputs structures: The WIN platform forms part of AUTHeR's strategic plan, a WIN platform committee has been established with meetings, including stakeholders from other schools that drive programmes under the WIN platform. According to Driscoll (2008:39), Universities require an "institutional commitment" category that requires documentation regarding budget, infrastructure, strategic planning, and faculty-development efforts to support CE. Colleges and Universities that were unable to meet the requirements of the first stage were encouraged to address these foundational indicators before seeking classification at a future date. This is a universal problem at Universities for CE programmes. Formal structures and processes can be identified early in the need's analysis process.

- Inputs need analysis: A formal, documented needs analysis was conducted in 2011; no formal follow-up documentation regarding needs analysis was recorded. The community and University's needs may have changed over the last seven (7) years and activities performed currently may not be relevant.

### 3.4.2 Theme 2: Under-reporting of activities in projects within the larger platform

The term "activities" describes the various activities within the projects that are performed by the WIN platform in terms of CE activities. In this case, "activity" is the combination of actions taken or work performed through which inputs such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilised to produce specific outputs (Zall Kusek & Rist, 2004:223). The WIN platform consists of various activities or projects that are running under the larger platform. There was no detailed report containing all the activities or with all the various projects that are run under the WIN platform. According to Lazarus *et al.* (2008:64), South African Universities had a wide range of community service projects, yet no institution at the time had conducted a systematic audit of these activities. Part of the activities are the various expenses that are incurred. Part of the analysis was to identify the various expenses relating to the projects. Projects were identified, and code groups were formed according to the various projects. The result was forty-four (44) documents relating to the activities performed by WIN with forty-seven (47) codes assigned to nine (9) groups. The coded groups were specific activities that formed part of CE, the research, marketing and expense groups that relate to the overall activities of CE.

**Table 4: Activities within the WIN platform**

| Project | Type of document | Information |
|---|---|---|
| Mobile clinic | Minutes of meetings | Progress on the contract between various parties of a mobile clinic for the community of Vaalharts |
| Glass recycling | Memorandum of understanding (MOU) | Training the community to do glass recycling, establish a partnership with the local municipality. Setting up a sustainable glass recycling programme |
| Sustainable diets | Minutes of meeting | Information on sustainable diets and an action plan for 2013-2015 |
| Consumer science | Minutes of meeting | Research on the Vaalharts community for consumer science students |
| Urban and regional planning | Minutes of meeting | Students did their final year projects on the Vaalharts area |
| Kinder kinetics | Minutes of meeting | NWU students doing recreational and kinder kinetic activities with the Vaalharts community |
| Marketing | Minutes of meeting, marketing poster, invoice for promotional t-shirts | Marketing the WIN platform, marketing material for the community to participate in the research |

Included in the various activities identified above are the expenses occurred in these activities and the research done relating to the activities.

- CE expenses: Fifteen (15) codes were allocated to expenses. These are various types of expenses incurred for the project activities, the majority of expenses and budget allocation are for transportation and field workers. The Vaalharts community is situated 290km from Potchefstroom. Figure 15 (on following page) from ATLAS.ti identifies the various expenses that form part of a CE programme.

- Activity research: Thirteen (13) codes were assigned to research activities, documents for research activities included, specific activities in grant documents, student agreements for research, and minutes of meetings discussing the progress of students doing research in the Vaalharts area under the umbrella of the WIN platform.

Various activities took place between NWU and the community of Vaalharts; however, very few of these activities were documented. A systematic review of university-community engagement done in the USA also indicated that CE is described as beneficial across the included studies but the body of evidence for community engagement is lacking (Carter *et al.*, 2015:116). The main source of documented activities were minutes of meetings with limited information about the details of the activities. Activity reports can help to identify outputs and measure the impact, as well as ensure that value for money is added to the programme.
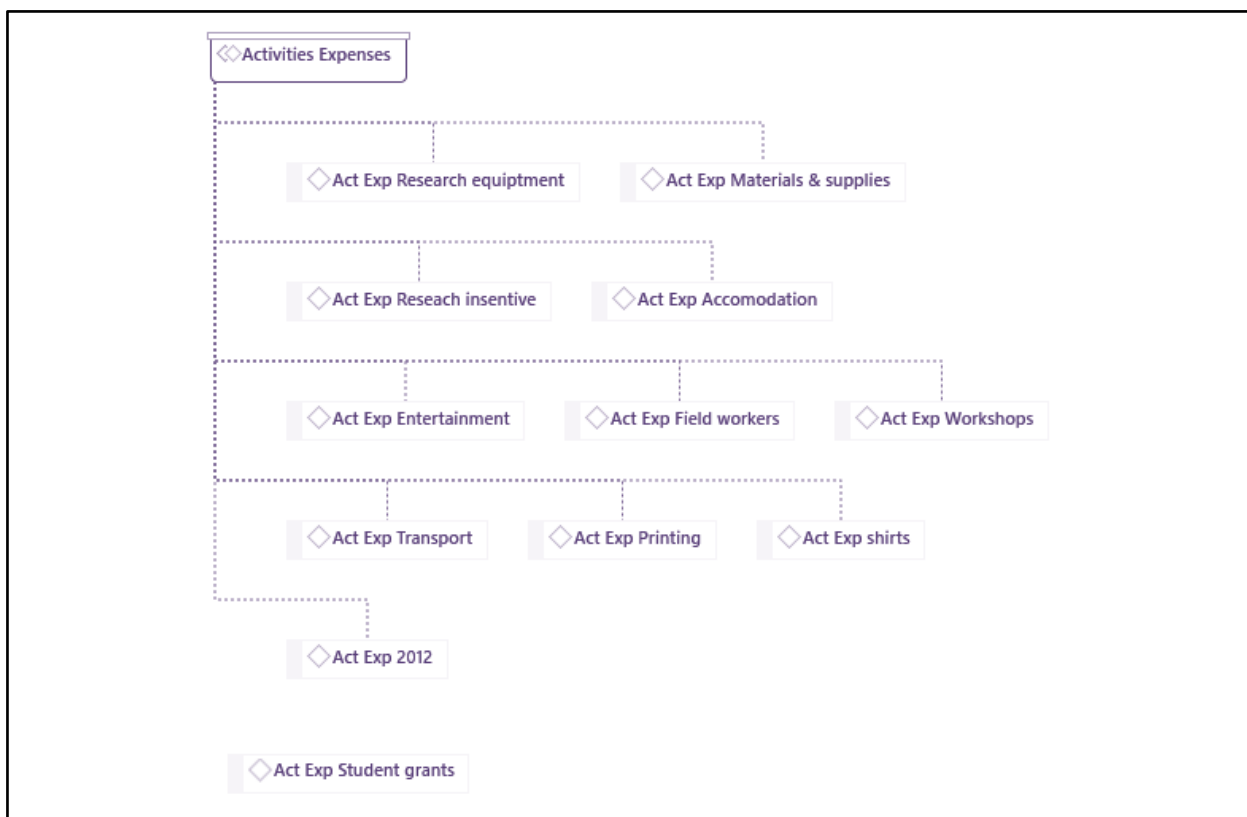


**Figure 15: A graphic depiction of all the types of expenses identified in the projects that were realised within the WIN platform from ATLAS.ti**

### 3.4.3  Theme 3: Insufficient reporting on projects' output

"Output" is defined as products or services that are being produced. Outputs are extrinsic and outcomes are intrinsic (Mills-Scofield, 2012). Outputs are the products that are delivered, and therefore extrinsic. On the other hand, outcomes are defined as the benefits the community receive and are therefore intrinsic. The products, capital goods and services that result from a development intervention may also include changes resulting from the intervention/activities which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes (Zall Kusek & Rist, 2004:227). In a non-profit organisation, the outputs include the programme, training and workshops delivered but the outcomes are identified as the knowledge transferred and behaviours changed (Mills-Scofield, 2012). In CE projects typical outcomes could include the workshops delivered to the communities of Vaalharts area on nutritional value or the delivering of a mobile clinic to the community. In the analysis of output documents, six codes were assigned to two groups, namely output CE activities and output research and contained five documents.

- Output CE activities: Under the CE activities the output code was assigned to an Excel document, containing details of all participants in a WIN project. This is an example of the outputs of a project, showing the participants that benefited from the project. The CIR office in AUTHeR developed a template to be completed for each CE activity that summarises the activities and stakeholders involved; this template document was part of the document analysis. These templates can be used for each project with specific fields that can be used to compile an output report. The AUTHeR reports for 2015 and 2016 had the various activities as described above with outputs measured in terms of research outputs in publications, or vague descriptions.

- Output research: The WIN platform has, over the years, been a major part in research for students in various fields. Documents for output research relate to a report containing the specific research outcomes from 2013 to 2015. In this research report of AUTHeR for 2015 and 2016, all the publications from the research were listed as outputs of the WIN platform.

In terms of the WIN platform, outputs were measured for CE as related to research outputs, the measurement is the number of students with completed master or doctored studies, or articles published based on the CE in Vaalharts. According to the, the most frequently reported CE outputs were traditional academic outputs (such as articles in scholarly journals). The Universities' focus is still on research as a main objective indicator with research being conducted in a CE. Turning CE from a one-way to a two-way process, outputs could not only be measured in terms of research outputs. The template of outputs can guide the design of a more formal process on output reporting.

### 3.4.4   Theme 4: Superficial outcomes reporting

CE takes places to create specific outcomes. CE outcomes can include improving the lives of the community and providing students with a unique community learning experience. Outcomes are measuring the reason why the engagement took place. The focus is on achieving outcomes, implementing performance measurement, learning from experiences and adapting, and reporting on performance (South Africa, 2010:9). Outcomes should be measured to ensure the objectives are reachable or to identify adjustments to the input or activities that need to be made. Outcomes will demonstrate whether success has been achieved and outcomes will show which road to take. Setting outcomes is essential in building a results-based system (Zall Kusek & Rist, 2004:57). In the analysis of outcomes 24 codes were assigned to the various outcomes of CE, divided into two group codes, namely: output financial and output performance. Outc = Outcome.
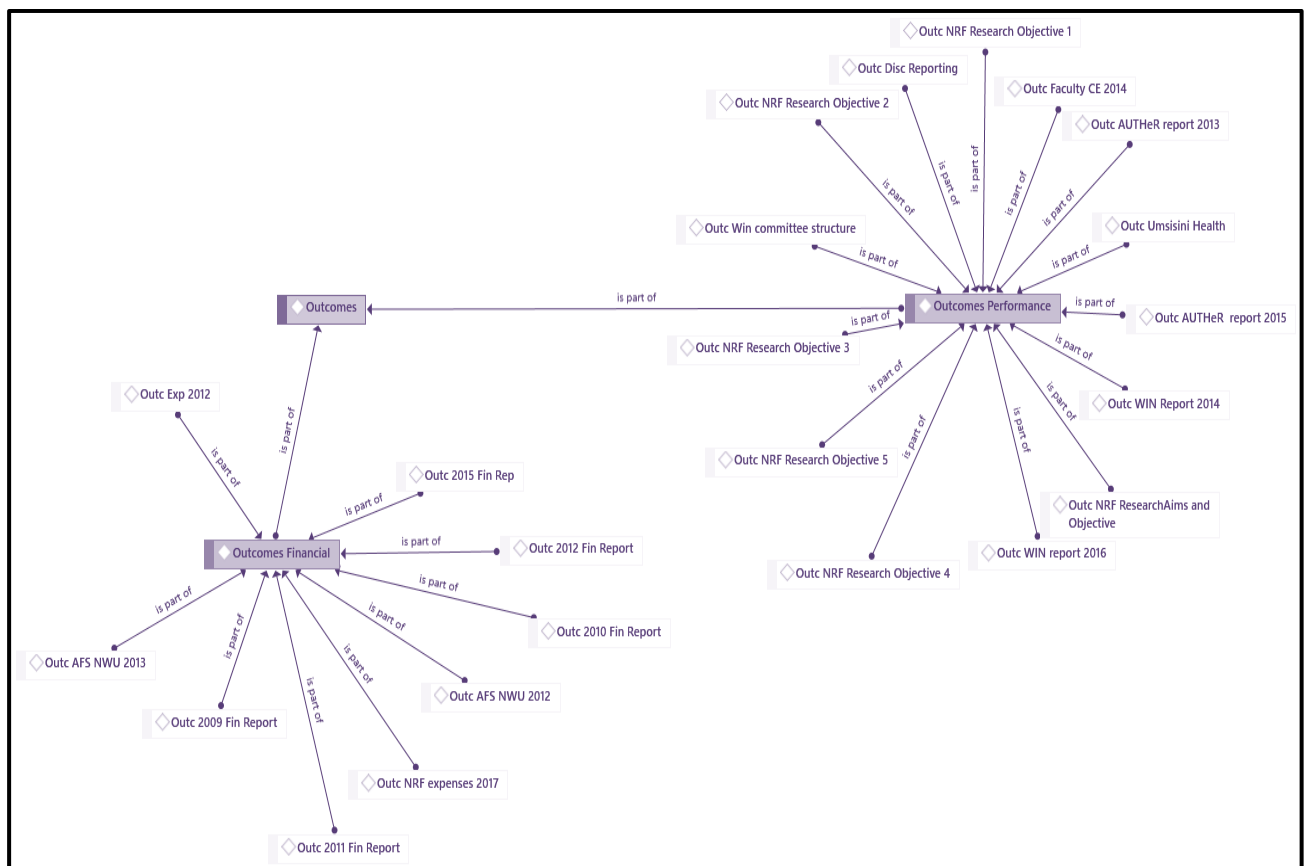


**Figure 16: Types of projects' outcomes as reported in the WIN platform from ATLAS.ti**

Codes and documents were also split into the two outcomes categories of outcome financial and outcome performance in the document analysis process:

- Outcome financial: Annual financial statements of funds received from various years, which included the budget compared to the actual expenses. Six (6) documents and nine (9) codes were assigned to outcomes financial.

- Outcome performance: AUTHeR had two (2) annual reports (from 2015 and 2016) containing the performance of each activity under the WIN platform. One project report had also been completed on a template from an external funder on the outcomes of the project.

Strategic objectives should state clearly what the institution intends doing (or producing) to achieve its strategic outcomes-oriented goals (South Africa, 2010:14). The strategic goals should be set at the beginning of a project and are the main reason for the project. CE would, as a non-profit project, be more focused on the performance outcomes than on the financial outcomes as the main outcome will be performance and not profits. However, a non-profit should still function within financial boundaries.

Financial outcomes will be included in financial reporting. In terms of Section 40 of the Higher Education Act of 101 of 1997 (amended) (South Africa, 1997), any funds received by the University should be reported in terms of Section 41 of the Act where full financial records should be kept. The funds received and spent on CE are also governed by this Act. Therefore, Universities should have prepared full financial records for CE funding. This includes monitoring the spending against the set budget. However, there are no formal budgets prepared and therefore the current comparison is just a theoretical exercise without understanding the impact of these outcomes. Funding received internally does not require formal budgeting and record keeping. This is a major control weakness since there is no control of reporting if the funds are used for CE activities and can lead to the misuse of funds. In terms of the Higher Education Act (1997), regardless of the source of the funds, there needs to be formal reporting on the funds; this includes internal funds. Internal funds should therefore also be required to do formal budgeting, record keeping of detailed expenses and reporting.

### 3.4.5 Theme 5: Impact reporting absent

Reporting on the impact of interventions is a developing science. Impact measures the results of achieving specific outcomes. In a review of measurement tools for evaluating community coalitions aimed at promoting community health, Granner and Sharpe (2004:514) found that the largest number of measures were for assessing individual or group characteristics, 'with impact and outcome measures being the least numerous'.

The WIN platform has various activities that are performed by researchers and students for the community of the Vaalharts area. However, there is no impact reporting stating how the

community's lives have been changed. Existing financial accounting systems tend to be geared towards documenting that funds were spent appropriately but not necessarily whether the expenditures were most effective in terms of organisation (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:235). In the case study of WIN, the expenses were also recorded without necessarily how these expenses impacted the community. The purpose of the larger study is to develop a framework that includes the measurements of impact. Internationally there are CE frameworks like the Kellogg Commission and the Council of Independent Colleges developed in the USA. These approaches are particularly strong on assessing institutional effectiveness and measuring the impact of service-learning and civic engagement initiatives on students, academic staff, the institution and the community (Hart & Northmore, 2011:6).

### 3.4.6   Theme 6: Minimum requirements and regulations for direct reporting of projects

"Regulations" relates to specific regulations and requirements CE needs to adhere to when activities are performed. A study done by the Ford Foundation during 1997 and 1998 had the below findings relating to SA Higher Education institutions and CE (Lazarus *et al.*, 2008):

- included community service in their mission statement;

- very few Higher Education institutions had an explicit policy or strategy to operationalise this component of their mission statement;

- most Higher Education institutions had a wide range of community service projects; and

- generally, these projects were initiated by innovative academic staff and students, and not as a deliberate institutional strategy; certainly not as a core function of the academia.

Most Universities have implemented CE, but the necessary regulations, policies and frameworks are not yet in place.

In the document analysis for regulations ten (10) documents with six (6) codes were allocated to regulations to adhere to. The NWU's own policies like the NWU travel and subsistence policy, internal templates, requirements from service agreements and MOUs, and specific South African laws like BBBEE and tax compliance were identified. The WIN platform also has its own criteria for projects. All these documents form the regulating environment for a CE programme. The figure below illustrates these reporting requirements.
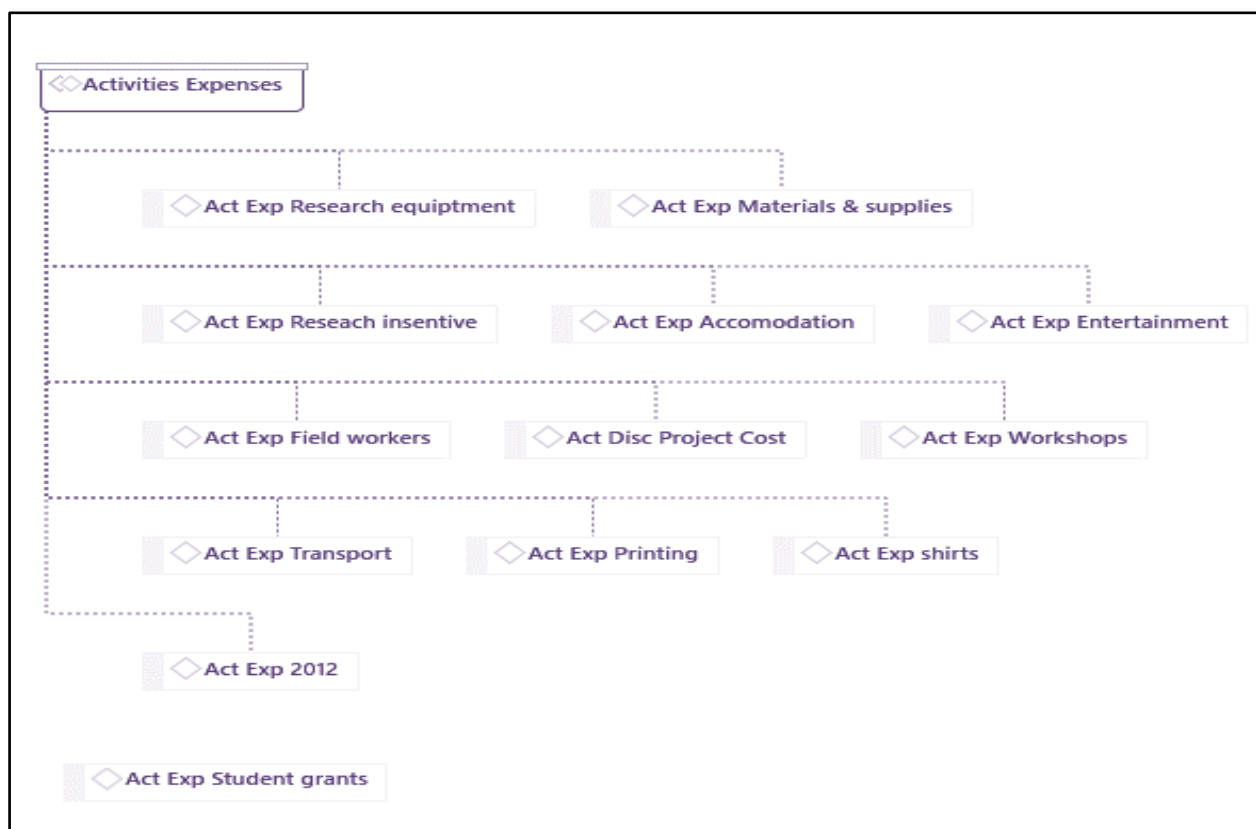
**Figure 17: The minimum requirements and regulations in projects' reporting in the WIN platform from ATLAS.ti**

A CE programme is influenced by various entities, each with their own requirements and laws. In the case of the WIN programme, it is the NWU with its own policies and regulations that require reporting as well as the funders who have specific regulations and processes on how to report on the funding, and the activities of CE. In the majority of the projects, there is a local government stakeholder, either the municipality or a government department, bringing its own government requirement into the mix. All of these regulations and policies need to be adhered to, potentially making CE activities very complex and this can be seen as a barrier to CE.

### 3.4.7 Theme 7: Inconsistent monitoring and evaluation presented

Evaluation is a continuous process and different types of evaluation are required at the various stages of CE. Evaluation is the systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on policies, programmes, projects, functions and organisations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability, and to recommend ways forward (South Africa, 2011:vii). Examples of monitoring and evaluation in CE can be; the tracking of expenditure against budgets, checking if requirements are being achieved and, measuring the outcomes against the objectives set at the beginning of the programme. In Chapter 2 of this study, the various evaluation processes and timeframe were discussed.

Evaluation in this case study had seven codes allocated and eight documents related to evaluation. Documents included were:

- the initial implementation evaluation of the Vaalharts area and a summary form of CE activities;

- WIN platform form with all the criteria and a checklist of the CE programme;

- an initial needs assessment that was done on the Vaalharts area

- evaluations with questioners in the community, for research purposes

- a stakeholder report with indicators and targets; and

- an Excel sheet from the Faculty of Health listing each school CE programmes.

The evaluations had no specific time frame allocated to them and were done on a need's basis. The advantages of evaluation measurement of engagement can provide evidence for an institution's fulfilment of its commitment to engaged scholarship. It can be used for institutional planning and provides a tool for assessing the degree to which engagement is aligned throughout the university (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 2016:238). Evaluation needs to be a continuous process throughout the project. Each stage of the project will require different types of evaluation, starting with the initial needs analysis and ending with the measuring the success and impact of the project.

## 3.5   SUMMARY

The case study identified the types of expenses and the processes that are included in a CE programme. This chapter opened with a discussion of the process of realising the data collection, how the documents for the WIN platform were collected and the construction of the database in ATLAS.ti. Documents were analysed with the use of ATLAS.ti and seven themes were identified for the data analysis. The steps of Tesch as described by Creswell (Creswell, 2014:185) were followed for quantitative data analysis. Each theme was identified from the document analysis, describing the theme according to its characteristics. The results documented include the types of documents and the various groups that were formed through the analysis. The results were followed by a discussion on the findings and various recommendations to help CE programmes in the future.

# CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS, PROPOSED FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the overall conclusion of the study and evaluates the various research steps. The limitations of the study are discussed with recommendations for future studies on CE and its financial aspects.

## 4.2   CONCLUSIONS

There are currently three models for CE in Higher Education (HE) in South Africa; however, the ideal situation is a model where both the community and university are engaged in a two-way process, resulting in a mutually beneficial relationship. Included in the two-way model, a financial framework should form part of the CE process. The financial framework should not only report the expenditure but also report on the impact and outcomes of all the stakeholders, answering the question: was value added with the money spent?

The financial aspects cannot be evaluated in isolation without the evaluation of the entire project. Various evaluations should be conducted throughout the process to ensure a high-quality CE programme is delivered, resulting in a mutually beneficial relationship. Although CE is a complex process, documenting the process in a structured manner can add value to measuring the impact of CE interventions. There is a lack of control mechanisms to check if the expenditure occurred is valid and in line with the CE activities. The financial system documents expenditures but there is no process in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the spending. The majority of expenses are for transport and field workers, but the value added in terms of funds spent are not recorded. Budgets are not linked to activities: budgets are prepared without taking into consideration the various activities or the objectives the programme wants to achieve. Budgets are prepared without specific detail using cost like overheads and without a formal budgeting committee checking that validity and accuracy of the budget. No documented measurement of impact on the community is done: outputs are measured mostly in terms of research with no specific measurement for the value these engagements add to the community. For CE to be a two-way process the outcomes for both the community and the university should be measured.

## 4.3 PROPOSED FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINANCIAL FUNCTIONS WITHIN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

A financial framework can be defined as the policies, procedures, regulations and standing orders that are used to ensure proper controls are in place to take care of funds received (Powys, 2018). Deloitte Global (2018) describes a financial framework as addressing the following:

- the objective of general-purpose financial reporting;

- qualitative characteristics of useful financial information;

- financial statements and the reporting entity;

- the elements of financial statements;

- recognition and de-recognition;

- measurement; and

- presentation and disclosure.

All the above elements are considered in this proposed framework. The proposed framework includes the reporting of general financial objectives, reporting of useful financial information as well as performance information. Financial statements are included as the financial outcomes of CE. The various processes are measured throughout the proposed framework and are presented and disclosed in a reporting format.

Based on document analysis and a literature review, the proposed financial framework for financial functions for CE within a Higher Education institution builds strongly on the key performance components and evaluation model of South Africa (2011:8).

A CE project should be a holistically planned with each aspect linked to the next in terms of activities and outputs according to the required processes and regulations. A CE project starts with a need's assessment indicating the required inputs for the project. Inputs are the resources required for CE, including budgets that should be linked to activities while activities are the actions performed within a CE project, and outputs are the product or services as a result of the activities. As part of the inputs, the objectives for the CE activities are set. The outcomes of these objectives are measured to see if the objectives were met. The impact is measured in the long term to measure the result of achieving the outcome. Regulations and processes need to be aligned with MOUs and policies of the various stakeholders that are identified and form part of the input stage. Part of the overall framework is the monitoring and evaluation process that involves deep analysis

of issues such as causality, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, value for money, and sustainability (South Africa, 2011:2).

The framework consists of various elements as displayed below, followed by a detailed discussion.
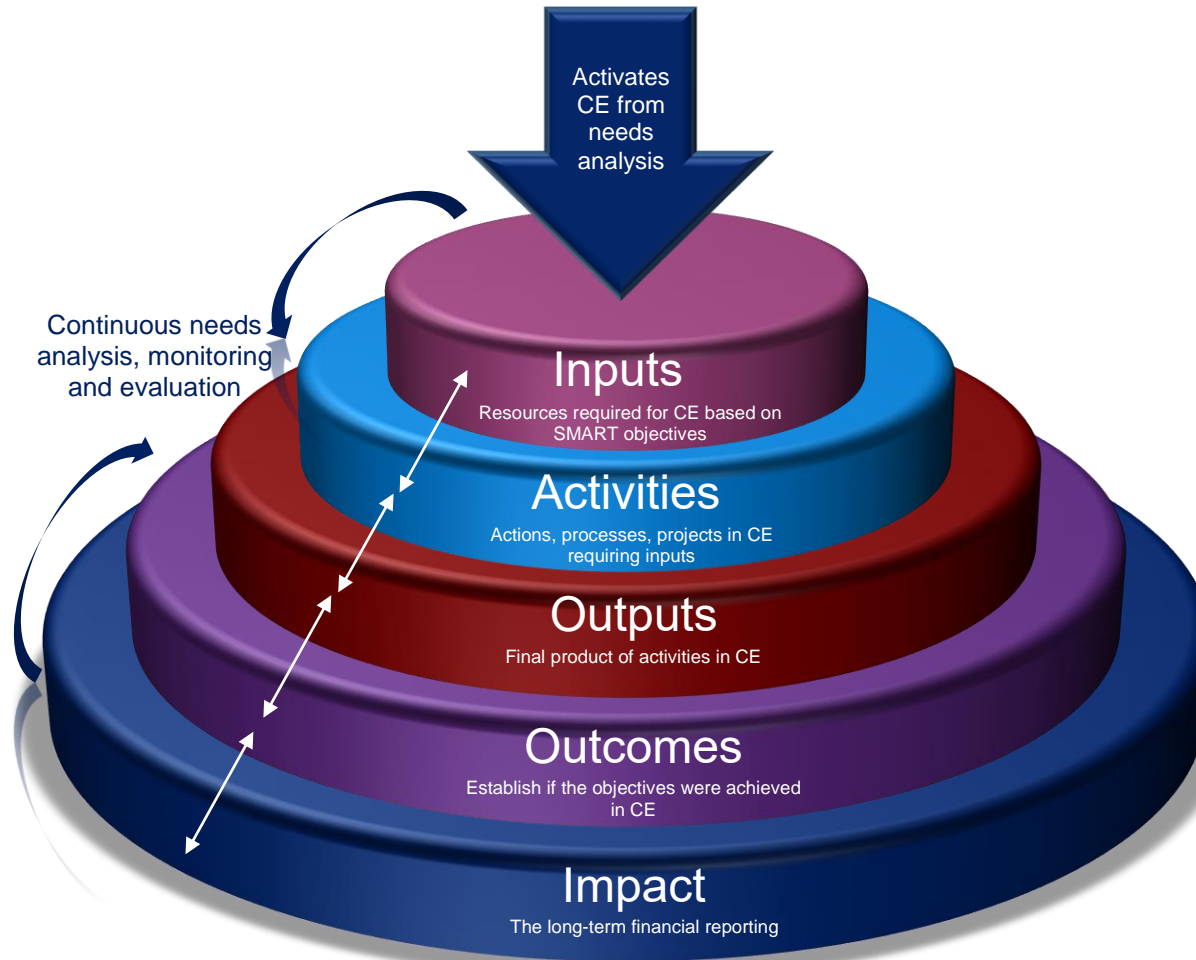
### 4.3.1 Needs analysis

The proposed framework starts with a needs analysis to identify the need of the community, the University and other stakeholders. Needs assessments aid in understanding the true cause of an organisation's well-being challenges, setting expectations with the organisation's stakeholders about what outcomes the intervention is likely to achieve, and identifying possible barriers to intervention effectiveness (Maneotis & Krauss, 2015:229). The needs analysis is part of the evaluation process and is the diagnostic evaluation: It identifies what is already known about the issues at hand, the problems and opportunities to be addressed, causes and consequence, including those that the intervention is unlikely to deliver, and the likely effectiveness of different policy options (South Africa, 2011:9). The needs analysis should be conducted at regular intervals, not only in the planning phase, and this should be formally documented with changes as needs change. A needs analysis should be a continuous process to celebrate successes and to learn from setbacks in order to further community development (Community Tool Box, 2018). Doing the needs analysis throughout the project will ensure that the project stays on target and will help identify the resources and processes required as inputs for CE. The needs of all the stakeholders have to be identified; the various needs of all stakeholders can be identified with the use of focus groups (Community Tool Box, 2018).

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**Figure 18: Proposed financial framework for community engagement in higher education institutions in South Africa**

### 4.3.2 Input

"Input" is the resources required to perform the activities in a project. The success of a project can be determined by the inputs and should, therefore, remain a high priority. Included in the inputs are the elements below:

- Objectives: Part of the input process is to identify what the aim of the project is, what the project wants to achieve. The objectives should be written as a performance statement that is SMART and must set a performance target that the institution can achieve by the end of the specified period (South Africa, 2010:14). Setting objectives and linking them to the budget and activities will help to measure the outcomes more effectively. Objectives should be set according to the SMART principle (West *et al.*, 2017:22) as listed below:

  - Specific: the outcome should be clearly defined without any ambiguity.

  - Measurable: the outcome should be clearly measurable so that it can be said if it has been achieved or not.

  - Achievable: outcomes should stretch abilities slightly so that the project can have an impact but should be still achievable by all stakeholders.

  - Realistic: outcomes should take the various limitations of the community and University into account.

  - Time-bound: a specific time frame should be added to the outcomes to make sure the objectives can be achieved within a realistic and practical time.

- MOU and grand applications: Establish who has the authority to sign and set all requirements for the MOU and grant applications. It is critical to establish who has the legitimate authority to enter into the agreement at both the University and the community partner sites since those individuals actually conducting the work may not have the necessary authority to do so (Begun et al., 2010:60). Part of the MOU will be the financial arrangements for the various parties and it should be documented in detail. Where financial implications are involved in the overall intent of an MOU, these should be spelled out in detail including which entity will pay for each item and when payment is due and to whom (DIYLaw, 2016).

- Budgets: Develop a standard budgeting process in which expenses are clearly defined and matched to specific outcomes. Budget control is a process of budget planning and

implementation that is designed to ensure that resources are allocated in an efficient, transparent, and secure way (Spacey, 2017). Budgets must be approved by stakeholders as well as a budget board of the NWU, a review and approvals process that establishes accountability for spending at an appropriate level of an organisation. Changes and overspending also typically require approvals. Budgets may be designed with some flexibility to avoid excessive approvals (Spacey, 2017). Controls with regards to the type of expenses and reasonability of the expense should be established as part of the process.

- Database: Develop a single database where all documents are stored, including various versions of MOUs; this will help to ensure continuity of the CE projects and disputes have a financial impact can easily be resolved with the latest agreements that are easily accessible.

- Policies and regulations: An internal checklist need to be developed to document all the regulatory requirements of each stakeholder. The checklist can be part of the MOU, and the regulations and policy requirements should be identified early on as part of the needs analysis. Since an MOU is a formal agreement, it should be developed with the assistance of legal, financial or other relevant experts. This is to ensure that the provisions are sensible and do not have unintended implications or produce unreasonable expectations (World Meteorological Organization, 2012). CE projects have specific regulations that are required for each project. These regulations for CE are a result of the policies both internal or such as government legislation. These regulations need to be identified at the beginning of a project and forms part of inputs.

### 4.3.3   Activities

There is no formal process in place to document the various activities of a CE platform. According to Driscoll and Sandmann (2016:86), the best documentation is that which most effectively communicates and makes visible the evidence of the scholarship of engagement. Develop field reports where the various activities are documented and added to the database for record keeping and to provide a track record. The field reports can contain the various outputs and the problems experienced during the activities; this can help future development of CE. Activities are the basis for developing a framework between partnerships which can be found in the answers to three questions (Cox, 2000:10), namely:

- What types of activities or programmes are implemented to improve communities?

- Who are the parties involved in or affected by those activities?

- What are the individual interests of those parties in the community improvement activities?

A study conducted by Glass *et al.* (2011:9) also asked similar questions in order to identify the activities of CE:

- What types of scholarly activities are faculty members involved in as a publicly engaged scholarship?

- How do the types of publicly engaged scholarships vary by demographic and appointment variables?

- How do the types of publicly engaged scholarships vary by college grouping?

A field report of activities should be developed with each of the questions for each project. These questions can help identify the indicators and stakeholders for the development of a CE framework and therefore forms part of the proposed framework. The field reports will help indicate the types of expenses incurred as a result of the activities; this can help future budget processes to identify the expenditure and the relevance of the cost.

### 4.3.4 Output

Outputs are the final product or services that are delivered. A specific output framework should be established at Universities where outputs are not only measured in terms of research outputs but also output indicators by all the stakeholders in the project. An example of outputs is the number of people attending a workshop or the number of research articles; it is the result of the activities. Outputs are mostly measured in terms of academic outputs such as the number of articles produced. Outputs can also be measured in other types of outputs such as reports, policy documents, popular publications, new or improved products and processes, community infrastructure and facilities, spin-off companies and cultural artefacts were also significant (CHE, 2016:256). Output reporting in this form will highlight both the benefits for the University as well as the community, showing the outputs as a two-way process. Reporting on outputs has been limited to research outputs and, in future, should include all outputs for all stakeholders.

At Universities, the motivation for CE is not yet the same as for research. The focus on CE will increase if the same amount of financial benefits is associated with CE as with research for university staff. A study conducted by Holland (2016:67) found that faculties have different motivations and different expectations regarding recognition and rewards so their interests in incentives and rewards were different as well. Successful institutions or departments use diverse approaches including, for example, financial incentives; recognition through publicity, awards or

special titles; support for dissemination activities; or support in fundraising or grantmaking to support public service projects.

### 4.3.5 Outcomes

Outcomes are measured in two areas, namely financial and performance. Financial areas will include financial reporting, actual expenditure against budgets, and measuring the expenditure in line with the objectives. Financial outcomes, therefore, relate to the reporting and the requirements of IAS. For example, a financial statement or expenses measured against budgets. The objective of general-purpose financial statements is to provide information about the financial position, financial performance, and cash flows of an entity that is useful to a wide range of users in making economic decisions (Deloitte Global, 2018).

Performance outcomes, on the other hand, will be measured against the objectives to establish if the objectives that were set at the beginning of the CE project were achieved. In the input processes, objectives are set according to the SMART principles to establish what the CE project wants to achieve. In the outcomes process, the objectives are used to measure if the objectives are achieved. Did the CE project outputs make the difference? Outcomes are the benefits the community or the students receive as a result of CE (Mills-Scofield, 2012).

According to Fisher *et al.* (2006) outcomes should answer the following questions:

- Who will change – the [people] you are training.

- What will change – the knowledge, attitudes, and skills you expect to change.

- By how much – how much change do you think you can realistically achieve.

- By when – the timeframe in which you hope to see change.

- How the change will be measured – the surveys, tests, interviews, or other methods you will use to measure the different changes specified.

Answering the above questions and measuring the SMART outcomes will indicate the success of the performance outcomes of a CE project.

### 4.3.6 Impact

Impact refers to the changes that result from CE activities in terms of students and stakeholders over the long run; impact measures the results of achieving specific outcomes as discussed in Chapter 3. Did the CE activities make a difference? This is a result of the activities and reaching the outcomes. The impact of the CE projects should be measured through regular evaluations.

Research done by Gelmon *et al.* (2018:10) suggest that a good strategy is to integrate evaluation protocols for planning, operation and reviewing each campus-community partnership. Impact evaluation goes beyond considering what agencies are doing to what happens as a result of these activities, and the extent to which these interventions are indeed making a difference in the lives of people and the conditions in which they live (Perrin, 2012:1). This approach will bring rigour and consistency to the process of hearing the communities' voices relating to the inputs for CE, and progress will go far in improving the quality and impact of the work.

However, measuring impact is still a developing science with various obstacles. There is a lack of standardised measurements because of little focus on developing tools to evaluate the processes by which Higher Education institutions establish community partnerships (Hart & Northmore, 2011:3). As a consequence, 'little has been achieved in the development of robust measures reflecting the benefits that flow from such partnerships to both Universities and communities with which they engage' (Hart & Northmore, 2011:4). In future impact criteria should be developed to measure the impact of CE, considering the activities and the outcomes of the CE project. Another obstacle for impact measurement (according to Hart and Northmore (2011:5)) in the development of such measures is the wide variety of potential activities encompassed by what is here termed 'university community engagement'; the lack of precise definitions of important concepts; and the variety of approaches adopted in evaluating public involvement. Setting a standard definition of CE will help to develop the measurement of impact in future and is recommended as part of future research. The university can start by receiving regular feedback from the community, report on the overall process and do future research on impact measurement for CE.

Monitoring and evaluation can help and support impact evaluation. Impact evaluation shares common characteristics with monitoring and evaluation and is seen as another evaluation process. Perrin (2012:6) describes how monitoring and evaluation can contribute to the impact evaluation in four basic categories, namely:

- Provide information about the nature of the intervention which is essential for impact evaluation. This information is already obtained in the monitoring and evaluation process as baseline data with changes.

- Provide information about the context of the intervention; what can work or not. The various types of interventions and the factors that influence the interventions.

- What we already know (or at least suspect) about impact. Sometimes there already is some evidence or at least a strong suggestion – from monitoring and/or evaluation – that changes may be taking place. In such cases, an impact evaluation could document and

confirm what is really going on and the extent to which these changes have been a result of the programme's activities.

- What other evidence may influence the decision to undertake an impact evaluation. Evidence obtained from monitoring and evaluation.

The table below provides the various characteristics of monitoring, evaluation, and impact evaluation for a CE programme as derived from Perrin (2012:3).

**Table 5: Characteristic of monitoring, evaluation and impact evaluation for community engagement**

| Characteristics of monitoring, evaluation and impact evaluation | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Monitoring** | **Evaluation** | **Impact evaluation** |
| • Internal use <br><br> • Tracking activities against plans and expectations <br><br> • Management purposes <br><br> • Tracking data against a small number of objectives <br><br> • Uses qualitative data <br><br> • Addressing the needs of external requirements for compliance and regulations <br><br> • Assumes appropriateness of activities and objectives for the project <br><br> • Difficult to use by itself for assessing of impact | • Internal and external use <br><br> • Involves systematic, evidence-based enquiry <br><br> • Can provide guidance on direction and address "how" and "why" <br><br> • Use data from different sources and various methods <br><br> • Uses both qualitative and quantitative data <br><br> • Goes beyond outputs and outcomes; has different types of evaluations <br><br> • Can question the rationale and relevance of the objectives and activities for the project <br><br> • Can contribute to impact evaluation | • External use <br><br> • Done infrequently and sporadically <br><br> • Can use findings of impact evaluation and apply to other projects <br><br> • Focus on long-term changes with a specific focus like improving quality of life <br><br> • Linking the cause-and-effect because of the activities <br><br> • Uses discrete research study <br><br> • Considers what was done with the use of monitoring and evaluation <br><br> • Form of evaluation |

Higher Education institutions in South Africa can develop their own criteria for measuring impact and linking and combining monitoring and evaluation with impact evaluation by using these characteristics of monitoring, evaluation, and impact evaluation as a basis.

### 4.3.7 Monitoring and evaluation

As highlighted above, monitoring and evaluations can help and support impact evaluation; impact evaluation is another evaluation process. Evaluation happens in various stages and in Chapter 2 the various evaluation stages, as well as the timeframe of each stage, were discussed. The NWU needs to establish its own specific criteria to evaluate CE; the criteria need to be set up in such a way that they fit all CE projects. The criteria truly ensure the scholarly aspect of engagement and can serve as significant guides for multiple levels of the scholarship of engagement: for the initial level of decision-making when a faculty make a commitment to civic engagement; for the planning and implementation level; for the documentation level; and for the review/evaluation level (Driscoll & Sandmann, 2016:91). Perrin (2012:4) define monitoring as a continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. An example of monitoring is tracking the various expenditure to ensure the expenses do not exceed the budget and track the progress of the activities to ensure outcomes are achieved and the process is an internal process.

Evaluation is seen as an external process and can be defined as the systematic and objective assessment of a planned, ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation, and results (Perrin, 2012:5). Evaluation is a formal process in which the total expenses for a project or year are measured against the budget in the form of a financial report. The monitoring and evaluation will ensure that the projects achieve the outcomes and will help measure the impact of the projects.

The various elements in the proposed framework are interlinked with each other. The proposed framework with each of the elements will need to be adapted and evaluated for the requirements of the various projects.

### 4.4 EVALUATION

At the start of the study, the gap identified was the lack of evidence to propose a financial framework for a reciprocal university CE. In this case study it was confirmed that due to limited documentation of the various processes of CE, it is hard to establish a financial framework that can address the various functions of a CE programme.

The problem statement was: what are the critical financial functions within the WIN platform that can assist to propose a financial framework? The critical financial functions identified were the various inputs required to start a CE programme from the need's analysis, the MOUs with various regulations to the budgets that need to be linked to the outputs.

### 4.4.1 Evaluation of the objectives

The initial aim of this study was to critically analyse the financial function of a CE within the WIN platform to establish a framework for the financial function of the CE. The developing of a framework was done by identifying activities in Higher Education and meeting the three objectives:

Objective 1: Identify all the various reporting, regulations and governance requirements for a CE programme. A specific theme was added for this objective, the regulations to adhere to, here the various requirements of each stakeholder was identified, including the policies and processes of NWU, the requirements of the MOU's and specific government laws like tax compliance. However, each CE programme will have its own regulatory requirements and therefore it cannot be applied to all. The regulations and processes are a component that needs to be considered and can have financial implications for stakeholders.

Objective 2: Critically review existing WIN platform documentation to establish and identify the various financial components of a CE programme and how these components influence it to establish a financial framework. The WIN platform documentation was analysed with the help of ATLAS.ti. However, the documents were spread over various years, each year did not have the same documentation, and documentation was limited for the years prior to 2016 due to a project manager who is no longer part of AUTHeR. With the documentation provided the components could be identified for inputs and activities; financial outcomes for prior years were also limited with most year financials being just an Excel document comparing budget and actual expenses.

Objective 3: Propose a framework for the financial functions of the CE activities in the WIN platform and also for CE within Higher Education. The financial functions of a CE programme are influenced by various components and the financial aspects cannot be seen as a separate function but must be seen as an integrated function. This study had time constraints and focused only on a single CE programme; various other programmes should be evaluated in the future, as well as other Universities to develop a financial framework.

### 4.4.2 Evaluation of the research methodology

A case study method was used with quantitative research methods, specifically document analysis. It was a good and relevant methodology to identify the various components and to understand the processes and financial aspects of a CE programme.

### 4.4.3 Evaluation of the analysis

The documents were analysed with the use of ATLAS.ti in order to identify different themes. The researcher had limited knowledge of CE and the analysis was done from an outsider's perspective. Only the available documentation was analysed, and documents were requested as the analysis went on. Enough documents were obtained to identify the various financial components of a CE programme.

Overall the study had limitations but provided sufficient information for analysis that assisted in getting a better understanding of the financial component and the influence on a CE programme.

## 4.5 LIMITATIONS

The researcher confirmed that CE is still a new "phenomenon" without a unified definition or framework, and different definitions thereof were visible in the documents analysed. Therefore, the researcher found that there was limited literature available on the financial aspects of CE in Higher Education in South Africa. This confirmed, on the one hand, the necessity for this research but also highlighted the limited confirmatory literature.

## 4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

CE is part of the future for Universities and can potentially have a great impact on communities, especially considering the opportunities captured between communities and the University. It was apparent that CE programmes are already in place at South African Universities but that the controlling, evaluating and reporting on financial and other CE activities are still in the early stages of development. Future research, the CE practice and recommendations for the MBA programme should be highlighted.

### 4.6.1 Future research

Future research can be done on the following topics:

- Developing a "unified" definition on CE; this will be the core of all measurement aspects of CE.

- How CE is reported in terms of finances and performance objectives.

- Developing a reporting system for CE on finances and performance objectives.

### 4.6.2 Practice recommendations

Various practices are already in place for CE; however, the following practices are recommended:

- The NWU should develop its own CE framework for the various faculties to report on their CE activities.

- CE currently are not receiving the same level of attention as research and innovation and learning and learning (other two pillars), and Universities should each develop their own CE measuring criteria with incentives.

### 4.6.3  MBA recommendations

CE does not directly form part of the MBA curriculum and students should be made more aware of CE as future business leaders MBA students can be part of CE as a stakeholder to fund future projects. MBA students are part of various businesses, each with its own social responsibility programmes; these programmes can be included in the CE of the university and can be beneficial to all stakeholders.

The MBA curriculum only includes reporting of financial levels but with more and more non-financial information being required for reporting. For example, environmental reporting. Therefore, the focus should also be on reporting for non-financial aspects as part of the curriculum.

### 4.7  SUMMARY

Community engagement has the potential to have a positive impact on both the university as well as for the community since when working together great skills and opportunities can be developed. CE should be documented in such a way that sufficient information can be obtained years later. CE has many research opportunities but should not be an add-on to research but a pillar on its own. There are various recommendations for the future development of a CE framework, specifically focused on the financial aspects of CE. With the right infrastructure, CE can develop into an independent pillar like research and learning.

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# ADDENDUM A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE
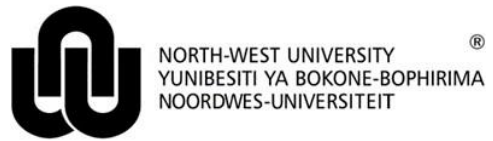
**NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY**
**YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA**
**NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT** ®

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Tel:    018 299-1111/2222
Web:    http://www.nwu.ac.za

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel:    018 299-1427
Email:  Bennie.Linde@nwu.ac.za

31 October 2018

Ms D Kruger
*Per e-mail*

Dear ms Kruger,

## FEEDBACK – ETHICS APPLICATION: C HART (20035365) – MBA

Your application for ethical clearance – *Developing a financial framework for community engagement financial function(s) within a higher education institution* – has been evaluated on the 26th of October 2018.

<u>Outcome:</u>

The application is approved as a low-risk study.

Ethics number (A): NWU-00665-18-S4

Yours sincerely,

Prof B Linde
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)

Original details: (11153431) C:\Fakulteit\Bestuur\Kwaliteitsbestuur\Etiek\26 October 2018\C Hart\\26 October 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.3

# ADDENDUM B: RESEARCH DATA GATEKEEPER COMMITTEE PERMISSION

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: +2718 299-1111/2222
Web: http://www.nwu.ac.za

**Research Data Gatekeeper Committee**

## NWU RDGC PERMISSION GRANTED / DENIED LETTER

Based on the documentation provided by the researcher specified below, on 28/11/2018 the NWU Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (NWU-RDGC) hereby grants permission for the specific project (as indicated below) to be conducted at the North-West University (NWU):

> **Project title:** Developing a financial framework for community engagement financial function(s) within a higher education institution
>
> **Project leader:** D. Kruger & C. Niesing & P. Bester
> **Researcher:** C. Hart
>
> **Ethics reference no:** NWU-00665-18-S4
> **NWU RDGC reference no:** NWU-GK-2018-059
>
> **Specific Conditions:**
>
> **Approval date: 28/11/2018**    **Expiry date: 28/11/2019**

General Conditions of Approval:

- The NWU-RDGC will not take the responsibility to recruit research participants or to gather data on behalf of the researcher. This committee can therefore not guarantee the participation of our relevant stakeholders.
- Any changes to the research protocol within the permission period (for a maximum of 1 year) must be communicated to the NWU-RDGC. Failure to do so will lead to withdrawal of the permission.
- The NWU-RDGC should be provided with a report or document in which the results of said project are disseminated.

Please note that under no circumstances will any personal information of possible research subjects be provided to the researcher by the NWU RDGC. The NWU complies with the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA) as well as the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPI). For an application to access such information please contact Ms Amanda van der Merwe (018 299 4942) for the relevant enquiry form or more information on how the NWU complies with PAIA and POPI.

The NWU RDGC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the NWU RDGC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance

Yours sincerely

Prof Marlene Verhoef
Chairperson NWU Research Data Gatekeeper Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\test 2.docm
13 November 2018

Current details: (22351930) M:\DSS1\8533\Monitoring and Reporting Cluster\Ethics\Applications RDGC\Updated RDGC Permission Letter.docm
15 November 2018

File reference: 1.1.4.3

# ADDENDUM C: LETTER FROM DIRECTOR

**NWU**®
NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA

Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (RDGC)

For attention: Mr Nkosinathi Machine

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel:     018 299-1111/2222
Web:    http://www.nwu.ac.za

**Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR)**
Tel:     018-299 2095
Email:  petra.bester@nwu.ac.za

16 November 2018

Dear Mr Machine

## INVITATION AND PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT: CORNELIA HART (20035365) – MBA (single study)

**Community engagement research within AUTHeR**

AUTHeR (Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research) is a research unit within the Faculty of Health Sciences, North-West University. AUTHeR is also the coordinator of the WIN Platform, a community engagement initiative within the Vaalharts and Jan Kempdorp area. The WIN Platform obtained a LivingLab status from the CSIR. After multiple years in community engagement, researchers in AUTHeR identified the incongruence in community engagement as perceived by community members, students, academia and funders. This led to a research project, titled *A reciprocal exploration towards a university-community engagement framework*, funded by the National Research Foundation. At present I am the primary investigator of the project in close collaboration with Dr Christi Niesing and Dr Nicole Claasen. This grant does not have a larger study ethics clearance and all the students apply for single study ethical clearance.

**Required a postgraduate student with a strong commerce background**

Within this project, one objective is to develop a financial framework for community engagement financial functions. This objective was identified because we experienced that community engagement is an essential but also an expensive reality in higher education but lacks proper financial structure in its operationalisation within communities. We (the core research team) soon identified that we will have to invite a postgraduate student with a strong financial academic background to conduct this research.

**Ms Cornelia Hart, registered for a MBA conducts research within the community engagement research project**

In 2018 Ms Cornelia Hart visited AUTHeR to explore options for her research in her MBA. As Ms Hart has a strong commerce undergraduate background and is employed within an accountant position, it made Cornelia the ideal candidate. The core research team approached Cornelia and invited her to conduct her research within this community engagement project that is NRF funded. This request was accepted by Ms Hart. Since the beginning of 2018 Ms Hart received dedicated study supervision by Ms Doret Kruger (supervisor), Dr Christi Niesing (co-supervisor) and myself (assistant supervisor). The research entails a case study design focused on the WIN Platform, with document analysis of completed projects, which can inform a financial framework regarding all the financial activities within community engagement within a higher education context.

**Nature of what this research entails**

Ms Hart's research entails only analysis of documents and no interviews. The documents are analysed in order to understand the current process of financial activities based on the following criteria: key performance indicators for the document analysis included impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, input and regulations from a financial perspective.

The following documents have been identified for analysis:

| Types of documents | Justification |
|---|---|
| Financial records (including budgets, minutes of meetings, project reports and project plans) of the WIN Platform as coordinated by AUTHeR. | The focus of the document analysis is only on the financial dimension of community engagement, it is not related to auditing of reports for the purpose of income and expenses but to describe the process of how financial activities realise in community engagement. |
| Grant applications for funding, irrespective of the funder nor the outcome of the application. | Because different funders have different requirements, the financial framework should be as broad as possible. |
| Grant award letters from funders. | These letters specify the required processes for funding. |
| Community engagement strategic plans as prepared and coordinated by AUTHeR. | To understand what the role of finances in the realisation of community engagement activities is. |

**Permission granted to Ms Hart to conduct document analysis**

On behalf of AUTHeR, permission is granted to Ms Cornelia Hart to conduct a document analysis on all the applicable reports related to the WIN Platform subjective to the following:

1. That the document analysis will be conducted as part of Ms Hart's mini-dissertation, titled *Developing a financial framework for community engagement financial function(s) within a higher education institution*.
2. That Ms Hart obtains ethical clearance from the EMS-REC.
3. That Ms Hart's study falls within the National Research Foundation's Community Engagement grant, titled *A reciprocal exploration towards a university-community engagement framework* and appropriate recognition and official NRF disclaimers should be adhered to as stipulated in the grant award letter.
4. That Ms Hart will be granted access to the reports in electronic format, and that Ms Hart will adhere to the principles of privacy, confidentiality (respect), justice and benevolence.
5. Ms Hart is invited to visit AUTHeR whereby she will be granted a physical space to work, access to the NWU's wifi and support by the Community-Integrated Research Office within AUTHeR to access the reports.
6. That Ms Hart will submit the appropriate gatekeeper application letter to obtain permission from the Registrar of the NWU.
7. I hereby also declare my conflict of interest, namely that I am the primary investigator (PI) of the listed NRF grant; and an assistant supervisor to Ms Hart's dissertation. However, I am writing this letter as the director of AUTHeR. I acknowledge my full responsibility as director and as PI and as assistant supervisor and will adhere to the ethical-legal guidelines of the NWU.


Yours sincerely,


Petra Bester
Research Director

# ADDENDUM D: LANGUAGE EDITOR



**Spell Check**
*Professional Language Editing & Translation Services*

**TR Stewart – Bachelor of Arts in English and Linguistics**

7 Siesta
8 Kamp Street
Potchefstroom, 2531

Tel: 0845567745
spellcheck1977@gmail.com
tanyaleestewart01@gmail.com

03 December 2018

To whom it may concern

**DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING**

**Re:** Developing a financial framework for community engagement financial function(s) within a higher education institution

This serves to confirm that I undertook the language editing of the above-mentioned document on behalf of Ms C Hart, NWU student no: 20035365.

All language and grammar errors identified were marked electronically by means of "track changes". Implementation of comments and changes was left up to the author.

The same applies for the referencing and technical editing, done on my behalf by Mrs Belinda Cuthbert.

Should you have any queries please contact me on 084 556 7745.

Yours sincerely

TR Stewart
Member: South African Translators' Institute
SATI registration no: 1003470

# ADDENDUM E: TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

## turnitin

## Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

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| File size: | 1.59M |
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