



# Conflict Transformation through music and dance. A Participatory Action Research in Gweru, Zimbabwe

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Public Administration-Peace Studies

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## ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe has a history of violence stretching back to the pre-colonial period. The country gained political independence in 1980 after a protracted armed war with the illegal Smith regime. The liberation movement, under whose banner independence was gained, has carried over and almost normalised the cultures of obliterating difference, muting dissent, cronyism and systematic economic marginalisation of citizens. Incidences of ethnic, religious inter- and intra-political party violence, and individualism are rife. As a result, most of the local conflicts experienced in Zimbabwe are symptomatic ‘electoral conflicts’ fuelled by political competition and polarisation, leading to economic collapse and social fragmentation (Ncube 2014, Heal Zimbabwe Trust 2015: 5). The conflicts have arguably weakened Zimbabwe’s strongest attributes and institutions, which include the church, the family unit and good-neighbourliness.

This thesis aims to show how conflict transformation can be brought about in the Mkoba community, using Participatory Action Research. It engages a select group of musically gifted citizens into establishing a *cosmopolitan* music and dance ensemble with a view to strengthening the community’s social capital and improving the quality of life of the residents. The study therefore brings out how music and dance, and by extension participatory performing arts, can serve humanity as a platform to initiate dialogue and cooperation among conflicting residents. In addition, the study details how entertaining and interactive gatherings in broken communities have the power to heal residents psychologically, replacing pessimism and lassitude with optimism and a proactive approach. Unique to this multi-disciplinary study is its binding together of theories concerning music for social change, social entrepreneurship and asset-based community development, all of which are undergirded by conflict transformation. This ethnographic account suggests how to develop and sustain community-based organisations and/or activities using the holistic sustainability frame, which emphasizes the importance of artistic vibrancy, community relevance, capitalisation and good governance. This holistic and eclectic approach thus creates an organic platform through which the community can act for social change.

## **DEDICATION**

With love to my late brother, Frank, and to my loving parents, VaMurozvi naMurambwi.

## DECLARATION

### **Conflict Transformation through music and dance: The case of Mkoba, in Gweru, Zimbabwe**

I declare that this project has not been submitted for a degree to any other university or educational institution. I declare that where I have used the work of others, this has been correctly referenced in the thesis and in the reference list, and that any research of a similar nature that has been used in the development of my research project is also referenced.



.....  
Innocent Tinashe Mutero

I hereby approve the final submission of the following thesis.

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Doctor S. B. Kaye

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Professor G. T. Harris

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
ACCZ	Apostolic Christian Council of Zimbabwe
AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AIC	African Independent Churches
ANC	African National Congress
ATR	African Traditional Religions and Culture
CCJP	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
ECZ	Evangelical Church of Zimbabwe
ERA	Educative and Reflective Arts
FROLIZI	Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Program
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GNU	Government of National Unity in Zimbabwe
IRA	Inkabaywe Rukuvhute Arts
IYASA	Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-M	Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai
NACZ	National Arts Council of Zimbabwe
PF ZAPU	Patriotic Front Zimbabwe African People's Union
PISI	Police Internal Security and Intelligence
PPT	Popular Participatory Theatre
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SME	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
STERP	Short-Term Emergency Recovery Program
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Develop Program
UP	United Parties
USD	United States Dollars
YVT	Youth Voices Trust

ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU NDONGA	Zimbabwe African National Union NDOGA
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union Patriotic Front
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZUD	Zimbabwe Union for Democrats
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This thesis is concerned with how the social fabric of societies in conflict can be transformed from a state characterised by the challenges of intolerance, discrimination and insecurity, to one of civility, reciprocity and cohesion. Consequently, the thesis implements and questions the role of community arts enterprises in generating the inclusive bonding and bridging forms of social capital, the latter being understood as a collective term for social relations and the norms of trust, cooperation and reciprocity that are derived from them (Putnam 2000: 19). The study was set up in the Mkoba community of Gweru in Zimbabwe. The study is multi-disciplinary and uses ideas from social entrepreneurship, asset-based community development and popular participatory arts to engage the community in an endogenous peacebuilding process. For effective conflict transformation, the activities and processes followed in the research were informed by the prevailing political, social and economic conditions in Mkoba, in particular, and in Zimbabwe, in general.

## **1.2 An Overview of the Political Environment**

Violent conflict has become a part of Zimbabwe's national character. The country has witnessed several epochs of violence, with differing intensity, from 1893 to date (Hove, 2016:14). A recurring point about these conflicts is that on most occasions, war or violence has been between locals, with the exception of the fight with white settlers. Battles for political supremacy and ideological contestation have often turned violent, involving common citizens, who otherwise do not take part in making grand political resolutions. This is particularly the case in independent Zimbabwe, where the common people have been misled to fight political battles which often favour and stroke the egos of political leaders and do not necessarily favour Zimbabwe.

The political playing field in Zimbabwe is not level. The state has three arms, which are the judicial, the legislative and the executive. However, it seems the first two arms and many key institutions like the security services, which control and give checks and balances to the politics of the day, have been systematically captured by the executive arm of the government. They have also been conflated with the ruling party (Bratton and Masunungure, 2008, Chibwe, 2014). As a

result, democratic processes are stifled, and dissent is punished as subversion or treason. For example, the security section of the state has, on several occasions, provoked non-violent demonstrators and beat the protestors, with a view to silence all remonstrance. The President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, has also been accused of using a patronage system to hold on to power and to silence criticism within his party. Effectively, he has turned the country into a neo-patrimonial state (Bratton and Van De Walle 1994, Moyo 2012). According to Moyo (2012: 71):

In neo-patrimonial regimes, the chief executive maintains authority through personal patronage, rather than through ideology or law. The essence of neo-patrimonialism is the awarding of public officials and granting of personal favours by the patrons, that is senior ruling party members. In return for material rewards, clients mobilize political support and refer all decisions upward as a mark of deference to patrons. Mugabe has managed to use the system of patronage to reward persons' key to the survival of the regime by rewarding them with senior positions in the army, parastatals, in government and with farms.

The plague of building institutions through a patronage system has affected the ruling party and opposition political parties alike. Raising discussions on leadership renewal leads to violent expulsion from the respective party. In essence, what the political parties are exemplifying is that there is no room for change and sparring of ideas. This further increases the rift between the old and the young, or between those in power and those competing for power. The system has similarities with the gerontocratic culture followed by the patriarchal Zimbabwean societies.

The opposition political parties in Zimbabwe have worked tirelessly for justice, social cohesion and economic prosperity. However, some of the methods that they have used to register their dissent incorporates violence. These political parties have not always adhered to non-violent means of resistance when registering dissent (Mapara and Wasosa 2012). It has also been difficult for opposition political parties and the civil society to seek recourse, even after referring to provisions made in the constitution. In the end, due to limited options, the opposition parties at times engage in violent protests, which are usually met with heavy-handed police tactics. Ultimately, the use of physical violence as a means of gaining supporters and silencing opposition, is now common in

Zimbabwe. No matter the structure or level of power contestants are competing for, violence usually characterises elections of leaders, from the village level to the national elections.

While the above discussion sheds light on the most discussed challenges in Zimbabwe, below I will focus on the conflicts and challenges faced by the common people of Zimbabwe in their everyday lives.

### **1.3 Context of the Research and Problem**

Zimbabwe has experienced the politics of exclusion and marginalisation, which emerged from questionable governance, endemic corruption, bureaucratic harassment, political intolerance, and impunity (Machakanja 2010: 3). The deteriorating economy has played a part in both disenfranchising and dividing citizens. As the economic situation continues to tumble and opportunities become scarce, it has become increasingly difficult for Zimbabweans to share the little available resources. This competition for meagre resources leads to selfishness, individualism and polarity which are opposites of humanity. Zimbabwe has an artisan economy, where most Zimbabweans depend on informal business for their livelihood, most of them being vendors (Shonhe 2017). As a result, there is stiff competition for both wares and customers in the urban centres, where almost everyone is selling something. The rise in vendors has contributed to creating unhealthy competition, which grows into polarity at times. Due to these pressures, most of Gweru, and by extension Zimbabwe's citizens, now appear to be self-centred and hesitant to cooperate for the common good.

Since most of Zimbabwe's economically-active citizens are out of employment, it means many are idle for long hours. Young people now turn to harmful substances and drug abuse. Although there were very few incidences of physical political violence in Zimbabwe and none at all in Mkoba in the time this research was being conducted, youth who are under the influence of drugs are a menace to society (Makanga 2017). Often, they turn to crime, and they become disrespectful and disregard cultural norms and values (Ibid.).

While efforts at conflict resolution have been made by the Zimbabwean government through setting up the *Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration* following the violent



2008 elections, people doubt the sincerity of the government and feel the exercise is no more than a charade by political parties (Machakanja 2010, Munemo 2012). The government-led national healing takes an exogenous approach and is divorced from the realities of communities. The Mkoba community in Gweru, Zimbabwe, faces cultural and ethnic conflicts as well as intra- and inter-party-political conflicts. The repercussions of such conflicts are that residents are not afforded equal development opportunities. At times, opportunities are not awarded on merit but rather according to political and ethnic affiliations. Consequently, where there is tension, there is no cooperation, thus the Gweru community as a whole suffers. In addition, when there is tension, ordinary citizens are always taken advantage of by those in power. Polarised communities hinder people from sharing experiences, learning from each other or developing with each other. This study therefore seeks to harness the enticing power of music as an experiential platform through which the community can dialogue for positive social change.

#### **1.4 Rationale for the Study**

A detailed analysis of the Zimbabwean crisis, which will follow in the next chapters, indicates that Zimbabwe needs more than a political power settlement. Indeed, ZANU PF and MDC-T's political contestations have shaped the narrative on Zimbabwe and have also led to a sustained attention to the country. The fierce rivalry between these two arch rivals has given birth to a politics predicated on the will to power (paradigm of war) as opposed to a will to live (paradigm of peace). Most of the local conflicts experienced in Zimbabwe are symptomatic of 'electoral conflicts' fuelled by political competition and polarisation, which have led to economic collapse and social fragmentation. The country experiences growing incidences of ethnic, religious inter- and intra-political party violence, and a breakdown of community. These conflicts have arguably weakened Zimbabwe's strongest attributes and institutions, which include the church, the family unit and good-neighbourliness. The extreme conditions of social fragmentation, anxiety and frustration expose a need to engage the community in strengthening its social capital, built through common activities which allay fear, foster free expression and community participation.

This study helps to highlight emphasize that citizens have a key role to play in peacebuilding and that politicians or the state do not have a monopoly over peacebuilding processes. Through focusing on the activities organised by residents and partnerships created in the community to

transform conflicts and to promote peace, the study will help emphasize and give credence to the role of every day citizens and the utility of social capital in developing peace initiatives. The study also provides an avenue for, and fresh ideas on how participatory performing arts can be harnessed to deal with conflict in repressed environments as well as to evaluate the utility of such. In addition, the study will also contribute to existing knowledge and research on music as a useful tool for peacebuilding.

## **1.5 Overall Aim**

The study aims to establish a music and dance ensemble comprised of members from diverse ethnic and political backgrounds who will use music to strengthen the social capital of the Mkoba community, with a view to uniting and improving the quality of life of the residents.

### **1.5.1 Specific Objectives**

- 1) To examine the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in the Mkoba community.
- 2) To find ways of creating a socially-aware music and dance ensemble and sustaining its impact.
- 3) To describe the characteristics of music and dance that can be manipulated in performances for social cohesion.
- 4) To examine the ability of music and dance to increase cohesive social capital in a community in conflict.

## **1.6 Methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative research paradigm and specifically uses arts-based research methods, since it involves community-based research (Shaun McNiff 2008). Stringer (1999: 9) notes that “Community-based-research is life enhancing enabling the expression of people’s full human potential”. This study uses participatory action research methods informed by the “assets-based approach”. This methodology was engaging, avoided focusing on problem identification,

and emphasised cultural strengths, potential and value. Through recognition of what people possess, rather than what they lack, the approach seeks to overcome perceptions of deprivation and powerlessness, and encourages self-representation and agency (Mathie and Cunningham 2003).

### **1.7 Study Population and Sampling**

The study population consisted of female and male residents of the Mkoba community, aged eighteen and above. A total of fifteen people was closely involved in the work of the ensemble. However, not all of them were performers, nine of the participants were performers while the remaining six played various important administrative and advisory roles. Purposive sampling was used to select musically gifted participants to form the music and dance ensemble. These participants were representative of a cross section of the ethnicities, political affiliations and gender distribution of the area. The performance sites were chosen using judgemental sampling, selected both for their accessibility to the public and because they were convenient to use for social change arts performances.

### **1.8 Data Collection Methods**

Research data was gathered through (i) observation of the participants and (ii) informal personal interviews conducted with the participants, which involved engaging with them and getting their personal experiences. Data collection was done through fieldwork and involved an ongoing process of participant observation and relied entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction (Patton 2015). Both the ensemble members' inter-personal relationships as well as their relationships with the community were documented (See appendices 5-7). The process of change was also documented through having in-depth interviews with audiences of performances, ensemble members and community leaders. Focus group discussions were also conducted with the group at the start and end of every stage of the research process, to ensure that the group planned, implemented and evaluated the intervention.

## **1.9 Data Analysis**

Data was analysed using inductive analysis and creative synthesis, where patterns, themes, relationships and attitudes were discovered through the spoken and non-verbal language material. This inductive analysis process is in line with the view credited to Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 139) that “good research is not generated by rigorous data alone ... [but by] ‘going beyond’ the data to develop ideas” through detecting the typical within the general and the general within the particular (Ibid.). In this thesis, the song lyrics were analysed using textual analysis so as to gain insight into how sensitive dialogue can arouse empathy, as well as to understand how the socio-political crisis in Mkoba, Gweru, influences the community’s music making and performances. The dance analysis examined how the facial expressions, gestures and dance routines reflected and modelled social and political values and structures. Themes were identified and arranged into thematic frames for presentation, interpretation and analysis. Still photographs and an ethnographic film were also used to present the findings.

The effectiveness of the use of music as an agent to bring social change in a polarised community was measured using a hybrid framework borrowing constructs from Hunter and Page’s framework on presenting arts-based peacebuilding reports and evaluations, which focuses on the following four key questions for processes of gathering evidence and analysis: “(i) What was intended? (ii) What emerged? (iii) What insights were gained? (iv) What happened next?” (Hunter and Page 2014: 130). In addition, Herrington’s 3R Framework of evaluating art for social change initiatives was also followed – this framework suggests focus should be on the Reach, Resonance, and Response to the intervention (Herrington 2016: 8).

## **1.10 Rationale for Using an Arts-Based Conflict Transformation Strategy**

My experiences growing up in Gweru in the 1990s, with political crises and ethnic tensions, presented a challenge for me since the early 2000s to engage the Mkoba community in using music and dance to stimulate constructive dialogues about their political and ethnic differences, and to contribute to both socio-political and economic amelioration. The experiences of political crises and ethnic tensions presented an urgent desire to engage the community in thinking beyond their political and ethnic differences, and to engage them in working for both socio-political and

economic improvement through immediately available resources such as cultural capital and human capital. In a study carried out in Gweru, it is argued that communally-owned communication methodologies can effectively bring social change (Mutero 2013: 116-117).

The use of art was also premised on Putnam's argument that "The creation and presentation of art often inspires a raft of civically valuable dispositions – trust, openness, honesty, cooperativeness, tolerance, and respect" (Putnam 2000: 1). This thesis explores the use of music as an experiential platform that can be used to transform relations in a community in conflict. This project took an asset-based approach, which mobilised resources from the community and engaged target society participants into establishing a '*cosmopolitan*' music and dance ensemble, whose mission was to build relations and to promote political and ethnic tolerance through music and dance performances. During this study, the project reinvigorated the declining music and dance performance platform, and also created new performance frames and spaces.

### **1.11 Positionality: The Researcher as an Artist**


The preceding discussion has briefly highlighted that the current situation in Zimbabwe calls for intervention. As a way of introduction, I have also discussed in little detail the rationale behind using an art based conflict transformation strategy. However, what I have not mentioned is that besides literature supporting the utilitarian role that art plays in social change, I am also a performing artist. At the time of writing this thesis, I had spent slightly more than half of my life as an artist who focuses on arts for social change. I was initiated in edutainment in the year 2000, as a form one student at Mkoba 3 High School in Gweru. Over the years I have worked with different organisations and on various projects which focus on community development through mostly, theatre for development. This background sustains my belief in the use of arts for social change. Most importantly, working with leading organisations such as Patsime Edutainment Trust trained me on how to let the community take a leading role in defining their problems and fashioning solutions for such.

Besides working communities on arts for development projects, my academic journey has also been reflective of my passion for social change and the use of expressive arts to reach desired ends. In 2011, in partial fulfilment of my Honours degree in Music and Musicology I embarked on an

action research which sought to empower marginalised youth with entrepreneurial and music and dance skills. For my Master of Arts in Applied Ethnomusicology degree, I investigated on how community groups use traditional dance to speak out against injustices. Below I present a table highlighting some of the arts for social change projects that I have been privileged to be part of.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Project Synopsis</b>	<b>Website Reference</b>
<b>Let's circumcise</b>	2012	A musical video featuring Oliver Mtukudzi, Winky D and Vee encouraging medical male circumcision as a way to prevent and mitigate the spread of HIV	<a href="http://youtu.be/ijDR2PsHm_A">http://youtu.be/ijDR2PsHm_A</a>
<b>Inkabazwe Rukuvhute Arts</b>	2011	This a community arts group that I helped initiate as part of my honours degree research at the Midlands State University in 2011. The research sought to empower marginalised youths through imparting traditional dance skills to them so that they can perform as a commercial entity.	N/A
<b>Vimbai's Diary</b>		This is a film project which was a follow up to my honours dissertation project. In this project I imparted film making skills to marginalised youth so that they could use the skills to voice their concerns and also make a living through disc sales.	Link follow footnote <sup>1</sup>
<b>Paradzai</b>	2010	A Shona short film in which I was the scriptwriter and lead actor. The film speaks about the importance of writing	<a href="http://youtu.be/p_WpepThS7k">http://youtu.be/p_WpepThS7k</a>

<sup>1</sup> Vimbai's Diary <http://zimbeatnews.blogspot.com/2011/11/awarding-winning-filmmaker-launches.html>



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wills in Zimbabwean communities. The film was produced by Patsimeredu Edutainment Trust.

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Mutero (2014:24)

## **1.12 Thesis Overview**

This thesis consists of eleven chapters, forming the introduction, body and conclusion. The contents of the chapters are briefly outlined below.

**Chapter 1:** This chapter provides an overview of the political background, the prevailing context of the study, and the methodology and rationale for the study.

**Chapter 2:** The second chapter begins with historicising the conflict and challenges Zimbabwe is facing, in a bid to have an overarching understanding of the conflict and political situation in the country. It also gives context to the discussion which follows in the next chapter.

**Chapter 3:** The major aim of this chapter is to illuminate how conflict plays out in local communities. It begins by showing how the government has effectively peripheralized citizens' participation in making political and economic decisions. The chapter also follows a discussion detailing how community institutions have been used to disempower citizens. In other words, the chapter details the prevailing situation in Gweru and the history behind the situation. By taking into account the context and challenges, the chapter advocates conflict transformation as an undergirding theory and peacebuilding strategy.

**Chapter 4:** The fourth chapter forms the first part of the literature review. It focusses on arts for social change and social capital, discussing how arts for social change can strengthen a community's social capital.

**Chapter 5:** This chapter forms the second part of the literature review – it engages the theoretical framework, integrating social entrepreneurship and asset-based community development theories. It also attempts to find the nexus between social entrepreneurship, social capital and arts for social change, the last two being discussed in depth in the previous chapter.

**Chapter 6:** In this chapter, the research methodology is presented.

**Chapter 7:** This chapter gives an in-depth understanding of Participatory Action Research, explaining how it is applied in this study.

**Chapter 8:** Results of the study are presented in this chapter – the research process and findings are discussed and the data is analysed. Its focus is on the research journey, mapping cultural variances and parallels, discussing team-building, as well as presenting community-centred strategies for establishing a viable social enterprise.

**Chapter 9:** This chapter continues the results section, focusing on rehearsals, performances and engagement with the community.

**Chapter 10:** This chapter explains the evaluation approach and criteria. It offers an assessment of how music and dance performances were used to strengthen the community's social capital.

**Chapter 11:** This chapter offers a summary of the major findings of the research, giving recommendations and concluding the research.

### **1.13 Conclusion**

This introductory chapter provided a glimpse of what follows in the study. It briefly discussed the background, methodologies and data analysis used in the study.



## **CHAPTER 2: ZIMBABWE: AN ANGRY NATION?**

*Going through the history of Zimbabwe and observing the current mood of citizens, one is left with the question: “Is Zimbabwe an angry nation?”*

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the political, economic and social crises in Zimbabwe. It explains the history of the economic, political and cultural divisions, as well as the brewing and potential conflicts which result from them. Since this research examines how communities can actively engage with music and dance as media or a platform where they can rehearse conflict resolution, a discussion on how the mainstream media has been used to reduce conflict will also be presented. In general, the discussion in this chapter gives a broader picture of the conflicts which Zimbabweans face, with the focus being on national politics, media and leaders, while the next chapter focuses on the experiences of ordinary people and how decisions made by national leaders affect ordinary citizens.

This chapter presents a discussion of the different epochs of Zimbabwe’s internal strife in order to deepen the understanding of how each wave of disturbance contributed in creating another wave of conflict. Most importantly, a reflection on precedence can show how this research project can be useful in averting a possible rebirth of conflicts. After the liberation struggle, which on its own was a major disturbance, post-independent Zimbabwe has faced six inter-related waves of internal strife. The epochs of physical violence are namely: *Gukurahundi*, from 1981-1987; the 1990 elections; the 1998 food riots; the 2000 land invasion and elections; the 2008 elections; and the post-2013 elections period – these have brought violent conflicts into Zimbabwe’s communities and ingrained a culture of violence in them (Du Plessis and Ford 2009, Sachikonye 2011). This chapter will discuss the periods of conflict in chronological order. The epochs have also been conceptualised to enable a clear analysis of events.

### **2.2 Zimbabwe before Independence**

It has long been established that violence begets violence and to support this fact, Africa (2015) argues that the xenophobic violence witnessed in South Africa was a result of a mixed records of

human rights security and long standing violence against the people. By extension, the same is true for Zimbabwe. Mistrust among the people of Zimbabwe has grown for a long time and is especially evident between the Shona and the Ndebele. Scholars trace animosity to the initial Ndebele-Shona contact of 1838, when the Ndebele, coming from South Africa, smashed the Rozvi Empire (Mabhena 2014: 139). It is said that after the Shona were defeated in the war, “the Ndebele became the de-facto rulers of every square inch of the land and the de-facto rulers of every single head of cattle in Rhodesia” (Alexander, McGregor and Ranger 2000: 93).

Mabhena (2014: 140) claims that during this era the Ndebele insultingly called their poor counterparts *Amahole* (low life citizens), and most of them lived in a place called *Ebuswina*, considered to be the root of the name *Shona*, near present day Masvingo. According to Bourdillon (1976: 31-32), the word *Shona* was first used derisively by the Ndebele in referring to the people they had defeated. The Shona did not call themselves by this name and at first detested it (Ibid.). Instead they referred to themselves as the *Mbire* (Chigwedere 1980, Mutswairo 1996). Bourdillon's submission for the surfacing of the term *Shona* seems to branch from Harald von Sicard's remark that “Shona (*Svina*) is generally regarded as a derogatory name ... it was applied by Ndebele conquerors to the indigenous population” (von Sicard 1950: 138). *Svina* is a Shona, and more specifically a *Karanga* dialect word whose English equivalent is *grime*, which is probably the reason why it is thought to be insulting. The prefix *ma* was added to the term *svina* for it to be applied to people, and it read *Masvina* and subsequently *MaShona*. Interestingly, to date Zimbabweans have a penchant of using derisive names on people from other nationalities residing in Zimbabwe and this serves to fuel conflict (Mashiri 2002).

During the 1838 Ndebele-Shona uprising, the Ndebele people managed to conquer the Shona due to tactical superiority. The Ndebele's superiority and organisation is aptly captured in Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2009:167) explanation of *Mfecani* (The Shona-Ndebele uprising). He posits that:

[*Mfecane*] revolution was marked by creative statecraft that led to the emergence of such new political and social formations such as the Ndebele in the highveld of South Africa. The process unfolded in terms of how a small Khumalo clan expanded into a nation and how a small Khumalo ruling elite managed to broadcast its power over

people of different ethnic groups. Mzilikazi employed such strategies as raiding, conquest, assimilation and the incorporation of individuals, groups and communities. It included inculcating Ndebele values and language over people of different ethnic groups.

However, the Ndebele's dominance over the Shona was ended by the colonialists who, with their advanced artillery, defeated both the Ndebele and Shona armies during the first Chimurenga. After the first Chimurenga, both the Ndebele and Shona went under white colonialists' dominion. It should be noted that the 1838 war was more of a territorial uprising than it was tribal one; the Ndebele had invaded Shona hinterlands from South Africa.

### **2.3 Revolutionary Front Leadership Matrix**

For the purposes of this discussion, the history of leadership disputes of pre-independence Zimbabwe will be discussed from 1957 up to 1980, the year when the nation got its independence. This period was primarily chosen because most of the leaders to be discussed played, and still play, a crucial role in the leadership debates in Zimbabwe. To begin with, in 1957, the African National Congress (ANC) of Southern Rhodesia was formed and was led by Joshua Nkomo as its President, James Chikerema as the Vice President, and George Nyandoro as the Secretary General (Zvobgo 2009: 106). The ANC was formed to stand for and defend the rights of natives, some of which were subjugated by draconian legislation (Meredith 2008: 28).

The ANC's strength, and perhaps the ideal attribute for every political organisation to be formed in Zimbabwe, lay in its inclusivity. Zvobgo posits that in the ANC's statement of principles, it was stated that the ANC stood for "the national unity of all inhabitants of the country in true partnership, regardless of race, colour or creed; it stood for a completely integrated society . . . and they were opposed to tribalism" (Zvobgo 2009: 106). The composition of the top echelon of the leadership itself suggested that tribalism was not tolerated, as it had a mix of tribes. To date, most political parties in Zimbabwe follow this pattern, where the top two leaders come from the Shona and the Ndebele. The party was, however, banned in 1959 (Ibid.).

Coming after the ANC was the National Democratic Party (NDP), which existed from 1960 to 1961. Again, as with the ANC, this nationalist party was led by people from different tribes. The founding president was Mr. Michael Mawema, who was deputised by Morton Malianga, while Ndaningi Sithole and Robert Mugabe were national chairman and publicity secretary, respectively (Zvobgo 2009). On the surface, this was again another all-inclusive party, but a look at the hierarchy shows a battle for leadership was always looming. The hierarchy, having too many layers, had a president and a chairman who served similar roles from the start, which was a possible cause for friction. It is highly likely that the leading figures were co-opted into leadership positions to satisfy their love for power, as shall be revealed through the splits which came about (to be discussed later). In addition, even when the NDP enunciated in their statement of principles that they were non-racial, their leadership did not have anyone who was not black. It will be myopic to assume that there were no white people who sided with black people during the war, and who could have been co-opted in the structures.

This support from the whites dates as far back as the early days of colonisation, where missionaries like Bishop Dodge stood for and with blacks. Maenzanise notes that “The old pattern of racial segregation within the church was breaking down and Bishop Dodge would work to break down the customs of the white settlers in the society at large” (Maenzanise 2008: 74). Nyenya adds that “Bishop Donald Lamont, a Catholic clergy, was known to be very vocal against racial discrimination. He made very critical comments against the 1969 constitution which further marginalised the participation of Africans in the economy and administrative affairs of the country” (Nyenya 2016: 9). These, and many other like-minded white people, accelerated the independence of Zimbabwe through championing native education and the provision of decent medical facilities. On these grounds, their absence in liberation-war political parties is suspicious. Perhaps their absence signals that tribal representation was only tokenism. The NDP was later to be led by Joshua Nkomo, after an election in October 1960, only to be banned by Sir Edgar Whitehead on 9 December 1961 through the use of the Unlawful Organisations Act (Zvobgo 2009: 112).

The National Democratic Party was followed by the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU), which survived from 1961 to 1962 and was led by Joshua Nkomo. Disagreements on strategy led

to the split of ZAPU. As noted earlier, the Ndebele-Shona uprising was motivated by territorial independence, while this split is possibly the result of the genesis of tribal politics (Msindo 2016). The consequences of the Shona-Ndebele war were first seen in 1963, when the leading liberation-war party, ZAPU, split on ethnic grounds (Msindo 2012). At this stage, power between the Shona and Ndebele was no longer determined by military tactical superiority but by numbers. The Shona people outnumbered the Ndebele and they used their numbers to their advantage at times avenging themselves for the 1838 war. ZAPU was under the leadership of Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo, who came from the minority Ndebele (Huyse 2003). It is argued that Shona-speaking liberation-war leaders felt that they represented the majority, and that they initiated the split at the cost of a united and concerted effort of dislodging the colonial government (Huyse 2003, Sachikonye 2004, Murambadoro and Wielenga 2015). While Nkomo went on to lead ZAPU, which had rebranded to the People's Caretaker Council, Mugabe, Sithole and other Shona revolutionaries, except for Enos Nkala, went on to form ZANU, which also faced leadership problems.

As will be discussed here, the tribal conflict did not just exist between the Shona and the Ndebele people. The Shona, who constitute the majority of Zimbabweans, also had tribal divisions clearly marked by their different dialects. These differences affected the unity within ZANU. For instance, the late Ndabaningi Sithole, who came from what is known as Manicaland Province today, was Ndaue, while his main adversary within ZANU was Zimbabwe's sitting president, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, who is from Mashonaland and speaks the ZeZuru dialect. Msindo (2014: 153) argues that "amidst the chaos, in 1971, a new movement Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) emerged, supposedly to unite the nationalist movements and revive the armed struggle FROLIZI was made up of mainly ZEZURU Shona from both ZANU and ZAPU".

It is therefore clear that scheming and polarised factionalism has always been part of Zimbabwe's political fabric. In addition, the tribal and dialectic conflicts still exist, and they are very prevalent forms of factionalism in ZANU PF today (Staff Reporter 2016). The national leaders in Zimbabwe have used the nationalist rhetoric to promote their leadership ambitions. Mashingaidze (2005: 83) opines that "Nationalism had the ambiguity of being both exclusionary and all-embracing. It subsumed class, ethnic and religious differences, and, at the same time, tried to use these cleavages

for its sustenance”. There is an inconsistency between their actions and their words, largely manifesting a ‘gallery-unity’ which only serves as display or window dressing.

## **2.4 Gukurahundi violence in Zimbabwe**

*“We eradicate them. We don't differentiate when we fight because we can't tell who is a dissident and who is not” (Robert Mugabe, April 1983).*

The government of Zimbabwe under the leadership of Robert Mugabe became notorious for squashing voices of dissent. The country has a long history of being ruled as a one-party state since the colonial era, such that divergent political ideas are viewed as subversion and that they attract hate. Tendi (2016) argues that President Mugabe’s power is also closely tied to that of the military as a consequence of the ZANU PF’s legacy as an armed liberation movement. Speaking on the possible roots of violence in Zimbabwe, Sachikonye (2011: 41) also adds that:

First, the roots can be traced to colonial state structures and practices, which ruthlessly suppressed moderate African nationalism in the 1950s, with the unintended consequence of fostering a more radical, uncompromising African nationalism in the 1960s. The arsenal of the colonial state included *sjamboks*, dogs, guns and poison as well as torture against nationalist activists and liberation fighters. Most of these weapons and repressive techniques were inherited by the new state in 1980 almost hook, line and sinker.

The culture of violence bred by the revolutionary war had far-reaching consequences and added to creating more violence, even between former allies. It is alleged that the first split experienced by revolutionary war parties was an act of revenge on the part of ZANU PF, led by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, and sadly, enough has not been done to correct the anomaly which led to many other subsequent conflicts (Mabhena 2014). *Gukurahundi* was the first of such ruthlessly violent conflicts in Zimbabwe.

In 1979, ZAPU and ZANU, led by Nkomo and Mugabe respectively, forged an alliance called the Patriotic Front in order to negotiate for Zimbabwe’s independence at the Lancaster House

Conference (Msindo 2014: 155). The 1979 Lancaster House Agreement paved the way for Zimbabwe to attain independence in 1980, several years after the protracted battle with the settler regime, which started in 1966. However, after successfully negotiating for a peaceful settlement of the Zimbabwean question at the Lancaster House Conference in London as a unity, the nationalist forces went on to field two separate candidates for the 1980 general elections, which were subsequently won by Robert Mugabe. According to Mabhena (2014: 141):

The delegation to the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference in 1979 went under the banner of the “Patriotic Front”, and this created a feeling among the guerrilla group and its supporters that whatever agreement was reached on the Zimbabwe question, they were ready to act collectively. When the agreement was finally signed, and paved the way for the first democratic elections, ZANU declared that it would contest the election outside the Patriotic Front Alliance. ZAPU was caught unaware and tried all avenues to maintain the alliance by even registering as the Patriotic Front in the general elections.

In his autobiography, which he wrote while in exile, Zimbabwe’s late Vice President Joshua Nkomo suspected that ZANU PF’s victory could have been as a result of rigging (Nkomo 1984: 210). His assertion is difficult to ascertain considering that in 1980, ZANU PF did not have much influence in the electoral system. However, his party’s loss in constituencies, which even to date are opposition party strongholds, might make his assertion true. For the purposes of this discussion, which is highlighting the roots of conflict in Zimbabwe, this disputed set of election results can be bracketed under the early sources of conflict.

The birth of an independent Zimbabwe did not usher in a peaceful nation. The 1980 government of national unity, which included the late Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo and several ministers belonging to the Zimbabwe African People’s Union Patriotic Front (PF ZAPU), crumbled in 1982. As early as 1981, the new state of Zimbabwe was already embroiled in a messy fratricidal conflict, which was a feud between the Ndebele and the Shona, ending in 1987 (Sachikonye 2004: 5). *Gukurahundi* is a Shona word, literally meaning ‘washing away the chaff’. Traditionally, the people of Zimbabwe used winnowing baskets or threshing to clean or rid their corn of its husks –

these husks are called chaff. Needless to say, the chaff is unimportant rubbish and the people of Matabeleland and the Midlands Provinces were equated to the useless chaff. Metaphorically, this speaks to Mugabe and ZANU PF's unbridled resolve to politically exterminate the Ndebele-speaking people. Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2002: 22) is also of the same view, arguing that:

It was no coincidence that the Fifth Brigade was also called *Gukurahundi*, which in Shona language means 'the rain that washes away the chuff from the last harvest, before the spring rains'. It seemed the 'last harvest' was the achievement of independence, the Matabeleland region and the Ndebele were the 'chaff' that was supposed to be washed away and the 'spring rain' was the establishment of the one-party state in Zimbabwe.

The term *Gukurahundi* was appropriated to refer to the civil war which broke out in Zimbabwe after the notorious North-Korean-trained 5 Brigade murdered thousands of people in the Zimbabwean province of Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands Provinces (CCJPZ 1997). *Gukurahundi* was extremely atrocious, as it even targeted civilians. The report compiled by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (1997: 32) has chilling testimonials from victims, with one of them claiming that:

The 5 Brigade came after dark when we were sleeping. They forced their way into the house and asked if we had any daughters. When we said our daughters were only young and were sleeping, they went to the bedroom, and took our 2 daughters aged 12 and 14 to the forest, where they beat them for half an hour, then brought them home. . . .

The report does not make an interesting read, but the situation in Zimbabwe has changed in many ways. Tribal conflict is still present, albeit at times subtle and manifesting in ways other than physical violence. At times, the rivalry is seen in sports, particularly in soccer where Highlanders Football Club is hugely regarded as an Ndebele people's team, and Dynamos a Shona people's team (Ncube 2014). Ncube has witnessed incidences where public toilet walls, even at universities where most students attending were born after *Gukurahundi*, are inscribed with tribal banter. This goes to show that even if the ZANU and ZAPU signed the Unity Accord in December 1987 to



signal the end of war, hatred still persists, sometimes turning violent at soccer matches (Ncube 2014).

As discussed here, *Gukurahundi* was not the beginning of violent conflict in Zimbabwe, and it was also not the end. The circle of violence continues to grow, mainly due to the inefficacious national healing processes which are drawn by the state and not linked to the people. In analysing the national healing efforts made after *Gukurahundi* and similarly violent epochs in Zimbabwe, Murambadoro and Wielenga (2015: 32) argue that “all the processes have remained largely at a political party level, with little impact on the community”. Along similar lines, Mashingaidze (2010: 20) is of the view that “the major deficiency in the contemporary conciliatory political milieu is the lack of clear and binding instruments for achieving national healing and reconciliation”. Murambadoro and Wielenga (2015: 31) further argue that:

Zimbabwe has a long history of violent conflict spreading over decades including the independence struggle. The government has implemented several high-level initiatives with the intention of resolving the conflict between political parties... And these include the Lancaster House Agreement (1979), the Dumbutshena and Chihambakwe Commissions of Inquiry in 1981 and 1983, the Unity Accord in 1987 and the Global Political Agreement in 2008.

*Gukurahundi* has long-standing causes which so far have proved that, if not dealt with, they have the potential to trigger other fatal disturbances. Unfortunately, this trend is not peculiar to Zimbabwe, it is spread across the continent, where most peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes have been widely criticised for their elite focus, lack of local legitimacy, lack of broad local participation, and insensitivity to local needs (Sriram 2007, Taylor 2007).

#### **2.4.1 A summary of the Gukurahundi Epoch**

The *Gukurahundi* period can be summarised as a period of messy and violent conflict. The ‘nationalists’ who participated in the revolutionary war against the white colonial regime were consumed by an insatiable need for power. During the liberation war, soldiers from either ZIPRA or ZANLA were accepted and revered across the country. However, after gaining independence in the 1980 elections, there were divisions. It is clear from the preceding discussion that the

politicians were interested in unfettered and absolute power instead of nation-building, leading to the fielding of separate candidates in 1980. This obsession with power has unfortunately been a vice, impeding democracy and development in Zimbabwe.

It is likely that to gain political mileage after the 1980 split, the political leadership manipulated the citizens' political psychology by covertly pushing their own interests while leading the nation, and by settling their own personal scores under the pretext of fighting dissidents. During this era, there were strong regional politics between the north and south of Zimbabwe. According to Laakso (2003: 1), "Between 1980 and 1987 there was a strong regional party, ZAPU, which transformed from a partner of the ruling party to repressed dissident". The dissidents' narrative, used to fan the civil war, unfortunately led to the Ndebele-Shona binary, which still exists today, to become pronounced.

## **2.5 Zimbabwe after Gukurahundi**

Beginning from 1987, Zimbabwe has seen skewed peace settlements, which have served to intensify ZANU PF's holding of power, making Robert Mugabe increasingly powerful. Laakso (2003: 119) argues that "Consolidation of the authoritarian power of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in independent Zimbabwe has not proceeded through the withering away of dissent". However, it is through manipulation of the constitution in his favour that Mugabe is now in control of the state security apparatus and has influence over the judiciary, as he is the one who appoints both army generals and High Court and Supreme Court judges. The report by the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) states that "a series of constitutional amendments transformed the country from a parliamentary to a presidential democracy" (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2010: 3).

Due to the unnecessary loss of human lives, Joshua Nkomo, who had moved from being a partner in government to a repressed dissident, was forced into acceding to unity with ZANU PF. This merger of ZANU PF and PF ZAPU in 1987, marked by the signing of the Unity Accord, dealt a huge blow to multi-party politics, and by extension, to democracy in Zimbabwe. As a reaction, Edgar Tekere was to lead one of the first political movements to resist one-party politics in Zimbabwe during the 1990 elections. His political party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement, was

vehemently stifled through brute force, and harassment became a precedent for almost every political opposition that was to emerge (Laakso 2003: 125, Meredith 2007: 88). Laakso (2003) opines that yesteryear opposition political parties, which include Margret Dongo's Zimbabwe Union for Democrats (ZUD); the United Parties (UP), led by Abel Muzorewa; ZANU NDONGA, led by Ndabaningi Sithole; as well as students' movements and trade unions, were all violently squashed by the ZANU PF government.

Perhaps what is important to note during this period is that ZANU PF purposefully used physical force on civilians to curtail their support for opposition political parties. When Tekere criticised ZANU PF's misdirection in 1988, he eventually formed the Zimbabwe Unity Movement, the country's first opposition political party after the merging of ZANU PF and PF ZAPU. Tekere's supporters were threatened with death during the run up to the 1990 elections. ZANU PF, which was responsible for the killing of 20000 civilians during *Gukurahundi*, brought back memories of the sad past through television and radio adverts. Laakso (2003: 125) observes that:

ZANU ran aggressive television commercials saying that to vote for ZANU was to choose life but to vote for the opposition was equal to death. ZUM was presented as a divisive and reactionary force supported by "Rhodesians" and South Africa. ZANU Youth and Women's Leagues again conducted infamous door-to-door campaigns to harass suspected ZUM supporters.

By evoking recollections of the past, the government was showing that they do not abide by the letter of reconciliation pronounced by the unity accord they had signed in 1987 (Tevera 2015). The consequences of their actions were that it built hatred and suspicion in citizens. It was evident then, as it is now, that the truce served political parties and not the general populace. Consequently, the violence that erupted during the 1990 elections was the worst to be seen in an election year after 1980 (Sithole and Makumbe 1997: 135). In 1990, the former mayor of the city of Gweru, the late Patrick Kombayi, was shot by a known ZANU PF activist and current Member of Parliament for the Chiwundura constituency. Unendoro (2007: 2) states that:

The run-up to general elections in 1990, the head of the Central Intelligence Organisation, CIO, in the Midlands region, Elias Kanengoni, and senior ZANU-PF Youth League official Kizito Chivamba shot opposition candidate Patrick Kombayi, who had made the mistake of running against Mugabe's deputy, Simon Muzenda. Even though a Zimbabwean court found the two men guilty of attempted murder and the Supreme Court upheld the conviction, Mugabe promptly pardoned them.

This violent political incident, where the armed Chivamba and Kanengoni shot Patrick Kombayi, is still etched in the minds of many of Gweru's senior citizens. I also experienced the cult persona Chivamba built, in 2008. I was deputy to Pluto Chivamba, younger brother of Kizito, who was the chairperson of the youth wing of ZANU PF *Gukurahundi* district, which covers Mkoba 12, 16 and 17. Pluto Chivamba exercised unbridled authority, even on the main wing. He was untouchable, as people assumed he had the protection of his brother, who benefitted from President Mugabe's impunity, which was disguised as clemency.

Interestingly, the 1988-1989 period is also the same time when the Willowgate scandal was exposed. Rusvingo (2014: 28) asserts that:

In the 1980s the Willow gate scandal in which cabinet ministers used their influence to buy cars cheap and resell them at a profit saw ministers resigning and one of them, Maurice Nyagumbo went on to commit suicide and he must be turning in his grave to question why he ever did it when today so many ministers are allowed to get away with murder.

This was the first biggest corruption scandal to be brought to the public eye. It resulted in the resignation of six government ministers, with one of them, Maurice Nyagumbo, committing suicide (Moyo 1992). This incident is particularly relevant to this study, because it gave rise to a chain of cases of impunity and patronisation, which have since grown into the crisis Zimbabwe faces today. The culprits were never arrested, and the results from the Sandura commission, tasked to look into the matter, were never made public (Chikuhwa 2004: 60).

Zimbabwe had yet another election in 1995, where Margret Dongo, a feisty war veteran, was thrown out of her party, the ZANU PF, after showing readiness to challenge her party's leadership (Chikuhwa 2004: 96). Margret Dongo took the bold decision to challenge Vivian Mwashita, ZANU PF's candidate, during the 1995 parliamentary elections. According to Sithole and Makumbe (1997: 135), "Margaret Dongo, ZANU (PF) member in the 1990-1995 parliament, defied the party after the politburo refused to nominate her for the 1995 parliamentary elections. She ran as an independent candidate and lost, but cried foul". These elections are symbolic in the sense that ZANU PF rigged the election and not only did Dongo manage to successfully contest the results, she went on to win the election rerun, setting a precedent for a host of other election result challenges. Sachikonye (2004: 187) observes that:

The election was re-run and won by Margaret Dongo leading to the disqualification of Vivian Mwashita. This was the first time in Zimbabwe's electoral history that a successful challenge had been through an election petition. This 1995 case was a harbinger of a spate of election petitions made following the 2000 parliamentary election. More than 30 petitions, mostly against ZANU-PF candidates, were filed in the High Court by the MDC. Most petitions cited vote buying, intimidation and violence and flouting of electoral regulations.

To date, most of the conflicts faced in Zimbabwe are typical of election disputes. People fight over candidates, voters and results. These fights threaten to destabilize the social and economic fabric of the nation. A closer look at Margret Dongo's ouster from ZANU PF suggests that it was probably the first marked sign of growing factionalism in Zimbabwe, which bears its head in ZANU PF to date. This phenomenon is referred to as a "decline in [party] elite cohesion . . . [, which is] the strong sense of unity . . . of the core leadership group in an organisation", the organisation here being the ZANU PF party, where "[t]he core leadership group inside the ZANU (PF) includes members of the politburo, central committee, and (after the 1980 elections) its parliamentary caucus" (Sithole and Makumbe 1997: 123). Factionalism and inter-party violence will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections of this chapter.

### **2.5.1 Key Developments**

The period which comes after the deadly *Gukurahundi*, has two aspects worthy noting. Firstly, it is interesting to note that some scholars like Scarnecchia (2008) and Mpani (2007) argue that Zimbabwe ceased to be a British Colony in 1964 after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). Following this argument, 1980 does not become the year Zimbabwe became independent, rather it is the year that the majority vote was accepted, following the Lancaster House Conference. The Unity Agreement, which ended *Gukurahundi*, becomes the second negotiated settlement which ended armed conflict in Zimbabwe, and it marks a period in which the civil war in Zimbabwe ended. The violent epochs which were to come after 1987, though brutal, did not involve military war.

Secondly, this is also a period in which ZANU PF started witnessing dissent from its own ranks. Progressive and democratic nationalists who were against a one-party state, left the party. However, ZANU PF was not prepared for plurality, and these political figures were silenced with violence. This era did not have pronounced violence because the ruling party still enjoyed popular support. Barring the isolated incidences of political violence, it is almost safe to say that it represents a time in which Zimbabweans gave a chance to the non-violent settlement of political differences by political leaders. This assertion is supported by Kjellin (2012: 13), who posits that “After the Matebeleland massacres in southern Zimbabwe in the 1980s, a relative calm followed in the 1990s”.

## **2.6 Economic Decline, Empowerment and Conflict in modern Zimbabwe since 2000**

Zimbabweans struggle with a plethora of daunting challenges including, but not limited to, disease, poverty, unemployment and hostility. The Research and Advocacy Unit (2016: 5) claims that Zimbabwe is “a nation that is one of the most desirous of democracy in Africa and also one of the most pessimistic about ever achieving this, and a citizenry that is regularly termed captured or mere subjects”. The country is reeling from stress in all facets of its economy. Zimbabwe is further crippled by the incessant exodus of its economically-active citizens to better economies due to the moribund economy, poor harvests, poor health care and insecurity. It is estimated that 1,500,000 Zimbabweans have migrated to neighbouring South Africa where they, at times, face xenophobia,

including depressing social attitudes, prejudice, and at times, physical violence (Crush and Tawodzera). With omnipresent government corruption, persistence of violence, inefficacious rule of law and uneven economic growth, the mess that Zimbabwe is in is undoubtedly a result of years of cumulative ill-governance, which inevitably leads to conflict (The Fund for Peace 2010, class notes 2011).

Zimbabwe's political, economic and social woes are well documented, dating back close to four decades. However, the period between the years 2000 and 2008 is specifically important to this research, which seeks to strengthen the community's social capital by encouraging organic and engaging activities between community members as well as by encouraging entrepreneurial ventures. The period between 2000 and 2008, which is referred to as a "lost decade" by Sachikonye (2011), is a time in which the country's economy, and several efforts to save the economy from nose-diving, failed. It is also a period in which Zimbabwe saw a rise in political party violence, starting with the 2000 Constitution Referendum.

## **2.7 Elections, Land Reform and Electoral Violence: 2000-2005**

The people of Zimbabwe voted against adopting ZANU PF's preferred constitution, in a referendum held in 2000. Masungure (2011: 135) states that "Civil society was so robust that, in alliance with the fledgling opposition MDC party, it successfully campaigned for a 'No' vote in the February 2000 referendum on the state-driven draft constitution". Though the referendum was not necessarily an election pitting ZANU PF and MDC against each other, the two parties had opposing views for the constitution and they campaigned heavily for their respective preferences. The result was in essence ZANU PF's first huge loss at an election. It announced the birth of strong opposition, the MDC, which had been formed in 1999.

Following the referendum was the June parliamentary elections held in the same year. There was really not enough time for ZANU PF to regroup and appeal to voters who had shown their displeasure with the party during the referendum, and as a result, the party resorted to violence (Southall and Slabbert 2013: 143). In the run-up to the elections, ZANU PF meted violence on known and suspected opposition party supporters. Sachikonye (2003: 130) observes that "The 2000 election is likely to be remembered for a long time, though largely because the election

campaign was carried out amid a degree of intimidation and violence unheard of since independence. Clearly, the stakes were much higher than in any other election since that of 1980". The rate of violence, however, increased in subsequent elections. Nonetheless, more than 30 precious lives were lost as a result of electoral violence (Ibid.). Evidently, ZANU PF could not contain the newly-formed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and they responded to the new wave of political pressure through violence (LeBas, 2006: 420). It is however important to note that Gweru, where this research took place, was not one of the most violent areas.

Just like the 2000 parliamentary elections, the 2002 presidential elections witnessed a lot of violence. At this point, the government was now orchestrating violence on white commercial farmers through former liberation war fighters who spearheaded the land reform program. The ZANU PF government embarked on a chaotic, albeit necessary, Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) to redress the land imbalances. The land redistribution exercise is referred to as *Jambanja* land reform by locals. The term *Jambanja* is symbolic of the chaos that characterized the exercise. It is a colloquial Shona name which means 'force' or 'heavy fighting'. It is a term which was made popular by the late Zimbabwe liberation war veteran and musician, Marko Sibanda.

Perhaps an analogy of the land reform captured in a song is important for this research, seeing that this research relates to music and conflict. In his hilarious song *Jambanja Pahotera*, Marko Sibanda sings about a bloody fight which ensues in a hotel between two naked promiscuous couples after finding out that they had exchanged partners in extra-marital affairs. Marko Sibanda was a war veteran himself. The term *jambanja* embodies all the violence that came during this period. Chaumba, Scoones and Wolmer (2003: 7) posit that:

Literally *jambanja* means violence or angry argument, it has been used in subtly different contexts and to refer to different people and places, including: the ex-combatant farm invaders themselves, the farm invasions, and more broadly to politically instigated violence. A particular popular war veteran catch phrase was '*jambanja ndizvo*' (violence is the answer). In some cases, the term was also appropriated by opposition supporters to mean fighting back against a bully. But in



essence it has come to refer to a time and space of, at best, confusion and nonsense and, at worst, disorder and chaos.

The Fast Track Land Reform Program lived up to its moniker as ZANU PF supporters went on a rampage, destroying farm properties and killing in the process. Worryingly, the Zimbabwe Republic Police, which has been labelled as partisan by some, did not take action to stop the violence (Good 2002: 15).

ZANU PF also used the land issue to gain support during the presidential elections, using violence in urban areas and farms and intimidation in communal areas (Kamete 2002: 417). Raftopoulos (2002: 417) also observes that “violence, in particular, continued to be used as a campaign tool, with perceived opposition supporters being murdered and subjected to intimidation and torture, with an increase in the use of sexual torture”. The country’s security services sector showed open support for Robert Mugabe. “In 2002, General Vitalis Zvinavashe openly indicated that the army would only support leaders who fought in the war” (Muvingi, 2008: 88). The police, through the Commissioner General Augustine Chihuri, even threatened a coup if the people voted against Robert Mugabe (Ibid.). It is unfortunate that Mugabe’s government devised a system of political and legislative methods as well as nationwide violence in an effort to woo and coerce voters – this practice runs to date.

It should be noted that the violence which accompanied the FTLRP cannot just be blamed on ZANU PF. Many academics and the media gave prominence to the physical violence which transpired during the land distribution exercise (Chikowore 2014). Unfortunately, some of the accounts were not necessarily true, and a lot of hurtful myths and misconceptions were peddled (Scoones *et al.* 2010). In addition, it is important to note that the physical violence could have been an outburst of the structural violence that persisted in Zimbabwe. Chikowore (2014: 23) traces the long history of structural inequality in Zimbabwe. He posits that:

Following from Zimbabwe’s attainment of political independence, which came after the negotiations at the Lancaster House Conference of 1979, Zimbabwe inherited a racially skewed land distribution. This was in favour of the minority white settlers. In this setup

over 6 million people lived in the marginal lands of Zimbabwe and thus relegated to the peripheries of the agrarian economy. This brought about inequalities in accessing the natural resources of the country such as prime land hence exacerbating the land question in Zimbabwe. The centrality of land issues in the history of the country shows that after gaining independence there was need to ‘right the past wrongs’ by redressing the social ills brought about by the colonial legacies. History shows that since colonialism the tension that was there between the blacks and the whites was centralized on land issues; this gave the blacks the motivation to fight against the colonial powers in the famous liberation struggles christened the Chimurenga war.

It is likely that had the powerful elites addressed the economic disparities in time, the physical violence and racial hatred which characterised the FTLRP could have been avoided or at least minimised. Instead, the government and white commercial farmers ignored the land issue for a long time. Even the opposition party’s inconsistency on the land issue shows that politicians were worried about gaining votes more than they were worried about facilitating a good living for all citizens.

This decade of crisis also saw the health services becoming dysfunctional. In addition to the shortage of medication and drugs, health services professionals took industrial action on a regular basis, further crippling this all-important sector. As a consequence, Zimbabwe failed to efficiently contain a cholera outbreak, which caused many avoidable deaths and threats to human life. Sirajuddin (2011: 541) posits that “an estimated 95,531 suspected cases of cholera and 4,282 deaths due to cholera were reported during the 2008 cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe”. This cholera outbreak was also a result of poor service delivery and the ruthless treatment and displacement of people from their urban dwellings by the government under a 2005 operation supposedly meant to cleanse the city, code-named *Operation Murambatsvina*. Its intensity is captured by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe, Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka (2005: 7), who posits that:

On 19 May 2005, with little or no warning, the Government of Zimbabwe embarked on an operation to “clean-up” its cities. It was a “crash” operation known as “Operation

Murambatsvina”, referred to in this report as Operation Restore Order. It started in the Zimbabwe capital, Harare, and rapidly evolved into a nationwide demolition and eviction campaign carried out by the police and the army. Popularly referred to as “Operation Tsunami” because of its speed and ferocity it resulted in the destruction of homes, business premises and vending sites. It is estimated that some 700,000 people in cities across the country have lost either their homes, their source of livelihood or both. Indirectly, a further 2.4 million people have been affected in varying degrees. Hundreds of thousands of women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water and sanitation, or health care. Education for thousands of school age children has been disrupted. Many of the sick, including those with HIV and AIDS, no longer have access to care. The vast majority of those directly and indirectly affected are the poor and disadvantaged segments of the population. They are, today, deeper in poverty, deprivation and destitution, and have been rendered more vulnerable.

*Operation Murambatsvina* was a result of conflict and power play between the ZANU PF and the MDC – the central government engineered a clamp down on the Harare City Councillors, which forced the deposition of Harare mayor Elias Mudzuri of the MDC, replacing him with commissioners led by Sekesai Makwavarara, a member of the ZANU PF. Bratton and Masunungure (2006: 26) argue that:

Despite its success at manipulating the 2005 election, ZANU-PF could not conceal the fact that it had lost control of Zimbabwe’s major urban centers. In a pattern reminiscent of the previous parliamentary election in 2000, the opposition MDC won all seven parliamentary seats in Bulawayo and all but one of Harare’s eighteen seats. In this light, *Operation Murambatsvina* appeared as an act of retribution by a vituperative ruling party against a noncompliant electorate.

*Operation Murambatsvina*, which caused untold suffering to urban dwellers, was sanctioned by the City Council Commissioners. *Operation Murambatsvina* was to be rolled out in all cities and

towns of Zimbabwe. The hurt this disturbance caused still lingers as there has not been any meaningful reparation. As such, communities need to be healed of such hurt.

### **2.7.1 Reflection on the FTLRP, Politics and Violence**

This period can also be understood as an epoch about the dissatisfaction of people with the government. Citizens took it upon themselves to redress the land imbalances, and in a way, managed to show that citizens have power over their government. It is however unfortunate that the ruling party, ZANU PF, hijacked the process for political expediency. The land seizures managed to take the people's attention away from the government to focusing it on the land question. In addition, since the imbalance was glaring, many black Zimbabweans ignored the calls against the violence which was meted mostly on white commercial farmers – their government was, in this period, a 'preferred devil'.

However it is unfortunate, just as it is obvious, that the exercise was a disaster of monstrous proportions. The effects of *Operation Murambatsvina* are still present, years after it was carried out. The operation was carried out at a time when the economy was underperforming. In addition, "It was implemented in a highly polarized political climate characterized by mistrust, fear and a lack of dialogue between Government and local authorities, and between the former and civil society" (Tibaijuka 2005: 19). Consequently, the results are still being felt today and the country needs to invest in solving these social and economic problems (Benyera and Nyere 2015).

## **2.8 Harmonized Elections and Runoff in 2008**

For the first time since independence, ZANU PF lost its parliamentary majority in 2008. Even worse, the leader Robert Mugabe lost the presidential race to Morgan Tsvangirai. The loss should have come as a shock to Mugabe and his team, judging at least from their buoyant pre-election mood. The run-up to the 29 March 2008 election is largely regarded as a free and fair election (Masunungure 2010). Political parties and independent politicians were free to reach out to the electorate in largely peaceful campaigns. However, the same cannot be said of the results of this election process. ZANU PF rigged the elections. The ZANU-PF-controlled Zimbabwe Election

Commission took five weeks before announcing the election results, supposedly planning on how to subvert the people's will. Mugabe and Tsvangirai had to contest in a runoff election in June.

The runoff election campaign period was one in which citizens were subjected to heavy-handedness by the army and state security agents. ZANU PF embarked on a brutal election campaign that they code-named *Operation: Makavhotera Papi?* (Operation: Who did you vote for?). Essentially, what this campaign sought to do was to beat people into denouncing their choice. There was increased electoral violence instigated by the army. The ZANU PF government built a "militarised form of electoral authoritarianism" (Bratton and Masunungure 2008). The country held, and probably still holds, ceremonial elections which have predetermined results and which only serve to legitimise dictatorship. Rather than destabilizing authoritarian regimes, elections may actually act as a buffer, conceding the form of democracy while denying its substance" (Masunungure 2011: 48). The army is used to instil constant fear, while the election also leads the people to be compliant to the ruling party.

The 2008 alliance between ZANU PF and the army saw the army taking an outright and dominant political stance. As a result, the people's will was subverted, the election was a sham, and there was a lot of intimidation of the electorate. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network's view on the runoff election was that:

When the results were finally released on 2 May 2008, it took almost two weeks to have the run-off date announced on 15 May 2008 during which the run up to the run-off degenerated into a run over leaving in its wake a trail of destruction, houses burnt down, many people displaced and homeless, many children orphaned, and community relations torn asunder. Freedom of assembly and movement were heavily restricted with rural areas virtually sealed off from opposition rallies, the opposition leadership subjected to sporadic arrests and detentions, their campaign activities under total blackout on national electronic and press media. Hate speech, incitement of violence, and threats of war characterized electoral campaigns, with the ruling party presidential candidate threatening to go back to war if he lost the election to the MDC presidential candidate, whom he considered a puppet of the West.

This trail of destruction highlighted here still haunts Zimbabwe. The country's material resources and moral fabric are in tatters. Attempts continue to be made to bring people together. The immediate results of these peace or unity pacts are always encouraging. The contesting political parties work together to bring change for the people but as they do that, they will also be working hard to bring each other down. The 1987 Unity Accord has not done much for the people of Matabeleland and the Midlands Provinces in terms of infrastructure and economic development. However, relative peace prevails. In 2008, after the militarised elections, ZANU PF, MDC-T and MDC-M began discussions to form the Government of National Unity.

## **2.9 The Government of National Unity: Unity of Purpose and Economic Recovery**

The Government of National Unity in Zimbabwe (GNU) was formed at the behest of the SADC after the regional bloc realised that Mugabe's illegitimate government was not going to save Zimbabwe from heading into economic doldrums. It was formed in 2009, after lengthy deliberations between the ZANU PF and the MDC-T and MDC-M formations led by Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara, respectively.

Zimbabwe introduced the multi-currency system at the inception of the Government of National Unity. As a result, the financial sector stabilized. The country was coming from a period of hyperinflation between 2005 and 2009, where at its peak, inflation was at a shocking monthly rate of 79.6 billion percent in mid-November 2008 (Hanke and Kwok 2009: 353). Kairiza (2009: 2) adds that "inflation increased from 47 percent in 1998 to qualify the Cagan's (1956) hyperinflation definition when it reached of 7,982 percent in 2007, thereon it kept increasing to reach 231,150,889 percent in July 2008 whereupon the country disbanded the national currency and adopted a basket of foreign currencies as legal tender five months later". Inevitably, there was chaos in the banking sector, citizens failed to withdraw their monies and when they eventually did, the money was not worth the paper it was printed on.

After going through a rough decade, generally known as the Zimbabwean crises which ended in 2009 at the formation of the Government of National Unity, a raft of measures was drawn up to rescue Zimbabwe's economy. The former Minister of Finance and the then member and Secretary-

General of the Movement for Democratic Change, Tendai Biti, introduced the Short-Term Emergency Recovery Program (STERP). This economic blueprint managed to stir Zimbabwe out of hyperinflation. It provided an environment which allowed the economy to grow. According to the Zimbabwe Report prepared by the African Development Bank (2009: 11), “In response to the stable and liberalised economic environment under the Short-Term Economic Recovery Program (STERP), real GDP grew by 5.7 percent in 2009 and is estimated to have risen strongly by about 8 percent in 2010, compared with a decline of about 14 percent in 2008”.

Zimbabwe’s universities and schools, which had closed prior to the Government of National Unity GNU, opened their doors to the public once again. Through the UNICEF’s Education Transition Fund, the transitional government managed to re-equip primary and secondary schools (UNICEF Zimbabwe 2011). During this period, schools were given permission to offer incentives to teachers in a bid to augment the teachers’ salaries as well as to attract experienced educators who had quit their jobs (Makanga and Mutsagondo 2014). The multi-currency system made it possible for Zimbabwean workers to buy something with their salaries or to at least use their money as a store of value.

The Government of National Unity resurrected many services such as pension and insurance schemes and medical aid, which had been obsolete during the hyperinflation era. Empty shop shelves were refilled, and basic commodities such as sugar, mealie-meal and cooking oil were now available. The transport system also normalized. Consequently, many Zimbabweans living in the diaspora, flocked back. It is clear from the data on Zimbabwe’s economic performance that though the country had problems during the GNU, the policies of that era were aiding economic recovery. However the growth was short-lived, as Zimbabwe was to plunge into yet another economic crisis after the 2013 general elections.

## **2.10 Zimbabwe after the 2013 elections**

In 2013, Robert Mugabe was given the mandate to once again lead Zimbabwe after cruising to a landslide victory in a disputed election against his long-time political opponent, Morgan Tsvangirai (Southall and Slabbert 2013: 136). Mugabe’s government had little success in removing

the huge challenges confronting a nation trying to recuperate from an ugly economic breakdown and from the damages of hyperinflation.

Currently, Zimbabwe is a country that is being affected by huge financial distress from all sectors of the economy, and where more than 50% of the population is surviving under a dollar per day. The World Food Program Profile on Zimbabwe states that:

Zimbabwe is a low-income, food deficit country, ranked at 156 out of 187 on the 2014 UNDP Human Development Index. Currently, 72 percent of the population live below the national poverty line (living on less than USD 1.25 per day). Thirty percent of the rural poor are considered to be ‘food poor’, or ‘extremely poor’.

These statistics paint a sorry picture, as this effectively means that almost all of Zimbabwe’s population live in extreme poverty. Currently, \$1.25 is the internationally-accepted poverty line (Food and Agricultural Organisation 2016). To add to that, Zimbabwe is one of the countries in the world that is rearing under high unemployment, which is estimated to be around 80% (Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index, 2016: 3). A 2015 Supreme Court ruling, allowing both the public and private companies to fire workers without benefits, worsened the unemployment crisis. An unprecedented 30 000 workers were fired in less than two months by different companies.

The ruling and subsequent job losses created animosity and potentially irreconcilable differences between workers and employers (Uzhenyu 2015). Zimbabwe’s economy is very poor, to an extent that most citizens are vendors. It is highly likely that the newly-unemployed people also had no capital to start their vending stalls or any other small-scale enterprise. Even worse, the situation created despondency across the nation as retrenchments shook all sectors, including the usually stable public sector.

## **2.11 The media, politics and hate speech**

Over the years, conflict and polarity in Zimbabwe has been exacerbated by reckless media reportage, which is often drawn on political party and tribal lines, thereby fanning hatred. The



following discussion proceeds to briefly touch on the levels of media polarity and its effects on denting Zimbabwe's social fabric. It should be noted that radio and television are the most accessible forms of media for the people in Mkoba, Gweru. The weekly and daily national newspapers, together with Gweru's community newspapers, *The Sun* and *The Times*, are sold at a dollar per copy, and hence are out of reach for many citizens. To that end, the news and/or factors informing conflict in this community are not far attached from the national crisis.

Jonathan Moyo, a former Minister of Media and Information Technology and the current Minister for Higher and Tertiary education in Robert Mugabe's government, concedes that the media is polarised. Speaking during a public lecture at the National University of Science and Technology, he confirmed the polarisation saying, "The state of the media today is very polarised, has been especially for the last 13 years of the existence of your school. Your school is 13-years-old and it is a product of a very polarised media environment . . ." (Moyo 2013). Probably the direst immediate effect of polarised media is that it fuels hate speech, thus stumbling efforts aimed at reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Hate speech is broadly defined in an online report by the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe, which postulates that hate speech:

Is a general term for speech (or the use of language) intended to degrade, intimidate, or incite violence or prejudicial action against a person or group of people based on their race, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, language ability, moral or political views, socio-economic status, occupation or appearance, mental capacity and any other distinctive liabilities.

The state media and the privately-owned media have been found wanting in this regard. Zimbabwe has been in an electioneering mode since 2000, with such hate speech and other discourses of exclusion in the Zimbabwean political arena occupying the political communication as political parties compete to sell their brands and discredit competitors. ZANU PF's abuse of the media probably stems from realising that political elections are won and lost in the competition for people's trust, and that modern media are a vital link between the governing and the governed, having decisive impact on election results in most political systems (Waldahl 2004).

The publicly-owned but government-controlled media has been used to disseminate messages of hatred and intimidation, as well as to discredit the political opposition and persuade the electorate to support the political status quo. Ever since the emergence of the MDC, the ruling party's position in the country has been threatened, which has led to ZANU PF resorting to the use of public newspapers and public television to spread its ideologies and its hatred towards the opposition party, with the intent to stimulate hatred of the MDC amongst the people. Mutsvairo (2016: 141) observes that "The Herald's relationship with the government is symbiotic. While, faithfully disseminating the ruling party's political, social, and economic agenda, it has been guaranteed exclusivity to news, ensuring that it secures 'scoops' away from independent journalists and maintains its journalistic edge against competitors".

On the other hand, the private media takes every opportunity to vilify the ZANU-PF-led government (Mukasa 2003: 173). The independent media which includes, but is not limited to, The Standard, The Financial Gazette, Daily News, NewsDay, Radio VOP, Nehanda Radio and Nehanda TV made it possible for the opposition to deliver its political message to citizens (Powell 2011). Unfortunately, exclusion was also being practiced in the private media, which mostly reported on the violence caused by the ZANU PF activists and which reported extensively on the violence happening on the farms. This view is also held by Mpofu (2014: 4), who posits that "The private media, especially diaspora based online publications have played an antagonistic role to ZANU PF and have sought to define the nation in terms that rail against and contest those of ZANU PF". While the exposé on violence was important, it fanned hatred and stereotyped ZANU PF as a violent party, exonerating the MDC from all the violence.

### **2.11.1 Hate Speech and polarity on Radio and in Music**

Over the years, the state-controlled media has played, and continues to play, a crucial role in ensuring that ZANU PF is strongly placed as the party of liberation and the people's party. Part of the strategy involves affording generous airplay to musicians who exalt ZANU PF and liberation war songs. In addition, through flexing their financial muscle, ZANU PF stalwarts acquired music-recording companies, giving them leeway to manipulate musicians. Mhiripiri (2008: 4) posits that "Some bemoan the fact that there is now 'complete control' not only of the airwaves through

restrictive legislation, but of the music industry in particular through its direct ownership and control by the government and party officials”.

Regrettably, some of the songs, when sung out of the liberation war context, fan hatred, while others composed specifically to denounce the MDC, have undertones of hatred. According to Mapara and Wasosa (2012: 290), “Through songs such as *Mbiri yechigandanga* (The famousness of the liberation war fighter) that was sung by the late ZANU (PF) political commissar, Elliott Manyika, the party has continued to celebrate the use of violence against political opponents”. The music is usually accompanied by the *kongonya* dance which Gonye (2013) suggests is a purveyor of violence. Gonye (2013: 67) further opines that:

If politicians used *kongonya* both as a tool to mobilize indigenous Zimbabweans against settler domination during the years of British colonialism, they also used *kongonya* to coerce and manipulate Zimbabwean nationals to support and identify with Zimbabwe’s 2000 *jambanja* (a Shona term for disorganized violence describing the forceful repossession and redistribution of the formerly white settler-owned farms by blacks; the violence was spearheaded by ZANU PF war veterans who christened it the Third Chimurenga).

However the MDC was not to be outdone, as through their supporters they released songs which were full of banter and disrespect, especially considering Zimbabwe’s gerontocracy. In one of the songs, Dread Reckless sings “*Mugabe unobehaver kunge pwere same same naNtombana*”, which literally translates to ‘Mugabe you behave like a child, you are just the same as a baby girl’. In another more brutal song, the same artist sings “*Saddam waenda sare Bobo*”, meaning ‘Saddam is dead and Mugabe is in line’. According to Mapara and Wasosa (2012: 291):

The song entitled *Sadam waenda kwasara Bhobho* (Sadam is Gone and Bob should Follow Suit). The implication is that the party’s wish is to have President Mugabe face the same fate as happened to Saddam Hussein whose country Iraq was invaded by American forces and he was executed. This result in ZANU (PF) hitting back at the MDC being the stooges of the West and also the West being the master minders of

regime change agenda in the country. This song has also caused ZANU (PF) supporters to react violently to MDC supporters whom they accuse of pursuing the regime change agenda violently.

The song was composed during a time when Saddam Hussein, the dictator, was killed. It was, in part, a celebration of Saddam's demise and a reminder to Mugabe, and by extension ZANU PF stalwarts, that they will meet the same fate as Saddam Hussein. While the songs and dance from both the ZANU PF and the MDC made good campaign material, they had the unfortunate effect of sending the wrong signal, evaporating the sanctity of human life.

To date, young musicians in Zimbabwe, and in particular Zim Dancehall artists, are accused of being divisive. This Jamaican-influenced youth music is considered violent, dehumanizing and a deviation from the morals and values of the Zimbabwean people (Viriri, Viriri and Chapwanya 2011). Paradoxically, with all the unfavourable reviews and bad reputation, Zim Dancehall is currently the most popular music genre in Zimbabwe. The music thrives on animosity and hate speech, which by extension reflects the Zimbabwean society. The hard-hitting lyrics have the potential to either ignite or fuel disturbing conflict. Viriri, Viriri and Chapwanya (2011: 9) argue that this music has "extremely detrimental effects on the Zimbabwean youth, who tend to interpret popular music lyrics literally". Of course there are many artists who have positive messages in their songs, but with this genre, radios seldom pay attention to or censure music based on the lyrics.

In their quest for political dominance, political parties have used music in ways that unfortunately divide the community. However, a positive point is that a host of musicians and even theatre artists who are not aligned to political movements, continue to make performances which propagate messages of peace, equity, equality and social justice. Chapter four has been dedicated to describing how art has been used in Zimbabwe for social change. It is against this background of the successful use of art to bring positive change that this research is motivated. In addition, an understanding that music can at times be used to bring disunity, led the study to follow the lenses of the social enhancement model of music (Brown 2006).

### **2.11.2 Citizens, New Media and Conflict in Zimbabwe**

Though coupled with irregularities, the political contest in Zimbabwe has become stiff over the years. Due to the Inclusive Government, which promised so much and delivered so little in terms of economic benefits to the common people in Zimbabwe, citizens have lost hope in both the ZANU PF and the various opposition political parties, especially the MDC (Guzura and Chigora 2011). As a result, political parties have become peripatetic, resorting to desperate mudslinging, often through the media. However, Waldahl (2004) long observed that “indoctrination of the people was replaced by competition for their minds: it had suddenly become much harder than before to tell people what to think”. The coming of new media has also made it difficult for the government to maintain monopoly and to manipulate all the information shared among people. Many Zimbabweans practise citizen journalism via social media. It is however unfortunate that even citizen journalists are polarised.

The internet’s reach has continued to expand in Zimbabwe, growing from a paltry penetration rate of 0.4 percent in the year 2000 to an estimated 21 percent penetration as of 16 July 2016, according to internet live stats. This growth was paralleled by a growth in mobile phone penetration. At the moment, most of Zimbabwe’s citizens have mobile phones. According to Gambanga (2016: nd), “Zimbabwe’s mobile penetration increased in the last quarter of 2015 and now it stands at 95.4 percent”. Consequently, this gave rise to a surge in the use of social media by Zimbabweans. The new media has been useful in moving citizens from the periphery of political discussions. Today, citizens are no longer passive recipients of information but active producers and consumers of the same information (Krupke 2015). Facebook has become extremely popular in the political lives of Zimbabweans, seeing the emergence of faceless Facebook characters, the most popular being called Baba Jukwa and Amai Jukwa, in the run-up to the 2013 general elections. According to Bugalo (2013: 1):

Baba Jukwa is a self-proclaimed ZANU-PF party insider and online character who joined Facebook in March 2013. Within four months, and on the eve of the election he had accrued 322 889 Facebook likes which continue to increase daily. His timeline status reads “Concerned father, fighting nepotism and directly linking community with their Leaders, Government, MPs and ministers”. Baba Jukwa’s revelations before the

election varied from disclosing political figures suspected to be misusing state funds to politicians who are likely to be killed by other politicians and disclosing the illegal practices done by ZANU-PF.

Amai Jukwa is described in the following manner (Bugalo 2013: 1):

Amai Jukwa is a self-proclaimed ZANU-PF party member and online character who joined Facebook in January 2013. In a space of six months, she had accrued 48 249 Facebook likes on the eve of the election. Amai Jukwa's timeline status reads "Loving mother of three". Her posts before the election varied from raising debate on the MDC-T to explaining the strengths of ZANU-PF and questioning Baba Jukwa's credibility.

These two characters represented views from the opposition political parties and the ruling party, respectively. Unfortunately, instead of debating policy and selling political manifestos, Zimbabweans used the two characters' profiles to spread hate.

In recent times, a clergyman, Pastor Evan Mawarire, also excited the emotions of Zimbabweans and got many to speak out against bad governance in Zimbabwe, through a non-violent movement called #ThisFlag. Unfortunately, like his predecessors, the movement is threatening to further divide Zimbabweans, particularly after the occasion of him moving to the United States of America. Some of the citizens' reactions to and potentially destructive divisions created by Pastor Evan's move can be accessed through reading comments emanating from an open letter written by the blogger Jean Gusho. The emotive comments are evidence that Zimbabwe is teetering with conflict and that the online non-violent movement is threatened. However, the Zimbabwean government seems to be aware of the power of Facebook and has extended its leash to this social media platform.

## **2.12 The Church in Zimbabwe**

*And once they [the Bishops] turn political, we regard them as no longer being spiritual and our relations with them would be conducted as if we are dealing with political*

*entities, and this is quite a dangerous path they have chosen for themselves. (President Robert Mugabe 18 April, 2007)<sup>2</sup>.*

The Church's engagement with the government has not been fair and sincere at all times. Munemo and Nciizah (2014: 68) posit that "The role of the Church in national healing and reconciliation has been greatly undermined in the transition period because of close links with civil society. Civil society has been accused by the ZANU PF of working in cahoots with the west to effect regime change". While by law the Church has a right to belong to civic society, the prevailing conditions in Zimbabwe where the civic society is compromised raises a lot of questions with regards impartiality. Many Faith Based Organisations have taken an openly anti-government stance and often they identify with Civil Society organisations, which are also at loggerheads with ZANU PF. Therefore, instead of acting as arbiters in the Zimbabwean political impasse, the Church has taken a position to fight the establishment. Such a stance compromises their objectivity in bringing about positive social change, particularly with regards to peacebuilding.

In addition, the Church cannot be wholly absolved from perpetrating violent crimes or instigating such crimes. This is primarily because the religious institutions are made up of the Christians who fight on political grounds, on the grounds of ethnic differences and at times, even on a religious basis. It is a given that a people's behaviour is susceptible to change according to the identity they assume at a particular time (Howard 2000). Hence one can be totally adorable when on the pulpit and a fiery predator when, for example, on the political front. Seeing that Christian or religious labels are usually static, I have observed that cases of citizens who convert from one religion to another are very few compared to cases of believers who change denominations under one faith. I therefore take a position that the Zimbabwean church community has played its own part in fuelling conflict in communities.

To begin with, there is latent conflict within Christian denominations, mainly due to power struggles and accusations of mal-administration mostly relating to the embezzlement of funds. At times, it also about doctrinal differences. For instance, long-existing Pentecostal churches like the Methodist Church, the Anglican Church as well as numerous African Independent churches, have

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<sup>2</sup> Mugabe warns Catholic Bishops over politics.

split. It is common to hear of splits rather than expansion of churches in Zimbabwe. The Sunday Mail's Bulla (2015:17), reported that:

The Pentecostal world is also no stranger to conflicts and AFM in Zimbabwe has headlined the media due to such public conflicts. Recently pastors, deacons and elders took the president of the church, Rev Ashper Madziyire, and his executive to court challenging his re-election. Court battles have characterised AFM in Zimbabwe over the years. In 2008, the Belvedere assembly dragged its pastor to court for promoting unbiblical practices. In 2009, church members were at loggerheads with Rev Madziyire who was also their overseer due to alleged misappropriation of funds.

As far back as 1992, leadership wrangles took root in the Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect led by Noah Taguta resulting in legal battles for church ownership and regalia. In 2013, two sons of the late founder of Zion Apostolic Faith Mission Church – Bishop Pedzisai Shoko – were locked in a legal battle to take over leadership of the church after their father's death the previous year. And in the Evangelical Church of Zimbabwe (ECZ), a leadership wrangle spilled into the courts after incumbent Bishop Benson Makachi had been accused of attempting to influence the outcome of the election for new leadership.

The reasons for the splits vary a lot, for instance, the conflict in the Anglican Church is viewed by Tongowona, Mathews and Pavari (2014) as politically inclined. These authors view President Mugabe's siding with Bishop Kunonga as the catalyst and grounds for the clergyman waging war against fellow Anglican parishioners. Tongowona, Mathews and Pavari (2014: 90) posit that "With tacit support from President Mugabe, he became an exponent of anti-homosexual crusade and went on to seize Anglican property. The conflict in the Anglican Church degenerated into a complex theological and political dispute that assumed an international character". Some clergymen like Obediah Msindo have not hidden their support of violence, especially violence meted to opposition party supporters by the ZANU PF, or have at least openly supported inhumane policies and programs (Dombo 2014: 146).



The reasons for splits in African Independent Churches have been noted to emanate from “greed, power hunger, spiritual doctrinal differences and false prophecy” (Beta 2015: 1). Interestingly, both sets of causes of conflict within the Pentecostal Churches and African Independent Churches identify with the causes of conflict in the Zimbabwean society in general. This makes the church a good institution for those working on mending conflicts in the community, primarily because the church provides a safe environment where people can meet, question issues regarding their livelihood, and talk about unity without sounding political or fearing the draconian legislation, since the “Public Order and Security exempts religious activities and events” (United States Government 2013).

However, over the years the church has also played defining roles in the politics of Zimbabwe. As has been alluded to earlier on, the church supported the people of Zimbabwe in their quest for freedom from colonisation, “assuming a prophetic voice and speaking with one voice on behalf of the oppressed masses of Zimbabwe” (Maenzanise 2008: 79). Munemo and Nciizah (2014: 63) also add that the church “played an active role in the war of liberation denouncing racial segregation, human rights abuses and other excesses of the state”. The church worked to emancipate the lives of the common men, regardless of being targeted by the settler regime (Ibid.). Today Faith Based Organisations like the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and the Christian Alliance of Zimbabwe still play an important role in checking on the government’s transgressions against humanity. Nonetheless, in present-day Zimbabwe, the church is at times found to be turning a blind eye on the politics of the day, as will be shown in the following discussion.

The inclusion of church, and by extension religious discourse, is premised on the realisation that over eighty percent of Zimbabweans confess to be Christians (Munemo and Nciizah 2014). It is therefore not inappropriate to assume that the church, though fragmented into different denominations, is the biggest socialisation pool in Zimbabwe. Zakeyo (2003: 3) observes that “A great majority of the people of Zimbabwe like most Africa are a profoundly spiritual people in whose life – personal and communal – religion is a dominant force”. Therefore, while this thesis does not specifically look at the role that religion can play in strengthening the community’s social capital, the discussion and inclusion of religious debate is indispensable.

Generally, the church is expected to nourish a people's spiritual exigencies, and it is an institution facilitating the veneration of God as the Supreme Being where people live in fellowship with a view to live to eternity. In addition, at times the church sees to it that the less privileged of our society are looked after, and that services such as hospitals and schools which make life comfortable for people, are made available. This view is also corroborated by the church according to the Church and Civil Society Forum (2012: 11) whose understanding is that:

The church as an institution is concerned with the total well-being of the people, their salvation and peace. The church (whichever one) wants control over not only the lives, but also the actual minds of its followers. Its role is flexible: when people are traumatized the church becomes healing, reconciliation, peace, justice and so forth.

Implied here is that the church has a salient role in facilitating sublime living for citizens in the face of the violent conflicts and socio-economic and political problems daunting Zimbabwe. In the recent past, faith based organisations such as the Christian Alliance of Zimbabwe, led by Bishop Ancelimo Magaya, has raised concerns to the government over the violation of human rights. Taking part in national healing and reconciliation processes in Zimbabwe has never been easy. The processes are highly polarised, political and serve merely as window dressings. As such, religious organisations should find ways in which they can engage with the people and government without causing or exacerbating political brawls.

## **2.13 Conclusion**

This chapter gave a panoramic view of the conflicts in Zimbabwe. It is quite evident that the clashes are centred on the politics of the day, are magnified by the media and affect even the strongest of community institutions such as the church. The influential political and social players have not been sincere in decisively dealing with conflict. Politicians and the clergy from across the spectrum have used the Zimbabwean challenges to settle their own personal agendas, which have been of so little help to the common people. This discussion was important in providing a framework for the intervention. Before considering how music and dance can be used to reconcile a community, one needs to understand the context as well as the prevailing situation of the community in which the music and dance is to be used as an intervention. However, for the intervention to be meaningful, there is a need to have a deeper understanding of the localised

conflict in Gweru, Mkoba. To that end, the following chapter traces where and how citizens were disempowered by politicians, and how conflict plays out in communities.

## **CHAPTER 3: STATE CAPTURE, CITIZEN ESCAPISM AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter continues with historicising violence in Zimbabwe, albeit giving context to the conflict currently being experienced in Zimbabwe by questioning power relations. The chapter unravels how political parties have pushed citizens to the periphery of community and national development through the sensational politicisation of the economic development of Zimbabweans as well as their social and religious lives. To achieve this, the discussion will focus on how national politics plays out in communities, fuelling conflict and disenfranchising citizens. The chapter will also address how the government of Zimbabwe has captured religion as well as how religious institutions have contributed to the powerlessness of citizens either through omission or commission.

Following an explanation of the patterns and nature of the conflict prevailing in Zimbabwe, the chapter will also examine the main peace theory guiding this thesis. Without giving away the contents of this chapter, the study embraced the lenses of the theory of Conflict Transformation (Lederach 2003), to investigate how everyday people can transform adversarial relations in a community. The discussion is framed in a way that it shows how conflict transformation was embraced as a strategy for peacebuilding.

### **3.2 Citizen Silence and the Capture of Key State Institutions**

During the period which came immediately after the war, Zimbabwe's economy grew and showed a lot of potential (Law 2009: 49). However, as the economy grew, the ruling elites were working on concentrating power on themselves instead of national institutions and structures. Straw (1983) opines that ZANU PF leaders did not strictly follow socialist ideals as they accumulated unparalleled wealth, while workers' wages and salaries were poor. Ordinary citizens might not have observed that the national leaders were plundering national resources because they were still gripped by the euphoria of independence. However, this had ramifications.

One of the first institutions which was captured by the political elite was the army. Under the instruction of Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe had a battalion of soldiers, called the Fifth Brigade, trained in North Korea. The Fifth Brigade was in the forefront of tormenting mainly Ndebele-speaking people. What is striking about the Fifth Brigade, and perhaps the first step towards the capturing of national institutions, is that they did not follow proper army command channels. Mabhena (2014: 143) posits:

The Fifth Brigade was different from all other army units, in that it was not integrated into the army. It was answerable only to the Prime Minister and the ZANUPF central committee and not to the normal structures of the army. Their codes, uniforms, radios and equipment were not compatible with other army units. Their most distinguishing feature in the field was their red berets.

In addition, as the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade ravaged political activists in Matebeleland, other citizens did not raise alarm, as observed by Mashingaidze (2005: 85) who states that “even though the civil war was fuelled by ethnicity, local people in Matebeleland did not support the ‘dissidents’”. In addition, since Joshua Nkomo denied leading an insurrection, the so-called dissidents did not have political leadership and party support (Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger 2000: 181). Zimbabweans have followed this character, where they prefer to be passive onlookers or even worse, they become armchair critics of democratic and progressive activists, as revealed on Nehanda Radio (Are we a nation of armchair critics? 2016). Ultimately, the oppressor benefits as they go ahead with their actions with little or no resistance. It is likely that the citizens’ and politicians’ indifference to the plight of the so-called dissidents, particularly at the beginning of the war, could have played a role in increasing the insurgency.

It is important to note that through silence or deciding not to question the then Prime Minister Robert Mugabe’s excessive powers as well as not supporting citizens who were being victimised, citizens ceded their powers to oppressors. Ayvazian (2011: 3) postulates that:

Members of the dominant group who are not perpetrators of violence often collude, through their silence and inactivity, with those who are. Allied behaviour is an effective

way of interrupting the cycle of violence by breaking the silence that reinforces the cycle, and by promoting a new set of behaviours through modelling and mentoring.

Furthermore, victims of violence during the *Gukurahundi* era did not have community allies. According to Ayvazian (2011: 1), “An ally is a member of a dominant group in our society who works to dismantle any form of oppression from which she or he receives the benefit”. The lack of community support for the former ZIPRA forces, who were now mislabelled dissidents, meant that the citizens had accepted that Prime Minister Robert Mugabe could run a separate and almost personal army in the form of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade. As a way of communication, silence is viewed as politeness or accent, as postulated by Sue and Sue (1977: 427) who state that “Oftentimes, silence is a sign of politeness and respect rather than lack of desire to continue speaking”. The civil service was also complicit – most civil service organisations either did not pick up or ignored the disturbances happening in the Matebeleland region. Chirimambowa and Chimedza (2014: 73) posit that:

In the early 1980s civil society was generally focused on ‘development’ or ‘welfare’ – examples included the Association of Women’s Clubs (AWC) and the Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP). There were also white-dominated organisations like the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) and the Employers’ Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ), which wielded a strong policy influence over the state.

The civil society organisations operating in Zimbabwe in the early 1980s complimented government’s roles in providing stable living to citizens. However, in the rush to compliment and align with the new government, the civil society neglected its role of being watch dogs. Using the *Gutsaruzhinji* (socialism) and *Gwara remusangano* (ZANU PF ideology) rhetoric, the government managed to manipulate the civil society to follow its whims, for it to be acceptable or to be seen as working for the people (Chirimambowa and Chimedza 2014: 74). Reflecting on the role of the civil society in the years immediately after Zimbabwe’s independence, Moyo (1993: 7) argues that:

Civil Society groups, such as trade unions and student movements, which had operated underground during the days of settler government and which had hoped to attain legitimacy after independence were left bleeding by the ruling party's tactics, and some organisations bled to death because they failed to find any political space for independent policy action arising from self-management and self-organisation without state tutelage.

Hawker (2009: 12) adds that “Western government and donor organisations took a benign view of Zimbabwe until about the turn of the century, overlooking the oppression of the Ndebele people in the early years of independence”. Even though in later years the civil society was active in holding government to account on human rights abuses, their reluctance to face the system when President Mugabe was an undeniable darling of the people and foreign nations, in a way led to the disastrous *Gukurahundi*.

Currently, most Zimbabwean citizens either lack enough courage or are reluctant to question ridiculous activities of some of the State Security agencies, like the Zimbabwe Republic Police. This is regardless of the fact that there are laws protecting citizens. The Ministry of Home Affairs, who is responsible for the police, has on a number of occasions, called out ordinary citizens to resist abuse as well as to ‘police the police’. Reporting for the Herald Newspaper on traffic laws abuse, Mrewa (2017) quoted the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs saying “Of late we have been receiving complaints, but no one has brought forward concrete evidence of spikes being thrown at cars. Measures such as level 12 fines of \$3 000 or 10 years’ imprisonment can be taken against unruly officers”. Evidence from the ground suggests that this is not mere talk from the Minister, as rogue cops are being arrested. However, because of the citizens’ silence, police brutality and corruption persists.

### **3.3 Citizens Perpetuating Images of Violence**

Even though *Gukurahundi* ended in 1987, the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade army, which was created for the purposes of victimising former ZIPRA combatants and Ndebele people, had a distinct dress, the red beret. To date, the Zimbabwe Military Police wears the red beret and they are known for using brute

force in their operations. It seems that there has not been an effort to at least protect citizens from the torturing memories of *Gukurahundi* brought up by the images of the army uniforms.

The naming and mislabelling of former soldiers who had quit the army due to fear of repression and becoming targets of violence, was strategically done to create enmity and exclusion of people who did not conform to the government's dictates. The terms 'dissidents', 'bandits' and 'Super-ZAPU' were therefore used by the government to depoliticise all defected ex-ZIPRA combatants (CCJPZ 1997: 34). Effectively, ZANU PF conjured up memories of the liberation war by giving sell-out labels to citizens who had divergent views. Unfortunately, citizens in present-day Zimbabwe still use divisive labels, for instance, I live in ward 15 in Mkoba, Gweru, and that same ward is called *Gukurahundi* ward in the ZANU PF system.

It is not uncommon to find young Shona people threaten their Ndebele counterparts with the return of *Gukurahundi*, particularly at soccer matches involving Highlanders and Dynamos (Ncube 2014). These young people, and probably some older people, use the *Gukurahundi* inference innocently, since there is not much public discussion about the topic. From my personal experiences, the Ndebele people do not make the situation any better, and attempts to reach out and speak out about the *Gukurahundi* era, particularly with young people, is usually met with unexplained resistance. Often, I have had responses saying, "*we are not going to speak about that*" or "*let's talk about something else*". However, from the non-verbal language, such responses suggest young Ndebele people are deeply disturbed by this period.

However, some who speak out, particularly in academic settings, show that their experience of the phase is imported and often meant to seek political pittance. There is no real desire to effectively deal with this problem. This is not to conceal the ruinous effects of *Gukurahundi*, but just to highlight that the epoch is used as a currency to gain political relevancy. As mentioned in the previous chapter, opposition political parties trivialise *Gukurahundi* by using it to canvass for electoral support. They obviously know that "Memories are part of each party's socially constructed understanding of the situation, shaped by culture and learning" (Miall 2004: 8). Hence, they want to invoke memories which make people hate ZANU PF. After elections, they go silent and forget that they have elicited painful memories that can cause damaging conflict. In the



meantime, they have brewed violence and hate, as the discussion on *Gukurahundi* leads the Ndebele to conflate ZANU PF and Shona people, due to the composition of the 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade (Ncube 2014). Unfortunately, this recollection of the past has potential to lead to deadly conflict if not handled well. According to Miall (2004: 8), “the way groups remember and construct their past is often central to the mobilisation of conflict”.

Supporters and officials of the two leading parties in Zimbabwe, the MDC and the ZANU PF, still use hate and divisive speech when referring to their political rivals. One of the most commonly used terms at national and district (or grassroots) levels is ‘sell-out’. This term contains intolerance and hate. According to Scarnecchia (2008:16), the culture of intolerance which evolved from the late 1950s meant that “the term ‘sell-out’ no longer simply applied to those who were seen as working for the settler government . . . but also to other intellectuals and politicians who tried to forge ahead independently of the leadership clique”.

### **3.4 Single and Divisive Narrative of Violence**

To its credit, the newly-elected government initiated and saw through massive development. However, the *Gutsaruzhinji* (socialism) economics which the government pursued led people to over-rely on the government for development, and the consequence which was felt just after two years into self-rule was that the progress blinded citizens and even the international community to the brazen brutality which the people of Mataebeleland and the Midlands Provinces faced. According to Scarnecchia (2008: 68):

For many people outside of Zimbabwe, the details of what the *Gukurahundi* was and how it has shaped Zimbabwean politics is little known. A great deal of criticism has been made of scholars and the international community for not looking more critically at the *Gukurahundi* when it was occurring because the world was “in love” with Mugabe and the newly independent Zimbabwe.

The details of *Gukurahundi* are not just scanty to people outside Zimbabwe, many locals, particularly of Shona descent, do not know the gory details of *Gukurahundi*. There is a paucity of literature discussing the effects of *Gukurahundi* on the Shona, and as a result there is a single

narrative. Hawkes (2009: 14) avers that “Though the events in Matabeleland were extensively reported, few Western governments said anything and in the scholarly literature a similar silence was observed. Documenting silence is more difficult than the reverse and a couple of examples must suffice”. The earliest and most comprehensive accounts of *Gukurahundi* revealed to the public were through a report by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) and the Legal Resource Foundation.

Mashingaidze (2005: 85) posits that “Although ethnicity was a factor in the war, in terms of its spatial dimensions, expressions and victims, its course did not altogether follow ethnic lines. The dissidents did not enjoy civilian support”. Anecdotal evidence of the effects of *Gukurahundi* on Shona people is also provided by Mlambo (2009: 17), who posits that:

When government forces, who were mostly Shona-speaking, cracked down on the dissidents, they were perceived to have used excessive force. Dissident activity included the kidnapping and murder of tourists, the burning down of churches and the murder of priests, and general terrorism. And yet, the government’s resolve to stop these dissident activities was internationally interpreted as an attempt to silence political opposition and to exterminate the Ndebele-speaking people. That interpretation alone had its own destabilising effects, which increased the bitterness of the Ndebele section of the population and fuelled political polarisation between the Shona and Ndebele.

While the most spread narrative of the victims of *Gukurahundi* is justifiably about the Ndebele, the Shona people who were victims of *Gukurahundi* probably also carry equal bitterness which inhibits them to relate well with others in the community. There is a need for the government, or better still, communities to acknowledge that *Gukurahundi* affected people across tribes, though the Ndebele were the worst affected. According to Mutero (2017), for Zimbabwean communities to effectively dialogue about *Gukurahundi*, “Shona people need and have to understand the chosen trauma Ndebele people face. And on their part Ndebele need to open-up to alternative narratives of tribalism”.

Scholars', activists' and ordinary citizens' preoccupation with the *Gukurahundi* era make it seem like the Shona and Ndebele people are the only groups faced with ethnic challenges in Zimbabwe. Zimbabweans of Malawian, Zambian and Mozambiquan origin are a subject of ridicule to the so-called native Zimbabweans. Chikowero (2008: 117) observes that:

Zimbabweans of Malawian ancestry are referred as “MaNyasalandi” or “Mabwidi” while those of Mozambican ancestry are called “MaMoskeni” or “MaChikunda.” Those who originate from both Malawi and Zambia are also called “MaChawa.” It has been argued that these people are Zimbabweans by naturalization as they have lived in Zimbabwe from the 1950s although, for political expediency, their legitimate status is now being questioned by the establishment. The establishment's notion of “super-patriotism” belies a desire to marginalize minorities in a manner that is antithetical to the national reconciliation policy.

The plight of minorities in Zimbabwe might not make international or even national headlines, but it is a problem bedevilling communities at their most basic structures. The demeaning labels alluded to by Chikowero are still being used in Mkoba. Unfortunately, residents use them to refer even to the fourth generation of immigrants, most of whom have never set foot in the countries ‘natives’ claim are their homes. Young women of Malawian origin for instance are targets of sexual jokes for their alleged participation in *Chinamwali*, a sexual rite. As a young man, I have experienced fellow young men from Malawi being ridiculed over *Sadaka*, a Chewa celebration. We often circulated misinformed accounts of the tradition. The most common and harmful lie that circulated was that when a Moslem dies, the dieners store the water used to clean the corpse for later use during *Sadaka*. These accounts of hateful mislabelling “marginalize minorities in a manner that is antithetical to the national reconciliation policy” (Chikowero 2008: 117).

There is a long history of a culture of political violence in Zimbabwe. It is an ahistorical fallacy to reclude the opposition political parties, particularly the MDC, from carrying the blame of political violence. According to Eppel (2009: 970), “In the rest of Zimbabwe, incidents of violence perpetrated by ZANU-PF have been far in excess of that of the MDC, by around 90 per cent”. Even though the role of the MDC in political violence is minimal, the party and its members should

desist from violent activities as well as champion social cohesion. Continued silence about the violence and undemocratic tendencies of the MDC at best nurture another violent and authoritarian political entity. In recent years, the MDC has been involved in a series of intra-party political violence (Zimbabwe Peace Project 2016).

### **3.5 Aid, Crippled Citizen Agency and Community Polarity**

Though the liberation war had led to massive destruction of the built environment, the social infrastructure was strengthened. Most black Zimbabweans across tribal and dialectical lines were united by the desire to topple the colonial power (Mashingaidze 2005). As a result, when the war ended, the ordinary citizens embraced the new nation as a Zimbabwe for all, which needed the efforts of everyone to prosper. To respond to people's hopes, the government moved in fast to accommodate socialist ideals to lead the growth of the new country's economy. At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe became a socialist state in which every citizen and every structure was expected to function for national development. Nyong'o (1987: 18) argues that "appropriate response to popular demands was developed; that development could be planned for; that planning essentially involved the optimum utilisation of available domestic and foreign resources to achieve certain growth targets; and that for the majority of popular masses to benefit, these growth targets had to be in the rural areas, hence rural development". However, this was the genesis of the usurping of citizens' agency in nation-building and their playing of a key role in the governance of Zimbabwe.

The culture of silence and being vocal when there is an opportunity to attract funding, is now ingrained in Zimbabwe's civil society. The President has called it the 'Madhuku strategy of survival'. Describing the Madhuku strategy of survival on his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday, Mugabe (2010) said:

We will be very exceedingly grateful to get rid of any dishonest persons because they don't serve the purpose of the government. They are not doing us any good at all. They are there, everywhere, in the private sector, in the public sector. Even in the opposition you find them, there are people who want to make money out of nothing. You have Madhuku, Madhuku, Madhuku, Madhuku. I don't know what he actually leads. It's called the NCA.

He congregates a handful of people, a group of three here and another set of two over there. Headlines scream that “he is going to do this” He is going to cause disturbances”. But the truth is that he would be broke. He provokes the police by doing streets protests. Consequently, he is beaten by the police. At times, he is arrested together with his three followers and that attracts the attention of news agencies such as the CNN. Stories in the news will be that Madhuku has been arrested and that gives him credence to beg for donor support. Some trickle to him with cheque books. At that point he goes quiet, but when his coffers run dry, he repeats the process. You see he has made his money. That’s how Madhuku survives. The Madhuku Strategy of survival.

Mlambo (2009: 22) avers that the Madhuku strategy has led both ZANU PF and MDC to focus on trivialities instead of key national issues. I argue that instead of following the Madhuku mentality, the civil society should always be vigilant and find its urgency in representing people rather than fund-raising.

As factionalism riddles political parties today, people within the same political ranks label each other as ‘sell-outs’. In communities, people who are labelled ‘sell-outs’ are usually left out of community development programmes or they do not benefit from aid programs. In the Mkoba community, it is common to witness neighbours shunning each other, particularly in times of need. For instance, residents have appropriated grassroots political party structures to organise assistance in cases of funerals. This assistance is not always determined by political parties and is not always an idea of politicians, rather it is just the concept of neighbourliness. Unfortunately, sell-outs or people who are viewed as uncooperative, rarely get neighbourly assistance. Such practices involving a lack of compassion and vengeance threaten to tear the community apart. Hammar (2005: 19) argues that “Village Development Committees and Ward Development Committees have remained local ZANU (PF) party committees and cells carried over from the liberation war but whose partisan and authoritarian practices pervaded both popular participation and democratic developmentalism”. Though being a construct of ZANU PF, these structures are not always ZANU PF structures, particularly in towns where the MDC dominates. However, they remain political. The localised polarity often cannot be dealt with effectively following political hierarchies since

feuding locals “are not prepared to be seen in the same place at the same time, their respective political parties have no way to move forward constructively at local level” (Eppel 2009: 973). The urge is to explore alternatives which ensure that all members of the community relate well.

### **3.6 The Church and Politicians Conniving to Disempower Citizens**

The previous treatment of religion in the preceding chapter covered a great deal on how politics and politicians in Zimbabwe interact. The discussion brought out the role that religious leaders played in fighting for Zimbabwe’s colonial independence as well as the fight against justice in post-colonial Zimbabwe. During the colonial times, most religious leaders and organisations seemed united in the fight against the Smith regime’s minority rule as well as their empowerment of the poor. Today, religion has been captured by both the ruling party and the opposition political parties to serve myopic political interests instead of serving the people. Politicians from across the divide scramble around and seek the endorsement of religious leaders when the country nears elections.

Campaigning at church gatherings has the clear advantage that the message reaches a lot of people at one time. However, there are accusations that religious organisations are relegating their ecumenical role of social transformation by siding with the ruling party ZANU PF and not being critical of the party’s human rights abuses. Matikiti (2014: 97) observes that:

AICs for a long time have identified themselves with ‘Pan Africanism,’ enabling them to fully participate against what they deem imperialistic agendas. They do so in pursuit of Pan African Movement’s goals of participation in the governing process and self-determination for African peoples. In this regard, the ACCZ has not been effective in its contribution towards social transformation in Zimbabwe. Instead, this ecumenical body has always been found supporting the status quo. The body appeared to always be manipulated by ZANU PF whenever the party needed numerical support for any agenda of its interest.

The mere fact that the church decides to openly side with a political entity in a country fraught with political polarity is problematic. It brings to question the church’s relationship with

congregants or just any other groupings who have divergent political views. The unholy alliance between some of the religious leaders and the politically powerful elites sees the two parties mortgaging on each other's powers.

The ruling party, ZANU PF, is accused of capturing the church by implanting its functionaries to lead religious associations. Matikiti (2014: 99) argues that "Zanu PF has heavily infiltrated ACCZ". It is difficult to refute this assertion when one looks at the conduct of ACCZ. According to Masvingise (2012), Johannes Ndanga, President of ACCZ, speaking on behalf of his organisation which has over seven million members, said "We want to express our solidarity with President Robert Mugabe and we want to say that we denounce political opportunists". The ACCZ also revoked Dr. Joice Mujuru's position as its patron when she was expelled from ZANU PF, showing that the position she occupied on the religious board was on political grounds.

While the government of Zimbabwe is rightly accused of causing the economic hardships and the social and political mess that the country finds itself in, some religious leaders, particularly Christian leaders, have taken advantage of the chaos to swindle desperate and unsuspecting citizens (Church and Civil Society Forum 2012). Many Prophetic and Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe are accused of taking advantage of and over-burdening hapless citizens, confirming Karl Marx's (year cited in Mclellan 1997: vi) view that "religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people".

Zimbabwe's declining political and economic fortunes have seen a growth in wealthy charismatic churches influencing the society and the politics of the day (Manyeruke and Hamauswa 2013). Nhumburudzi (2016: 16) also observes that "Because of the prevailing socio-economic and political problems that Zimbabweans were facing, Pentecostalism had attracted a huge following as people sought imminent divine intervention to their never-ending problems".

However in Zimbabwe today, the church is either divided over its role in the politics of the nation or at worst, some churches choose not to be involved. Treading the politics of Zimbabwe is a tall order for many religions. Kjellin (2012: 33) observes that "The major challenge for this

organization, and for all the ecclesiastical communities in Zimbabwe, is to remain outside of politics and to ensure that political polarization does not influence the Church”.

Instead of helping citizens who turn to the church for divine intervention, some Christian pastors and prophets are engaging in activities that make the poor people poorer. When religious organisations rip off poor gullible masses, at times stripping them of their hard-earned wealth, there are chances that in the long run the practice will demoralise and tatter the social fabric of the community. Commenting on the activities of charismatic prophets in Zimbabwe, Biri and Togarasei (2013: 83) said:

The prophets promised prosperity that is divinely instituted. They promised people that all the suffering would end, as long as people heeded God’s voice and contributed to the church in form of tithes and pledges. The prosperity prophets, however, stirred a lot of controversy in the country. There were accusations that the prosperity they preached was only realised by them as many of them moved from rags to riches.

Clearly, as ordinary Zimbabweans wrestle for the few economic opportunities provided by the government and other aid agencies, the role of the church, which is scuttling the processes and thus furthering the divisive plight, cannot be ignored.

Such nefarious activities being carried out by some Christian leaders are fuelled by the fact that in Zimbabwe, and perhaps like in many places, religious institutions are expected to help communities and even governments. Kjellin (2012: 50) argues that “The Church plays a role both on the centre stage and on smaller stages, in relation to politicians and decision-makers as well as in relation to the life situations of its members”. In addition, Basure and Taru (2014: 47) argue that “Religion can be seen to be not only a mirror image of societal processes, but also an answer to the various questions which individuals and society seek to answer. Death, wealth, health, illness, success and misfortune can all be understood and interpreted using religion”. Therefore, people easily trust religious leaders, who in turn misuse the trust and confidence vested in them. In the long run, some of the consequences include religious-based polarity.



History has it that native Zimbabweans turned against white missionaries in the pre-independence era after they realised that some of the promises made by missionaries were fake. Barret argues “Africans realized with some bitterness that the hopes aroused by the early days of Christian preaching would not materialize . . . Hope was replaced by frustration and resentment as they saw their traditional complex further disrupted by the expansion of white settler areas and the growth of towns”. While the pre-independence and the post-colonial contexts are very different in many ways, fake promises still have the potential to agitate citizens and lead them into conflicts of various forms. The current wave of frustration and conflict in Zimbabwe is being fuelled by ‘enlightened citizens’ who mockingly call prophets by the name ‘profits’, which has gained traction (Chitando 2013).

One of the greatest challenges that the Mkoba community, and by extension Zimbabwe, faces today is selfishness and a weak social capital, which could be in part a construction of the church. It’s possible that the Church has played a part in making citizens lose their sense of community and become individualistic. Chitando (2013: 99) states that “Pentecostal prophets proclaimed that God had grand plans for Zimbabweans. If they would commit themselves, pray and fast, their fortunes would be transformed in a very profound way. The emphasis was on individual transformation in the midst of massive structural challenges”. Most charismatic prophets are psychologically winning over congregants by manipulating the Bible to fit their non-spiritual and selfish needs (Chitando, Gunda and Kugler 2013). It is said that “the young prophets present themselves as standing in the line of the prophets of old, specifically those in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. They deploy the Bible as a defence and maintain that their exploits are biblical” (Ibid). Unfortunately, some of the ‘Biblical teachings’ are manipulated and they become non-inclusive and potentially divisive due to the emphasis on individualism.

### **3.6.1 Religious Intolerance and Homogeneity in Communities**

Unlike in other states, Zimbabwean citizens have not engaged in wars that have been triggered by religious intolerance. Nonetheless, there is hatred between people of the same religion or of different religions. Most of the conflict is triggered by a competition for followers as well as failing to appreciate that freedom of religion entails that people are free to lead a religious life of their choice. It is not uncommon to find Christians and Traditionalists trade insults over religion

(Myambo 2008: 2). At the community and family level, these differences are seen between “one pastor against pastor, member against member, tribe against tribe, one social stratum against another, one region against another, children against parents and so on” (Ibid.). As a result, religious intolerance may lead to irrevocable breaking of relations.

The number of ordinary Zimbabweans finding solace in Christianity is growing as the economy continues to sink (Maxwell 2006). As a result, there is competition for leadership positions in churches as potential leaders seek to strategically position themselves. Nhumburudzi (2016: 41) posits that “Some in the Pentecostal church today have employed diabolical means for them to succeed a church leadership office”. Most of these battles fought by aspiring leaders involve unassuming ordinary members. The enormity started in church inevitably spreads to the daily lives of congregants in the community, thus destabilising sublime interaction.

There is also inter-denominational polarity perpetuated by the need to expand the numbers of church members. The competition inhibits different denominations to cooperate or complement each other in community service work. Kjellin (2012: 34) notes that:

There is no obvious cooperation between churches at the local level; to the contrary, it is not unusual for established churches to evince certain scepticism towards the Pentecostal churches that are attracting new members. These new churches especially attract young people. But even the oldest Pentecostal churches, such as the Assemblies of God, are sometimes received with scepticism by other denominations, and vice versa.

It is very important for churches to complement each other’s competencies in social service provision as this might increase their impact and in turn attract more converts. Unfortunately, hindsight, cripples some church leaders. Kjellin further notes that “Ecumenical relationships can even be seen as threats against a Church’s very identity” (Ibid.). The reluctance towards pluralism exhibited by some church leaders inevitably affects ordinary congregants and the community at large.

Zimbabwe allows for religious freedom through the provisions of the Constitution. Followership of the religions is distributed as follows: “(part Christian, part indigenous beliefs) Christian 81%, Baha’i 0.32%, Muslim 0.73% and other 0.42%, Ethno-religions 15.86%, and Agnostics 1.01” (Gwaravanda, Masitera and Muzambi 2013: 222). However, amongst all the named religions, Christians and Traditionalists openly fan conflict. Members of both faiths believe that their religion is ‘the’ conviction and everyone not conforming to it is a lost sinner. Biri (2012: 37) observes that:

Many Pentecostal or “born again” Church services are characterised by the theology of “deliverance from powers of darkness” that ruin the life of a Christian. Located within the rubric of “powers of darkness” are African traditional religions and culture (ATRs). ATRs have been condemned by Pentecostals as demonic so a “born again” Christian needs a “total break from the past”, supposedly achieved through its denunciation.

Implied here is that services work towards inculcating and propagating messages of intolerance and hate in the community. Usually, in Mkoba and in many other Zimbabwean communities, people, including relatives attribute a streak of bad omen to witchcraft. People openly following ATRs are often regarded as the witches and are ostracised (Chavhunduka 2001). These divisions, brought about through misunderstandings or not appreciating religious pluralism, affect the most basic component of communities, the individual.

Regardless of the fact that the country has a variety of religions, the education system does not follow a multi-faith approach. This is a rather unfortunate situation that in the school system, which is another platform for socialisation and learning, the unlearning and re-learning of cultures does little to prepare students to live in a community with people of different religions. In a study that reviews Zimbabwe’s Ordinary Level Religious Studies curricula, Gwaravanda, Masitera and Muzambi (2013: 222) posit that:

The syllabus is designed for a multi-faith society as reflected in schools yet other religions like African Traditional Religions (ATR), Islam, Buddhism, Baha’i and atheists among others, are excluded from the syllabus. Thirdly, the virtue of respect

for other religions remains elusive to the syllabus because there is no comparative analysis from other religions to give an appreciation of interfaith dialogue. Fourthly, the syllabus does not give flexibility and open-mindedness that is needed in the globalised world because the method used requires the pupils to be descriptive rather than analytical.

Most Zimbabweans go to school until they sit for their Ordinary Level examinations, also known as form four examinations, and at this level they are not prepared to make critical analysis of issues. To add to that, as has already been discussed, the church fans intolerance. Therefore, this means many people are oriented by the school towards despising other religions. There is a need for interventions which raise awareness on the multiplicity of religion or which bring people of different religions and denominations together to cordially work together for the benefit of the community. An absence of awareness has resulted in an ignorance which is leading people in the community to fuel conflict in their individual capacities.

People break relations with their neighbours, siblings and extended family on the basis of religious differences. While churches and the government can lead processes of tolerance, the community can also take a lead in transforming relations through initiating or taking part in activities that exalt appreciation of cultural or religious variances and parallels. Besides accepting that there are various forms or denominations of Christianity, Zimbabwean communities need to be awakened to the presence of many religions, if sustainable change is to be achieved. It will not be wise to rule out the possibility of conflict emerging, for example, between Christians and Buddhists, in the case that ATR becomes weaker. In any case, the misunderstanding of the *Sadaka* ceremony discussed earlier foments conflict.

### **3.7 Citizen Journalism as an Albatross to Peaceful Co-existence**

One of the shackles to democracy in Zimbabwe has been an unfair press. The government of Zimbabwe has been accused of promulgating the laws included in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA 2002), the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA 2001) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA 2002), which stifle plural voices, media freedom and

freedom of association. Commenting on media-muting and freedoms, Alexander (2006: 46) argues that:

The ruling elites mightily prejudiced mainstream media, slanting it towards their official explanation of the events unfolding in the country, leaving the Oppositionists with no space to tell their own narrative. Even the indigenous communication systems of public gatherings, music or theatre are manipulated, with acts or performance considered too critical of the government banned.

The public-owned and government-controlled media usually bears the brunt of critiques. It appears as if other media players practise fair journalism but that is not the case. Both public and private media houses play a part in increasing tension in Zimbabwe. There is an identifiable rift between the private media and public media which is indicative of the community set-up. Furthermore, both the private and public media play a part in stifling citizens' voices and concerns. Citizens are not given an opportunity to dialogue through the media or shape the news that governs their days. Media scholar Takesure Pambuka (2017) opined on his social media feed that there is no press freedom and plurality of voices in the media. Pambuka (2017) further argues that:

Press freedom extends to the right of the citizenry to speak, be heard and reply. It's not simply about media stables' right to seek and inform the public. In Zimbabwe, it is saddening to note that both private and public media are facing insurmountable pressure from political forces, that is proprietors are exercising undue authority over what gets to be public information thereby neglecting the plurality of voices and opinions from the people. For example, our media's eternal focus on factionalism and political fights appears to be a deliberate ploy to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the glaring and loud suffering of the majority. The media are supposed to be the vanguard of development communication but ours are bent on glorifying political personalities instead of making politicians conscious of their jobs. Media pluralism is not about having 3 million television stations, it is about the variety of voices that interact in the media.

As the principal player in the media industry in Zimbabwe, the government of Zimbabwe has been rightfully condemned for setting a wrong precedent in media relations in Zimbabwe. However, citizens have embraced the new media as alternative platforms to tell counter and plural narratives about Zimbabwe. Manganga (2012: 111) posits that “the shrinking of the democratic space forcing citizens to resort to other counter-publics where they can have access to multiple and competing narratives and discourses. The Internet has emerged as an alternative public sphere for Zimbabweans within and outside the country”.

Sadly, with the upsurge of social media, ordinary citizens have been competing to spew vitriol, thus increasing polarity in communities. Mhlanga and Mpofu (2014) argue that the extent and amount of free speech practised on social media has altered the quality and quantity of social relations, as words are fired randomly like bullets, and in the process they are harming and killing relations and weakening the community’s social capital.

Citizens take to social media to canvass support for their preferred political parties as well as to speak about hugely-contested tribalism issues and conflict. The use of social media is welcome as an alternative public sphere “as they variously contribute to the salient democracy debates” (Mpofu 2013a). However, due to a plethora of causes, including a lack of training on media ethics, hatred in the wider communities’ citizens at times end up aggravating conflict (Mpofu 2013b: 116-118). Unfortunately, though social media is providing an outlet where the ordinary people and even the elite can say their opinion freely, there is little effective communication taking place.

There is evidence of competition and inflated egos hampering dialogue and fuelling hate speech as citizens fight to have their voices or points stand out (Sandvik 2009). Often the impoliteness is deliberate and “people have turned more nasty than reasonable” due to the cover of the internet (Baym 2006: 66). Implied here is that individuals have the agency to cause conflict without being sent or representing large group interests. Individualism, political polarity and loss of a sense of community is best exhibited by the online interactions done by its citizens and buoyed by the ‘open cover’ of the virtual spaces (Chibuwe and Ureke 2016). Social and political institutions are broken and some thrive on fanning hatred. Zimbabwe is nurturing a culture where relations are built on hate, malice, jealous, selfishness and individualism (Chirimamowa 2017). This research

employed cultural capital to engage with a music ensemble which was a microcosm of the community in ways that transform unsustainable relationships.

### **3.8 The Mkoba Situation through the lenses of Conflict Transformation**

This study acknowledges that the government, opposition political parties as well as religious bodies, among other bigger institutions, have a role to play in the conflict happening in Mkoba. The foregoing discussion attempted to illuminate that the polarity between and among residents follows particular patterns which include tribes, political parties, religion and even mere opinion. Lederach (2003: 34) argues that when drawing a conflict map, “the immediate issues are rooted in a context – patterns of relationships and structures all with a history”. The conflicts that the Mkoba community face today follow different but related patterns which stretch over varying lengths of time. The community has over the years been structured to accept and normalise different forms of violence.

As I discuss the conflict in Mkoba and perhaps the rest of Zimbabwe, I see it as important to first highlight that the ineffective national healing programs in Zimbabwe have nevertheless been very important in restraining the country from plunging into an armed conflict. My position is influenced by Galtung’s (1969: 167) assertion that “the use of the term peace may itself be peace-productive, producing a common basis, a feeling of communality in purpose that may pave the ground for deeper ties later on”. Residents of Mkoba today face numerous conflicts as their well-being is being violated from many fronts. Often in discussions about Zimbabwe, there is a tendency not to highlight the part that the government has played in attempts at peacebuilding. This is because the long-standing and contested government of Zimbabwe has had its hand on many violent acts. However, due to the peacebuilding process that the government initiated, this research was able to focus on and work with individuals in building a better community which boasts of norms of trust, respect, reciprocity and tolerance.

Moving on, there is a plethora of definitions attempting to explain what a conflict is. The situation presented in Mkoba at best defines conflict. Most conflicts in Mkoba are a result of a lack of compromise, greed, power, hunger and the inability to find each other through processes which include, but are not limited to, dialogue. Beliefs and attitudes which perpetuate community conflict

are largely psychological. In other words, conflict is a social construct. There are high chances of conflict wherever people gather, by design or by default. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005: 18) argue that conflict is omnipresent and it manifests even during non-violent campaigns.

Though most of the definitions are worded differently, the general understanding is that a conflict subsists when there is a divergence of interests between different parties (Gillhespy and Hayman 2011). According to Anstey (1999: 6), “Social conflict is a relationship when two parties believe that their aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously, or perceive a divergence in their values, needs or interests (latent conflict) and purposefully employ their power in an effort to eliminate, defeat, neutralise, or change each other to protect or further in the interaction (manifest conflict)”. On the other hand, Cooper (2003: 85) posits that:

Conflict is an ineradicable part of human condition and it occurs when the interests of one party come by accident or design into engagement with those of another or others . . . conflict develops when something is propelled in the space already occupied by something else that cannot readily accommodate this new presence.

Common to many definitions of conflict is that it is a relational phenomenon. The study was motivated by Chikwanda’s (2014) proposal not to view conflict as just an albatross to development but also to look at it as an opportunity to bring about social change. Chikwanda (2014: 54) notes that “conflict is neither negative nor positive but a neutral and necessary cause for social change. What is fundamental therefore is the manner in which a conflict is perceived and then handled”. Therefore for this research, which intended to contribute towards building sublime living in the community, it was important to use lenses which appreciate that conflict is part of human life and that it can be turned around to help the community or can be resolved to build new, pleasant and ever-changing realities, hence the term ‘conflict transformation’.

### **3.9 Why Conflict Transformation?**

The discussion on Zimbabwe’s political and social background illuminated that Mkoba is home to individualistic and polarised citizens. The thrust of this research was to build relations between participants with a view to improving the community’s wellbeing. Conflict transformation follows



a path where the society looks at skirmishes as a pedestal for launching positive deeds. It is desirous to have a society where cooperation and collectivism benefits the community. The theory and practice of conflict transformation focuses on “building right relationships and social structures” (Lederach 2003: 4). The Centre for Multi-Party Democracy (2008: 12) opines that “Conflict transformation is a more systematic approach, one that makes use of our experience and wisdom. Knowledge about the nature of conflict is used to develop systems, instruments and skills that can help us gain a better understanding of conflicts and deal with them more satisfactorily”. Similarly, in Lederach’s view, such turns are normal and should be followed if there is to be real transformation. Lederach (2003: 14) posits that:

Conflict Transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.

These explanations bring attention to the fact that transformation is a process which follows an undulating plane. Conflict transformation requires truthful commitment to changing adversarial relations into cordial relations.

The focus on building relationships comes from an understanding that a fragmented society is an impediment to peace and development and that when a society is closely knit there is widely-shared progress (Saunders 2001). In addition, Miall (2004: 4) argues that “Relationships affect the whole fabric of interaction within the society in which conflict takes place”. As a result, the basis of the peacebuilding work done in this research was relationships. The challenges that were solved as well as the solutions came from relationships.

Due to its quest to build lasting and sustainable infrastructures of peace, conflict transformation follows systematic processes which have due regard for the root of the problem just as they see the need to solve surfacing challenges. It is for that reason that the previous chapter, together with this chapter, give an in-depth analysis of violence in Zimbabwe. The intervention methods which were used made it possible for participants to think beyond the current episodes of violence. The

participants lived experiences but were affected by similar conditions in different ways. Therefore, as shall be seen in later stages, the conflict transformation process was meandering and it took unexpected turns. Lederach (2003: 10) proposes that the route to conflict transformation embraces multi-dimensional lenses held together within one frame. The lenses make it possible to look at the historical patterns and knit relationships between the immediate conflict. Lederach (Ibid.) further posits that:

. . . we need a lens to see beyond the presenting problems toward the deeper patterns of relationship, including the context in which the conflict finds expression . . . we need a conceptual framework that holds these perspectives together, one that permits us to connect the presenting problems with deeper relational patterns.

This is an eclectic and flexible approach of handling conflict which deals with both the immediate challenges as well as the underlying patterns and context, if not simultaneously, then in cognisance of the other. Conflict transformation speaks to a metamorphosis of harmful interactions, cultures of polarity, intolerance and selfishness, hence the decision to follow its guidance in sustainably mending systemic polarity in Mkoba.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

The chapter's discussion on how the conflict is played out in the media and other socialisation institutions such as churches shows that citizens are left with no one to look up to. As such, the following chapter addresses social capital, the community and the performing arts, with a view to borrow ideas on how residents of Mkoba can effectively participate in mapping and implementing change within their community regardless of the differences cascaded down onto them by the political and social elites. This multi-disciplinary study employed the lenses of the Social Enhancement model of music, the social entrepreneurial behavior theory and asset-based community development to understand and implement an intervention which strengthened the community's social capital. However, these theories were undergirded by conflict transformation theory with a view to leveraging the urgency of individuals and the cooperation of many to achieve the greater common good.

## **CHAPTER 4: PERFORMING ARTS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This study is focused on strengthening the social capital of the Mkoba community, through creating a music ensemble and subsequently presenting musical performances. Art plays a salient role in providing an experiential platform for people to meet and dialogue for the greater good of the community. This chapter reviews the literature relating to social capital theory and its relationship to peacebuilding and community-based creative entrepreneurship. Since the use of arts for social change in this project is primarily focused on strengthening the community's social capital, the discussion will start by unpacking the concept of social capital and how it affects and is affected by various facets of the economy and our daily living. Thereafter, the focus will be on how art in its various forms has been used for social change.

The final section of the chapter tries to find a nexus between arts for social change and social capital. With an understanding that the arts entail so many disciplines, the study focuses on the performing arts, particularly music and dance performance. However, the process of building relations between ensemble members took insights from theatre-based techniques. The role of music in society will be critically analysed, including how it affects individuals and a group of people. In cognisance of the fact that this study is being done in Zimbabwe, a country with a long history of repression of the citizens' freedoms such as freedom of speech and association, the study will take an in-depth analysis of how music, and by extension expressive performance art, can be used effectively in unsafe environments such as Zimbabwe.

### **4.2 What is social capital?**

The term social capital has been a buzzword in recent years. It has been used by development economists, chief among them the World Bank, as well as democracy and peacebuilding activists. A comprehensive explanation is provided by Putnam (1993: 167) who demythologises social capital from an abstract academic concept through a contextual explanation which removes complexities, imagined or real, associated with social capital. He propounds that:

Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence . . . For example, a group whose members' manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust . . . In a farming community . . . Where one farmer got his hay baled by another and where farm tools are extensively borrowed and lent, the social capital allows each farmer to get his work done with less physical capital in the form of tools and equipment.

Similarly, as in Putnam's reading of social capital, McConnel (2016: 134) argues that social capital is the value of relationships accrued by individuals through belonging to and sustaining networks. The concept of social capital is unpacked here as the qualities of social organisation such as trust, norms, relations and synergies enabling a people to accrue communal benefits. McConnel's suggestion has ties with Putnam's inference which points to an unconventional use of the term 'capital', a term that is usually related to either some form of material resource or money but that is used here to refer to an intangible and innumerable commodity (Putnam 1993: 167). Similarly, in Collier's (1998: 1) words, social capital is social because it involves people being sociable. Ordinarily, definitions and explanations in the same mould with the one provided by Collier are not enough to offer a clear understanding because 'social' remains unpacked in that explanation. But in this instance, the repetitive emphasis suggests that 'social' has currency in social capital.

According to Harrington (2005: 2), the words "social and society derive from the Latin words *socius* and *societas*. For the Romans, a *socius* was a member trading partnership. A *socius* was a merchant cooperating with other merchants as a partner associate". The inferred definition of 'social', derived from consulting social theorists, is that it relates to the organisation of the society involving or allowing friendly relations. Harrington (Ibid.) further states that "it is concerned with relations of sociation between members or partners including not only business partners, but a great many other kinds and processes of sociation and socialisation between individuals". On the other hand, 'capital' can be understood as relating to assets or resources crucial in giving life to an entity and sustaining its life. To that end, if treated as an independent clause where 'social' qualifies

‘capital’ and we pursue its meaning through etymology, social capital will mean the use of affable relations to give birth to and nourish sublime living and society construction.

Helen Gould (2001: 90) states that social capital “is the wealth of the community measured not in economic but in human terms. Its currency is relationships, networks and local partnerships. Each transaction is an investment which, over time, yields trust, reciprocity and sustainable improvements to quality of life”. In addition, Mercer (2002: 33) explains that “social capital refers to the institutions, relationships and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interaction and is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable”. The consensus, here again, is that social capital is an investment in human infrastructure, where living cordially in communities is envisaged to better a people’s life. Realising that social capital relates to how people live together, this discussion proceeds to debate Ubuntu, which is considered to be the underpinning worldview for most people in Southern Africa.

#### **4.3 The nexus between Social Capital and Ubuntu**

As discussed earlier on, social capital entails trust, reciprocity and the working together of community members, thus it has similar constructs as Ubuntu, referred to by Mkhize (2008) as the process of becoming a human being. The Ubuntu world view requires every individual to maintain social justice, to be empathic to others, to be respectful and to have a conscience. A profound explanation of Ubuntu is given by famed pacifist Desmond Tutu who is cited in De Jager (2010: 21) saying:

One of the sayings in our country is ubuntu – the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can’t exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can’t be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality – ubuntu you are known for your generosity . . . We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity.

Stated in a different manner, Archbishop Tutu is suggesting that bad actions or evil spreads and harms many. In support of Tutu, the pan Africanist and scholar Letseka (2000: 184) posits that “the underlying concern of Ubuntu (humaneness) is with the welfare of others”. Implicit here is that every individual’s actions should be considerate and cognisant that they do not live in a vacuum. It is important to note that the Ubuntu philosophy does not encourage people to neglect their personal aspirations. Rather, one can pursue one’s individual aspirations but these should be communally-rooted. Hence the adage, “*Umntu umuntu ngabantu*”, which explains that a person’s humanity can only be experienced through their interaction with other people. Letseka (2000: 180) argues that “ubuntu has normative implications in that it encapsulates moral norms and values such as ‘altruism, kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, courtesy, and respect and concern for others’”. On the other hand, social capital, as put forward by Coleman (1990), is a mix of interpersonal and group relationships facilitating each individual to reach goals which ordinarily are impossible to achieve without the support of one’s network. Coleman (1998) states that one of the major effects of social capital is producing human capital in future generations. Social capital is essential for a child’s emotional and intellectual growth. In fact, children are extremely influenced by the family’s human capital, however, this can lead to unpleasant results, that is, when family is not of great importance in the children’s life or when this human capital is used mainly outside the household (Coleman 1998).

Evidently, reciprocity has a huge currency in both ubuntu and social capital. The difference between Ubuntu and social capital is that while the former prescribes desirable and acceptable forms of human conduct in a community of people, the latter facilitates such. In other words, Ubuntu is a *way of* life, whereas social capital is a *way to* a life. According to Mangena (2012: 11), “Hunhu/Ubuntu is not only a dialogical African moral theory, it is also a way of life. This means that hunhu/ubuntu does not only evaluate and justify moral acts in African settings but it is also a world view for the Africans”. To that end, high moral transgressions are proscribed within the ubuntu philosophy as they hamper progress and weaken the community by causing separation between people.

Nonetheless, moral transgression could be rectified if the community works interactively to re-establish social connection, interdependence and hence moral community (Mangena and Chitando

2011). Based on the Ubuntu philosophy, people are learning beings who strive to become better beings through interaction with others. Personhood thus becomes a making of the other. Without digressing, it is interesting to note that this reading of Ubuntu has ties with Participatory Action Research methodologies used to facilitate and mend relations and bring positive social change in Mkoba. According to Kaye (2017: 6) “Action research in a more informal sense has existed for generations, particularly in pluralistic societies that value consultative approaches to problem-solving”.

Communities such as Zimbabwe, that have embraced the Ubuntu philosophy, need to have a strong social capital for them to better their economies and subsequently mitigate conflict. It is critical to note that every people have set norms, traditions and customs and these are almost always society-specific. Culture varies from one society to another, and at times even within one community diversity is often mistaken for difference and leading to conflict. In Zimbabwe for example, tribal conflict between the Shona and Ndebele poses a huge challenge. However, both the Shona and Ndebele people live by the Ubuntu world view and they believe that a healthy society should work together in tackling challenges threatening their existence.

This study is set in Gweru, which falls between the Shona and Ndebele regions, hence a sizeable percentage of residents can speak both major local languages, although Shona is spoken by the majority, with approximately 30% speaking Ndebele (Manganga 2014). Both cultures have sets of idioms which support and/or encourage people to live together in harmony with a sense of community responsibility.

To buttress the importance and existence of Ubuntu in Zimbabwe, Mandova and Chingombe (2013) make a critical analysis of the Shona and Ndebele proverbs which anchor the philosophy of Ubuntu through encouraging communality. For example, the Shona have proverbs such as “*chara chimwe hachitswanyi inda*” which when literally translated means ‘one finger can’t crush lice’.

There is also a myriad of idioms in the Ndebele language and culture, one such expression being “*izandla ziyagezana*” meaning ‘hands wash each other’. The contextual meaning of both proverbs

is that much can be achieved through cooperation. In the context of this project, there are two significant points about the existence of these idioms in both the Shona and Ndebele culture. Firstly, their contextual meaning gives agency to cooperation and secondly, there is evidence that the Shona and Ndebele cultures have cultural parallels on how people in conflict can find ‘sameness’.

#### **4.4 Economy, Conflict and Social Capital**

Zimbabwe’s political crisis has been coupled with economic and social decline. Idleness and the lack of economic opportunities contributes to the chaos in Zimbabwe as young people turn to drug and substance abuse to relieve their pent-up frustrations (Gono 2014, Mugovha 2014). Conversely, drug-abuse incapacitates young people, thus stalling their potential to contribute to economic growth. In addition, drug-abuse leaves victims at the mercy of powerful politicians who manipulate them to become perpetrators of violence. The deliberate manipulation of young people by politicians to mete violence is emphasized by Lindsay Hilker and Erika Fraser (2009: 32) who posit that “in Zimbabwe, party elites recruited excluded youth into their youth wing and often used them to intimidate and brutalise the population”. This study thus realises that there is a strong link between poverty and conflict and sets to spark a community-led initiative which addresses economic woes and provides a platform for dialogue.

Zimbabwe is thus caught in a vicious cycle of poverty and polarity demanding an exigent strengthening of its social capital for economic amelioration and vice versa. Chikwanda (2014: 189) posits that as “people from poor socio-economic backgrounds tend to compete for the few available resources there is a possibility to develop worse suspicions, mistrust and anger, resulting in high levels of violence”. In other words, poor communities or communities whose economies are not performing efficiently have a weakened social capital and are a fertile environment for violence and polarity to thrive. Evidently, ailing economies contribute to incidences of violence and frosty relations in communities.

The study however realises that there is little that communities can do to directly change national economic fortunes, since the government has relegated citizens to the periphery of economic activities. To that end, focus is on strengthening the community’s social capital. Coleman (1998)



supports the idea of strengthening a community's social capital for economic and greater social benefit, saying social capital is usually coupled with physical, human and financial capitals, and that it is of paramount importance to note the difference that unlike the three previously-mentioned capitals, which are counted as personal belongings, social capital is mostly public and everyone can make use of it.

While economy has come to be strongly identified with money, economics is a much broader field to just think of in terms of money. Among many other things, it encompasses how scarce resources are distributed throughout a population. It is important to address the economy in the widest forms possible though paying particular attention to peculiarities. For instance, giving humanitarian aid and money to Zimbabwe has not bettered the economy, which is on a precipice. The country has been receiving generous donor support for humanitarian response, mainly from different governments. The European Union has pledged \$100 000 000 for Zimbabwe under the European Development Fund (EDF) 2014-2020 National Indicative Programme (NIP), while the USAID (2013) reports that "in 2016 they invested over \$253 million in Zimbabwe's health sector". According to United Nations Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF), which services across many sectors, disbursed 1,601,192,579 for the period 2012 to 2015, and in 2016 to 2020, the estimated support totalled \$1.6 billion (United Nations Zimbabwe: 35). The amounts the state, NGOs and the government have received is a lot, but challenges persist, bringing up the argument that monetary development assistance to African governments has led to dependency, encouraged corruption and ultimately perpetuated poor governance and poverty. This argument is supported by Dambisa Moyo (2009: 49, 58-59) who argues:

This is the vicious cycle of aid. The cycle that chokes off desperately needed investment, instils a culture of dependency, and facilitates rampant and systematic corruption, all with delirious consequences for growth .... However foreign aid perpetuates poverty and weakens civil society by increasing the burden of government and reducing civil freedoms .... Foreign aid does not strengthen the social capital it weakens it ... In the world of aid, there is no need or incentive to trust your neighbour, and no need for your neighbour to trust you .... Which is why foreign aid foment

conflict. The prospect of seizing power and gaining access to unlimited aid wealth is irresistible.

This thesis does not seek to dismiss the importance of bilateral and multilateral relations facilitating aid between nations and people with different nationalities, respectively. Instead, it acknowledges the importance of people and nations working together for the common good. However, it draws attention to the current debates on the efficacy, and lack thereof, of internally-drawn aid in developing countries. Eveleigh (2013: 6) argues that in Zimbabwe's cultural industries sector, there is a concern that "external financial support for arts and culture is more reactive and sporadic, than proactive and strategic". It is unfortunate that most arts for social change initiatives in Zimbabwe depend on the ever-dwindling and insufficient donor support, as the government is cash-strapped. In an intensive study on funding patterns of the culture sector, Eveleigh (2013: 7) found out that:

A major challenge facing the sector is that demand for funds far exceeds the capacity of donor agencies. This is well illustrated by the gaping disparity between applications received and funds awarded by the Culture Fund. Between 2007 and 2010, 5456 proposals were received requesting a total of 37 million USD: 447 of these were awarded through disbursements amounting to 798,256.11 USD. SIDA's annual support to Culture Fund during this period was 1 million USD. Of this, an average of less than 300,000 USD, or 1 third of the whole fund was given in grants.

More recently, Daniel Maposa, the Director of one of the very few thriving art-for-social-change NGOs in Zimbabwe, alluded to the fact that external funding is drying up and that it also does so little, particularly in terms of helping local cultural production and reproduction initiatives, due to skewed funding schemes (Maposa 2016). In cases where funding is available, the funding mechanisms have been criticised for impeding sustainability (Moyo 2009). To that end, the study engages the Zimbabwean community in addressing their economic and social concerns using local initiatives and locally-available resources.

However, the study is under no illusion that change will come as imagined. It realises that altruistic societies might be largely idealistic than they are real. It is rueful that “man’s needs are insatiable” as Umeogu (2012: 114) opines, which inevitably leads to selfishness in times of competition for few resources. Humanity’s proclivities to selfishness, regardless of its damage to common good, are aptly captured by game theorists. Hardin (1968: 1244) postulates “Therein is the tragedy. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit – in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pushing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons”. Individualism and selfishness raise an individual’s attention to being better than the next person, thus damaging the social fabric.

People in contexts such as Zimbabwe are highly susceptible to become corrupt and have individualistic tendencies, which are against the tenets of social capital. Gross political inequalities and dysfunctional economies also lead people to engage in unfair practices. Boix and Posner (1998: 688) argue that:

Co-operation among unequal people is problematic because there will always be incentives for the poor, who will naturally be dissatisfied with the existing distribution of assets, to defect from co-operative arrangements that perpetuate the status quo. Moreover, to maintain their political and economic privileges, the rich will manoeuvre to undermine any collective efforts that the poor may undertake to better their lot.

The current situation in Zimbabwe is that officials in the ZANU PF government have a well-known penchant of diverting public goods and even national programs to their individual benefit. Mbanga (2012: 459) states that “The indigenisation legislation, whereby all foreign and white-owned companies are required to cede 51% of their shares to black Zimbabweans, has been touted as a populist move. All but the most desperate and naive know that this is just another ploy for the few self-styled ‘liberators’ to grab yet more wealth in the name of the people”. The problem of people with a sense of entitlement, who want to benefit from programs, initiatives or goods that they have not helped in acquiring and hence do not deserve, is however not unique to ZANU PF.

Corruption in Zimbabwe has reached alarming levels, affecting all sectors of the economy. There are numerous cases of high-level corruption cases involving government ministers which have been swept under the carpet. Some of the most publicised corruption scandals by Zimbabwean government officials as noted by Hove (2016: 229) include the following:

Most notable scandals include the Willowvale, the VIP housing scheme, the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), and the War Victims Compensation Fund among others. Investigations were made on some of these scandals but efforts to investigate other scandals were resisted by every means by the Mugabe regime.

The worst case of corruption which shows that the rot has been normalised in Zimbabwe was casually publicised to the nation by President Robert Mugabe in February 2016 (Centre for Research and Development 2016: 1). To date, no one has been arrested for the corruption scandal. Trading Economics reports that “Zimbabwe is ranked number 154 least corrupt nation out of 175 countries” (Ibid). The immediate effect of corruption is that it breeds mistrust and greed. Bjørnskov (2013: 3) views that “increasing corruption could also lead to less honesty and trust in fellow citizens by way of signalling that honesty often does not pay”. In a study of corruption in Harare, and by extension Zimbabwe, Dube (2011: 23) observes that:

In Zimbabwe’s Harare metropolitan area, systemic corruption is now a way of life with most state public enterprise officials being the perpetrators of such activities, this, however, is an ethical dilemma. An ethical dilemma is a conflict between right and right, while moral temptation relates to conflict between wrong and right. Moral temptations are, for example, bribery and improper bidding practices. Ethical dilemmas are issues such as economic growth versus environmental protection, discipline versus compassion with employees and socio cultural norms versus professionalism. Such are conflicts between two or more right values and lie at the heart of ethical decision-making.

Corruption watchdogs such as the Transparency International Zimbabwe have been accused in media reports for being steeped in corrupt activities and paying lip services to the fight against

corruption (Mutingwende 2017). While I am acknowledging that there are many vices crippling Zimbabwe, corruption ranks high. It is highly possible that corruption in part causes the distrust and self-serving behaviours among Zimbabweans, which have also spread to civil societies. Masunungure (2009: 127) observes that “Zimbabwe’s civil society is characterised by a high, if not overdeveloped, sense of organisational sovereignty”. An organisational psychology militates against effective and sustained collaboration among civil society organisations as each organisation wants to do its own thing in its own way with little ‘interference’ from others”. Civil society organisations in Zimbabwe are not immune to corrupt tendencies and the effects of corruption.

Strengthening a community’s social capital is thus an imperative in building efficient civic organisations as well as reducing corruption. Bjørnskov (2013: 17) opines that higher levels of social capital lead to less corruption, both by implying more agents that are unlikely to accept a bribe and fewer attempts at bribing agents. Therefore, building networks of trust will have the effect of raising efficacious communities self-reliant on championing economic growth and generally sublime societal living.

Unfortunately, Zimbabwe’s systemic corruption, gross political inequalities and dysfunctional economy is leading people to engage in unfair practises. Competition and greed is also raising individuals to give attention to being better than the next person, thus weakening social capital and subsequently damaging the social fabric. Most scholars agree that social networks, norms, reciprocity, relationships and trust are the underlying tenets of social capital (Collier 2002, Paffenholz 2009, Paffenholz and Spurk 2006, Colletta and Cullen 2000, Putnam 2001, Mercer 2002).

Social networks are aptly described by Lin (2009) as the social infrastructure connecting the community to generate returns for individuals and collective use, while Putnam (2001: 20) explains reciprocity as doing good with a view that the one receiving your favour or someone else will return the favour. Initiating an act of goodness is therefore banking on trust, another construct of social capital that expects that recipients will return the goodness. The views raised above

suggest that a strengthened social capital is a resource which potentially enables communities to proffer solutions to their challenges through collective use of their diverse abilities.

However, social capital is not necessarily inherent in living together or living in the same neighbourhood. People should invest in cordial mutual relationships to enjoy the benefits of living together, as the absence of credible mutual commitment incentivises individuals to be selfish. However, there is a certain school of thought that questions the hype around social capital as well as its utilitarian role in bettering communal life and how social capital is built. Durlauf (1999) questions the assumptions and highlights some of the limitations of social capital. He asks “do trust-building social networks lead to efficacious communities, or do successful communities generate these types of social ties?” (Durlauf 1999: 3). Add to that, corrupt elements of the society are usually tied together through bonding social capital to be discussed later.

#### **4.5 Types of Social Capital and Relevance to Conflict Transformation and Social Change**

Literature boasts of a menu of varied definitions of the term social capital and what it entails. However, as alluded to earlier on, social capital denotes systems facilitating, or is a product of socio-economic organization, such as cosmology, trust, reciprocity, sharing of information and networks. Social capital can be broken down into cognitive and structural components. Since cognitive activities involve conscious mental activities which include reflecting, understanding, learning and retaining knowledge, they are thus the driving force behind reciprocity, trust and a sense of community responsibility. Structural social capital therefore refers to the relationships, networks and institutions providing a platform for people to use or share the products of cognitive social capital.

The networks and relationships making up social capital lead to either horizontal or vertical relationships, as espoused by Colletta and Cullen (2000). They state that “horizontal relationships are those that exist among equals or near equals; vertical relationships stem from hierarchical or unequal relations due to differences in power or resource bases” Colletta and Cullen (2000: 3). For this study, horizontal relationships are very important as they are the base on which the ensemble would be built. The idea is that through the music aestheticism and other widely-accepted cultural

activities, participants will manage to influence the community into forging relations across vertical and horizontal lines.

#### **4.5.1 Social capital and peacebuilding: Bridging Social Capital**

Bridging social capital as the name suggests connects separate or heterogeneous entities. It is a term used to refer to social capital as a resource located in the external relationships between actors, specifically focusing on social networks (Adler and Kwon 2002: 20). According to ABS (2002: 5), “Bridging refers to those relationships we have with people who are not like us and these may be people who are from a different socio-economic status, from a different generation or a different ethnicity”. The difference of bridging social capital from bonding social capital is that it is an inclusive connection between people from across ethnic, political, cultural, racial, religious and any other divides. Reference to bridging social capital as a weak variant of social capital does not imply that it’s less important.

Due to its ability to bring various people and networks together, bridging social capital is thus impartial and hence able to establish positive life-enhancing values and ties. Malmström (2014: 14) observes that “Efforts aiming towards increasing this type of weak ties within a larger group consisting of different identities and connections often lead to better economic opportunities, such as securing a job position and facilitate social support on community level”.

The usefulness of bridging social capital in facilitating wider communal action and cooperation is greater to what can be achieved through bonding social capital (Putnam 1993: 175). However, bridging social capital has its own deficiencies though not very pronounced. It is premised on the assumption that social capital is a resource which is equitably distributed across the society. This optimistic generalisation is sadly untrue, especially in countries experiencing other forms of inequality. In fact, Zimbabwe is an example of a country experiencing high levels of inequality in politics, income and resource allocation and as a result, even the social capital is weak amongst the poor and is unevenly distributed. As a result, the advantaged members of the community prejudice the disadvantaged, obstructing them from fully enjoying the benefits of social capital (Colletta and Cullen 2000: 15-16, Adler and Kwon 2002: 30). However, the marginalisation is not as rampant as it is in communities with a strong bonding social capital. The implication therefore

is that to achieve sustainability, the study should first focus on strengthening bonding social capital, hence the need to work on creating a small united ensemble first before reaching out to the community.

In addition, as has been discussed earlier, Zimbabwe is in a perennial electioneering mode, which causes and exacerbates conflict. Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights (2015) reports that “the 2014 political year in Zimbabwe was tumultuous to say the least. It was not an election year, but it had all of the drama that one would expect from an election period; campaigns, power shifts, constitutional amendments and a highly divided society”. Consequently, citizens are always creating pacts against each other, even from the same parties and communities, as exemplified by the intra-party conflicts in ZANU PF and the Movement for Democratic Change.

These conflicts lie within group ideologies and identities, hence the bonding social capital is stronger compared to the bridging social capital. Even when it is like that, the bonding social capital is continuously being eroded with such vices as corruption and mal-governance, which are weakening not only the economy but also citizenship. To that end, this study is motivated to focus on strengthening the social capital of the Mkoba community by first creating a social entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble, which can be thought of as a meeting place for young people who share the same vision regardless of other differences they might have. Secondly, to strengthen bridging social capital, the ensemble will create performances which use art as an experiential platform through which people can connect and dialogue for social change.

#### **4.5.2 Social capital and peacebuilding: Bonding Social Capital**

Bonding social capital refers to cohesion and trust within socially homogenous groups (Putnam 2000: 22). Putnam stresses that bonding social capital is a crucial aspect of social cohesion and proffers an assortment of benefits to both individuals and societies in entirety. He states that “bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilising solidarity” and constitutes “sociological superglue” (Putnam 2000: 22). To that end, bonding social capital is the first step towards social cohesion, which is important for the community to realise its economic potential. The concept of social cohesion is given by Berkman and Kawachi (2000: 175), who said that social capital is a subset of social cohesion:



Social cohesion refers to two broader intertwined features of society: (1) the absence of latent conflict whether in the form of income/wealth inequality; racial/ethnic tensions; disparities in political participation; or other forms of polarization; and (2) the presence of strong social bonds-measured by levels of trust and norms of reciprocity; the abundance of associations that bridge social divisions (civic society) and the presence of institutions of conflict management, e.g., responsive democracy, an independent judiciary, and an independent media.

Implied here is that social cohesion entails a web of heterogeneous relationships and networks, as opposed to homogenous networks and relationships which unfortunately exist in Zimbabwe and are fuelled by corruption and cronyism.

However, there are dangers likely to be created by bonding social network, hence the ensemble will be composed of people from different and divergent backgrounds. There is a danger that if bonding social is created in groups with minimal differences and many parallels, it can create powerful societies yet that are full of hate. Pluralism should not be cosmetic or be confused with quantity. Varshney (2001: 363) claims that “if communities are organised only along intra-ethnic lines and the interconnections with other communities are very weak or even non-existent, then ethnic violence is quite likely”. The adverse effects of bonding social capital are said to include the perpetuation of corruption and by extension other social, economic and political vices. Harris (2007: 8) observed that:

Within countries where the level of bonding social capital is high and encourages exclusion of outsiders, corrupters are more confident that their deals will be ‘honoured’ and reciprocated. This is because of the high degree of closeness of their relationships with their corrupt partners, which are likely to be through kinship or long-term friendship.

ABS also supports the notion that bonding social capital has the potential to obstruct social cohesion in certain environs. ABS (2002: 5) posits that:

The existence of some highly-bonded groups such as drug cartels, illegal immigrant smuggler groups, mafia operations and terrorist groups can embody high levels of internal trust and reciprocity, but use their bonding social capital to serve different ends, many of which do not serve the public interest or the community at large.

Bonding social capital is rightly condemned for its potential in causing conflict and other nefarious activities. However, it is practically impossible to do away with bonding capital in the quest for peace and social capital as it provides the primary tie between two or more parties. For any relationship to grow to include others, it starts with a union between two or more parties. Whether the union will generate positive results or not is really another matter, which in this case will be dealt with following the lenses of Brown's (2006) Social Enhancement Model of Music. Bonding social capital actually leads to the highly-acclaimed bridging social capital.

The use of music and dance for conflict transformation and/or peacebuilding is an enviable proposition as the art of music is easily accessible the world over, and Zimbabwe is no exception. Hassler and Greenwald (2009) speak about using music to make peace, arguing that musicians have long worked with activists or as activists to bring peace during eras such as the American peace and civil rights movements of the 1960s and 70s, to the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, to the 'Singing Revolution' that led to Estonian independence in 1991. They also observe that both professional musicians and the general public can successfully engage in the use of arts for social change (Ibid.). In the same vein, I also discuss the use of music to strengthen a community's social capital.

#### **4.6 Music as an alternative in a repressed environment.**

Prior to discussing the important utilitarian roles of music, it is imperative to discuss the contexts in which it will be used in this research. Zimbabwe presents an extremely difficult case in which to work towards conflict transformation and peacebuilding. On paper, the Zimbabwean government seems to be in support of efforts to transform conflicts and to unite the people, while their actions show signs of insincerity. The Organ on National Healing Reconciliation and Integration, which was formed by the Inclusive Government, has faced wide criticism for using an exogenous approach which did not manage to address the needs of local communities (Machakanja

2010, Mbire 2011). Mashingaidze argues that while the organ was supposed to function independently, interference and undue control by the ZANU PF government might have caused its failure. The government's interference is understood to be a result of past involvement of senior government officials in acts of violence (Machakanja 2010).

The ZANU PF government's neglect of programs and policies which help the general citizens is however not limited to peacebuilding, as espoused by Gatsheni (2003: 101) who states that "Zimbabwe's nationalism has now lost its noble emancipatory ideals and has become impervious to the human rights and democratic demands of the people". Likewise, the arts and culture sector is also being manipulated to match the ZANU PF master narrative. Siziba (2009: 12) postulates that "Culture and its production to date has been informed by patriarchy and gerontocracy and this has disadvantaged young people". In addition, the government is continuously watching individual and societal behaviour and whips those considered to be 'deviants' in order to correct their ways.

An awareness that the government is not sincere on its national healing processes (Machakanja, 2010) and their manipulation of culture production and consumption calls for creative ways through which communities can still work for peace without the government being aware or without raising alarm (Siziba, 2009). Although the obtaining situation poses a threat even to culturally-based conflict resolution strategies, societies by nature are not passive imbibers of cultural knowledge, and people internalise schemas or cultural models which have influence on their decision-making and behaviour (Scupin 2012: 43). In the midst of the repression, communities can lead their own healing and development using strategies which can survive in a hostile environment. Music and dance can ably provide a platform through which alternative cultural expressions can thrive (Siziba 2009, Mutero 2014). Artists and communities living under repression usually create cultural codes through which they can safely discuss their political and social problems.

The tensions bound in the country inevitably lead to the rise of a culture where the communities create safe cultural codes which they understand and use as a coping mechanism in the face of repression (Muwonwa 2012, Mutero 2014). By extension, I also argue that through music and dance, people can create communication alternatives which allow them to by-pass oppression and

divides existing across social, economic and political issues. Zimbabwe has a culture of impunity, where the leadership avoids interrogating and talking through past injustices, in an effort to avoid both inflicting harm to victims and safeguarding their own interests.

Music presents an experience through which the community can collectively wade through their diversity and create common grounds for further dialogue. The making and selection of music itself can potentially be mired in conflict. The conflict is bound to occur, emanating from differences in expressions and preferences (Mutero 2014: 46). The conflict experienced during the making of music and dance is an opportunity for a small group to dialogue and rehearse conflict resolution. Siziba (2009: 10) concurs that such challenges are bound but they are simultaneously viewed as in essence imbued with agency thus they are both constraining and enabling”. To that end, no matter how fragile Zimbabwe is, it provides a good context in which people can purposefully engage in cultural production for conflict resolution and transformation. The urge is therefore to find ways of creating a socially-aware music and dance ensemble and sustaining its impact even in unpredictable operating environments.

Music production and its use is susceptible to manipulation to meet certain ends, as forwarded by Brown (2006: 9) who points that “the use and control of music are motivated, specified, and controlled by social and economic functions, especially those related to behavioural control”. Implied here is that music can proffer social change, when meaningful and thoughtfully manipulated from production to consumption. Music as an agency has been tested and approved for social change projects. The undertone in Brown’s assertion however brings currency not just to music but to people who then manipulate the music in different contexts. It is thus in order to discuss how the arts bring about social change even in the most uncondusive environments.

Music was used to augment political efforts in the quest for peace in the highly volatile conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis over Jerusalem in the 1990s (Al-Tae 2002). Here, music was used by Palestinian singers in the promotion of what seemed to be a utopian coexistence of Arabs and Jews. The singers managed to effectively deploy music for the betterment of their highly-polarised society by embracing cultural diversity in the making and performance of music. Urbain (2005) also observes that music was successfully used for peacebuilding by Yair Dalal in

the Middle East “through masterfully playing the violin, mixing Jewish and Arab music organising concerts with musicians from both backgrounds, and sharing his views through interviews” (Urbain 2005: 204). Al-Taei acknowledges the political shortcomings in resolving conflict and argues that music “penetrates our souls and brings people together” (Al-Taei 2002: 55). As a result, music plays a seminal task in building cohesion within cultural communities “serving as a site for negotiation and contestation between groups” (Lipsitz 1994: 126). This study follows these successes by also taking people from across the social strata and divide. However, it differs in that the project is not led by an individual, and my role as a lead researcher is to stimulate the community ensemble into facilitating dialogue through music and dance performance. All the participants also have equal opportunity to share their views and determine the course of the intervention, consequently leading them to collectively draw parameters to guide how they will live together well.

Music has also been used to address issues on social cohesion in less politically-volatile environs such as post-apartheid South Africa. For instance, the national anthem which was adopted at independence in 1994 “begins with the Xhosa, Zulu, and Sotho versions of the popular hymn of the same name” (2012: 19) in order to bring people together. While the national anthem affords the people a unified voice, South African popular artists have also added their different messages which speak, though separately, to inclusivity in post-apartheid South Africa.

Commenting on the South African context, Balog *et al.* (2012) observe that “each artist searches for the solution to how post-apartheid music and culture should look, they do so separately. Maybe, though, until the two sides can find more common ground and purpose, it will be impossible to find die antwoord [the answer/solution]”. Implied here is that though the efforts of individual musicians are commendable, they will come to nothing if the musicians don’t unite and sing a shared song. Therefore, in order for a community to accrue sustainable benefits from music-making and performance, there is a need for the same community to be involved in either making or listening to music, and better yet, to be involved in both. Differently put, the success of any such initiative lies in the readiness of the community to cooperate.

Having said that, it is important to note that even though music-making and performance is not the beginning and the end of conflict resolution, music facilitates the community to work together regardless of differences. Rebecca Dirksen (2013: 49) submits that community musicians can undertake activism by emphasizing cultural parallels. Music alone or any other “cultural projects cannot change the order of society or remove embedded structural inequalities, but they do enable positive discourse and provide clear direction, as well as musical enjoyment” (Dirksen 2013: 50). Change lies in people and that is the reason why there is an urge even for scholars to engage in action researches which engage communities in making peace through ways that they have a sense. However, Dirksen (2013) does not detail how musicians respond to the change of context from commercial to community awareness shows, a gap this study will fill as it finds ways of bringing about economic transformation.

In Zimbabwe, this research follows findings from an ethnographic expository of how marginalised people from Gweru use *chinyambera* traditional dance to speak out against the socio-political challenges they face in Zimbabwe (Mutero 2014). Equally informing this research is Tony Perman’s (2010) study on *muchongoyo*, showing how non-verbal performance is connected to political interest and popular expressions of political sentiment of *Ndau* communities in Zimbabwe.

The above-mentioned research studies show that community musicians manage to speak out against crude political practices. It is therefore clear that it is possible to use art forms to engage in discussion which speak out against ill-governance. However, this study’s interest is not on voicing dissent, rather it intends to encourage people to work together for the common good regardless of political, social, ethnic or any other differences. By realising that the above research studies show that music can bring people together, and in cognisance of Rwafa’s assertion that communal music making promotes positive pluralism, individual accountability and equal participation (Rwafa 2014: 51), this study also intends to harness that magnetic power of music.

#### **4.7 Music and Collective Identity**

For music to be able to stimulate people into working together or following the ideals that it propagates, the people should identify with music. Robertson (2010) and Dirksen (2013) concede

that for music to reconcile ethnicities, the feuding parties should identify with the music and its ideals. Robertson argues that in order for the music used in transformation to be effective, the parties involved must feel connected to the music both ethnically and ideologically, or feel attracted to the possible social structures it may represent (Robertson 2010: 51).

In other words, making and playing music does not automatically work towards conflict transformation, and there should be conscious effort to make the music accepted by the community as well as to speak to challenges being faced by a community. It is thus important to discuss the notion of music identity. Group identity is based on shared beliefs, suffice it to say that collective identity hinges upon communally-accepted dogmas. As a medium for communication, music is integral to the production and reproduction of culture and belief systems. When Zimbabwean, and by extension African people, make music together with a sense of community, their experience and the music strengthen the shared beliefs, and by extension, social capital. The music becomes communally-owned and hence people identify themselves with music and they take pride in their collective creation and not for its technical musical qualities.

When music is used to bring about a social change or even when it accompanies a television commercial, the song almost always becomes synonymous with the product or what it is representing. Likewise, music in Zimbabwean settings is classified to identify with certain activities and even tribes. As an art form, African music has this particular trait of being representational, and it is made in a way that helps in understanding different experiences and systems of meaning, as well as the process of cultural diversity within specific societies (Nzewi 2007). Through music it is thus possible to get to know a people's experience with conflict, what they are afraid of and what holds them back from conflict resolution. Music provides a good platform for sharing experiences and dialoguing.

When communities make music, the messages contained therein usually represent the community's collective fears and hopes. In addition, music with profound messages is highly likely to be accepted by audiences. Boulez (1963: 34) observes that in non-Western music, the beauty of a composition is not based on how intricate the composition is or only on aesthetic enjoyment, but rather on its connection and usefulness in addressing the community's realities. In

addition, Haecker (2012: 24) posits that “music is inextricably tied to function and its value is measured in accordance to its cultural usefulness. Music’s aesthetic beauty or form is merely the conduit for expression of shared existence. Non-Western music invites communal participation, and with it, a reaffirmation of collective identity”.

Music was also used by American social movements not only for justice and equality but to affirm their collective identity. Eyerman (2002) argues that W. E. B. Du Bois believed that the arts should be used to construct, portray and propagate the best possible image of blacks, with a view to dampen the negativity associated with blacks. The American Civil Rights movement, also known as the singing movement, used songs “to connect the collective by linking past, present and future experiences creating a sense of empathic belonging” (Bassalé 2013: 28). Music was used here to champion a cause for civil rights as well as to serve as an identity pointer. This research is particularly important in that it shows that music can indeed rally people into focusing on a collective agenda.

The American social movement was spurred on by songs and its affiliations grew while at the same time people found belonging in the music. Bassalé (2013: 26) adds that “Whether through cultural exchange or social movements, music and songs are central in shaping modern cultures. Music as a carrier of past traditions bears images and symbols to help frame present day reality”. Implied here is that music informs how people in a society can behave as individuals and as people living together.

It is the same power of music that brings people together that I intend to take advantage of here. But most importantly, when people are brought together, the research will extend the role of music to affording every participant the chance to fully participate in the mapping and implementation of the activities, subsequently strengthening the social capital. During such processes of cultural exchange, musicians and composers will also actively modify existing musical forms and lyrics with a view to influencing collective behaviour and encouraging the community’s search of a new identity (Haecker 2012). Music is therefore important in the works of collectives as it can help them create an identity as well as bond them.



The power of music in conflict transformation is aptly captured by Byerly (2007) who acknowledges the power of music as a means of both conversation and conversion when she states:

Music presents an elegant yet complex model of non-violent conflict resolution that stresses the essential bi-directional nature of protest and resolution. It also reveals the importance of exposure to alternative environments, styles, and social groups, so that striking or meaningful musical works have the opportunity to be heard. These then have the prospect of becoming musical markers in individuals' lives, potentially leading to moments of truth and consequential changes of heart.

The fact that music can be a convergence zone for a community gives currency to the notion that it can be used as an experiential platform to stimulate dialogue, cooperation and peaceful coexistence in a community. It has already been established that music can draw the attention of everyone, even that of people with diverse ideas and worldviews. Music can thus present cultural parallels which everyone identifies with and is comfortable to use in creating their different songs. The fact that conflicting people or communities can have music as a common identity sets a stage where opposing ideas can coexist. Moments of truth are a very important aspect of conflict resolution as they allow survivors and perpetrators of abuse to share their stories with others, resulting in catharsis (Guthrey 2013: 43). Also implied is that music, music-making and the sharing of music facilitates dialogue which "is itself constitutive of redemptive self and social reconstruction for survivors" (McKinney 2008: 270). Music provides victims and perpetrators a clean slate on which they can engage peacefully, regardless of the context in which they live.

Music-making and enjoyment are practices that are easily accessible to all within a community regardless of status, and music-making activities can serve as giving a 'voice' to the community. In truth and reconciliation processes, the voice is described as an opportunity to speak out on one's experiences, allowing for further healing (Guthrey 2013: 51). Victims can therefore use music as a voice through which they can speak of their horrid experiences and most importantly, set the tone for the dialogue to redress the situation or to prevent such from recurring.

Voice permits victims to “seek recognition” and “control” by expressing themselves in front of others, in this case, other group members and audiences (Wemmers and Cyr 2006: 111). In addition, having a voice or speaking can help people to overcome the disempowerment and marginalisation of victimisation (Guthrey 2013). In a research on music done by Zimbabwean popular musicians with a view to propagate messages on peace, Rwafa views that It is important for indigenes to take part in the making and subsequent consumption of music meant for peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Rwafa suggests that:

Songs all sung by Zimbabweans exemplify indigenous peace building that is created and promoted by the very people who experienced pain or were part of a politically violent environment. The reality that a peace initiative is generic presents sufficient ground to understand that peace as something motivated by individual and collective memories about violence. Singing about peace therefore becomes part of memorializing pain and finding ways of healing it in order to restore social and political stability.

Therefore through the use of music, first within an ensemble, this research attempts not only to heal and possibly bring closure to victims of violent conflict, with a view to reaching a wider community to initiate processes which bring a conflicting society together, but also attempts to get the people’s views on what causes violence in communities as well as to get grassroots solutions to violent conflict in communities.

#### **4.8 Music, culture and conflict transformation**

Societies which have experienced conflict are highly likely to experience another spat of conflict (Walter 2004, Collier and Sambanis 2002). According to Tsunga (2008: 49), Zimbabwe has an unending cycle of violence, and has experienced organised violence and torture, particularly around elections, regardless of the government’s calls for reconciliation and national healing. While there are many reasons leading to the recurrence of conflict, one of them has been the use of intervention strategies which relegates culture to the periphery of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. There is an intrinsic link between language, culture and development, where a neglect

or non-recognition of culture in developmental processes has very high chances of failing the intended goal, as there would not be community ownership.

Embracing culture in development is necessary for community initiatives to succeed. Swantz (1985: 14) asserts that “not only a mentality of trust in one’s own cultural heritage but also a deep understanding of different cultural patterns and ways of perceiving and conceptualising practical life situations is crucial for development”. Unfortunately, Zimbabwe has instituted National Healing and Reconciliation programs which are not community-inspired and do not integrate indigenous knowledge systems, and are hence detached from the people and by extension, from the culture (Machakanja 2010).

With certainty, culture is a people’s way of life, as inferred by Tylor (year cited in Kipuri 2004: 1), who defines culture as “. . . that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and all other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”. Since culture encompasses all life, it is thus prudent to use culturally-informed interventions in peacebuilding initiatives involving communities. The use of an all-inclusive peacebuilding and conflict transformation intervention corroborates with Bloomfield’s (2003) idea on how conflicts should be managed. He argues that conciliatory initiatives should be all-encompassing since it is “entire communities who have to begin to reorient themselves from the adversarial, antagonistic relations of war to more respect-based relations of cooperation” (Bloomfield 2003: 11). Cultural activities like music-making and performance are activities open to and enjoyed by everyone, hence a good platform to initiate community healing, reconciliation and integration.

Commenting on the recurrence of conflict Amollo states (2008: 1), “the cultural dimension which carries with it local indigenous knowledge has not been well integrated into the system; nor have practical indigenous methodologies been well integrated with theory”. This thesis thus views Amollo’s assertion as a diagnosis of failing initiatives and attempts to prescribe the use of music as an experiential community-owned platform for dialogue. Principally, the urge for culturally-rooted peacebuilding and conflict resolution strategies in communities comes from realising that when people are entangled in a conflict which runs for years, as is the case with Zimbabwe, there is a danger that it can become the norm or, put differently, its violence can become a way of life.

While an indigenous knowledge system refers to a large corpus of information or data developed from the way natives live, this thesis chooses to focus specifically on music and more generally on the performing arts as the indigenous knowledge which can be used for peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The use of art is premised on Putnam's (2000: 1) argument that "The creation and presentation of art often inspires a raft of civically valuable dispositions – trust, openness, honesty, cooperativeness, tolerance, and respect". In addition, music and dance is easily accessible to the community, and all people can participate freely.

Music for social change can also be composed in vernacular, and most importantly communities can decide to source music and dances from the public domain. The advantage is that the target community will be able to identify with the music and dance they choose, hence they can easily decode cultural codes which an outsider may fail to do. Amollo (2008) says "The message to be put across becomes an integral part of entertainment – an enjoyable social occasion.

Implied here is that entertainment-based communication methods can effectively reach hard-to-get audiences. Entertainment will thus have to play twin roles of making the audience happy and creating a conducive mood, allowing them to get the message. The audience will not necessarily set themselves to learn or to get a message from a song, but it will incidentally happen as a result of the environment and mood created. Having said that, it is important to constantly bear in mind that even when the audience does not always prepare themselves to listen to music for social change, the reverse is the case for the musicians. The people making the music should always know that their music should speak to issues of social capital and peaceful environments, hence to the rationale behind stimulating and training an ensemble which reach out to 'unsuspecting audiences.' Amollo avers that music performance provides a forum within which diverse and sometimes sensitive issues can be discussed without the fear of victimization or intimidation (Ibid).

The tension that Zimbabwe experiences has been discussed in detail in previous chapters, and it really is the thrust of this thesis to circumvent the consequences associated with peacebuilding and conflict transformation through creative interventions. Even though Amollo (2002) speaks of theatre, these traits are not a preserve of theatre only, music and dance performances and other

performance arts forms can achieve the same. The efficacy of the performing arts, music included, is aptly captured by Arendshorst (2005) who posits that:

Narrative story-telling traditions are an axis of drama for conflict transformation. Traditional idioms, myths, and values are contained and retained in oral media. Traditional narratives maintain a context of meaning and psychological protection for people, particularly when in difficult and even painful circumstances. In many cultures, story-telling includes imagery, song, and dance.

Just like the story-telling described above, theatre is a mix of many art forms which includes music and dance, while music and dance performances also include a variety of other performing arts forms. Music in particular has the ability to accommodate many concerns of the audience as well as the performers through an open participation. According to Mulaudzi (92):

It is through dance, especially communal dance, that indigenous people clearly express participation ethos, which is so vital to the amusement and aesthetic satisfaction. It is also through dance actions that one finds the clearest expression of the concept of identity through community.

Motivation for this project thus stems from this and many other music-specific traits that will be discussed. Music affords people the opportunity to interact and diffuse tension, either through singing or dancing. In social change settings, people can sing and dance along to the music in any manner, as long as it is moralistic, decent and in accordance with the societal norms and values.

The practice of performing arts, which include traditional dances, music, theatre and poetry, is often said to be important in reflecting social, economic and political structures. Researching on the music of the Tsonga in Mozambique, Johnston (1973: 109) posits that music parallels the social and biological ladder of people living in a community. Garfias (2004: 1) also posits that “Music is an undeniably important element in human culture, it exists in every known human society and in every period of time for which we have knowledge. The structure of music and the manner in which it is used can tell us much about the society itself, its social structure and stratification”. It

is highly likely therefore that people sing about the conflict, albeit in hushed tones if they are in repressive environments like Zimbabwe. In those hush environments, music can also be made to propagate messages of peace and reconciliation.

Zimbabwean popular musicians Jah Prayzah, Sulu Chimbetu, Edith Weutonga and the late Chiwoniso Maraire have in the past recorded a collaborative album, singing against violence (Rwafa 2015). The songs on the album amplify the aspirations of Zimbabwe to live in a non-hostile environment. Suffice it to say that music is part of the everyday life of people. It is a culture, shaped by and shaping societal living, mirroring the economic and socio-political realities. The use of song to sanction deviant behaviour and to encourage good has always been part of the African culture. The ability of music to create a democratic space, be it temporarily during a performance or permanently, is also discussed by Mulaudzi (2014:61). He states that:

Indigenous songs were admired at traditional gatherings for their poetic licence which enable artists to express their feelings. In these songs values include qualities such as morality, usefulness, success and pleasure, and the desired objectives or ends of a society. Cultural values are biased in fixed rules for making choices in order to reduce uncertainty and conflict within a specific community.

Music is culture and culture can be manipulated by men to their preferred realities, as espoused by Geertz (1973: 5) who posits that (wo)man is an “animal suspended in webs of significance which he himself has spun. The structure and form of the web is constantly changing in relationship to new circumstances and, in response man is constantly rearranging his position (often unconsciously) within that construction to find meaning”. The making and use for conflict resolution presents a democratic space through which every member of the community can be heard. This research seeks to consciously manipulate culture through music in order to facilitate peacebuilding in the Mkoba community.

#### **4.9 Music and Empathy**

The basis of using music is that a creative process can be the starting point for involving the people in the process of social change, as it empowers them with a voice that validates their own

experiences and builds a sense of confidence and power (Kaliwat Theatre Collective 1996). In addition, Slachmuislder (2006: 8) argues that if change within a community were to occur, it would happen only when a community is given a forum for sharing their own ideas, understanding one another and developing ways of affecting change together.

Sharing of experiences provides a route to the strengthening of the community's social capital, and of major importance to strengthening a community's social capital is the ability for citizens to empathise with each other. As has been alluded to earlier on, social capital has reciprocity as one of its major tenets. It is only possible to return good to the next person if you feel and understand their dilemma or situation.

When one has empathy for the next person, they put themselves in the position of the other and hence act in a way that does not exacerbate their pain, or better yet, they bring a solution. Empathy is understood to be "a subject's emotional experience and conscious response by means of cognitive processing (perspective taking) of the unconscious mirroring of the feelings and thoughts of another person's experience (Bassalé 2013: 15). It is therefore a product driven by affection and reasoning. Music and dance performances have the potential to draw people together to feel for each other and to engage in harmonious interactions.

In musical terms, harmony can be loosely explained as the perfect accompaniment of different voices put together to bring multi-layered and beautiful pieces. According to Mulaudzi (2014: 94), harmonious interaction "refers to singing together of more than one voice, synchronised dancing together of more than one person, or the mutually depend relationship of the leader and chorus". The process of harmonious interaction as described by Mulaudzi is symbolic of what the ensemble aims to achieve.

First, the research aims to create an ensemble of people willing to work together for the common good. Secondly, the ensemble will make music and dance as well stage performances which encourage and facilitate members of the community to interact and work together for their common good. While there is a difference in the senses used to create musical harmony and social harmony,

both are premised on the ability of people to listen to and compliment each other when falling short. The product brought by both different sets of harmonies is the common good.

In addition, there is also a symbiotic relationship between how music is made and consumed and how empathy is made. Both processes rely on active listenership. According to Vecchi (2009), empathy is a natural by-product of active listening. Empathy implies identification with and understanding of another's situation, feelings and motives. It goes without saying that music is primarily consumed through listening, be it active or passive. What is crucial is to realise that the very moment an audience sets out to hear the ensemble's band, they have already initiated the process of empathising, assuming the song carries a message which demands such.

It should also be noted that the process is not a once-off event, it needs to be repeated. To that end, serialised music and dance performances will be used to achieve sustainable transformation. Bess Lomax Hawes (1992: 343) posits that sustainable change from applied music work should be hinged on a long-term perspective where change is brought about based on precedence and prospects. If the research manages to encourage a small number of empathetic individuals and provides them with a mechanism to allow them to keep on exercising empathy, that might lead to the spread of empathetic tendencies within the society.

While music is traditionally used to carry messages on peace or any other social change agenda, this study, which draws participants from groups in conflict, views the creation of harmonious music as the first level of success in creating empathy and subsequently using art for conflict transformation and the strengthening of social capital. The ensemble will get involved in collectively modelling musical structures including melody, rhythm, meter, form and harmony tonality. In addition, the musical harmony will be used as a platform through which the community can interact, initiate dialogue, identify problems and identify solutions to the problems, thus increasing empathy. According to Hoffman (1984), empathy increases as one engages cognitively to understand another person's distress, whereas personal distress decreases during such cognitive activity. Collective music-making has the potential to shift individual focus on the self to the other. Music can carry emotions and it also improves an individual's ability to decode the feelings



(Schellenberg 2005: 319). Suffice it to say that music will be used to stimulate empathetic and reciprocal attitudes from people and consequently development in the community.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that empathy is a feeling leading one to act humanely towards the next person, because they understand their plight or they just don't want any bad happening to the next person. The argument in this thesis is that music can evoke such emotions, where one will think and act well for the benefit of not just themselves but the next person, thus strengthening social capital and its subsequent benefits. Johnston (2010) also argue that music is a powerful vehicle for emotion and for the arousal of emotions. There is also a recurring assumption that "music can enable people somehow, to get inside each other's minds, feel each other's suffering and recognise each other's shared humanity" (Laurence 2008: 13). To that end, "once in a while or often if we are fortunate, we hear music that inspires awe, transfixes us, even stops us in our tracks" (Bicknell 2009: 16). The agency of music in making people empathetic is explicitly put here. It is this foresaid relationship between empathy and music and taking a cue from Urbain's (2008: xii) assertion that "it is high time for the human brain and heart to join forces and apply the power of music for peaceful and effective transformation" that this research hopes to usurp for the benefit of the community.

#### **4.10 Why Music and dance? Nexus between Music and Social Capital**

A number of world cultures practise traditional music as a way of bonding and maintaining solidarity and communal identity. For instance, *mbira* music is known to be Zimbabwean music, *Isicathamiya* is South African, *Calypso* music identifies with Trinidad and Tobago, *Reggae* with Jamaica etc. Music also works "to stimulate cognitive development, encourage innovative thinking and creativity, varied understanding of the importance of cultural diversity and reinforce behavioural patterns underlying social tolerance, peace building and understanding of other people" (Njoora 2015: 32). The utilitarian roles of music described here give impetus to using music for transformative learning.

This study will facilitate transformative learning by enabling the sharing of experiences through music-making and performance. Mezirow (2010) puts transformative learning as the process of using a prior interpretation to construct a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's

experience in order to guide future action. Implied here is that the ensemble will function as a social enterprise which facilitates social change through initiating shared problem identification and solving processes that can have a long-term impact on the community (Yule 2012: 35).

The use of music is framed through the lens of the social enhancement model of music which addresses how music is created for specific assignments and how it is effectively manipulated to reach target audiences and maintain the musician's intended meaning (Brown 2006: 10). In this research, the community functions as both the musicians and the audience, giving credence that the message carried has little susceptibility to manipulation by forces against social cohesion.

The field of performing arts has many disciplines which include drama, theatre, poetry, acrobatics or circus arts, puppetry, mime, magic, illusion, public speaking, recitation and many more. All these styles mentioned, among others, can potentially strengthen a community's social capital, primarily because of their power to attract crowds. In this thesis, I choose to focus on music and dance not because I have done an evaluation to find out which one is the most efficacious but because I am a trained musician and traditional dancer. Having said that, there are also studies which I will discuss below showing that music is quite an effective way of bringing people together as well as stimulating dialogue. Again, other art forms are not being dismissed here and neither is this a grounds for comparison, rather I discuss how music incorporates other art forms. O. Connell (2010: 2) argues that music-making and performance does accommodate diverse people positing that:

Music rather than language may provide a better medium for interrogating the character of conflict and for evaluating the quality of conflict resolution. While language as prose tends to delimit interpretation according to the partial dictates of authorial intention, music as a practice serves to liberate interpretation according to the multiple voices of audience interpretation.

Implied here is that music is liberating as it allows a community active and probably full participation in finding solutions. As discussed earlier on, music-making is an activity which cannot be monopolised by any sector of the community. It allows for people to dodge an

unfavourable master narrative in contexts such as Zimbabwe. For the success of the intervention to be realised, there is a need for full active participation from the community.

Music also has the capacity to engage different senses of individuals and most importantly it can instil a sense of community and responsibility. Francis (2008: 4) argues that:

Music is a very powerful medium and in some societies, there have been attempts to control its use. It is powerful at the level of the social group because it facilitates communication which goes beyond words, enables meanings to be shared, and promotes the development and maintenance of individual, group, cultural and national identities. It is powerful at the individual level because it can induce multiple responses – physiological, movement, mood, emotional, cognitive and behavioural. Few other stimuli have effects on such a wide range of human functions. The brain's multiple processing of music can make it difficult to predict the particular effects of any piece of music on any individual.

Implied also in Francis' (2008) assertion is that music invokes empathy, a subject that has been discussed in-depth earlier on in this thesis.

At community gatherings, music has the same agency as theatre for development. The underlying feature of theatre for development performances or workshops is their aim at an exchange of ideas between actors or facilitators and the audience (Matiza 2015: 63). To that end, when an ensemble stages either a dance, music or drama performance, their overall objective is not to entertain people but to engage and stimulate debate and discussion on issues raised in the performance. As a result, the performance and post-performance discussion and activities are a platform for collective problem-identification and problem-solving, with a view to achieving the common good. Music was used with success in theatre for development during the liberation struggle in colonial Zimbabwe. Speaking of the music sung during the liberation struggle, Matiza (2015: 64) asserts that:

Thus, the music that was sung during gatherings as forms of drama for development through music in Zimbabwe the *pungwe* performances had an important role of giving hope and transforming people's lives towards an independent Zimbabwe. The themes interwoven in the storylines of the performances were problem-oriented and of direct relevance to the community. This conforms to the idea that drama reflects on people's problems in an interesting manner. Thus, when a work of art is produced, it is in line with the struggles of the people responsible for it. Hence by solving those problems, development is enhanced. Finally, audience is motivated to interact in a direct manner with the actors or facilitators during or after the performance. This means that after a work of art has been performed, the audience will have an opportunity of interacting with the musician, maybe in terms of clarifying some issues. In this way, the performance will be meaningful because the artist will leave no stone unturned to address pertinent questions from the audience.

The use of music and dance in this research is similar to what is described above. However, the major difference is that this research process puts the community at the forefront in all stages. Focus will be on working with people to achieve a shared, workable understanding of their lived reality and, in the process, the research will be rescued from the monopoly of knowledge production by myself as an academic researcher, allowing the study participants to actively and autonomously map and implement the social change agenda.

#### **4.11 Music Perpetuating Conflict**

Music is not inherently peaceful as argued by Al-Tae (2002), Kent (2007), Howard (2010) and Gonye (2013). In Zimbabwe, music was used to spur liberation war fighters to keep on fighting the Rhodesian army (Pongweni 1982, Vambe 2004). Gonye (2013: 65), contends that in recent years a Zimbabwean dance called "kongonya has both a human and inhuman face, having been transformed from a dance for the people into a dance against the people – a phenomenon at the mercy of political manipulators". Kent (2007) argues that music potentially perpetuates conflict depending on how it is used and what it represents while Howard (2010), in reference to the conflict in North and South Korea, argues that music mirrored their respective ideologies and propagated the feud after their division in 1945.

Inferred here is that music alone, without the underlying intentions of the musician, does not necessarily cause or transform conflict. However, Howard (2010) makes a counter argument that music also has the potential to advance national reconciliation, as it unifies people and attracts even hard-to-reach audiences. An assertion based on the success of peace concerts he observed (Howard 2010: 85), committed to the cause. Consequently, the study will select participants who will voluntarily commit to change their society. Hatherley (2011: 14) argues that though transformative learning might result in social change, the impetus comes from the learner.

It is apparent that music is not innately peaceful and groups and individuals who want to create or maintain conflicts have often made good use of music to further their agenda (Al-Tae 2002). The question which comes even after motivating the use of music is why use a potential catalyst for violence? It is important to note that people and even songs are not inherently violent. Their position can be changed and this research will do exactly that with better conviction that exuded by those who use music violently.

### **Music and Conflict Transformation**

The practice of using arts in peacebuilding has not been given critical attention in academia (Aruajo 2006: 289, Shank and Schirch 2008, Robertson 2010, O'Connell 2011). Berg avers that "Music is commonsensically thought of as something that unites people, hence it is frequently deployed in multicultural contexts. However, little research has been done to see how this works over time". In addition, Robertson (2010:39) argues that music scholars do not seem keen to explore wider social meaning of music with the intent to assist in conflict situations. On the other hand, Shank and Schirch (2008:217) posit that "many peacebuilding projects do not have an artistic dimension. The arts remain marginalised within the peacebuilding field, perhaps because they are seen as "soft" approaches (within an already "soft field) to the "hard" issues of conflict and violence, or because peacebuilding practitioners frequently originate from social science and political science rather than the arts and humanities field". In essence, the cultural dimension which is carried in music has either been given little attention or has not been well integrated in peacebuilding theory and practice.

Nonetheless, the use of music and by extension the expressive arts in peacebuilding is a practice common in many societies (Bergh and Sloboda, 2010). The ensuing discussion will look at select cases where music has been used for conflict transformation in different contexts. The discussion is particularly useful for the field [peacebuilding as it highlights] “the elicitive, contextually appropriate, nonverbal, and transformative nature of arts-based techniques” (Shank and Schirch 2008:219). In addition to bringing together, the seemingly repulsive and ineffective arts and peacebuilding into creating a cogent, art-based peacebuilding model looking at different case studies will expand our understanding of the arts and how their use affects humanity.

Music was used to augment political efforts in the quest for peace in the highly volatile conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis over Jerusalem in the 1990s (Al-Tae 2002). Here, music was used by Palestinian singers in the promotion of what seemed to be a utopian coexistence of Arabs and Jews. The singers managed to effectively deploy music for the betterment of their highly-polarised society by embracing cultural diversity in the making and performance of music. Al-Tae acknowledges the political shortcomings in resolving conflict and argues that music “penetrates our souls and brings people together” (Al-Tae 2002: 55). As a result, music plays a seminal task in building cohesion within cultural communities “serving as a site for negotiation and contestation between groups” (Lipsitz 1994: 126).

Urbain (2005) also observes that music was successfully used for peacebuilding by Yair Dalal in the Middle East “through masterfully playing the violin, mixing Jewish and Arab music organising concerts with musicians from both backgrounds, and sharing his views through interviews” (Urbain 2005: 204). This enabled the creation of spaces where difference and social boundaries were understood and respected. Therefore, music was used, to play a major role of defining national solidarity. According to Njoora (2000:7), “music informs our sense of place whether that refers to physical setting of social activity as situated geographically or philosophically that is stylistic space”. Differently put, music facilitates a mutual understanding of context and thought. This study follows these successes by also taking people from across the social strata and divide. However, it differs in that the project is not led by an individual, and my role as a lead researcher is to stimulate the community ensemble into facilitating dialogue through music and dance performance. All the participants also have equal opportunity to share their views and determine

the course of the intervention, consequently leading them to collectively draw parameters to guide how they will live together well.

Music has also been used to address issues on social cohesion in less politically-volatile environs such as post-apartheid South Africa. For instance, the national anthem which was adopted at independence in 1994 “begins with the Xhosa, Zulu, and Sotho versions of the popular hymn of the same name” (Balog *et al.* 2012: 141) in order to bring people together. While the national anthem affords the people a unified voice, South African popular artists have also added their different messages which speak, though separately, to inclusivity in post-apartheid South Africa.

Commenting on the South African context, Balog *et al.* (2012: 142) observe that “each artist searches for the solution to how post-apartheid music and culture should look, they do so separately. Maybe, though, until the two sides can find more common ground and purpose, it will be impossible to find die antwoord [the answer/solution]”. Implied here is that though the efforts of individual musicians are commendable, they will come to nothing if the musicians don’t unite and sing a shared song. Therefore, in order for a community to accrue sustainable benefits from music-making and performance, there is a need for the same community to be involved in either making or listening to music, and better yet, to be involved in both as the success of any such initiative lies in the readiness of the community to cooperate.

The currency of song and dance to melt cultural and conflict boundaries is further elaborated by Kaiser (2006) in an anthropological study of the ways in which musical and dance forms have been used to negotiate identities, bring about social transformation, and deal with political upheavals at the Kiryandongo refugee settlement in Uganda. Kaiser (2006:183) concludes that music and dance have been used by the residents of Kiryandongo “to negotiate competing and overlapping identities, providing a forum in which both a specifically Acholi identity, as well as a more inclusive Sudanese identity, can be asserted and explored”.

This study used purposive sampling to select musically talented participants who come from different and conflicting backgrounds. The idea was borrowed from the successes of Zelizer (2003; 2004) work. There is similarity in these studies in that Zelizer focused on the practical use of

artistic processes in peacebuilding in identity conflicts. In the Zimbabwean context, the identity conflict shows itself as ethnic conflict between the Shona and Ndebele people. However, the major differences between these two studies are in that Zelizer's focus was mainly on musicians and organisers. My study goes further to look not just at how music facilitates conflict transformation within the band but its effect on the wider community. Inclusion of the whole community during performances comes from an understanding that in African communities, music making and performance is a communal activity. According to Impey and Nussbaum (1996:12) "in African culture, the highly interactive, communicative and communalistic nature of music and dance creates a high degree of social cohesion".

#### **4.12 Music, oral Tradition and Conflict Transformation**

This study is set in Zimbabwe where the majority of the people have no reading culture despite the country's high literacy rate. Makaudze and Kangira (2016:1198) argue that "Zimbabwe currently boasts of one of the highest literacy levels in Africa. Paradoxically, such an encouraging state of affairs is not paralleled with a high reading culture. Instead, the high levels of literacy are undone by a very low reading culture". Shank and Schirch (2008:218) argue that for the arts to be effective in peacebuilding they need to be driven by a working strategy. Music becomes one of the natural choices to reach many people in a community with a poor reading levels like Zimbabwe. Music and dance are easily accessible to the community, and all people can participate freely. Commenting on the suitability of the use of expressive performance in conflict transformation, Amollo lists the following important characteristics of music which makes it susceptible for use in conflict transformation:

1. As an oral medium in the local language, it appeals to and involves those audiences which, either through problems of illiteracy or through a lack of knowledge of the prevailing language, are kept out of the development of the political, social, and economic structures within which they live;
2. It is a means of cultural expression, and thus enhances the sense of ownership for everyone within the community. ( Amollo 2008:2)



The agency of music in peacebuilding is also found in that “art [it] can nurture social capital by strengthening friendships, helping communities to understand their heritage, and providing a safe way to discuss and solve problems”. In addition, songs have long lives. The messages carried in music have a longer life compared, for example to print messages. This quality is particularly important considering that peacebuilding is a long, tedious and unending process, there is also needed to have long lasting and relevant messages. Bassale (2013:1) argues that “music permeates various aspects of people’s lives. Whether heard through radio stations while driving to work, or through an MP3 player while jogging in the park, or through the speakerphones at a shopping center, or as a background score when watching a movie, music is virtually everywhere, surrounding us as we live life”.

Music and dance performance is also one of the very few avenues people can use to address pressing social, economic and political ills. Siziba (2009) suggests that there is a relationship between repression and culturally informed subversion. In Chapter Two I have discussed how leading political parties in Zimbabwe deliberately fuel conflict and how the ruling party has stifled almost every avenue for citizen participation. Music making and performance therefore becomes a platform through which the community reflects on and acts on its daily challenges. It thus is possible for communities to use music and dance performance in the ‘seeing and looking’ realm suggested by Lederach (1997:121). He posits, “to look is to draw attention to, or pay attention to... and to see, is to look beyond and deeper,” (Ibid). These music and dance performances have the potential to empower the community negate political and social constraints and move from the periphery of the making of culture to become significant actors in culture formation thus challenging gerontocracy and patriarchy which forces them to be passive imbibers of culture. In addition, the community becomes actively involved in conflict transformation processes.

Taking into consideration Harris and Morrison’s (2003:17) view that “Peace through transformation is based on the assumption that human beings are capable of love that can overcome feelings of hatred”, music becomes an organic choice to facilitate transformation. This is particularly true when we follow Laurence’s (2008:13) assertion on music that “Music is often seen to unite us, and also to promote our self-awareness and self-esteem, mutual tolerance, sense of spirituality, intercultural understanding ability to cooperate, healing to name but a few”. There

is a recurrent conjecture in this view that music allows people to empathise and have a shared humanity.

## **CHAPTER 5: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This study is framed within two methodological frameworks, the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory propounded by El Ebrashi (2013) and asset-based community development (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993, Kretzmann *et al.* 2005). The chapter also discusses social entrepreneurship with anecdotal reference to Zimbabwe, in order to frame the discussion within a context in which the ensemble has been created.

### **5.2 Social Entrepreneurship: Interaction with definitions**

Social entrepreneurship is an intriguing field which spans across various fields and has garnered interest in many academic disciplines (Dart 2004, Leadbeater 1997). In addition, “social entrepreneurship borrows from an eclectic mix of business, charity, and social movement models to reconfigure solutions to community problems and deliver sustainable new social values” (Nicholls 2008: 2). Even though social entrepreneurship enjoys much currency and has been a virtual explosion (Zelizer 2014), a plethora of definitions have been put forward which lack consensus on what the term refers to (Dacin, Dacin and Martear 2010). The term itself is a phrase consisting of two ambiguous words, social and entrepreneurship, whose meanings are usually made to suit the conveyer’s preferences (Mair and Martí 2006). The lack of consensus on the meaning can in a way be attributed to unfixed meanings of the two words making up the phrase (Farny 2012: 12).

A social entrepreneur is described by Light (2006: 50) as an “individual, group, network, organisation or alliance of organisations that seeks sustainable, large-scale change through pattern-breaking ideas in what governments, non-profits and businesses do to address significant social problems”, while Mair and Martí (2006: 37) argue that social entrepreneurship is a “process involving the innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities to catalyse social change and/or address social needs”, Similarly, Roberts and Woods (2005: 49) claim that “social entrepreneurship is the construction, evaluation, and pursuit of opportunities for transformative social change carried out by visionary, passionately dedicated individuals”. As

illustrated here and supported by Dacin, Dacin and Matear (2010), there is no universally-accepted definition of entrepreneurship and the different meanings are usually contested by conceptual theorists (Martin and Osberg 2007, Dees 2001).

Considering the numerous descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon called social entrepreneurship, the study realised that opportunity, innovation and social capital are constantly mentioned in the multitude of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise definitions. The emphasis however, is dependent on individual scholars (Shane 2003). Martin and Osberg (2007: 35) also corroborate this notion and they provide a compound definition, positing that:

We define social entrepreneurship as having the following three components 1) identifying a stable but inherently unjust equilibrium that causes exclusion, marginalisation, or suffering of a segment of humanity that lacks the financial means or political clout to achieve any transformative benefit on its own; 2) identifying an opportunity in this unjust equilibrium, developing a social value proposition, and bringing to bear inspiration, creativity, direct action, courage, fortitude, thereby challenging the state's hegemony; and 3) forging for a new, stable equilibrium that realises trapped potential or alleviates suffering from the targeted group, and through imitation and the creation of a stable ecosystem around the new equilibrium ensuring a better future of the targeted group and even society at large.

While an understanding of the social entrepreneurship concept is very important, this empirical study chose not to focus on the conceptual differences on social entrepreneurship put forward by many scholars, nor did it attempt to add anything to the existing menu of definitions. Rather, the research focused on operationalising chosen meanings through setting a social entrepreneurial initiative. In addition, the study focused on explicating the importance of opportunity recognition, innovation and social capital. Most importantly, through the lenses of the social entrepreneurship behavioural theory, the study was framed to understand the politics of social enterprises and how they source resources as well as how they survive. In that regard, the process of setting up a social entrepreneurial venture was informed by the views of the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory of El Ebrashi (2013).

### 5.3 Behavioural Theory of Social Entrepreneurship

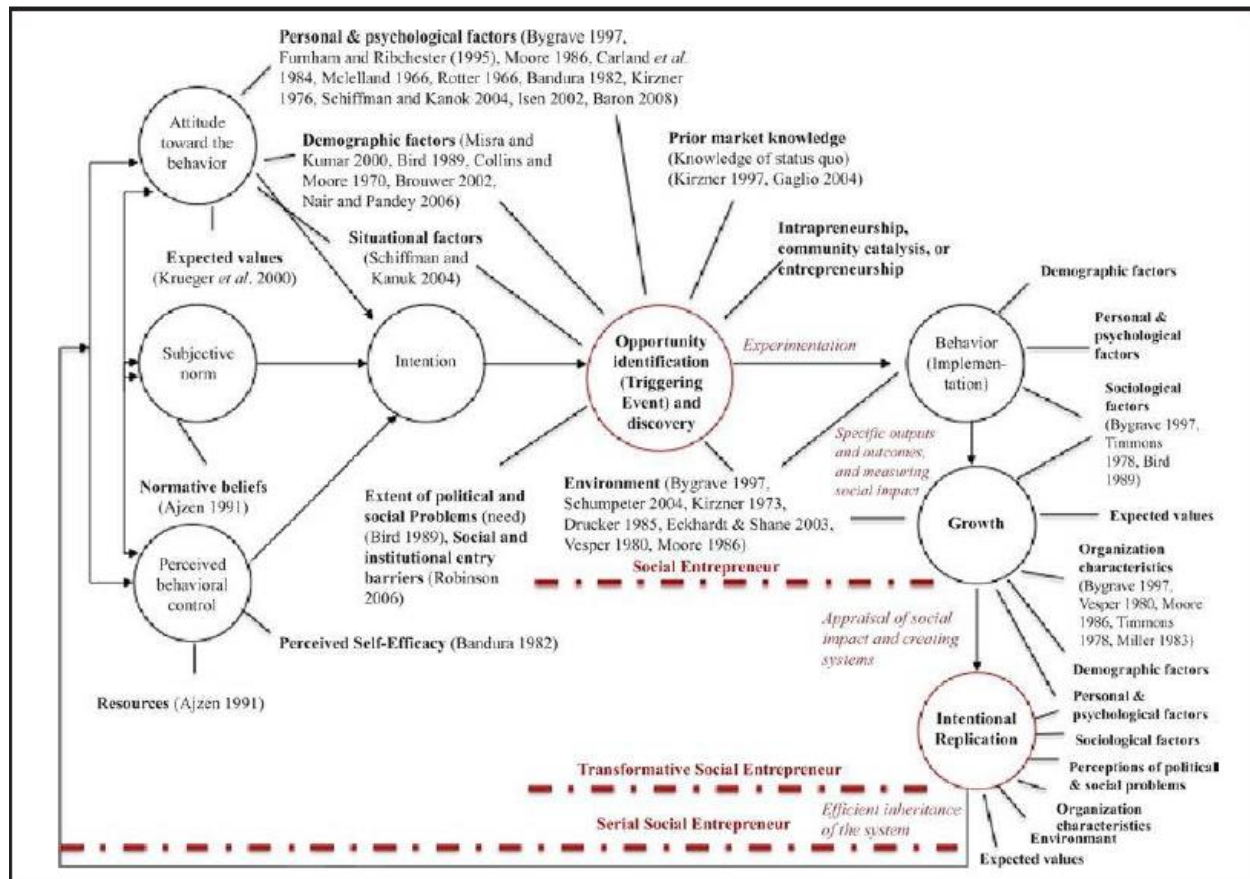
This study, which intended to set up and run a social enterprise, is guided by the social entrepreneurship behaviour theory of El Ebrashi (2013). The social entrepreneurship behavioural theory focuses on the contextual factors that lead to creating social enterprises, the underlying organisation dynamics and structures, and how such organisations mobilise resources and sustain their impact. According to El Ebrashi (2013: 203):

Social entrepreneurship behaviour theory goes beyond stating the achievements of social entrepreneurs, and dig(s) deeper to the motivations and cognitions of these social entrepreneurs and analyse the social entrepreneurship behaviour. The behavioural theory of social entrepreneurship studies the contextual factors that lead to social venture creation, the underlying organisation dynamics and structures, and how these typologies measure social impact, mobilise resources, and bring about sustainable social change. Studying the underlying motivations and conditions upon which social enterprises evolve will help in extending the *reach* and management of social outcomes and impacts.

The ideas of this theory informed this study on how to create a socially-aware and entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble that could identify with its target audience as well as survive in a difficult environment such as Zimbabwe. The theory is cognisant of Freire's (1970: 72) view that meaningful engagement with people requires mutual respect where people are treated as equals and as subjects rather than objects. Using the lenses of this theory, the research was also guided in establishing context-specific strategies and models of community-led sustenance and expansion of conciliatory music and dance performances.

Through employing Participatory Action Research methodology, the study was therefore more concerned with how best to set up and run a social entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble which could bring about social change in the Mkoba community. Farny (2012: 1) argues that "the action-oriented social entrepreneurs are effective in addressing and solving the local social obstacles because they are well embedded in the environment". Therefore, investigating how other

organisations develop is of paramount importance in setting up an entity (Davis *et al.* 2005), as it helps in introducing new typologies of social change organisations which can create sustainable social impact as well as helping to understand the context (El Ebrashi 2013: 189).



**Figure 5.1:** The Behavioural Theory of Social Entrepreneurship, taken from El Ebrashi (2013: 197).

The behavioural theory of social entrepreneurship has three constructs influenced by the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991). As shown in **Figure 5.1** above, the three constructs which affect the formation of intentions include attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. According to Ajzen (1991: 179), “intentions to perform behaviours of different kinds can be predicted with high accuracy from attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control; and these intentions account for considerable variance and actual behaviour”. This study was primarily concerned with behaviours which promote peaceful coexistence and cooperation. In addition, all the constructs in the behavioural theory of social entrepreneurship are

affected by various factors (antecedents) which include: personal and psychological factors, sociological factors, demographic factors, environment, expected values, situational variables and organisational characteristics (El Ebrashi 2013: 197-199). Implied here is that there is a menu of factors which influence people in their individual capacities, as groups and/or as communities, to work for social change. It is important to understand the environment in which a group of people survive in order to effectively facilitate change through social entrepreneurship.

#### **5.4 Applicability of the Behavioural Theory of Social Entrepreneurship**

To understand the applicability of the theory, the ensuing discussion will dissect through the context in which the ensemble will be created. An understanding of the context in which the social enterprise was set was important in ensuring the success of the initiative, as the social entrepreneurs should be aware of their operating environment. An awareness of the context is also important in peacebuilding, as each and every polity is bound to have its own peculiarities which require specific attention and/or at times innovation. As a result, working towards bringing about social change in contexts such as Zimbabwe, where the state is against citizen-development and most of the citizens are constantly losing hope on any change agenda, requires sustainable and innovative ideas and an unparalleled commitment to peacebuilding (Solidarity Peace Trust 2015).

Hope, therefore, lies in ambitious and persistent individuals with innovative solutions to the society's most pressing problems. Individuals who are keen and proactive in achieving the social change agenda in wide communities, regardless of resource limitations, are needed (What is a social entrepreneur 2016). The society faces numerous challenges which require a multi-sectoral approach in dealing with them. Uniting people for collective action and dealing with challenges in various foyers of the society requires novel, inclusive and out-of-the-ordinary approaches (Nicholls 2008, Dacin, Dacin and Matear 2010).

Undertaking an entrepreneurial activity which shakes the status quo in tyrannical environments such as Zimbabwe can be deemed subversive (Siziba 2009, Muwonwa 2012). Nevertheless, the unfriendly environment should inspire the entrepreneurs rather than deter them. Smilor (1997) underscores that entrepreneurs are not cowed by bad circumstances, rather they are buoyed to make

the bad situations better no matter the odds that seem to be stacked against them. Smilor (1997: 341) posits that:

Entrepreneurship is a subversive activity. It upsets the status quo, disrupts accepted ways of doing things, and alters traditional patterns of behaviour. It is at heart, a change process that undermines current market conditions by introducing something new or different in response to perceived needs. It is sometimes chaotic, often unpredictable. Because of the dynamic nature of entrepreneurship and because of the entrepreneur's ability to initiate change and create value . . . the concept of 'creative destruction' is an apt description of the process . . . the entrepreneur thus disrupts the economic status quo, and as a result creates new market opportunities.

It is therefore important to understand the politics of the operating environment and to be aware of and be prepared to face the ever-flaccid context, which can at times be turbulent.

A widely-held view holds that economic exclusion of citizens in key economic activities is prejudicial, hence it leads to conflict. Instances of exclusion include partisan distribution and benefit from state resources. The Ndebele people in Zimbabwe also lament that their regions are underdeveloped as compared to Mashonaland regions due to unequitable distribution of resources (Ngwenya 2014, Ncube 2014). This competition for fewer resources has the potential to fuel violent conflict (Solomon and Kosaka 2014). Addressing economic inequalities through equitable distribution of resources, non-discriminatory access to opportunities and job creation can therefore be a panacea to some of the conflicts threatening peaceful coexistence (Mafeza 2013: 793). Common poverty and suppression become common denominators which can draw people to pull their efforts together. Sentama (2009: 51) also holds that:

People drawn into networks of cooperation and exchange become tied together by their practical economic interests. Under the influence of these new interests and engagements, they begin to see their clashing commitments in a new and clear light. People gradually learn to see each other as individual members of a family and to recognize their own interest in upholding a common set of basic rights for all.



Within the Zimbabwean context, social entrepreneurship provides an opportunity for people drawn together by similar challenges to ignore their differences and work towards ameliorating the situation. With unemployment estimated to be above ninety percent, the economic disaster in Zimbabwe is being felt by most of the people regardless of ethnicity, religion and political persuasion (CIA Factbook,2017). The widespread suffering present in Zimbabwe has ushered in almost equal status, which has the potential to effect positive inter-group attitudes despite the fact that initially the people might have had different statuses as individuals or groups (Schofield and Eurich-Fulcer 2001). Even though diverging views posit that “equal status does not necessarily produce better ethnic relations, positive change cannot be anticipated at all in its absence” (Forbes 1997: 121). While the current economic situation is hardly ideal for societal living, the communal suffering has a homophily effect (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). It has created a common ground for traditionally prejudiced members of the society and the privileged. Indeed, initially people may come together for selfish reasons, but this study was carefully designed to increase the participants’ empathy and sense of community through use of music as well as through shared stewardship of the social entrepreneurial ensemble.

Social entrepreneurship has the potential to create institutions of peace, whereas music and dance performances create a platform for the community to gather their collective efforts in building ‘institutions of peace’. The efforts at building relations, nurturing them and harvesting from them are determined by the community for them to be meaningful and sustainable. This social entrepreneurship behavioural theory therefore sat well within this study, which seeks to mobilise willing individuals into creating an ensemble which uses music and dance performance as a pragmatic platform to resolve conflict in the Mkoba community.

## **5.5 Opportunity Recognition**

Scholarship on entrepreneurship suggests that opportunity can be identified through the potential of a service or goods to generate profit, its innovativeness and the subjective norms (Herron and Sapienza 1992, Shane and Venkataraman 2000, Shane 2003). There are three variables considered here: The first variable is profit which, in business terms, means there should be a financial gain accrued after a transaction(s), which could involve the buying and selling of goods or provision of

services. Be that as it may, profit in social entrepreneurship is not necessarily about realising financial gain or income. Dees (2004: 2) argues that “social entrepreneurship is about innovation and impact, not income”. The financial gain is important but social impact is primarily why social entrepreneurs set up different entities to achieve their goals. To that end, their profit cannot always be measured in financial terms but rather on how well a problem has been solved from the initial time of contact.

The second variable to consider when recognising social entrepreneurial opportunities is innovativeness. Innovation ensures that not only is an idea novel and replicable but that it should satisfy a specific need. In other words, innovative entrepreneurs meet their target market at the point of need. This is particularly important in peacebuilding initiatives considering that conflict resolution, conflict transformation and peacebuilding, among other factors, are the means to achieving societal transformation. Conflict is omnipresent and despite the numerous efforts made to resolve and transform conflict, these efforts do not always achieve the desired results, hence it is important for peacebuilders to continually improve ways of dealing with conflict. Innovation comes in handy in order to respond to the ever-mutating forms of conflict.

Thirdly, social entrepreneurs also consider subjective norms during the opportunity recognition process. While the three variables are important in opportunity recognition, subjective norms require different attention in community peacebuilding initiatives, particularly on this project which is participatory and takes a bottom-up approach. Ajzen (2005) asserts that “a subjective norm is a perceived social pressure arising from one’s perception”. Subjective norms are thus a reflection of societal influence on our actions. They come from an understanding that to lead a humane life, one should always be aware that they do not live in a vacuum or in isolation. The theories and practices informing this study have a commonality in that they have an awareness that the society is important in building the ensemble, making the music, performing the music and ultimately in effecting conflict transformation. The conciliatory music and dance ensemble, the social entrepreneurs in this case, considered to pursue products or services that bound them as different individuals and was likely to be accepted by the community.

To summarise, it is implied here that social entrepreneurs consider an opportunity as a service or product which is profitable and new or better than available goods and services such that the community is likely to accept it. Opportunity recognition becomes the thought process where an individual concludes that they have identified a gap to make a difference (opportunity) (Wasdani and Mathew, 2014). As a result, this thesis focused on novelty, profitability and popularity to discuss the performance art as an opportunity to be explored as an experiential platform through which the Mkoba community can meet and dialogue for social change.

### **5.5.1 Opportunity Recognition and Importance of Prior Knowledge**

My background with community development initiatives has played a part in influencing my decision to embark on this research, where I team up with fellow Mkoba residents in establishing a social entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble. According to Mair and Noboa (2003: 7):

Social entrepreneurs' context, that is their involvement with social sector or their exposure to social issues, not only allows them to recognise but also seems to turn them into altruistic citizens unsatisfied with the status quo; loyal to their values and philosophy; motivated to act socially responsibly.

I will share my lived experiences as a social, political and arts activist and how they relate to opportunity recognition. Over the fifteen years of practising as an artist, in which I have worked as a community-based artist, full-time professional artist as well as a part-time session artist, I have gained a substantial amount of human capital (Herath 2014: 77). My active involvement with the performing arts for social change started in 2000, when I was in my first year of secondary school. Over the years, I have worked on numerous arts productions which span across genres, including television film production, music production, community theatre, community festival curatorship, arts journalism, poetry anthology editing and publishing.

This period has afforded me a chance to experience both the outsider's and insider's perspectives of what happens in the arts fraternity, experiences which are proving to be advantageous when anticipating audience preferences as well as building teams. Baron (2006) points to prior knowledge of a market, industry or customers as a basis for recognising new opportunities when

they emerge. In my case, I have since acquired postgraduate qualifications and industrial experience focusing on arts management and arts for social change.

The importance of experience and prior knowledge in opportunity recognition cannot be emphasised enough. Fields (2016: 107) argues that “experience is important and that individuality plays an important role in social innovation. Social innovators should therefore be encouraged to use their life and business experience and to expose themselves to various opportunities to gain more life and business experience”. My experiences as a performing artist and arts for development scholar have raised my understanding and awareness of the opportunities that lie in using music and dance to bring about social change. Patzelt and Shepherd (2011: 633) observe that “recognition of opportunities increases with individuals’ prior knowledge of the natural and communal environment, their motivation for personal gains, and their motivation to develop gains for others”.

Prior knowledge also made the difference for the Australian Aborigines, who for a long time were a marginalised indigenous grouping, until they discovered that opportunities for sustaining their culture lay in their knowledge of what constitutes their own culture (Foley 2003). Similarly, the significance of an individual’s business acumen, their knowledge and skills is also echoed by Thomas and Mueller (2000). In the South African context, it has been observed that “the lack of adequate skills also affects the capability of SMMEs . . .” (Pillay and Kaye, 2016: 249). While the national economies of Zimbabwe and South Africa have different strengths, their poor citizens face similar challenges emanating from historical prejudices.

It is also important to have an appropriate skill set when managing conflict in a community. Kohlrieser (2007: 3) argues that “the mind’s eye is a fundamental tool to create a positive or negative result in managing conflict. Our mind’s eye is shaped by experiences and choice, which determines the way we view the world and, ultimately, determines success or failure in dealing with conflict”. However, in this current instance, the artistic experience is not enough. Precedence suggests that peacebuilding and conflict resolution interventions which are not communally-owned have little success in Zimbabwe. This research makes a choice to pursue an endogenous approach in strengthening the community’s social capital after realising that the solutions to a community’s problems do not lie with the researcher or any single individual. It is particularly

important that within the frame of arts and culture, one can never have monopoly over knowledge. The participants of the research might have different or similar experiences but all these experiences are equal and important in opportunity recognition.

## **5.6 Where and what is the innovation?**

The entrepreneur's ability to positively react to change, map the trends and to determine the course of change thus become very instrumental in making a difference. Zimbabwe's ailing economy presents a fertile ground for establishing a social entrepreneurial venture. Currently, a social entrepreneurship venture in Zimbabwe can easily avoid scrutiny, for instance, through creating linkages with small- to medium-scale enterprises that the government is encouraging citizens to set up in order to curb unemployment. Njaya (2014: 270) posits that:

In its economic blue-print, Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation, 2013-2018, the government identified small and medium enterprises and cooperatives as drivers of sustainable economic empowerment, economic growth and employment creation. In fact, the government saw the informal economy as an option to formal sector business. This was based on the assumption that it was natural that people joined the informal economy in order to survive.

The informal sector is indeed providing a lifeline to many Zimbabwean families during a time where many are unemployed and opportunities for formal employment are very few. Music-recording and performance currently absorbs many unemployed young people, especially through the Zim Dancehall genre, and it is palliative in the times of distress facing Zimbabweans (Mugari 2016). In addition to the fact that music is currently heavily relied on for its palliative currency in Zimbabwe, making and performing music within the community is also not capital-intensive. Material for community-based music and dance performances is usually drawn from the community's indigenous knowledge systems which the respective communities identify with. It is highly possible that feuding communities can find common ground in their cultural expressions, which can then be the pedestal to launch positive dialogue in a community (Ndlovu 2010). Nzewi (2007: 8) also suggests that:

African musical arts in all its ramifications and transactions, is the product of intuition researched and made concrete in human/societal experiences. That the logic of the musical arts explicates the lore of life is not a mystery, rather a mastery of the intuitive science that systematic sonic rationalisations can process the meaning of human life, death and society.

Music and dance performances which come from known traditions and practices, if appropriately used, can lead to social change as people can identify with the meaning embedded in these art forms (Ndlovu 2010). As discussed in earlier chapters, music and dance performances have a unique cognitive affection and they also have the ability to attract people through their entertainment value. Consequently, this research was meant to harness these attributes of music in peacebuilding by stimulating the community to appreciate their cultural parallels and variances as well as to opt for dialogue while shunning violence in all its forms, even during times of conflict. While music and dance performance play a critical role as agents of social change, this study recognised the developing of community-centred and sustainable peacebuilding and conflict transformation institutions to be more important, hence adopting the social entrepreneurial business model.

However, no single effort or approach can cause change, be it social or political. Elections, war, protest and in this case performing arts, are not adequate to single-handedly deliver change. It is expecting too much to think that if a performance is staged today, society would change tomorrow. Though it is folly to glorify the performing arts as the only effective community-relations adhesive, it does not mean that the medium is impotent. It has potential to bring about significant change, especially in combination with other innovative and contextually-relevant approaches. There is a need for practitioners to be cognisant of the fact that some methods contribute to docility and passive consumption of art while others create opportunities for people to think critically and in some cases to take action.

Convening an ordinary community arts group to make and perform art, even if it is for the intention of bringing about social change, might not be enough. The challenge is that arts organisations in Zimbabwe face funding and viability problems. Eveleigh (2013: 7) states that “a major challenge

facing the [arts] sector is that demand for funds far exceeds the capacity of donor agencies”, while the Zimbabwean economy has its failure attributed to “lack of effective participation by key stakeholders and the lack of independent institutions to correct market failures, promote innovation, and reward risk taking” (Monyau and Bandara 2015: 13).

The ensemble formed through this research was run as a social entrepreneurial venture which learnt from the experiences of other arts organisations and peacebuilding initiatives in Zimbabwe. The entity was timely in that the government of Zimbabwe has been called by the United Nations to “. . . prioritise strengthening institutions engaged in social dialogue and promoting entrepreneurship. It should also encourage developing skills and vocational training, with specific measures to empower and support women, youths and SMEs and provide access to affordable credit” (Monyau and Bandara 2015: 13). The twin processes of modelling the ensemble as a social entrepreneurship entity and engaging in performances for social change were expected to play complimentary roles in managing conflict in Mkoba. In addition, the sustainability of the social entrepreneurial entity hinged on the fact that this participatory action research allowed participants to choose the course and to be inventive rather than to be limited to a research plan proposed by myself as the principal researcher. The bottom-up approach is argued to be of paramount importance in encouraging organic peacebuilding as it creates a true sense of participation, responsibility, and ownership of the process within the target population” (Lederach 1997: 242).

## **5.7 Towards an endogenous approach to peacebuilding (Social entrepreneurship, Asset Based Community Development and Community Arts)**

**Figure 5.2** in **Section 5.7.1** shows that there is a nexus between social entrepreneurship, asset based community development and community arts dialogue, which can be used in peacebuilding provided that there is genuine participatory involvement of the community. The relationship is fuelled by, and strengthened by, the community’s social capital. The more people in a post-conflict community wilfully interact, the better the chances of community development and peacebuilding. It is also important to realise that in the endogenous interaction process, social capital appears in every construct. The constructs in these interlocking processes either feed on or produce social capital. For instance, here music and dance performances are expected, through their affective abilities, to produce social capital. The Arts and Social Capital (2000: 1) states that:

The arts offer a unique means of connecting us to our common humanity. Whether visual, musical, dramatic, or literary, the arts allow us to “create together” and to discover shared understandings. The creation and presentation of art often inspires a raft of civically valuable dispositions – trust, openness, honesty, cooperativeness, tolerance, and respect.

On the other hand, social entrepreneurship creates circles that strengthen social capital (Brenche 2015) through motivating residents to work for the common good, regardless of the economic and political circumstances they find themselves in (Stenval 2014: 7). While asset based community development draws its strengths from pooling resources from different people within the community, the relationships that concerned people have are often an ignored, yet important, conduit (Cunningham and Mathie 2003).

### 5.7.1 Endogenous Arts Based Peacebuilding



**Figure 5.2:** Endogenous Arts Based Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Communities: the three interlinked processes promote active and dialogic participation of community members.



At the core of community-based peacebuilding or community-owned developmental processes is participation. Community members should be fully engaged as subjects of development working towards development in order to achieve sustainability. Hart (2008: 5) posits that “participatory development is an approach that recognizes that for a project to be successful over the long-term, it must be based on the needs, wishes, and participation of local or recipient actors . . . Sustainability means that the development project does not consume more economic, environmental or human resources than are available in any given setting, thus limiting its long-term viability”. Implied here is that to be effective, development solutions should be owned by the people affected or benefiting from the developmental activities, as they will use their intimate knowledge of local beliefs systems, ecologies and their relationships to maintain and pass on the legacy of peaceful communities.

The efficacy and sustainability of conflict transformation initiatives rests on the meaningful involvement of the community at every step of the process. Endogenous approaches to conflict resolution refers to practices of attending to conflicts using mechanisms that are traditionally embedded in the cultures and lives of the local people (Dodo 2015: ix). They usually follow bottom-up approaches to development, ensuring that people are not treated as objects but subjects who can determine the course and navigate the challenges that they are bound to meet in the process of building a peaceful community.

As has already been discussed, one of the challenges facing peacebuilding in Zimbabwe is that the government favours the top-down approach, where they prescribe how the community should engage in peacebuilding (Machakanja 2010, Dube and Makwerere 2012). The top-down approaches led by government usually lead to negative peace or just an absence of violent conflict, as they are typically enforced through legislation or nationally-recognised agreements. For instance, in Zimbabwe the conflicts between the Shona and Ndebele people were declared over after the signing of the 1987 Unity Agreement between Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo. The agreement managed to end the genocide, but unfortunately conflicts still simmer in the community. Similarly, Dube and Makwerere (2012: 303) have observed that:

A successful, legitimate and sustainable approach to peace in Zimbabwe requires the inclusion of civil society and their interests. Top down peace building can compromise the foundations of durable peace, resulting in the perpetuation of destructive conflict in the country. Failure to acknowledge the importance of popular participation in peace efforts will culminate in the lack of grassroots support and ownership. Without popular support, the peace programme will fail.

Issues of peacebuilding and conflict transformation should therefore not be a preserve of the government or elite members of the community but they should be all-inclusive (Dress 2005). Waldman (2008: 14) also observes that non-inclusive peacebuilding institutions, though legitimate, fail because there is no universal ownership of the efforts, especially from the population that is left out.

However, social entrepreneurial ventures by their very nature have roots in communities. It is only through understanding what the community lacks that any attempt to provide for the deficiency can be successful. In addition, as discussed earlier, social entrepreneurs need to have a strong understanding and knowledge of their context. While social enterprises can be set up by people who are not members of the community in need of aid, this research presents a case where affected community members came together to build a social enterprise.

It was essential that the community fully participated and owned the social enterprise, as that would increase their sense of ownership of the ensemble and most importantly agree to its quest for peaceful coexistence. Holstein (2013) argues that communities must “own” the process of their reconciliation for it to be sustainable in the long term. “When local actors resolve differences at the community level, they share both a sense of ownership and accountability, which makes their collective work toward a common goal more fruitful and successful” (Holstein 2013: 2).

## **5.8 Social Entrepreneurship and Social Capital (trust building)**

There are numerous factors which lead people to remain in poverty; included is the marginalisation of certain members of the population from accessing resources by both public and private institutions. Social entrepreneurship therefore provides a lifeline through which residents can look

forward to making a livelihood. However, in the absence of material and financial resources or otherwise, social entrepreneurs turn to social capital. Woolcock (2006: 16) realises that:

At its best, a social capital perspective recognizes that exclusion from economic and political institutions is created and maintained by powerful vested interests, but that marginalized groups themselves possess unique social resources that can be used as a basis for overcoming that exclusion, and as a mechanism for helping forge access to these institutions.

The overarching aim of this participatory study was to strengthen the community's social capital through establishing a social entrepreneurial music ensemble. Paradoxically, successful social entrepreneurial initiatives themselves require strong social capital to thrive. According to Sserwanga *et al.* (2014: 304), "social capital plays an important role in opportunity-discovery by diffusing new ideas and providing a wider frame of reference. It is a valuable asset that can produce advantages for individuals and firms as a function of their location within a network of relationships". This study invested in building relationships in the social entrepreneurial venture with a view to produce strengthened social capital. The investment was motivated by the hypothesis that, since Zimbabwe is a post-conflict nation, existing community ties are the basis through which more networks and alliances are born.

Now, there is a symbiotic relationship existing between social capital, trust, honesty and peace, where trust is an essential element of the social capital . "Trust has long been a key ingredient in the ethos that sustain economic dynamism and government performance . . . In the absence of trust, there can be no certainty in contracts, social or otherwise" (Putnam 1993: 170). For a community to have trust between one another, there is a need for the citizens to interact on one platform or another without anyone feeling prejudiced. This music and dance performance social entrepreneurial venture is one of the many platforms which can be used as a meeting place. In turn, repeated positive interactions between people "enables a promise-trust relationship to build up providing an incentive for honesty" (Collier 1998: 27). These, and many other values which underpin business operation, can be the basis through which a community can start to see each other in a different light, negating negative and dehumanising attitudes towards one another.

Views from scholars discussed above suggested the economic woes confounding Zimbabweans can potentially stimulate them into rallying towards the creation of a social entrepreneurial venture which in turn increases trust between members of the community. Trust-building is critical in this matrix, as it can mitigate the effects of dehumanisation of the ‘other’ among the venture members. Sentama (2009: 29) argues that:

The psychological process of dehumanization might be mitigated or reversed through recognizing the common humanity of one’s opponents and including them in one’s moral scope – recognizing the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family, the development of empathy, the establishment of personal relationships between conflicting parties, and the pursuit of common goals. Re-humanization can thus help to break down enemy images or damaging stereotypes.

However, “trust required for cooperation is not blind, it comes from prior knowledge of the disposition, consequences’ and ability of one to earn trust” (Putnam 1993: 170). Trust is important in social entrepreneurship just as it is in peacebuilding processes, as it facilitates the relationships-building process between the parties in conflict (Notter 1995: 5), creating links, hope and reciprocity. Putnam (1993: 171) argues that “there is no duty indispensable than that of returning kindness. All men distrust one forgetful of a benefit”. A fertile ground for conflict transformation is therefore presented once people negate the valorising of the ‘self’ and the demeaning of the ‘other’. It is also possible for trust built among members of a social enterprise to spiral to non-members as the “network allows trust to become transitive and spread” (Ibid.). In the case of this study, trust was expected to spread through messages from the music and dance performances as well as to symbolise cooperation.

It has been established here that trust is essential for peaceful coexistence in a society, however social entrepreneurial ventures seek not only to meet social ends but economic ends as well. Likewise, trust can also affect the economic performance of activities which require input from two or more parties. More is achieved where the level of trust is high, while entities with less trust inevitably have low economic output. Knack and Keefer (1997: 1256) argue that “Individuals in

high trust societies spend less to protect themselves from being exploited in economic transactions, while low trust can also discourage innovation. Societies characterised by high levels of trust are also less dependent on informal institutions to enforce agreements”. Due to the proclivity of cooperation in high trust societies, development is almost inevitable since “the development of societies is based on conscious consensus efforts” (Idahosa 2016: 22).

In the absence of solid trust, collective music-making and social entrepreneurship becomes the panacea providing an alternative platform through which communities can rehearse conflict transformation as well as build trust. The aim thereof would be to build a society which is conducive to development, “which involves structural change in the community especially in how resources are used, the functioning of institutions, and the distribution of resources in the community” (Green and Haines 2015: 6). An environment would be created where residents do not solely rely on external support or government support for their livelihood, but where citizens are active in mapping and providing for their livelihood.

McQuiten *et al.* (2012: 11) propound that “social enterprises go some way in affecting this very change by providing a new model of intervention where the focus shifts from servicing the poor to enabling those experiencing disadvantage to become the agents in their own economic and social development”. Enabling communities to fend for themselves relieves pressure on the government and other funding agencies, thus allowing aid material to be channelled to other pressing humanitarian needs (Ibid.). The question however is how we capacitate a needy community in an ailing economy such as Zimbabwe.

## **5.9 Resourcing through Asset Based Community Development**

Zimbabwe is a country that is being affected by huge financial distress from all sectors of the economy. While the government, private businesses and some non-governmental organisations make various efforts to create employment for the citizens, these efforts are hampered by poor governance (Polachek and Sevastianova 2010). Capital, labour and production in Zimbabwe are all compromised and this has a significant impact on the economy and subsequently peace. Over the years, a lot of effort has been channelled towards identifying and addressing the needs of the communities, but the challenges still persist. While addressing the community’s needs is noble,

the challenge with a needs-based approach is that there is no real transformative empowerment, and communities usually end up looking forward to and relying on aid (Moyo 2009, Green and Haines 2015).

In addition, historically artists in Zimbabwe are not held in high esteem, and the work they do is not considered a profession. Musicians for instance are called *marombe* (vagabonds). Though many young people are now taking up music due to unemployment, the absence of a well-structured music industry and labels such as *vapfanha vembanje* (marijuana smoking young people) imply that musicianship is not yet fully accepted as a job in Zimbabwe. Artists' contribution to key nation-building processes such as peacebuilding is also undermined. Cohen (2009: 106) observes that "efforts of artists and cultural workers to contribute to peace are under resourced and that their contributions are under recognised". Most artists therefore thrive without or with very little financial resources.

In view of the above-mentioned issues, this study employed an asset-based approach to development, thus providing an alternative to the needs-based approach as well as shifting from an otherwise mechanical problem-solving approach to an empowering, holistic asset-building approach (Wilkie 2005) with predetermined programs. Perhaps an important question to ask before engaging on asset based development is: 'What is an Asset?'

It is highly possible that assets can be spoken of in terms of the resource that the community lacks. Quite often needy societies and small businesses attribute their underdevelopment to a lack of assets/resources (Bukaliya and Hama 2012). This mentality and position of lack scuttles development by blinkering development practitioners' appreciation and understanding of assets. A simple and yet accommodating explanation is put forward by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 25) who posit that assets are the gifts, skills and capacities possessed by different people in their different capacities in the community. Oliver (2001: pxii) adds a detailed explication on the importance of assets stating that:

An 'asset' in this paradigm is a special kind of resource that an individual, organisation, or entire community can use to reduce or prevent poverty and injustice.

An asset is usually a ‘stock’ that can be drawn upon, built upon, or developed, as well as a resource that can be shared or transferred across generations . . . As the poor gain access to assets, they are likely to take control of important aspects of their lives to plan for the future and deal with economic uncertainty, to support their children educational achievements, and to work to ensure that the lives of the next generations are better than their own.

Zimbabwe might be impoverished but just like every other country, it has the assets needed to spearhead endogenous development and subsequently community-based peacebuilding approaches. According to Haider (2009: 4):

Community-based approaches (CBA) seek to empower local community groups and institutions by giving the community direct control over investment decisions, project planning, execution and monitoring, through a process that emphasises inclusive participation and management. The basic premise for demand-led approaches is that local communities are better placed to identify their shared needs and the actions necessary to meet them. Taking charge of these processes contributes to a sense of community ownership, which can contribute to the sustainability of interventions.

Using this explanation of what community peacebuilding entails and the benefits it accrues, it is highly likely that peaceful coexistence and development can be achieved using community assets. With an awareness that people inherently have the potential to do good for their individual selves and the community through capacity-utilisation, this research responded to the calls against over-reliance on external aid and/or needs-based intervention. The shift however, does not imply that communities can do it alone or that external aid is not important in community development. There is evidence that NGOs play an instrumental role in bringing about social change (Riley 2002). “It is just that the ABCD approach has at its core the notion that communities (in particular local associations within those communities) must drive the development process. The role of outside agencies therefore becomes one of group capacity building to ensure that local associations are defining the community vision and mapping and mobilising local assets and resources to this end” (Mathie and Cunningham 2003: 482).

Asset based community development will thus help the community to realise that: 1) they have power to define and determine their own emancipation, and 2) they can be successful on their own and on their own terms (Alinsky 1971, Green and Haines 2015). The problem of donor apathy, which has been discussed in earlier chapters, also compels this study to settle for an asset based approach since it is advantageous in that developmental work is not stalled by late or non-allocation of donor resources. The project's progress hinges on pulling community resources together, annulling underutilisation of resources and making effective use of such resources for community development through asset based community development. **Table 5.1** in **Section 5.9.1** presents the principles of asset based community development which the community can draw on.



### 5.9.1 Principles of Asset Based Community Development

**Table 5.1:** Principles of Asset Based Community Development adapted from Zolondek (2010: 7) and the Asset-Based Community Development Institute (n.d.).

Principle	Description
Asset Based	Starts with what is present in the community of its residents and workers and the associational and institutional base of the area.
Internally focused	Concentrates first upon the agenda building and problem solving capacities of local residents, local associations and institutions. Stresses the primacy of local definition, investment, hope and control.
Relationship Driven	Constantly builds relationships between and among local residents (bridging and bonding social capital respectively), local associations and local institutions.
Everyone Has Gifts	With rare exception; people can contribute and want to contribute. Gifts must be discovered.
Relationships Build a Community	An intentional effort to build and nourish relationships is the core of ABCD and of all community building.
Citizens at the centre	It is essential to engage the wider community as actors (citizens) not just as recipients of services (clients).
People Care About Something	Agencies and neighbourhood groups often complain about apathy. Apathy is a sign of bad listening. People in communities are motivated to act. The challenge is to discover what their motivation is.
Motivation to Act must be identified.	People act on certain themes they feel strongly about, such as: concerns to address, dreams to realize, and personal talents to contribute. Every community is filled with invisible “motivation for action”. Listen for it.

Through asset based community development, the community can effectively funnel the different abilities of citizens towards addressing community development. Through asset pooling, residents in a community can support each other’s socio-economic needs in a multitude of ways. In a group set-up similar to the social entrepreneurial ensemble, “working collectively provides the

opportunity for sharing knowledge and costs between actors and limiting duplication of efforts. Second, gathering the support of collective actors means the ability to incorporate disparate viewpoints to present an organized yet unified public voice around an issue” (Montgomery, Dacin and Dacin 2012: 379). Bringing an otherwise conflicting group of people to one platform is an important step towards strengthening social capital and community development. The view supported by the grand philosopher John Stuart Mill (1848) is given below, who is noted to have said that:

It is hardly possible to overrate the value . . . of placing human beings in contact with persons dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar. . . Such communication has always been, and is particularly in the present age one of the primary sources of the present age, one of the primary sources of progress.

To ensure that an asset based approach is efficacious in bringing about community development when setting up a social entrepreneurial entity or peacebuilding entity, there is a need to encourage residents to make the best of their diversity by working to the best of their abilities as well as by employing the most capable candidates. Caruso (2007: 4) posits that diverse teams allow “better utilisation of talent, insider understanding of audiences or markets as well as enhanced creative and problem solving ability through integration of knowledge and perspective”. The challenge however, is on transforming the conflict and underlying mistrust in the community. As it stands, individual residents of and associations from the Mkoba community or any post-conflict community might be aware of their shortcomings and the strengths of the next person or association, but because they are trapped in mistrust and at times jealous, they will not accept the strengths of perceived foes, even if acceptance is for the common good.

### **5.9.2 Asset Based Community Development and Community Interaction (social capital)**

Following from the above discussion, problems in post-conflict communities, though manufactured during times of conflict, persist largely due to the reluctance of residents to engage. As a result, there is a need to have people-centred approaches to address challenges in post-conflict communities. It is important that while people identify their problems as well as propose solutions

to such, they should also think of or be made aware of how their being disturbs the next person's peace. Preceding chapters have discussed how music can help in building empathy as well as providing a platform for engagement. This communication is important and should be married to asset based community development, where people realise and utilise their skills and strengths in order to collectively develop their community. Turner and Pinkett (2000: 2) posit that "The individual capacities of residents are the basic building blocks of any community. As people exercise these capacities, they often find they need the talents of others in their enterprises. This leads them to join with other individuals who will work with them toward a common goal". Full utilisation of the community's capacities in development will inevitably result in ushering in not just economic growth but also development where structures and acts of inequality are collectively challenged.

Asset based community development has ties with the interactional theory propounded by Wilkinson (1991). The basic tenet of the theory is that "community is defined by the regular and sustained interaction of individuals who share a common geographic area with an interest in the welfare of the locality" (Korsching and Davidson 2013: 41). While it is stated that communities are independent structures (Wilkinson 1991), people within a community depend on one another, and gradually common interests emerge (Green and Haines 2015). Wilkinson further posits that "social interaction is a pervasive feature of community life that underlies and gives substance to ecological, cultural, organisational and psychological aspects" (Wilkinson 1991: 4). As a result of interactions, people develop relationships and identify and appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses to the benefit of the society.

The community-based development approach has methods which change agents or social entrepreneurs can use to rally the community's support (Cunningham and Mathie 2002). Though individually-named, these methods are interlinked. The methods follow processes which require honesty, cooperation and reciprocity which in the long run lead to peacebuilding. Honesty is integral in ensuring that there is due diligence in asset mapping, and the participants together with the social changer should figure out what every individual can specially contribute to the best of their ability (Rans and Altman 2002). After making an inventory of the community's assets, what follows is building connections between gifted individuals (Ibid.). Connections alone are not

enough for the sustainability of the externalities. The problem of free riders might arise, therefore there is a need to encourage reciprocity. These activities strengthen the community's social capital.

Rans and Altman (2002: 2) argue that the variety of ways used to mobilise the community assets manage to create new opportunities as well as build strength from within. Mathie and Cunningham (2003: 477) suggest the following methods through which communities can be mobilised for asset based community development:

- Collecting stories of community successes and analysing the reasons for success.
- Mapping community assets.
- Forming a core steering group.
- Building relationships among local assets for mutual beneficial problem-solving within the community.
- Convening a representative planning group.
- Leveraging activities, resources and investment from the outside community.

#### **5.10 Advancing the Sustainability of Endogenous Peacebuilding through Community**

Needs-based approaches and donor-funded development interventions have been criticised for their detachment from the community's aspirations and lack of sustainability (Mpofu 2012, Moyo 2009). Zolondek (2010: 6) also posits that "criticisms have been raised regarding the needs based development approach to community development, including issues of deficiency and equity, perpetuating a culture of poverty, dependency, and practice". In some instances, it is argued that foreign aid fuels political polarity and uneasiness. Mpofu (2012: 91) further argues that:

Though, it can be envisaged that foreign aid is supposed to be beneficial to the cultural communities of Zimbabwe, the foregoing has shown that this can be contested. It has been exhibited in the foregoing that foreign aid is almost always political and aid giving is not necessarily altruistic. A close look at foreign aid indicates that the self-interest of the donor rather than philanthropic motivation more often than not motivates such programs since the NGOs come to Zimbabwe.

The major problem of a needs-based approach is that it is unsustainable in light of reduced donor support and it over-relies on support. The advantage with music and dance performance, or any other performing arts activity, is that they do not require a lot of economic capital to carry out. Instead, performance art is a form of cultural capital providing citizens with a platform for interactions which open up spaces for working together, unbundling barriers and scaling the social ladder (DiMaggio and Mukhtar 2004).

In addition, community peacebuilding and music and dance making calls for more creativity, innovation and cooperation from participants, which works well in strengthening the community's social capital and its self-reliance. Kretzmann *et al.* (2005: 1) argue that they “. . . are also convinced that non-profit organizations are much more powerful community actors when they are not exclusively focused on needs, problems, and deficiencies but are effectively connected to the resources, or assets, of the local community”, hence the focus on utilising indigenous knowledge systems as well as full participation of the community. Furthermore, performance art is a trade that has been used since time immemorial for both amusement and as a communication tool by various communities. Performance art still remains one of the most effective ways for communication and does not require one to be very literate in order to understand the messages being conveyed.

To that end, this project was conceptualised to harness the community's musical abilities and sensibilities in strengthening the community's social capital as well as for economic amelioration.

The performing arts ensemble which adapted a participatory and open vocational learning and training style was meant to create a new breed of community-performing artists and citizens in general, who, even in the depressed Zimbabwe economy, do not look at what they lack but rather at what they have and ponder on what they can do with what they have. As a result, through asset mapping, which is a process of learning about the resources available (Kretzmann et al. 2005), the community would appreciate and leverage local resources to the benefit of their locality (Wilkinson 1991).

## **CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodology followed in this study. It also discusses in detail the research paradigm, approach used, and data collection methods and tools as well as the data analysis methods. In addition to highlighting how the validity and trustworthiness of findings was achieved, the chapter delves into the ethical concerns and procedures guiding the study. However, the chapter does not delve much into how Participatory Action Research and Popular Participatory Theatre were used as methodologies, as chapter 7 has been dedicated to that.

The discussion will be guided by the study's research objectives which I will restate here. These objectives will be referred to later in the chapter when explaining how each component of the design intends to achieve each objective.

#### Overall Aim

- The study aims to establish a music and dance ensemble comprised of members from diverse ethnic and political backgrounds who will use music to strengthen the social capital of the Mkoba community, with a view to uniting and improving the quality of life of the residents.

#### Specific Objectives

- 1) To examine the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in the Mkoba community.
- 2) To find ways of creating a socially-aware music and dance ensemble and sustaining its impact.
- 3) To describe the characteristics of music and dance that can be manipulated in performances for social cohesion.
- 4) To examine the ability of music and dance to increase cohesive social capital in a community in conflict.

## **6.2 Underlying research paradigm**

Research, be it qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods research, is at all times guided by a philosophy or a set of beliefs which informs action – this is called a research paradigm (Denzin and Lincoln 2008: 245). A research paradigm informs the study in the following four very important areas: axiology, epistemology, ontology, and methodology (Denzin and Lincoln 2008, Mertens 2010). In essence, the research paradigm defines the worldview of the researcher. The paradigms undergirding this study are discussed below.

While research paradigms are important, it is more important to ensure that a study is not limited by the bounds of a research paradigm. This trajectory has also been advanced by eminent research methodology scholars including Patton (1990: 39), who argues that “Rather than believing that one must choose to align with one paradigm or the other, I advocate a paradigm of choices. A paradigm of choices rejects methodological orthodoxy in favour of methodological appropriateness as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality”. To that end, the transformative and interpretive research paradigms, under the lenses of which this study is framed, are discussed below.

### **6.2.1 Transformative Paradigm**

Primarily underlying this study is a transformative research paradigm, which according to Chilisa and Preece (2005: 33) “denotes a family of research designs influenced by various philosophies and theories with a common theme of emancipating and transforming communities through group action”. To reach the research goal of establishing and using a music-for-social-change ensemble in a hostile environment, this participatory action research study relied on participants’ innovation in creating an enabling environment. Therefore, besides ethical considerations, we had to plan on following routes which had few or no limitations. The transformative paradigm “explicitly addresses issues of power and justice and builds on a research base of literature from mixed methods” (Mertens 2010: 25). In its quest for emancipation, the transformative paradigm corresponds with Paulo Freire’s (1970) ‘dialogical conscientisation’ and Habermas’ (1984) communicative theory. This paradigm also acknowledges that there are multiple realities and has the “emancipation of the community from domination and a drive towards social equity” (Mangenda 2011: 38) as its goal.

This research is an interdisciplinary study combining the three academic disciplines of music, social entrepreneurship, and conflict transformation studies. Through its interdisciplinary nature and reliance on cultural studies, this study is overtly eclectic, harnessing innovation to face dynamic challenges compounding the community. Mertens (2010: 28) argues that “The philosophical basis of the transformative paradigm is quite diverse, reflecting the multiple positions represented in that paradigm”. Furthermore, Gray (2003: 5) argues that methodological eclecticism is a strength within the field due its energy and dynamism. As such eclecticism has a profound effect on whether a research goes on to achieve the desired results or not.

For transformative researchers, positive social change is not realised as an offshoot of other research objectives. Rather, the researcher makes a conscious decision to stand for and work with the repressed or disadvantaged on a study whose primary goal is to emancipate the participants’ lives from whatever that ties them down. According to Mertens (2010: 21), “transformative researchers consciously and explicitly position themselves side by side with the less powerful in a joint effort to bring about social transformation”. For someone like me, who undertook a participatory action research for the purposes of attaining a doctoral research degree, the choice comes with a lot of uncertainties, joys, and suspense on whether the pursuit will be successful. However, thinking of the possible change that one’s research can bring about into a community is just as humbling as it is overwhelming.

Nonetheless, one is always cognisant of the fact that their research is neither a magic bullet nor a prescription to end the society’s challenges. In addition, what one plans during the research proposal process can be overtaken by unforeseen events or might not be wholly accepted by the community. While the research proposal goes through rigorous assessment from initial meetings with my research supervisor and co-supervisor up to the assessment from the Higher Degrees Committee, there is one constituency all these committees and I cannot ‘box’ within defined and perhaps restrictive research rules’ that is the study participants. The best we can do is predicting and setting up the research within the parameters of research ethics. We should also be aware that the research participants are in charge of proceedings and the study can morph into anything the



participants deem necessary as they interact organically (Mertens 2010: 8), perhaps for as long as it is right by law and at times, by their culture.

It becomes apparent that societal change is a process which cannot be predicated on one person's actions or sentiments because there is no one person who is a product of their making and they do not live in isolation. By extension, an individual's actions carried out in solitary confinement can hardly affect change in a community. Our behaviours are predicated on a triadic reciprocal determinism whereupon our "behaviour, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental influences all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other bi-directionally" (Bandura 1989: 2). Implied here is that the object of people's being is multivariate and therefore all the parallels and variances in people's view of the world should be considered when working on social change, for all to feel represented and have a sense of belonging.

As alluded to earlier on, the transformative paradigm is not blind to the researched/study participants' agency in transforming their own lives. It recognises that people come from different backgrounds and as such their view of reality might be different, consequently affecting how they confront challenges. To that end, the project frames its interventions in a methodical manner that allows participants to understand and manage conflicts emanating from multiple social contexts but bearing in mind that no specific conflict handling style can suit all situations (Drama for Life 2017). The transformative paradigm, therefore, embraces a pluriversality of interventions, which appreciates that there is no one universal or monolithic route to transformation but that through various means one can reach the transformation end. It gives room to the participants and the researcher to use the field as an experiential platform and to be innovative in the face of challenges. Most importantly, the transformative paradigm upsets the status quo in contexts where there are brute human rights abuses and social injustice.

The transformative paradigm is usually collaborative, calling on the researcher to work together with the participants as equals. It is a pursuit of scientific knowledge "viewed more as an attitude or approach rather than well-defined techniques to be followed. The focus is on empowering local people to take charge of the research process, and this empowerment may be achieved via numerous methods that should be determined by the details of the population and project at hand"

(Anaquot 2008: 1). Consequently, there is a need for an awareness and respect of the participants' culture as the "research involves respecting and understanding the participants and recognising the knowledge and capabilities of the local people who can work with researchers to obtain analyses and solutions" (Ibid.).

### **6.2.2 Interpretive paradigm**

*"We don't see things as they are; we see things as we are" (Anais Nin 1961).*

The words above attributed to Anais Nin best illustrate how important it is to integrate cultural considerations into research and be wary that our preconceived ideas have an effect on how we see the world. Cain and Lawless (2013: 4) argue that:

The researchers and research participants "worlds" may be different because of cultural experiences. We tend to view things not as they truly are, but in the context of our own personal preconceived notions and prejudices. Our previous experiences will often affect our expectation of future events.

Conducting research in such a way is very bad and perpetuates oppression. There is a need for research to observe high cultural competence, which refers to "awareness of unique and defining characteristics of the populations" (Atim and Cantu 2010: 1). As a result, in an endeavour to understand the politics, culture and the violence in Mkoba, this study is also underpinned on an interpretive paradigm which allows the "researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants" (Thanh and Thanh 2015: 24). Goldkuhl (2012: 140) adds that "The core idea of interpretivism is to work with these subjective meanings already there in the social world; i.e. to acknowledge their existence, to reconstruct them, to understand them, to avoid distorting them, to use them as building blocks in theorizing". The account told in this research has to be from Mkoba residents.

In preceding chapters, it has been highlighted that there has not been a wholesome truth and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Generally, people have not been given a chance to release their frustrations (Ngwenya 2014). It is therefore in order that community healing and/or conflict

transformation processes give members of the community an opportunity to tell their stories, as individuals. Of course this can lead into collective story-telling but the first step is to make sure that we avoid silencing individual narratives. The interpretivist paradigm has room for “multiple perspectives and versions of truths” (Thanh and Thanh 2015: 25). To that end, as I took views from Mkoba residents, I did not in any way assume that they have uniform cultures. Instead, I had awareness that every individual who participated in this study had a different and, at times, unique voice that deserves to be heard.

The interpretivist paradigm also ties in with the transformative paradigm in that it is open to innovation and trying out new ways to answer as well as to find solutions to challenges compounding humanity. Smith (1993: 120) argues that interpretivists are ‘anti-foundationalists’, because “there is no particular right or correct path to knowledge, no special method that automatically leads to intellectual progress”. As a result, this study was not rigid in finding out ways through which the Mkoba community can strengthen their social capital. The mix of people’s experiences was healthy in working and dialoguing towards a desirable end. This process of letting the community ‘be’ through conducting a research which is essentially an organic experiential platform is supported by Kemmis and McTaggart (2007: 277) who posit that “If practices are constituted in social interaction between people, changing practices is a social process”. My view is that giving a lot of methodological restrictions on how social processes should manifest is putting importance on tools at the expense of organic and positive human interaction.

All the questions raised above together with my obstinate view of transforming the Mkoba community contribute to forming my world view, that communities can play a very significant role in fighting oppression and that they can independently determine the course of their fight. In addition, a better understanding of the prevailing situation and possible solutions also comes from the community, and as a result, the methodologies used for this project offer the community the autonomy to lead their own development. My research approach therefore is informed by studying two complimentary paradigms.

### 6.3 Research Approach

One of the most difficult tasks that I encountered in my formative years as a researcher was justifying how I chose between qualitative and quantitative research. For starters, I thought of research as some sort of ‘detective work’, where you invest your time in finding out about something or someone. It never really occurred to me that the process, even in detective work, is systematic. The question on whether to use qualitative or quantitative approach was always determined by what my first research mentor taught me. My mentor would say “qualitative research deals with words while quantitative research deals with numbers”. To be honest that simplistic approach towards research and the prospects of going for ethnographic field visits tickled my fancy for research. It was a choice between worrying about mathematics and writing about people’s stories, never the significance of the research on the participants’ lives let alone the methodology making the research valid.

However, over time and after some intellectual growth, I came to understand that good research has an impact on people’s lives producing “knowledge that can be applied to real-world situations. Researchers work to enhance our knowledge of how to best address the world’s problems” (Unite for Sight n.d.). I decided on using qualitative research for my topic which reads “Conflict Transformation through Music and Dance. A case of Mkoba, Gweru, Zimbabwe”. Perhaps, what made the study different is that we did not try to use exciting art forms but rather, the research process highly engaged participants in the making of the ensemble and the music. It is therefore only prudent that this study, which seeks to strengthen the community’s social capital, follow participatory action research methodologies.

As I have already mentioned in preceding chapters, social capital is the cordial working together of the community for the benefit of all. In a state like Zimbabwe, whose politics and ruling politicians impede economic growth and social cohesion, one of the alternatives available for development is for the community to work together in alleviating their conditions without necessarily looking up to the government or an external agency.

At this juncture, I briefly turn my focus to reflecting on how I chose between a qualitative and a quantitative approach. I take it that finding the nexus between the research approach and its goal

is similar to when in everyday life, one's trip and purpose of the trip determines the type of transport one is going to use. At times it is practically impossible to walk certain distances; we therefore have to use some mode of mechanical transport. We cannot walk from Zimbabwe to Durban but we can fly or drive. In the same way, we cannot drive to India from Durban, but we can fly or sail. In a nutshell, the idea behind the study or its questions determines the research approach and methods it will employ (Al-Busaidi 2008: 12).

This research is about human interaction and the efficacious use of a people's performance arts culture to achieve peaceful coexistence. Opting for quantitative research methodologies could make it difficult to understand some of the insights and experiences of the participants, and by extension of the community, that are needed to be understood in order to address the complexities of living in an environment where there is latent conflict. To that end, this participatory action research (PAR) study employs a qualitative approach. In essence, participatory action research takes a 'hands-on approach' to solving a community problem. I will however, explain about participatory action research as the chapter progresses and also more in the following chapter.

In the meantime, I will focus on why I chose a qualitative approach for this PAR study. The first of my research objectives was 'to examine the nature, extent, causes and consequences of conflict and violence in the Mkoba community'. According to Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009: 4), "Qualitative research methods attempt to broaden and or deepen our understanding of how things come to the way they are in our social world". Implied here is that through qualitative research methodologies, we seek to find answers to the how, why, what and when questions of everyday living. We want to find out why people behave in a particular way, how individuals or a community form their perception and attitude towards one phenomenon or another. In addition to finding out how and why cultural practices morph in the ways that they do, qualitative research also asks questions which want to find out the effects of the environment on people and at times, the effect of man's attitude towards the environment.

The questions raised above are fundamental as they lead us to have an in-depth understanding of our environment and how we relate to it. We get to know a people's realities, at the very least according to our own interpretation, but at most usually through a combination of the participant's

own interpretation and my interpretation as a researcher. In the same vein, Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 3) offer the following definition:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices . . . turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

The question perhaps is: so, what is the implication of this for this study? It is important to have knowledge of and a deep understanding of the Mkoba community's behaviours. It is important to know for example, why people frown at the mention of a particular party, or why we show a disinterest in a dialogue when we pick up one's ethnicity through their dialect. Of course there are some covert behaviours that we cannot see but that does not mean that they are not manifest and they are subject to investigation. MacDonald (2012: 34) posits that "qualitative methods focus on the whole of human experience and the meanings ascribed by individuals living the experience; broader understanding and deeper insight into complex human behaviours thus occurs as a result".

Qualitative research methods come with a range of data collection methods which one can choose from for example to find out more about non-verbal nuances (Ritchie 2003: 35). I for one believe that peace is a way of life, it is a culture, therefore it only makes sense for researchers or peacebuilding practitioners who are keen on being actively-involved in contributing to peace in communities to embrace qualitative methods, since they dissect through the community. Al-Busaid (2008: 12) argues in favour of qualitative research methods arguing that "They are considered to be well suited for locating the meanings that people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives and their perceptions, presuppositions, and assumptions". Qualitative research provides data collection methods, which allow organic participation of participants as well as finding the meaning and importance of research in conflict areas.

Through qualitative research, we seek not to predict and control but to understand our realities and our relationship with our environment, human and otherwise (Pinnegar and Daynes 2007). Therefore, by employing a qualitative research approach and related methodologies, I was in a position to experiment with an organic approach and I investigated how music and dance can be used as a platform through which the community can strengthen its social capital as well as dialogue for social change. Realising that the subject of this research and related concepts are fluid, I made sure to use qualitative research in order to follow through and record even minute's change without manipulating participants and the different variables at play. On the other hand, had I used quantitative research, this would have "[involved] manipulation of some variables (independent variables) while other variables (which would be considered to be extraneous and confounding variables) are held constant" (Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge 2009: 6). In summary, qualitative research helped to juxtapose my understanding of the community through its own lenses as well as my own views.

#### **6.4.2 PAR Setting**

Gweru falls between the Shona and Ndebele regions, hence a sizeable percentage of residents can speak both of Zimbabwe's major local languages, although Shona is spoken by the majority with approximately 30% speaking Ndebele. The city of Gweru experienced all forms of political violence experienced in independent Zimbabwe since the *Gukurahundi* disturbances of 1983. The study was conducted in the Mkoba area, which is the most populous high density suburb in the city (Parliament of Zimbabwe Research Department 2011). Out of the 158,233 Gweru residents (ZIMSTAT 2012), 63,810 people are from Mkoba of which 30,794 are registered voters (Parliament of Zimbabwe Research Department 2011). Most of the major corporations which had operations in Gweru downsized business, leaving the population with a high number of unemployed persons. Like most urban areas in Zimbabwe, the constituency is characterized by a declining standard of living, food shortages and severe power and water cuts. This research creates a 'cosmopolitan' ensemble of twelve participants, representative of a cross section of the ethnicities, political affiliations and gender, and stages performances in all the seven wards of the Mkoba constituency.

I find it important to reiterate that I am a resident of Mkoba. To that end, my understanding of the conflict in Mkoba, while benefitting from this systematic study, extends beyond some of the texts written on Gweru that I have read. I have lived in Gweru from birth. I am also a trained, applied ethnomusicologist, who has worked on community projects and with community artists for years. This background in part informs my choice of case study as well as the ethnographic research methods used.

The other reason for settling in Gweru is that there is little political interference. As has already been discussed in Chapter 4, most of the political mishaps in Zimbabwe are provoked by ZANU PF and/or its members. This is not meant to exonerate the Movement for Democratic Change and the other small opposition parties, as they are also complicit in the violent act, though rarely provocative.

The opinion leaders, including the community gatekeeper the Honourable Amos Chibaya, who is an Mkoba Member of Parliament and deputy secretary general of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, respect academics and in a way give them protection. This made working in the Mkoba community more convenient, as the participants felt that they would be shielded from any political persecution by the community leaders. Both my Honours and Masters degrees focused on politics and music and were conducted in the same constituency. As I have intimated in Chapter 2, and as corroborated by the Zimbabwe Peace Project of January 2016, violence in Zimbabwe's urban areas is usually instigated by the ruling party ZANU PF. The chances of successfully carrying out this research, which is political by virtue of being participatory action research, were enhanced by the political dynamics in Gweru. ZANU PF is not directly at the helm of the local authority and the community is predominantly MDC, at least judging from the fact that key elected local government offices are held by the Movement for Democratic Change.

## **6.5 Study Population and Sampling**

Up to this point in this chapter, I have discussed the research approach and design employed as well as the paradigm underpinning this study. What I have not done however, is to introduce perhaps the most important constituency of the study, that is, the research population. This being an empirical and transformative study, it goes without saying that I could not have done anything



without a study population. Desktop research studies for example can be successfully done by the researcher alone. A simple albeit not simplistic look at the research population is where I got the answers to respond to the research questions as well as to achieve the research goal. My view of what a study population entails is also corroborated by Castillo (2009: 1) who posits that:

A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of a scientific query. It is for the benefit of the population that research studies are done. However, due to the large sizes of populations, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is too expensive and time-consuming.

This study's population catered for the gender divide, at least in ways acceptable in Zimbabwe. We did not set out to include gays and lesbians, transgender or queer people, and at the same time we did not discriminate against them or their choices. To that end, gender here is defined according to the biology of being male or female, and the study population included male and female residents of the Mkoba community, aged eighteen and above. The people I targeted to be the beneficiaries can be thought of in two levels. The primary participants were the men and women who made up the ensemble, and the secondary participants were the general population of the Mkoba community who experienced the music presented by the ensemble during performances.

The following definition of a study population forwarded by Hassan (n.d.) suggests that a population is chosen mindfully. Hassan (n.d.: 1) posits that "A research population is also known as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common, binding characteristic or trait". For instance, I used musicianship and a genuine and outwardly love for music as one of the criterion to select or exclude participants. I have mentioned earlier on that though I come from a musical background this study is not a study in music. My focus was not on music the sound but music and humanity. To that end, I felt I did not have to teach people how to make good music. I had to work with those whom I felt and knew had the talent in them.

Initially my plan was to work with twelve musically talented residents of Mkoba. However, I failed at any time to get 12 participants being part of the performance ensemble. The initial size of twelve

after highly informed by years of participating in traditional dance performances with a large group of twelve people, I thought twelve people are manageable and have stage presence. However, observing other small bands led me to reduce the number to ten. It is however, unfortunate that one of the participants passed on at the initial stages of the study, leaving the nine of us to carry forward the work. In addition to the performing five, I also worked closely with another team of 6 people. Of the six, four were actively involved in the administration, while the other two offered guidance.

Apparently, the research took an unexpected but pleasant turn. Though I had thought of teaming up the ensemble according to musical strengths, I had never really given thought to the administrative qualities of the musicians. We ended up bringing together a team of administrators cum workshop facilitators after one of the musicians suggested we should do so. I will explain in detail about the administrators and workshops later on in this chapter. But basically, instead of just forming an ensemble and performing we ended up forming another group of university trained and formally unemployed graduates and musicians who held workshops with church choirs. These workshops focused on music training, social entrepreneurship and music management.

The ensemble members, the team of administrators as well as work workshop participants were chosen through purposive sampling. I had to make sure that the people I am working with can deliver musically or had the requisite knowledge needed to be shared during workshops. Purposive sampling is also called theoretical sampling and according to Mason (2002: 124):

In its more general form, theoretical sampling means selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to your research questions, your theoretical position and analytical framework, your analytical practice, and most importantly the argument or explanation that you are developing. Theoretical sampling is concerned with constructing a sample (sometimes called a study group) which is meaningful theoretically and empirically, because it builds in certain characteristics or criteria which help to develop and test your theory or your argument.

This meaning is corroborated by Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003: 79) who argue that in a purposive sampling:

The sample units are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study. These may be socio-demographic characteristics, or may relate to specific experiences, behaviours, role.

This choice of sampling technique departs from probability sampling which strives to give everyone a fair chance of being part of the research. While that fairness is ideal, this research did not have the luxury of selecting people who might turn up not to like music at all. Or to run the risk of selecting people who represent the same or almost similar views. Just as is the case with most qualitative studies I had to opt for non-probability sampling, where the selected units were deliberately chosen to represent certain groups with Mkoba community. Ritchie, Lewis and Elam further argue that “The sample is not intended to be statistically representative: the chances of selection for each element are unknown but, instead, the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection” (Ibid.).

The secondary study population were the members of the Mkoba community. We reached out to the Mkoba community through free performances. Our performance sites were all the six shopping centres in Mkoba. These centres became a natural choice because they are central and can be accessed. I used convenience sampling to select these sites. According to Kothari (2004: 14), “When population elements are selected for inclusion in the sample based on the ease of access, it can be called convenience sampling”. The shopping centres were not just convenient to the ensemble members but to the community as well. We never set out to reach a particular number of performances, instead we agreed that we would let circumstances and the environment determine how many performances we are going to have at any particular venue. Zimbabwe is a very volatile country the Police can just decide to stop performances.

However, as the lead researcher I was aware that the number of our performances was ideally supposed to be determined by achieving our set goals. In research parlance this is called saturation, defined by Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009: 22) as a stage reached “. . . when new data from new cases do not contribute to the development of emerging theory even after you have tried to ensure that your new cases are those most likely to extend or challenge your ideas”. It is

however, important for us to ponder over the feasibility of reaching a level of saturation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. I am of the opinion that peacebuilding and conflict transformation think these are perennial pursuits as people will always be in conflict. To that end, for this saturation was determined not by the number of performances but by a satisfaction that 1) we had managed to create a socially aware ensemble, 2) that we had managed to stimulate debate and dialogue around issues causing recurrent conflict in the community. In other words, have we moved forward from the where we found the community at before intervention. And if we have moved forward can we leave? Or do the community still needs us to facilitate their dialogue through performances or any other creative means of engagement that might arise.

The members of the audience who provided answers to this research became part of the study through self-selection. Dewey (2004: 87) claims that “A self-selected group is simply a naturally-occurring group”. Implied is that participants were chosen from people who organically made a choice to attend the performances. There are genuine concerns of bias coming from the fact that this sample might not be representative of bias. However, this group is welcome for this study because “they can grant us access to a particular perspective on the studied phenomena. That is, they ‘represent’ a perspective, rather than a population” (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2009: 49, ).

Though the team of musicians and administrators are not authoritative representations of all the people in Mkoba and Zimbabwe at large, deliberate effort was put to consciously select individuals from different ethnicities, political and religious backgrounds. Insights on how various members of the community behaves and relates was obtained during a cross sectional study I embarked on as well as insights from my stay in Mkoba as an insider. According to Osman (2012: 3):

Cross-sectional studies are simple in design and are aimed at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, problem, attitude or issue by taking a snap-shot or cross-section of the population. This obtains an overall picture as it stands at the time of the study. For example, a cross-sectional design would be used to assess demographic characteristics or community attitudes. These studies usually involve one contact with the study population and are relatively cheap to undertake.

I was fortunate not to invest any material resources during the cross-sectional research yet I got to be involved consciously with the community countless times find out more about the community.

## **6.6 Data collection methods**

Research data was gathered using participant observation together with personal experiences and engagement technique through unstructured personal interviews with participants. These occurred as part of an on-going participant observation fieldwork and relied entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction (Patton 2002). I documented both the ensemble members inter personal relationships as well as with the community.

It is very easy for one to be overwhelmed with information when conducting a qualitative research. Each and every single day one experiences something interesting. There is a pull towards giving a journalistic account of events, which however can be restrained by employing the correct data collection methods. It is therefore important for a qualitative researcher to take heed of Patton's (2002: 87) view that one should "know how to separate detail from trivia to achieve the former without being overwhelmed by the latter". The data collection methods and data collection techniques are closely linked but the two should not be confused. Anna Voce (2005: 1) provides lucid definitions distinguishing the two concepts; she argues that "Data collection method refers to the systematic approach to data collection while technique refers to the art of asking, listening, and interpreting".

In essence the primary data collections methods for qualitative research are observation, interviews and focus group discussion. These processes are part of everyday human interaction. Hardly a day passes by without engaging in at least one of the methods/ activities. To that end, it is imperative for one to exercise discipline and have considerable skill when conducting qualitative research. Differently put, "Data collection must be carefully planned, executed, and controlled to gain scholarly respect" (Hahn 2008: 71). I used Voce's (2005) distinguishing definitions to discuss how as part of this study I went about collecting data through interviews, focus group discussions and observation. According to Curry, Nembhard and Bradley (2009: 1445), the "primary methods of qualitative data collection include in-depth interviews, focus groups, observation, and document review", this study does not however, include document review under this bracket.

My exclusion of document review from primary data collection is informed by Boslaugh (2007: 1) who asserts that:

The distinction between primary and secondary data depends on the relationship between the person or research team who collected a data set and the person who is analyzing it. This is an important concept because the same data set could be primary data in one analysis and secondary data in another. If the data set in question was collected by the researcher (or a team of which the researcher is a part) for the specific purpose or analysis under consideration, it is primary data. If it was collected by someone else for some other purpose, it is secondary data.

This view is supported by Johnston (2014: 619) who argues that “Secondary data is the data that have been already collected and recorded by someone else and readily available from other sources”. My use of document review was largely restricted to literature review. The literature review helped to theories and gave an appreciation of the context and the challenges and prospects of using arts, social entrepreneurship to strengthen the community’s social capital. In a transformative study like this, it is important that data comes from participants. It is only through this way that we know emancipation was organic, effective and most likely sustainable. In the following paragraphs, I discuss in further the data collection methods and data collection techniques I used. I should however, say that detailed and perhaps close to step by step account of the processes will be revealed in the coming chapters where I present the research findings.

### **6.6.1 Natural conversational ethnographic interview**

My interaction with research respondents did not start with the formal data collection, instead I had been interacting with some of the participants from years back. As I have already mentioned, I come from an applied ethnomusicology background to that end, I interact with artists very often. Before engaging in this study, I already knew I wanted to contribute towards a better society through the arts. The problem was always how? It is through these years of trying to find out how I can play my part as an artist that I met many artists, at times bouncing off artistic ideas. The relationship I built enabled my data collection to be an organic iterative process, where learning,

unlearning and relearning have not been restricted by some paradigmatic thinking. Whitehead (2005: 6) argues for similar processes saying that:

Ethnographic discovery is not only about uncovering heretofore unknown phenomena, but in many instances, discovering the right questions to ask to understand the emic meaning of known phenomena, as well as newly discovered phenomena. As such, ethnography is then defined as an open-ended emergent process of learning episodes that is facilitated through iterative processes of continual observations, asking questions (interviewing), making inferences, and continuing these processes until those questions have been answered with the greatest emic validity possible. This process of open-ended emergent learning is facilitated through another departure from the positivist approach of following a rigid methodology, and that is the ethnographer must be ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically flexible and creative in the use of a range of methodologies that will help in understanding the people and the study topic with the greatest emic validity possible.

The cyclic processes and the prolonged stay in the field enabled me to conduct natural conversational ethnographic interview (Ibid.). This type of interview as is implied by its name does not depart from our everyday conversations. It is actually consciously framed not to deviate from how we would relate in our daily routines. Of course, the researcher and the participant(s) will be aware that there is a research going on but unlike probably in an in-depth interview. We don't alert each other that 'now we are talking about the research let's be serious'. Therefore, this type of interview departs from the traditional unstructured in-depth interview as argued by Whitehead (2005: 16):

This is the descriptive interview that is conversational in format. I call this format the natural conversational ethnographic interview, because the discourse is similar to what naturally occurs in a conversation, and usually occurs when the ethnographer is simply another participant in a conversation. However, ethnographers, having some idea of what it is that they want to learn in the setting, aspects of their research concerns are never far from their consciousness, even though the conversation or the activity maybe

primarily social or informal. Because some form of research paradigm is part of an ethnographer's consciousness, she or he are not only alert when something emerges in the conversation in which they don't quite understand, but also when the conversation seems to be moving into an area related to that research paradigm. In such instances, the ethnographer may ask a question to further explore the issue of interest, then become the alert listener, and then insert the appropriate natural inquiries of what, how, who, where, when, and why, that were mentioned earlier in the discussion of descriptive observations.

Whitehead (2005) also argues for a perennial awareness of the study from the researcher. Implied here is that when conducting a research with a view to make conclusions based on understanding a people's culture in almost its totality one doesn't have 'to park or shelve' their data collection methods for later use. To that end, there shouldn't be a time when one says 'for now I am just interviewing and I will be blind to observations'. Instead Whitehead (2005: 9) argues for using the methods simultaneously, through a process he calls the "natural cultural learning process" where observation, interviewing, participating, and making interpretations occur in a iterative process, only getting better as the interaction continues and new information, questions and relationships emerge.

### **6.6.2 Semi structured Interviews**

Though for most part of the research period I relied on conversational type of interviews, I also set aside time where I had semi structured in-depth interviews with all the ensemble members, selected audiences as well as the administration team. DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006: 316) proffer that "Semi-structured interviews are often the sole data source for a qualitative research project and are usually scheduled in advance at a designated time and location outside of everyday events. They are generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewees". Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant's experiences (McNamara 1999).

Though very useful, this study does not use interviews as the sole data source. I used an interview schedule to guide the interview sessions. The reasoning behind using an interview schedule was



so to facilitate uniformity, thus making interpretation, analysis and evaluation easier. Of course, follow up questions were always different from one interview to another but the largely not premeditated. They were sparked by what we would have discussed in each and every interview. In cases where I felt, the responses were too varied or they need another perspective I jotted down my questions for focus group discussions.

### **6.6.3 Focus Group Discussions**

Initially, the ensemble was the primary focus of this study; however the field processes led to an ‘unplanned’ but very useful inclusion of a group of administrators cum workshop facilitators. Kumar (2011: 126) avers that “Focus groups are a form of strategy in qualitative research in which attitudes, opinions or perceptions towards an issue, product, service or programme are explored through a free and open discussion between members of a group and the researcher”. These discussions were very useful in finding out more on what the participants thought were the characteristics of music and dance that could make them susceptible to manipulation in performances for social cohesion.

At most the number of discussants in the focus group discussions I had was thirteen. Well, fourteen including myself and that is when everyone within the ensemble and the workshop / administrative team involved. However, in some instances, I had interviews with just the workshop / administrative team. In essence the focus group discussions with the workshop / administrative team were strategic planning meetings or periodic planning meetings. The meeting environment provided an opportunity to rehearse democracy, to dialogue and shape a collective imagination of a better society.

During instances that a member or some members failed to take it was mostly due to personal reasons. At all times proceedings were jotted down by either a volunteer ensemble member, or a designated individual for the workshop / administrative team. Norum (2012: 2) states that “the issues discussed in focus groups are more specific and focused than in group interviews and they are largely predetermined by the researcher”. However, though my interviews were focused to the research they were very flexible and perhaps too relaxed to appear as a formal study. We strived

for a happy mood so as to keep with the goal of the research. My role was largely to bring them back to the issues of interest as identified by the group (Norum 2012).

#### **6.6.4 Observation**

Data collection through observation calls for the use and an alertness of all of the researcher's active senses. With the exception of disability "observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses, providing a 'written photograph' of the situation under study" (Kawulich 2005: 2). While on the other hand "participant observation is the process enabling researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study in the natural setting through observing and participating in those activities" (Ibid.). Merriam (1998) suggests that critical in determining what a researcher should observe is the researcher's purpose for conducting the study in the first place. "Where to begin looking depends on the research question, but where to focus or stop action cannot be determined ahead of time" (Merriam 1998: 97). As a result, for this participatory study I relied heavily on participant observation where focusing mainly on the following modes of interaction or relationships:

- ensemble participant- ensemble participant,
- ensemble participant-audience,
- ensemble participant-administrative team member
- ensemble participant- administrative team member
- ensemble- administrative team

My position as performer-administrator puts me in a good position to relate well with both the artists and administrators. However, it was important for me to be guided by best practices as result where possible I adhered to pointers from Patton's (2002: 87) Framework for observation which I share below.

**Table 6.3:** Framework for Observation, taken from Patton (2002: 87).

**Observer Framework**

- Learning to pay attention
- Seeing what there is to see, and hearing what there is to hear
- Practice in writing descriptively
- Acquiring discipline in recording field notes
- Knowing how to separate detail from trivia to achieve the former without being overwhelmed by the latter
- Using rigorous methods to validate and triangulate observations
- Reporting the strengths and limitations of one's own perspective, which requires both self-knowledge and disclosure

As a result, I had sustained interactions with both teams seeing how both teams separately and cooperatively worked towards achieving the set goals. These interactions came in handy in coming up with a credible research as I had more time to solicit data. Whitehead (2005: 6) “It is through repeated observations, conversations, and more structured interviewing that the ethnographer gets an emically valid understanding of the socio-cultural contexts, processes, and meaning systems that are of significance to the study participants”. Regardless of my direct involvement in the aforementioned approach, the findings were subjected to critical analysis in order to establish conclusions after final implementations. The process of participant observation as argued by (1989: 13), is a “logic and process of inquiry that is open-ended, flexible opportunistic and requires constant redefinition of what is problematic, based on facts gathered in a concrete setting of human experience. Perspective of the people is obtained through interacting with them”. Therefore, the study values the views of the participants and the community more than any say from anyone else.

### **6.6.5 Ethnographic film and Images**

This study also employed ethnographic film and stills footage for data collection. I made video and audio recordings of interviews, rehearsals and performances. In addition to providing material for the ethnographic film the videos acted as visual note-taking and ethnographic diary-keeping. I complimented my use of with compilations of notes on observations I made. I borrow the idea

from Vignau (2015: 205) who argues that “In visual anthropology, the suggested way of procedure is to present an ethnographic film along with a written, accompanying study guide, which is complementary”. Baily (1989: 16) also argues for the integration of film and written work, positing that:

Filmmaking should be regarded as only part of the research, and the film as only part of the product, to be used to communicate the kind of information that film does well and that writing does not. Film and written texts should be mutually illuminating; the written text enhances our understanding of what we see, and the visual image makes what we read more comprehensible and meaningful

These collection methods allow the flexibility to further probe initial participant responses for elaboration. Film worked as a living archive, where we revisited and reincarnated captured moments including highs such as our barnstorming performances to lows such as heated disputes between members. The captured images both motion and still work to confirm, extend or even realign verbal narratives.

## **6.7 Data Analysis**

In the forthcoming chapters I will analyze the findings qualitatively and present them in juxtaposition with an ethnographic film reflecting on the interviews and programs carried out during field study. In addition, activities designed by the ensemble and the administrative team will be reported and evaluated qualitatively spelling out the activities employed during the participatory action research. The analysis and presentation of the findings of this study is arranged into thematic frames and it is pinned on the understanding that “Data analysis involves discovering patterns among the collected data, so as to identify trends that point to theoretical understanding” (Babbie 2004: 284).

I analysed the data using inductive analysis and creative synthesis where patterns, themes, relationships and attitudes are searched through the spoken and non-verbal language material. This inductive analysis process is in line with the view credited to Coffey and Atkinson (1996: 139) that “good research is not generated by rigorous data alone . . . [but by] ‘going beyond’ the data to

develop ideas” through detecting the typical within the general and the general within the particular. My analysis looks at the song lyrics using textual analysis so as to have an insight into how the socio-political crisis in Gweru influences their music making and performances.

Since the groups’ interaction was not limited to just rehearsals and performance, the analysis also looked at the participants’ interaction in different settings giving an in-depth understanding of their (participants) behaviour and the reasons that govern the behaviour. In turn this enabled the study to examine the ability of music and dance to grow cohesive social capital in a community in conflict.

Qualitative research allows for an analysis which interprets reasons behind various aspects of behaviour, using open-ended questions and discussions to gather respondents’ perceptions, attitudes and behaviour (Lindeman 1992). The analysis of the music, post-performance discussions as well as interview responses will also help in understanding the underlying meanings in content and the relationships being built and existing. According to Bryman (2001: 101):

By analysing the text, hypotheses can be formulated regarding both the constructor of the text and the intended audience and the possible social effect of the text, thus making it possible to have an almost holistic view of the communicative event rather than a part of it which other methods like interviews provide.

Pfukwa (2001: 25) also adds content analysis has potential to reveal in-depth insights into the producers’ philosophy, worldview, their intentions and emotional state. I also look at the choice language use, considering that the research this study brought together people from different ethnicities to work on one ensemble where they had equal and shared power. On the other hand, the dance analysis looks at how facial expressions, gestures and the dance routines re-enacted and modelled social and political values and structures.

In my quest to fully attend to the research questions I also utilise Hills’ (2003) framework which I present below. Generally, the framework is a reminder that research should be a focused unit albeit with many differently named and interconnected sections.

**Table 6.4:** Data Analysis Frame, adapted from Hills (2003: 1).

<b>TASK</b>	<b>QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE ANALYSIS PROCESS</b>
Prepare data for analysis	What data has been collected for each research question or objective?
Go back to research questions	What did the study aim to do? What are the issues involved?
Go back to literature review	Who said what about your research focus? Whose work seems most important? Does your data seem to match/contradict the work of others?

### **Validity and reliability/trustworthiness**

The validity of this study was ensured through juxtaposing findings from interviews, video recordings and my observations and interpretations as a participant observer. Additionally, the results were solidified by using purposive sampling to select respondents who are in a strong position to champion socio-political inclusivity and musically gifted individuals who form the primary resources for the ensemble. Validity was also ensured through comparing and contrasting of theoretical perspectives on the subject against the study's field experiences and deductions from such will help strengthen the validity, rigour and reliability of the study results (Golafshani 2003).

## **6.8 Ethical considerations**

Emancipatory studies are inherently political, and Zimbabwe has been going through political turmoil for years. As a result, this study looked at a potential explosive subject. My actions and those of the research participants had to at least, align with the laws of Zimbabwe and at the very best be right with the community. To that end, I had to observe existing community structures so my first port of call was to announce my intention to research in the community as well as to seek permission to do so from the gatekeeper. According to Saunders (2006: 6), gatekeeper refers to "the person who controls research access. For example, the top manager or senior executive in an organization, or the person within a group or community who makes the final decision as to whether to allow the researcher access to undertake the research". In my case I had to work with the highest political office in Mkoba constituency. Therefore, I sought and was granted gatekeeper's letter by the Member of Parliament of Mkoba constituency, the Honourable Amos

Chibaya. My application for the gatekeeper's letter provided details of my research. It also spelt out all the rights and activities that the participants undertook during the research.

### **6.8.1 Letter of Information and Informed consent**

All people who took part in this research did so knowingly, and with a full understanding of the research and its implications. Before taking part in the research I made sure that a participant received the letter of information and the informed consent letter, understood and voluntarily signed the consent form. The participants were given informed consent letter, which they signed before taking part in the study. Shahnazarian *et al.* (2013: 3) argue that:

Informed Consent is a voluntary agreement to participate in research. It is not merely a form that is signed but is a process, in which the subject has an understanding of the research and its risks. Informed consent is essential before enrolling a participant and ongoing once enrolled.

These letters carried very important messages which told participants that; if for any reason any participant felt that the research might put them at risk and they do not want to be referred by name in the thesis they were obliged to say so and their anonymity was assured. I maintain confidentiality by using a pseudonym. However, the identity of the ensemble members cannot be concealed as they staged public performances. Participants also knew that their participation in the study was voluntary and participants were told beforehand that they participate on their will and they can withdraw from the research at any stage.

## **6.9 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the research methods and methodology as well as the ethical considerations. In a nutshell, the study is qualitative gathering data in situ. I also explain that data is interpreted mainly according to the views of the researched community. Moving on, in the following chapters where I present the research findings, you will realise that I transcribed in verbatim and coded all the data. The coding involves interweaving the responses obtained from interviews and the observations in order to come up with a narrative of how the ensemble managed to successfully use music and dance performance as an experiential platform to rehearse inclusivity.

## **CHAPTER 7: PRAXIS IN RESEARCH**

### **7.1 Introduction: Understanding Participatory Action Research**

The previous chapter detailed the conceptual underpinnings of qualitative research in an effort to bring to fore why this study settled for a qualitative approach instead of a quantitative research. Primarily a qualitative research offers an opportunity to get an in-depth understanding of the social phenomena under study. It makes it possible to study culture as it lives and develops, providing insight into how social experiences are created, transition and how meanings are created and valued (Silverman 2005: 10). This is quite different from quantitative research whose emphasis is on the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not process (O'Reilly 1995: 27, Silverman 2005: 10). Having noted, this all-important difference, this study further explores qualitative research and picks participatory action research as its design of choice.

To that end, this chapter is set to advance the understanding of participatory action research (PAR). Its specific focus is to explain more the nexus between participatory performing arts and participatory action research. Concerns have been raised in some circles doubting the academic merits of engaging in reflective action under the ambit of research. To that end, through the ensuing discussion, I hope I will aid in concretising the two methods of research in academia.

### **7.2 What is Participatory Action Research (PAR)?**

Often, when Participatory Action Research is mentioned, Action Research (AR) is also discussed. With varying degrees, scholars argue that there is difference between these two. For scholars, who argue that there is a difference between PAR and AR, the variance is that AR is empowering while PAR is both empowering and transformative due to its participatory nature. MacDonald (2012: 36) states that “action research involves an action researcher and community or organization members who are seeking to improve their situation”. In addition, action research can be settled for by a researcher who aims to improve his or her practice, for instance teachers, in classrooms do not necessarily have to ask pupils for voluntary ‘participation’ in the improvement of a teaching practice. In most cases it just happens, as part of the teaching and learning process. The idea is to effectively pass an instruction.



The counter argument goes on to say PAR is democratic and it entails wilful participation. Its pursuit is not material wealth but an eradication of a poverty of courage, introspection, and docility. According to MacDonald (2012: 34), “PAR is considered democratic, equitable, liberating, and life-enhancing qualitative inquiry that remains distinct from other qualitative methodologies”. However, to think that pupils or anyone for that matter can be forced into learning, and we expect real change is living a lie. And again, this classroom example I have used is not representative of all AR studies, many if not all formal studies require informed consent of participants.

My understanding of the designs and a critical look at the definitions forwarded as well as reading through studies where the two designs have been used indicate that both require the researcher to actively engage with participants with a view to either empower or transform participants. Kaye (2017) also corroborates, the view that the noted differences between PAR and AR are very minute to warrant a distinction, though acknowledged. She avers “that participatory action research is frequently differentiated from action research; however, since participation is key to both the difference may be the degree of the focus on the participatory nature of the research rather than any major differences” (Kaye 2017: 5).

Nonetheless, for this study, without discrediting proponents of AR or undermining the effectiveness of AR in bringing about social change, I will use the term PAR. The motivation to use the term PAR stems from Mertens’ (2010) definition of the design. She states that “Transformative participatory action research (PAR) involves members of the community in the research process in varying roles, but does so with explicit recognition of power issues and a goal of transforming society. PAR is associated with inquiries that are based on social transformation, often in developing countries” (Mertens 2010: 238). Particularly interesting for this study which focuses on creating an expressive art led communication platform in an oppressive environment, Mertens adds, “PAR emphasizes the use of methods that allow the voices of those most oppressed to be heard” (Ibid.).

Many scholars as alluded to earlier on provide various and often differently worded but agreeing definitions of PAR and AR. I will not focus more on the different definitions instead, at this juncture, I will present the common thread of characteristics that were laid down by Stephen

Kemmis and Robin McTaggart (2005). However, there are some common characteristics which appeared in discussion by most of the scholars I consulted therefore, I will engage some scholars who further explicate, that which makes PAR emancipatory.

To begin with, the duo argues that “three particular [elements] are often used to distinguish participatory research; shared ownership of research projects, community based analysis of social problems, and an orientation toward community action” (Kemmis and McTaggart 2005: 273). Their truncated characterization of PAR is supported by Fals-Borda (1987: 330) in a wordy definition, proffering that:

PAR, is not exclusively research neither oriented, nor only to adult education or political action, but that it encompasses all these aspects as three stages or emphases not necessarily consecutively. They are combined into an experiential methodology, a process of personal and collective behaviour occurring within a satisfying and productive cycle of life and labour. This experiential methodology for life and labour implies the acquisition of serious and reliable knowledge upon which to construct power for the poor and exploited social groups and their authentic organisations. In this connection, people’s power may be defined as the capacity of the grass-roots groups, which are exploited socially and economically, to articulate and systematise knowledge (both their own and that which comes from outside) in such a way that they can become protagonists in the advancement of their society and in defence of their own class and group interests.

### **7.3 Characteristics of PAR**

Kemmis and McTaggart (2005) go on to list seven characteristics of PAR which will guide the discussion below.

#### **7.3.1 PAR is Practical and Collaborative**

In an effort to bring about positive social change PAR engages in democratic processes where every concerned person is given an opportunity to say their views, engage in dialogue instead of

debates on how best to serve the community or the greater good of humanity. Resolutions are arrived through democratic processes. PAR is propped by research participants or by the marginalised community. It is also a collective decision and action process fostering equality among people. The agency in following PAR processes lies in that they are for, and are led by participants. Mertens (2010: 238) gives an explicative definition of PAR, saying that PAR:

. . . has explicit recognition of power issues and a goal of transforming society. PAR is associated with inquiries that are based on social transformation, often in developing countries. . . . PAR emphasizes the use of methods that allow the voices of those most oppressed to be heard. Thus, such research might take the form of community meetings and events that allow the oppressed people to tell their own stories, to reflect on their communities, and to generate ideas for change. The components of participation and dialogue can centre on identification of needs, evaluation of services, or design of interventions.

### **7.3.2 PAR is Critical**

That PAR is critical means that it's a research process conceived to question and shake unjust systems and restraining systems. PAR goes beyond imparting a skill set to affecting one's attitude, behaviour and character. Distinctive about this methodology is the inclusion and participation of the subaltern, leading in processes that make sense to their own development. It gives people the agency to map and shape their worldview and their existential realities. Meaningful and active involvement of the marginalised community in the entire PAR processes means that they are able to think through the course of action, reflecting on adjusting and scaling up actions accordingly. According to McTaggart (1994: 582), "distinctive feature of participatory action research is that those affected by planned changes have the primary responsibility for deciding on courses of critically informed action which seem likely to lead to improvement, and for evaluating the results of strategies tried out in practice". In my view, this is different from 'deciding for young people that I should teach them to sing and dance for money because I am an applied ethnomusicologist'. There won't be ownership and commitment to the process for starters.

The research team takes time to find out and critically analyse the problems that they are facing. A full understanding of the situation only serves to prepare for the next stage in participatory action research. In essence, when people, marginalised or not, are aware of their situation, they become empowered to take appropriate action to better themselves or the unfavourable circumstances. MacDonald (2012: 37) argues that “Critical consciousness development requires the individual to be knowledgeable about political, social, and economic contradictions, and to take action to change the oppressive elements of reality, thus liberating oppressed individuals”. However, the process does not end there it’s a cycle of learning and improvement as suggested MacDonald who posits that “PAR is not only research that is followed by action; it is action that is researched, changed, and re-researched within the research process by the participants” (Ibid.). Implied is that positive social change is not an event but a process of learning, unlearning and relearning through evaluation and action.

### **7.3.3 PAR is a Social Process**

This characteristic of PAR made it an inevitable choice for this study which sought to strengthen a people’s social capital. PAR is only possible when there is cooperation between people. In addition, PAR processes are premised on the collective they also put emphasis on ‘individuals to find themselves’. Hence it draws from sociologist George Mead, in Habermas’ (1991: 26) view that participatory action research recognizes that “no individuation is possible without socialization, and no socialization is possible without individuation”. While Karpel (1976 cited in Lapsley and Stey 2011: 1) forward that individuation refers to a process “by which a person becomes increasingly differentiated from a past or present relational context”. This means that PAR processes speak to Asset Based Community Development ideals where a community’s full development comes from people realising their individual potentials and working as collectives.

The goal of this study is to strengthen the community’s social capital. In other words, the research seeks to facilitate cooperation, community action or collectivism and trust amongst the residents of Mkoba. It only makes sense that the study follows PAR, not only does it discourage individualism but the PAR processes emancipate participants from ‘mental slavery’ giving them courage to speak and reorder unfriendly social structures and the politics of the land. MacTaggart (1991: 169) avows that “PAR was developed as a means for improving and informing social,

economic, and cultural practice” which “in principle is a group of activities” [whereby individuals with differing power], status, and influence, collaborate in relation to a thematic concern”.

#### **7.3.4 PAR is Participatory**

Since PAR puts emphasis on building relationships premised on individuation it unavoidably becomes participatory. Lapsley and Stey (2005) argue that:

the agency of individuation requires a mature sense of autonomy and independence, but without isolation and alienation. This process of individuation gives people the agency to be comfortable in their own skin and be confident to actively take part and represent themselves in processes that affect their lives. When one has achieved a state where they have an autonomous selfhood it becomes highly possible for them to become confident enough for instance question authority, reorder social structures and systems. In other words, PAR makes critical and pro-active citizens engaging people to examine their own knowledge”.

There are differences in the nature of, and focus of participation and these are very important to consider when choosing this design. Participation in a study can either be as a means or as process. This difference is amply noted by Yule (2012: 17). She argues that participatory as a means implies the following:

It is a way using the economic and social resources of the people to achieve predetermined targets. More so community participation is sponsored by an external agency and is seen as a method of supporting the progress of the project. However, results are more important than the act of participation in itself. Furthermore, participation as a means is essentially a static, passive and controlled form of involvement. It is the form of engagement more commonly found in rural projects”

For participation as a process, Yule (2012) states that:

Participation as a process by some is referred to as participation as an end. Whilst participation as a means is externally driven and agent-centred, participation as a process is driven by the community and involves a progression in which self-confidence and cohesion among communities is built up. Participation as a process in theatre for development interventions is a self-motivated, unquantifiable and essentially unpredictable element. It is created and moulded by the participants. It is an active form of participation, responding to local needs and changing circumstances. More generally, participation as process presupposes the building of influence or involvement from the bottom upwards.

There also are four ways to participate in PAR and these include contractual, consultative, collaborative and collegiate participation. While this study uses collegiate participation, below I present a the table with descriptive notes on each of the four modes of participation.

**Table 7.1:** Four Modes of Participation in PAR, adapted from Bangoli and Clark (2010: 102).

Type of Participation	Description
Contractual	participants are contracted in to take part in research
Consultative	participants are consulted on their opinions
Collaborative	(participants work with ‘academic researchers’ on projects devised and controlled by the latter)
Collegiate	participants work alongside ‘academic researchers’

### 7.3.5 PAR is Emancipatory

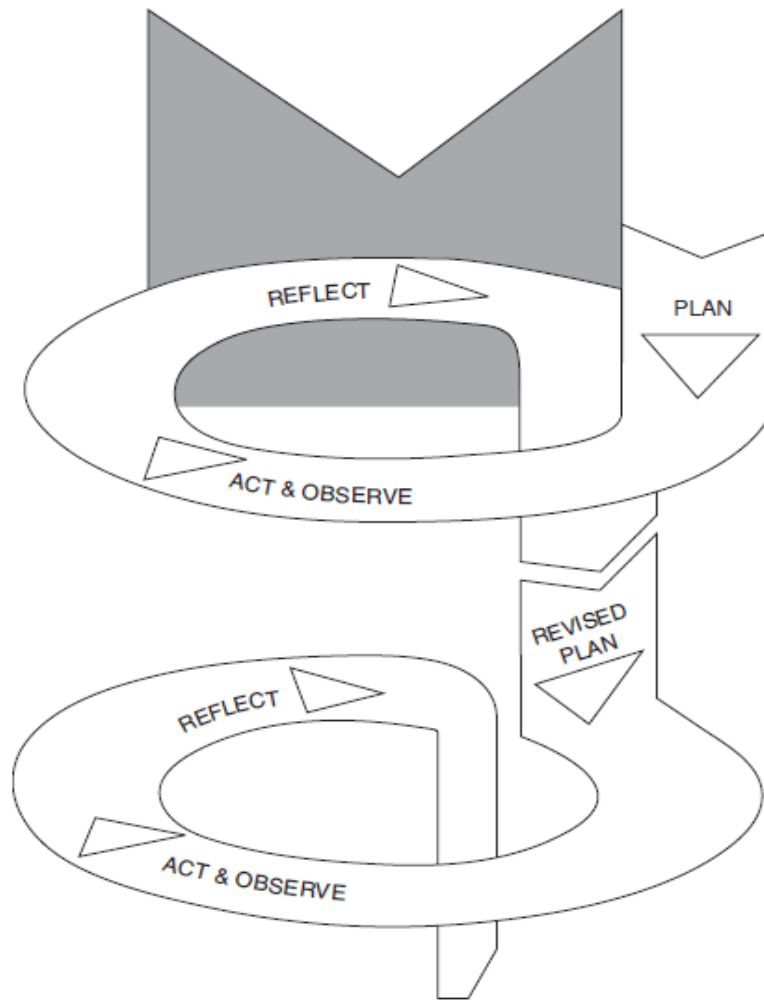
PAR emboldens silenced constituencies. It gives agency to the subaltern to be confident in their selfhood and subsequently to warm up to collective actions.

Due to the ‘internalised culture of silence’ in Mkoba PAR is very relevant to the Mkoba community and by extension Zimbabwe as whole. The common men and women of Mkoba are given an opportunity to be heard and to direct the course of their lives. Mertens (2010: 27) states that by establishing a transformative approach and reaching out to concealed communities, researchers have the opportunity to engage voices that have been traditionally unrecognised or excluded. In

the same vein, Kemmis and McTaggart (2005: 283) are of the view that “Participatory action research aims to help people recover, and release themselves from, the constraints of irrational, unproductive, unjust, and unsatisfying social structures that limit their self-development and self-determination”. PAR methodologies have the agency to stimulate as well as facilitate a silenced people to speak out. PAR strives for democracy, bold and pro-active citizens, oneness of humanity and equality.

### **7.3.6 PAR is Reflexive**

Common with the PAR process is the phrase ‘reflection in action’ which speaks to PAR’s quality of being reflexive. Under PAR research is an ongoing implementation of decisions born out of thoroughly processed thoughts. PAR is a learning methodology which relies on critically evaluating practices and knowledges’ in order to come up with relevant evidence based interventions. It is a spiralling cycle of making and decisions, implementing actions and assessing such for further refined actions and decisions. Below is an illustrative diagram showing the PAR processes.



Action Research Spiral Sourced from Kemmis and McTaggart (2005: 275)

### 7.3.7 PAR aims to transform both theory and practice

There is a growing call for academics (as educators) and researchers to bridge the disjuncture existing between their research activities, and community needs (Esau 2015). The argument is that much of the work is esoteric and disengaged from peoples lived realities (Esau 2015: 68). Crudely put academics have often been accused of “functioning in an almost Utopian world, where they focus on explorations and place little value on the possibilities of applying their research findings. In this world, relevance is not an essential component of research, because there is no need to justify the importance of the research to anybody else” (Mutero 2016). Unlike, the exploratory and positivist methodologies which enhance theory, PAR transforms both theory and practise. PAR



bridges the theory-practice divide through integrating theoretical insights in the development and implementation of studies which address the challenges of the day (Esau 2015: 75).

The use of PAR methodologies in peacebuilding according to Kaye (2017), affords the research to be anchored on both principle and pragmatism. This means a principled peacebuilding intervention is informed by knowledge of the context, participants and possible outcomes and their implications (Ibid.). Aligning to this understanding of PAR, this study also increases options on the menu of scholarship on PAR. Indeed, the appreciation of PAR brought by this study is also juxtaposed to academic conceptualisation of the process. It also provides an in-depth understanding of PAR based on activities that were carried out in Mkoba, Gweru. The knowledge it presents was obtained from real life practices and facilitating social change in real time.

#### **7.4 Popular Participatory Performance Arts as Research Methodology**

As I have pointed out in the previous chapters, this study is not content with just finding out how people in Mkoba experience conflict and underdevelopment, instead the primary pursuit was to facilitate positive change led by the community. And here in, lies the suitability of participatory action research and popular participatory theatre. Lacayo and Singhal (2008: 8) also argue that participatory theatre “processes can be used to catalyse changes in social norms and collective attitudes by provoking interpersonal and public dialogue”. This chapter will unpack popular participatory theatre and music making (PPT), as a PAR methodology which “deeply involves [the Mkoba] specific communities in identifying issues of concern, analysing current conditions and causes of a situation, identifying points of change, and analysing how change could happen and/or contributing to the actions implied” (Prentki and Selman 2000: 8).

The study’s engagement with performing arts transcends a preoccupation with just aesthetics of the art placing importance on the agency of art to bring about social change as well as the deliberate and strategic steps made to produce art that can effectively aid in achieving positive social change. Lacayo and Singhal (2008: 8) speaking on edutainment further argue that:

Communication processes are not just an accompaniment or embellishment to accomplish social change, but an integral and fundamental part of the social change

enterprise. Communication processes nurture critical thinking capabilities such as identifying and analyzing the causes and manifestations of discrimination, social exclusion and violence and the ability to develop and implement personal and collective alternatives to solve those problems.

It has been observed that popular participatory theatre and music making is a “powerful way for ethnography to recover and interrogate the meanings of lived experiences” (Denzin 1997 cited in Conrad 2004: 9). I should reiterate that though, I am insider of Mkoba community and an active participant in this study, the research values and carries the perspective of all the participants. In fact being a member of the community helped in achieving emic validity as well as dealing with the cultural and political issues in Mkoba, which potentially can drag the research if one is not aware of the context.

Hartstock (1998) and Collins (2000) share the view that one’s knowledge, views or lack thereof is directly related to their social standing and location. To that end, I should hasten to mention that as a Zimbabwean citizen, I also have firsthand experience of the oppression and living conditions in Mkoba Gweru. According to Whitehead (2005: 5), “emic validity, is simply understanding the study(s) from their own system of meanings”. He further argues that “this can be achieved only by being in the host community and coming to a thorough understanding of the daily lives of the hosts”.

Important however, for participatory processes to be successful, communities should actively lead the process. Therefore, as a researcher I had to question and be aware of my own biases and assumptions. Holloway and Wheeler (2010: 5) suggest the following:

To be able to examine the world of the participants, researchers, must not take this world for granted but should question their own, assumptions and act like strangers to the setting as naïve observers. They make the familiar strange. Immersion might mean attending meanings with or about informants, becoming familiar with other situations, reading documents or observing interaction in the setting. This can even start before the formal data collection but it means researchers immerse themselves in the culture of the study.

Accordingly, my interaction with participants and engagement with popular participatory theatre started well before, the formal research process. I had time to live within and understand the research context as well as build acquaintances with the research community. I also improved on my knowledge in participatory arts through engaging in community based arts initiatives as well as working for esteemed arts for development organizations.

Chipendo (2014) argues that due to a growing number of cultural studies researchers who give false hopes to the research community, with the intent of getting closer and at times syphoning cultural wares of the researched people, communities are now reluctant to participate in researches. To that end, my knowledge of, and relations with participants were important in building trust between me and participants. The International Online Training Program on Intractable Conflict (online) states that:

*[Communities]* feel more comfortable with insiders as mediators, as they know the situation better, are more easily trusted, and will stick around to make sure any settlement is implemented, unlike outsider neutrals, who usually leave to go home or go on to their next case. Thus outsiders may not be as invested in the success of the mediation as an insider might be, nor are they present to help resolve any difficulties that develop in the implementation as often as insiders are.

Though, I have had the privilege of pursuing post-graduate studies, I still identify and participate in community arts, often without monetary returns. In addition, I also enjoyed the three advantages of an insider researcher forwarded by Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) cited in Unluer (2012: 2.). They posit that:

. . . three key advantages of being an insider researcher: (a) having a greater understanding of the culture being studied; (b) not altering the flow of social interaction unnaturally; and (c) having an established intimacy which promotes both the telling and the judging of truth.

As an insider researcher I had also conducted fieldwork for a similar study in 2013, during the elections. Therefore, I also knew how to navigate the political systems as well as how to work with community authorities. Unluer (2012: 2) avers that another advantage of insider-researchers is that they “. . . generally know the politics of the institution, not only the formal hierarchy but also how it ‘really works’. They know how to best approach people. In general, they have a great deal of knowledge, which takes an outsider a long time to acquire”. I will dwell more on this aspect in my research findings chapter, detailing how the authorities helped in coming up with a performance content which was acceptable to the community as well as how they protected us.

Being an insider researcher is usually disadvantageous in that as a researcher who is used to a culture you might fail to pick important information (Mercer 2007, Unluer 2012). However, a combination of awareness of my “surreptitious agenda” and my role as a researcher, led me to being frank with, and constantly urging participants to lead processes along with me. In addition, the use of theatre based data collection, revealed more information about the community than I thought I knew. It was also difficult to miss or ignore the information presented expressively.

The conventional term used for the use of expressive arts to bring about social change process is popular participatory theatre but because some of the activities which the study engages with may not fit in the academic definition of theatre. And the fear that academic definitions of ‘theatre’ might have exclusionary effects and limitations to the point of standing in the way of liberation of the oppressed, I choose to use the term popular participatory performing arts. For instance, Mangeni’s (2000) use of music in a theatre for development project strips music of its efficacious didactic role, posting that “music and dance were employed to telescope time and place, bridge scenes, vary action and accommodate audience participation” (Mangeni 2000: 83).

While, this might have just been reference to a single play, danger is that if read in isolation the assertion has the potential to relegate other genres to the periphery of change agency as they are mere auxiliaries, which best work to beautify a production. To that end, I choose to ascribe to the term popular participatory performing arts, I am aligning with Conrad’s (2004: 4) view that “. . .

better defined by its intentions of personal and social transformation, than by the various forms it may take, Popular Theatre draws on participants' experiences to collectively create theatre and engage in discussion of issues through theatrical means".

My use of the term popular participatory performing arts is premised on the desire to give room to all creative expressions to be explored in the services of humanity. In addition, this way activity of the study will not be limited to what is for instance acceptable with the confines of theatre or accepted as proper by musicians but focus will be on getting and fostering liberation through performance making and staging. Popular Participatory Performing arts encapsulates all performance genres others thought of as being outside theatre, if any. Having said, that it is important to note that besides opening up more activities which might be misconstrued as non-theatre activities, my understanding of what I term popular participatory performance arts is not different from popular participatory theatre.

For the purposes of understanding popular participatory performing arts there is need to engage with Paulo Freire's (1970) banking concept of education which inevitably leads to the 'culture of silence' as well as Boal's (1970) Theatre of the Oppressed. Freire gives us the ideological basis to understand how are people are oppressed through social socializing agents such as education. In addition, he speaks to how education can also be used as agency for 'conscientization' which refers to "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and take to action against oppressive elements of reality" (Ibid.).

The concept of conscientization is defined by Sanders (1968: 2) as "a change of mentality involving an accurate, realistic awareness of one's locus in nature and society; the capacity to analyse critically its causes and consequences, comparing it with other situations and possibilities; and action of a logical sort aimed at transformation. Psychologically it entails an awareness of one's dignity". To that end, Conscientization gets oppressed people speaking out oppression and actively engaging in bettering their social realities. Nyirenda (n.d.: 6) posits that "Conscientization rests on value assumptions of equality of all people, their right to knowledge and culture, and their right to criticise their situation and act upon it. It also implies having a faith in the capacity of all people, including the illiterate, to engage in critical dialogue".

As I have already mentioned in previous chapters, Zimbabweans at large do not speak out against injustices, if they do, they rarely address their oppressors directly. They prefer using metaphors or ‘speaking in hushed tones. This phenomenon is akin to what Freire (1970) refers to the ‘culture of silence’ perpetuated by fear of the government. Freire (1970: 30) states that:

In a culture of silence, the masses are 'mute', that is, they are prohibited from creatively taking part in the transformation of their society and therefore prohibited from being. Even if they can occasionally read and write because they were 'taught' in humanitarian - but not humanist - literacy campaigns, they are nevertheless alienated from the power responsible for their silence.

While, Freire postulates that this culture of silence and or oppression is carried on by the educational system, in Zimbabwe it runs through the society. The society has been oriented by the politics, gerontocracy and the education system not to question authority. The society has ‘internalized oppression’ which according to Williams (2012: 21) “is a system which has structured and mutually reinforcing ways of reproducing inequality through the daily functioning of society and societal institutions”. Therefore, this oppression is cyclic, being passed from one generation to the next. At times the community unwittingly accepting their oppression under the guise of cultural norms, while the dominant or oppressor groups strengthen their hold to power. Knowing that there is a culture of silence is important but what is critical and what Freire advocates for is to dismantle the banking concept of education and the culture of silence. He argues that “human existence cannot be silent [because] human beings are not built in silence but in word, in work and in action-reflection” (Freire 2002: 88).

Implied is that people or a community is supposed to work towards its own emancipation. Liberation is not something that can be gifted to a people. As I have alluded to earlier own Freire (1970: 11) advocated for a liberating education. He argues that:

Problem-posing education, as a humanist and liberating praxis, posits as fundamental that the people subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. To that end,

it enables teachers and students Subjects the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and alienating intellectualism; it also enables people to overcome their false perception of the reality. The world -no longer something to be described with deceptive words-becomes the object of that transforming action by men and women which results in their humanisation. Problem-posing education does not serve the interests of the oppressor. No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin the question; Why?

It is this kind of education which has ties to popular participatory arts and the way that this research is formulated. Performance is used here as an experiential platform through which people rehearse peaceful and emancipatory coexistence as well as a mirror through which the community reflects on its being.

Similarly, Freire (1970: 3) avows that “a deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation”. In essence, what Freire is saying and what I am supporting through the use of reflective performances is that people have to be aware of the challenges they face to be able and to truthfully liberate themselves. It therefore becomes important to introduce alternative educational systems and forms of socialization which empower people to speak out and active play a role in their own empowerment (Freire 1970: 29). Performances conducted in this study reflected the people's realities. In addition, participants managed to name, comprehend and face their challenges as will be discussed in the results chapters. The whole process of reflection and action is what Freire (1970) terms ‘praxis’. He argues that “It is not enough for people to come together in dialogue in order to gain knowledge of their social reality. They must act together upon their environment in order to critically reflect upon their reality and so transform it through further action and critical reflection” (Freire 1970: 29). Since we have established ideology on which the popular participatory performances that this study are underpinned, I proceed to explain how I used performance as a research methodology.

#### **7.4.1 Popular Participatory Performance Arts as Ethnography**

In the previous sections of this chapter I have highlighted how important it is to have an in-depth understanding of the context in order to come up with a relevant intervention strategy. Usually

understanding a community calls for ethnographic studies. It was fortunate except for two participants everyone else of the study participants, who are in any case co-researchers, were lived in Mkoba. The two who do not live in Mkoba, stay in Mambo<sup>3</sup> another high-density suburb of Gweru, they became part of the study primarily for their excellent musical talent and that they spent a lot of time with Mkoba based musicians. This meant that we all had a historical appreciation of the prevailing situation. In addition, the method that this research used as an intervention strategy provided another platform to know more about the community as the ensemble team-building exercise involved participants talking about their frustrations and conflict in the community. Furthermore, the music and dance performances were made from material sourced from the participants lived realities. Making and staging of performances was some pseudo-ethnography of some sorts.

To understand why I call these performances pseudo-ethnography, I will engage Mertens' (2010) appreciation of the performance ethnography concept. Mertens (2010: 232) argues that "it involves the development of a script and often a staged reenactment of ethnographically derived data. The power of performance combined with ethnography serves to bring the results of the study to life in a way that is engaging and informative for the purpose of raising consciousness and stimulating action". Hanock and Ockleford (2007) add that "the term means portrait of a people and it is a methodology for descriptive studies of cultures and people. The cultural parameter is that the people under investigation should have something in common...". Performance in African culture is not just entertainment or some element of culture we can do without. In this study performance is thought of and presented by a collective as a "human symbolic interaction of a performance kind" (Ben-Amos and Goldstein 1975: 3), denoting the processes which actually happen when people map, make and are shaped by their worldview (Ibid.). It provides a platform to gaze into a people's past, future in the present.

I should quickly point out that this study was not necessarily set up to be performance ethnography. Instead, performance was conceived as means to strengthen the community's social capital as well as achieve social change. However, inevitably the making and subsequent staging of the performances involved using material whose substance was sourced from the community and

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<sup>3</sup> The life in Mkoba and Mambo is similar



participants lived realities. This experience created some sort of simulated but very important performance ethnography. Conrad (2004: 9) argues that:

In their research, performance ethnographers find or create opportunities to perform their cultural understandings by observing, participating in performances, and/or representing their findings to others through performance. As instances of performance that provide cultural understanding, performance ethnographers inquire into cultural events: public occasions, rituals, games, storytelling, theatre, and dance; social dramas or dramatic events in everyday life such as moments of conflict; everyday interactions including culturally conditioned behaviour, the performance of social roles of gender, race, status, age, and so on; and communicative/speech acts that are performative.

In addition to producing knowledge, performances (during rehearsals and in the community) in this study went a step ahead of just reflecting the society, they helped re-build relations and imagine the future. Nicholson (2005) also notes that knowledge in performance is embodied, culturally located and socially distributed. This means that knowledge is produced through interaction with others, and that reciprocity between participants creates new forms of social and cultural capital (Nicholson 2005: 39).

As argued by Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008: 7) that popular performing arts “provides active embodiment of the narratives within a dialogical space created for action, reflection and becoming”, performance afforded the participants and me to observe, relive, shape and imagine a better society. Garoian (1999: 6) further argues that performance opens a liminal pedagogical space that allows for a reflexive learning process that “recognizes the cultural experiences, memories, and perspectives – participants’ multiple voices – as viable content”. And importantly it ...encourages participant discussions of complex and contradictory issues” (Ibid.).

In using performance as a source of information detailing pertinent information on the society existential realities, this study thinks of performance in the same line with Johnston (1973) and Garfias (2004)’s views on music. Johnston argues that music mirrors the society, and that it reflects our relations and even our existence as biological beings (Johnston 1973: 109). While, Garfias also

posits that “. . . the structure of music and the manner in which it is used can tell us much about the society itself, its social structure and stratification” (Garfias 2004: 1). Performances give us an entertaining and engaging gaze into our social life. Therefore, researchers can employ performances to elicit data which is different from what they could obtain from other equally important data collection methods.

Parallel to these assertions is Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008: 3) definition of drama. To them performance is:

. . . exposure, confrontation and contradiction which lead to recognition and analysis, which in turn awaken understanding. When the spectator enters into the theatre space, s/he enters into the reality of the situation enacted and thus, even when relating to personal or collective past, theatre praxis is always enacted and asserted in the present. This is what can make theatre more real than the normal stream of consciousness and thus most effective.

For this study which uses performing arts based methodologies, the implication is that songs, poems, dramas, skits and all related performances were not determined by the director or whoever is overall in charge. Instead, all participants were encouraged to actively take part in every stage of the process from concept development to the actual performance and the subsequent post-performance discussion. The processes afford participants to look into, and reflect on their lived realities. The facilitator who in this instance is me, the researcher inevitably has to have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the community embarks on ethnography of the community. Otherwise people sing, act or recite poems which they think are ‘safe’ not necessarily liberating. Or without ample knowledge of the community’s politics the researcher might unwittingly coerce or even influence participants into engaging in dangerous pursuits which can effectively dampen all their hopes for liberation.

## **7.5 Data Collection in Popular Participatory Performance**

Though I have since written about how I collected data for this study in the previous chapter, my writing did not detail how data collection is done through popular participatory performance. To that end, I proceed to share the data collection experiences of this study. The performances “offered

a vocabulary for exploring the expressive elements of culture...and consequently allowed for the tracing of the social rhetorical forces of particular expressions” (Hamera 2011 cited in Denzin and Lincoln 2011). Through rehearsals and the subsequent performances participants and audiences managed to explore their personal tensions and the communal conflicts in ways that were culturally relevant and conducive for dialogue. This was achieved through the following activities

### **7.5.1 Workshops**

I conducted workshops building a team amongst the participants as well as preparing the them on how to use arts for social change. The main exercises of the workshop included the following experience sharing, games and exercises, selection of particular issues that were of interest to the group, music parallelism and variance mapping These workshops also worked as debriefing sessions where participants took the opportunity to say out their frustrations with the government, society, local leaders as well as with themselves. The methods we used during the workshops and rehearsals worked as both data collection tools and intervention strategies. I should however; say that ordinarily these methods are intervention strategies. I used them as data collection tools after I realised that they have potential to elicit data which I would otherwise not get from using conventional data collection tools, which I have already mentioned and explained their application in this study, in the previous chapter. Following below, is how I used the intervention activities as data collection tools.

### **7.5.2 Hot Seating**

We also used hot seating, to know more about participants and their take on issues related to the politics of the land, tribalism, religion and the economy. To do this, we took turns to ask the participant who was on turn to create the image (hot-seat). The set rule was that the participant who was on the ‘hot seat’ had to respond truthfully to issues and questions raised. Most of the questions were centred on finding out more about the participant’s background as well as what motivates them. This was in order to facilitate reflexivity where all of us the participants began to examine the objectivity and subjectivity of our truths (Heathcote and Bolton 1995: viii). The most effective, way in which we use the hot-seat, as shall be seen in the following chapters was to ask,

colleagues, to interpret a sculpture made by one of the partners. This allowed the team to realise and appreciate that they experienced challenges in the same manner.

### **7.5.3 Thought Tracking/ (Free-Style)**

Since ours was a music and dance group we borrowed the thought tracking technique from theatre. Ordinarily, this technique calls for participants to voice their inner thoughts, usually with one word following a signal from the facilitator. Our thought tracking, which we called ‘free style’ session, saw the participants improvising on song texts. The process followed that one of us starts a song speaking to a particular issue and when they feel they have exhausted their thoughts, they passed on the baton to the next person, melodically. This exercise, as will be seen in forthcoming discussions also brought participants together through sheer musicality and at time funny musical blunders. This improvisation is not really new to the Shona culture (Pickard 2016: 35). Apart from being an avenue through which participants shared their frustrations, I also managed to have insights on the sources of frustrations and roots of conflict.

### **7.5.4 Post-Performance discussions**

A critical element of the intervention is the post-performance discussion which we conducted wherever possible. It is from the discussion that issues raised in the performance are discussed. The discussion allows for the discussant to interact with community and engage them on issues raised, emphasizing on positive reinforcement of the messages on peace. We also gather the community’s thought on issues raised and issues that we had not raised. It should be noted some of our performances were done in beer halls which were not conducive for a post-performance discussion. Instead we engaged participants during the performance on activities similar to karaoke, where they would lead the singing.

### **7.5.5 Narrative Inquiry**

The most favoured of the data collection techniques the participants used based on frequency of use is the narrative inquiry. As participants grew to know each other, and became comfortable in each other’s space they increased the level at which they shared stories about their life. Often,

these stories were then used to inspire new songs and new performances. Webster and Mertova (2007: 1) posit that:

Narrative inquiry is set in human stories of experiences. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories... narratives is well suited to addressing the complexities and subtleties of human experience in teaching and learning.

The stories shared helped to make sense of the present as well as to make insights into the future. We also realised from the stories that most of the participants knew each other for quite a long time as they shared some of the experiences told.

#### **7.5.6 Image theatre**

On a very few occasions, we used Image theatre, particularly in the first week of the research where we had our team building workshop. Image is a unique data source; it allows people to sculpt their realities. Boal (2002: xxii) argues that:

The participants in Image Theatre make still images of their lives, feelings, experiences, oppressions; groups suggest titles or themes, and then individuals ‘sculpt’ three-dimensional images under these titles, using their own and others’ bodies as the ‘clay’.

Image theatre affords participants non-verbal means to reveal crucial truths about societies and cultures. In this study, through the use of image theatre participants were therefore afforded a free space to generate their imagined or real experiences of latent conflict. We did not explore this technique throughout the research because it was ‘abused’ as participants warmed up to each other. There was a tendency to sculpt images that were in essence meant to be comic, thus moving from the intended use of the method. The process morphed into cooperative games which do not necessarily offer an alternative source of ethnographic data but “. . . help to develop the essential skills of cooperation, communication, empathy, and conflict resolution by giving them an opportunity to work together toward a common goal” (PeaceFirst2016: 1). These games are

usually used for team building exercises. This was a welcome development in terms of our research goal.

## **7.6 Evaluation**

This study was designed using an interventionist approach with a view to stimulate desired behaviours and attitudes between and among participants (Glanz, Lewis and Rimers 1990: 17). Implied is the study realises that building amicable relationships and conflict transformation relies on changing a people's behaviour and attitude towards the other, with an understanding individual's behaviours are influenced by both personal and environmental factors. The evaluation therefore is guided by the following questions; 1) "How many people benefitted from the intervention? 2) Where are the people and what are their role in sparking or ending conflict?

After finding out who the beneficiaries, the evaluation will also look at behaviour and attitude specific issues. It will look to assess whether there has been a change in relationships and account for that change (impact). In addition, I will also evaluate the success of using social entrepreneurial entities to advance community conflict transformation initiatives. This aspect of evaluation primarily focuses on the sustainability of such ventures, especially considering that the venture did not have any financial backing.

## **7.7 Ethical Considerations**

I have discussed the ethical considerations in the previous chapter. However, I wish to emphasize that participatory action research is a very delicate process because it implemented in real time to solve real life challenges. Some of the events that come up can be totally unexpected. It was therefore, important for me to remind participants even after signing the consent forms, that they had an unreserved right to quit at any time and they were not liable to explain their reasons for quitting.

## **7.8 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter presented the interplay between PAR and popular participatory performance, particularly as it was used in this study. It is an extension of the research methodology chapter presented earlier on. The chapter also dwells on the use of arts based research

methodologies in more detail. It illuminates a discussion on how the arts can be used as an intervention as well for data collection.

## **CHAPTER 8: ‘YOUR VIBE ATTRACTS YOUR TRIBE’**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a presentation of the findings from this study that created a social entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble which made and performed music with the intent of strengthening the community’s social capital. The chapter explores the uncertainty of conflicting and conflicted individuals entangled within societal, religious and political differences and a pulling desire to explore their common love of music. As such the chapter begins with presenting biographies of participants, with a view to prepare our understanding of the personal, psychological and social factors that influence their participation in collaborative group activities. It also presents and analyses how cultural capital and human capital were used to grow and run a sustainable social enterprise. In addition, the discussion follows how the ensemble navigated through group decisions, detailing the trajectory the ensemble followed in its exciting formative stages, harrowing conflict-ridden phases and in the resolution and transformation of the conflicts that led to successfully achieving goals.

This research had two equally daunting and exciting challenges that it had to face. First, we had to create a musical ensemble comprised of individuals with competing ambitions. Secondly, that team had to inspire the community with its performances and perhaps its existence. On paper, there seemed to be a natural flow of how things will happen. However, our experience, as will be seen as the discussion progresses in this chapter, proved otherwise. The experience suggested that building a team and training for arts for social change, run simultaneously. Hence, you cannot say: ‘now we are making this ensemble a team’, and after you are satisfied, move on to say: ‘we are now learning how to use arts for social change’. The processes are required to be observed as twin processes benefitting from each other. Therefore, the workshop dealt with these two simultaneously. However, for the purposes of presentation, this chapter will mainly focus on the organisation of the team, while the next chapter mainly focuses on how the music was utilised for social cohesion.

The ensemble was created to respond to latent conflict experienced in Mkoba, Gweru. It was also formed against a background where a number of start-up ensembles and even established bands in



Zimbabwe usually disband due to leadership disputes, financial queries and at times, delayed success. To that end, in addition to finding ways of making music which address issues of latent conflict, the ensemble also sought to make a living out of the performances, by following the tenets of social entrepreneurial behavioural theory, as propounded by El Ebrashi (2013). This ensemble creation was also informed by principles of asset based community development as well as insights from established arts industry people. Each and every member was selected for their unique strengths which I knew would complement the strengths of other members.

The chapter follows an eclectic mix of both a descriptive approach and an anti-narrative reportage to present the research results. Following the narrative or story format to present some of the results was intended to situate PAR in the practices of everyday people. Sandelowski (1991: 161) argues that “narratives link science with everyday life to reflect on the increasing reflexivity that characterises contemporary inquiry and furthers the postmodern deconstruction of the already tenuous boundaries among disciplines and the realisation of meaning”. By extension, it worked to establish and position my involvement with, and benefit of working for and with, the community as a researcher. On the other hand, the chapter is steeped in traditional anti-narrative reporting to juxtapose the study results with comprehensive views of other scholars and experts, with a view to offer a neatly-analysed thesis on the use of expressive arts in strengthening a community’s social capital.

## **8.2 Narrating the journey**

My initial contact with the field for research purposes was in July 2014, when I was preparing for a PhD in Applied Ethnomusicology. I shared my frustrations of not getting gainful employment and my ambition to start a festival with Ms. Abigail Sivanda, who is the Provincial Arts Manager for the National Arts Council, Midlands province. I was very livid, to such an extent that I regret some of the words I said. On her part, Ms. Sivanda realised that I had a lot of pent-up frustrations and she suggested that I draft a concept note for the proposed festival. Her conduct was so accommodating and supporting that she made me believe in myself again. While on my way out, she quipped in Shona “*Makatsamwa!*” (You are angry). And added with a chuckle “*Hasha muite shoma* Mr. Mutero” (Restrain yourself or watch your temper Mr. Mutero). It felt good that she had

realised that I was angry. At the back of my mind, I thought she would pass on the message to whomever I was angry with. Alas, she had other ideas.

Ms. Sivanda was to later call me during the day, informing me that she wanted me to facilitate a presentation on arts management at a workshop organised for musicians by a local beverage company. She went on to ask if I was still in town so that we could discuss it more. Fortunately, I was still in town wandering, with no real business; immediately, I walked back to her workplace. There was no way I could miss this opportunity to make some tens of dollars. As I traced my footsteps back to the National Arts Council office, situated at the New Government complex in Gweru, I was deep in thought. I felt as if I got the opportunity to facilitate at the workshop because I had thrown a tantrum. Since I had recently acquired a Master's degree in Applied Ethnomusicology, I felt bad and that I should not 'shout my way to getting a job'. The first thing I did when I got into her office was to apologise for my earlier rant. To cut the long story short, I was forgiven after some counselling.

I was then briefed on my contractors' expectations, and all that was still to be done before the workshop, which was in three weeks' time. It was at this workshop that I was to meet a group of disoriented, polarised and angry musicians and theatre artists. It immediately hit me that even if I were to come up with a brilliant concept, it would never succeed under such polarity. I shared with Ms. Sivanda my concerns and she confided with me that one of Gweru's biggest let-downs is lack of cooperation and at times sabotage between artists. Artists had differences and anger which they bottled up, at times releasing it violently or manifesting as prejudice. Something had to be done!

In August 2014, I confided in two of my closest arts colleagues and friends, Almon Moyo and Itai 'Poet Itai' Sekeremo, whose career I was managing at that time, that I wanted to work on uniting Gweru musicians, but that had to be under the strict guidelines of an academic research. They thought this was a great idea and they would assist at any time. We discussed about the possible artists to include. Days went by and I eventually left for Durban without initiating the project. Fast forward to January 2015, I was added to a WhatsApp group formed by Poet Itai, titled *Gweru Musicians Association*. All the artists that I had targeted for the study were on that platform, together with some who had attended the workshop I talked about earlier on. The communication

in the group was mainly centred on sharing jokes. This however, let us get to know each other better and we continued to build our relationships via the virtual platform, until the birth of the ensemble.

My worst fear as I thought of creating the ensemble for this research was failure to attract talented participants who would be keen to participate in the study. I knew I did not want to train people to become artists, as that would have made me an expert who dishes out information. This would have also meant that the study would follow an unwanted “liberal social science approach, which supports the rule of experts and limits popular authority” (Root 1993: 249). Instead, all I wanted was to facilitate a platform which allowed communitarianism, sharing experiences, cooperation and growth of the artists, as well as finding ways to improve our service to the community. The formation of the ensemble was going to epitomize the reconfiguration of relations in the community through communitarian research. According to Rahman (1991: 21), “formation of new people’s organizations if none suitable exist or the strengthening of existing popular organizations and promotion of a self-reliant, assertive culture within them”. Hope was therefore in the agency of the community as represented by the group of selected artists, so I had to look for talented artists.

The initiative to form a WhatsApp group where artists shared experiences and advice, gave me hope that though divided, Gweru’s artists can potentially work together. It was an indication that there is something common among us, which we needed to explore. There was a need to bring together our different capabilities beyond the WhatsApp virtual space into spaces where we can tie together our different capabilities for greater results, through asset based community development. According to Turner and Pinkett (2000: 2):

The individual capacities of residents are the basic building blocks of any community. As people exercise these capacities, they often find they need the talents of others in their enterprises. This leads them to join with other individuals who will work with them toward a common goal. When they do this, individuals combine their own talents with the capacities of others to form associations and support local institutions that can make extensive and valuable contributions to their community.

The different strengths of the participants and their shared interest in music were going to be the pedestal on which the ensemble would be built. Eventually, I organised to meet physically with all the artists I had targeted for the study. I explained to them what the research was about, and showed and explained the consent form. These meetings were done with one artist at a time, at a meeting place of their convenience in Gweru.

### 8.3 The Participants

Since the main goal of this research project was to create a socially-aware music and dance ensemble and sustain its impact, the participant selection process targeted musically-talented individuals. However, to make sure that the ensemble was a microcosm of the Mkoba community, I had to make sure that participants represented the different ethnicities and religious and political persuasions that were in conflict in Mkoba.

#### 8.3.1 Ensemble Participants' Profiles

**Figure 8.1** shows photos and brief biographies of all the participants who made up the ensemble. The median age of the participants was twenty-five. The youngest of the participants was aged twenty and the oldest thirty-five. What this therefore means is that all the participants, except for Ras Deeva, were born in independent Zimbabwe. Again, all except for Ras Deeva were born after *Gukurahundi*. However, they have all experienced the political tension and economic downturn in present-day Zimbabwe. Prior to the study, all the male participants and the late Blessing 'Tasarina' Chibaya<sup>4</sup>, who passed away before we started rolling out the project, had worked in a band set up. Tasarina was instrumental in the formation of the ensemble – she made the first donation to the ensemble, providing her office, which was located at Club Eclipse, for use by the ensemble's administration team. Of the other two ladies, Gracious Maworera was practising as a solo musician, while Nomsa, who was born in a musical family, knew she had a beautiful voice but she had never thought of herself as a musician.

I gathered the information presented in **Figure 8.1** through different methods, which include ethnographic conversational interviews, observation and through analysing profiles submitted at



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<sup>4</sup> Tasarina passed on 18 April 2015 er

the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, for those artists who were registered. It is important to note that as someone who had interests in music, occasionally profiling musicians for Music in Africa<sup>5</sup> and 263Chat, I had observed and profiled some of the musicians as part of my journalistic work. I also had to confirm with all the artists except for Tasarina if I had managed to truthfully profile them.

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<sup>5</sup><http://musicinafrica.net/innocent-tinashe-mutero>

Image/Name	Brief Biography
 <p><b>Yulesis ‘Deep Roots’ Katoto</b></p>	<p>Yulesis is a recording artist, producer cum sound engineer. Prior to this project, he led a band called Deep Roots. It’s unfortunate that the band has since disbanded. Some of his former band mates were part of the project. He is a talented vocalist and guitarist and he also has a musical ear. Yulesis is of Malawian origin (<i>MuBrantayre</i><sup>6</sup>).</p>
 <p><b>Michael ‘Samukoko’ Mukoko</b></p>	<p>Michael Tawanda‘SaMukoko’ Mukoko<sup>7</sup> is a vocalist and mbira player. Tawanda has experienced ZANU PF’s gross human rights violations at a closer level than anyone else in the ensemble. He is a nephew to Jestina Mukoko, a renowned human rights and peace activist, and Director of the Zimbabwe Peace Project who was once abducted by the state security agency for her role in working for peace. Tawanda brought unexpected calm and tolerance to the ensemble, which he claims to have been passed on to him by his aunt.</p>

<sup>6</sup> Derogatory term used to refer to people of Malawian origin. However, Yulesis has embraced it and uses the term as a political statement to assert who he is. The term is derived from the Malawian city of Blantyre.

<sup>7</sup> SaMukoko and Yulesis are not residents of Mkoba. They stay in Mambo, however in addition to spending their time with Mkoba artists, their talent and experience was special. In addition, the duo of Dumisani Sihwede and Poet Itai, who were initially targets, joined the army and relocated to South Africa, respectively.



**Nomsa 'Sisi' Moyo**

Nomsa Moyo is a Gweru born-and-bred lady. She is Ndebele but she writes and speaks Shona proficiently. Upon joining the ensemble Nomsa was a bitter woman who was going through a messy divorce. She needed respite and a source of income. Prior to the research, I had worked with Nomsa's brothers on other music projects.



**Gracious 'Gigi' Maworera**

The vivacious Gracious spent most of her school life alternating between Gweru and Gwanda. She writes and speaks both Shona and Ndebele proficiently. Gracious has experienced tribalism both in a predominantly Ndebele region and in a Shona area. While she claimed not to be a tribalist, she confessed that 'the two tribes are not equal'. Gracious is a gifted dancer and vocalist who has a healthy appreciation of music from the Shona and the Ndebele.



**Tapiwa 'Saujiri' Tsiga**

Tapiwa 'Saujiri' Tsiga is arguably the best lead guitarist to come out of Gweru in recent years. The lanky guitarist is also an MDC activist. While he doesn't play at party gatherings, he doesn't shy away from his political choice.



**David 'Ras Deeva' Tarusarira**




Ras Deeva is a Rastafarian and a staunch ZANU PF supporter. He believes in the party's communist and Pan-Africanist ethos. He has, on many occasions, performed at ZANU PF events. Ras Deeva is a percussionist, song-writer and he also plays mbira and acoustic guitar. He has experience working on arts for social change in Botswana.



**Denver 'Teenoz Beejay' Berejena**

Beejay represented that group of young people commonly referred to in Zimbabwe as '*masalad*'. While the term '*masalad*' has been in use from around the year 2000, I have appropriated it to mean young people born just before and after 2000. They have not experienced the best of Zimbabwe and they have nothing to compare our present with, except what they read or see on television about other countries. Hence the *masalad* generation are young people who prefer affluent, western-influenced lifestyles. Their sense of community is not tied on kinship and tribe but mostly material. Denver is a gifted percussionist who belongs to this group. In the ensemble, he played drums.



 <p><b>Blessing 'Blejah' Chimutowe</b></p>	<p>Blejah is a keyboardist and he is also of Malawian origin. He is a Christian who prefers charismatic churches ahead of any other denomination and religion. Blejah claims to be disinterested in politics.</p>
 <p><b>Tonderai "TI" Chapwanya</b></p>	<p>Tonderai Chapwanya is a seasoned bassist, regarded as one of the best in the Midlands Province. Out of frustration he had quit music and stayed for years in South Africa as an economic refugee. Tonde counts his years in South Africa as wasted years and he blames the ZANU PF government for his predicament. He is Shona and sees no hope in political solutions solving Zimbabwe's problems.</p>
 <p><b>Blessing 'Tasarina' Chibaya (late)</b></p>	<p>Blessing 'Tasarina' Chibaya was born on 9 August 1991 and she passed away on 18 April 2015. Tasarina was the first female musician to buy into the idea of working as a collective. She passed away a day after we had shot a video for a funding pitch. May her soul rest in peace.</p>

**Figure 8.1:** Participants' profiles (sourced from own data 2016).

Amongst these musicians, two had worked together before the project and had parted ways due to differences, which they glossed over as growth, and four confessed that they avoided meeting due to what they called ‘negative vibe’. This negative vibe was even evident on the WhatsApp platform. This selection was made possible due to my knowledge and insider understanding of the politics of the arts arena in Gweru.

#### **8.4 Strategic Planning Week**

The planning meeting provided the ensemble with a “. . . heuristic tool for foresight, enabling us to envision possible futures in order to improve decision-making and strategy-setting” (Berkhout and Hertin 2002: 7). Since ensemble members were coming from different orientations, it was important that we invest time in creating a common ground, shared vision and a clear strategy of operation. Therefore, the strategic planning meeting also provided an opportunity to come up with a “systemic and inclusive approach of dealing with critical issues of innovation, reflexivity and framing in analysing change” (Ibid.). Implied here is that we did not want to leave anything to chance, and the change process and steps had to be deliberate. According to Mertler and Charles (2010: 2), PAR planning is also useful in the following ways:

1. Identifying the issue to be changed.
2. Looking elsewhere for information. Similar projects may be useful, as might professional reading.
3. Developing the questions and research methods to be used.
4. Developing a plan related to the specific environment. In the school setting, this could involve personnel, budgets and the use of outside agencies.

We held our strategic planning workshop at the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society, Mkoba Youth Centre, located in Village 7 of Mkoba, every day from Saturday 21 February 2015 to the 28<sup>th</sup> of the same month. The facility was offered to us free of charge after making an application to the Zimbabwe Red Cross through the Provincial manager. It is highly likely that our application was given priority and received expedited attention, due to the fact that I had in previous years voluntarily offered services to the community via Red Cross during the cholera outbreak which hit

Zimbabwe in 2008. Clayton *et al.* (2010) contend that reciprocity is a key in community engagement, as it facilitates both mutually-beneficial transactions and power-shifted partnerships.

We also received anonymous food and beverages donations sourced by Ms. Abigail Sivanda, the National Arts Council Manager. The workshop started every day at 09:00 and ran until 16:30. Of all the ensemble members, Yulesis was the only one employed elsewhere. He runs a studio in the outskirts of Gweru's Central Business District. However, he chose to be with the group for the duration of the workshop. According to Allison and Kaye (2011: 5), "strategic planning can help an organisation focus its vision and priorities in response to a changing environment and ensure that members of the organisation are working towards the same goals".

#### **8.4.1 Workshop Day 1**

##### **Session 1: Identifying and framing a common goal**

Prior to starting the workshop, I conducted informal interviews with participants, which centred on the state of the music industry in Gweru, the economic mess in Zimbabwe and the conflict in Mkoba. These interviews prepared the artists on what to expect during the course of the study, such that when we eventually met for the first time as an ensemble, our morale was high. I gave the opening remarks and led proceedings for the first two days. On the following days, leadership rotated amongst participants.

To start the day, I formally introduced the study to all the research participants. I had the following as the most crucial points of my introduction:

- They were going to be my partners as we worked on this research, which sought to use the collective strengths of musicians to impact the community positively.
- The course and implementation of the research is not dependent on me but on the participants.

In order to set an organic and informal mood for our interaction, I suggested that each and every one of us introduce themselves in the best way possible, most preferably in an artistic way. The introductions ranged from sheer profanity, comedy and music, all of which set a happy mood.

Thereafter, I shared with the participants that I expected the process to be long and tedious, that it would raise sensitive issues and that tempers might flare. Nonetheless, I implored the participants to voice their concerns or react to anything in ways most comfortable to them, regardless of flaring tempers. Therefore, it was important that we be guided by the values that we would agree on. As a result, our first session was geared towards coming up with a shared research goal.

It is however unfortunate that the participants did not come with a clean slate. Their familiarity with my work as an applied ethnomusicologist who focuses on traditional music and dance had already swayed their thinking to a particular direction, which I think they thought would make me happy. The participants' comments on the research project informed the goal and objectives of this study. The most part of the goal identification and framing discussion revolved around the following questions:

1. How can we make traditional dance performance dialogue for political tolerance and social inclusion in polarised communities?
2. What is it that we should do to attract funding?

After a careful analysis of the above questions, we realised that the discussion was about what they thought I wanted to do and not what we could do as a community of artists. I am certainly sure about this because amongst the artists in attendance, I was the only artist with an interest in traditional dance. The focus on traditional dance was meant to make me happy or at least it showed lack of involvement. What this meant was if I went ahead with the project, I would be lying that it was PAR study. I suggested that we take a break, before we repeat and refocus the exercise again with an understanding that PAR finds its merit not much at the end but during the research process. According to Yule (2012: 18), "Participation in research projects should not just be focused on attaining the research goals but to transform participants". Participation can be a mechanism for empowerment, but can also be a mechanism for rendering the 'poor' even more powerless by an agenda that was not theirs to begin with (Chambers 2000). It was important to make sure that the research process focused on ". . . the empowerment of individuals and communities in terms of acquiring skills, knowledge and experience, leading to greater self-reliance" (Yule 2012: 18).

On resumption, we played the rhythm and name game, an exercise that all participants were familiar with. The purpose of the game was to make sure participants get to know the names of their colleagues as well as to prepare them for working harmoniously as a unit. In order to create a flowing rhythm, the game followed the following two steps:

1. Participants gathered in a circle where they were taught a rhythm which they would produce through clapping their hands and thighs.
2. On mastering the rhythm, the leader randomly calls a name of one of the participants in song. The called participant is supposed to also randomly call a colleague, maintaining the time of the music or rhythms.

This exercise was very easy for all participants, primarily because they were all musically talented. It also worked to loosen up the mood and prepare the ensemble members for forthcoming activities. I present the transcribed version of the game in **Figure 8.2**.

# Oats Game

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Unknown

CALL

1 2 3 4 Rhythm

CALLED  
RESPONDENT

RESPONSE 2

RHYTHM  
HAND - CLAPPING  
(FOR ALL)

4

MI-KI you sele-ct? YU-LE you sele-ct? GI-GI you sele-ct?

Oats YU-LE Oats GI - GI Oats TO-NDE

7

TO-NDE you sele-ct? BLE-JAH! you sele-ct? DEN VER you sele-ct?

Oats BLE JAH Oats DEN VER Oats NOM-SA

10

NOM-SA you sele-ct? SA - U you sele-ct?

Oats SA - U Oats TE - SE

12

TE-SE you sele-ct? TE-SE we sele-ct TO - SE

Oats TE-SE Oats TE - SE

**Figure 8.2:** Oats Game – transcribed version of the ‘rhythm and name game’ played by the members of the music and dance ensemble in this study.

Thereafter, I explained the PAR process to all the members, emphasising that they should own the process, as I was just a facilitator. The group would have none of it, as they wanted me to be part of the process, to own it as well. I then realised that I had also not settled into the research, probably because of the experience we had when setting the research goal. In trying to emphasise that the community or participants owned the research, I ended up alienating myself from the study. It was after that that I rephrased my earlier statement, assuring colleagues of my “active involvement, collaboration, engagement and empowerment of stakeholders in the process of initiating changes” (Mubuke and Leibowitz 2013: 31). I was part of the process just like everyone else, and my earlier statement was as a result of what I thought was a methodological limit.

The process of coming up with the research goal was very tedious, but it was an important step which we could not miss. The process was premised on my academic research goal, which I shared with the ensemble members. Krishnaswamy (2004: 2) argues that:

Before a PR project is started, the research partners (researchers and community members) must have a clear understanding of the broader goals of the research project. It is also important to clarify the goals of the researcher, and how these relate to the goals of potential partners from the community. Without a clear sense of what the research project is trying to accomplish, it will be difficult to design a practical and effective PR project.

By this time, we were barely a team, however, we went on to agree that our goal was to create a music ensemble which brings all people together and will be supported primarily by the people of Gweru. Our motivation came from the success of a local drama called ‘Fidelis’, which was already popular around Zimbabwe and had attracted the attention of arts gurus such as the musician Alick Macheso (Moyo 2011: 2). To successfully reach our goal first, we had to be a team “. . . working together, using tools to achieve common understanding on research goals and activities” (Krishnaswamy 2004: 1).



#### **8.4.2 Day 1, Session 2: General Strategy**

After agreeing to identify and framing the project's goal, our next task was to deliberate on how we were going to carry the project forward. Though this was not a strategic planning meeting, we had to at least come up with a plan to achieve our set goal, as well as to think around the kinds of activities that we would embark on. The process was done by way of allowing every one of us to make suggestions. I led the team in discussing the type of data that we were looking for, in accordance with the academic research. In addition to that, I also briefed them on the data collection methods that we were going to use, emphasising that our daily conversations and observations were going to be our most trusted tools.

With reference to the way forward Yulesis Katoto, who had recorded two albums and who has a contract with Harare-based Diamond Studios, suggested that:

Even if we are going to work together as an ensemble, our association to the ensemble should not stop any one of us from pursuing the projects that they have pursuing before the research project, or any idea that might come up during our engagement with the ensemble.

Ras Deeva (David Tarusarira) also chipped in, saying that:

The idea of the ensemble, from where he stands is actually meant to bring us closer to an extent that we can cooperate when one has a new project they are working on or they want to work on.

I was to find out later on that Yulesis had a stifling contract with his contractors. It did not allow him to record any new material, visual or audio, without direct express confirmation of the firm. Hence, he was sceptical about binding legal contracts.

### 8.4.3 Values of the Research Partners

The term research partners here is used to denote equality and equity between research participants and myself. We established a set of values which would guide our thinking and action as we pursued our goal. To come up with these values, we followed a process where everyone was given an opportunity to suggest what they thought to be a good value. Our biggest challenge in carrying out this exercise was the language barrier. Participants preferred that when one suggests a value, they explain it. For instance, if one was to suggest ‘integrity’, they had to explain what they meant. The explanations became more popular than the one-worded values. All participants preferred their home language. Unfortunately, this elicited the group’s first encounter with tribalism and xenophobia.

The first contentious contribution was put across in Ndebele. One of the Ndebele-speaking members said:

*“Eqemjini lethu sifuna abantu abakhutheleyo njalo bezimisele”* (In our group we need members who are proactive).

Innocently, Gracious Maworera, a colleague, supported her saying:

*“Vele kufanele sisebenze gadalala okwezigqili”* (Indeed, we should work very hard like slaves).

While these two contributions made sense and were very important, they came in quick succession, and this disadvantaged most Shona speakers whose knowledge of Ndebele did not go far beyond every day parlance. A bit of quarrelling ensued with Ndebele speakers rightfully arguing that all the while we were speaking in Shona, they never complained. Yulesis, who is of Malawian origin, added to the confusion when he added his voice in Chewa, his native language.

This conflict came too early in the study and unexpectedly for me. However, it brought us to discuss about which language to use during the workshop and in our interactions. Since this was the first day, participants were still very excited. We didn’t take long deliberating on the issue. We

agreed to use Shona, Ndebele and English, though preference was on vernacular languages. Our position was influenced by Nomsa Moyo's reaction to the barrier. She quickly volunteered to translate Ndebele to Shona and vice versa, arguing in jest, that 'as our sister she had the duty to teach all us babies how to speak'. At the end, the exercise was fun and the nickname '*Sisi*' (sister) stuck with Nomsa, to date. Mapako (2016: 87) argues that "nicknames are prevalent practice in Zimbabwe, used sometimes for endearment and group solidarity". We also set the following ground rules to guide our interaction during the workshop:

- Respecting every person's view
- Use of either Shona, Ndebele or English
- Confidentiality
- Punctuality
- Equality
- Equity
- Respecting 'personal spaces'

This tension which came at the early stages of our gathering confirms Lederach's (2003: 4) view that "Conflict is a natural part of relationships". What is important is ". . . to develop capacities to engage in change processes at the interpersonal, inter-group, and social-structural levels" (Lederach 2003: 5). The ground rules were meant to, and by and large served to, reduce damaging conflict within our operations. Moving forward we also agreed that our rehearsals, performances and our operations should be premised on an agreed set of shared values. Gorenak and Košir (2012) forward that:

Organizational values are integrated into the personality of a company thus playing a similar role as values do in lives of individuals; directing behavioural patterns, influencing relationships within the organization and influencing how company perceives its customers, suppliers and competition.

A careful analysis of the values that the ensemble chose reveals that they can be categorised into two sets. There is a set of relational values which identify with Ubuntu, and another set of business

values which is linked to entrepreneurship. **Table 8.1** below presents the values in the three languages the ensemble communicated in, namely English, Ndebele and Shona.

**Table 8.1:** Ensemble Values (sourced from own data 2016).

ENGLISH	NDEBELE	SHONA
Proactive	<i>Ukukhalipha</i>	<i>Kupangama</i>
Hard working	<i>Ukusebenza nzima</i>	<i>Kushanda nesimba</i>
Integrity	<i>ukuthembeka</i>	<i>Kuvimbika</i>
Empathetic	<i>ukuzwela</i>	<i>Kunzwirana</i>
Cooperation	<i>Ukubambisana</i>	<i>Mushandirapamwe</i>
Respect	<i>Ukuhlonipha</i>	<i>Ruremekedzo</i>
Innovation	<i>Usile</i>	<i>Umhare</i>
Professionalism	<i>Ukusebenza ezingeni eliphezulu</i>	<i>Kushanda nomazvo</i>
Transparency	<i>Ukuphumela egcekeni</i>	<i>Kuita zvinhu pajekerere</i>
Non-discrimination	<i>Ukungakhethi</i>	<i>Kusasarura</i>

In the same session, we also named our ensemble ERA, which is an acronym for Educative and Reflective Arts. I had used this name before for an art-for-development entity that I fronted before relocating to Harare and subsequently, South Africa. The decision to use a familiar name was meant to accrue the benefits of the relationships and reputation ERA had established. We appropriated *Tobve Gweru*, a catchy line popularised by Gweru's most famous music producers, Oskid and DJ Tamuka, meaning 'we are from Gweru', to be our war cry. There is a sense of pride in one's city that the lines evoked in the participants.

It was also proposed that we come up with a schedule for rehearsals, team-building and allocation of administrative duties. We decided that rehearsals would be led by a different person according to the focus of the day and our individual competencies. Kretzmann (2010) also encourages that to realise the effectiveness of asset based community development, it is important to mobilise and

give individual skills and passions a chance. Turner and Pinkett (2000: 2) also argue that “A capacity-focused paradigm recognizes the skills, talents and gifts of local community members”. To that end, we also agreed that Yulesis was going to be the rehearsal manager. He was the most versatile of all the team members and he is also a music producer, therefore, when we made this decision, it was on the basis that his experience and knowledge might come in as a tie-breaker if ever we were going to have conflicting creative ideas.

Using the same strategy of focusing on strengths, I was tasked to be the ensemble’s manager. The decision was primarily based on my experience working with established entities and start-ups. My responsibilities included growing our profile, registering with responsible authorities as well as striking partnerships. In essence, I was given all the administrative work. My complaint against this was creatively received. The group suggested I convince other university-trained youth to join the administration team. This proposition gave birth to an unexpected offshoot of the ensemble which focused on the Faith based community. Later on, I will discuss more about this project administration and activities. Our most immediate task was to build a cohesive and effective team.

## **8.5 Devotion and Oneness**

From day two going forward, our workshops began with music and prayer. After the prayers, what followed next was a brief recap of the objectives of the research, planned activities of the day and how they fitted in the research. The floor would then be opened for participants to field any questions or comments. The ensemble followed Christian rituals. Most of the ensemble members, except for Ras Deeva, were Christians, though their denominations were different. Ras Deeva is a Rastafarian who respects Christian values. He says he was born and raised in a Christian family and later on, in his youth, decided to follow a faith of his choice. As a result, the ensemble was free to follow Christian principles without anyone feeling prejudiced.

The ensemble’s most favoured songs were popular choruses called *You Are Alpha and Omega* and *Mazuva Ose* (Every day), which I present in **Figure 8.3** and **Figure 8.4**, respectively, in staff notation. These songs ushered all participants into worship mode. We did not choose specific individuals to pray, instead everyone could pray, not necessarily in unison like is usually the case when people repeat the Lord’s Prayer, but simultaneously with everyone reciting a different prayer.

The idea to pray together was chosen for its effect on instilling a sense of community and camaraderie between ensemble members. JW (2015: 1) posits “Music not only adds meaning to prayer, but it also unifies congregations in a way that nothing else could. It allows us all to feel more involved and together; with each individual voice adding to the congregation’s united prayer”.

# You Are Alpha and Omega

Unknown

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

$\text{♩} = 60$  Adagio

**SOPRANO** *p* *mp*  
1. You are Al-pha and O - me-ga, We wor-ship you Oh Lord, You are wor-thy

**ALTO**  
1. You are Al-pha and O - me-ga, We wor-ship you Oh Lord, You are wor-thy

**TENOR**  
1. You are Al-pha and O - me-ga, We wor-ship you Oh Lord, You are wor-thy

**BASS**  
1. You are Al-pha and O - me-ga, We wor-ship you Oh Lord, you are wor-thy

## CHORUS

Adagietto

4

1. 2.  
to be praised. to be praised. We give you all the glo-ry, We wor-ship

*f*  
to be praised. to be praised. All the glo-ry, We wor-ship

*f*  
to be praised. to be praised. All the glo-ry, We wor-ship

*f*  
to be praised. to be praised. All the glo-ry, We wor-ship

**Figure 8.3:** ‘You Are Alpha and Omega’ in staff notation, sung by members of the music and dance ensemble of this study during the workshops.

# Mazuva Ose

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Unknown

**Adagio** ♩ = 60

LEAD SOPRANO

SOPRANO 2

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

Ma-zu-va, o - se ma-ka-te-nde ka\_\_\_ su Ma-zu-va, o -

5

Lead Sop Adlib.

se ma - ka - te - nde-ka\_\_\_ Je - su



7

Ma - zu - va, o - se ma - ka - te - nde ka\_\_\_ Je - su

Ma - zu - va, o - se ma - ka - te - nde ka\_\_\_ Je - su

**Figure 8.4:** ‘Mazuva Ose’ (Every day) in staff notation, sung by members of the music and dance ensemble of this study during the workshops.

## 8.6 Self-Appraisal, Truth and Teambuilding

We realised that for our plans to be successful and sustainable, there was a need for every one of us to channel their energies to the effort and pull in one direction. As a result, we went through a session where we discussed some of our characteristics and behaviours that could aid or hamper our progress.

Participants were implored to be truthful and to share what they thought about themselves, even from previous experiences which had nothing to do with the ensemble. These views were to be said openly, without anyone judging the other, and we categorised them into two: 1) the good that I see in myself, and 2) the dark sides no one might know and might be harmful to the team. Since we did this exercise at the formative stages of our ensemble, we were going to repeat it on later days, though a little bit differently, asking members to positively affirm their colleagues' traits and let each individual say what they need to change for the team.

By means of focus group discussions, we engaged in ethnographic conversational interviews in which participants shared narratives that describe who they are in terms of character and behaviour. The thinking behind congregating and conversing informally was in order to present a relaxed atmosphere where participants openly and truthfully share their views of self, without prejudice or being judged. **Table 8.2** below presents the characteristics and behaviours that the ensemble members shared.

**Table 8.2:** Characters and Behaviours of Participants (sourced from own data 2016).

<b>The good that is in me</b>	<b>The dark sides no one might know and might be harmful to the team</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Innovative, humble, frank</li><li>• Respectful, knowledgeable, cooperative</li><li>• Accommodating, goal-getter, humorous</li><li>• Loving, eager to learn, obedient</li><li>• Patient, shy, understanding</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impatient, intolerant</li><li>• Short-tempered, pessimist</li><li>• Deceptive, skeptic</li></ul>

These behavioural patterns given in **Table 8.2** appeared in more than one person. To that end, they helped participants to appreciate each other as well as feel comfortable even with their insecurities. For instance, during an informal interview, Tonde shared that his past experiences with bands have not all been good, and that he had agreed to be part of the project because he trusted me, not the other team members. However, hearing colleagues say that they were sceptical, settled his nerves, as he was not the only one experiencing such. In other words, he, and by extension the team members, found comfort in numbers and the honesty that the ensemble was built on.

## **8.7 Exploring the Entrepreneurial Behaviour**

### ***Intention: Attitude, Social norms and Individual Competence***

It is unavoidable for this study to invite a scrutiny of the attitudes and behaviours of the participants which motivated them to take part in creating, and which enabled them to run, a social entrepreneurial entity. As a result, I will look into the participants' motivations, sociological factors, situational variables as well as other antecedents which mattered in the life of the ensemble. This discussion aids in explaining the ways of creating a socially-aware music and dance ensemble and sustaining its impact.

Though I have highlighted how difficult it was for us to separate the processes of team-building and enhancing our competencies in the use of arts for social change, I will nonetheless try to make a separation here as I explain the interplay of members, attitudes, community norms and individual competences, which can also be thought of as self-esteem and their effects to give birth to and lead to the growth of the ensemble. The study is cognisant of the *Theory of Planned Behaviour* which states that "individual behaviour is driven by behaviour intentions, where behaviour intentions are a function of three determinants: an individual's attitude toward behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control" (Ajzen 1991). However, the ensuing presentation and analysis of findings will be framed through the lenses of the *Social Entrepreneurship Behaviour Theory* (El Ebrashi 2013) with a view to critically engage with how various antecedents shaped the birth, growth and sustainability of the ensemble.

As I have indicated earlier on, this chapter follows an eclectic mix of reporting styles. The foregoing discussion was heavily leaned on the descriptive narrative approach. The result of this approach, which details results in everyday parlance, is that it demystifies that academia is esoteric and feeds on utopian ideals. Most importantly, it is a method to sort the work in an accessible chronological format. Moving on, the report will now be immersed in academic reporting to juxtapose the study results with wide-ranging views of different scholars, practices and practitioners with a view to offer a credible, rigorous and validated thesis.

### **8.7.1 Personal and Psychological Factors: Tolerance of Ambiguity (*You never know with soccer*)**

The economy is perpetually tumbling and the ruling party is accused of lacking the political will to arrest the country's challenges. On the other hand, the opposition political parties, replete with splits, appear unprepared for nation-governance, and the people have lost hope even in key institutions and processes such as elections. Consequently, one of the challenges facing Zimbabwe today is 'the uncertainty of hope'. However, uncertain Zimbabweans and some of the country's institutions have been lauded for their resilience (Munangagwa 2009, International Monetary Fund 2016). This study's participants also exhibited this resilience. There was no certainty on whether we were going to work well as a team, let alone meet our set objectives. Nonetheless, the ensemble was optimistic and relentlessly pursued its goal, exhibiting what Santos calls the 'spirit of social entrepreneurship' (Santos 2012).

Dugan (2013: 2) posits that ambiguity tolerance entails "Staying in uncertainty, or staying with question, despite the discomfort of not knowing the answer, or not knowing where we are headed, it requires relinquishing control even though a solution is not always guaranteed". The ensemble's character and tolerance of ambiguity was embodied in the cliché '*you never know with soccer*'. This truism '*you never know with soccer*' was coined by Yulesis and it became the ensemble's motif whenever we wanted to experiment on something that we were not entirely sure of or when we tried to implement things which history suggested would fail. The idea behind the cliché, according to Yulesis, is that:

In a soccer match, people can make predictions all they like but the result can only be known after the game. For instance, in a match between Highlanders and Dynamos either one of the two teams can win. But most importantly and relating to us as an ensemble is before the game both teams fancy their chances of winning (Interview with Yulesis Katoto 2016).

It became common to hear a colleague say “*you never know with soccer*” as a form of encouragement when for instance, we were planning to solicit for a paid show at a venue that had resident artists or when we planned to partner with churches. In essence, the urge was to try, no matter how the odds might have seemed to be against us. This optimism was also a result of the *kukiya-kiya* economy which I will discuss later.

The soccer analogy has ties with tolerance of ambiguity, which is thought of as one of the major personal and psychological factors that inform entrepreneurial intention. While the ensemble was aware of the fortunes that music can bring, they also accepted the fact that in Zimbabwe, their chosen vocation was looked down upon and success was often not guaranteed such that unheralded musicians are viewed as loafers (Butete, 2014). The ensemble hung on to hope and was aware that the community did not really look up to emerging talents and that musicianship was not considered a career of first resort. In an interview, Tapiwa observed that:

The life of a musician is the life of an entrepreneur. People mistake the itinerant musician for a loafer but we move around trying to get opportunities (Interview with Tapiwa Tsiga 2016).

Wee, Lim and Lee (1994: 37) argue that entrepreneurs have a high tolerance of ambiguity than the general population. Entrepreneurs exist in a highly volatile environment with less job security and permanence than the population in general (Ibid.). While the whole community cannot be entrepreneurs, and without absolving the government of its duties to work towards building a functioning economy, the ensemble’s high tolerance of ambiguity should inform the community that optimism is key to building peaceful societies. Sridhar (2014: 7) argues that optimism is an important value which enhances the transformative power of the arts as well strengthening

community mutual dependence. The ensemble has shown that instead of the community further tearing apart because of the high levels of unemployment in Zimbabwe, citizens can summon the sum of their abilities to activities that uplift their individual beings and consequently the community, as suggested by Sentama (2009: 51) who states that common challenges can be a base through which people settle differences.

### **8.7.2 Effect of Sociological Factors on Social Entrepreneurial Intention**

This research sought to strengthen the community's social capital, and by extension the reverence of the Ubuntu worldview, through exploring community-based pathways or the indigenous knowledge system. From the interactions that I had with ensemble members during focus group discussions, unstructured and conversational ethnographic interviews as well as observations, I picked up that part of the reason that Zimbabwe's conflict has not escalated to war is that the people had a general respect of humanity. The participants had a general view that the latent conflict we experience as a country is possibly as a result of the following:

- interconnectedness of our relationships,
- the respect for elders, and
- wanting to be seen in good light by the community.

These views are explicit in the following assertion made by Denver Berejena that:

The only reason we do not fight every day is that we have lived in the same space for a long time such that neighbours who were once strangers now consider them relatives. Otherwise, people are really angry with the government and with each other.

Nomsa gave weight to Denver's thoughts through an Ndebele idiom which says *Asiwonke okuvezela izinyo okuthandayo* (Not everyone who smiles at you loves you) whose Shona equivalent is *Zino irema rinosekerera warisingadi* (the tooth is a fool; it smiles at one it does not like). Fortune (1976: 44) states that culturally this means that "a smile can hide all sorts of inner feelings". This practice is rooted and widespread in the Shona and Ndebele cultures. The ensemble

was creative enough to follow cultural routes in search of solutions to what they thought to be the causes of latent conflict.

Though the family unit did not influence any one of the participants, there was a general consensus in focus group discussions that the society in which we live has an influence over participants taking up social entrepreneurship. Research holds that the family has an effect on whether or not one becomes a social entrepreneur through imitating, observing and modelling behaviour (Rokhman and Ahamed 2015). However, this does not necessarily hold truth for this research. None of the members have parents who are social entrepreneurs. SaMukoko (Michael Mukoko) was the closest to coming from a family of social entrepreneurs, since his aunty Jestina Mukoko heads an NGO which fights for peace in Zimbabwe. In addition, besides the fact that the Zimbabwe Peace Project is not a social enterprise, SaMukoko admitted that his aunty, who lives in Harare, does not have any influence on him working together with fellow musicians to change the community.

Instead, all participants had one or more non-governmental organisations which they looked up to. In particular, Mr. Masimiri, the founder and former Director of Midlands Aids Organisation (MASO), an AIDS service organisation, appeared to be everyone's role model in as far as community service was concerned. Most of the ensemble members who had worked with Mr. Masimiri during his days at MASO confessed that they wanted to be as influential and as rich as him, and that community performances were one of the ways in which they could exert their influence onto the community. The place of role models in social entrepreneurship and modelling behaviour can never be over-emphasised (Bandura 1971, Bygrave 1997, Irengun and Arikboga 2015).

### **8.7.3 The Agency of *kukiya-kiya* Economy in Teaming**

Besides a shared passion for music, the ensemble members' family backgrounds are almost identical due to the agency of what Jones (2010) refers to as the the *kukiya-kiya* economy. Jones (2010: 285) explains the *kukiya-kiya* economy as “a new logic of economic action in post-2000 Zimbabwe” which was born out of the economic mess. He argues that the largely informal *kukiya kiya* whose activities are “heterogeneous in the extreme, ranging from vegetable vending to illegal

foreign currency trading to bribe-taking and pilfering at work” suggests cleverness, dodging, and the exploitation of whatever resources are at hand, all with an eye to self-sustenance” (Ibid.). In other words, Zimbabwe is operating a survivalist or getting-by economy.

This background helped them to pull in the same direction without anyone feeling prejudiced or out of place, as evidenced by one of the ensemble members, Nomsa, who asserted that she felt comfortable around her colleagues because they do not look down upon each other and there is no show-off. Mill (1869 cited in Caruso 2007: 1) is also of the idea that what binds people is sameness and posits that “Intimate society between people radically dissimilar to one another is an idle dream. Unlikeness may attract, but it is likeness which retains”. This similarity in circumstances, environment, hopes and aspirations can be read as the homophily principle, which is very important in building and sustaining relationships (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and James 2001). I will however not delve much into the homophily effect till the stage I talk about the ensemble’s relationship with the community.

Participants of this study also alluded to the fact that lack of employment opportunities has played a part in them taking up music as well as participating in the ensemble. During interactions, it was clear that the potential to make money through music, as well as the non-availability of other options, had a role in attracting participants to music. Even though, people might not have money to live comfortably and at times extravagant lives but the nature of our society is such that “people use music and alcohol to relax and to forget about their worries, so it is an opportunity for musicians to make a living” (Interview with David ‘Ras Deeva’ Tarusarira 2016). While in another interview, Denver added that:

We have learnt at a very young age that a man has to man up. My father is almost reaching retirement age yet there little that he has saved for us his family or for his own up keep after retirement. My mother has never been employed formally, she used to be a cross-border trader, selling wares in South Africa but because of old age she has since stopped. So, I have got to do what pays the bills. The situation demands that (Interview with Denver Berejena).



It is evident here that both Ras Deeva (David Tarusarira) and Denver have been forced by the economic turmoil to pursue music as a source of living. Zimbabwe today can easily be home to the biggest percentage of entrepreneurs per population. It is estimated that while over ninety percent of the population are formally unemployed, 5.6 million people are self-employed or crudely-put, vendors (Musoko 2015). The unemployment rate and deplorable living conditions have seen a surge in young people engaging in micro- and medium-scale business as well as taking up music as a vocation, particularly under the Zim Dancehall genre. Irengun and Arikboga (2015: 1187) have a view that social entrepreneurs are motivated by the environment and they posit that:

Poverty, lack of clean water, insufficient education opportunities, environmental problems, problems relating to women, child labor, death of employees, problems arising from armed conflicts and wars, plague, insufficient medical treatment, unemployment, increase in crime amongst youth, environmental disasters are common problems suffered not only by undeveloped or developing countries but by almost all countries in the world. Ongoing systems are inefficient to solve these problems. Therefore, new and innovative systems and paradigms are highly needed for creating solutions, which social entrepreneurs try to produce.

In addition to the challenges, the success of the drama *Fidelis*, which I mentioned in the previous chapter, and 12 Bullets a Mkoba music stable, also inspired the ensemble to work as a team and for the community.

The economic ties which bound the performing members of the ensemble also had the same effect on the team which managed the Dunamis Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Competition and Workshop. This is a project run by unemployed university graduates which came as a spiral of this study. It drew participants from different church denominations and branches alike to an event where they explored much-needed exchange and dialogue between and among creatives. I will return to discuss the project in detail later. All the administrators, except for Mr. Alimon Moyo, were unemployed university graduates holding different Honours degrees. Mr. Moyo was self-employed however; his business of making *marimba* and *mbira* was struggling. To that end, just like his fellow graduates, they were frustrated that they could not get gainfully

employed regardless of spending years studying for higher qualifications. From interviews we had, the following appeared to be the reasons which brought them to the project:

1. Making money
2. The possibility of being part of something big with other graduates who hold different qualifications
3. They all took the process of taking part in the research as a way of reducing boredom from spending days doing nothing

The pulls to social entrepreneurship highlighted above give an impression that the participants may have been motivated by what seems to be selfish reasons to join the project. This shows that social ventures are not always created entirely on good will alone but need to make profit as well. Rokhman and Ahamed (2015: 30) argue that “social entrepreneurship is an attitude that reflects an individual’s motivation and capacity to identify an opportunity and to pursue it, in order to produce new value or economic success”. Social entrepreneurs are at times led by their huge ambitions to bring change and attitude to change. It is therefore important for communities mulling social venture creation to think beyond the problem they want to tackle. They should also focus on the attitude of the community towards the problem or at times, the method through which the problem is going to be mitigated, as ignoring either one of the two might result in a lack of buy-in. People will act as if they are unconcerned yet they are really worried. This ensemble was created during a time when Zimbabweans shared a loss of hope in political solutions to the country’s crisis.

I should state that even though I have mentioned what might seem to be individualistic motivations, the administrative team knew fully well that their taking part in the project was in pursuance of a shared vision and primarily for the general good of the community. In an interview I had with Almon Moyo, who was part of the administrative team and one of Gweru’s arts entrepreneurs, he argued that:

For artists, collaboration should never be about names. It is about sharing the same background and inspiration or most importantly sharing the same objective (Interview with Almon Moyo 2016).

Kretzmann *et al.* also argue for having a shared goal and complementing abilities for the success of projects built on asset based community development. A closer look at their motivations also reveals that they believed that working within and as a team has benefits and success not just with regards to shared goals but on an individual basis. For instance, joining a team for the purposes of benefitting from colleagues' knowledge or strengths has some show of personal advancement as well appreciating other people's competencies. Most importantly the diverse educational backgrounds meant that the team was built on a solid base. Caruso (2007: 10) posits that "culturally diverse teams incorporated more ideas into their problem solving and generated more ideas".

## **8.8 Social Service and Sustainability of the Ensemble**

As I have mentioned earlier, the performing artists who were part of this study suggested that we have an administrative team since they wanted to focus on what they do best. I was given the task of coming up with an administration team. There was no budget for remuneration and administration but the work had to be done. Due to circumstances, my choices here were limited to people I had long-standing relationships with. These are people with whom we had a culture of reciprocity. I asked my friends, George Svinurai, Almon Moyo and Prosper Kunzvi, to help with the administration, but there was no female representation here and most of my female friends were based in Harare. George suggested we ask Cleopatra Mbedzi, his former colleague at the Midlands State University, to be part of the project. I also knew Cleopatra as a young girl who had participated in a theatre project that I had facilitated in 2008, with the help of The Alliance Church in Zimbabwe.

Initially, this team's duties were to sell the ensemble's productions with a view to making money for our, and the ensemble's, sustenance. However, we ended up coming up with the DUNAMIS Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Workshop and Competition, a highly successful project which complimented the work of the ensemble in communities. Our team comprised the five of us as active administrators, as well as two members of the advisory board, Ms. Abigail Sivanda and Pastor Laiton Ncube. We also sent out invitations for the Advisory board to one Professor at the Midlands State University and a young lawyer, who both agreed to be part of the board. However, due to their pressing commitments and working outside of Gweru, they did not

take part in activities related to this study. Hence, I do not mention their names here, but I acknowledge their support and belief in the utility of the project. We held a strategic planning meeting at the National Arts Council offices. This meeting was attended by the ensemble's artists and administrators. Pastor Laiton Ncube and Ms. Abigail Sivanda were also in attendance as mentors.

### **8.8.1 A Service to the Community**

Our first session of the strategic planning workshop got participants sharing generalised overviews of the social, political and economic environment in Gweru and Zimbabwe by extension. The knowledge that we shared was going to be used to inform our work. It was agreed that while we will be happy to be accepted by people of all age groups in our community, our target group were youth. Most youth in Zimbabwe have never been formally employed. Doing a snap survey around the streets of any high-density suburb in Gweru, one is bound to meet hordes of youths on street corners.

Some pro-active and innovative youths have taken the fight against unemployment into their own hands after realising that the government was overwhelmed with other pressing needs. These groups of youths and women who have taken the initiative to contribute towards eradicating unemployment, have done so contravening the law, as most of them have engaged in illegal economic activities which include money laundering, alluvial gold panning and the selling of pirated films and music. In their efforts, which have to some degree quelled down their woes, these youths and women are always fighting running battles with local authorities and the police.

We were therefore aware of the market forces and that there is high competition and restricting City by laws. Efforts made by other young people strengthened our resolve to work together for the common good. However, we were also aware that the term 'youth' in Zimbabwe has been coupled with ungratefulness, intolerance, violence and laziness, among other ills. To that end, we had to abide by the values we had set if we were to gain the community's support as well as to inspire positive change. Tribalism has also taken centre-stage in the societal polarisation in Zimbabwe. Politicians have taken the *Gukurahundi* massacre as a tool to weaken rival parties. Youths who were not even born during the era of *Gukurahundi* or who were too young to

understand, have been given illusions to the era. These illusions further exacerbate the tension between the Zimbabwean people as chances of dialogue are squashed. In instances where people have had to dialogue, they have done so without sincerity.

Therefore, we realised that without access to information, these young people and women will continue to suffer, and the cancer of intolerance and hostility will spread and weaken socio-political and economic foundations and effectively cripple the nation. Hence our music and dance performances, as well as any other programme we might think of doing, had to be tailor-made for our target population for the purposes of facilitating information acquisition and providing empowering knowledge which enhances and stimulates our target community to be effectively decisive. Our arts for social change performances in the community had to address the current identified needs, anticipated trends and future needs. We opted to use edutainment and forum-theatre-framed performances in our addresses to the community. These methods identified with our programming outlay, which did not seek to witch-hunt but rather sought to transform conflict, restore unity among polarised groups, and instil tolerance and sustainable dialogue among the target societies.

## **8.9 Scenario Planning**

During the strategic planning meeting, we also reflected on the challenges that we risked facing under the socio-political environment in Gweru, Zimbabwe. We also made projections of environs that are conducive for the survival and operations of the ensemble. The reasoning behind this process was that we hoped that this knowledge would help us to predict, prepare for or manage change. Morrison and Wilson (1996: 3) argue that “The scenario process highlights the principal drivers of change and associated uncertainties facing organisations today and explores how they might play out in the future. The result is a set of stories that offer alternative views of what the future might look like”. The perceived risks which had potential to scatter the work of the ensemble included the following:

### **Risks**

- Increased political and economic instability<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> #ThisFlag protests almost curtailed our work in churches.

- External interference of our activities at district level
- Failure to attract any funding or resources
- Members leaving prematurely

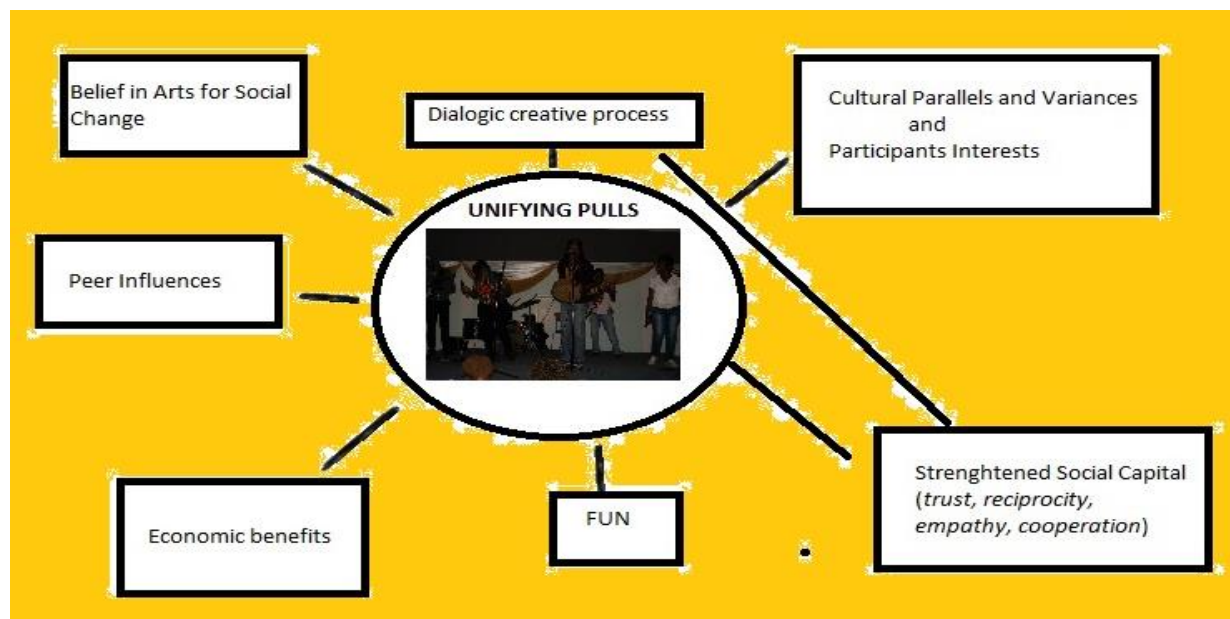
Nonetheless, we also looked at the positive side. We made a list of assumptions which we thought might create an enabling environment for us:

### Assumptions

- The prevailing political environment does escalate to an armed conflict
- The business community, non-governmental organisations and the City authorities agree to support or collaborate with the ensemble
- Communities willing to work without expecting material benefits from us
- The ensemble retains its current staff and recruits more competent personnel to help the existing team

### 8.10 Unifying Pulls

**Figure 8.5** summarises the factors that pulled participants towards working together. It is a summary of the discussion that we have had.



**Figure 8.5:** Unifying Pulls in Endogenous Arts Based Peacebuilding (sourced from own data 2016).

Participants were attracted to the ensemble by the following:

- Belief in Arts for Social Change
- Peer Influences
- Dialogic Creative Process
- Economic Benefits
- Cultural Parallels and Variances
- Fun
- Social Capital

### **8.11 A Summary of the Process**

The ensemble's birth and growth followed organic stages of group decision-making and development which allowed participants to develop at their own pace and in their own ways (Corey, Corey and Corey 2010). The ensemble validated the assertion that brought out that "Groups offer a natural laboratory where people can experiment with new ways of being" (Corey, Corey and Corey 2010: 87). The stages through which the group went through are aptly captured by Wilson (2010) when she speaks of group stages of development. Wilson (2010: 2) posits that team members go through the following processes:

The team members first come together, welcoming, polite and not a little wary, how they descend into conflict while establishing their positions, how the boundaries are eventually and sometime tortuously established and, if all goes well, how the team reaches a place of stability where it can perform to the best of its combined abilities.

The process discussed by Wilson (2010) has parallels with Johnson and Johnson's (1994) view on group development. They posit that a group has seven stages of development. However, out of the seven, I noted the following four: "structuring procedures and becoming oriented, Rebelling and differentiating, committing to and Taking Ownership of the Goals Procedures and Other members

and functioning maturely and productively” (Johnson and Johnson 1994: 466). It also linked to Tuckman’s (1965) elegant and useful model on group development. **Table 8.1** below presents the stages that the group in this study went through, according to the views of both Tuckman (1965) and Johnson and Johnson (1994). This study therefore also follows four of the five stages in Tuckman’s stages of group decision-making which are “forming, storming, norming and performing” (Tuckman 1965: 396). According to this groundbreaking trajectory, a team goes through exciting formative stages, harrowing conflict-ridden phases and resolution and transformation of the conflicts leading to successfully achieving goals. From our experience, some of which I have already shared and will continue to share in the next chapter, the stages do not follow any chronological order. Heated conflict for example can come at the very beginning of the process, threatening the whole existence of the group. However, most of the pronounced activities happening within the group will be in line with a particular stage that you are at.

**Table 8.3:** Experiences of the ensemble members of this study during stages of team development described by Johnson and Johnson (1994) and Tuckman (1965).

Stage of Development	Brief Explanation of what to expect during the phase
Structuring procedures and becoming oriented / <b>Forming</b>	At this stage members will be getting to know one another. There is a lot of pretence, and most members showed that they wanted to be likeable. Group members wanted to know what is going on and they gave me, as the convener, an opportunity to guide the process.
Rebelling and differentiating / <b>Storming</b>	At this juncture, interaction between members increase. However, it comes with clashes, be they personal or philosophical clashes. Interaction between participants is livelier, they engage in different processes which either trigger or resolve conflict. The process of managing conflict begins here, and skills such as listening and dialogue become increasingly important.
Committing to and Taking Ownership of the Goals Procedures	The ensemble sets standards which will identify them and benchmarks which they can only achieve as a collective. The members realise their cooperative interdependence; hence norms of trust are raised and a sense of mutuality is also built.



and Other members / <b>Norming</b>	
Functioning maturely and Productively / <b>Performing</b>	At this stage, we have a productive and efficacious team. Members are aware of their roles hence avoiding duplication. In addition, through interaction they can collectively solve problems and face challenges head on. “However, if this stage was reached without working through issues of earlier stages, the team may disband, or regress and address those issues”

## 8.12 Conclusion

This chapter detailed the processes we went through in creating a cosmopolitan ensemble. The discussion is framed under the lenses of the social entrepreneurship behavioural theory (El Ebrashi 2013) and the asset based community development theory (Kretzmann 2010). Even though we managed to come with an ensemble which consisted of artists from different political, ethnic and religious backgrounds, which they ostensibly hold very strong views for, the members insisted that they will still pursue solo careers and perhaps call ensemble members for help if need be. Making a team out of people with competing ambitions is no mean task, particularly in an environment where personal aggrandisement is the norm and cooperation and selflessness is viewed with suspicion. The making of the ensemble and its administrative team paved the way for staging performances and workshops in the community with a view to propagate the messages of peace which I will discuss in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 9:**

### **REHEARSALS, PERFORMANCES AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY**

*“I like beautiful melodies telling me terrible things” (Tom Waits, 2015).*

*“Music is the great uniter. An incredible force. Something that people who differ on everything and anything else can have in common” (Sarah Densen, n.d.).*

#### **9.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter showed that it is possible to take an area of ‘sameness’ or a people’s common interest, in this case music, to congregate individuals and use its empathetic affectivity to facilitate inclusivity and team-building amongst people of different ethnicities, religious affiliations and political persuasions. Going forward, this discussion delves into analysing the non-sonic qualities and the cultural relevancy of music, with a view to understand what makes music susceptible to manipulation in performances with conflict transformation agendas. This chapter also addresses how the ensemble increased community voices through representative participation. This is premised on the fact that it is not definite that the views and ideas of the ensemble members were representative of the social mood. However, caution was taken in recruiting participants from across the social strata with the idea of projecting it as a microcosm of the community. Furthermore, I will discuss, how the ensemble respected and related with local structures in order to come up with a successful intervention.

#### **9.2 Using Multiple Art Forms to Release the Ensemble Members’ Pent-Up Frustrations**

It was important for the ensemble members to let out their own frustrations, aspirations and hopes in order for us to effectively champion for social change. We had to be at peace with ourselves first as individuals, then as a collective, before we reached out to the community. In order to do that we borrowed ideas from Image theatre which according to Boal (2005: 3) “. . . is a series of exercises and games designed to uncover essential truths about societies and cultures without resort, in the first instance, to spoken language”. While according to Boal (2005) this technique is reliant on images and uses fewer or no words, we used the images to stimulate worded expressions

in the form of musical free-styles. The use of musical free styles was motivated by the knowledge that music is affective and that it is also an outlet of emotions (Juslin and Sloboda 2001). In addition, experience in collective arts production suggested that members' creativity should not be restricted to a genre or any rule. Rather, we encouraged each other to do whatever one felt inspired to do.

The first two exercises looked at the participants' perceptions on belonging and community first in Gweru, and then by extension in Zimbabwe. The first image of citizenship in Gweru showed an individual in transit, looking back over his shoulder with a sullen face. The image stimulated another participant to sing one of Zimbabwe's most popular lullabies called '*ehuhwe nyarara mwana*' (child may you stop crying). However, the song was not done following the traditional tune. The lead singer made it a slow tempo which evoked a solemn mood that drew participants to empathise with the sculptor.

The song was also made a call and response song, such that all participants managed to join in, though at different intervals as the change of melody was not rehearsed. The immediate resonance with call and response singing was because the method is common in both Shona and Ndebele music, just as is musicking (Mutero 2014, Ndlovu 2010). Singing is therefore not just music, it is a message of beauty of diversity. When people sing in call and response, they do not sing with one voice. The many voices singing with different registers creating a beautiful sound symbolise and communicate the agency of pluri-versatility. The call and response symbolically reflects the basic structure of community in African societies. According to Impey and Nussbaum (1996: 4), call and response "... exemplifies and embodies the highly interactive and communicative elements of African dance and music in a way that allows and encourages individual expression that is integrated with and supportive of group expression". The call and response method makes music a shared communal activity in the Zimbabwean societies. The plurality of voices and the 'alternation' between caller and singer speak to an awareness of the strengths of others. This has ties with Maruta's (2010: 14) view of asset-based community development, which emphasises communities mobilising their different capabilities to meet genuinely shared needs.

#### **Literal Translation of *Ehuhwe Nyarara mwana***

**Call:** *Ehuhwe nyarara mwana* (Ehuhwe<sup>9</sup> stop crying child)

**Response:** *Ehuhwe nyarara mwana* (Ehuhwe stop crying child)

**Call:** *Mwana anochema, kuchemera mai vake* (The crying baby, is crying for mother's attention)

**Response:** *Ehuhwe nyarara mwana* (Ehuhwe (a melodic nonsensical) stop crying child)

The song is presented in staff notation in **Figure 9.1**.

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<sup>9</sup> *Ehuhwe* is a melodious vocable with no semantic meaning

# Ehuhwe Nyarara Mwana

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Unknown

The musical score is written in staff notation with three systems. Each system consists of three staves: CALL, RESPONSE 1, and RESPONSE 2. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the staves.

**System 1:**

CALL: E - hu- hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na I-we

RESPONSE 1: E - hu- hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

RESPONSE 2: E - hu- hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

**System 2 (starting at measure 5):**

CALL: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na I-we

RESPONSE 1: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

RESPONSE 2: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

**System 3 (starting at measure 9):**

CALL: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na I-we

RESPONSE 1: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

RESPONSE 2: E - hu hwe\_ nya-ra-ra Mwa-na.

Figure 9.1: *Ehuhwe Nyarara mwana*, in staff notation.

However, it should be noted that this notation is not prescriptive of how the song should always sound, but it for presentation purposes. The song can change on any day depending on the wishes of the singer. For us the song morphed each time after the first experience of singing it as an ensemble. We ended up calling our names instead of referring to a nameless baby (*mwana*), that is instead of singing *ehuhwe nyarara mwana* (Ehuhwe stop crying child) we sang *ehuhwe nyarara Tina* (Ehuhwe stop crying Tina). The use of our names in the song was very effective. Its pull was much stronger than when no specific names were called. One of the participants Denver said:

When my name was called in song I had goose bumps. Normally, I do not cry from songs or in public but whenever the ensemble sings my name as unison my eyes are filled with tears. I fail to contain it. I become vulnerable. It felt bad at first but every time we do it now I release some negative energy. It's liberating (Interview with Denver Berejena on 27 February 2015).

### **9.3 Frustration with the Electoral System: *Vahwerengedzi Vanobira* (The enumerators are cheats)**

While the group was singing *ehuhwe nyarara mwana* (child may you stop crying), one of the participants started reciting a poem which spoke about flawed electoral processes in Zimbabwe. The poem was later titled *Vahwerengedzi vanobira* (The enumerators are cheats). I should mention here that I deliberately do not mention the participants' names – even though they signed consent forms agreeing to the use of names, I strongly believe that not mentioning their names is the right thing to do in a nation where the government's temper is drastic. Nonetheless, ERA went on to publish a poetry anthology for this poet. Below I present one stanza of the poem in the original Shona language and the English translation, followed by the participants' analysis of the image, poem and song.

#### **Title: *Vahwerengedzi vanobira***

*Ukaona vachibayana unoti makara asionani* (Their public spats make it seem like they are enemies)

*Guruva rinoputika sepane mikono inobayana* (Dust rises as if bulls are fighting)

*Tose tose zvino totosvogwa* (And we are all dazzled)

<i>Ku ti arohwa ndoupi hatichavoni</i>	(As a result you can't see who loses the fight)
<i>Tinenge tangova bishi kufuridzana</i>	(As we try regaining our sight)
<i>Usabwaira vanobira</i>	(Don't blink, they will cheat)
<i>Muna Kurume, varume vaya vakabira Musaigwa</i>	(In March they stole from Musaigwa)
<i>Mhiri, Sambiri vakakona kubira</i>	(Musaigwa failed to cross over)
<i>Kudozama mandimire asi Save vakanyura</i>	(He failed to float)
<i>Gwizi gwaisafema, Dutu iri raive guruguru kwazvo</i>	(The river was full and there was a huge tide)

### 9.3.1 Participants Unpacking of the Image Song and Poem

We then engaged on a reflection process which led us to think critically about the following questions: How challenging was it to relive your frustrations through sculpture? Does the sculpturing mean anything to your present realities and your future? What do you think of the groups' interpretation of your image? Do the multiple interpretations help in any way? Do you think your behaviour, interaction with the group and the society is going to change due to the session? I will therefore focus the following discussion, which taps on participants' responses, on the questions above.

In this session, we used music to create a mood which was favourable for non-offensive truth-telling. As per tradition, we also sang at the beginning of the session, during intercession time as well as during breaks as an energizer. Due to the intensity of the issues and emotions that the images and songs raised during the session, we included a debriefing exercise, where we sang a high tempo and happy songs (Juslin and Sloboda 2001). In addition to the tempo, the message that the songs carried was also important. Debriefing was not meant to erase the thoughts of the images but to prepare to settle tempers, emotions and to relax the environment. One of the songs we did was *Masibambanane Sibemunye*, sung in Ndebele, and the song's message is 'let's unite'. Following is the literal translation of the lyrics, and the notation is given in **Figure 9.2**:

#### **Literal Translation of *Masibambanane Sibemunye***

<b>Call:</b> <i>Masibambanane Sibemunye</i>	(Let's come together and be one)
<b>Response:</b> <i>We MaAfrica</i>	(People of Africa)

**Call:** *Ilizwe lethu liphumelele* (For our region to prosper)

**Response:** *We MaAfrica* (People of Africa)

This song is popular with community theatre groups. Though its text implores Africans to unite for the prosperity of the region, on our part the message was localised. It didn't refer to Africa the continent but Africa was used to remind us that our oneness transcends from just being Zimbabweans.



# Masibambanane Sibemunye

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Unknown


$\text{♩} = 90$


CALL   
Ma-si-ba - mba-na - ne si-be-mu-nye, I - li-zwe


RESPONSE 1   
We-Ma - A - fri-ca\_\_\_\_\_


RESPONSE 2   
We-Ma - A - fri-ca\_\_\_\_\_

RESPONSE 3   
We-Ma - A - fri-ca\_\_\_\_\_

4   
le-th li-phu-me le - le\_\_\_\_\_ Ma-si-ba - mba-na ne si-be-mu-nye,

  
We-Ma - A - fri - ca\_\_\_\_\_ We-Ma -

  
We-Ma - A - fri - ca\_\_\_\_\_ We-Ma -

  
We-Ma - A - fri - ca\_\_\_\_\_ We-Ma -

7

The musical score is written for five staves, all in the key of D major (indicated by four sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#). The first staff begins with a measure rest followed by a quarter note D5, then eighth notes E5, F#5, G#5, A5, B5, and a half note C6. The lyrics 'l - li - zwe le - th li - phu - me le - le' are aligned with these notes. The second staff starts with a quarter note D5, followed by a half note E5, a quarter note F#5, a half note G#5, a quarter note A5, a half note B5, and a quarter note C6. The lyrics 'A - fri - ca' are under the first three notes, and 'We - Ma - A - fri - ca' are under the last four. The third staff begins with a quarter note D5, followed by a half note E5, a quarter note F#5, a half note G#5, a quarter note A5, a half note B5, and a quarter note C6. The lyrics 'A - fri - ca' are under the first three notes, and 'We - Ma - A - fri - ca' are under the last four. The fourth staff starts with a quarter note D5, followed by a half note E5, a quarter note F#5, a half note G#5, a quarter note A5, a half note B5, and a quarter note C6. The lyrics 'A - fri - ca' are under the first three notes, and 'We - Ma - A - fri - ca' are under the last four. The fifth staff begins with a quarter note D5, followed by a half note E5, a quarter note F#5, a half note G#5, a quarter note A5, a half note B5, and a quarter note C6. The lyrics 'A - fri - ca' are under the first three notes, and 'We - Ma - A - fri - ca' are under the last four.

l - li - zwe le - th li - phu - me le - le

A - fri - ca We - Ma - A - fri - ca

A - fri - ca We - Ma - A - fri - ca

A - fri - ca We - Ma - A - fri - ca

A - fri - ca We - Ma - A - fri - ca

**Figure 9.2:** *Masibambanane Sibemunye*, a song sung by the ensemble members in this study.

Our use of Image theatre involved a participant sculpting an image expressing their feelings or experiences of the political environment, social challenges, and the economy. The image posed as an outlet of what we live every day. To begin with, the image sculptor, unpacked his mannequin saying that:

It was a representation of my present state, where I keep on moving forward with life but I do not have a clue of where this life is taking me. Thinking or looking at my past shreds all his hopes for a better future.

It is clear that according to the sculptor, the meaning embedded in the image was personal. He spoke of the frustrations that he faced as an individual. On the other hand, the singer had a similar meaning but viewed the image as a representation of the wider community, stating in a personal interview that:

The country's soiled past makes it impossible to look straight ahead. There is a lot of mistrust such that people don't focus on the job at hand but on possible detractors (personal interview with singer).

The singer's impersonal and appropriating a nationalistic view of the image was in agreement with the poem. However, the poem was more on electoral fraud, imploring citizens to be vigilant as the nation faces another harmonised Presidential and Parliamentary election in 2018. The poem was therefore not just steeped in history, it used the memories of the past to predict and prepare for the future. As opined by Bloomfield (2003: 16), "such examination of the past, will generate a more cooperative present in order to begin to develop a safer future of coexistence". The outcomes of this session were very important as they were symptomatic of the challenges facing Zimbabwe.

It is interesting to note that the sculptor and everyone else in the ensemble agreed to both meanings. Participants unanimously agreed that as a people we share the same frustrations, and that the sculptor's appropriation of a personal meaning to the image did not necessarily mean that he thought he was the only one going through challenges. This important exercise therefore allowed participants to realise that they did not have unique challenges and that they were not just telling

their own story. Bruyne and De Maeseneer (2013: 2) are also of the opinion that the efficacy of performing arts in reconciliation and transformation lies in that:

The participants share in telling (performing, acting, designing) the stories of the other party in the conflict, as such, they learn to inhabit each other's stories. They feel into the other's experience. In this way, the differences between the conflicting parties, generations, religions, and classes are relativized in order to find a common expression. The participants take on responsibility for each other's story so as to humanize both themselves and the other by accepting the other's testimony and becoming its co-author.

#### **9.4 Looking Ahead of the Frustrations**

These three testimonies revealed that the participants were of the view that progress or lack thereof in Zimbabwe is hinged on experiences of the past. Therefore, in dealing with these testimonies, we had two options, either to speak out or to ignore the past and move on. We should put into cognisance that these options come in against a background where one of the greatest impediments to reconciliation and healing in Zimbabwe is that the government has not wholesomely dealt with the nation's conflicted past. Instead, they have resorted to moving away from the past as quickly as possible. Most Zimbabwean communities, including Mkoba, have adopted the same method of ignoring to deal with the violent past and surging forward for development. Violent epochs such as the most recent 2008 electoral violence has been ignored. There is no public talk about it, yet victims and perpetrators are known.

In dealing with the past, the argument is that it “. . . can seem as if slowing things down, dwelling on the painful past and the unfinished thoughts and feelings around past violence, would endanger the new political and social structures” (Bloomfield 2003: 15). However, a counter argument is proffered by Amadiume and An-Na'im (2000: 31), who posit that “a people who do not preserve their memory are a people who have forfeited their history”. Acknowledging history is important as bridges and intervention can be built from lessons drawn from past experiences (Amadiume and An-Na'im 2000: 22). The participants also thought selective amnesia is an impediment to progress. One of them reasoned that:

We have to acknowledge the past, we are very young to have participated in eras like *Gukurahundi* but we obviously played a part during the 2008 elections and other conflicts we experience today, violent or otherwise.

The use of multiple art forms or methods of communication offered multiple mirrors of the situation, where participants interpreted the image in different ways, broadening our perspective of issues we are faced with as a society. We did not have one accepted meaning of an image, instead participants could come up with lyrics inspired by what they thought the images meant. As argued by Boal (2002: 175), when “. . . dealing with images we should not try to ‘understand’ the meaning of each image, to apprehend its precise meaning, but to feel those images, to let our memories and imaginations wander”. In some instances, the images did not immediately arouse emotions or meanings which could be put in words. At such times a member could hum a melody depicting and setting the mood of their understanding of the image. Colleagues would then join in the melody with lyrics or continue humming. In addition, this made participants have an appreciation of the next person’s artistic capabilities, thus creating mutual dependency among ensemble members. From this exercise, we decided on sharing the ‘truth’ as we know it and not necessarily as we have experienced it. Implied here is that we agreed on sharing even tribal and political stereotypes.

## **9.5 Demystifying Stereotypes through Talk**

The follow-up session was meant to share the different stereotypical views participants had on their perceived foes, be it people from the opposing political party or people from a different tribe. According to Adler (1991: 5), “stereotyping involves a form of categorization that organizes our experience and guides our behaviour toward ethnic and national groups. Stereotypes never describe individual behaviour; rather, they describe the behavioural norm for members of a particular group”. The challenge is that this categorisation divides people into binaries of them and us, resulting in the prejudicial othering of others (Jensen 2011: 65). Mabhena (2014: 139) avers that stereotypes refer to:

. . . [t]he creation and consistent application of standardised notions of the cultural distinctiveness of a group. Stereotypes are held by dominated groups as well as by dominating ones and they are widespread in societies with significant power differences as well as societies where there is power equilibrium between ethnic groups.

Evidently, stereotypes are a product of contact or lack thereof between people. It is highly likely that contact again has the potential to end stereotypes. The manner in which these stereotypes were put across suggested that the other tribe or political party was the reverse of the said negativity. For example, if the stereotype is ‘Shona people are very short’ the reverse would be true about Ndebele people. In some instances, participants agreed to the generalisations. For instance, the *Karanga* participants agreed they spoke loudly. I did not however agree to it because I am a Shona of the *Karanga* dialect but I consider myself soft-spoken. It is such type of disagreements regarding stereotypes or the status quo that have the potential to strain relationships, thus triggering conflict. Therefore, for effective conflict resolution there is a need to give attention to even such minute and personalised detail. Lederach and Maiese (2003) argue:

Rather than concentrating exclusively on the content and substance of the dispute, the transformational approach suggests that the key to understanding conflict and developing creative change processes lies in seeing the less visible aspects of relationship. While the issues over which people fight are important and require creative response, relationships represent a web of connections that form the broader context of the conflict. It is out of this relationship context that particular issues arise and either become volatile or get quickly resolved.

The whole exercise followed this pattern where stereotypical behaviours were either accepted or denied. However, what is important is that they were spoken about and they aided to create healthy relationships. It revealed political and tribal stereotypes that we thought trailed us from history and impeded future growth. I have however, included only the negative stereotypes in **Table 9.1**.

**Table 9.1:** Tribal and Political Stereotypes (sourced from own data 2016).

Shona people	Ndebele people	ZANU PF	MDC (Opposition parties)
They don't bath and have no sense of fashion.	They are of loose morals	They rig elections.	The leadership and members are dull.
They are power hungry.	They don't value education.	Youth members have a low self esteem.	They are sexists.
They are loud.	They are lazy thieves.	They have tribal politicians.	They are tactless.
They practice witchcraft.	They have pugnacious tendencies and they like fighting with weapons.	They are violent.	They are sell-outs.
They are very corrupt.	They sold out the country to whites.	They are very corrupt.	
They practice nepotism ( <i>chikamalism</i> ).	They took away all the beautiful Shona women during the Ndebele-Shona Uprising.	They are opposed to leadership renewal.	They don't understand leadership renewal.
The ladies are ugly.	The men are irresponsible.	They are liars and populists.	MDC people are <b>JUST</b> boring.

There was a divine exchange of stereotypes, akin to child play, called *kunemerana* in Shona and *Ihaba* in Ndebele. Due to the small size of the group, it allowed intimacy and friendly banter, such that participants did not find the stereotypes offensive. The use of banter was encouraging to our efforts of team-building, as it facilitated a mutually-permitted level of disrespect. According to Porter (2007: 47):

One simple, effective way of dismantling typical stereotypes is to take people out of their mundane contexts into workshops, youth camps where people engage with the

other for the first time and surprisingly discover that they are “normal” human beings. It is impossible for many to picture themselves as someone else’s enemy.

The common thought and feeling after this exercise was that generalisations are harmful and they cause unnecessary sectarianism (Spadacini 2013: 10). The small size and the cosmopolitan composition of our ensemble made it possible for the participants to debunk the stereotypes almost instantaneously. Schmelzel argues that working with smaller groups of key people “allows for work with more lasting effect than indiscriminately choosing participants” (Schmelzel 2006: 9). Since the ensemble was made up of people from different backgrounds, there was little convincing needed for members to realise that stereotypes are just there to further division. Though we had co-existed for a few days as an ensemble, we had not experienced incidences that confirmed stereotypical behaviours.

Participants however felt that stereotypes and a propensity for morbidity had become second nature to Zimbabweans. It was clear to all of us that the differences between Shonas and Ndebeles or between the ruling party and opposition political parties were based on imagined realities that had appeared to be the truth because of the lack of an exercise to address these stereotypes. As participants we agreed that we had been complicit in perpetuating the stereotypes in one way or another. For instance, one of the participants intimated that:

For all my life I have always avoided serious relationships with Ndebele women no matter how beautiful they are, because I have always been told you can’t get married to Ndebele because they are of loose morals.

The stereotype is a common cliché with the Shona people who say *Mandeverere haana hunhu* (Ndebele people are uncultured). When asked if his stance was premised on any experience, he was honest enough to say he has never had a female Ndebele friend. He jokingly added that he however, finds Ndebele women to be physically attractive. This is a stereotype, however it was met with approval by all. However, it raised the issues around the Ndebele-Shona uprising, which is regarded as one of the roots of conflict in Zimbabwe. Ncube (2014: 205) posits that “the historical Shona ‘wounds’ date back to pre-colonial Zimbabwe, in the 1860s when the Ndebele



ethnic group under Mzilikazi came into present-day Zimbabwe from Nguniland (present-day South Africa)”).

## **9.6 Reflection and the Way Forward**

### **9.6.1 Catharsis**

It is very important that the participants engaged in an exercise of truth-telling. Silence about issues affecting the economy, society and politics can potentially lead to “stress, anxiety and depression” (Dowdall 1996: 34), which can also drive conflict. The ability of participants to speak out and share some of their inner feelings as subjects of the conflict in Mkoba, be it as victims or perpetrators, is a huge step towards community healing, reconciliation and transformation. Participants noted that the opportunity to say their views and express their feelings straight in the face of their perceived foes was relieving. They mentioned that even though they speak out and even attack people with divergent views on platforms such as Facebook, releasing the anger in the physical presence of foes is liberating, even though they knew in some instances their fellow participants could do little or nothing to change the status quo. Guthrey (2013: 153) suggests that voicing should be considered as a mechanism which facilitates relief and catharsis to victims of violent settings, thus leading to healing.

After reflecting on the stereotypes that we had shared as an ensemble, we agreed that our attitudes could be indicative of how our society is structured and cultured. We were however, enthralled by the image theatre exercise which had evoked an empathetic song and poem from colleagues. This exercise led participants to openly speak about areas they felt needed redress in the community and country at large. However, we felt that we needed to do more with regards to personalising conflict transformation. We needed to question the roles that we have knowingly and unknowingly played in fuelling conflict. From the exercise, the recurring themes suggested that as individuals we had to truthfully and continuously engage in the following:

- Share with colleagues what pushed us into conflict in the past
- Have a shared understanding of conflict in our community

- Build trust and interdependence between ensemble members and consequently work to influence the wider community

### 9.6.2 Stereotypes: The ‘I’ Question and ‘We’ Narrative

By creating a small ensemble, this study sought first to transform the ensemble members so that they could effectively execute the second goal of the research, which was to become agents for social change. As a result, we had sessions which focused on individuals speaking out about the roles that they have played in perpetuating inequality and fuelling conflict. This session also focused on what we could do to correct our past mistakes. In order to carry out this task, we followed the forum theatre frame. According to War Resisters’ International (n.d.):

The basic idea is to act out a scenario, perhaps leading to an undesirable conclusion or violence and then to begin acting out the scenario again. This time, however, either a participant in the role play or any observer can shout ‘freeze’ and take over a role in the scenario to try to do something differently.

To that end, we shared personal encounters of the conflicts that we have been involved in before. The idea was to relive the scenario and enact ways we could have handled the situation. We ended up choosing to base our reactions to the following real life story which was experienced by one of the participants.

#### **PRESENTATION PLOT**

Character A is seated at a disused bus stop and they are called over by a Police Officer. S/he pretends not to have heard the officer’s call because the officer had used the term *mupfanha* to call. This infuriates the Officer who harshly grabs Character A.

This simple plot presented complex issues that ordinary citizens have to deal with, and the issues raised included:

- Conduct of Law enforcement agents
- Citizens’ attitude towards law enforcement agents

- Language

It was agreed that the law enforcement agent was wrong in dragging character A. However, some participants felt that character A called for the abuse, and they argued that the police officer was using minimal force against an un-cooperating citizen, while others felt *mupfanha* was a derogatory term that no one should answer to. For the Ndebele, *mfana* means young man, while the Shona, who derived the term from the latter, use it normally to denote power. “*When one calls you mupfanha in Shona, the message is simple*”. They are saying I beat you, said one of the participants.

After raising the different problem areas that scenario presented, participants took turns to show how they would react. Usually, forum theatre would demand that audiences become ‘spect-actors’ who watch and join in when they feel they have something to contribute. They don’t give instructions. We did not follow that route; we broke into teams and made different reactions which we presented through performances. This exercise integrated a multiplicity of performance arts forms. It was encouraging to hear participants suggesting that we employ Zimbabwean traditional dance styles. The argument was that we should make music that resonates with our cultures.


In our assessment of the scenarios, it was concluded that most of the participants presented scenarios which were superficial, and there was a tendency to rush to reach a compromise. Important however was that all of us presented alternatives to violence, however unrealistic. Nonetheless, the process had a song which we all enjoyed the most and which we eventually made into our theme song. This song is entitled *Tatukana here?* and was taken from the cultural repertoire as is. Most of the participants knew the song from primary school soccer matches where they would sing it to spur their team on. It brought with it nostalgic feelings. However, the lyrics do not speak of soccer or any game, they are actually related to conflict management. The notation of the song is presented in **Figure 9.3** followed by the literal translation of the song.

# Tatukana Here?

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero


Unknown

CALL



Ta - tu-ka-na he- re? Ta-tu-ka-na he- re? Ta-tu-ka-na he- re?

RESPONSE 1



RESPONSE 2



RESPONSE 3



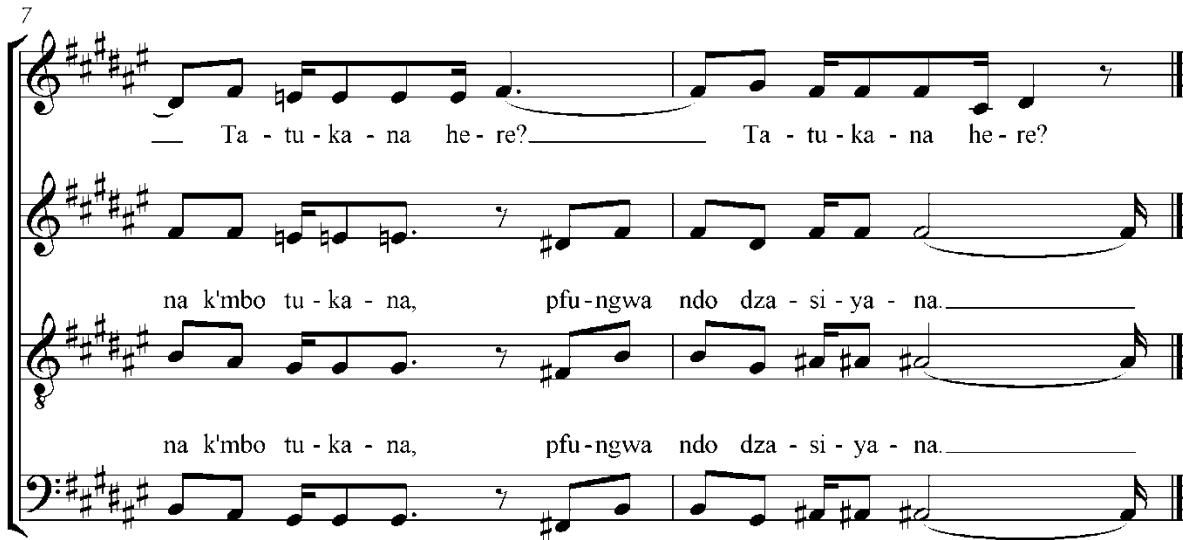
4



Ta-tu-ka-na he- re? Ta - tu - ka-na he re? Ta-tu - ka-na-he re?

Ha-ti - na k'mbo tu - ka-na, pfu-ngwando dza-si - ya-na. Ha-ti-

Ha-ti - na k'mbo tu - ka-na, pfu-ngwando dza-si - ya-na. Ha-ti-



**Figure 9.3:** Notation of *Tatukana Here?*, a song sung by the ensemble members of this study.

### **Literal Translation of *Tatukana Here?***

**Call:** *Tatukana here, tatukana here?*

(Have we scolded each other?)

**Response:** *Hatina Kumbotukana Pfungwa ndodzasiyana*

(We haven't scolded each other, we just differ on opinion)

*Tatukana here?* is a call and response song which sums up the conflict in Zimbabwe. The call is a question which says: "Have we scolded each other?", and the response answers: "No, we just have divergent views". It is also a fast tempo song which exudes so much energy.

This session was very important to me as the lead researcher, as it gave me an opportunity to assess the ensemble's readiness to perform in the community. As I have already mentioned, all the participants except for one were practising artists. Due to the economic difficulties in Zimbabwe, most artists who ordinarily focus on commercial art, will at some point in time work on commissioned arts for social change productions, usually for non-governmental organisations. To that end, I was looking specifically at the ensemble's understanding of arts for social change and observing how they would handle disagreements which might arise as a result of their work.

Through this process, I realised the importance of engaging with participants as equals, valuing their knowledge as well as building on that knowledge. Starting from the known is also important because, in addition to the researcher realising that the participants are not objects but autonomous subjects, it gives the team room “to relate to experiences of the past, comment on the present and project about the future” (Schneiderman 1986: 51).

## **9.7 Towards a Shared Understanding of Conflict and Arts for Social Change (Dialogic Creative Process)**

Though the initial activities that the group embarked on during the team-building exercise worked to bring about the different types of conflict, we had never focused on delineating what conflict is. This is because I felt it was better for participants to experience and identify the different types of conflicts as our relationships unfolded. To that end, I deliberately skipped discussions on what conflict is or what it is not at the beginning of the research. I felt this might instil disinterest and hamper progress. It is advised to avoid jargon when engaging in non-academic community projects, as it easily becomes a communication roadblock (Peace Direct online, Graham-Clay, 2005). On seeing that the ensemble was becoming a better team, we had to prepare to engage with the community in conflict transformation processes. Part of the process was to make sure we had a shared definition on conflict as an ensemble. To that end, we carried out an exercise where participants shared what came to their minds when they heard the word ‘conflict’.

Since we had shared experiences that made us loathe or feel disliked by the other earlier on, coming up with a shared understanding of conflict and its roots became a fairly easy exercise. In summary, what came out during this session was that the ensemble thought of a conflict as a tiff between two or more people who have different worldviews, perceptions, approaches or goals. Due to the composition of the ensemble, which took participants from different and often opposing sectors of the society which were not necessarily political, conflict was also thought of as an everyday phenomenon.

Participants agreed that conflict can happen between neighbours and within families, be they nuclear or extended. There was also mention that a person can be in conflict with oneself and that this has the potential to affect how they relate with the next person or people. It is clear here that

participants did not view conflict as some abstract or distant phenomenon which affects others and not them. In other words, we did not think of conflict for example as the differences between leaders in the ZANU PF and the MDC. An understanding that conflict, though omnipresent, is hierarchical, made it possible for us to come up with interventions which target specific communities.

The music-making process and subsequent performances factored in that sources of conflict and reluctance to cooperate for the common good stemmed from different sources. The participants' readiness to speak out about the roles in fanning conflict signalled that the time was ripe for the ensemble to shift focus towards celebrating our diversity through noting and using our cultural parallels and variances. To begin with however, we had to come up with an agreed definition of conflict.

## **9.8 Popular Music as a Unifier**

My assumption prior to starting fieldwork for this study was that one of the major exercises that we were going to embark on was to find parallels and variances in Ndebele and Shona music, that is, looking at and comparing the form of Shona and Ndebele music as well as striking a balance on which language to use for the song texts. However, when the time for the intervention came, the participants showed that they were not worried about language, at least in so far as music was concerned. The participants concurred with the argument that music in Zimbabwe, though originating from particular tribes, identifies with and perhaps unifies the nation. Upon asking whether the participants wanted the music to be reflective of their tribal identities, participants had this to say:

*Jah Prayzah anodiwa kwese shamwari, plus hapana asingazivi Majaivana* (Jah is loved all over and there is no one who can claim not to know Majaivana) (Conversational interview with Michael 'SaMukoko' Mukoko 2015).

Good music is just what it is. Good music. There is no need to try and balance tribes we end up failing on our mission. Let us just work together as one people *umunwe owodwa awucobodisi intwala* (Team is better than one). Music is a language in itself,

a happy song is a happy song no matter we sing it in Ndebele or Shona. I am Shona by birth and Ndebele by birth and that has never confused my taste of music. I am connected to the Ndebele hip-hop culture. I love how Cal-Vin spits his bars, yet I am also a big fan of Jah Prayzah (Interview with Gracious Maworera 2015).

Jah Prayzah is one of Zimbabwe's leading lights in music. He is young man, aged twenty-nine. Though currently he is changing his music style to Afro beats, which is popular in Africa, the music which made him a household name in Zimbabwe is *mbira*-inspired. On the other hand, *Lovemore Majaiva* is a legendary musician who made his name in Bulawayo before quitting music. These two musicians are only a few of the many musicians from either the Shona or Ndebele people loved by people across the divide. However, Almon Moyo, a Music and Musicology graduate who was part of the administrative team, argues that:

It is important to note the arguments proffered by the ensemble members that they are comfortable with making and listening to any music regardless of the language should not necessarily mean that there is tolerance of other tribes. We should remember that Zimbabwe was under colonial rule and still experiences the effects of colonialism under the guise of globalisation one has to be cognisant of the monolithic effect of colonisation which almost created a uniform musical culture (Interview with Almon Moyo 2016).

Moyo's views are corroborated by Berliner (1978: 25) who states that when missionaries came to Zimbabwe they "imposed religious and aesthetic values on Africans and condemned traditional forms of expressive culture, including music". Matsika (2000: 4) also adds that the British colonialists instituted schools where the curriculum had nothing to do with the African way of life. Even though after independence the government of Zimbabwe tried to integrate African mores and values in the education sector "western musical content is still dominant in the curriculum. The system is still maintaining a status quo ante regarding music education" (Muparutsa 2012: 62). As a result, most people in Zimbabwe are bi-musical; they have an appreciation of the Western musical culture as well as the African music which they have acquired either through training or mostly through passive listening (Hood 1960).



Therefore, while the different musical styles in Zimbabwe originate from specific ethnicities, for instance *mbira* from the *ZeZuru*, *Mhande* from the *Karanga*, *Isitshikitsha* from the Ndebele, *Amabhiza* from the *Kalanga* and *Muchongoyo* from the *Ndau* people, the education has been set up in a way that these forms of music are taught across the country. The music is not tribal or ethnic, it is Zimbabwean music. Commenting on *Jerusarema* dance, which is one of Zimbabwe's traditional dances, Mataga (2008: 97) posits that the dance "has been adopted by other Shona and non-Shona groups, urban based dance clubs and traditional performing groups, for tourists, political gatherings and other social events". This is equally true of all other indigenous music of Zimbabwe. The National Arts Council also plays a part in bridging the identity divides which come as a result of ethnic music, through the *Jikinya* Dance Festival which targets all primary schools in Zimbabwe. In 2016, the festival had *Hossana* dance which originates from Maebeleland as the national theme dance.

Ultimately, these efforts work to create a hybrid Zimbabwean music culture which accommodates every ethnicity. It is even better for the Midlands Province where this research was carried as the province "has mixed styles with both Ndebele and Shona influences" (Muparutsa 2012: 63). The implication therefore is that as an ensemble, we made good music, without regard of where we sourced the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic resources of the music.

What mattered most were the competencies and ambitions of the participants rather than the ethnic origins, thus relating to asset based community development which focuses on people's strengths (Fisher *et al.* 2008). This does not mean we were not aware or did not put credence on the tribal differences purportedly affecting the community. On the contrary, we were quite aware, and it was a factor of our community performances, as will be discussed later. It is just that the ensemble had matured beyond delusional tribal differences.

### **9.8.1 Cultural Appreciation: Learning Languages through Music**

One of the major causes of conflict in Zimbabwe is the issue of language. Both the Ndebele- and Shona-speaking people fan hatred around the use of language. It is common to find people in Zimbabwe finding comfort in speaking or learning English rather than another indigenous language which is not spoken within their respective families. I have highlighted in the previous

chapter that we also faced the language challenge, which was only saved from degenerating into a harmful conflict by one of the members who volunteered to translate.

Later on I observed that both the Ndebele and Shona speakers could understand and speak both languages. They were just arrogant at the beginning. However, this arrogance is indicative of the national fabric, which has a socially-instilled demeaning attitude towards other tribes. As a result, we did not sweep aside the issue of language, as we knew it was a contentious issue in Zimbabwe, though not much of a problem in Gweru because of the healthy mix of Ndebele-speaking and Shona-speaking people.

At the beginning of the project, when the Ndebele participants used terms which are often not part of the everyday parlance, the Shona-speaking participants had a proclivity to ask their counterparts to speak in Shona. This was the case regardless of the fact that Nomsa had volunteered at one of the sessions to translate. On the other hand, Ndebele-speaking participants never asked for an interpretation, at best they would ask for the use of different terms when they felt that they did not understand the Shona words that were used. This is reflective of the Shona and Ndebele relations in Zimbabwe. Most Shona people are reluctant to learn other indigenous languages, while at the same time the Ndebele people have been ready to learn Shona, as they view the tribe or language as superior.

While this might seem problematic and might call for an urgent redress where Shona people are taught, or better yet, encouraged to speak Ndebele, the scenario is not necessarily a cause of conflict, especially when people accept the differences. Robertson (2010: 39) argues that “long-term successful conflict transformation requires an acceptance of differing cultural identities or the creation of a new shared cultural identity”. In this study this phenomenon could have been as a result of the unequal numbers between Ndebele and Shona participants. Shona-speaking participants outnumbered the Ndebele participants, primarily because the selection process did not just use language as an inclusion or exclusion criterion.

However, the important point is that as the project progressed to include a lot of music, Shona-speaking participants began to show an interest towards the Ndebele click-words in a song. Here,

they rarely asked for code-switching, instead they excitedly learnt the new words, often asking for the meaning and examples of how the words can be used in everyday communication. Evidently, the music was making it possible for participants to learn each other's language and most importantly, the relationships became closer.

I did not immediately share my view on the use of language with the ensemble members, as I feared that the interaction would become artificial and lose its impact on appreciating languages. However, during the reflection exercise, Blejah (Blessing Chimutowe) shared the same sentiments and referred us to an inspiring statement made by Innocent Nkululeko Dube, the Director of the Bulawayo-based internationally-acclaimed theatre company IYASA, during a TEDX talk entitled 'Music against Ignorance'. Sibanda (online) said:

For us politics has failed. Music has not because music is a universal language, everybody can understand it. You can sing along. There is one to man or a woman's heart speak their language, sing their music and they would be your friend, your brother forever and ever.

In addition to interacting closely, the maturity came as a result of a deliberate exercise we had in sharing the non-musical cultural parallels and variances. This activity showed that in our day to day lives as a people of Zimbabwe, our cultures are the same. Without going into detail on the cultural practices, the following are some of the practices the ensemble shared and their relevancy to their work.

#### **9.8.1.1 Faith and Belief Systems**

Zimbabwe is largely a Christian nation, currently experiencing a growth in charismatic churches. Both the Shona and Ndebele participants agreed that some of the miracles performed in these churches have divided people's opinions. In addition, participants noted that both the Shona and Ndebele people believe in ancestral spirits (*Midzumu/Amadlozi*). Within this belief system, there is veneration of ancestors and a defined progeny-progenitor relationship between the living and the living dead. The ancestors, who are the living dead, take care of the living as well as sanction them when they fail to live harmoniously with nature and fellow human beings. It was however,

not the position of the ensemble to decide on behalf of the community with regards to who does genuine miracles or whether African Traditional Religion was acceptable or pagan.

### **9.8.1.2 Familial Relations and Counsel**

For the Shona and the Ndebele people, family is not limited to the nuclear family, which is narrow and consists of the parents and siblings. Instead, family implies the extended family, that includes aunts, cousins, nephews, uncles as well as people with whom you just share the same totem. According to Dodo, Ndanga and Dodo (2012: 91), the use of totems '*mutupo*' and honorific titles called '*chidawo*' is highly valued so much so that people of the same totem are not encouraged to marry since they are considered cousins". All these people have a prerogative to counsel or sanction your behaviour when it's deemed off-track. Therefore, the ensemble felt that it was not out of place to make music which questions and directs some of the community's behaviours.

### **9.8.1.3 Political Leaders' Behaviours**

In addition, the participants realised a similar culture in leaders from both the ZANU PF and the MDC parties, who they claim, have a tendency of neglecting the community only to come back when it is election time. In addition, their political affiliations do not stop them from working together in parliamentary portfolio committees. While we did not make songs which directly speak about this phenomenon, our post-performance discussions always pointed to it.

The ensemble later used these cultural practices as resources in creating art that identified with the community as whole. In addition, the parallels worked well to bridge the divide between participants.

## **9.9 Releasing Participants Frustrations and Hopes through Narrative Inquiry**

At this juncture, I trace the music-making process, performance and the subsequent post-performance discussions and reactions. I should reiterate that the ensemble was built against a background where most residents of the Mkoba community, and by extension Zimbabwe, were disenchanted by the lack of political will to answer to the prolonged political crisis in Zimbabwe as well as the paucity of neighbourliness and oneness in the community. As such the discussion

will detail how the individuals in the ensemble told stories about their frustrations, shared aspirations of the other and navigated through the conflicts.

We had to employ narrative inquiry as a means to draw out the attention and meaningful involvement of all ensemble members. Through narrative inquiry we created a platform through which we shared our lived experiences, with a view to finding a common ground as well as working together on creating solutions for some of the challenges that we face. In essence, narrative inquiry is a dialogue, which focuses on nothing else but our lives. Clandinin (2006: 44) posits that:

Narrative inquiry is an old practice that may feel new for a variety of reasons. It is a common place to note that human beings both live and tell stories about their living. These lived and told stories and talk about those stories are ways we create meaning in our lives as well as ways we enlist each other's help in building our lives and communities.

Sharing experiences and creating music through narrative inquiry, commonly referred to in Zimbabwean community arts circles as '*kuworkshoper*' from the term workshop, presented an opportunity to and gave autonomy to the participants to fully take charge of their liberation. Usually when one embarks on making music or any other art form, the process is, in most cases, highly personal. The artist reveals themselves or their worldview on the art they are working on. The process of music-making is ". . . personal and individual, and simultaneously cultural and social" (Dillon 2007: 2). As a result, our work as an ensemble was cognisant of the fact that it is almost impossible to separate the person from their art or to expect the art to effectively change the community without the meaningful involvement of the artist. Implied here is that as we rehearsed for performances, we also rehearsed for their freedom (Boal 1970). We used narrative inquiry to come up with songs and performances which spoke to the communities' lived realities. Webster and Mertova (2007: 1) also forward that:

Narrative inquiry is set in human stories of experiences. It provides researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the

world depicted through their stories. . . narratives are well suited to addressing the complexities and subtleties of human experience in teaching and learning.

In other words, we did not let our imagination stray in identifying the issues that needed to be addressed in the community. This use of people's lived realities as a resource for song-writing parallels Freire's (1972: 74) assertion that "human existence cannot be silent nor can it be nourished by false words but only the true words with which men and women can transform the world". Furthermore, Dyson and Genishi (243) add that "Stories help to make sense of, evaluate, and integrate the tensions inherent in experience. Stories help us transform the present and shape the future for our students and ourselves so that it will be richer or better than the past".

#### **9.10 Eliminating Elite Capture: Involving the Community Stories through Representation Participation**

This thesis has thus far argued that the exercise to transform the relationships of ensemble members into a team was rooted in arts. Following the strides we made as a small community of musicians, focus is now on looking at the agency of the same media when engaging with a larger, albeit more diverse and complex, community. Since we did not have an opportunity to directly involve the whole community in the making of songs, due to monetary and time constraints, we had to opt for representative participation. We engaged a select group of community leaders in a consultative meeting to make sure that the music will not carry the unintended message to the community.

The ERA board of advisors, composed of Pastor Ncube and Ms. Sivanda, was very instrumental in this exercise. Pastor Ncube used his networks and position as the Chairperson of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, Gweru chapter as well as the Provincial Deputy Chairperson. He invited Pastor Kumire, Pastor Chingwe and Deaconess Mlambo, all from different denominations, to come to the event. The event was also graced with the presence of Mrs. Chimhangwa, also known as Mai Maguma, and Mr. Final Dube, both staunch ZANU PF supporters; Mr. Peter Zigiwa, an opposition politics activist; Mr. Champagne Nyengera, a seasoned community theatre artist based in Gweru; as well as Mr. Simbarashe Muringo, the Zimbabwe Red Cross Youth Advisor.

Making sure that attendees were not from the same institution or were from conflicting parties was very important in this exercise, as this cross-sectional representation ensured that we capture views that identified with many people in the community. Pastor Ncube led the process and asked me to explain to participants that the information we gathered was useful for two main purposes; that is, the narratives shared would be used to create music which identified with, and was going to be performed for, the community. Consequently, this would help the ensemble to design and develop interventions which had specific topics and specific target populations. I also used the opportunity to talk about ethical issues and their rights, to reassure them that their participation was voluntary and that they could quit at any time, as well as to inform them that their participation did not come with any material benefits.

Going forward, we followed an open communication process where participants shared their views on the status of communal relations in Mkoba, with a view to finding out what they thought could be the main problem and its root causes. Since this was a group of people who are highly involved in community activities, they were encouraged to share real life experiences, be they ‘second hand’ or personal experiences. Again, like previous exercises, no response was deemed wrong and participants were encouraged not to dismiss or interject colleagues unless absolutely necessary. Some of the inspiring stories that were shared included the following stories:

I was born and bred in Tsholotsho, I am Ndebele through and through. However, I do not see Ndebele or Shona when I interact with people. Some of you might know that I am married to a Shona person, Mr. Chimhangwa. When we speak about inter-culture marriages today, it seems as if all has been rosy. The time I married Mr. Chimhangwa in the late 1970s, Shona people and Ndebele people did not really like each other. It was even made worse after independence when we faced Gukurahundi. I was totally ostracised by both my husband relatives and my own people.

I made Gweru my home for a long. I did not visit my maiden home or my husband’s rural home. But my children did. They tell me they felt unwanted, particularly when they visited their father’s rural home, which in any way is their home too. They heard people bad mouthing me and they were constantly reminded that their mother was ‘*Mundeverere*’ and that they could not pronounce ‘*svi*’ correctly. It’s different when they

are here in Gweru people will subtly dislike you but they won't make you feel unloved. My challenges in Gweru came through politics. In 2008, MDC youths used graffiti to write their party slogans on my house as well as on Gogo Maphosa's house in Mkoba 13. I know who they are and I know why they did it (narration from Mrs. Chimhangwa).

Mr. Final Dube also shared his story which I write below:

I work for the Ministry of Youth as a Program Officer for Gweru District. I have been a subject of hate speech from people who belong to both ZANU PF and MDC. The former accuse me for being a sell-out while the latter think I am a government spy. I was recruited for my job via party structures, Cde Mutero<sup>10</sup> you are aware of how the party works (*chuckles*). People from ZANU PF get worried when I offer services to MDC supporters, but the services are from government not from the party. I am always advised against taking part in activities organised by Non-Governmental Organisations, yet I have a passion for HIV/AIDS Activism. On the other hand, if we are to move out of this venue and pass through Mkoba 16 shopping centre, I will be a subject of all sorts of insults from MDC supporters, blaming me for the failures of the government. Of course, I am used to some of it and I always tell them to join ZANU PF with their brilliant ideas. However, important from experience is that you should know that what you are going to do will be scrutinised by people from both political ends.

In addition to the above, the clergymen also added their voices about what happens within and between churches. What was common and interesting about the stories that they shared is that they had experienced interpersonal conflicts, which are rampant in the community. The pastors' roles as counsellors exposed them to what I would call 'every day conflicts', which are between the laymen and usually provoked by incidences that seem unthreatening. Interestingly, according to Pastor Kumire and corroborated by all people in attendance, issues that divide the community at

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<sup>10</sup> I used to be an active ZANU PF activist. I got my first job working for the Ministry of Home Affairs under ZRP as a general hand as a result of my participation in party activities.



large stem from something as mundane as the use or sharing of the washing line between neighbours. He said that:

Of course, the national politics affects all of us since we are citizens of one nation. But the roots of what makes us unresponsive to our neighbours' plight is not what President Mugabe does to Mr. Tsvangirai or what Mr. Tsvangirai does not do for the President. The polarity in our community stems from jealous, poor communication, gossip, among other petty things. It is not surprising to find people in our neighbourhood who do not like the Toyota brand for example, because their next-door neighbour who stopped from using her dura-wall as a washing line drives a Toyota. There won't be anything wrong with the Toyota here. It is also common in relationships to find spouses supporting different soccer teams not because of the type of play exhibited by the respective teams but just because they cannot be seen to be agreeing. And also, because they have other issues that they disagree on, A Manchester United loss will make a husband happy because the wife who supports the team did not give him money to buy beer!

So, when we have that culture of disagreement, it easily grows into a culture of being ingrates. Some people will never acknowledge the good done by their perceived enemies, there is always a 'but'. For example, no matter how Prophet Makandiwa heals the sick, there is always someone who will say he is fake. Likewise, no matter how the current government does well, some people will always say they have failed. Just like your neighbour will think that smiling at them means you want a favour from them. We fail to look at issues independently; we attach precedence to every action whether good or bad.

Ultimately, the ensemble used the threads from the different experiences to weave songs and performances that speak to the daily lived realities of the community. In relation to the participants of this exercise, what is important to note is that all the stories they shared used the first person narrative and there was a sense of responsibility for the challenges we face as a community. Participants were afforded a platform where they could speak freely of their personal involvement

and experiences with the myriad of challenges and conflict in Mkoba, thus practising democracy (Boal 1970). In addition to sharing the experiences, a few suggestions on how to make effective art were also shared. However, the ensemble was given the autonomy to wholly own the production process as well as the freedom to experiment artistically.

### **9.11 Showcasing to Political Heads**

While it is important that the ensemble genuinely reflects on what is happening in the community, there is also no wisdom in doing this while putting the lives of the ensemble members at risk. Therefore, the review session served the twin purposes of making sure that we do not present ‘politically incorrect’ performances which would get us into trouble and that we get the political heavy weights on our side. Haider (2009: 8) argues that:

Elites can provide important leadership in community-based programmes as they often have the skills to negotiate with external actors, read project documents, write proposals and keep accounts and records. Such leadership can be exercised for the benefit of the community. In addition, as noted earlier, involving traditional authorities in community projects may be necessary to prevent opposition to the projects.

As a result, we had a closed performance review session with the Honourable Amos Chibaya, Member of Parliament of the Mkoba Constituency; Councillor Charles Simbi, who is the ZANU PF councillor of Ward 12 in Mkoba; Mr. Trust Chineni, a youth activist and former councillor for Ward 15; and Ms. Rejoice and Ms. Privilege Saki, both from Youth Voices Trust, a nonpartisan entity which champions contestation of ideas as well as encourages young people to take part in mainstream politics.

The review session also allowed us to find out if we had managed to reflect on what was happening in our community, at least in the eyes of politicians. It is unfortunate that the Honourable Member of Parliament never made it to any of our performances due to his busy schedule. However on this day he said that:

Your music has unsettling truths, however I do not expect you to have any challenges with the community. You are not confrontational or provocative, neither are you partisan. As artists, you are watchdogs. It should embarrass you that people misbehave and neglect their culture in your presence. At the moment, we are suffering as a country, mind you I mean everyone is suffering, even those in ZANU PF and those in my party. We need music such as yours, to help us get by our challenges as well as to get us talking to each other as a people (post performance comment from Honourable MP Amos Chibaya).

Councillor Charles Simbi echoed the same sentiments as the Honourable Member of Parliament, Chibaya, and also went on to highlight that the ensemble's efforts were in line with the government's program. He had the following to say:

I don't see anything wrong with your music. You are doing a very good thing. Don't just change or be swayed by donor funding, if that is what you aim to solicit. In fact, I want you guys to play at one of my Night Clubs. This work should not be for free. The government has even allocated money for similar exercises under the Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Intergration which was once led by the late Vice President Mr. Nkomo (post performance comment from Councillor Charles Simbi).

Interestingly, MP Chibaya did not challenge the statements made by Councillor Simbi, despite his party's position that the government has not been sincere about national healing processes. As a result, the two local leaders gave the confidence and endorsement that our music was safe for community consumption. However, what is to be noted from their responses is that they both acknowledge that there is latent conflict in Mkoba. MP Chibaya's assertion that "your music is unsettling" can be interpreted in two ways, firstly, he acknowledged the role of his party, the Movement for Democratic Change, in violence, and secondly, "your music" implies that our effort at the time did not fit easily into community music, yet we wanted so badly for the music to be accepted by the community as their music.

However, Councillor Simbi's response and readiness to commission us to perform at one of his Night Clubs was in itself a good sign, at least in showing that the music had good entertainment value. Even better, Ms. Saki drew parallels between the ensemble's creative output and her organisation's work. She implored the ensemble to take a neutral political stand which does not support or degrade the political players' reasoning that this would draw people to identify with the music. Connell and Gibson (2003: 15) argue that representing undesirable power structures stands in the way of transformation and building shared cultural identities. To add on, Mitchell (1996: 1) states that "when making music for conflict transformation parties involved must feel connected to the music ethnically and ideologically, or feel attracted to the possible social structures it may represent".

#### **9.12 Reflection on Participation: Finding the Nexus between the Individual and the Community**

There are different types of participation used in participatory performing arts. In our case, two ways of participation stood out. The first is exemplified by the way we deliberated as an ensemble and came to an agreement of what constitutes conflict, without bringing in the whole community's views. Secondly, a different form of participation was seen in how we involved the community leaders in sharing experiences of challenges and conflict in the neighbourhood brings to fore. The ensemble's work before involving the larger community followed transformative participation. According to White (1996: 6), "transformative participation is where participants determine their own needs and priorities and take collective action to achieve them and this is seen as practice of empowerment".

On the other hand, the decision to use the views of the ensemble members and a select group of community leaders is called 'representation participation'. While we acknowledge that this form of participation leaves out some members of the community, we should also appreciate that it is the best when there are budgetary constraints. For this study, there was trust that the ensemble and the community leaders are organic intellectuals who can represent the narrative of the Mkoba community fairly.

Mr. Nyengera, an experienced art-for-social-change practitioner who attended our consultative meeting with community leaders, also conceded that it is almost impossible to get the views of not just anyone but a huge number of people from the community. He also cited logistical and budgetary challenges as an impediment. However, he lauded the ensemble for taking in the views of community elders, as they understood the community better. He said:

You must take what the Pastors, Mai Maguma and Cde Dube's views and believes seriously. They know the community better than you and I also do as an artist. What they have said is highly reflective of the community; you now know what people want and what they dislike as well as their common interests. Built on that, you will identify with your audiences (Focus group discussion comment from Mr. Nyengera).

Both the urge to explore commonalities and their efficacy in conflict transformation cannot be over-emphasised. Speaking on third party interventions, Robertson (2010: 39) posits that:

Non-binding third party interventions seem therefore more appropriate than binding interventions, since they permit the participants to explore their commonalities which are required in order to build trust. This exploration must occur in a neutral environment and that once commonalities have been discovered; the building of a set of shared beliefs and values can begin. This shared set of values and beliefs would then form the basis of a new shared cultural identity, the existence of which could lead to a mutual motivation to negotiate for a transformation of the conflict.

Our music and dance ensemble created an environment through which we managed to discuss the political and cultural commonalities, thus transforming relationships between band mates and encouraging us to perform for the community.

### **9.13 Recognising the Laws Guiding Public Performances**

Artists and arts groups in Zimbabwe are, by law, required to register with an association affiliated to the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (NACZ) through the provision of the NACZ Act (1985). On the other hand, the Censorship Board can ban performances in accordance with section 16

Subsection (6) of the Censorship and Entertainment and Control Act, which gives the Censorship board the power to disapprove performance that they think will disturb peace and instigate public disorder and immoral behaviour. However, community artists have a tendency of not submitting their work to the censorship board which is also crippled by a shortage of personnel (Mutero 2014: 77).

The only hurdle becomes notifying the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) about your intended performance. It is unfortunate that most people take notifying the police as seeking permission from the police (Mutero 2013: 77). Due to the unstable politics and the police's relationship with the ruling party, there is a general assumption that the police will not give the green light to events of a political nature. On the contrary, the ZRP were very professional and welcoming in our case. All they wanted from us was a letter informing them of the time and date that we were going to have the event as well as the expected numbers in attendance.

The ZRP also told us that there is a provision for us to have police details in attendance, however at a cost. We however did not have funds, thus we did not opt for that option. Nevertheless, the police promised that patrol officers will pass through and that since the event did not involve alcohol or anything which can induce toxic behaviours, we certainly did not need officers. However, from my experience working under the ZRP, I knew that they would send members of their undercover division called 'Police Internal Security and Intelligence' (PISI).

The police clearance is required at every time that you decide to hold a gathering at a public place. However, the law does not apply when the gathering is a church service or school event. We therefore took advantage of this provision when we hosted the DUNAMIS Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Workshop and Competition at The Alliance Church of Zimbabwe as well as when we worked with High School students at Mkoba 1 High School.

#### **9.14 The Performance Structure at Public Performances**

Moving on, I discuss about the public performances we held. Including the performance we had for political heads, we managed to do a total of seven performances at different albeit similar venues. We performed at Mkoba Hall, The Alliance Church in Zimbabwe, Mkoba 1 High School,

Zaire, Batanai Cocktail, Batanai off-Sales and at the Midlands Agricultural Show. Due to the similarities in audiences and performance structure, I am going to discuss the performances in clusters, which are determined by similarities in dominant themes that arose from performances and analysis.

In all instances, be it at a beer hall, school or church venue, the ensemble's performance repertoire included cover versions of popular artists and original compositions and folk songs. Our playlist had four categories which were popular music, yester-year hits, folk songs and our original compositions. This included a lot of Jah Prayzah's music; music from Pah Chihera; golden oldies from James Chimombe, Solomon Skuza and Simon Chimbetu (all late); and Thomas Mapfumo. Coincidentally, SaMukoko is Jah Prayzah's doppelganger while Yulesis' appearance is similar to the Chimbetus; that alone excited audiences. The idea behind performing covers was to get the audience to warm up with songs that they were aware of as well as to make them appreciate the ensemble as a group of talented musicians. Besides the popular appeal of the songs we covered, some carried a message which complimented the messages in our original songs.

### **9.15 Use of Pre-existing Social Capital: Collaboration between Youth Voices Trust (YVT) and ERA**

Our first performance was held at the *Chipembere* Youth Centre, popularly known as Mkoba Hall, situated in Mkoba 2, from 14:00 to 18:00 hrs. I was the first to arrive at the venue to make sure that the Gweru City Council employees working at the Hall did not close the doors on us or that they did not leave their work station before time<sup>11</sup>. In addition, this being the first performance of the research study, I did not feel settled, regardless of the amount of work that we had done on it. The choice to have our first performance at Mkoba Hall was symbolic in that, up until 2003, the centre was a bastion of social cohesion and community interaction. The youth centre used to host performance arts and sporting clubs, which allowed young people from all over Mkoba to interact. This is the venue where many sporting icons of the Mkoba community were nurtured. These people include the likes of Victor Bhunu, a black belt karateker, the late boxer Frank Mutero (who is also

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<sup>11</sup> Gweru city Council has gained notoriety for poor service delivery.

my sibling), and Talent Maposa and Edmore Chirambadare, soccer players who now play their trade in Swaziland and South Africa, respectively.

The community centre also produced a galaxy of female soccer stars under the team *Chipembere* Queens who travelled to Norway in 2002. All Mkoba-based theatre groups, except for IRA, which I used to lead, were based at Mkoba Hall. Nonetheless, IRA was also an affiliate member of *Chipembere* Youth Centre and we had used the place as our rehearsal venue in 2007, while we were known as IRA, an acronym for Inkabazwe Rukuvhute Arts. The decision to work from elsewhere was primarily based on the convenience and opportunities that came with working at the Mkoba Red Cross Training Centre. It is unfortunate that as the economic situation in Zimbabwe got worse, Mkoba Hall lost its lustre to the community.

The caretaker of Mkoba Hall decried the fact that an International Non-Governmental Organisation had led Mkoba Hall to be a white elephant. Rejoice of YVT echoed the same sentiments when she said that:

As residents, we are complicit to the capture of community property. We follow the dictates of non-governmental organisations, often participating and allowing the organisations to set our development agenda. The NGO came and fenced areas which we farmed maize and said we should now focus on growing vegetables, which by the way have been growing at our homes. Now this hall is just used by churches instead of being a recreation facility (Ethnographic conversational interview with Rejoice).

To that end, since Mkoba Hall was no longer popular as a community arts centre, our performance attracted a sizeable crowd. The attendance was such that at the beginning of the show, only a few people had entered the venue, but the numbers gradually swelled as the day progressed. Most of the people who came were YVT volunteers, who already knew each other. However, there were also some people in attendance who came just out of curiosity. Nonetheless, due to its history and its place in the society, the venue and its surroundings were familiar to both the ensemble and the audiences. As a result, the atmosphere made it possible for people in attendance to enjoy the performance freely as well as engage with the artists. Pitts (2016: 1176) argues that familiarity



with venues as well as events “identifies continuums of engagement that draw on psychological frameworks of identity and belonging”.

Most importantly, at this event the importance of networks and reciprocation had already begun showing. Nemoto, Gloor and Laubache (2011: 8) forward that “pre-existing social capital indeed reduces time-to-market” an initiative or to form an alliance. The public-address system that we used on the day was provided at no charge by the Youth Voices Trust (YVT), a Mkoba-based non-governmental organisation. We had an arrangement where we agreed to perform at a subsidised cost for YVT at one of their events which needed music.

The success of the event is testament to the fact that alliances and shared vision between organisations or individuals is important in achieving social change. Martin *et al.* (2014: 1) argue for a shared vision saying that it “. . . provides orientation and meaning for leaders and their teams. It helps them to focus their energies and engage in the transformation of practice”. Furthermore, the activity was the first in years which had seen young people congregating for their own activities. There was a shared optimism between the event conveners and the Mkoba Hall caretaker that our use of Mkoba Hall as an entertainment venue had the potential to bring back community interest to the space and that young people would meet again to chase their dreams at the venue.

### **9.16 The Performance Structure and Audience Engagement**

This was the only show we held at an ‘uncontrolled’ public space which had a very successful audience engagement and post-performance discussion. Primarily, this was because YVT volunteers, who made up a sizeable number of the audience, had an appreciation of how theatre for development performances work, since the organisation employed the service of theatre groups in some of their projects.

Since the ensemble was not made up of novice performers, we did not have problems with stage fright and all the other excuses common with inexperienced performers. We managed to hold a successful show, at least in terms of performance, attendance and the enjoyment of the audiences and performers alike. The music was well-received and with certainty I can say that we had a band.

The process that we had gone through had yielded results. The performance was incident-free and fun-filled.

### **9.16.1 An Evaluation of the Event**

YVT played a very important role in ensuring the success of the event. Through their structures and experience working with youth leaders in Mkoba, YVT invited youth from across the political and social divide to attend the event. Youth who were invited through YVT channels were advised not to wear political party regalia to the event, as is the norm with YVT events. The estimated number of people who passed through the venue entrance is plus or minus eighty. The ratio of males to females in attendance was 3:1, and by way of appearance most of the people in attendance were aged between 18 and 25.

Though most of the audience were politically mature due to the work already done by YVT, there were some individuals who had interacted with members of the opposition political party at an event of a somewhat political nature. I managed to have an interview with Dorothy, a self-confessed staunch ZANU PF supporter, who had this to say about the performance:

As you know the situation in Zimbabwe is tough especially for activists. You are either labelled ZANU PF or MDC and at times you can be called *MuNdevere* (Ndebele person) or *MuShona* (Shona person). This shows that there is no unity. But on the day of the performance there was no labelling according to politics or tribes. We were at the same level, communicating with everyone. The performance, discussion and engagements created a conducive environment. They played songs which urged us to be one (Interview with Dorothy).

The audience also spoke about the contextual relevancy of the songs. One of the popular yesteryear hits which we played was *Vanhu Vatemala*, originally sung by Thomas Mapfumo. *Vanhu vatemala* literally means ‘black people’. The song is a call for Black Africans to unite. The focus of this song is on xenophobia and the lack of cooperation between African states. However, audiences felt that the song related to the solutions to present challenges being faced by Zimbabwe. Rejoice, who was part of the audience from YVT, mentions:

*Vanhu vatema* advises us to work cooperatively, just like we have seen YVT and ERA working together for this show. There is a lot that we can achieve if we pull our different resources together. Even in our lives at home we have *nhimbe* (collective farming). Cooperation is not something foreign in our culture. It defines us.

The following is the literal translation of one song:

**Literal Translation of *Vanhu vatema* by Thomas Mapfumo**

<b>Call:</b> <i>Vakomana kana tiri tose imi</i>	(Boys, if we are one)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> (nonsensical)	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Tinokunda nhamo dzakawanda</i>	(We will overcome our hardships)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Vakomana kana takabatana iwe</i>	(Boys, if we team up)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Africa tikaramba tiri tose iwe</i>	(Boys, if we are one)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Tinokudza mhuri yedu tose</i>	(We will raise our family together)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Africa kana takabatana iwe</i>	(Africa if we unite)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Mhuri yedu yose inoguta</i>	(Every one in our family will be satisfied)
<b>Response:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Call:</b> <i>Hoiyeye ihere</i> (nonsensical)	( <i>Hoiyeye ihere</i> )
<b>Response:</b> <i>Kubatana kubatana vakomana</i>	(Unity Unity boys)
<b>Call:</b> <i>Ahonde ahonde</i>	( <i>Ahonde ahonde</i> )
<b>Response:</b> <i>Chikonzero chatiparadza</i>	(What is the reason for our polarity)
<b>Call:</b> <i>Hoiyeye ihere</i>	( <i>Hoiyeye ihere</i> )
<b>Response:</b> <i>Umene mene hwatiparadza</i>	(Self centredness has divided us)

Besides advancing the study's urge to bring people together as well as to foster cooperation as enunciated by Rejoice, *vanhu vatema* was received with so much joy. The urgency of the song was therefore not just in the text. The audience's appreciation of the song could be seen through them

singing along as well as dancing energetically to the fast-paced *Dinhe* rhythms. The photos in **Figure 9.4**, **Figure 9.5** and **Figure 9.6** capture the mood created by the other songs performed during the show.

(a)



(b)



(c)



**Figure 9.4:** (a) Youth donning YVT regalia (Photo by Author), (b) A clique of ladies dancing (Photo by Author), and (c) Mixed crowd (Photo by Author).

(a)



(b)



(c)



**Figure 9.5:** (a) Enjoying himself alone (Photo by Author), (b) Wearing a ZRP inspired jacket (Photo by Author), and (c) Young couples also had fun (Photo by Author).



**Figure 9.6:** The band on Stage performing at YVT event (Photo by Author).

### **9.17 Existing Social Institutions: The Beer Hall Setting (*Zaire and Batanai Cocktail Mkoba 16*)**

The Gweru City Council used to run a profitable liquor entity called Go-Beer Breweries, which was in the business of brewing opaque beer. The entity expanded vertically, establishing beer halls, where the residents would purchase and imbibe the Go Beer brand as well as other alcohol brands. Up until around 2003, the Gweru-City-Council-run beer halls were popular with residents, as was the Go-Beer brand. However, the entities became unprofitable, leading to the closure and leasing of premises. Mkoba 3 Beer hall for example, was leased to a church, while Mkoba 16 Beer hall was turned into an administrative centre. On the other hand, Zaire was leased to an entrepreneur who continued with the liquor business.

We secured Zaire through the operations manager Mr. Murendo (pseudonym) with the purposes of staging a performance at their joints. We clinched a deal to perform at Zaire as well as at Batanai

in Mkoba 16. To that end, this discussion follows proceedings from the two venues, which also attracted a similar audience mostly composed of male alcohol-imbibers. We had an awareness that while beer has the potential to intoxicate and is often abused by some members of the society, the Beer hall still served as a community meeting place. In fact, beer-drinking gatherings have been observed to play an important role in community peacebuilding. In a study which analyses the role of traditional beer as a peacemaking facility, Dodo, Ndanga and Dodo (2012: 97) posit that:

Beer was observed to be playing an important role in as far as peacemaking and peace building efforts are concerned. The study established that the traditional brew brings people together for both celebrations and traditional rituals, which are part of the Shona people. Both the old and young people are brought together. Even villages with a history of hostilities are brought together during beer drinks. Actually, rivals take advantage of the drink either to explain their positions or to apologise so that there can be new beginnings.

I will be misrepresenting facts if I say all the people who came to the beer outlets on the days we had performances were drawn to the places by our music. At the same time, I would be wrong if I do not give credit to the music's pull effect. The music, popularity of the venues and strategies from the bar management as well as from the ensemble played a part in building the audiences. Using our collective experiences acquired from performing at different venues as well as insights from the venue management, we settled to start our performance early. For the proprietor, starting early meant that more clients will be attracted to his business by live music. For us it meant that we had the opportunity to perform while most of the audience was not yet drunk, paying attention to the performance.

#### **9.17.1 Assessment of the Beer Hall Performances**

My evaluation of these performances will follow the artists' perspectives of their performance. I should mention that, though audiences in a beer hall are generally uncontrollable, their behaviours are predictable. To that end, I will also juxtapose the artists' perspectives with my personal experience as a participant observer. It is important to note that in repressive environs such as Zimbabwe, managing to stage a politically-inclined performance is on its own a huge step towards



unsettling oppressive systems. Writing on the effect of popular music in shaping politics and the society, Barber (1987: 2) argues that “In extreme cases, meaning is communicated simply by the fact that the performance takes place at all – in very repressive regimes, simply continuing to come together to perform and participate is a statement of identity and defiance”. The ensemble did more than just perform, we managed to engage the audiences through presenting “. . . an [exciting] encounter with the audience” (De Bruyne and De Maeseneer 2013: 27). It was common to see frenzied dances and chants from the audiences as well as to see some audience members who appeared to be deep in thought. The agency of entertaining performances in conflict transformation is aptly captured by De Bruyne and De Maseneer (2013: 5) who posit that:

The participants work towards a concrete performance, an encounter with the audience. This means that the group’s output should be of a certain aesthetic quality. The aesthetical provides a force and a field that allows people to transcend their emotional and conceptual limitations. Professional artists help the participants to break out their own hackneyed modes of expression and take their personal stories to a higher aesthetic level. In this way, they provide a safe place in which the participants can overcome repression, reticence and shame, to the extent that they want to

The musicking by audiences also included singing along, animated greetings of the artists and at times jumping onto the podium. Interestingly, we never encountered any incidents of audience members causing havoc through their participation or jumping on stage.

### **9.18 The Utility of Functional Metamorphosis of Song**

Audiences at the beer outlet setting approved with great excitement the uses of traditional songs or music which had undertones of known songs. Mutero (2014) discusses this as a functional metamorphosis of song. This was done by way of changing the lyrics of the traditional songs and putting development-oriented lyrics to the popular tunes. This is a common practice with mainstream Zimbabwean musicians. It is no wonder why some of the ensemble’s songs were also adapted from the traditional music repertoire to communicate development messages. Mutero (2014: 1) posits that functional metamorphosis of song is “adopting popular musical melodies or music which is already in the public domain for its roots, popularity, expressiveness and energies

with a view to reflect, contest, resist and mediate in the prevailing socio-political”. This functional metamorphosis of song is regarded as one of the most potent ways of addressing social ills through music, as the music is usually readily accepted by target audiences (Siziba 2009). The ensemble performed traditional songs such as *Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko?*, which was often warmly received. Besides the audience reaction, the song also had agency to the way that the artists analysed the source of their problems. I provide the notation of the song *Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko?* in **Figure 9.7**, followed by a literal translation and contextual analysis of it.

# Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko?

Transcribed by Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Unknown

CALL

Wa-te - mc tsa-nga ndi-yani ko? Wa-te - mc - tsa -

RESPONSE 1

Nde - hwa-nda pa - pi -

RESPONSE 2



3

nga Mu-ze-ya Wa-te-me tsa-nga ndi-yani ko? Wa-te-me tsa

Wa-te-mc tsa - nga Nde-hwa-nda pa-pi ko?



6

nga Mu-ze-ya Ha-ye-hwa-ye-hwa Ka-nyu-ri-re Ha-ye-hwa-ye

Wa-te-mc tsa - nga Nde-hwa-nda pa-pi ko?



2

9

hwa Mu - ze - ya                      Ha - ye - hwa - ye - hwa   Ka - nyu - ri - re

—                      Wa - te - me   tsa -   nga                      Nde -

11

Ha - ye - hwa - ye - hwa Mu - ze - ya

hwa - nda   pa - pi - ko?                      Wa - te - me   tsa -   nga

**Figure 9.7:** Notation of *Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko?*, a traditional song performed by the music and dance ensemble of this study.

### **Literal Translation of *Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko?***

**Call:** *Wateme tsanga ndianiko? Wateme tsanga muzeya*                      (Who cut the reed? Cutting the reed!)

**Response:** *Haa wateme tsanga*                      (Cutting the reed!)

**Call:** *Haa aaah muzeya wee*                      (Ooh my grandson/ daughter)

**Response:** *Ndohwanda papi ko?*                      (Where do I hide?)

**Call:** *Haa aaah muzeya*                      (Ooh my grandson/ daughter)

**Response:** *Wateme tsanga*                      (Cutting the reed!)

**Call:** *Haa aah kanyurire*                      (Ooh I am drowning)

**Response:** *Ndohwanda papi ko?*                      (Where do I find refuge?)

### **Contextual Analysis of *Wateme Tsanga Ndiyaniko*?**

The textual analysis of the song suggests that this song is about someone wailing about reeds which have been cut and perhaps they are afraid that they will drown or will have nowhere to hide. However, according to SaMukoko, the song brings up two issues. Firstly, it questions the source of Zimbabwean problems by asking “*wateme tsanga ndianiko*” (Who cut the reed?). He argues that the conflict that we experience in our community as a result of competing for very few resources is not because we cannot use available resources sparingly. Instead, there are connected individuals or powerful authorities who are denying the common people their share of the national wealth through pillage. Secondly, the song gives awareness to people that they should not fight each other but rather the system which promotes such conflict.

It is important to note that it was not always the case that the audience reacted to the music through jumping, dancing or ululating. The audience reception of the ensembles’ original compositions was notably different. Since these were new songs that the audience had not heard before, the response was somewhat lukewarm, in terms of activity on the dance arena. Of importance however is that, at both venues, the audience did not leave the place as a sign of disapproval. They listened attentively to the new songs, applauding the ensemble at appropriate times, for instance at the end of a song or when a member showed virtuosity during a guitar solo.

Though we had not anticipated this type of reaction, it worked in our favour. The ensemble’s music was meant not just for entertainment but to facilitate peaceful coexistence and the strengthening of social capital. These processes require an engagement with music beyond its sonic infrastructure and towards its functionality, which often is the meaning of the texts. Therefore, as people dance and enjoy the music, it is important for the music of a social change project to ensure that people get the message while also being entertained. **Figure 9.8** shows the ensemble performing at Batanai Cocktail.



**Figure 9.8:** The ensemble performing at Batanai Cocktail (Photo by Author).

### 9.19 Local Actors and the Homophily Effect on Message Reception

This study also found out that there is currency in using local musicians in arts for social change programmes. Besides the fact that locally-based musicians understand the conflict in the area and the political dynamics, the target audience also identifies with the musicians as familiar and accessible members of their community who have experienced, and continue to experience, life in ways similar to everyone else. McPherson *et al.* (2001: 415) support this phenomenon, arguing that “Similarity breeds connection. This principle – the homophily principle – structures network ties of every type, including marriage, friendship, work, advice, support, information transfer, exchange, comembership, and other types of relationships”. This was also supported by the community members in interviews.

During most of our performances we didn’t mount a platform which we could use as a stage. We had our performance on the same level as the audience with a view to symbolically represent sameness – this is depicted in **Figure 9.9**. In addition, this set-up enabled the audience and the ensemble to interact as people who are close and have shared challenges.



**Figure 9.9:** The ensemble performs on a stage with no raised or barricaded platform (Photo by Author).

I organised and managed to have an interview with another member of the audience, Mr. Jonathan (pseudonym) at his home. Mr. Jonathan thought that the ensemble's ability to engage audiences to speak about the issues affecting the community made their presentation an effective educative tool. He was also of the opinion that working with exceptionally talented locally-based artists was a good idea, both for its entertainment value and for localising the message and the messenger. In his words he said:

It might be difficult to appreciate the good work that is done by the peers because as you know a prophet has no honour in his village. But the boys were just good. Really good! From the performance, I watched, I think that knowing the performers made me think critically about the message. If it was some big artist maybe I was going to take it as mere entertainment (In-depth interview with a member of the audience).

Mr. Jonathan's sentiments also bring to the fore the discussion of using local faces and local ideas for community peacebuilding. Haider (2009: 7) argues that to have community support and to achieve holistic peacebuilding, local actors, including even the marginalised, should be involved. These performers, as local actors, increase affective para-social interaction because the audience identifies with the performers in person as well as with the message that they carry. Papa, Singhal, Law, Pant, Sooge, Rodgers and Shefner-Rodgers (2001: 35) argue that "para-social interaction is the degree to which an audience member identifies with a particular media character, and believes that his/her interests are joined". They also posit that the performer or media personality might not have a similar connection with the audience (Ibid.), however in this study, that is not the case, as performers were purposively selected for their experience in the community as well as their roles in some of the latent conflict experienced in the community.

## **9.20 Resonance/Impact of the Intervention Strategy**

Reaching key people or huge audiences is not enough just on its own, the intervention should resonate with the expectations and challenges of the target community. As such, the OECD framework advises that when evaluating a peacebuilding program, there is a need to look at the impact, that is, to question among many other questions "What happened as a result of the peacebuilding activity?" (2008: 2). On the other hand, Herrington opines that "Resonance digs into the immediate interpretations and reactions of participants, focusing primarily on individual and interpersonal levels of change.

Resonance is also closely tied to Process and Quality" (2016: 8). To evaluate the resonance of this performance-led peacebuilding intervention, the study looks at the production process (team-building) aesthetics or quality of the artistic production as well as the content. This thesis has already addressed issues to do with aesthetic resonance, in part, through selected audience responses given in Chapter nine. One of the best ways to assess whether the audience identified the content of a musical performance is to let the community give their own contextual interpretation of the songs. At this stage, I will focus on how the music and musical performances facilitated personal and interpersonal change in the ensemble members as well as the audiences.



### 9.20.1 Personal Growth of Ensemble Members (*Team-Building*)

During the different rehearsals that we had, the stories which the participants shared fall under the following themes: under-development or neglect of their community, betrayal in friendships, poverty or lack of economic opportunities and political intolerance. This creative process stepped into the participants' private lives and exposed their vulnerability to the system and the environment. Nonetheless, this process was liberating to the musicians. When I discussed with participants about their impression of the collective music-making process and their views on the music that they had created, there was a shared satisfaction that the music will reach constituencies which can effect change and that the process had already improved their tolerance of people with divergent views. These views are well-captured in Blejah's sentiments below:

Besides that, my story is like everyone else's story, I am enthralled that it's my voice being heard. I might never find an opportunity to speak directly with national political leaders but I feel like I have already spoken to them through colleagues who support them who were part of the ensemble as well as the local leadership which came through. Eventually, everyone will get the message in the same way I got it (Interview with Blessing 'Blejah' Chimutowe 2016).

Furthermore, besides being an outlet to release pent-up frustrations, the collective music-making and performance process saw ensemble members interacting, exchanging notes and consequently building each other's confidence. I am also of the view that besides identifying with the community, the personal stories shared also brought the ensemble closer. Reflecting on the process and team engagement, Tonde (Tonderai Chapwanya) had the following to say:

I have for long thought of myself as a guitarist. People know me as Tonde the *bassman* [Bass guitarist]. I rarely share songs that I write. However, through this process I felt relieved, there is a lot that I have always wanted to say in song but I never did. The process was just as relieving as it was liberating. (Interview with Tonderai Chapwanya 2016).

Tonde's sentiments confirm that working in teams or interaction makes it possible for persons to move away from individualistic tendencies towards a desirable norming stage where communication is open and mutual trust is prevalent, thus making individuals comfortable to work with, and proud to be associated with, a community of oneness (Tjosvold and Tjosvold 1991).

While Nomsa added that:

I am virtually trying to find my feet in the arts, view me as any person from the community. I did the exercise without necessarily looking forward to creating a hit song, because I think I am still a novice to do that. Though I had difficulties in coming up with a good melody, my impression is that everyone in the community needs to have someone to listen to them. Everyone has a story to tell (Interview with Nomsa Moyo 2016).

The participants' views express the efficacy of collective music-making in so many ways. It is clear that collectivism or workshops increased the group's sense of ownership of the process.

Speaking out against the political mess in Zimbabwe is such a tall order. It is highly likely that, had we used any other rigid and probably formal means to share our lived experiences and to make music, the participants would self-censor. However, in the process of collective music-making, the ensemble members managed to share even 'uncomfortable truths'. The truths are important because "it is only after truth-seeking initiatives have taken place, that willingness to seek justice based on people's understandings of what happened to them can be achieved" (Machakanja 2010: iv). To have participants share their lived experiences, and at times opposing views, gives hope to community-led conflict transformation processes.

### **9.20.2 Rehearsing Dialogue through Collective Music-Making**

One of the greatest impediments to development in Zimbabwe is inflammatory and ineffective communication. Mutero (2017: 4) argues that:

Zimbabwe's bickering is detrimental to national development as most citizens are now self-centred and are hesitant to cooperate for the common good. The politically muscled benefit from impunity and have put in legislation which mutes voices which sanction their wayward behaviour.

The members of the ensemble were not immune from the squabbling. In fact, one of the selection criteria used to pick them for the research was that they identified with some group in conflict or that they had personal differences. The study succeeded in developing a culture of effective communication between the ensemble members, through participating in the music and dance rehearsals. As I have alluded to in Chapter eight, on first contact, the participants did not reveal their aspirations and not even their personalities. One incident that stands out is when participants suggested we do traditional music and dance (my specialty) as intervention. This probably could have been a disaster in the long run. George had the following to say:

You know about the sensory adoption, where you get inside a dark room. For the first few minutes you will not be knowing what is there in front of you or on your right, then after a few minutes you will start to see but the vision will be blurred in a way. So, what I am saying is as times went on, we managed to know each other in terms of the emotions that we have. You can try to learn from one another. You know about team work, as you work together you end up knowing what the next person expects, his feelings or her feelings when it comes to other matters. So, there are issues of working together because it was a process, if it was an event the attachment could have been there but it could not have been smooth as the one we had.

Gracious also mentioned that:

I believe that relations are made stronger as people continue working together. When you first meet, you will be barely friends, you are just people who know each other. During the formative stages of our meetings, there was almost no visible conflict and an unrealistic smooth follow of proceedings. We were fake. But right now, I know you,

I know her, she knows me, with time the relationships grew stronger, we became more of sisters and brothers (Interview with Gracious Maworera 2016).

The pretence and fake personalities mentioned by Gracious are characteristic of the forming stage in group interaction. Mdunjana (2010: 10) avers that “during this stage people tend to be polite, with true feelings often withheld from fear of affecting others and giving the wrong impression”. This fake harmony at this stage can be an impediment to conflict transformation (Ibid.). However, as explained by the participants, the success of the project lies in the continued interaction which brought members of the ensemble closer and which made their communication akin to dialogue, defined by Isaacs (1993: 25) as “. . . a sustained, collective inquiry, into the processes, assumptions, and certainties that compose everyday experience. Yet the experience is of a special kind – the experience of the meaning embodied in a community of people”. In addition to supporting Gracious’ opinion, Denver’s comment below testifies that there was dialogue. In his assessment of the project he said:

From the first time we met, like people we came from different schools. We used to collide a lot, we were more of rivals. So, the first time we were introduced to group we had a lot of camps, for example SaMukoko and Sisi would be together. But we grew to love each other, now our relationships are more of brothers and sisters. I now enjoy everyone’s company. We respect each other’s views. I am free to make mistakes, experiment or contribute to colleagues’ creative products (Interview with Denver Berejena 2016).

When the ensemble embraced dialogic communication, it facilitated open and highly creative contributions to the project. The interaction became spontaneous, fun and at times telepathic. I also observed that we managed to explore our own thinking and behaviours together, thus moving to a shared understanding of problems and issues relevant to the group (Querubin 2011).

### **9.20.3 From Downloading to Active Listening**

The rehearsal processes also developed the participants’ listening skills. The ensemble was comprised of people with different musical preferences and experiences, just as we have people

with different worldviews and experiences in the community. These differences were healthy in preparing participants to listen actively as well as to try out alternatives suggested by colleagues. According to Nomsa, the journey has lessons which she applies in her life outside the ensemble. Reflecting on how she first found it difficult to take suggestions and how she has changed, she had the following to say:

For me, this was because I always put effort in everything that I do. Regardless of all that hard work, someone would suggest alternatives. At first, this got me really frustrated. But I realised we cannot be good at everything and at times we do not even see that we are making mistakes. Therefore, I realised that I had to listen to views from colleagues. Often, they were suggesting better ways of executing a task. I should also say initially I could not take their suggestions partly because of the way they spoke. Now, I can listen to everyone's view, understand where they are coming from and where they are headed. After all submissions, I make my own assessment before deciding (Interview with Nomsa Moyo 2016).

In the same vein Almon Moyo said:

My relationship with others who I worked with, helped me to build my character. It helped to listen to other people's views and socialise better with others. As a musical instruments manufacturer, when I am making instruments, I rarely mix with a lot of people, so being part of the team helped me in that regard. I learnt team work and its benefits. I learnt how to work with others to achieve more. We even discussed personal issues and work related issues. For example, there was a time when one of us made a mistake and they were afraid to meet the Pastor [Pastor Ncube, was the Patron], but the team helped them with advice on how best to present their case to the Pastor (Interview with Almon Moyo 2016).

Moyo's assertion shows that when effectively used, music can be a platform through which the small units of the community (individuals) can come together and collectively work, not just to create art, but also to enjoy the positive externalities of working together, thus strengthening the

community's social capital. In his study, prominent scholar Robert Putnam (1993: also found out that "The choir generates an externality: its members learn to trust each other even though this is not the purpose of their interaction".

Nomsa's and Almon's reflections on their bad listening brings to attention the efficacy of collective music-making in developing active and engaged listening. Both initially exhibited a listening habit referred to by Scharmer (2007: 2) as 'downloading', where one does not give importance to the whole message but just to that which confirms their knowledge. The danger with downloading is that it makes one rigid, and selectively blind to other opinions or world views, thus limiting one's options and inhibiting a strengthened social capital (Ibid.). Fortunately, the dialogic creative process developed effective listening skills in the participants, thus creating an open space for dissent, negotiation and collaboration.

## **9.21 Conclusion**

This chapter concludes, through following the work of the ensemble, that dialogic creative processes are useful in conflict transformation. The discussion also contends that engaging a disenfranchised citizenry and otherwise polarised citizenry is possible by manipulating their common interest, in this case dialogic participatory performing arts, which include theatre and music and which created a safe environment through which citizens revealed their frustrations and dialogued for social change. Through detailing how the ensemble worked, the chapter has also explored the different kinds of participation that can be used for community-led conflict transformation initiatives. The ensemble as a core group of the study followed transformative transformational processes, whereas the rest of the community's voices were factored in through representational participation. The following chapter discusses the effectiveness of music and dance and similar performing arts activities as an intervention strategy in areas with latent conflict.

## **CHAPTER 10: EVALUATION**

### **10.1 Introduction**

This study was inspired by the spontaneous communality of singing and dancing, a cultural feature of the Zimbabwean communities, to create a social entrepreneurial music and dance ensemble. The view was to resuscitate the “features of social organisations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam 2000: 35) in the Mkoba community. It used dialogic creative processes to facilitate relationship-building and open discussions and dialogue on a broad range of issues affecting the sublime societal living and cooperation of Mkoba residents. In this chapter I evaluate the success of the intervention in transforming conflict. Evaluation is defined by OECD (2012: 12) as follows:

Evaluation refers to the process of determining merit, worth or value of an activity, policy or programme. It consists of the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

The previous chapters appear to have pre-empted the evaluation process, because in compiling this research report, I have followed Hunter and Page’s (2014) suggestion on presenting arts based peacebuilding reports and evaluations. They posit that the arts based peacebuilding reports should be “devised with four key questions for processes of evidence gathering and analysis: (i) What was intended? (ii) What emerged? (iii) What insights were gained? (iv) What happened next?” (Hunter and Page 2014: 130). The research findings chapters which reported on the team-building process and the community performances have already given much about the success of the intervention, thus answering the questions “(i) What was intended? (ii) What emerged?” of Hunter and Page’s (Ibid.) framework. This method of presenting data allows the research “to reflect on the voices of the artists while on the other hand it is mindful of the various levels of ability and communication that participants may have” (Brown 2014).

Moving forward, this chapter will offer a summative evaluation assessing the effectiveness of PAR methodologies and the ability of music and dance to develop cohesive social capital in a community in conflict. The evaluation borrows ideas from Herrington's (2016: 8) 3R Framework of evaluating art for social change initiatives to focus on the Reach, Resonance, and Response to the intervention.

This evaluation framework realises that art is not a 'magic bullet' which summons desired change against any odds. In addition, unlike the logic model, this framework does not set predetermined outcomes which are determined by inputs, it recognises that the agency and shape of participatory arts interventions, just like peacebuilding, is premised on complex wilful human interaction. As posited by Hunter and Page (2014: 128), "Predetermining the change that is most contextually relevant and needed in a multi-layered peacebuilding process is problematic. Strict goal orientation can limit the generative capacities of building in peacebuilding (*and making in art*)".

The 3R framework is useful as it follows levels of change as widening concentric circles (Herrington 2016: 8). The use of music and dance in this study was guided by Brown's (2006) Social Enhancement model of music, with a view that the empathetic effects of music spiral affecting not just the musicians but the recipients as well. To that end, the evaluation process should follow how the change spirals. With the 3R framework, the following changes can be tracked: "internal changes within individuals, interpersonal changes amongst family members or peers, changes in dynamics and relationships amongst social groups at the community level, and broader institutional and political changes, such as the integration and commitment of government or traditional leaders to change a law" (Ibid.).

The study also uses ideas from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to build an evaluation framework, which looks at the relevance, efficiency, impact, effectiveness and sustainability of a peacebuilding program (2015: 221). Combining the two frames helps in coming up with a holistic evaluation which allows the study to assess both the intervention tool and the conflict transformation process. I will also delve into discussing the sustainability of the ensemble and its work, following the tenets of the dictates of holistic



sustainability, put forward by Maposa (2016). This purpose of this discussion is to inform decisions about creating sustainable structures for social entrepreneurial ventures following the asset based community development approach.

## **10.2 Reaching Hard-to-Get Audiences Evaluating: Reach**

Besides functioning as a platform through which conflicting young people met, the ensemble was primarily occupied with making music which functions for social change through influencing behaviours and attitudes of the target audiences. It is therefore important for an evaluation study to find out how many people the intervention has reached out to, in order to ascertain the importance or effectiveness of the strategy. Evaluation of reach can be tackled from two angles. You can either find out the total number of people who benefitted from the intervention, or success can also be evaluated through finding out if you managed to reach out to the key people, no matter how big or small the number is.

Some of the performances were done at venues where we could not account for audiences coming in for the performances. Nonetheless, I should mention that it is possible in some settings to count the people attending a show, either through a ticketing system or an attendance register, depending on the size of the crowd as well as the venue. The attendance register also makes it possible to access the participants' demographic data. According to Herrington (2016: 8):

**Reach** looks at 'the who;' whether the performances are being presented to a suitable audience, and who is engaging in the performances. It aims to capture the inclusiveness of the theatre, and participation of key stakeholders. Reach is measured by collecting information on demographics, using a 'key people' versus 'more people' approach, and concentrating on inclusion and diversity. This data contributes to determining whether or not critical mass or key leverage points are being reached in order to influence social norms. Reach measures the outputs of PTC programming and provides foundational information to later measure the changes in Resonance and Response created by the programming.

In the absence of accurate data, the study makes use of estimates, the challenge however is that the estimates speak just to the more-people approach, leaving out the data on key people. The ensemble reached an estimated average of one hundred and fifty people per show at all closed-venue performances such as The Alliance Church in Zimbabwe (Mkoba 1), Batanai (Mkoba 16) and Mboma (Mkoba 14). The closed-door venues, which had relatively small audiences, allowed for meaningful performer/audience engagement. In addition, the audience was also delineated; the Mkoba Hall performance for instance attracted young people who had an interest in politics, while our engagement with the community at The Alliance Church in Zimbabwe, got the interest of religious young people. The implication is that the performance repertoire was made to identify with the target audiences.

On the other hand, the numbers ballooned at open air venues as there were no restrictions to entry. The challenge however, with such open-air performances, is that there is very little audience/performer interaction as compared to smaller venues. Thus, the performances are highly valued for their entertainment rather than for their function. The differences in attendance were due to venue capacity, age as well as gender stereotypes associated with some venues. For instance, the beer hall setting is largely considered the men's territory.

The ensemble held closed-door performances for a select group of opinion leaders from the community. These performances were motivated by the group's awareness of the efficacy of social hierarchies in observing community peace or sparking disturbance. The participating leaders praised the ensemble for asking for their opinion before taking the performance to the wider public. Onyeji (2010: 46) posits that community leaders are "representative components of the larger community who critically assess and validate or reject musical presentations at given points in time". Observing the importance of this group and giving them honour was very important, as it meant the whole community participated through representational participation.

Reflecting on her organisation, YVT and the ensemble's experiences, Ms. Rejoice believed that engaging opinion leaders evidently played a role in the acceptance of the group by the community and in protecting them from rogue political elements. I also observed that, up to the time of writing this thesis, no one from the ensemble has had a brush with the police or political and church leaders

for their participation. However, since conflict is omnipresent, the assumption is that everyone in the community has a role to play in sparking and in managing conflict. Therefore, every member of the community is key in conflict transformation and should be included if conflict transformation initiatives are to be genuinely inclusive. We managed to reach a lot of people in terms of numbers.

Due to the nature of the performance venues we used for this study, it was almost impossible to access the demographic data of people in attendance. Nonetheless, through attending the performances, I noticed that the reach amongst senior citizens was somewhat lower than amongst young people. The generation of senior citizens experienced all the post-independence conflicts and challenges in Zimbabwe, while the millennials inherited tribal hatred from the seniors. Nonetheless, it is encouraging that the ensemble had a huge following from young people across the social strata.

The ensemble had a good reach in churches, and young Christian adults showed their commitment to social change by attending the ensemble's performances as well as by taking part in the Dunamis Music Management and Marketing, Social Entrepreneurship Workshop.

### **10.3 Social Acknowledgement and Belonging**

Participants' realisation that they faced similar challenges as their perceived enemies made them feel as one and supported. Working with the ensemble and creating music helped participants to acknowledge the challenges faced by colleagues. The empathetic responses drew participants closer. Ras Deeva, who sculptured his image as a despondent adult in his prime, said during the exercise in which we sought to release pent-up frustrations that the music and the poem which his colleagues sang showed him that his challenges were not unique to him and that people understood where he was coming from. His worry was particularly around his age; before the project he felt the younger artists might not understand him or they might consider him an "old failure".

The theme of social acknowledgement also featured on most participants' assessment of the project. There was a consensus that the support the ensemble got from the community energised and gave hope to the team. The support was seen as indication that the community knows about

the suffering and they deem it fit to be given attention (d'Estrée 2006). In turn, this boosted the ensemble's urge to want to continue working within and identifying with the Mkoba community.

### **10.3.1 Identity and Belonging through Music**

The research was quite effective in getting participants to not only think of the role of the other in sparking or perpetuating violence. Music and other performing arts techniques used, led participants into thinking of the self. For example, the process of making music saw participants sharing stereotypes which they had against their 'rivals'. Participants stripped down conflict from being an issue about the Ndebele and Shona, MDC and ZANU PF or, Protestant Church and Charismatic Church. During the research process I observed that hate language and cliques were abandoned to form one unit. The music-making process and the subsequent performances gave participants an opportunity "to show empathy toward one another, recognize differences as well as areas of common ground, and demonstrate a capacity for change" (UNDP 2009). The explanation from the participants was that they realised that they did not take part in sparking the conflict but they had the agency to at least stop the feud amongst themselves, as conflict did not benefit them in any way.

In addition, they were all drawn by their shared passion for music to interact respectfully in a creative space, which affected their interactions in their everyday life (DeNora 2000, UNDP 2009). While acknowledging that people in the community have cultural incompatibilities, the ensemble showed that musical parallels and variances can be manipulated to create a hybrid sound which is not alienating.

The study's success can also be looked at from the perspective that it managed to see conflict transformation from the same lenses as Lederach and Maiese (2009: 8) who posit that conflict transformation demands a sharper focus on the immediate events, historical issues and patterns that can sustain a peaceful environ in the future. They posit that:

So what are useful lenses that bring varying aspects of conflict complexity into focus and at the same time create a picture of the whole? First, we need a lens to see the immediate situation. Second, we need a lens to see past the immediate problems and view the deeper relationship patterns that form the context of the conflict. Third, we

need a lens that helps us envision a framework that holds these together and creates a platform to address the content, the context, and the structure of the relationship. From this platform, parties can begin to find creative responses and solutions.

During the research process, participants questioned the role of politics and social institutions in fuelling conflict. They also went on to analyse the most immediate cause of turmoil, and unemployment was thought as one of the worst challenges faced by the community, hence the need to create an ensemble. The resultant ensemble also made music which built relationships among members as well as music which can be a source of social sanction in future.

The ensemble had to contend with vertical structural violence which manifests as political repression, economic exploitation and cultural periphery[isation] of the subaltern (Gultang 2000: 23). Therefore, an effective response to the structural violence meant the ensemble streamlines regaining the freedom to speak out, identity and economic well-being (Ibid.). The preceding discussion shows that with some degree of success, the music and dance ensemble managed to contribute towards strengthening the community's social capital and building a peaceful community.

#### **10.4 Evaluating Audience Experiences**

Results from the study show that audience experiences of music performances catalyse social transformation in four different but linearly-connected ways. Social change through music can change one's personality, interpersonal relationships, identity formation and cultural practices. The discussion to follow will discuss the four ways through which music performances facilitated change in audiences.

##### **10.4.1 Music for Enjoyment and a Stress Reliever (Personal)**

Music played a functional role of diverting revellers' attention from the daily challenges, thus giving a momentary release of stress. Stress is a precursor to conflict (Sommerville and Langford 1994: 242), and often stressed people fail to effectively control relationships, trust and control, and communication (Sedström 2007). However, if effectively used, music comes in to relax the person

and helps in releasing the stress (Yehuda 2011). Though difficult to measure, from the impact that the ensemble's music performance made in social transformation, it is quite possible to see that the ensemble brought happiness to audiences. This is depicted in **Figure 10.1** below.



(a)



(b)

**Figure 10.1:** (a) Excited fan leaps onto the stage (Snapshot), and (b) Excitable SaMukoko gets to get a photo with a huge audience (Photo by Author).

The reactions of the audiences showed that they enjoyed the performances and danced with wild abandonment at all our shows. Most importantly, interview respondents confirmed that there was great entertainment value in the music and performances, and that attending the show helped them to divert attention from their daily challenges and be happy, even if it was momentary.

#### **10.4.2 Tolerance of Divergence (Inter-Personal)**

Music brings people together from all walks of life. The ensembles' performances were open to everyone, regardless of social class or political persuasion. During the performance held in partnership with YVT, music created a safe platform through which young people from different political persuasions met and discussed issues of common interest. Dorothy, one of the audience interviewees, shared an opinion shared by many that the ensemble's performance structure engaged audiences in ways different to what the community is used to when they attend popular music shows. In her own words, she had the following to say:

Before the ensemble's performance, I had attended musical performances by the likes of Jah Prayzah before. But you know when you attended such shows it's all music and dance, people rarely talk with strangers. But ERA's performance had breaks enabling us to speak not just about the music but about our challenges as well. It helped us to socialise (Interview with Dorothy).

Below is a thread of some of the sentiments shared by audience members whom the music and performances helped in terms of building inter-personal relationships. The audience members are referred to as 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

The performances were very good especially the ensemble's original songs and the use of different languages also made it possible to just appreciate diversity (Interview with audience member A 2016).

The show was also good in that it accommodated people of all ages. Most musical performances that are happening today only cater for young people's entertainment (Interview with audience member B 2016).

When you enter the dance floor you forget that you have differences, you are all drawn by sameness and it becomes stupid and impossible to resume hate after we are dancing together on the same arena (Interview with audience member C 2016).

The dialogic nature of the performance also allowed audiences to participate in forming the acceptable narrative and relations. There was also mention that the ensemble's inclusion of traditional music in their repertoire inculcates pride and community-identity in the audiences, which in turn leads to positive community norms. While this is very true, it will be wrong for this study to claim successes on such levels considering the time we have been working in the community. Widespread cultural change takes time and a more committed investment. However, it is important that through the research individuals managed to discover their agency and they are already agents for change.

## **10.5 Entrepreneurial Spiral as Success (Unexpected Results)**

The success of a social entrepreneurial venture can also be seen through spiral ventures. The study took two interesting twists which put the ensemble in a position to influence transformational participation of the community members outside the ensemble. Yule (2012: 20) posits that “Transformative participation is where participants determine their own needs and priorities and take collective action to achieve them and this is seen as practice of empowerment”. We worked on two projects namely:

1. Dunamis: Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Workshop and Competition
2. Chaplin High School (Heroes a theatre production)

### **10.5.1 Dunamis: Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Workshop and Competition**

This project targeted musical groups and musicians in churches. It brought together choirs and bands from different congregations and denominations with the hope to open up the creative space and to explore the much-needed exchange and dialogue between and among Christian musicians. The inaugural 2016 workshop/competitions were held on 2 June 2017 at The Alliance in Zimbabwe.

Run using a workshop/competition format, this faith-arts fête event championed youth performances of music for social change and to contribute towards sanctioning deviant behaviour. The competition aspect of the project involved churches making music based on Biblical messages of their choice, while the workshop component took participants through music-making, music management and marketing sessions. The idea was to increase artists’ credibility with the community so that they become resources and positive contributors to development. Six of the seven topics were facilitated by the team of ERA administrators based on their competence and qualification. The event was attended by musicians from the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, The Alliance Church and the Christ Embassy Church. Also in attendance were Pastor Laiton Ncube, who represented ERA’s board, Miss Honour Muvhango, representing the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, and ERA’s administrative staff. **Figure 10.2** on the following page shows Pastor Ncube addressing participants. This is followed by a list of topics covered in the workshop.





**Figure 10.2:** Pastor Ncube addressing Participants at the Interdenominational workshop (Photo by Author).

**The topics covered in the workshop included the following:**

- Art as a preferred social change mode of communication
- Project design and Implementation
- Business Plan/Entrepreneurship
- Financial Aspects and Resources Mobilisation
- Band Management (Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution and Conflict Transformation)
- Music marketing and new Media
- Music industry, cultural policy and ethical issues (National Arts Council of Zimbabwe)

Herrington (2016: 22) argues that still images can be used to validate data in an evaluation report. In **Figure 10.3** below, I present a picture collage of the presentations and performances. **Figure 10.4** on the following page shows photos taken from the Dunamis Social Entrepreneurship, Music Marketing and Management Workshop.



**Figure 10.3:** Interdenominational workshop participants performing and discussing in small groups



**Figure 10.4:** Dunamis Social Entrepreneurship, Music Marketing and Management Workshop.

### **10.5.2 Ensemble Members' Overall Evaluation of the Spiral**

It is unfortunate that this study did not set out to focus on these two projects. They are a spiral of the study's entrepreneurial venture. Nonetheless, the little time that we worked on these projects gave me an impression that working with established community organisations or groupings provides better chances of bringing about social change. The homophily effect also comes into play here and the chances of limiting participants' social worlds are minimised through engaging people from different schools or churches, thus creating and strengthening social networks, which is social capital. Below are some of the project implementers' end of project assessments of the venture:

When we ran the project, I felt it was a success, because it imparted knowledge, it brought people to mix and socialise issues through music, such that even after performances people continued to mingle (Interview with Moyo).

My evaluation of the success and acceptance of the project is summed up by a participant from of the churches who said "We were not looking forward to get rich information like this. We were looking forward to just singing not to get ideas we can use ourselves and within the community" (Interview with George 2016).

Working with other University graduates made me realise that there is a lot that I did not know. The biggest lesson for me however, did not come from getting new knowledge. I always liked it when different explanations were of what I know were given. It was eye opening and I feel challenged to do more, on the next project (Interview with Cleo 2016).

If churches take full ownership of the project the desired change can come earlier than we expected. At the same time, we have to also think of ways of involving young people who do not go to church. They should benefit as well (Interview with Kunzvi 2016).

### **10.6 Sustainability of the Ensemble**

One of the most difficult tasks after setting up a social entrepreneurial venture in low-income communities is sustaining its social impact as well as the organisation. While sustainability of

either of these two is dependent on one, the processes that our ensemble went through suggest that sustainability of the venture is contingent on social impact sustainability.

The discussion is underpinned by Maposa's (2016) theory on holistic sustainability in theatre. Maposa argues that for an arts organisation to achieve sustainability, it must be guided by four pillars of sustainability which are "artistic vibrancy, community relevance, capitalisation and good governance" (Maposa 2016: 3). I will use these four pillars or constructs of this theory to evaluate the effectiveness of asset based community development in the ensemble's standing and capacity to become a sustainable organisation. The success of asset based community development in this study should be read as a loss of individualistic tendencies and the triumph of collective approaches in dealing with community problems.

#### **10.6.1 Capitalisation**

The goal of this study was to strengthen the social capital between and among the people of Mkoba using music. To do that, we had to set up a social entrepreneurial ensemble. From the various literatures I consulted and as highlighted in Chapter four of this study, social entrepreneurs aim to achieve social good more than they want to make a profit. While this is a welcome proposition, it is one of the most difficult tasks one can ever set to achieve with economically-active young people in an impoverished community and on a zero budget. On planning to set up a social venture, entrepreneurs should not disregard financial sustainability.

Indeed, the ensemble was started at a zero budget, but this does not mean it was not capital-intensive. Fortunately, the assembling of the group followed the tenets of asset based community development, where participants brought in resources that would ordinarily require money. For instance, all instrumentalists provided their own instruments and we had to partner with like-minded organisations in order to access a free public address system. The material resources brought forward by partners can be rightly valued in monetary terms. However, for the purposes of this research which hypothesised the importance of relationships, the success confirms Knack and Keefer's (1997: 1251) assertion that interpersonal trust and norms of civic cooperation are currencies which influence economic performance.

### **10.6.1.1 Diversification of Financial Streams**

Instead of just relying on good will and exchange of public good with material resources, the ensemble got involved in other innovative ways of capitalisation. This was motivated by an understanding that depending on one source of funding could be our biggest let down (Brooks 2002, Singh 2014).

To pursue financial sustainability, the ensemble held commissioned performances. The idea brought by one of the participants Yulesis, to allow everyone to continue or start pursuing solo-careers parallel to the ensemble's activities, worked well. We ended up having 'many bands in one'. What I mean is that the lead vocalists of the ensemble were at liberty to solicit for shows under their individual names and use the same backline as the ensemble. Ultimately, in this mode of operation of the ensemble, the team gets frequent gigs albeit with different names and at times with a slight change in line up or attire.

### **10.6.2 Good Governance**

To be effective and functionally sound the ensemble appointed a board of directors. We sent out invitation letters (see appendix H) to become part of the board and got acceptance (see appendix I) from Pastor Laiton Ncube<sup>12</sup>, Ms. Abigail Sivanda<sup>13</sup>, Ms. Chipso Mutambo<sup>14</sup>, Mr. Wellington Tinashe Davira<sup>15</sup>, and Professor Advice Viriri<sup>16</sup>. The purpose of the board per Article 6 of ERA constitution is as follows:

The board shall comprise of two artists plus individuals drawn from the following professions: academia, legal, civic society and industry and commerce. Two members of the executive committee will represent the committee in the board meetings namely the director and the finance and administration manager. The purpose of the board is to guide and advise the committee on relevant strategies that ERA can adopt. The professional input of the board will ensure that ERA's activities and policies are abreast of current developments on the ground. The board

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<sup>12</sup> Christian Minister.

<sup>13</sup> Provincial Manager, National Arts Council of Zimbabwe.

<sup>14</sup> Public Health Practitioner and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

<sup>15</sup> Lawyer.

<sup>16</sup> Arts consultant and Professor at the Midlands State University.

of governors will serve a three-year term. A member of the board may be reappointed after the expiry of the four-year term of office.

While the board never had the chance to sit as a collective, the ensemble's association with their profiles and input of those who managed to directly input in the ensemble's work was very valuable "in ensuring that we were effective and able to fully maximise resources" (Myer 2014: 1). The team of artists also realised their inadequacies as administrators and sought the aid of university-trained colleagues, a move which worked well for the ensemble's sustainability, as shall be discussed earlier. Good governance also meant the ensemble had an eye for financial opportunities, risky moves and could speak authoritatively on the aesthetics of the art productions.

### **10.6.3 Community Relevance**

Essentially, the use of music in this study was premised on the understanding that people can identify with music as a cultural product whose production and reproduction is meant to serve the community (Barber 1987). This view is also corroborated by Brown (2006: 3) who posits that "music is a functional object whose universal persistence over time and place has resulted from its contribution to the operations of societies". This discussion has so far shown that music played a utilitarian role in the formation and cohesion of the ensemble, and we can argue that in part, the survival of the ensemble rested on the suitability or relevance of the music that was used in the process of team-building. The previous chapter has shown how the community's reception and acceptance of the ensemble and its music contributed to fuelling the team. The ensemble got the support of the audience, that of high profile members of the community, as well as the support of the layman.

### **10.6.4 Artistic Vibrancy**

Maposa's (2016) theory of holistic sustainability has two other constructs of artistic vibrancy and community relevance. These two form the crux of the discussion in the preceding chapter nine. Maposa argues that an organisation artistic vibrancy is defined through looking at how the programming is "lively, refreshing and continuously re-imagined" (Maposa 2016: 24). The ensemble's productions easily identify with what Maposa defines as artistic vibrancy. As I have highlighted, when I presented the artist profiles, we had a team of three talented lead vocalists, namely, SaMukoko, Yulesis and Gracious. These three brought different flares to the

ensemble's face, as they have different performance signatures. In addition, we did not limit our engagement to the community performances. We also facilitated performances by community members through Dunamis Social Entrepreneurship and Music Management Workshop.

## **10.7 Summary of the Evaluation**

It is very encouraging that the ensemble's music is seen as an associated enhancer of mood, attitude and behaviour by both the ensemble members and the audiences. The members of the ensemble saw changes in their self-efficacy as well as their levels of mutual trust. In addition to transformative attitudes, like empathy which developed amongst ensemble members, relationships of mutual benefit were built amongst all. Participants also dispelled stereotypes and other divisive behaviours. A sign that the music ensemble affected the community positively is that change was embraced through their music and spiralling of the venture. For both the audiences and the artists, the music increased either an appreciation of diversity or tolerance of diversity. In a nutshell, basing on what the ensemble set out to achieve, this project was a success. However, moving forward, the most immediate challenge that the ensemble faces as Zimbabwe faces another election in 2018 and the economy continues to tumble, is to maintain and expand their work in the community.



## **CHAPTER 11: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **11.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises and concludes the study. It as well offers recommendations for further research and upgrade of the intervention strategy. At its inception, the study was set to achieve the following overall aim and objectives. This study *DAREd* humanity to experience the fullness of life which comes when people cooperate for common good, speak-out against social ills, let-out their pent frustrations as well as dialogue through music and dance making and performances. From the ensuing discussion, the research process *DAREd* participants to learn interpersonal skills. The study's reading of *DARE* is informed by Johnson (1997: 18) thinking of verb as an acronym. He posits that dare implies:

Disclosing ourselves to and trusting each other.

Accurately, communicating with each other.

Resolving conflicts and relationship problems constructively.

Encouraging and appreciating diversity

The study began by selecting willing musically talented individuals who had divergent political and religious views as well as different ethnic origins. The study traced the roots of conflict in Zimbabwe and how it has affected kind relations in the community as well as economic decay. The research went on to engage with literature on social capital, arts for social change, social entrepreneurship and asset based community development. Held up by the literature, the study followed a participatory action research methodology to come up with an endogenous arts-based peacebuilding frame.

### **11.2 Summary**

This participatory action research is an expository of what committed and united communities can achieve through harnessing their cultural capital in order to strengthen the community's social capital as well as the pursuit of social justice. The study also brings out how music and dance and by extension participatory performing arts can serve humanity as a platform to initiate dialogue and cooperation among conflicting residents. Unique to this multi-disciplinary study is that it bands together theories speaking to music for social change, social entrepreneurship and asset based community development all undergirded by conflict

transformation. The holistic and eclectic approach created an organic platform through which the community rehearsed for social change.

A careful selection of scholarly data and rich information obtained from interviewing participants as well as living and seeing the challenges presenting in Mkoba, has shown that Mkoba and by extension Zimbabwe is a conflicted society. Chapters two and three show that the government of Zimbabwe which is conflated with ZANU PF, the ruling party uses brute force, repressive legislation and intimidation to achieve political dominance. Opposition political parties and some religious organisations have also been complicity in usurping the agency of citizens in determining the course of their lives and in fuelling conflict. This misuse of power has cascaded from the top-echelons of government to the grassroots. The Mkoba community has broken relationships as the people lack neighbourliness and a sense of community. Residents are polarised mainly on political, religious and tribal grounds and this polarity is indicative of the national character, as discussed in chapters two and three. The effect has been that in addition to a morbid tendency of primitive accumulation, individualism among residents, threatening Ubuntu.

This study which used the affective power of music and dance, dwells in-depth on how music can be used as an associative enhancer of peaceful behaviour. Chapter four reviews literature on arts for social change and social capital. It espouses the relationship between social capital, arts for social change and peacebuilding. Following the discussion, grounds reason for using community-based creative entrepreneurship to tackle some of the hard-pressing social problems. The chapter brings out the nexus between music and social capital, arguing that inherent in music is the ability to facilitate bonding, maintaining solidarity and communal identity. In addition, music is also thought of as a media to facilitate transformative learning where people rethink and revise their interpretation of experiences, with a view to guide their actions in the future (Mezirow 2010). The major idea espoused by the discussion is that the creative output of this study can be used by members of the ensemble and indeed by the whole community to critically look at the conflict and cordially propose solutions.

This study used the lenses of the social entrepreneurial behaviour theory and the asset based community development to come up with an endogenous conflict transformation strategy. One of the challenges faced in conflict transformation from the streets is that the efforts are usually sporadic and thus unsustainable if there are no proper structures which identify with the

grassroots that are built (Atashi 2009). The two theories give salience to both the motivations and individual abilities in building sustainable institutions. It guided the study to become a participatory and open vocational learning and training style which created a new breed of community performing artists and citizens in general, in the depressed Zimbabwe economy, who do not look at what they lack but at what they have and ponder on what they can do with what they have.

This ethnographic account gives ideas on how to formulate and sustain community based organisations and or activities, through detailing the processes through which the ensemble went through from formation, team building, strategic planning, partnerships and implementing community performances. The participatory action research used arts based methodologies both as a data collection tool and as intervention as explained in chapters six and seven. Data was also collected through informal in-depth-interviews, narrative inquiry and natural conversational ethnographic interview. The methods enabled the researcher to gather data in an organic environment.

Since the study was meant to use music and dance making and performances, the selection of participants followed purposive sampling. In the end the carefully talented musicians managed to create aesthetically appealing didactic and lucid performances. Their shared passion for music played a role in instilling a sense of appreciating complementarity. A juxtaposition of the methodologies and the theories on which this study was framed added to the validity and trustworthiness of the research results.

### **11.3 A Reflection Study Findings**

Strengthening the social capital as well as the treatment of conflict in societies which have gone for years with latent conflict and no recent outbreak of violence should not follow dictates of the national politics and character. Instead, it is very important for the society however small to be treated as an autonomous polity, with its own needs, desires, characters and means to solve its own problems. For instance, the current outlook of Zimbabwean politics suggests that the ruling party ZANU PF and the opposition should stop the bickering and that the Shona and Ndebele people have what seem like irreconcilable differences which need not delay in solving. While, this holds truths and is important, individualism and conflict in smaller communities' stem from non-complex issues but grow and spiral to bigger issues, primarily due to lack of

effective communication and interaction. Music and dance performances and perhaps other entertaining and interactive gatherings in broken communities have the agency to convalesce residents psychologically, replacing pessimism and lassitude with optimism and a proactive and transformative mindset which enables them to appreciate importance of community.

### **11.3.1 Peace benefits**

When I decided to embark on this study, I was frustrated by the lack of opportunities to get a job even after graduating with a Master's degree with very high marks and in record time. It was obvious to me that the system favoured those who had connections. In other words, I believed I am a victim of nepotism. I also realised what was called nepotism in workplaces has similarities with 'elite cohesion' in ZANU PF described as "a strong sense of unity or 'sticking together' of the core leadership group in an organisation" by Sithole and Makumbe (1997: 123). What the similarities call to is that people are magnetised to band together when they know they are all going to benefit. To that end, at the inception of the study participants were made aware and were attracted by the possible benefits of the study as reported in chapter eight. The study's finding bear similarities with Atashi's (2009) analysis of peace benefits. Atashi (2009: 47) avers that "during the negotiation stage, different set of peace benefits are often used as incentives to create stakeholders among the different factions that may be opposed to ending violence".

It fair to assume that community led peacebuilding activities have the potential to gain traction and buy-in from the community if the participants or beneficiaries personalise the benefits of bringing social change and they know there is a lot to lose if they engage in harmful practises such as war and violence. Atashi further postulates that "the structure of benefits can lock parties in the cycle of commitment to peace, since going back to war would not only mean factoring in the costs of war, but also the loss of benefits" (Ibid.). Conflict transformation should be spoken in languages/activities accessible to the common people. Most importantly openness about the benefits and processes to achieving the benefits (peace) is a condition precedent to social reconstruction and conflict transformation in Zimbabwe.

### **11.3.2 The Agency of Positive Deviance**

The study revealed that communities have the potential to work for common good with little or no assistance from the government. However, this was possible after conflict parties

managed to bring attention to the effectiveness of using local resources and wisdom to solve local problems. Therefore, the study validated the utility of positive deviance approach in solving social problems as propounded by Dodge (1985). According to Singhal (2010: 2), “positive deviance is an approach to social change that enables communities to discover the wisdom they already have and then to act on it”. The community as represented by the ensemble did not rely on expert advice or assistance to reconstruct their relationships. The ensemble members and the selected opinion and community leaders knew very well, what causes conflict in their neighbourhood. They even had recommendations and strategies on how to approach the wider community.

It is likely that had an outside expert driven the project, the change was going to be either artificial or cosmetic to meet the reporting criteria of the expert. Singhal (2010: 3) avers that “often the wisdom to solve intractable social problems lies within the community as local wisdom trumps outside expertise when it comes to solving the most intractable problems”. In essence, positive deviance approach gives credence to endogenous arts based peacebuilding which is premised on transformative participation, familiarity and flexibility and ability complementarity. This research combined the affective power of music and dance performance with the bridging potential of social entrepreneurship which are both community rooted agencies.

### **11.3.3 The Effectiveness of Participatory Performance Art**

The use of music and dance for conflict transformation in a group set up brought out the role of music in inducing empathetic affectivity. The participants were drawn to listen and feel for their colleagues, through songs. Music created a mood and environment where ordinarily sensitive and provocative issues were raised and discussed openly. The music and discussions which came in between allowed participants to probe more into issues they would ordinarily not speak about. Most importantly, they afforded an experience sharing and reflection platform. The participants which included but not limited to being teary eyed, gasps of disappointment, smiles, clasping and clapping hands were immediate signs that the method affective and is bringing closer realities.

Occasions in which different forms of expressive arts were triggered and used as spiralling responses suggest the urgency of performativity in feeling and understanding the plight of the

plight of next person. The frisson created by aesthetics of art, connect the message bearer and the message receiver such that the pain or happiness because a shared feeling. Though not necessarily, a creative process, engaging participants in an exercise in which they mapped their cultural variances and parallels, increased their levels of trust and keenness to embrace inclusion. The homophily effect which was of course also a product of similarities of economic and political problems also worked in bringing the ensemble closer together. Participatory performance art is an effective platform through which communities can rehearse change, dialogue and shape agendas of the future. However, the platforms for interaction and communication indeed are not limited to expressive arts, the community should always decide on what they all identify with. Communities should therefore be encouraged to increase on physical interactions in merry settings and familiar environments and activities.

#### **11.4 Recommendations**

The expressive arts are often read as a compliment or at the very worst as an embellishment to other conflict transformation interventions. This study brings out the importance of art in getting people to speak-out, share experiences, dialogue for common good. Taking performing arts as cultural capital, the study realises that all people have cultures, and cultural practices that inform their world view. To that end, the study saw participants go through a shared process of production and reproduction of culture, the ambience created by the cultural variances and parallels became the platform for transformation. It is therefore the thrust of this dissertation to posit that music and dance performance, read as cultural capital can effectively strengthen the community's social capital through transformative participation of cultural imbibers (human capital). The urge is therefore to peacebuilding and conflict transformation scholars to harness and champion communities to find out and allocate the different community shared and at times unique wealth in the pursuit of humane living.

One of the most pressing difficulties in evaluating the success of social change projects is that, the factors contributing to change are not limited to the intervention strategy. Even when evidence shows that the intervention was successful, we should always be cognisant of the fact causality is rarely linear and decisions are almost always based on multiple inputs (Harris and Chib 2012: 6). A plethora of factors and actors contribute to the desired change. For instance, in this study it can be argued that the period of calm that was being experienced in Zimbabwe, allowed the ensemble to flourish. I therefore strongly feel that there is a need to have in-depth

studies which perhaps have the same scope as a PhD thesis being immediately implemented to evaluate interventions. Violence and conflict is ever mutating, there is therefore a need to constantly replenish knowledge which helps in predicting and effectively transforming conflicts. For instance, through constant consultation and assessment of the intervention this project realised earlier on that to facilitate more effective change to the wider community, the ensemble must focus more on performing for organised groupings like churches and community based organisations and they went on to follow that route.

## **11.5 Conclusion**

In overall the study concludes that while, the challenges being faced in Zimbabwean communities are symptomatic of the national character and crises, the grassroots have ability to deal with some of the challenges. A plethora of the conflicts which seem irreconcilable are perpetuated by both an unwillingness to dialogue from the community and manipulation of chaos to strengthen the elite's hold to power. Even worse is that communities have closed out platforms to dialogue thus perpetuating conflict. There is thus a need to increase platforms and frequency of opportunities where communities own and share their stories. Citizens no matter how small the grouping, should not mortgage change to external agencies as they can facilitate effective community peacebuilding through summoning their cultural capital, human capital and social capital to the service of the community.

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**Footnote 2:**

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**Footnote 3:**

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**Footnote 4:**

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**Footnote 5:**

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## APPENDIX A



### LETTER OF INFORMATION

Dear Madam/Sir

My name is Innocent Tinashe Mutero, a Doctor of Philosophy in Management Science student at the Durban University of Technology in Durban, South Africa. I am currently doing research, under the supervision of Dr Sylvia Kaye. You are invited to participate in a research study that I am conducting titled *Conflict Transformation through music and dance: The case of Mkoba, in Gweru Zimbabwe*. The participatory study will establish a music and dance ensemble comprised of members from diverse ethnic and political backgrounds who will use music to strengthen the social capital of the Mkoba community with a view to uniting and improving the quality of life of the residents. Your participation in the study is voluntary and it is important for you to understand that you can pull out of this research at any time you wish to do so. It is your right to stop participation at any level of the study and there will be no adverse consequences for making that decision. There is no remuneration for taking part in the study.

The research will have a total population of thirty-four participants who include twelve members of the proposed ensemble, seven ward councillors. In addition, four participants will be selected from the audience at every performance held. The performances will be held in open spaces at all the five different shopping centres in Mkoba. Therefore, participants in this research are either the performers or the audience. For the performers rehearsals for this study will be held at a community space agreed upon by the ensemble members. You are supposed to attend a workshop on making music together with fellow ensemble members for five days a week over one month. The ensemble will consist of twelve members drawn from across the society. In addition, you will be part of interviews that I will conduct regularly through the research process. And to audience, you have been identified to participate in this research because you have watched this research music and dance ensemble performing. As a willing participant in this study you are required to go through an interview(s) with me and to respond to questions that you are comfortable to respond to.

All recorded material will be edited for presentation and you will be availed with an opportunity to preview the material and raise your discomfort and suggest changes if any. At any time of the research process, as a

participant (s) you have a right to disapprove or stop the use of any audio and video material made about you. If for any reason, you feel that the research might put you at risk and you do not want to be referred by your name in the thesis you are obliged to say so and your anonymity is assured as I will maintain confidentiality by using a pseudonym. The recorded videos and voices will be kept at Durban University of Technology for five years after the research is passed. Thereafter I will take full custody of all the uncut material until the findings have been published in recognized journals. It is important for you to understand that you can pull out of this research at any time you wish to do so. It is your right to stop participation at any level of the study.

Should you have any problems or queries please contact me on cell phone line+263 773 265 406 or through email [muteroinnocent@gmail.com](mailto:muteroinnocent@gmail.com) . Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Dr. Sylvia Kaye: Peacebuilding Programme, Durban University of Technology, [sylviak@dut.ac.za](mailto:sylviak@dut.ac.za) or phone +27 31373680 or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: TIP, Prof F. Otieno on 031 373 2382 or [dvctip@dut.ac.za](mailto:dvctip@dut.ac.za).

Sincerely

Innocent, T. Mutero.

## APPENDIX B



### CONSENT

#### Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Innocent TinasheMutero, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- **I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.**
- **I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Time**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature / Right Thumbprint**

I, Innocent TinasheMutero, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full Name of Researcher**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full Name of Witness (If applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

## APPENDIX C



Faculty of Management Sciences  
Department of Public Management & Economics

Mkoba Parliamentary Office  
Mkoba 3  
Gweru, Zimbabwe

Date

Dear Honourable. Amos Chibaya

### **RE: Permission to undertake research in Mkoba**

My name is Innocent Tinashe Mutero, a Doctor of Technology in Management Science student at the Durban University of Technology in Durban, South Africa. I am currently doing research, under the supervision of Dr Sylvia Kaye. I am kindly asking for permission to conduct my research titled *Conflict Transformation through music and dance: The case of Mkoba, in Gweru Zimbabwe* in your constituency. The goal of the participatory study is to establish a music and dance ensemble comprised of members from diverse ethnic and political backgrounds who will use music to strengthen the social capital of the Mkoba community with a view to uniting and improving the quality of life of the residents.

The research will have a total population of thirty-four participants who include twelve members of the proposed ensemble, community leaders. In addition, four participants will be selected from the audience at every performance held. The performances will be held in open spaces at all the five different shopping centres in Mkoba. Therefore, participants in this research are either the performers or the audience. For the performers rehearsals for this study will be held at a community space agreed upon by the ensemble members. The ensemble will consist of twelve members drawn from across the society.

My experiences growing up in Gweru in the 1990s, under political crisis and ethnic tensions has challenged me since the early 2000s to engage the Mkoba community into thinking beyond their political and ethnic differences and work for both socio-political and economic amelioration through music and dance.

Participants will be given letter of information and informed consent forms which detail the research process and what is expected of them. In addition, their participation will be voluntary. Should you wish to discuss the study further, do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor using contact details provided below.

Yours faithfully

.....

Innocent Tinashe Mutero

Phone: +263 773 265 406

Email: [muteroinnocent@gmail.com](mailto:muteroinnocent@gmail.com)

**Supervisor: Dr. Sylvia Kaye**

Peacebuilding Programme, Durban University of Technology

Phone: +27 31373680

Email: [sylviak@dut.ac.za](mailto:sylviak@dut.ac.za)



## **APPENDIX D**

### **OUTLINE OF WORKSHOPS**

#### **INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP**

##### **1. Welcome**

- Introductory remarks.

##### ***Review the following:***

- Who the researcher is and what the aim of the research is.
- What will be done with this information.
- The journal and its function.
- Participants set the ground rules.

##### **2. Setting the mood for dialogue**

- Open the flow for questions that the participants may have first.

##### **3. Focus group discussion**

- Games and exercises ( relevant games that help in knowing an individual).

#### **REHEARSAL WORKSHOPS**

##### **1. Warm-up**

##### **2. Introduction**

- Aims and objectives of workshop.
- Our expectations.

##### **3. Main activities**

- Experience sharing.
- Games and exercises.
- Selection of particular episodes that were of interest to the group.
- Music making.

##### **4. Reflections**

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Proposed Questions for Ensemble members**

Name of interviewer :  
Sex :  
Pseudonym or Interviewee code :  
Date :  
Time :

#### **Unstructured Interviews**

Questions will be centred on participants' life journey:

- The challenges that come with living in a polarised community.
- The impact these have had on the participant.
- Ambition and aspirations.
- Future hopes.

**Proposed interviewees are participants.**

#### **Structured Interviews**

- What were your impressions of the Rehearsal/ Performance sessions?
- What is your relationship like with other ensemble members/ rest of the community?
- What are the lessons that you get from your performances and how do you implement them?
- What have been the audience responses to your performances?
- Do you think that it is an effective method to bring about positive social change?
- What do you think the community can do to help sustain the gains brought by the performance?
- Do you encounter any problems when presenting the performances?
- What was the most interesting aspect of the processes and performance?
- What type of music and dance do you prefer for this initiative and why?
- How effective is it to use the applied music approach when dealing with socio – political realities and why?
- How important is it or otherwise to have affected communities devise and act their own issues as compared to experts doing it on their own behalf?
- What suggestions do you give for the approach to be more effective?
- Any other comments, thoughts, opinions on the play or any related issue?

## APPENDIX F

### Interview Guide for Audience

#### Section 1

1. Age
2. Ethnicity
3. Political views

- Can you briefly summarize the performance that you have watched?
- What are the central themes in the music and dance just performed?
- Do you relate with their song content? If yes how? If no what's missing in the songs?
- Have you attended an event similar to the one held today?
- What do you think about the use of music and dance as a tool to reconcile the Mkoba community?
- What makes you want to attend a similar function next time?
- What are the lessons that you get from your performances and how do you implement them?
- What was the most interesting aspect of the event and performance?
- How effective was the performance in bringing conflicting parties/ people together?
- What suggestions do you give for the approach to be more effective?
- How important is it or otherwise to have affected communities devise and act their own issues as compared to experts doing it on their own behalf?
- What suggestions do you give for the approach to be more effective?
- Any other comments, thoughts, opinions on the play or any related issue?

#### **Proposed Interviewees**

- Ward councillors
- Broad community drawn from the audiences
- (snow balling contacts)

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Observation Guide**

- Attitude of ensemble members towards each other.
- The social interaction of the ensemble members.
- Level of participation in the ensemble activities.
- The audiences' reaction during the performances.
- The audiences' reaction after the performance (success stories).
- The community leaders reaction to the performance and subsequent community service initiatives.

## APPENDIX H

P. O. Box 1334  
Gweru,  
Zimbabwe  
Tel: +263 773 265 406  
+263 737 569 334  
Email: [erazimbabwe@gmail.com](mailto:erazimbabwe@gmail.com)  
[muteroinnocent@gmail.com](mailto:muteroinnocent@gmail.com)



21 March 2015

Dear Prof Viriri.

### **REF: INVITATION TO SERVE ON BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

It's a pleasure to invite you to become a member of the Board of Trustees, at ERA. As a member, you will be required to give general advice on the overall operations of Era, particularly as it relates to governance.

Apart from an exciting strategic plan which contemplates significant growth over the next three years, we feel that being a member of our Board will provide an opportunity to be a part of the Arts Industry in the country. ERA feels a person with your background and experience would perfect in helping us achieve our goals and objectives.

The Board plans to meet bi-annually, each meeting will last for approximately two hours with refreshments being served. There may also be some follow-up discussion either by phone or email. Because of the nature of the matters to be discussed members will need to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Thank you for taking time to consider being part of ERA and I will be in touch with you soon; but in the meantime, I'm available to discuss any questions you may have. You can reach me by phone at 0773 265 406 or via email [muteroinnocent@gmail.com](mailto:muteroinnocent@gmail.com).

Yours Sincerely

I.T. Mutero

***Founder (ERA)***

# APPENDIX I

iPad 21:55 83%

mail.google.com

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bevan hungwe 12 Jan 2015  
☐ Food for thought presentation  
 This Wednesday 14th of January , ... **Inbox** ☆

me, Lloyd 3 5 Jan 2015  
☐ ERA Trust  
 Cde I have been very sick. Still am.... **Inbox** ☆

bevan hungwe 5 Jan 2015  
☐ Food for thought presentation  
 Compliments of the season. Hopin... **Inbox** ☆

me, abigail 2 30 Dec 2014  
☐ Invitation to ERA Trust Board  
 Dear Mr Mutero , Thank you for inv... ☆

me, vhutuzae, abigail 11 29 Dec 2014  
☐ IRA festival  
 Warm Regards Innocent Tinashe M... **Inbox** ☆

me, abigail 5 17 Dec 2014  
☐ HIVOs  
 Forwarded message From: "Innoce... **Inbox** ★

bevan hungwe 10 Dec 2014  
☐ Food for thought presentation  
 Season greetings, Hope I find you ... **Inbox** ☆

muteroinnocent@gmail.com ▲

**Innocent Tinashe Mutero**  
 It's a pleasure to invite you to become a member of the Board of Trustees, at ERA. As a member, you will be required to give general advice on the overall operations of Era, particularly as it relates to governance. Apart

**abigail sivanda**  
 to me  
 30 Dec 2014 [Details](#)

Dear Mr Mutero ,

Thank you for investing much confidence in me. I gladly accept and look forward to a fruitful working relationship under ERA. I have also gone through the attached document of the trust and found it to be in order, save for whether dates need to be put when signatories sign.

Pleasant day ,

Miss Sivanda

← Reply | → Forward

me 23 Dec 2014

☐ Invitation to ERA Trust Board

It's a pleasure to invite you to become a m... ☆

This message was sent using IMP, the Internet Messaging Program