

**AN EVALUATION OF
'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE
CHILDREN' PROJECT IN THE
NORTH-WEST PROVINCE**

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER ARTIUM

in

SOCIAL WORK

in the Faculty of Health Sciences

at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus

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November 2007

SUMMARY

AN EVALUATION OF THE 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE

Key terms:

Social work investigation, child abuse, child protection, community work, support, 'Isolabantwana/ Eye on the children', Child Welfare South Africa, volunteers.

Background: As a result of the high incidence and increase of child abuse and neglect cases, a community-based child protection programme was developed in 1999. In 2003 received Child Welfare South Africa permission to implement the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project on national level. By the end of 2006 this project was implemented at 11 communities in the North-West Province. As part of the project's objectives, community members were recruited, screened and trained to be specialised child protection volunteers, but it transpired that volunteers often exit the project after a brief period of involvement. A need subsequently arose to evaluate the project with the focus on the volunteers' subjective experience of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.

Objectives: The primary aim of the study was to describe the nature and character of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project as well as to establish the reasons why volunteers terminate their volunteering services within the project with the purpose to determine whether the project needs to be cancelled or has to undergo changes to ensure the commitment of volunteers.

Method: A triangulation research method was used. A semi-structured one-on-one interview schedule was developed and completed with 30 (15 active and 15 non-active) volunteers. The raw data and interpretations were given to an independent observer and verified with literature.

Results: Through the triangulation process it was determined that the major reasons why volunteers discontinue their volunteering services involve a lack of organisational, personal and community support.

OPSOMMING

'N EVALUASIE VAN DIE 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJEK IN DIE NOORDWES-PROVINSIE

Sleutelterm:

Ondersoek in maatskaplike werk, kindermishandeling, kinderbeskerming, gemeenskapswerk, ondersteuning, 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children', Child Welfare South Africa, vrywilliger.

Agtergrond: As gevolg van die geweldige toename in gevalle van kindermishandeling en –verwaarloosing is 'n gemeenskapsgebaseerde kinderbeskermingsprogram ontwerp in 1999. Child Welfare South Africa ontvang in 2003 toestemming om die program op nasionale vlak te implementeer, en teen die einde van 2006 het die Noordwes-Provinsie 11 gemeenskappe bereik. As deel van die program se doelwit is gemeenskapslede gewerf, gekeur en opgelei om as vrywilligers 'n gespesialeerde kinderbeskermingsdiens in die gemeenskap te lewer, maar dit blyk dat hulle die program te verlaat na 'n kort tydperk van vrywillige diens. 'n Behoefte ontstaan om die projek te evalueer binne die konteks van vrywilligers se subjektiewe beleving van die 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' projek.

Doelstellings: Die primêre doel van die ondersoek was om die 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' projek te beskryf en om meer begrip te ontwikkel oor waarom vrywilligers die 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' projek verlaat ten einde om besluite te maak rakende die kansellering of verandering van die projek om aktiewe vrywilligers te verseker.

Prosedure: In die ondersoek is daar van 'n trianguleringsproses gebruikgemaak. 'n Semi-gestruktureerde een-tot-een onderhoudskedule is ontwerp en met 30 (15 aktiewe en 15 nie-aktiewe) vrywilligers voltooi. Rou data en interpretasie daarvan is aan 'n onafhanklike waarnemer oorhandig wat weer bevindinge met literatuur bevestig het.

Resultate: Deur middel van die trianguleringsproses is daar bepaal dat die hoofrede waarom vrywilligers hulle dienste beëindig verband hou met 'n tekort aan organisatoriese-, persoonlike- en gemeenskapsondersteuning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who have supported me during the course of this research. In particular, a special word of thanks to:

- All the volunteers who participated and contributed to the success of this research – your inputs are greatly valued – thank you!
- CWSA organisations for permission to conduct my research and for your friendly assistance with “tracking down” volunteers.
- Ms Annelie van Rooyen, for presenting me with the opportunity to get to know the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project better.
- Louismarié Combrink for the language editing.
- Retha for your willingness and friendliness during the process of revising the raw data and for trying to make sense of the muddled writing on the forms.
- Dr Marie Steyn, for your constructive and supportive guidance during the course of this study – even though it felt at times as if it would never end.
- My family, friends and colleagues – Kitty and René in particular – for always enquiring about my progress and for words of encouragement; you are the best!
- Susan, for motivating me to begin with my Master’s and for your guidance with small practicalities such as a methodology file – and thank you for all the friendly SMS’s.
- My parents - Ma Joey and Pa Piet – for the pride in your eyes and your unfailing support in all the studies I have undertaken. Ma, thank you for proofreading those early sections!
- Mart, for your continued support, encouragement and for believing in me – this would not have been possible without you! Thank you for proofreading my work and for spoiling me so often in between.
- All praise and honour to Him who sits on the throne, the Lamb who showed me the way and gave me the grace to complete this research.

THE PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

Research findings were reported through articles as specified in the Calendar of North-West University (2007), rule A.13.7.3. The proposed journal to publish research findings is The Social Work Practitioner Researcher (accredited). The research report is divided into 4 sections.

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**SECTION A:
ORIENTATION AND
METHODOLOGY**

SECTION A: ORIENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Child abuse is still a serious social and national problem in the 'informed world' we live in today. Reports on, for example, a 10 year-old child who was repeatedly raped and then murdered by a family member (Louw-Carstens, 2007:6), a 14 year-old child who was kidnapped and brutally abused by four adult men (Keppler, 2007:4) and various children who were molested by a paedophile (Fourie, 2007:6) appear daily in the media, serving to inform society about child abuse and its terrible effects.

Beeld (Strydom, 2007:13) also refers to an article published in the *Suid-Afrikaanse Mediese Joernaal* in September 2007 that highlighted a tremendous increase of child sexual abuse cases at the Red Cross children's hospital. More than 50% of the 300 reported victims of child sexual abuse at the Red Cross children's hospital during the period of 2003-2005 were under the age of five years, of which more than 80% were known to the perpetrator.

Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) statistical data (Anon., 2004a:11) confirms that Child Welfare had 1 412 physically abused children on their workloads in 2003 and this number increased with an additional 1 814 cases reported in 2004. It highlighted that "Child Welfare dealt with 3 226 physically abused children on a monthly basis" (Anon., 2004a:11). In 2003, Child Welfare already had 1 676 sexually abused children on their workload and in 2004 an additional 2 850 sexually abused children were reported (Anon., 2004a:12). Child Welfare has "dealt with 4 526 sexually abused children on a monthly basis" during 2004 (Anon., 2004a:12). This increase of reported cases shows clearly that South Africa does not have sufficient resources available in the communities to address the problem of child abuse effectively.

In the 2004-2005 annual report of CWSA (Anon., 2005:32), statistical data reflects that 63 273 children required statutory intervention, of which 3 000 were physically abused children, 4 000

were sexually abused, 78 children were victims of commercial sexual exploitation, 11 000 were neglected children and 8 000 were abandoned. Due to the fact that child abuse in South Africa is increasing significantly, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) has decided to review the 1994 prohibition of corporal punishment in public places and Merton (2006:1) stated in the *Beeld* that the HRC has discussed the possibility that all forms of corporal punishment might be prohibited. A recent article in *Beeld* written by Du Toit (2007:15) notes that the corporal punishment Clause 139 was not accepted as expected and corporal punishment is still allowed as long it is used with discretion.

However, the messages that we receive through the media are that children need to be protected. Protection of children is the function of the primary caregivers, parents and/or family members. Berg-Cross (2000:43) highlighted that parenthood includes daily protection and nurture of children to ensure that the child bonds positively with his/her parents, as well as with society. If parents and/or family members fail in their responsibility to care for and protect their children, it becomes the task of the government. For this reason, the government needs to build a strong rapport with communities and their resources to be able to fulfil its protective duties toward children. Social workers, police and authorised persons are therefore ordered by the government to act on behalf of the child, according to the Child Care Act (74/1983).

If there is no action against child abuse, the social functioning of an individual, the family and the community as a whole will be affected. This can lead to a complete malfunctioning of a community if social problems such as child abuse are not addressed (Du Bois & Miley, 2005:66). To prevent this extensive malfunctioning, the community itself must take responsibility to protect and care for its children.

In 1999, Child Welfare in Cape Town (2006:1) launched a community project called 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children'. The purpose of this project was child protection. The focus of the project was to identify natural helpers in specific communities who could act as volunteers to assist in the project. The volunteers were screened and received 10 training sessions addressing different forms of child abuse, family violence, the Child Care Act (74/1983), first aid and other professional services. After completing the 10 training sessions successfully, the volunteers received authorisation from the Commissioner of Child Welfare in terms of Section 12(1) of the Child Care Act (74/1983) to implement child protection

measures with regard to abused children for a period of 48 hours. These volunteers received a certificate as proof that they had permission to act according to the Child Care Act (74/1983). The main purpose of the volunteer programme was to protect children in the communities through awareness services and support services to families.

During 2003, the CWSA obtained permission to run the project at other Child Welfare agencies in South Africa. During the first year, the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was implemented at 20 cities/towns in all nine provinces of South Africa. According to Mrs A van Rooyen (2007), former provincial manager of CWSA (North-West Province), by 2006 the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was implemented at 11 communities and approximately 165 volunteers were trained in North-West Province. The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project is of great value for the CWSA (North-West Province), but despite the positive outcome of the project, volunteers are starting to exit the project. When volunteers leave the project, it becomes problematic for the CWSA due to the investment of time and money in this project into developing skills that are no longer used. It also becomes a problem for the communities, because the volunteers are no longer actively involved in their communities and therefore fewer 'eyes' on the children mean less protection of children.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Based on the above contextualisation, the following objectives can be formulated for this research:

- ❑ To describe the nature and process of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.
- ❑ To explore the volunteers' experiences in the project.
- ❑ To identify reasons why the volunteers exit the project.
- ❑ To formulate guidelines aimed at improving the project.

3. CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENT

Establishing reasons why volunteers leave the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project may enable the organisations to prevent volunteers from terminating their volunteering services.

4. RESEARCH METHOD

4.1 LITERATURE STUDY

A literature study was conducted to investigate topics on child abuse, child protection, community-based social work, volunteering, programme design and evaluation. In this study, community members in low social economic environments participated in a community-based child protection project as volunteers with the main purpose to bring change in their community regarding child abuse and neglect. The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was designed for volunteers as main role-players in the project with the focus on child protection.

4.2 EMPIRICAL STUDY

The empirical study consists of different elements that include the research design, the selection of participants and the data collection methods (De Vos, 2005a:260).

4.2.1 Design

A qualitative approach was followed. Marlow and Boone (2005:11) describe the aim of a qualitative approach as to “collect in-depth information from each of the participants to understand the participant’s subjective experience of the phenomena under study”. Information that the researcher receives from the participants “involves non-numerical examination of phenomena” and “words instead of numbers” are used to analyse data (Marlow & Boone, 2005:11).

4.2.2 Participants

A purposive sampling method was used to select three CWSA organisations in the North-West Province that have implemented the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. The participants were selected through availability as described by Strydom (2005:202). Initially, only three CWSA organisations (Potchefstroom, Rustenburg and Vryburg) in the North-West Province were identified, but two more organisations (Orkney and Alabama) had to be included due to unavailability of the participants in the first three.

At each of the identified five CWSA organisations, 24 participants were initially selected through a simple random sampling method as described by Glicken (2003:180), but because all the selected participants were not traceable, the researcher was compelled to make use of participants who were available. This method is known as an accidental sampling method (Strydom, 2005:202). An end total of 30 participants (15 active and 15 non-active volunteers) were selected for semi-structured interviews.

4.2.3 Data collection

Three different data collection methods were used, including a literature study, semi-structured one-on-one interviews and small focus groups. Making use of these three data collection methods involved a triangulation process as described by Neuman (2006:149). The two small focus groups that were initially planned were replaced with an independent decoder to support the triangulation method.

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were used to pose the same questions to each participant. Participants had the opportunity to respond spontaneously toward these questions using his/her own words, without being influenced regarding their responses (Morse & Field, 1995:94). This data collection method was continued until data was repeated (Greef, 2005:294). The researcher analysed raw data received through semi-structured one-on-one interviews and identified themes and patterns. Raw data and the researcher's identified themes were given to another professional social worker who could act as a 'second observer' to verify data with the researcher's identified themes and patterns. This was again verified with literature to collect and analyse data from different angles (Neuman, 2006:149).

4.2.4 Measuring instruments

A semi-structured one-on-one interview schedule was developed by the researcher as a measuring instrument to guide the interviews and to note the participants' responses (see Appendix 1). The questions asked were relevant to the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project and the language used was understandable to the participants (Glicken, 2003:88).

4.3 PROCEDURE

Permission was received from the former provincial manager at CWSA (North-West Province) to continue research in the North-West Province. Five CWSA organisations (Potchefstroom, Orkney, Alabama, Vryburg and Rustenburg) were identified and the researcher received permission from each organisation to contact active and non-active volunteers to participate in this study. Initially four active and four non-active volunteers at each organisation were selected as participants, but not all the participants were available or traceable. Participants were selected through their availability and were prepared for the interviews through confirming the purpose of the study (Greeff, 2005:295). The recording methods and ethical codes were explained before each participant gave written consent (Greeff, 2005:295).

For this research project, the researcher presents a literature study and uses raw data received from the interviews for a triangulation data analysis method (De Vos, 2005c:362). Raw data and the researcher's identified themes and patterns were given to a professional social worker to read through the data and verify it together with the researcher's findings (see Appendix 2). Analysed data was verified with literature and is discussed in two articles.

4.4 ETHICAL ASPECTS

According to Gomm (2004:407-421) and Monette, Sullivan and Dejong (2002:55) there are six basic ethical issues in social science research, namely 1) informed consent, 2) deception, 3) privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, 4) physical and mental protection, 5) misconduct or fraud, and 6) scientific advocacy. The researcher interviewed 30 participants who were from different cultural and ethical groups and the following issues were taken into consideration:

- ❑ Participants' cultural, ethical and social differences were respected and the researcher acted with the necessary sensitivity towards these differences.
- ❑ The participants had the right to know that they participate in a research project. They were informed on the advantages and disadvantages of this research in order for them to make an informed decision to participate in the study. The participants understood that the research only aimed at gaining information and no promises for change were made.

- Participants were not misled and true information on the purpose of the study was given. By addressing this ethical aspect regarding deception, participants developed a feeling of trust with the researcher and they participated with more accurate and direct information – something that was valuable for this study.
- In terms of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher did not violate the participant's privacy. Information received was handled with confidentiality. Participants had the freedom to respond freely without being afraid that their identity would be exposed or that they would be victimised after the research has been completed.
- The participants were not exposed to any situation that could harm them physically or mentally, and have received the assurance from the researcher that their rights were respected throughout the study process.
- The professional code of ethics was followed and a research proposal was submitted to the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Health Science, North-West University, before conducting the research. Permission code 06K23 was allocated. Measures were taken to ensure that the findings of the research were reported accurately and objectively.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Morse and Field (1998:103) highlight four cognitive processes that the researcher must use when analysing data: “comprehending, synthesising (decontextualising), theorising and recontextualising”. The goal of qualitative research is to use raw data and transform it into findings (De Vos, 2005b:333). Raw data from the participants' responses was reduced through a sifting process, classified into significant topics and themes, and relationships between different themes were identified. A triangulation method as described by De Vos (2005c:362) was used by making use of more than one data source to verify significant topics. Literature and a 'second observer' were used to verify identified topics and themes. The results were reported into two articles.

5. RESEARCH REPORT

The research report is conducted as recommended by Strydom (2002:250).

5.1 SECTION A: ORIENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

In section A the research methodology was discussed. Aspects of the research questions, the aim of study, research methods and procedures were highlighted.

5.2 SECTION B: REPORT OF RESEARCH

Section B includes the two articles. Each article was handled separately and duplication of some of the information and sources could occur.

5.3 SECTION C: RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In section C the comprehensive findings, results and recommendations of the complete research are presented.

5.4 SECTION D: APPENDIXES

Section D comprises of the appendixes that were used during the research to gather data (see Appendix 1), guidelines for publication in *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* (see Appendix 2) and also the verification letter (see Appendix 3) from a professional social worker who acted as a 'second observer' in this research.

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**SECTION B:
THE JOURNAL ARTICLES**

Article 1

EVALUATION OF VOLUNTEERS' GENERAL EXPERIENCE OF THE 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to describe the nature and character of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project that was implemented since 2003 at Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) in the North-West Province. The roll-out of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project is divided into four stages that include planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation. Active and non-active volunteers' general experiences within the project were studied with the purpose of identifying problem areas that could have influenced them to terminate their volunteering services. A qualitative approach was followed to collect and analyse data. A triangulation process was used that included one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 30 participants (15 active volunteers and 15 non-active volunteers), a literature study and a 'second observer' to verify raw data. In general, the volunteers experienced the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project as positive, but problems were identified regarding organisational and personal support. Guidelines were presented to address these problems to prevent losing more volunteers.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not uncommon to read in South-Africa's daily press about abused and neglected children. Such cases could involve kidnapping, molestation and rape. The question as to how to curb child abuse and neglect is a pressing one. To obtain a measure of clarity on this question, it is important to identify 'who' is available and responsible to help decrease incidents of child abuse and neglect. The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project focuses specifically on this question of 'who' can be involved in a campaign against child abuse and neglect.

The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was originally developed at Child Welfare, Cape Town in 1999. Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) in the North-West Province first piloted this project at two organisations in 2003. According to Mrs A van Rooyen (2007),

former provincial manager of CWSA (North-West Province), the project was implemented at 11 communities in the North-West Province by the end of 2006. The basic principle of this project has a strong preventative angle. Natural helpers in communities were identified to act as 'eye volunteers' in the community to identify abused and neglected children (Cape Town Child Welfare, 2006:1).

CWSA (North-West Province) has trained approximately 165 'eye volunteers' during a four-year period, but during the survey for this research in 2007, only 44 volunteers were still active. This article focuses only on the volunteers' experiences within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project at CWSA (North-West Province) to gain a better understanding of their perceptions, feelings and ideas regarding the programme.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Mrs A van Rooyen (2007), former provincial manager of CWSA (North-West Province), stated that positive change regarding the reporting of child neglect and abuse has already been identified through annual statistical information since the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was piloted. She indicated that reported child abuse cases showed an increase of 388% in the North-West Province since 2003 until 2005, and on national level CWSA statistical data showed that reported child abuse cases increased with 151% from 2003 until 2004, while reported child neglect increased with 163% (Anon., 2004b:11).

An assumption was made that through the involvement of the 'eye volunteers' in the community, abused and neglected children could be identified sooner and reported to professional services. If it were not for the 'eye volunteers' interaction in the community, these children would not be identified or protected. The 'eye volunteers' therefore play a very important role in the protection and safeguarding of children in South African communities.

One of the most significant problems that CWSA (North-West Province) is confronted with, is that 'eye volunteers' exit the project soon after they have completed their training, or a few months after they have begun to participate actively in the project. This has a tremendously negative impact on the outcome of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project and also puts significant financial pressure on CWSA. A great deal of time and money were invested to offer free training for volunteers to develop certain skills required for the 'Isolabantwana/Eye

on the children' project. There was the expectation that these volunteers would remain longer in this project due to their specialised services in the community.

The question is now being asked whether CWSA (North-West Province) should continue with the project or whether the project should be adapted to accommodate volunteers according to other requirements. When these kinds of questions have been asked, it became necessary for the organisation to evaluate their project in order to obtain clarity regarding continuation or modification (Wholey, Hatry & Newcomer, 2004:xxxix). Guidelines regarding change or termination of the project could be given once volunteers' thoughts, feelings, perceptions and expectations within the project are understood better.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question is: what is the nature and character of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, and what are the volunteers' experiences within this project?

4. AIM OF THE STUDY

This article forms part of a larger research project. The purpose of this article is to focus specifically on the nature and character of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Before any recommendations regarding a project can be made, clear understanding of the nature, character and process is needed. This article therefore focuses on each active and non-active volunteer's general experiences within each stage of the project, so that their initial motivations to participate in the project, the impact of the training and their perceptions of a volunteer's role can be understood better. These experiences could give direction to develop guidelines regarding the continuation or modification of the project. In Article 2 of this dissertation, a detailed discussion of active and non-active volunteers' motivations and reasons, to either remain in the project or to exit it, will follow.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is presented according to different headings.

5.1 DESIGN

An explanatory research design was used to find answers to the 'why are things the way they are' questions for specific problems the researcher is already familiar with (Fouché & De Vos,

2005:106). The qualitative approach was used to establish what the participants' ideas and experiences regarding the process of implementation of the programme were. The qualitative researcher is rather concerned with the understanding and the explanation of phenomena as well as the observation of the natural state, than controlled measurement (Schurink, 1998:243).

Although the researcher did not make use of project evaluation as a research design, aspects of project evaluation appeared as a supportive social research method. Data was collected through a systematic process with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of a social intervention project such as the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004:29). Participants' experiences of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project were also used as a managerial tool to help the researcher in presenting recommendations regarding the future of the project (Royse, Thyer, Padgett & Logan, 2001:11).

5.2 PARTICIPANTS

Five CWSA organisations (Potchefstroom, Rustenburg, Vryburg, Orkney and Alabama) in the North-West Province that have implemented the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, were selected through a purposive sampling method as described by Strydom and Delpont (2005:328).

Difficulties were experienced to reach volunteers, specifically the non-active volunteers. In the end, a number of 30 participants (15 active and 15 non-active volunteers) were selected according to their availability. This method is known as an accidental sampling method (Strydom, 2005:202).

5.3 DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected by means of one-on-one interviews with each identified participant to establish the nature of their experiences within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Each participant was individually interviewed with the same introductory questions. The participants could then respond spontaneously without any manipulation from others (Morse & Field, 1995:94). Each participant was interviewed individually and participants were able to ask questions to obtain clarity on questions they did not understand. Notes were taken

during the interviews and some of the participants' exact quotes were written down (Grinnell, 2001:293).

5.4 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The semi-structured interview schedule was created as a measuring instrument to provide more direction during the one-on-one interviews. Glicken (2003:88) advises that interview schedule questions must be arranged by specific topics, the questions must be relevant to the research, only one question at a time must be asked and understandable language must be used. The researcher developed the interview schedule and topics of discussion were categorised according to the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project's stages.

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was processed according to Huberman and Miles' approach (in Poggenpoel, 1998:340). The semi-structured interview schedule already presupposes categories. The responses were then processed according to different themes and patterns (Neuman, 2006:461). A triangulation process was followed to verify the themes emerging from the data (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:181). Rubin and Babbie (2005:181) define triangulation as "... using several different research methods to collect the same information". An independent decoder was used to verify the information. These themes and patterns were again verified with literature to comply with the requirements of a triangulation data collection process.

5.6 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Monette, Sullivan and Dejong (2002:55) and Williams (2003:163-169) emphasised the importance of ethical aspects in social science research. There are five basic ethical issues that can be highlighted, including 1) informed consent, 2) deception, misconduct and fraud, 3) privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, 4) physical and mental protection, and 5) scientific advocacy. The researcher interviewed participants from different cultural, ethical and social backgrounds and behaved with the necessary sensitivity towards these differences. The focus was on adhering to ethical standards during the interviews:

- The participants had the right to know that they participated in a research project and were informed of the advantages and disadvantages of this research, in order for them to make an informed decision to participate in the study. They also signed a letter of

consent. The participants understood that the research was only aimed at gaining information and that the research might not lead to immediate changes.

- The researcher did not mislead the participants and true information regarding the purpose of the study was given. Through this ethical aspect of non-deception, participants developed a feeling of trust towards the researcher and responded with open-hearted sincerity.
- In terms of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher did not violate the participant's privacy and information received was treated confidentially. Participants' identities will thus not be made known. Thus, participants had the freedom to respond freely without being afraid that their identities will be made known or that they will be victimised after the research has been completed.
- The participants responded through interviews and were not exposed to any situation that could harm them physically or mentally. Participants were secure in the fact that the researcher will protect their rights through the entire study process.
- Ethical approval was received from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences, North-West University, before conducting the research. Permission code 06K23 was allocated. Measures were taken to ensure that the findings of the research reported in this dissertation are as accurate and objective as possible.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT

'Isolabantwana' means 'eye on the children'. Children who live in a safe environment within a secure loving family have their parents' or caregivers' 'eyes' to watch over them, but not all children have that privilege. Some children need other people's 'eyes' to watch over them to protect them. This is literally what the 'Isolabantwana' project embraces; volunteers keeping an 'eye' on the children in their communities. Within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, specific activities and objectives were developed to enable volunteers to act as 'eye volunteers' in the communities. CWSA's (North-West Province) service plan provided limited information and to this end, Mrs A van Rooyen (2007) gave more clarity on what the project entails through a personal interview.

6.1 BACKGROUND OF 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT

The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project is a community-based child protection project that was developed by Child Welfare, Cape Town in 1999. The purpose of this project is to identify natural helpers in the community who can be trained as 'eye volunteers', with the main objective of protecting children in their communities (Cape Town Child Welfare, 2006:1). In 2003, Cape Town Child Welfare gave permission for CWSA to implement the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project on national level. CWSA (North-West Province) piloted this project in two communities in 2003, and since then has expanded to 11 communities in the North-West Province by the end of 2006 (Van Rooyen, 2007)

For a volunteer to be part of this project, he/she has to undergo a screening procedure and complete a training project successfully. Only thereafter were the volunteers divided into different task groups that include 'authorised', 'supportive/lay counsellors' and 'educators' groups (Anon., 2004b:9). The main responsibilities of the volunteers are to identify children at risk and children who have already suffered abuse and neglect (Cape Town Child Welfare, 2006:1). These volunteers could render a one-stop 24-hour service and offer services such as lay counselling, removal of children, place of safety placements, intervention with families, support for children at risk and empowerment of families to prevent child abuse.

6.2 SPECIFIC PROJECT ACTIVITIES

According to the service plan of the South Africa National Council for Child Welfare in the North-West Province (2003-2005), the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was divided into two phases, namely the community mobilisation phase and the implementation phase. Within each phase, a variety of objectives directed the specific consecutive activities needed to take place as well as the allocation of specific role-players to each activity. Information on the project itself was limited and summarised, but it boils down to the following information regarding the two phases:

6.2.1 Phase 1: Community mobilisation

The objective of phase one was to establish a partnership between CWSA and the communities.

This includes the following activities:

- Identify specific organisations and communities in the North-West Province that have a need for a child protection project.
- Negotiate with different role-players (Department of Social Services, Commissioner of Child Welfare in each magisterial district).
- Marketing of the project through awareness campaigns, media, workshops and individual presentations.
- Recruitment and identification of volunteers. The target was to identify 75 volunteers for training, at approximately 15-20 volunteers per organisation.
- Ten training sessions with volunteers to equip them with knowledge and skills. The 10 training sessions include the following topics (Anon., 2003:6):
 - *Background and functioning of the project:* In this session the principles, structure and functioning of the project were discussed as well as ethical codes of volunteers, the role of management committees, unprofessional conduct, disciplinary codes and -procedures (Anon., s.a.(a):7).
 - *Project management:* Volunteers were trained on what project management in general implies, and aspects like project cycles, need assessment and monitoring were discussed (Anon., s.a.(b):18).
 - *Child abuse and neglect:* Concepts of child abuse and neglect were defined and signs of different types of abuse such as neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse were discussed as well as how to deal with abused children (Anon., s.a.(a):23).
 - *Statutory intervention and Form 4:* In this session the volunteers were informed about Section 14(4) of the Child Care Act 74/83, grounds for removal of children with a Form 4 as well as how to issue a Form 4 (Anon., s.a.(a):102).
 - *Children's rights:* Volunteers received training on what children's rights and responsibilities are.
 - *Parenting skills:* Parenting skills in general were discussed with the focus on communication skills, building children's self-confidence and disciplining of children (Anon., s.a.(a):56).

- *Domestic violence:* Volunteers were informed on the occurrence of family violence, types of victims and how to deal with family violence (Anon., s.a.(a):32).
 - *HIV/AIDS:* The definition of HIV, and the spreading and prevention of HIV were dealt with in this session (Anon., s.a.(a):46).
 - *The role of stakeholders like SAPS:* Volunteers were informed about different types of role-players in the community with specific focus on the child protection unit and their role (Anon., s.a.(a):92).
 - *Subsistence abuse and first aid:* In this session alcohol and drug abuse were discussed and volunteers were trained to identify abuse and to work with an addicted person (Anon., s.a.(a):37). In this session volunteers were also informed about basic principles of first aid (Anon., s.a.(a):87).
- A final screening of volunteers through testing their knowledge and skills.
 - A certification ceremony and authorising 'eye volunteers' and 'safe homes volunteers'.

6.2.2 Phase 2: Implementation

The objective of phase two was to strengthen existing child protection projects at CWSA that include a one-stop 24-hour service for abused children.

This includes the following activities on provincial level:

- establishing four project committees;
- capacity building of the four project committees and project role-players with the purpose to manage and monitor the project;
- six project management training sessions for project role-players;
- oversee and drafting of project plans and implementation plans;
- appointment of additional social workers/staff to monitor and implement the project;
- supervision to social workers in monitoring whether children are cared for;
- extend family strengthening programmes through workshops;

- ❑ oversee ongoing marketing and fundraising projects to ensure continuation of the project;
- ❑ monitoring of project implementation through statistical assessment;
- ❑ ongoing skills development and guidance to staff members; and
- ❑ establishing a safe home on local level.

Activities on regional and provincial level:

- ❑ oversee and renovations of safe homes to meet the set requirements;
- ❑ plan and administrate operational plans for safe homes;
- ❑ recruit, screen and appoint new staff/volunteers;
- ❑ manage finances and financial system and recording;
- ❑ train and support of volunteers/staff;
- ❑ monitoring of services; and
- ❑ reporting of project.

These two phases of the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project as described above constitute only a broad planning structure. A manual developed by CWSA (Anon., s.a.(b)) for social workers in this project provides more detail of the nature and contents.

6.3 NATURE OF ‘ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN’ PROJECT

To understand the nature of the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project, an understanding of the mission, vision, goal, principles, role and tasks of volunteers, structure and different stages is necessary. These could be described as follows:

6.3.1 Mission, vision and goal

The mission of CWSA is “...to promote the well-being of children by enhancing the capacity of families and their community to identify and protect children at risk” (Anon., s.a.(b):5). Social workers needed extra support for ‘after-hour’ protection services, and this has led to the launch of the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project. The project’s vision is to promote community involvement in the rendering of services as well as in the management of the project, and to develop an independent

community who is able to protect their own children against child abuse and neglect (Anon., s.a.(b):8).

The goal of this project is to protect children and to prevent child abuse and neglect (Anon., s.a.(b):5). The main focus of the project is on primary and secondary preventions that include precautionary measures to prevent the development of a problem as well as the provision of input in an early stage of a problem. Tertiary and quaternary levels of preventions also play a role regarding the prevention of an actual problem from becoming a critical problem and the prevention of further negative consequences for a child when there is already a serious problem (Anon., s.a.(b):5).

To reach this mission, vision and goal of the project, the following must be developed:

- focus on prevention services;
- protection of children over weekends and after hours (24-hour service);
- enhancing the community's responsibility in terms of child protection;
- long-term prevention of child abuse and neglect; and
- increased awareness of child abuse and neglect (Anon., s.a.(b):8).

It is clear that the focus was on creating a sustainable and attainable awareness and responsibility within the community to care for children.

6.3.2 Principles

The main principles in this project are "...to get the co-operation of the community concerning child protection and to enable the community to deal effectively with child abuse and neglect" (Anon., s.a.(b):6). The criteria for a community member to qualify as a volunteer in this project entailed that training is completed, that the candidate had sufficient knowledge and skills regarding child protection, and authorisation from the Commissioner of Child Welfare to act statutorily to protect a child at risk (Anon., s.a.(b):7).

6.3.3 Roles and tasks of volunteers

To be 'eyes' in the community and render a 24-hour protection service, volunteers' main tasks include the following:

- identify where children are abused and neglected;

- ❑ safeguard abused and neglected children by taking them to a place of safety;
- ❑ building the capacity of families through teaching them parenting skills in order to prevent further abuse and neglect;
- ❑ empowering children through teaching them life skills to protect themselves; and
- ❑ co-operating and networking with police, schools, churches, local government and organisations to protect the rights of children (Anon., s.a.(b):7).

6.3.4 Structure

The structure of the project is intended to identify and guide role-players to realise what the responsibility of each is. These can be divided into four categories: social workers, task forces, 'eye' volunteers and places of safety (Anon., s.a.(b):7). The social workers are responsible for the co-ordinating, training, monitoring and supporting of the volunteers. The task force is responsible for the marketing, management and supervising of volunteers. The 'eye' volunteers must assess less serious child abuse and neglect cases and intervene with a Form 4 if necessary for removal of the children. They are also responsible for counselling, referral of cases and prevention campaigns in the community. The place of safety provides a safe house for children who need immediate care.

6.3.5 Procedure

The procedure of the project entails the unrolling of the protection plan and can be divided into four stages that include 1) planning, 2) preparation, 3) implementation, and 4) evaluation and monitoring. Specific activities took place in each stage and could be summarised as follows:

6.3.5.1 Planning stage

In the planning stage each CWSA organisation orientated themselves with the outline of the project and was responsible for the following activities:

- ❑ consultation with the Commissioner of Child Welfare to gain authorisation for volunteers in terms of Section 12(1) for the Child Care Act 74/83 to remove a child if he/she is at risk;
- ❑ negotiation with different role-players to receive access to the community;

- ❑ compiling a community profile that includes aspects such as the history of the area, environment dynamics, resident diversity, available service-rendering organisations and specific leadership in the community; and
- ❑ identification of needs and completion of needs assessment (Anon., s.a.(b):8).

6.3.5.2 Preparation stage

The preparation stage includes activities that prepare the community members to be responsible volunteers and task team members. The specific activities in this stage are the following:

- ❑ recruitment of volunteers and the development of a job description for volunteers;
- ❑ screening of ‘task team’, ‘eye’ and ‘place of safety’ volunteers to identify whether they will meet the requirements regarding, for example, management skills, effective communications, objectivity, ability to work with children as well as a variety of other skills;
- ❑ training of volunteers by making use of the CWSA training manual for volunteers in 10 to 12 training sessions;
- ❑ volunteers have to pass a test that is based on the training manual; and
- ❑ graduation ceremony for the volunteers as finale of the preparations stage (Anon., s.a.(b):12).

6.3.5.3 Implementation stage

The implementation stage begins with the deployment of volunteers in the community. Volunteers must introduce themselves to the community through an awareness campaign to ensure that the community knows exactly which cases could be referred to them (Anon., s.a.(b):15).

6.3.5.4 Evaluation and monitoring stage

The evaluation and monitoring stage includes activities such as ongoing supervision, meetings and in-service training of volunteers to provide the necessary support and to monitor volunteers through administration duties.

Volunteers have a variety of documents to be completed and the social worker must keep record of all the volunteers' documents and work done in the project as a form of monitoring (Anon., s.a.(b):16).

From the above it is clear that the nature of the project describes each action to the extent that each organisation had the opportunity to redesign the project to their needs (Anon, s.a.(b): 6).

7. DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

Interviews were conducted with 15 active and 15 non-active volunteers at five CWSA organisations in the North-West Province (Rustenburg, Vryburg, Orkney, Alabama, Potchefstroom). Table 1 below presents the participants at each organisation.

TABLE 1: ORGANISATION PARTICIPANTS

CWSA Organisations in the North-West Province	Interviews with active volunteers	Interviews with non-active volunteers
Rustenburg	3	4
Vryburg	4	3
Orkney	4	4
Alabama	0	4
Potchefstroom	4	0
TOTAL	15	15

To gain a better understanding on the participants' responses, background information of each organisation is necessary, because each organisation's dynamics differ. CWSA: Orkney and Alabama completed volunteer training in 2003 and thereafter CWSA: Potchefstroom and Rustenburg followed suit during 2004. Lastly CWSA: Vryburg completed volunteer training in 2006. Because Orkney and Alabama volunteers were trained almost three years before Vryburg, the assumption is made that some volunteers were more experienced than others and that it will have an effect on their responses. There was also a high turnover of staff (social workers) at Orkney, Alabama, Rustenburg and Potchefstroom during the deployment stage of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project that may be noted from the participants' responses.

With this background taken into account, the interviews were conducted making use of the semi-structured interview schedule. Participants were encouraged to share their feelings and perceptions regarding the process. The discussion will be presented according to questions asked on the different stages of the project.

7.1 RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

Recruitment and screening of volunteers play a very important role for the success of a project and not every person who is willing to volunteer could qualify for this specific child protection project.

7.1.1 Recruitment of volunteers

Hugo and Slabbert (1990:256) emphasise that recruitment is not about convincing people to say 'yes' for participation in a project, but rather about eliminating all the possible negative influences that could destroy an entire project. According to Hugo and Slabbert (1990:255), there are three components to take into consideration when recruiting volunteers, namely: 1) marketing of project within the community of implementation to recruit the significant volunteers, 2) proper planning of the volunteers' role, and 3) possible reward for volunteers.

□ Marketing

In the process of recruiting volunteers it is necessary to make use of different marketing methods among which the media is the most common method. According to Crook, Weir, Willms and Egendorf (2006:44) a target group is already identified during the planning phase, but needs to be reached through:

- a recruitment message;
- appeal to the needs of the of the target group; and
- giving information on how these needs can be satisfied through volunteering.

Participants in this study were asked how they were recruited for the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Six active and eight non-active participants indicated that they reacted on the 'recruit message' after reading the local media article, while the other 16 participants were recruited through word-of-

mouth from other community members, friends and family members who have read the message.

□ **Planning of the volunteers' role**

To recruit volunteers to participate in projects might be easy, but to give them direction in what is expected of them is more complex due to the fact that volunteer's roles and tasks differ in the same way that organisations and projects differ. It is therefore necessary for an organisation to define the role of volunteers very clearly, but also to provide training as well as a job description for volunteers to provide them with proper direction regarding the specific organisation and projects (Chai, 1995:8). During the recruitment phase the 'recruitment message' will already give community members an idea of what is going to be expected of volunteers and what some of their tasks will be.

Ten active and 12 non-active participants in this study were introduced to the project and their roles during an introductory meeting that was still part of the recruitment phase, but they also received a more in-depth understanding of their roles and tasks during their training. Five active and three non-active participants did not attend the introductory meeting, but indicated that they were fully briefed on the project, their roles and tasks during training.

□ **Reward system**

In general, the understanding of volunteering is that it is a service out of free will with no financial compensation. Typically, volunteers receive only verbal reward of their services (Hugo & Slabbert, 1990:257). Although the majority of the population knows that volunteering means a 'free service', they still expect some form of remuneration to care for their own families (Swart, Seedat & Sader, 2004:9). It is therefore important to communicate through the 'recruitment message' what form of reward there will be to motivate people to participate as volunteers.

Rewards do not always mean money, but could also include other forms like a renewed sense of efficacy and freedom through volunteerism (Hall, 2001:53) or continued learning (Narushima, 2005:577). CWSA provided rewards for active volunteers in the form of a monthly stipend as well as rewards in a form of

reimbursing transportation costs and providing food during events, meetings and continued training (skills development) within the context of child protection.

Eight active and seven non-active participants in this study indicated that they were promised financial remuneration for services and travelling expenses, but they did not always receive what was promised. The other 15 participants mentioned that they initially did not receive promised stipends or financial remuneration for their expenses, but they did not regard this as a problem.

Out of the above responses from participants, an assumption could be made that CWSA followed the three components for recruitment as described in the literature. The market plan was successful because volunteers reacted on the recruitment message. CWSA also has a specific concept regarding the volunteers' roles and tasks, and introduced these to them before any screening started. The only problem experienced regarding the preparations for volunteer recruitment were the unanswered promises pertaining to rewarding of volunteers. An assumption can be made that CWSA realises the essence of rewarding volunteers and therefore made these promises, but experienced difficulty to uphold these promises.

7.1.2 Screening of volunteers

Organisations must try to get to know as much about a person or group when recruiting volunteers in order to select the right people for the job (Vineyard, 1984:23). It is therefore important that organisations have screening methods in place before any recruitment of volunteers takes place. Screening methods could assume various guises. The most common screening methods are completion of a personal profile or personal interviews. More in-depth screening methods involve completion of a variety of tests or verifying personal information by means of referees. Organisations must have screening criteria to ensure that volunteers meet the minimum requirements for specific projects. CWSA (North-West Province) identified four major screening criteria that involve literacy, no criminal record, successful completion of the 10-session training project and, finally, the knowledge test.

Participants in this study completed a personal profile form and were also individually interviewed. Part of the screening process was to verify participants' criminal record at the police station because one of the screening criteria was that volunteers must have

no criminal record. All the participants in this study, except one, indicated that they experienced this screening process as fair and reasonable, although there were a few who couldn't recall that they were screened and were somewhat confused. Their responses were:

"Must be a role model and have a clean profile when you work with children."

"Necessary for the project to do screening – a rapist couldn't participate in a child protection project."

"The test is necessary to evaluate the trainer's ability to teach and the trainee's understanding of topics."

"The test is necessary for myself and community – not here to play."

One participant regarded the screening process as positive, but highlighted the possibility that some people's lifestyles might have changed and that they can regret their previous criminal behaviour. He specifically insisted that people who show an interest in volunteering must not be punished for their past negative behaviour. He also separated specific crimes from specialised volunteering services and felt that the type of crime must be taken into consideration when volunteers are screened. His opinion was:

"I have no problem to check my criminal record because I don't do crime, but think that volunteers that might do [sic] crime in the past and changes [sic] mustn't be penalised for that. Some crime had no effect when you work specific [sic] with children. Take the background of crime into consideration."

Only one participant was uncomfortable that her criminal record could be checked and refused to give permission. She also denied that she has a criminal record, but admitted for the first time to the researcher that she was previously raped and that the court case was not yet finalised during the screening process, and she did not want anybody to know about it. It seemed as if she could not distinguish between a perpetrator and a victim.

From the participants' responses above it can be gleaned that screening plays an important role as indicated by literature. It was also indicated that not anybody could qualify to be selected as a volunteer for this project. In general, the screening process

was a non-threatening experience to volunteers due to the fact that some participants could not even remember that they were screened. Proof of their screening was found in the CWSA's documents. Some of the participants were of the opinion that the type of offence should be taken into consideration and not just checking whether a person has a criminal record.

7.2 MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

The motivation for each volunteer to offer his or her services free of charge to any organisation is an individual decision that is driven by personal reasons or expectations. Many authors such as Canfield, Hansen, Oberst, Boal, Lagana and Lagana (2002:363), Clary, Snyder and Stukas (1996:486), Crook *et al.* (2006:43), Reitsma-Street, Maczewski and Neysmith (2000:651), Swart *et al.* (2004:8) and Tschirhart, Mesch, Perry, Miller and Lee (2001:426) attempt to describe volunteers' motivations for volunteering. These could be summarised into the following aspects:

- expectations of reward;
- giving back to the community;
- wanting to make a difference in people's lives;
- gaining wisdom;
- overcoming personal obstacles;
- development of a better self-esteem;
- developing personal skills for career opportunities;
- a need for social connection; and
- experiencing the power of decision-making.

Hiatt, Michalek, Younge, Miyoshi and Fryer (2000:86) identified three motivation categories in which volunteers could be divided. The first category is an 'intrinsic' motivation where people become voluntarily involved because they want to help other people for an altruistic reason. The second category is an 'extrinsic' motivation where people want to help other people for an external reward, and the third category is a 'self-efficacy' motivation where it is felt that helping others provides one with self-fulfilment and sense of worth. These three categories could be interdependent of each other and Narushima (2005:569) assumes that the 'altruistic' motivation is always related with some form of 'egotistic' motivation.

Active as well as non-active participants in this study were asked what their motivation and expectations were to participate in a child protection project. Participants' responses could be summarised into the following four themes portrayed in their own words:

□ **A need for further education and development**

"I have had no knowledge on children and want to learn more things [sic]."

"Didn't know anything about children and how to treat them or work with them – my own children even benefit from my knowledge."

"I want to learn more about the white culture and want to combine it with our black culture – I want to learn how white people do things and work with children – I only know our black culture."

All the participants indicated that their expectations of training were met. They all gained more knowledge on child-related problems and how to work with children, and developed better skills in: communication, interaction, problem-solving and parenting skills. These responses indicate the participants' desire for further development. Although volunteers rendered a volunteering service to the community that could easily be seen as an 'altruistic' deed, their motivations are in fact 'egotistic', as described by Narushima (2005:569) above.

□ **Hope for career opportunity**

"To gain information and knowledge of children with the hope to get a job in future."

"I hope to get money and that volunteering might turn into a permanent job at the organisation."

"I have a dream of becoming a social worker one day – to attend training is the closest to get knowledge and an idea of what is social work all about."

Two active and two non-active participants indicated that they hoped to get a permanent job at CWSA through their involvement as a volunteer, but none of them were offered a permanent job. Three participants exited the project because they were offered a job at other organisations. Participants' motivations to participate as volunteers are linked to Hiatt's *et al.* (2000:86) second motivation category, namely 'extrinsic' motivation, because volunteers hope for an external reward through getting a job offering.

□ Concern about children and the community

“Feel called to do something for the community.”

“To go back to the community and help children – bringing information to the community.”

“Wanted to help children in the community in their own language.”

“I have a dream of working with children and this project made it possible.”

All the participants in this study became volunteers because they see children and the community suffering and wanted to help them through their connections with a welfare organisation. All the participants also indicated that their services were of high value in the community because they were available to help children or people and also to facilitate changes in these people’s lives. This motivation of volunteers links closely with an ‘intrinsic’ motivation as described by Hiatt *et al.* (2000:86) regarding volunteers getting involved to help other people.

□ Process of survival and self protection

“I just want to do something – get out of the house – I started to think negative thoughts (suicide) – I want to stop thinking of my (deceased) husband and to put my mind somewhere else.”

“To keep me busy and help me to focus on other things – keep me away from the streets doing bad things like crime.”

Two active and one non-active participants indicated very specifically that they participated in this project to protect themselves from negative behaviour or thoughts. Although it is a very self-centred motivation, they were able to replace their internal struggles with an external focus through helping other people who also suffer. Hiatt *et al.* (2000:86) refer to this motivation as a ‘self-efficacy’ motivation as mentioned above. This cognitive shift gave them new value in life. All the participants indicated that they have personally gained through their participation in the project and that they have found inner strength.

From the above-mentioned responses of participants one can identify aspects of intrinsic, extrinsic and self-efficacy motivations as described by literature. Volunteers have certain expectations when offering their volunteering services, and from the participants’ responses the assumption could be made that their expectations have been met.

7.3 PREPARATION OF VOLUNTEERS

Participants who were interested in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project had to complete a preparation process to develop their skills so that they would be able to work with children and the community. In this regard, Hugo and Slabbert (1990:256) note that volunteers expect training to gain skills that the job requires of them. Without this preparation stage volunteers would struggle to confront the community with confidence. To prepare volunteers for the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project they had to attend a 10-session training project, pass a test and attend a graduation ceremony.

7.3.1 Training

Hugo and Slabbert (1990:256) emphasise that volunteering could include a wide range of services and that training of volunteers must not be seen as a waste of time. Ongoing training is also very important and could also be seen as a form of reward for volunteers (Narushima, 2005:577). Because volunteers are typically adults, the training must be of such a nature so as to accommodate adult learners (Macduff, 1988:38). The difference between adult learners and children is that children start learning during childhood through socialisation and compulsory schooling, but adult learners are self-directed (Mezirow, 1991:1) and can therefore make a decision regarding future learning. People's perceptions and knowledge are formed by language, culture and personal experiences (Mezirow, 1991:1). Therefore, making use of metaphors is the best way to teach adults and, according to Mezirow (1991:80), metaphors are tools used to "...confront the unknown by making associations with what we know". Other aspects that are also important in the training of adult volunteers are: knowing the specific needs of volunteers, using suitable training venues and facilities for adults to feel comfortable, suitable training schedules to accommodate adults with other responsibilities, and using proper training methods to help adults to make sense of the information they receive (Hugo & Slabbert, 1990:256).

All the participants in this study gave positive feedback on their experience of the training. They experienced the training as professional and of high quality. Only one participant complained about one trainer who was rude to her when she asked a question, and two participants complained about one trainer who was unable to give a

presentation in English and talked unclearly (too softly). Other concerns that were voiced by some of the participants involved the venue, subsistence and time period. The food was not always enough or what they liked, and caterers were sometimes rude to the participants. The venue was too far from the taxi ranks and cold during winter. The presentations were sometimes too long and participants struggled to concentrate. In general, however, the participants experienced the training as excellent; they were able to ask questions, enjoyed the topics and appreciated the trainers' respectful attitude towards them. All the participants indicated that they have gained knowledge and some indicated that they have more insight in child abuse. This specific answer regarding the training summarises the responses:

"It opened my eyes for the reality outside. I didn't want to believe that. I realise children [are] being raped and identify my own feelings of exposure to that. I had to work through my own feelings of sadness."

7.3.2 Test

The test that the participants had to write was aimed at evaluating volunteers' understanding of what they learned and was administered to identify whether they would be able to combine theory and practice. Participants who passed the test with distinction would be qualified as 'authorised eyes' while participants who only passed the test were placed either into the 'supportive/lay counsellors' group or in the 'educators' group. Only the 'authorised eyes' were allowed to issue a Form 4 after consulting with a registered social worker. During an investigation two 'supportive/lay counsellors' are responsible for accompanying 'authorised eyes' and volunteers are not allowed to do home visits by themselves.

Participants' reactions toward the question regarding their experiences of the test indicated that the majority of them experienced some form of anxiety and were afraid or scared to write the test. However, the manual they received during the training was sufficient to prepare them for the test. Participants indicated that the test focussed more on the practical implementation and they were able to test their own skills at solving problems.

Only three participants, one active and two non-active, acknowledged the fact that they failed the first time they wrote the test. However, two participants had a second opportunity to write the test. They passed at the second opportunity. One participant mentioned that she had been promised a second opportunity to write the test, but it never happened. Although this specific participant did not pass the test, she was allowed to be contracted as a volunteer within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, but was not allowed to issue a Form 4 and had to work closely with the 'authorised eye volunteers'. Besides the mentioned responses, the participants indicated that allowing a person to be acknowledged as a volunteer even though she has failed the test created double standards in the organisation. Afterwards this led to a great deal of conflict between volunteers in the programme.

7.3.3 Graduation

The graduation ceremony was a form of reward for the volunteers who were able to complete the training and test successfully. According to Swart *et al.* (2004:4) volunteers tend to become demotivated and discontinue their services if they do not receive any form of acknowledgement or appreciation. All the participants in this study, except one, have never experienced a graduation before and described this event as life-changing. Twenty-six participants stated that they felt appreciated, valued, respected and proud of themselves to graduate, and only two active participants added that the graduation ceremony should have been more glamorous. Two other participants indicated that they could not attend their graduation due to personal reasons. Some of the participants' responses are:

"I didn't expect it was going to be so nice – it's the first time I graduate and feel proud of wearing a gown."

"At first I didn't see light at the end of the tunnel (before [I] started with training), but on the graduation day I was in light."

"People in the community influence your mind negative toward volunteering, but with the graduation I feel special and respected."

"The graduation motivated me to study for another 3 years."

"I've got what I always wanted for so long – the graduation was what I expected – to wear a gown."

From the above-mentioned perceptions of the three preparation stages one can establish that the volunteers gained a lot of knowledge and acknowledgement, in compliance with the literature overview above. An assumption can be made that these stages motivated volunteers to continue their volunteering services, in accordance with Swart *et al.* (2004:4).

7.4 DEPLOYMENT

After graduation the volunteers were deployed to be 'eyes' in the community. Crook *et al.* (2006:40) indicate that there are two phases of deployment, namely the initiation and maintenance phases, and they identify different motivations to participate as volunteers within each phase. The participants' responses could also be referred to these two phases. According to Crook *et al.* (2006:40) during the first phase - the initiation phase - volunteers' compassion, belief-systems, values, identification with others and personal needs motivate them to participate in a project, but during the second phase - the maintenance phase - these motivations change to a need for rewards. If volunteers' needs were not met during these two phases, they would most likely not continue their services and therefore exit the project during the deployment stage.

The participants were all already in the maintenance phase during this study and identified four major important issues they experienced during the deployment of the project. For volunteers to experience a feeling of success and satisfaction, it is important that they 1) understand the project and its procedures, 2) have clarity on their roles and tasks, 3) receive organisational support, and 4) that they are personally supported.

7.4.1 Understanding of the project and procedures

During the training, volunteers were informed about the purpose of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project and what the procedures were within this project. Feedback received from the participants in this study indicated clearly that all of them knew exactly what the procedures were that they needed to follow and what was expected of them. Participants identified two specific problems regarding procedures that involve mistakes from both the social worker and the volunteers' sides. The volunteers received training in the project's structure and procedures, and when the social worker changed certain procedures, volunteers became confused. For

example, the volunteers were not trained to write service plans or compile a budget, but some social workers expected this from them.

Although the volunteers were informed on their limitations or boundaries within the project's structure and procedure, it seemed that they still want more. For example, that the social worker must accompany them on home visits, demanding meetings with the management, as well as unreasonable increases in the stipends. These issues led to the assumption that the procedures were not clearly understood. Volunteers caused conflict at organisations when they continue to pressure social workers or the organisation to change the project's structure or procedures according to their demands.

One participant's response indicates this confusion between volunteers and social workers regarding sudden changes:

"Suddenly volunteers must help the social worker with new timetables/annual plan that was different from training and the social worker never implement the planning."

7.4.2 Understanding volunteer's roles and tasks

Volunteering means to render a free service without obligation with the purpose of giving support to other people. Crook *et al.* (2006:39) define a volunteer as "...a person who performs or gives services of his or her own free will without receiving a salary in return". Volunteers' participation is not primarily motivated by financial benefits, but are typically motivated by choice and benefits for all the parties, that include individuals, groups (organisations), the environment, and people who volunteer (Dingle, Sokolowski, Saxon-Harrold, Smith & Leigh, 2001:9). When volunteers know the definition of volunteering they tend to accept the idea of free service more readily, but still expect some form of reward. As mentioned previously, it is very important that the role of volunteers must be defined very clearly and that a job description for volunteers should be given to them with a view to defining specific boundaries (Chai, 1995:8). It is difficult to define roles and tasks for volunteers in general, but within a specific project like the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, very clear roles and task descriptions were given to the volunteers.

Participants in this study were asked whether they understood their roles and tasks. All the participants indicated that they understood the concept of volunteering and were able to explain specific tasks required of them, for example home visits, follow-up visits, referring to specific resources, record-keeping of contacts, attending meetings, supervision and training. Only one participant felt that she did not understand the role of the social worker, because she did not know that she had to report child abuse and neglect cases to the social worker. Therefore the assumption is made that although she valued the training, she did not quite differentiate between the social worker and the volunteer's roles.

According to Dingle *et al.* (2001:9) the definition of volunteering is identified by four criteria: 1) volunteering is a free service with no financial benefits, 2) to volunteer means to act out of free will and choice without anyone forcing one to do so, 3) a third party like children, community or an organisation benefits from volunteers, and 4) volunteers themselves benefit from volunteering. Participants in this study were asked to describe volunteers' roles and tasks. From their responses the following five characteristics were identified:

□ **A free service (no financial gain)**

"Helping without getting paid – helping people in my community."

"Give yourself and time freely without money or getting something back."

□ **A free choice (without obligation)**

"Volunteering is what I do out of free will and not because someone forces me to do it."

"A person who volunteers does work without pay – this should come from inside of you and not because somebody forces you to do it."

"To willingly help people – not forced to do it, but out of self – it is not about money – I expect to get minimum pay."

□ **Helping children and community development (benefit to a third party)**

"To help the community and be responsible – there is a co-dependency between the volunteer and his community – if the community is okay, I will be okay – I must help the community to be okay."

"Sharing your knowledge to people, helping people, treat them with respect and love."

"To show an example to the community."

“To work with people that suffer and help them.”

□ **Helping an organisation and the social worker (benefit to third party)**

“Help the social worker to help the people.”

“Protect children and refer to the social worker.”

“To work hand-in-hand with the social worker.”

“Help the social worker with reports, services and information to clients.”

□ **Development of personal skills (benefit to volunteer)**

“Not to get rich, but to receive training to receive skills development and personal development through involvement as a volunteer.”

“To gain experience and skills.”

“To gaining experiences working with people.”

“Growing in your potential through involvement.”

□ **Personal sacrifice**

“No matter what you get out of it, you must be satisfied within.”

“Sacrificing my time – not expecting much back from an organisation.”

“Offer yourself to make someone first priority than yourself – sacrifice your time, security, personal life.”

“Challenge problems and not be afraid.”

The above responses of the participants reflect the same four categories as described by Dingle *et al.* (2001:9), but a fifth perception was also identified that involved the sacrificing of one's personal life to offer volunteering services to an organisation.

7.4.3 Organisational support

Organisations that do not have financial resources to provide organisational support through paying the core staff and volunteers' costs will discourage volunteers, specifically those who live in a low income community (Reitsma-Street *et al.*, 2000:664). The essence of a support network is also emphasised by Steyn and Strydom (2007:28) and could be linked to the role of an organisation to create these support networks. Organisations must initially invest by means of intensive training and supervision to support volunteers in developing the personal skills needed to perform to their full

potential in the project. Cnaan and Cascio (1999:2) emphasise that recognition is also a very important aspect of organisational support to volunteers.

Volunteers feel empowered by the knowledge they gain during training, and experience a 'high feeling' after graduation - but when they have to implement theory into practice, it seems that they feel very uncertain. Participants' responses in this study could be summarised by one participant's quote:

"Volunteers have theory in their head, but no practical experience."

Twenty six participants in this study received positive support from the organisation during the implementation of the project and they identified the support mediums as follows:

❑ **Meetings for directions in programme implementation**

"Meetings help me to communicate on [sic] things I don't know."

"We discussed planning for the project and cases during the meetings." [sic]

"Tydens vergaderings was daar terugvoer gegee oor kliënte wat bereik is en watter tipe kliënte gehelp was."

❑ **Group supervision for training**

"We have group supervisions where we were able to discuss cases."

"The community members are sometimes afraid of the social worker – they talk to volunteers – we refer it to the social worker and receive help from the social worker and then go back to the clients." [sic]

❑ **Ongoing training for learning**

"The social worker go [sic] with us to do home visits to show an example – she was always there to help us."

"The social worker remind me how to do a Form 4 report – I just phone the social worker with difficult cases and work closely with social worker on standby." [sic]

❑ **Individual supervision for advice**

"If there was a problem, we were able to phone the social worker and ask for advice."

"I received feedback on previous cases and their progress."

Organisational support does not involve a time period, but should entail continuous action. As volunteers became more familiar with their tasks, they will develop confidence and wouldn't need the initial strong support from social workers anymore. They will be able to work independently and provide a support network for new volunteers entering the project.

Participants indicated that after a period of time, the organisational support decreased. Not all the volunteers were ready yet for this decrease in organisational support and experienced feelings of anxiety. Only seven active and three non-active participants indicated that they continued to experienced organisational support during the maintenance phase. All the other participants indicated that they experienced a lack of organisational support during the maintenance phase and identified the following issues:

□ **Unavailability of social workers**

"Social worker not always available when I want to discuss cases."

□ **Conflict of perceptions between volunteers and social workers**

"Social worker didn't understand the volunteers and thinks that the cases they discussed is not of such a big problem as they indicate."

□ **Unanswered promises regarding attendance of cases**

"We were able to talk with the social worker on difficult cases we experienced, but she never followed-up the cases as promised."

□ **Lack of guidance from social workers**

"During my first home visit I asked the social worker to accompany me, but she never."

□ **Lack of stability due to high turn-over of social workers**

"When I started to know a social worker, there is a new one coming – I didn't even remember how many social workers were there."

From the responses mentioned above, it is clear that the participants expressed a significant need for more organisational support from social workers. Volunteers were not ready for the huge responsibility placed on them after the training without the

social workers' intensive support. This led to conflict and confusion as discussed under 7.4.1, because volunteers expected more support from social workers than what they had received.

□ **Lack of financial reward**

Reitsma-Street *et al.* (2000:665) advise organisations that some form of support to volunteers could entail reimbursing their transportation costs and providing food during volunteer events. Another form of organisational support is provision of stipends for volunteers on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, 50% of the participants in this study experienced financial support negatively, as indicated by the following responses:

"The time we spend in the community with this project is not equal the money we received."

"Sometimes the volunteers didn't receive any stipends and depending on the money promised to us"

"I didn't expect money, but they introduce money to us when they started to talk about stipends and I started to request money when we didn't receive it and I started to get angry."

From the responses above, one can conclude that the volunteers received proper training and preparation, but during the implementation phase of the project they experienced problems putting their knowledge into action. Organisational support during this phase of a project plays an important role and according to the above responses, support was provided through meetings, ongoing training and supervision (corresponding to the recommendations in the literature). However, the participants' responses above also indicate that they feel that CWSA was unable to support volunteers throughout the project and problems of unavailability, conflict of perception, unanswered promises, lack of guidance, lack of stability and lack of financial rewards were experienced. These types of problems demotivated volunteers to continue their volunteering services and could be seen as among the major issues why volunteers exit the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.

7.5 EVALUATION AND MONITORING

According to Cnaan and Cascio (1999:12), volunteers who are managed through recruitment, orientation, training and supervision, will perform better and remain committed to continue their volunteering services for longer than those volunteers who are not managed. In-service training, ongoing individual and group supervision as well as meetings were also used as

monitoring tools in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Volunteers were trained to complete administration documents that were reviewed by the social worker to compile statistics for monthly and annual reports.

□ **Evaluation and monitoring through provision of feedback**

Participants in this study were asked whether they have received any feedback on the progress of the project or have access to statistical data on monthly or annual reports. All 30 participants indicated that they have never received any feedback on the projects' development in general, but seven active and seven non-active volunteers indicated that they did receive feedback from the social worker, but only on the progress of the clients they helped. Only two active and two non-active volunteers expressed a specific need to receive feedback from social workers on the children's they helped. One participant's response regarding her need to receive feedback was:

"Jy raak betrokke by 'n kind – meld dit aan en maatskaplike werker neem saak oor, maar jy kry nooit terugvoer hoe dit nou met die kind gaan nie."

□ **Personal support through the managerial style of the social worker**

The social workers' personal leadership and managerial style could enhance volunteers' performance (Cnaan & Cascio, 1999:30). The organisation's initial investment in the orientation and training of volunteers, and the social workers' continuous acknowledgement of volunteers' performance, could increase volunteers' feelings of confidence. It may then not be necessary for social workers to continue with intensive support to volunteers, so that they could gradually withdraw from volunteers and still be ensured of high performance from volunteers. Only 10 active and three non-active participants in this study expressed satisfaction regarding the initial personal support received from the organisation or social worker. One participant's reaction described it as:

"The training was enough to prepare me – I was scared the first time when I have to go to the community – I felt that I was going to disappoint CWSA, but the social worker gave direction for me on a personal level that helped me to grow during the year – I am still scared when I visit people, but I am more prepared."

All the other 17 participants indicated that they did not receive any personal support and some of their responses are as follows:

"The social worker just does her job and doesn't try to know me as a person – this changes my attitude towards the project very negatively."

"I have supervision with the social worker, but she only focuses on the client and not my personal feelings or ideas."

"We never receive any debriefing from the social worker after difficult cases."

From the above responses it is clear that some volunteers felt as if they were not respected as individuals and that their personal feelings or needs were not taken into consideration. This lack of personal support made it difficult for volunteers to measure their own personal growth. Through the volunteers' responses one can identify a need for more personal support.

□ **Role-players during evaluation and monitoring**

Although volunteers played an active role in the evaluation stage by providing administration documents of their activities in the community, they did not really experience being of any value at this stage, because they never received feedback on the projects' progress or personal feedback on their own development and growth. The assumption is therefore made that social workers had worked independently from volunteers in evaluating and monitoring the project's progress or volunteers' performances. Social workers were not able to contribute to volunteers' commitment and performance in the project due to their shortcomings regarding leadership skills or management styles, as indicated by Cnaan and Cascio (1999:30) above. This had a direct impact on volunteers' motivations to terminate their volunteering services.

8. CONCLUSION

Child abuse and neglect is a very difficult social problem to identify and reduce. CWSA (North-West Province) implemented the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project since 2003 with the hope of decreasing the occurrence of child abuse and neglect. A great deal of money and time was invested in this project to recruit, train and support volunteers. The main purpose of the volunteers was to function on a preventative level through 'watching' over

high-risk children in their communities, rendering a supportive service to these children and/or reporting child abuse and neglect cases to professional services. Although these volunteers play a very important role in the protection and safeguarding of children, there is a tendency among volunteers to exit the project after training or soon after they were deployed into the communities. Diminution of volunteers creates a significant problem for CWSA (North-West Province), because not all who are willing to volunteer could qualify for the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project due to the specialised service the organisation is rendering in the community.

In order to address the aim of this research, the nature and character of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was described. The project's procedures involved four stages that include a planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation stage; a structure that reflects thorough, detailed planning. CWSA organisations are mainly responsible to reach the first stage of the project and volunteers became intensively involved during the second and third stages. Although volunteers played an important role during the fourth stage, the evaluation stage, they didn't realise the importance of their input. The objectives of the project within each stage are reasonable and reachable, but without volunteers' involvement is it impossible to reach these objectives.

Volunteers' motivations to, and expectations of participating in a child protection project in the first place included: to receive further education, hoping for a career opportunity, honest concern about children and to protect themselves from negative temptations. These expectations were met through their involvement within the project. They experienced the recruitment, screening, training and testing as positive and reasonable - even enjoyable. Even during the deployment (implementation) stage they understood the project's procedures and their roles clearly. Volunteers identified their roles as entailing a personal sacrifice to render a free service out of free will to help a third party including children, the community and social workers, and also to benefit as a volunteer from rendering these services. The major negative experiences of volunteers pertain to organisational and personal support. Although volunteers received supervision, in groups and individually, and also ongoing training and meetings as forms of support, they experienced the organisation and social workers to be unavailable. Furthermore, they perceived the organisation to misunderstand their problems, and felt that it did not commit to its promises, and that there was a lack of guidance and stability. These

specific negative experiences demotivated volunteers, and led to their terminating their volunteering services.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above-mentioned findings, the following recommendations can be formulated:

- According to the volunteers of CWSA (North-West Province), the 'Isolabantwana/ Eye on the children' project does not need to change its processes, objectives, structure or activities and can therefore continue unchanged.
- During the preparation stage and recruitment of volunteers it is important that CWSA also plans beforehand what type of reward they are going to provide for volunteers to prevent empty promises.
- The screening process is an important aspect in the project and needs to be continued as it is. The possibility of accepting a volunteer who has a criminal history, but has proven that he/she has changed or has regrets, could be considered by a management committee.
- Volunteers could be asked what their expectations and motivations are to participate in a child protection project and CWSA must try to meet these needs if they are in the context of the project.
- The CWSA's preparation, specifically the training of volunteers, is excellent, but the focus must be more on the practical implementation of the project. This could be done through a practical period during the training, making use of role-play and systematic exposure to the community.
- Organisational support must be emphasised more and social workers must accompany each volunteer for at least three home-visits to the community to set an example.
- Social workers' support to volunteers must be more visible through open communication, transparency and availability for direction.
- Social workers must receive intensive training on the project before starting to work with volunteers.

10. LIST OF SOURCES

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Article 2

AN EVALUATION OF VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT IN THE 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to identify reasons why Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project volunteers have terminated their volunteering services at Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) in the North-West Province. A qualitative approach was followed to collect and analyse data. A triangulation process was used that includes one-on-one semi-structured interviews with 30 participants (15 active volunteers and 15 non-active volunteers), a literature study and a 'second observer' to verify raw data. Volunteers' motives to remain actively involved in the project include a commitment to bring about change in their communities, fulfilment of their passion for working with children and needy people, being able to see change and experiencing a sense of worth. Their motives to exit the project include aspects such as a lack of financial reward, exposure to threatening situations, lack of support in the welfare organisations, lack of support from the community, negative experience of teamwork and finding job opportunities at other organisations. Volunteers were able to see change in the community, receive acknowledgement, develop personal skills and knowledge and also found new meaning in life as benefits of their participation in a child protection project. Guidelines were identified for welfare organisations working with volunteers to ensure a more long-standing commitment of their volunteering services.

1. INTRODUCTION

Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) in the North-West Province implemented a child protection project known as 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project in 2003, and it is still running. The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was developed by Child Welfare Cape Town in 1999 (Cape Town Child Welfare, 2006:1). The purpose of this project was to recruit and train community members as volunteers, to be 'eyes' in the community to protect and safeguard vulnerable and abused children.

CWSA (North-West Province) trained approximately 165 volunteers from 2003 to 2006 in this specific child protection project. According to Mrs A van Rooyen (2007), former provincial manager of CWSA (North-West Province), only 44 volunteers are still active. Time and money were invested to implement the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, and

CWSA (North-West Province) cannot afford for this project to fail after only five years since its implementation. According to Hedley and Smith (1992:1), is it not strange for organisations to struggle to recruit and hold volunteers these days. It is uncertain why so many volunteers terminate their volunteering services within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project and the question is being asked whether CWSA (North-West Province) should continue with the project.

It became important for CWSA (North-West Province) to understand not only what keeps volunteers committed to the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, but also what volunteer's reasons are for discontinuing their volunteering services.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Welfare organisations are quite familiar with the White Paper for Social Welfare (South Africa Department of Welfare, 1997) and have therefore begun to make use of volunteers in communities as part of a community developmental approach to address social problems. At CWSA (North-West Province) volunteers from the community were recruited and trained free of charge in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. This project is a child protection project with the purpose of addressing the significant increase of child abuse and neglect through rendering a preventative service. A major problem that CWSA (North-West Province) is faced with is that trained volunteers terminate their volunteering services either just after the training or a few months after implementation. This has a very negative impact on the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project's outcome. Not any person who is willing to volunteer could qualify for this specialised task of volunteering in the community. Therefore, CWSA (North-West Province) should attempt to curb the loss of more volunteers in the project and has to identify reasons why some volunteers are terminating their services while others remain committed. According to Crook, Weir, Willms and Egdorf (2006:44), volunteers will remain active for longer only if their needs, goals and motivations are satisfied. With the outcome of this research, guidelines could be developed for welfare organisations to assist volunteers to stay committed and motivated.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question is: why do trained volunteers in the North-West Province exit the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project?

4. AIM OF THE STUDY

This article will provide a greater measure of clarity regarding the 'eye' volunteers' motivations to either continue or discontinue their volunteering services at CWSA (North-West Province). This article also forms a part of a larger research project and the focus will be specifically on the volunteers' experiences within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Active and non-active volunteers' opinions regarding their motivations will be identified. Through their indication of gaps and benefits that they experienced in the project, guidelines could be developed on how to manage volunteers. Welfare organisations that make use of volunteers in their projects could use these guidelines to support volunteers in general.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 DESIGN

An exploratory research design was used as described by Fouché (2002:109) to obtain insight and clarity as to why volunteers in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project of CWSA (North-West Province) terminate their services within the project, while other volunteers remain active in the project. A qualitative approach was followed to gather "... in-depth information for each participant to understand the participant's subjective experience of the phenomena under study" (Marlow & Boone, 2005:11). Direct quotes were used to represent the given responses and these were illustrated through using words and sentences instead of numbers or statistics (Neuman, 1997:327).

5.2 PARTICIPANTS

A purposive sampling method as described by Strydom (2005:202) was used to identify five CWSA organisations in the North-West Province. Afterwards, an accidental sampling method, as describe by Strydom (2005:202) was used to select 30 participants (15 active and 15 non-active volunteers) who could represent volunteers within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.

5.3 DATA COLLECTION

Literature study, semi-structured one-on-one interviews and an independent decoder were used as data collection methods. The process using more than one observer to collect and combine data with a purpose to gain a clearer picture is known as a triangulation process (Neuman, 2006:150).

According to the interview schedule, the same questions were asked to the participants during the one-on-one interviews. This contributed to participants' responding freely and reduced pressure or manipulation from other participants (Morse & Field, 1995:94). They were also able to discuss sensitive aspects, something that might not have been possible if a structured questionnaire was used (Taylor, 2005:41). This process was continued until a point of "... saturation of information" was reached Greeff (2005:294).

After the researcher has interpreted the data, an independent decoder was used as a second data collection method to verify the researcher's interpretations, themes and patterns (Neuman, 2006:149). The literature study was used as the third data collection method to explore data from a different viewpoint and to ensure accuracy of interpretation (Neuman, 2006:149).

5.4 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

A semi-structured one-on-one interview schedule was used as a measuring instrument during the face-to-face interviews. Glicken's (2003:88) directions to develop an interview schedule were used. The interview schedule focussed specifically on participants' motivations to either remain active or to discontinue volunteering services in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.

The data was recorded with direct quotes that emphasised the meaning of the participants' responses (Grinnell, 2001:293).

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Raw data received through a qualitative research approach was transformed into findings (De Vos, 2005b:333; Neuman, 2006:461). The approach of Huberman and Miles (in Poggenpoel, 1998:340) was used to analyse the data. The semi-structured interview schedule created

themes or categories, and therefore the data has been reduced and displayed before a conclusion has been drawn and verified. Raw data, interview notes and a summary of identified themes were also analysed by a 'second observer' to verify the researcher's interpretation of data, and thereafter the literature was used as a third analysis tool to meet the requirements of a triangulation process (De Vos 2005b:362; Neuman, 2006:150).

5.6 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Several authors such as Monette, Sullivan and Dejong (2002:55) and Morris (2006:245-247) emphasise the importance of ethical aspects in social science research. Ethical concerns can be summarised into five basic issues and need to be respected by all researchers. These are:

□ Informed consent

Participants come from different cultural, ethical and social groups and the researcher acted with the necessary sensitivity towards these differences. Participants had the right to know that they participated in a research project and were informed on the advantages and disadvantages of this research. This process allowed each participant to make an informed decision to participate in the study. All participants signed a letter of consent.

□ Deception, misconduct and fraud

The true purpose of this research was explained to participants: that it was aimed only at gathering information and that the research might not lead to immediate changes. No promises of change or remunerations were thus made. Through this ethical aspect of non-deception, participants developed a feeling of trust with the researcher and participated with more accurate and direct information.

□ Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

Participants' privacy was not violated and permission to enter a participant's home was requested before an interview was conducted. Anonymity and confidentiality were explained to all participants and information received from participants was handled according to this ethical code. Participants had the freedom to respond freely without being afraid that their identity would be made known or that they would be victimised after the research has been completed.

□ **Physical and mental protection**

Participants in this study were not exposed to any situation that could harm them physically or mentally. Participants had the security that the researcher would protect their rights throughout the research process and these rights were explained to each participant individually.

□ **Scientific advocacy**

The researcher followed the professional code of ethics and submitted a research proposal to the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences, North-West University, before conducting the research. Permission code 06K23 was allocated. Measures were taken to ensure that the findings of the research could be reported in a dissertation as accurately and objectively as possible.

5.7 DEFINITION OF A VOLUNTEER

Many authors define the concept volunteer in different settings. Therefore, in theory, a variety of definitions for volunteering exists. Dingle, Sokolowski, Saxon-Harrold, Smith and Leigh (2001:7) refer to two types of volunteers, that is, the un-manage volunteer and manage volunteer. According to Dingle *et al.* (2001:7) an un-manage volunteer is "... the spontaneous and sporadic helping that takes place between friend and neighbours or in response to natural or man-made disasters". He also defines manage volunteers as an action that "... takes place through organisations in the non-profit, public and private sectors, and tend to be more organised and regular" (Dingle *et al.*, 2001:7).

During 1982, Jenner (in Danoff & Kopel, 1994:15) has defined a volunteer as "... a person who out of free will and without wages works for a non-profit organisation which is formally organised and has as its purpose, service to someone or something other than its membership". This focuses specifically on the management of actions in a welfare organisation, as Dingle *et al.* (2001:7) also emphasise in their definition of a manage volunteer. Initially, volunteering was about rendering free services, but welfare organisations started to reward volunteers by giving a stipend. Tschirhart, Mesh, Perry, Miller and Lee (2001:422) define the concept 'stipend volunteers' as volunteers who "...receive some financial compensation below fair market value and work in formal service activities to help others with whom they have no personal connection". Crook *et al.* (2006:39) define a volunteer as "... a person who performs

or gives services of his/her own free will without receiving a salary in return” and focuses again on volunteering as a free service. From the above definitions for a volunteer it is therefore clear that there are different perspectives on exactly what it means. This could create some confusion and conflict if the concept of volunteer is not clearly understood.

For the purpose of this study, there will be a differentiation between two types of volunteers, that is ‘management volunteers’ and ‘community volunteers’. The concept of ‘management volunteer’ is closely linked to the definition of Jenner (in Danoff & Kopel, 1994:15) for volunteers, but the only difference is that these volunteers are in a membership relationship with a non-profit organisation with the key function of organisational management. ‘Community volunteer’ could be defined as a person who - out of free will - renders a support service to the community within the formal and managed context of a welfare organisation in return for some financial compensation as contracted with the welfare organisation.

The ‘community volunteers’ in this study are also known as ‘eye volunteers’ because they were specifically trained for the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project and render a specialised volunteering service in the community. As indicated in Article 1 of this research project, only some of the ‘eye volunteers’ were authorised to issue a Form 4 – a function that is normally associated with social workers or the police. Because of this position of authority it is not possible for any person who is willing to volunteer to participate in this project. Those selected have to complete the training and test before he/she could be allowed to render a service in the community.

6. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The results will be presented according to the questions asked in the interview. The questions already presuppose categories and the responses are therefore reduced and displayed as described below (Poggenpoel, 1998:340).

6.1 MOTIVATIONS TO VOLUNTEERING

Former studies have been conducted to find answers to the question “why do people want to volunteer?” and “why do people continue to volunteer?”. Clary, Snyder and Stukas (1996:486) provide the best explanation to this issue when they state that an individual’s motivation to participate as a volunteer entails a process or action that a person takes to satisfy certain

psychological or social needs, goals and plans. The initial motivations for individuals to volunteer may differ as they become more familiar with the work they do, and their needs also may change.

6.1.1 Initial motivation

It appears from the literature that the definition of the initial motivation changes over a period of time. Initial motivations of individuals to volunteer are closely linked to their specific needs. Each volunteer's needs are different and Danoff and Kopel (1994:14) refer to the relationship between the volunteer's needs and the satisfaction of their needs as motivation to volunteer. The authors identify seven needs criteria, including 1) a need for self-growth, 2) to gain work experience, 3) to build self esteem, 4) for enjoyment, 5) to build relationships, 6) to contribute to valued goals, and 7) to affiliate with an organisation. Reitsma-Street, Maczewski and Neysmith (2000:651) summarise initial motivations for volunteering into three specific needs, namely engaging in relationships, accomplishing tasks and experience of power in decision-making.

Two years later, Canfield, Hansen, Oberst, Boal, Lagana and Lagana (2002:363) published a popular book with the title, "Chicken soup for the volunteers' soul". Nine motivations of volunteers were discussed. These include issues such as an expectation to receive a reward, a need to give back to the community, an urge to make a difference, hope to receive appreciation, an expectation to experience love and kindness through giving and receiving, an expectancy to experience special moments, a purpose to gain perspective over issues, a wish to overcome personal obstacles and to gain wisdom. Crook *et al.* (2006:43) identified other important motivations for volunteering and summarise these into three categories, including 1) a need to identify with esteem and to protect the self from unpleasant feelings or thoughts, 2) a need for personal and professional growth, and 3) a social need.

It is therefore clear that volunteers' initial motivations to offer their volunteering services depend on their individual needs and that they will offer their volunteering services to an organisation where they would be able to meet those needs. Although the above-mentioned authors identify a variety of needs, it is not necessarily the case that all volunteers have the same needs, and therefore their motivations might differ.

The previous article in this research project, Article 1, reports that participants indicated four initial motivations for volunteering:

- ❑ A need for further education and development;
- ❑ Hope for career opportunity;
- ❑ Concern about children and the community; and
- ❑ Process of survival and self-protection.

This indicates that people will not volunteer if they do not believe that their needs, goals or motivations could be met through their volunteering actions.

6.1.2 Long-term motivation

Tschirhart *et al.* (2001:424) highlight 10 initial motivations why people volunteer, such as enhancing self-esteem, furthering one's career, making friends, learning new skills, relieving guilt, helping others, feeling needed, avoiding boredom, fulfilling religious duties and pursuing other ends. The authors also emphasise that people do not necessarily continue volunteering out of these 10 initial motivations, but rather out of "... habit, routine or an escalation of commitment".

Participants in this study were asked what motivated them to remain active in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Four main reasons were indicated that motivated them for long-term service as volunteers:

❑ **Commitment to the call to bring change in a community**

Marincowitz, Jackson and Fehrsen (2004:27) propound that people become involved as volunteers with the purpose of helping their own communities. Most of the time volunteers render a service to their own communities and have special insight into their communities' needs, something that is highly credible for any welfare organisation (Swart, Seedat & Sader, 2004:7). The majority of participants in this study witnessed and experienced social problems in their own community. Some participants also acknowledged that they saw welfare organisations struggle to approach the community in order to reach needy people. Eleven of the 15 active participants' responses were that they felt called to do something in the community because they couldn't accept that the need is so overwhelming. The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was a medium for the participants to

fulfil their needs to bring about change in their communities, and through their involvement they were able to answer to that 'call'. Participants continued their volunteering services because they felt committed to that call of bringing positive change to their communities. They also believed that the community needed them as a medium to bring information or help. If participants were unable to help specific community members, they could refer them to a formal welfare organisation or other resources in a process to offer help and support.

The above-mentioned is confirmed by the following responses of participants:

"I feel called to do this – to put aside my own personal problems and rather focus on other people's problems because I understand them."

"I enjoy helping the community and suffering children – I feel that I have to do it."

"I continue this project because the community needs more information."

□ **Fulfilment of a passion for working with children and needy people**

According to Swart *et al.* (2004:10), volunteers are more likely to remain active for longer because some of their expectations are being fulfilled. All the participants in this study indicated that they love children and have a passion to help them, but only 10 of the 15 active volunteers indicated that their passion to work with children motivate them to continue with their volunteering services. Three participants also stated that they wanted to become social workers, but because they did not have the finances, volunteering was the closest way to work with children and needy people. Through their participation as volunteers in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, they were able to express and experience their needs and fulfil their expectations to work with children and people with problems.

Some of the participants' responses were:

"I stay active in the project because I have a passion for children and don't want them to suffer. I'm able to help children through this project."

"I stay active in the project because I love the job – I love helping children."

"I stay active because I want to work with children and want to gain experience in working with people."

□ Experience change in community

Volunteers tend to continue with their volunteering services when they see change and progress in the clients that they have helped (Marincowitz *et al.*, 2004:26). All the participants in this study, active and non-active volunteers, indicated that they could see positive change in children and people's lives with which they intervened, but only the active participants indicated that experiencing change in the community motivated them to continue with the child protection project. Participants experienced that through their input, certain community problems were solved and people were able to gain power over problems. One participant's striking response indicating his motivation to continue his volunteering services was:

"...make a difference in people's lives and see that they gain power over the situation."

□ Sense of worthiness and self-esteem

According to Marincowitz *et al.* (2004:26), volunteers are more motivated to continue their volunteering services when clients appreciate their work and support them. Crook *et al.* (2006:42) also support this statement and emphasise that when volunteers are recognised in the community, this constitutes a great motivation for them to remain active as volunteers. Volunteers' relationships with an organisation may strengthen over time and they may begin to experience a sense of belonging (Crook *et al.*, 2006:42). Volunteers' sense of worth and growing self-esteem motivate them to commit to a long-term volunteering project. All the participants in this research felt that their involvement had a direct impact on bringing about change in the community. Eight participants indicated specifically that it made them feel proud, worthy and that they have found a new purpose in life. They also indicated that they have developed more confidence when working with people and that their self-esteem has grown.

Two outstanding responses of the participants were:

"The project give me purpose in life – to wake up everyday."

"I stay active because I realize I really helped people."

From the above-mentioned responses it is clear that volunteers' commitment to the call of bringing about change in the community, the opportunity to fulfil their passion for working with children and needy people, their witness and experience of change in the community and a sense of worth and self-esteem are their major reasons to remain active in a child protection project, and they do not remain active out of habit, routine or commitment as Tschirhart *et al.* (2001:424) have indicated.

6.2 TERMINATION OF VOLUNTEERING

In an article of Hugo and Slabbert (1990:257) regarding volunteers' experiences at NIMRO the authors came to the conclusion that organisations are not creative enough to keep volunteers. There are a variety of reasons why volunteers terminate their services. The most understandable reason that Hiatt, Michaled, Younge, Miyoshi and Fryer. (1998:90) mention is that volunteers' own families grow and their availability or time to continue volunteering also change. It is not a guarantee that recruited and trained volunteers will remain active in a project for years, because their personal circumstances can change (Hedley & Smith, 1992:98). Guinan *et al.* (in Marincowitz *et al.*, 2004:25) mention reasons why volunteers tend to exit volunteering projects, and specifically ascribe this to four major stressors: 1) inability to cope with emotional overload, 2) inability to solve clients' personal problems, 3) an experience of a lack of support, and 4) lack of training. The findings of Ross, Greenfield and Bennett (1999:730) confirm that volunteers terminate their services due to stressors such as client problems, role ambiguity, emotional overload and organisational factors.

When participants in this study were asked why they terminated their volunteering services at CWSA (North-West Province), they responded as discussed below. The reasons will simultaneously be explained.

□ Received a permanent job offer at other organisations

Dingle *et al.* (2001:7) indicate that "... unemployed people tend to volunteer to acquire skills that will help them find a paid work". When volunteers received a permanent job offer, their motivations for becoming a volunteer are satisfied. Three non-active participants in this study indicated that they terminated their volunteering services due to the fact that they received a permanent job offer at another organisation. These

three participants also stated that they would have continued their services if they didn't have a permanent job offer.

□ **Lack of financial reward**

All the participants, active and non-active volunteers, were unemployed and depended eventually on financial rewards for their services. Twenty-six participants were living in low-income group communities and most of them had families or children to take care of. When volunteers, and specifically unemployed volunteers, have to invest their own personal money in a project, they tend to terminate their volunteering services more readily than volunteers who receive some form of benefits, for example stipends and remuneration for their transport expenditures (Tschirhart *et al.*, 2001:435). Nine of the 15 non-active participants indicated directly that one of the major reasons why they terminated their volunteering services were due to a lack of financial reward. They were not able to take care of their own families and the small stipend they received could not compensate for the hours they spent away from home.

The following responses are an indication of their feelings:

"The stipends were not enough – I couldn't take care of my baby."

"I never received the promised stipends in the beginning and the money I used to visit clients – I never received the claims back. It put a lot of financial stress on me – I don't have a job and money. I took my own money for this job (volunteering). I gained a lot of skills in this project, but not on financial level."

"The time spent in the community was not equal to the money we received."

□ **Threatening situations**

As early as in 1943, Maslow (in Danoff & Kopel, 1994:14) identified survival, safety and security as the two most pressing needs that drive humans to act in a specific way. The assumption is made that when people feel threatened, their reactions will be motivated to protect themselves. Swart *et al.* (2004:10) also reiterate the issue of unrealistic expectations of volunteers when they move into the community and expose themselves to high-risk situations that can lead to trauma, specifically when there are threats of violence. Almost all of the participants in this study indicated that they were exposed to difficult situations in the community, of which two non-active and seven

active participants referred to specific life-threatening experiences. Participants are volunteers in their own community and fear that clients could react aggressively towards them if they removed children or interfered with the personal lives of others. Although only a small percentage of participants indicated life-threatening experiences as motivation to terminate their volunteering services, this must not be seen as irrelevant. Some participants who are presently still active in the project will yet be exposed to these types of threatening situations. They do not receive sufficient reward for risking their lives and it might only be a matter of time before active volunteers refuse to expose themselves further to dangerous situations.

One participant's touching respond was:

"I was confronted with life dangerous situations. I was scared of the people's reaction toward me – I'm afraid they beat me. My life is more worth than R150 per month."

□ **Lack of support from welfare organisation**

Cnaan and Cascio (1999:24) emphasise the importance of organisational support for volunteers to keep them satisfied and committed to a specific volunteering project. When organisations do not provide the necessary support, volunteers' loyalty tends to decrease and they also tend to terminate their volunteering services more readily. A number of 12 participants from the 15 non-active participants indicated that they experienced a lack of organisational support and also highlighted this as one of the major reasons why they exited the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Participants identified specific organisational support issues and these can be divided into four major categories:

• **Unanswered promises:**

The first unanswered promise is that welfare organisations recruit volunteers and could fall easily into a trap of making promises to people simply to convince them to join, in order to meet the organisation's needs. The most common promises involve financial rewards and education. According to Swart *et al.* (2004:9), this financial concern of unemployed people is one of the motivations to participate as a volunteer in the hope of receiving wages and remuneration in the hope that this could enable them to provide in their own family's needs. It has already been identified that a lack of financial support was one of the reasons why volunteers

terminated their volunteering services, as also indicated by Swart *et al.* (2004:9). Participants in this study indicated three types of promises that the organisation made to them, but failed to fulfil. These unanswered promises involved 1) financial rewards, 2) availability of the social worker for advice, and 3) follow-up services from the social worker to clients.

Although participants were prepared to receive no financial reward, the welfare organisations made promises to them to reward them in the form of stipends and remuneration for their travelling costs. Due to this expectation created by the organisation, they experienced disappointment and aggression when they realised that these promises were not kept. According to the participants, promises of even higher stipends were made, but participants initially did not receive any stipends. When they at last received it, it was far less than what was promised. Participants also indicated that the claims they submitted for their personal expenses and travelling costs were not paid as promised. Because the organisation did not honour their word, volunteers became negative and unmotivated.

Three outstanding responses were:

“Sometimes the volunteers didn’t receive any stipends and depending on the money promised to us”

“I didn’t expect money, but they introduced money to us when they started to talk about stipends and I started to request money when we didn’t receive it and I started to get angry.”

“Children were placed into my care as place of safety, but I didn’t receive any financial support – it was difficult to continue supporting children, because they also want nice things I bought for my own children.”

The second unanswered promise entails the disappointment in the social workers regarding their availability when problems needed to be discussed. Volunteers were promised that there would be a 24-hour support service from the social workers and that they could phone the social worker if they needed any advice or direction. Twelve non-active as well as eight active participants requested that support, but the social workers were not available. It is significant that more than 50% of active participants also experienced a negative supporting attitude from social workers that could also influence them in future to terminate their volunteering services.

One response summarises participants' general feelings regarding the unavailability of social workers:

"She (social worker) was never there (at office) and when you phone her she didn't answer the phone – I was getting discouraged and exited the project, but I am still interested in the project and want to continue again."

The third unanswered promise of welfare organisations concerns the social workers' unwillingness to follow up cases that have been reported by the participants. Participants, for example, identified a problem in the community or received requests for help from community members. When they realised that their skills were too limited and that the clients needed more professional help, they discussed these cases with the social worker who promised to follow these up with the clients. When participants revisited the clients, they learnt that no help was offered from the welfare organisation. These actions contributed to them becoming disappointed and negative towards the social workers. They experienced feelings of pity, pain and guilt towards the clients and could not accept that no professional assistance was provided to clients who desperately needed help. They became unwilling to be identified with an organisation that did not deliver services as promised, and decided to terminate their volunteering services.

They described their disappointment as follows:

"I feel angry towards the social worker and ashamed for not helping clients. I see that their situations are still the same – the social worker could have give help or even advice...I am disappointed in the social worker."

"I referred serious cases to the social worker but realized she was doing nothing about it. There was no help or services to the clients as promised from the social worker...I see nothing happen. The clients ask us (volunteers) what is happening but we couldn't give feedback. We became angry and disappointed in the social worker."

"I am a person who wants to help people and see that they get helped. It is not nice to see that they didn't receive help and still suffer."

- **Lack of acknowledgement and respect**

A lack of acknowledgement and appreciation is also one of the major reasons why volunteers discontinue their services at welfare organisations (Swart *et al.*, 2004:4).

Hedley and Smith (1992:99) also highlight the importance of acknowledgement, appreciation and respect and state that “the job in itself” is not enough and that an organisation has to express its appreciation “more formally in terms of a certificate”. Almost all the participants in this study - those who are active as well as not active in the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ project - indicated that they sometimes felt that the organisation did not show the necessary respect to them as individuals or that the organisation does not value their services. Participants sometimes experienced that the social worker did not take them seriously as volunteers regarding specific cases, while with some of the cases social workers pressured them to perform above their ability. Too high expectations are one of the reasons why volunteers tend to discontinue their services (Marincowitz *et al.*, 2004:26). Social workers must understand volunteers’ limitations and should expect more of them than what they are able to offer. When volunteers are unable to meet high expectations, feelings of incompetence develop that lead to termination of their volunteering services (Grube & Piliavin, 2000:1114).

It is significant that eight non-active participants at a specific area experienced a lack of acknowledgement and disrespect from the social workers and the organisation, but only three of them referred to this as motivation for finally deciding to terminate their volunteering services.

Specific responses of some of the participants were:

“When we as volunteers have a problem we want to discuss it with the managers....they didn’t treat us with respect ...I feel very angry for the way we’ve been treated.....they were looking down on us...I wouldn’t have left the project if they treat me with respect. They didn’t show appreciation for the job volunteers did.”

“The managers didn’t want to solve the problem we as volunteers have regarding our stipends – I was getting fed-up and decided to leave.”

- **Lack of stability**

Welfare organisations, and in particular non-government organisations (NGO’s), struggle to maintain a stable working environment because many social workers have left NGO’s to be employed in government positions that provide better financial benefits. NGO’s are unable to compete with government, which leads to

a high turnover of social workers. This has a significant influence on organisations, clients and also on the volunteers of specific projects. Four of the five CWSA organisations in this study experienced a high turnover of social workers during the implementation of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. Eight non-active participants in two specific CWSA organisations expressed feelings of frustration about not knowing who their new social worker or supervisor was, or that the new social worker was not fully orientated to support them as volunteers. They felt neglected and even thought that their services were not needed anymore. The lack of stability at welfare organisations leads to a lack of support for volunteers and that motivated participants in this study to discontinue their services.

The following responses summarise the participants' reactions:

"When I start to know a social worker, there is a new one coming – I didn't even remember how many social workers were there."

"They gave us a new social worker – when I go to the office to discuss cases with the social worker she was never there – when I phone her she never answer the phone – it discourages me, but I am still interest in the project and want to continue."

"I was not asked by the social worker to do home visits for more than 2 months – for a long period was there no job for me – I felt that my services were not needed anymore."

"When I came to the office nothing happened – that discouraged me because I want to work, but I waste my time."

□ Lack of support in the community

Volunteers are community members who want to make a difference in their own communities through their volunteering services. Swart *et al.* (2004:10) state that welfare organisations struggle to engage in a community because its members mistrust unfamiliar people's motives. Volunteers know their own communities' strengths and disabilities and are the best people to use when an organisation wants to break into a community. Almost all the participants - active and non-active volunteers in this study - were surprised with the community's negative attitude towards the concept of volunteering. The community's image of volunteering is one of an abusive relationship between them and the welfare organisations. Participants were teased by community

members for offering their services for free, but only one non-active volunteer acknowledged that this influenced her to terminate her volunteering services. The reason for her termination is closely linked to experiences of racism. Her response was:

“It was difficult for me as a black volunteer to work in the white community – they didn’t respect me and I experienced a feeling of racism.”

Participants in this study had to cope with the community’s negative image of volunteering services through receiving other forms of satisfaction. One participant’s specific response summarises active participants’ general feelings regarding the community’s negative attitudes:

“There is a negative attitude in the community towards volunteers – they say volunteers are employed but not getting paid. It let me feel bad, but to help other people is of more value for me than what people say about volunteers.”

□ Lack of teamwork

Poggenpoel (2004:194) highlights the important need of volunteers to be part of a group where they can experience “... acceptance, trust and build healthy interpersonal relationships”. Swart *et al.* (2004:10) also mention that team members would leave a group if there were a “... lack of team spirit, or sufficient cooperation that can manifest in conflict and persistence arguments”. Four non-active participants in a specific organisation indicated that they experienced serious team conflict and that the organisation’s inability to solve conflicts between volunteers motivated them to discontinue their volunteering services. It is significant that two active participants in this same organisation also experienced the team conflict as negative and expressed an unwillingness to re-accept the non-active volunteers in the project.

The non-active participants’ responses were as follows:

“One volunteer member took the show and created conflict in the team. The social worker took her side that influenced the other members negatively.”

“The social worker gave no support to the volunteers – she only valued one specific volunteer’s opinion – this created team conflict.”

“I didn’t feel comfortable with the team members – I was wondering what they were thinking of me and that made me nervous.”

From the above-mentioned responses of participants it is clear that their reasons for terminating their volunteering services in the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children project include aspects of: (1) receiving another job opportunity, (2) lack of financial reward and an expectation of more stipends, (3) exposure to threatening situations, (4) lack of organisational support in the form of professional services plus the unanswered promises, lack of acknowledgement and respect and a lack of stability in the organisations, (5) lack of community support and (6) lack of teamwork between volunteers. These identified reasons why volunteers discontinued their volunteering services are also supported by literature.

6.3 BENEFITS VOLUNTEERS EXPERIENCE

Volunteers experience a variety of benefits through their volunteering work. Each individual has specific motives and needs and tries to meet those needs through volunteering work. An organisation that makes use of volunteers must remember the importance of establishing volunteers’ needs when they want to satisfy these needs (Crook *et al.*, 2006:44). In most cases, volunteers reached their personal goals and benefits from volunteering to a higher degree than what they had expected. In literature, authors such as Crook *et al.* (2006:44), Dingle *et al.* (2001:8) and Swart *et al.* (2004:9) explain a variety of benefits that volunteers experience through volunteering, such as:

- ❑ social support, meeting new friends or establishing new relationships;
- ❑ personal effectiveness, developing new skills and increasing knowledge;
- ❑ emotional support, contribution to humanity’s psychological health;
- ❑ self-knowledge, broader perspective on life, experiencing feelings of achievement and personal growth; and
- ❑ improving job opportunities.

Active and non-active participants in this study indicated four types of rewards and benefits for being a volunteer: It is significant that almost all 15 active participants experienced all five types of benefits, while a small percentage of non-active participants mentioned only some of the benefits. It might be that non-active participants focused more on their negative

experiences within the project and could not find rewards through other mediums such as those identified by the active participants.

□ **Positive feelings**

All 15 active and only three non-active participants in the research group indicated that the biggest reward they have received was to witness change in children's and people's lives and to realise that they were the instrument that brought about this change. They experienced feelings of happiness, pride and inspiration as a form of reward through witnessing these changes. One participant's response summarises volunteers' general experiences as follows:

"To see change in people's lives makes me feel inspired – proud of myself – I know it's me that done that."

□ **Able to receive acknowledgement**

Crook *et al.* (2006:44) mention that volunteers will "... develop a sense of pride" when they "...experience recognition, acknowledgement and positive feedback from the community". Fourteen active and 10 non-active participants in this study indicated that, although the community had a negative image of volunteering services, they still requested volunteers for help and support. They experienced acknowledgement and recognition from the community members and felt that they have a purpose in life.

Some of the participants' responses were:

"Being in the community the people getting to know you as a volunteer and ask you for help – this is of great value for me."

"The community starts to report problems to you and shows respect toward you as a volunteer."

"The community looks up to you and values your input."

□ **Able to develop skills and knowledge**

According to Narushima (2005:577), continued learning and training is a form of reward for volunteers. All the participants in this study, active and non-active volunteers, valued the training they have received and indicated that their knowledge and skills had been broadened. Nine active and four non-active participants indicated specific new skills that they have developed, for example interpersonal skills, working with people, problem-solving, conflict management and communication skills. All of

the participants had an expectation to work with vulnerable children. Through their participation in this project, they were also able to practice new supportive skills. Two participants' responses were:

"I am learning new things every day....I learned how to communicate with people."

"If it was not for this project I wouldn't be able to grow personally - I learned communication and problem-solving skills."

□ **Able to find new meaning in life**

A volunteer could develop "... uniqueness, passion and skills" through the development of self-knowledge (Poggenpoel, 2004:193). Three participants in this study indicated that their motivations to participate as volunteers were driven by their fear of negative thoughts such as suicide or rebellious behaviour. These participants stated that through the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project they were able to develop self-knowledge and found new meaning in life. All the other participants also indicated that they experienced personal growth, and that this child protection project was of great value for them personally. Some of their responses were:

"...keep me busy and help me to focus on other things and not in the street doing bad or wrong things."

"This project gives me purpose in life – something to wake up everyday."

From the above-mentioned benefits it is clear that the participants' responses are supported by literature and that volunteers experienced the ability to see change, that they received acknowledgement, developed skills and knowledge and found new meaning in life as a major benefit to participate as volunteers in the child protection project. Despite these benefits that volunteers experienced within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, a large number of volunteers still terminated their volunteering services. Some volunteers terminated their services due to another job offering, but the majority of volunteers' negative experiences regarding financial, organisational, personal, community and team support motivated them to discontinue their volunteering services. Major issues that volunteers experienced in the project were the lack of organisational support through unanswered promises and no financial rewards, as initially indicated.

After participants have identified their reasons for exiting the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, they were asked for suggestions to improve the project with the purpose of keeping volunteers actively involved for a longer period.

6.4 VOLUNTEERS' OWN SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDELINES

All the participants had an opportunity to voice their suggestions and guidelines to improve the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project as well as suggestions as to how volunteers should be treated. Their responses could be summarised into the following categories:

- ❑ daily meetings with volunteers to speed up services and monthly meetings with management to give feedback of progress;
- ❑ more constructive monitoring of volunteers' services – some volunteers pretend to be working;
- ❑ more visibility in the community through identification uniforms;
- ❑ proper equipment for volunteers (stationery);
- ❑ better financial support through stipends and remunerations;
- ❑ own transport for volunteers for better service rendering;
- ❑ involvement in other wards/communities and service areas closer to volunteers' homes;
- ❑ team-building to build relationships between volunteers and organisations;
- ❑ fulfil promises that have been made;
- ❑ better support from social workers or the welfare organisations; and
- ❑ show appreciation towards volunteers.

7. ORGANISATIONAL GUIDELINES TO MANAGE VOLUNTEERS

Crook *et al.* (2006:44) highlight that the responsibility of improving volunteers' input in welfare projects doesn't always entail that volunteers change their actions, but rather that an organisation challenges specific issues such as:

- ❑ clear goals must be set;
- ❑ continuous feedback to reduce frustration;
- ❑ eliminate role ambiguity;

- provide an opportunity for volunteers to participate in decision-making regarding issues that have a direct impact on them; and
- increase organisational communication to reduce role ambiguity or role conflict.

From the participants' responses and requests above, the following guidelines can be formulated for all welfare organisations that work with volunteers and want to keep them motivated in projects:

- **Clear definition of volunteers and their roles:**

Organisations must be able to separate community volunteers from management volunteers and understand the role difference between these two types of volunteers. It might be necessary to redefine the concept of volunteering to reduce misunderstandings in the organisation. Hedley and Smith (1992:115) also highlight the importance of clear role definitions for volunteers and add that a proper job description should be given to volunteers. Volunteers also need to understand the difference between paid workers in an organisation and volunteers, and should further comprehend that volunteers are not employees who can demand certain benefits that only paid workers receive.

- **Treat volunteers with respect**

Volunteers are human beings who need to be treated with respect. Organisations have to prevent situations where volunteers could feel unworthy (Hugo & Slabbert, 1990:258) and disrespected. Each volunteer is an individual with his/her own dreams, feelings and goals in life, and organisations have to reflect the necessary respect in an attempt to keep volunteers satisfied (Crook *et al.*, 2006:44).

- **Supporting role of an organisation**

An organisation that makes use of volunteers has to remember the importance of its supporting role towards volunteers. Volunteers are not professionally trained social workers and cannot deliver the same results as expected from social workers. Organisations have to understand volunteers' limitations and have a proper support plan ready before recruiting volunteers. Hugo and Slabbert (1990:258) provide the following advice regarding the support of volunteers:

- basic and continuous training on subjects relevant to volunteers to perform their work with more confidence;
- ask volunteers for their specific individual support needs and develop a support plan for each volunteer;
- develop an evaluation plan with volunteers and give feedback to volunteers on their progress or growth; and
- continue to motivate volunteers through provision of rewards.

Other means of support that organisations could provide to volunteers are:

- availability when help, advice, guidelines, support and debriefing are requested;
- avoid making promises to volunteers and, if promises are made, keep them; and
- maintain an image of transparency and open communication.

□ Reduce volunteers' stressors

Volunteers have to be gradually introduced to their working area and "... must not do too much too soon" (Hedley & Smith, 1992:99). Volunteers could also experience symptoms of burnout and an organisation is responsible for protecting volunteers from expectations that are too high (Marincowitz *et al.*, 2004:27). Steps that organisations could follow to reduce volunteers' stressors are:

- Volunteers are often people from a low income status and their financial stressors could be reduced through provision of food during volunteer events (Reitsma-Street *et al.*, 2000:665).
- Reduce financial stressors through reimbursing transport costs and other expenses incurred to render services to community (Reitsma-Street *et al.*, 2000:665).
- Reduce emotional stressors through provision of weekly individual supervisions "...over the phone or face-to-face" with volunteers to give them the opportunity to discuss difficult situations and to receive guidelines from a social worker (Waller, Brown & Whittle, 1999:477).
- Reduce emotional stressors through monthly group supervisions with volunteers to discuss difficult situations, receive support and to gain perspective over problems (Waller *et al.*, 1999:477).

- Reduce conflict situations through regular meetings to give clear instructions and provide opportunities to discuss problems that volunteers may experience (Marincowitz *et al.*, 2004:27).
- Reduce client pressure through recruiting more volunteers and make them responsible for smaller sub-projects in the large project (Hugo & Slabbert, 1990:258).
- Reduce team conflict through regular team-building exercises to strengthen relationships between volunteers (Swart *et al.*, 2004:10).
- Reduce volunteers' stressors through the provision of necessary equipment such as stationery, uniforms and personal transport, to enable volunteers to do their job.

□ **Provision of rewards**

Organisations' appreciation of volunteers must be expressed through different forms such as through verbal rewards on something good volunteers did, provision of stipends or financial rewards, provision of annual certificates or individual progress reports to volunteers, giving a motivational function to volunteers, opportunity for volunteers to give annual feedback of projects' progress at the annual general meeting and a variety of other creative methods.

8. CONCLUSION

CWSA (North-West Province) struggled to keep the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' volunteers active in the project. A significant number of volunteers have already terminated their volunteering services; a situation that could lead to the failure of a great child protection project in the North-West Province. A number of 30 participants' (15 active and 15 non-active volunteers) motivations to continue or discontinue their volunteering services were investigated. Their initial motivations to enter the child protection project encapsulate the following: they felt the need for further education and development, they hoped to receive a permanent job offer, they were concerned about the children in their communities and reacted on their need for survival and self-protection.

Motivations of participants who continued their volunteering services include that they felt called to bring about change in their communities, their passion for working with needy people and children was fulfilled, they could see and experience the positive change in their

communities and enjoyed the feeling of worth. Participants exited the project when they received a permanent job offer, experienced a lack of financial reward, because of a fear of life-threatening situations, and a lack of support at organisations, the community and the team. Lack of support from organisations was highlighted by participants as the major reason for termination and referred specifically to unanswered promises, lack of acknowledgement or respect as volunteers and a lack of stability at organisations.

The benefits that participants have experienced, whether they continued or discontinued their services, were the opportunity they had to witness change in their communities, to be acknowledged as a volunteer, to develop skills and knowledge and to be able to find new meaning in life.

Participants expressed their needs and ideas on how they wished to be treated as volunteers. These recommendations were summarised into guidelines for organisations on how to manage volunteers; and included providing clear definitions of volunteers and their roles, treating volunteers with respect, stressing the importance of organisational support for volunteers, the organisations' responsibility to reduce stressors for volunteers and the provision of rewards for volunteers.

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**SECTION C:
CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

SECTION C: CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

This section includes a summary of the research findings regarding volunteers' experiences within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project with specific focus on the four research objectives. Findings from literature and the empirical study will be used to make final recommendations. Shortcomings identified in this study will also be highlighted as well as further research opportunities, which will be discussed at the closing.

2. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The explanatory and exploratory research design, in the context of a qualitative research approach, supported the nature of this study in order to gain more in-depth information from volunteers within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children's' project. The purposive sampling method that was used to select five CWSA organisations in the North-West Province was applicable. Due to difficulty experienced in making contact with non-active volunteers, the accidental sampling method was of great value to select 30 participants (15 active and 15 non-active volunteers).

The following two data collection methods, namely a literature study and one-on-one interviews with the volunteers, provided sufficient data to the researcher for analyses and interpretation regarding the purpose of this study. The independent decoder added another valuable dimension to the triangulation process to verify the validity and trustworthiness of the findings. No negative ethical issues were experienced during the research.

3. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research findings can be reported in the following four categories to support the four objectives of the study.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS: NATURE AND PROCESS OF 'ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE CHILDREN' PROJECT

In Article 1 of this dissertation, the nature of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was described. It is a community-based child protection programme that focuses on the safeguarding and protection of vulnerable children by means of trained volunteers. The process of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project was divided into four major stages that included a planning, preparation, implementation, and an evaluation stage. The implementation of programme activities was facilitated by screened and trained volunteers. These volunteers specialised in child protection activities through interaction with the community. The activities entailed support to children and families, a low level of intervention by issuing a Form 4 according to the Child Care Act, Act 74/84 as well as awareness campaigns regarding child protection. Only some of the volunteers received authorisation to issue a Form 4 in emergency cases. Volunteers only had permission to act under the supervision of a registered social worker within a formal welfare organisation such as CWSA.

The process of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project entails the unrolling of the protection plan through the four phases as mentioned above. Information was obtained from the service plan and manuals for the social workers and volunteers. Activities in stage 1, **The Planning Stage**, involve the compilation of a community profile and needs assessment. Negotiation with the Commissioner of Child Welfare (North-West Province) is one of the major activities in this stage in order to receive authorisation for volunteers to issue a Form 4. Stage 2, **The Preparation Stage**, entails activities such as recruitment and screening of community members to be trained as volunteers in a 10 to 12-session course. CWSA organisations in the North-West Province only provided 10 training sessions according to the needs assessments. The successful completion of a test after the training course was one of the screening criteria and this stage ended with a graduation ceremony. **The Implementation Stage**, stage 3, involves the volunteers' activities in the community with the focus on protection of vulnerable children and to render a prevention service to abused and neglected children in that community. Stage 4, **The Evaluation and Monitoring Stage**, includes activities like ongoing supervision, in-service training and meetings to monitor volunteers' activities and the project's progress.

The mission and vision, as well as the objectives or goals of this project were, viewed as attainable and sustainable. It provided clear guidelines but also provided space to personalise goals according to the community profile.

From the data obtained it can be concluded that the nature and the process of the programme were thoroughly described and outlined. The first objective, namely to describe the nature and process of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, was reached.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS: VOLUNTEERS' EXPERIENCES OF PROJECT

In Article 1 of this dissertation, the volunteers' experiences within the second, third and fourth stages of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project were investigated through one-on-one interviews by means of a semi-structured interview schedule. Volunteers' experiences of the preparation, implementation and evaluation stages could be summarised as follows:

3.2.1 Preparation stage

The preparation stage includes activities to recruit, screen, train and test identified volunteers as well as a graduation ceremony. Volunteers were introduced to the three recruitment components that included a well-considered marketing plan, an explanation of volunteers' roles and tasks, as well as a planned reward system for volunteers. Volunteers' responses regarding the execution of the recruitment activities were positive. However, during this stage promises regarding rewards were made that seemed not to have been complied with in the end.

In general, the screening process as part of the selection process was experienced as non-threatening. There were a small percentage of volunteers who requested that although a person's criminal history should be taken into consideration, it should not serve as penalisation if a person regrets his/her past criminal behaviour.

Volunteers experienced the training course as very positive and enjoyable. According to the participants' responses, they were grateful for gaining knowledge and skills during the course. Although the volunteers were anxious about the test, almost all of them were surprised at having passed it. Only one volunteer did not pass the test, but was in the end allowed to act as a volunteer. This situation created double standards in the screening process, which led to conflict in the volunteer team. Volunteers were

also allocated to specific tasks according to their test results and only volunteers who passed the test with distinction could qualify for becoming an authorised eye. This boiled down to the selection of only a few volunteers who were allowed to issue a Form 4 after consulting with a registered social worker. The closing of this stage ended with a graduation function, which volunteers in general experienced as very glamorous.

In general, the entire preparation stage was experienced in a positive way that contributed to the volunteers' education and personal growth. This stage only focused on cognitive knowledge with no direct practical application to develop skills needed for the implementation stage.

3.2.2 Implementation stage

The implementation stage is the core of the project where volunteers are actively involved in the community to identify and help abused and neglected children. Although the volunteers indicated that they have a clear understanding of the projects' procedures and their roles during this stage, there were still problems experienced regarding volunteers' and social workers' different expectations towards each other. According to the participants' responses, they experienced problems implementing the theory in a practical manner. Initially, volunteers received support from CWSA organisations through meetings, group supervision, ongoing training and ongoing individual supervision, but these support mediums became fewer as the project continued.

According to the participants' responses it can be concluded that after the training, a huge responsibility was placed upon volunteers to perform in the community, but the necessary support decreased over time. Due to the lack of a strong support network system, volunteers were not able to develop confidence and were not ready to work independently. Specific problems they experienced at this stage were unavailability of social workers, conflict of perception between social workers and volunteers, unanswered promises regarding attendance of cases, lack of guidance from social workers, lack of stability at organisations due to high turnover of social workers and a lack of financial rewards. Therefore, volunteers' perceptions of a disappearing organisational and personal support base led to feelings of anxiety and a greater demand for support and guidance from social workers. During the research, this need

for continued organisational and personal support during the implementation stage emerged quite strongly.

3.2.3 Evaluation and monitoring stage

Individual supervision, group supervision, training and monthly meetings were not only a form of support during the implementation stage, but were also used as a monitoring tool to evaluate the progress of the project. Completion of administration forms was another monitoring tool. Through the completion of administration forms, the social worker could evaluate volunteers' understanding of a problem and determine whether they were able to apply their knowledge. Therefore volunteers' personal growth within the project could be monitored. The project's progress in general could also be evaluated by compiling statistical data derived from administration forms and monitored through monthly and annual reports from organisations.

As discussed in Article 1, volunteers played an active role in the evaluation stage by providing the necessary documents for statistical data, but did not receive any feedback on the projects' progress. Therefore they did not realise the importance of their input at this stage. Volunteers would also have appreciated feedback on their personal growth and development.

From the above-mentioned, the second objective - namely to explore the volunteers' experiences within each stage of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project - was reached.

3.3 CONCLUSIONS: REASONS WHY VOLUNTEERS EXIT THE PROJECT

Volunteers' initial motivations and expectations to participate in a child protection project like the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project were evaluated and could be summarised as:

- ❑ a need for further education and development,
- ❑ hope for a career opportunity,
- ❑ concern about children and the community, and
- ❑ a process of self-protection and survival.

Although there was a large number of volunteers who exited the project, the motivations of volunteers who remained active in the project linked closely with their initial motivations to participate as volunteers. These motivations are:

- an answer to the call of the community for help,
- the fulfilment of a passion for working with children and needy people,
- to witness change in the community, and
- experiencing a sense of worthiness and building self-esteem.

It is interesting to observe that the initial expectations of the non-active volunteers were also satisfied. They received the opportunity for further education and skills development, permanent job offers and the chance to work with vulnerable children and needy people. Volunteers' motivations to terminate their volunteering services therefore had nothing to do with their initial motivations and expectations, but rather with their disappointment in the supporting structure of the welfare organisation and the community they serve. Reasons for termination that volunteers identified were:

- they received permanent job opportunities and couldn't continue with volunteering activities;
- lack of financial reward for volunteering services and a lack of reimbursement of volunteers' expenses;
- exposure to life-threatening situations in the community and a choice to rather protect themselves and their families;
- negative attitude of the community towards volunteering services and therefore they received no support from the community, but the community still requested volunteers' help;
- lack of teamwork and consistent conflict between volunteers.
- lack of support from welfare organisations, including the following aspects:
 - welfare organisations did not provide financial rewards as promised;
 - welfare organisations (social workers) were not available for help as promised;
 - welfare organisations (social workers) did not follow up with cases reported to them as promised;
 - volunteers did not receive acknowledgement and respect from welfare organisations;and

- welfare organisations were unstable due to the high turnover of social workers and volunteers had no manager to give direction or support.

From the above-mentioned it is concluded that research object three, namely to identify reasons why volunteers exit the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project, was reached.

3.4 CONCLUSIONS: GUIDELINES TO IMPROVE THE PROJECT

The following guidelines that were derived from the participants' responses as well as the guidelines proposed in literature can be implemented to improve the project's implementation at CWSA organisations in the North-West Province:

- During the planning stage is it important to develop very clear goals and objectives to reach the goals. Volunteers need to have clarity on the reasons why it is important to have clear goals and they need a structured plan to give direction towards reaching these goals.
- Organisations that make use of volunteers could concentrate more on continuous feedback to volunteers regarding the project's progress and whether goals or objectives were reached. It is also important to give feedback to volunteers on their personal growth and skills development for them to develop confidence and independence.
- Organisations that train volunteers could focus more on practical exercises and observations during the training phase or could even develop an extra practical course as part of the training process. A practical period must be seriously considered as a form of preparation for volunteers to enable them to work more independently and with a view to address their continuous need for significant organisational and personal support. Although 'eye' volunteers received intensive and specialised training regarding child protection aspects, they are still volunteers and not social workers. Volunteers still need social workers' input, guidance and advice.
- Volunteers' role ambiguity could be reduced through clear definition of volunteers' roles, tasks and division of specialised tasks, for example 'authorised eyes', 'lay counsellors/supportive eyes', 'educator eyes' and the 'place of safety eyes'. To prevent potential conflict, volunteers should also be informed on the different role players in an organisation and that there is a distinction between 'management volunteers' and 'community volunteers'.

- 'Community volunteers' is a specialised group of volunteers who are trained for a specialised task. This separates them from other volunteers who offer their volunteering services free of charge. The rewarding of a 'community volunteer' therefore plays a very important role and must be provided as contracted with them. The organisations' trustworthiness will be questioned if they do not keep promises to volunteers.
- Volunteers must not only be seen as instruments to get the job done, but should be treated with respect. Positive feedback and acknowledgement should also be given as regular as possible.
- Organisational support plays a very important role toward volunteers and could be provided through:
 - training and continuous training on subjects relevant for volunteers to do their work with more confidence;
 - establishing volunteers' specific individual needs for support, and develop a support plan for each volunteer, as well as an evaluation plan to give feedback about their personal growth;
 - continued motivation of volunteers through providing rewards and keeping promises made to them;
 - availability when help, advice, guidance, support and debriefing are requested by volunteers; and
 - keeping an image of transparency and open communication.
- Volunteers' stressors can be reduced through:
 - provision of food during volunteering events because 'community volunteers' are typically from a lower economic group;
 - reimbursing transport costs and other expenses to render services to the community;
 - weekly individual supervisions and a monthly group supervision to give them the opportunity to discuss difficult situations and to provide emotional support;
 - regular meetings and team-building exercises to prevent team conflict situations;
 - recruiting more volunteers to prevent high case pressure and making them responsible for smaller sub-projects within the project; and

- provision of necessary equipment such as consumables, uniforms or other forms of identification, and personal transport, to enable volunteers to do their job.

The above-mentioned guidelines can be used by CWSA organisations to improve the implementation of the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project and to keep volunteers motivated to remain active in the project for longer. The fourth research objective was therefore reached.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE RESEARCH

The following recommendations for the improvement of volunteerism at welfare organisations regarding the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project are made:

- This was a limited study with the focus on provincial level only. A more detailed study on national level is necessary to obtain a bigger picture of volunteers' experiences within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project. However, this study can be used as foundation for future studies regarding the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project.
- The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project is a very detailed and well-planned project, and the continuation of the project will be a great benefit for communities that implement it. No changes regarding the objectives, structure or activities are recommended.
- Aspects within the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project that might improve the project are:
 - intensive training of new social workers in the 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project before introducing them to the volunteer team;
 - planning of the volunteers' reward systems before the recruitment of volunteers starts to prevent making promises that could not be kept;
 - disqualification of potential volunteers due to a criminal record could be reconsidered in the case of sincere regret expressed by the person, taking into consideration the type of offence, as well as a letter of recommendation by a community leader;

- identification of volunteers' expectations and motivations to participate in the project and the development of a personal plan for each volunteer to evaluate their personal development, growth and progress;
 - adaptation of the current training manual for social workers and volunteers by focusing more on the practical implementation of theory, or the development of a practical course before volunteers are deployed in the community;
 - The identified gap in the organisation's support can be supplemented by training of volunteers to become their own support system. In this way experienced volunteers could then be a valuable support network for inexperienced volunteers.
- Although not part of the objectives of this research, it became clear that the high turnover of social workers had a negative impact on the motivation of volunteers to continue with their volunteering services, and it is recommended that the reasons why such a high number of social workers resign from welfare organisations or the social work profession should be investigated.

5. CLOSING

The 'Isolabantwana/Eye on the children' project offers a child protection service to a variety of communities in order to develop a support network. Through volunteers' involvement in this project, it becomes easier to identify and protect abused and neglected children. CWSA organisations invest a great deal of money and time to train specialised volunteers for this project, but experience a problem of volunteers exiting the project just after the training or a few months after implementation. This study identified reasons why volunteers of the North-West Province terminated their volunteering services, and provides guidelines on how to manage volunteers in order to keep them committed. Upon implementation of these guidelines, the declining number of volunteers might be reversed and this could contribute to volunteers remaining motivated in this project and committed to their pursuit of protecting vulnerable children.

**SECTION D:
APPENDIXES**

APPENDIX 1:
SEMI-STRUCTURED ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW
SCHEDULE WITH ‘ISOLABANTWANA/EYE ON THE
CHILDREN’ VOLUNTEERS IN CWSA” NORTH-WEST
PROVINCE

RECRUITMENT/SCREENING:

1. How were you recruited/selected to participate in the ‘Isolabantwana/Eye on the children’ programme?
 - Requirements
 - Fair
 - Personal expectations

TRAINING/TESTING/GRADUATION:

2. When/what year did you received training? For what period were you active as a volunteer (years/months)?
3. How did you experience the training?
 - Language
 - Trainer
 - Presentations
 - Topics
 - Difficult concepts
 - Time/period
 - Venue/food
 - Clear/uncertainty (opportunity to ask questions)
 - Isolabantwana programme/procedures
4. What was your experience of the test after the training?
5. What was your perception/feelings/experience of your graduation ceremony?
 - Respect
 - Value

DEPLOYMENT:

6. How were you prepared to move into the community after the training?
- Through the training programme self
 - Meetings/in-service training after training
 - Support/guidelines from social worker/organisation
 - Previous experience

EVALUATION:

7. Did you feel that you have made a difference in people's/children's lives through your involvement in the 'Isolabantwana' programme and how do you know it?
- Visible change
 - Feedback on statistic/evaluation reports
 - Personal experience
 - Valuable purpose in programme/self
8. Active volunteers: Why do you want to stay in the 'Isolabantwana' programme?
Non-active volunteers: Why did you exit the 'Isolabantwana' programme?
9. If you could change anything on the 'Isolabantwana' programme, what would it be?
- Screening/recruitment/training/testing/graduation/deployment/evaluation
 - Treated with respect/support/recognition

VOLUNTEERING:

10. How do you see your role/tasks as a volunteer?
- In the community
 - In the organisation
 - With other community members
 - Recognition as a volunteer
 - Status in community
11. What was difficult for you as a volunteer to deal with?
- Treat with respect
 - Receive support from organisation/community/family
 - Children
 - Team
 - Conflict
 - Understanding of 'Isolabantwana' programme's purpose and structure

APPENDIX 2: MAATSKAPLIKEWERK NAVORSER-PRAKTISYN

The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher is an interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of research concerning the methods and practice of helping individuals, families, small groups, organizations and communities. The practice of professional helping is broadly interpreted to refer to the application of intentionally designed intervention programmes and processes to problems of societal and/or interpersonal importance, inclusive of the implementation and evaluation of social policies.

The journal serves as an outlet for the publication of original reports of quantitatively orientated evaluation studies: reports on the development of validation of new methods of assessment for use in practice; empirically based reviews of the practice literature that provide direct application to practice; theoretical or conceptual papers that have direct relevance to practice; qualitative inquiries that inform practice and new developments in the field of organized research. All empirical research articles must conform to accepted standards of scientific inquiry and meet relevant expectations related to validity or credibility, reliability or dependability and objectivity or conformability.

All reviews will be conducted using blind peer-review procedures. Authors can expect an editorial decision within three months of submission, manuscripts and an abstract should be submitted in triplicate to The Editor, **The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher**, PO Box 524, Auckland Park, 2006. Articles should be typewritten and double-spaced, with tables and figures on separate pages. Manuscripts should follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 4th edition. Abstracts are compulsory.

A copy of the final revised manuscript saved on an IBM-compatible disk and formatted in MS Word format should be included with the final revised hard copy, or e-mailed to wainalw.rau.ac.za. Authors submitting manuscripts to the journal should not simultaneously submit them to another journal, nor should manuscripts have been published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content. A publication fee is payable by authors before publication

Die Maatskaplikewerk-Navorsers-Praktisyn is 'n interdisiplinêre tydskrif wat handel oor die metodes en praktyk van hulpverlening aan individue, gesinne, klein groepe, organisasies en gemeenskappe. Die praktyk van professionele hulpverlening dui breedweg op die toepassing van doelgerig ontwerpte ingrypingsprogramme en prosesse op probleme van individuele en samelewingsbelang, insluitende die implementeringe en evaluering van maatskaplike beleid.

Die tydskrif dien as middel vir die publikasie van oorspronklike verslae oor kwantitatief georiënteerde evalueringstudies; verslae oor die ontwikkeling en geldigheid van nuwe takseemetodes vir die praktyk; empiries gebaseerde kritiek op literatuur van waarde vir die praktyk; teoretiese en konseptuele artikels met praktykimpak; kwalitatiewe ondersoek wat die praktyk inlig; en nuwe ontwikkelinge op die gebied van georganiseerde navorsing. Alle empiriese artikels moet voldoen aan aanvaarde standaarde van wetenskaplikheid en aan toepaslike vereistes van geldigheid of geloofwaardigheid, betroubaarheid of toerekenbaarheid en objektiwiteit of bevestigbaarheid voldoen.

Die keuring van artikels vind op 'n blinde-portuurgroepbasis plaas. Outeurs kan verwag om binne drie maande na ontvangs in kennis gestel te word van die besluit van die redaksie. Manuskripte en 'n opsomming moet in drievoud gestuur word aan **Die Redakteur, Maatskaplikewerk-Navorsers-Praktisyn**, Posbus 524, Aucklandpark, 2006. Artikels moet dubbelgespaseerd getik wees, met tabelle en figure op aparte bladsye. Die manuskrip behoort riglyne van die *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 4de uitgawe, te volg.

Die finale hersiene manuskrip moet op 'n IBM-versoenbare disket voorsien word in MSWord formaat, of per elektroniese pos gestuur word aan wam@wl.rau.ac.za. Outeurs moet manuskripte nie gelyktydig by ander tydskrifte inhandig nie en ook nie gepubliseerde manuskripte in dieselfde of soortgelyke formaat inhandig nie. Bladgelde is betaalbaar deur outeurs voor publikasie.

APPENDIX 3:
LETTER FROM INDEPENDENT OBSERVER:

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