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How to cite this thesis
The development of a new sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust in HaMakuya, Limpopo Province, through arts-based training interventions.

by
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A dissertation submitted in the Department of Visual Art, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Johannesburg (UJ), in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Magister Technologiae (Fine Art). RES5671.
December 2013

Supervisor: Professor Kim Berman
Co-Supervisors: Dr. Lara Allen and Ms. Desiree Smal

University of Johannesburg
DECLARATION

I, Khaya Mchunu, hereby declare that the work in this dissertation is my original work and all sources used or referred to have been documented and recognised. This dissertation has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfillment of the requirements for an equivalent or higher qualification at any other recognised educational institution.

__________________________________________
Khaya Mchunu

_____ day of _________ 2013
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Kim, Lara, the women of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative in HaMakuya and the late Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, may the democratic spirit you have been known for continue to inspire us to contribute to the development our country.
ABSTRACT

The aim is to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust, located in the Domboni village in the rural chieftaincy of HaMakuya, north-eastern Limpopo Province, South Africa. The development of the new sewing co-operative aims to address the extreme unemployment in HaMakuya, which is one of the main causes of poverty in the area. It is also a response to one of the primary objectives of Tshulu Trust, which is to create employment. The research study addresses the extent to which arts-based training interventions might ensure the sustainability of the new sewing co-operative.

This study is a Participatory Action Research (PAR) training intervention that is Freirean in approach. I draw on the principles of Paulo Freire’s book *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1995, 2008) to provide the theoretical framework that underpins the training envisaged in this study. Methodologically, this project and study involves four action research cycles with newly-recruited members of the sewing co-operative. There is a final cycle which is my own self-reflexive cycle at the conclusion of the development project in HaMakuya. The cycles implemented with the members involve arts-based training approaches in design manufacture and embellishment, business training, and marketing of fashion and homeware products. In addition there is also training for enterprise development within the action cycles. Critical monitoring and reflection take place at the end of each cycle to inform action plans for the next cycles. The cycles of the development project end with a public showcase of the products manufactured and modeled by the participants. For my own self-reflections, I design and prototype my own designs for a fashion range inspired by my experience in HaMakuya. These prototypes as well as the products manufactured by the participants are included in a catalogue that supports this dissertation.

KEY WORDS

Participatory Action Research, Community Engagement, Rural development, Arts-based tools, Social entrepreneurship and Design for Social Development
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<tr>
<td>ABET</td>
<td>Adult Basic Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APS</td>
<td>Artist Proof Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL</td>
<td>Computer-assisted Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBR</td>
<td>Community-based Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEP</td>
<td>Community Engagement Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIPRO</td>
<td>Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWP</td>
<td>Community Work Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Department of Arts and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Developmental Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEAL</td>
<td>Describe/Examine/Articulate/Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FADA</td>
<td>Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFP</td>
<td>Fashion Fusion Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIVSA</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Indicators, Systems, Innovation, Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KZN</td>
<td>KwaZulu Natal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>Most Significant Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP3</td>
<td>Motion Picture Experts Group-1 Audio Layer 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRF</td>
<td>National Research Foundation</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
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<td>Republic of South Africa</td>
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<td>South African Fashion Week</td>
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<td>STATSSA</td>
<td>Statistics South Africa</td>
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<td>Full Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UJ</td>
<td>University of Johannesburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNISA</td>
<td>University of South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIVEN</td>
<td>University of Venda</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZCC</td>
<td>Zion Christian Church</td>
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INTRODUCTION


HaMakuya is in the north-eastern Venda region of Limpopo Province in South Africa, adjacent to Kruger National Park and close to the border with Zimbabwe. It is a rural chieftaincy that coincides largely with Ward 13 of the Mutale Municipality in the Vhembe district in Limpopo Province (Appendix 1). The Tshulu Trust website states that HaMakuya suffered systematic under-development during the apartheid era, when it formed part of the so-called ‘homeland’ of Venda, and is now recognised as a national poverty node (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). Apart from the recently introduced Community Works Programmes (CWP) run by the municipality, unemployment in HaMakuya is estimated at over 95% and the only substantive source of cash income is government grants (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). Tshulu Trust (No.: IT 12/08) is a not-for-profit organisation based in HaMakuya that aims to address poverty with the community for development (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). According to the Trusts’ mission statement (Tshulu Trust website [sa]) Tshulu aims to:

[E]nhance responsible wellbeing and livelihoods by improving the capacity of community members to utilise their natural and cultural resources sustainably. The intention is to stimulate the local economy by creating employment and micro-enterprise opportunities... through small business development.

Although Tshulu Trust was established through government and other funding, it is a self-sustaining social enterprise that aims to reduce unemployment in HaMakuya. The executive board of the Trust includes Mr. Rendani Lalumbe (Chairman), Dr. Lara Allen and Chief Makuya. Functionally, there are different organisational sectors and projects, in which community members and a few people from outside HaMakuya play an operational role. These include: Tshulu Trust Administration, Tshulu Trust Capacity Building, Tshulu Camp, HaMakuya Research Network, Tshulu Catering Co-operative, Tshulu Makuya Empowered Voices Resource Centre, and the Tshulu Sewing Co-operative. In addition there are adjunct projects in farming, art, craft and music. The HaMakuya Research Network led by Tshulu Trust’s Research Officer and Programme Manager are based at Tshulu Camp and play an important role in facilitating the logistics for students who conduct research and volunteer

---

1 National poverty nodes are characterised by “underdevelopment, contribute little to the GDP, and incorporate the poorest of our [South Africa’s] urban and rural poor” (Metrogis website 2009). The website also states that in South Africa there are 22 of these poorest areas (15 rural and 7 urban) that have been identified, and that 10 million South Africans occupy these areas.
work in HaMakuya. The following tables (Tables 1a, b, c, d and e) show the results of a survey conducted by STATS SA regarding Ward 13 and give an indication of individual monthly income, status of employment, levels of education and the sources of water and toilet facilities per household. These indicators reveal the extreme economic and social poverty that determines HaMakuya as a registered poverty node in Limpopo Province.

**Individual monthly income**
for Person weighted, 93402013: Ward 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>2428</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 - R 400</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 401 - R 800</td>
<td>276</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 801 - R 1 600</td>
<td>616</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 601 - R 3 200</td>
<td>144</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 3 201 - R 6 400</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 6 401 - R 12 800</td>
<td>132</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 12 801 - R 25 600</td>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 25 601 - R 51 200</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 51 201 - R 102 400</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 102 401 - R 204 800</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 204 801 or more</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Table 1a**

**Official employment status by Gender**
for Person weighted, 93402013: Ward 13, 15 – 64

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discouraged work-seeker</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other not economically active</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>1644</td>
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**Table 1b**

**Highest educational level by Gender**
for Person weighted, 93402013: Ward 13, 20+

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No schooling</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>474</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Primary</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Primary</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>183</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some secondary</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>1308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Secondary</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>276</td>
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<td>Higher</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>187</td>
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**Table 1c**

**Source of water**
for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of water</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Regional/local water scheme (operated by municipality or other water services provider)</td>
<td>1514</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borehole</td>
<td>103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rain water tank</td>
<td>3</td>
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---

2 See Appendix 2 for other STATSSA data on Ward 13.
Table 1d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water source</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dam/pool/stagnant water</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River/stream</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water vendor</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water tanker</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
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</table>

Table 1e

### Toilet facilities

**for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flush toilet (connected to sewerage system)</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flush toilet (with septic tank)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical toilet</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pit toilet with ventilation (VIP)</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pit toilet without ventilation</td>
<td>717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucket toilet</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
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Tshulu Makuya Empowered Voices Resource Centre

Figure 1a: Exterior of the Resource Centre. Photograph by the author.

Figure 1b: Interior of library area at the Resource Centre. Photograph by the author.

The Tshulu Makuya Empowered Voices Resource Centre, or the Tshulu Resource Centre (Figures 1a and 1b), as it is commonly known, was established in 2010 by Erin Wilkus, a student from Portland in the United States of America at the time. The centre, which was set up as an English-learning centre, is situated in the Domboni Village which is more developed than other villages within the rural chieftaincy. The funding for its establishment came through the Davies Project for Peace Award, granted to Erin Wilkus in 2010. Originally it was inspired by and established for primary and secondary school learners, but adults also have access to the centre. It is a furnished building powered by solar electricity and has computers that were installed with an English-language education programme from Rosetta...
Rosetta Stone is a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) software published by Rosetta Stone Inc. There are also books for the centre to operate as a physical community library.

Offices at the centre are occupied by the Trust’s Programme Manager, the Finance and Administration Manager, an Environmental Monitor and the Education Officer. Two community members are also employed to provide cleaning services. Staff based at the Resource Centre are members of the HaMakuya community. It is here that the HaMakuya Home-stay Programme for the student groups is organised. The Community Liaison Officer facilitates with the host family from different villages for the Home-stay Programme. Host families receive a generous fee for hosting student groups, and this serves as extra financial support for the community. Tshulu Trust also employs members from the community on a part-time basis to work as guides, translators and mediators between the students and the members of the host families.

Tshulu Camp

Tshulu Camp (Figure 2) is situated on the banks of the Mutale River, surrounded by Lebombo ironwood groves, baobabs and mopani woodland (S22 34.779 E30 48.518) and is approximately 4km from the village of Tshianzwane (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). There are five spacious tents which can accommodate a maximum of six people, and all tents have en

---

3 The Resource Centre and the facilities including internet service and maintenance are paid for and managed by Tshulu Trust.

4 Further reading on the establishment of the Resource Centre can be accessed on Erin Wilkus’ blog blog.rosettastone.com.
suite bathrooms with running hot water (Figure 3). In addition to the tents there is a house for long-term researchers to use and a small rondavel. Tshulu Camp, like the Resource Centre, is solar-powered for lighting and small appliances, while the kitchen and geysers use gas. Around the camp there is no direct network for cellular or internet service, which limits some kinds of research activities.

Information regarding visiting groups is communicated from the administration office at the Resource Centre to staff members based at Tshulu Camp who are responsible for rendering services. The staff at the camp includes the Program Manager and Research Officer, Camp Manager, two caterers from the Tshulu Catering Co-operative, two house-keepers, one building and maintenance worker and two security and grounds-keeping workers. The Community Liaison Officer usually based at the Resource Centre also works as a ranger and bird guide for visiting groups who might require such services. Whilst conducting various research projects and community development interventions, the student and volunteer groups are based at Tshulu Camp, however, they leave the camp to participate in the HaMakuya Home-stay Programme. Income generated from food and accommodation services for visitors at Tshulu Camp pays all of the salaries for Tshulu staff, including those based at the Resource Centre. Furthermore camp visitors provide a market for HaMakuya-based co-operatives such as catering, and the sewing co-operative.

The Tshulu Sewing Co-operative background

In June 2007 Tshulu Trust received a grant from the Limpopo Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) that included funds to set up a sewing co-operative. The funding received was from the government's poverty alleviation programme aimed at job creation through small, medium and micro design enterprises (SMMEs) development. According to the guidelines of the grant, when the co-operative was set up, business entrepreneurial skills were not specifically required, and the members received a set stipend for two years. The co-operative’s market consisted of the community of HaMakuya and South African and international student groups who visited 5 to 8 times a year to conduct research. In October 2010 the sewing co-operative closed abruptly when all the members resigned as a group halfway through the production of a large order. There were a number of reasons for the resignation of the group. Firstly, the members wanted to receive a regular salary like the

---

5 This background information was gathered from an interview with Dr. Lara Allen, co-founder and Executive Director of Tshulu Trust, on 06 June 2012.
regular stipend they received from the DAC funding, rather than being reliant on the vacillating income received from products sold. The fact that overall they earned more from the business in comparison to the stipend was not compelling. The reliable flow of limited income was more desirable than erratic flow of greater income. They also wanted regular working hours during the week, rather than periods of inactivity between orders and periods with high workloads that required members to work later during the week and at weekends. In my interview with Lara Allen (2012) she reflected on the lessons learned from the experience and stated that the higher income work schedule appeared to be not worth the inconvenience to the co-operative members. This was, in fact, a predictable outcome resulting from the internal tension created by the manner in which the first sewing co-operative was established.

Allen identified a need to start a new sewing project as a business that drew a different group of women from the surrounding villages who were more inspired by the entrepreneurial model (Allen 2012). She also identified the possibility for this project to be a Master’s study under the National Research Foundation-funded (NRF) Community Engagement Programme (CEP) initiative. This assisted me in my personal research as, in addition to a bursary, it included expenses for travel, accommodation and a budget for materials over the two-year study period. Allen proposed that the new sewing project focus on business principles that only require the income generated from production earnings (Allen 2012). This would involve a different approach to the granting of monthly stipends awarded to the first group. The model in the study is based on an equal partnership rather than the donor/beneficiary dependency.

Another request from Tshulu Trust was for me to provide new Venda fusion product designs for the co-operative. Venda fusion is a term coined by Allen with the aim of clarifying how sewn products align with the Trust’s mission to encourage the use of cultural resources sustainably. In this way the Venda traditional material is the cultural resource.

With the new foci of the proposed sewing co-operative, I was able to work collaboratively with Allen as my co-supervisor, and initiate the arts-based training interventions of the co-operative for the two years of the MTech study and project. The training aimed to equip the

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6 In Chapter Two I provide an in-depth discussion on the term Venda fusion as it is used in the project.
members with skills that enabled them to produce, embellish and sell products for the new sewing co-operative. This also responded to Tshulu Trust’s mission to achieve sustainable development and small business development. The NRF-funded arts-based project enabled four visits to HaMakuya in 2012 and another four visits in 2013, making eight iterative action research and training cycles, which took place over two years. Although the duration of the training varies, each cycle encompassed between six and ten training days of six hours each. This was sufficient time for the implementation of research plans and training of the participants.

The research participants
The training interventions were implemented in 2012 and 2013 and the project was advertised as a training opportunity in entrepreneurship and sewing. The participants included those who applied for the training opportunity, and people drawn through snowball sampling after attracting a small number of interested applicants. In each year I worked with four research participants. In the first year the participants were from the same village, whilst in the second year the members came from different villages. Only one participant remained in the research study from its inception to its completion. The participants from the 2012 training year did not have any prior training in sewing or business skills. Two out of three participants drawn in the 2013 training year had some sewing and business experience. In 2013 I continued training the new members in sewing and business skills, but focused more particularly on marketing and enterprise development which aligns with Cycles Four and Five.

Personal position in the study and project
I am the trainer, facilitator and researcher in this project and study. I began participating and being active in a community context in late high school between the years 2003-2005. During these years I was a member of the high school drama society that visited the local prison to commemorate South African holidays such as Youth Day and Human Rights Day. These visits afforded me the opportunity to exchange with prisoners through arts-based methods such as singing, acting and dancing.

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7 Snowball sampling “involves the respondent telling the researcher who the next respondent might be, and that respondent doing the same” (Thomas 2009:104).
8 The reasons for recruiting new members into the project are discussed further in Chapter Two.
In 2009 while completing my BTech (Fashion) degree at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), I began tutoring the first-year students in the department of fashion. I specifically tutored two modules called Garment Technology and Pattern Technology. The course modules were interactive and involved a significant amount of communication between the students and me as their tutor. Furthermore, the creative nature of the modules stimulated free and creative thinking amongst all of us to reach a solution for pattern and garment construction. The tutoring experience introduced me to a particular training style that fostered participation and finding creative ways to solve problems.

During 2009 I participated in the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) Design Achievers Awards, in which the challenge was to use my design discipline of fashion to address societal problems through the development of entrepreneurial design ideas. The Award programme included drafting a business plan designed in response to an identified problem and presenting this concept to a panel of judges. Through participation in this programme I became interested in adapting fashion design capacities for the benefit of South African citizens. I focused specifically on a business concept that would create employment through the development of craft projects where the products were inspired by the different attires worn by various cultural groups in South Africa.

Both my previous experience as a tutor and my previous participation in the SABS Design Achievers Awards informed the approach and context of this research study and community development project.

**Rationale and motivation**

This study fell within the mode of Community-Based Research (CBR) and used the capacities of fashion design to contribute towards community-engaged research in HaMakuya. Using the approach of Participatory Action Research (PAR) I conceptualised, applied, monitored and reflected on the process of establishing a rural-based sewing co-operative. In doing so I aimed to increase my existing knowledge and introduce this knowledge and expertise into a real-world context, which is different to my own. Moreover, the study aimed to demonstrate how and to what extent the field of fashion design and its related artistic capabilities can benefit HaMakuya by using self-employment opportunities to

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9 Community-Based Research is a mode offered by the UJ’s Visual Art Department in Professor Kim Berman’s research activity area: The Role of Art in Social Change.
create jobs. Consequently, the study, using a PAR methodological approach, enabled the participants in HaMakuya to address and reduce the problem of unemployment through self-employment.

This research study engaged and responded to a call for active citizenship, as proposed by Mamphela Ramphele in her book *Conversations with my sons and daughters* (2012). The book presents a challenge to the youth of South Africa, to achieve a truly democratic country. Ramphele (2012:18) explains that this challenge is:

>[A]bout how we are to re-mobilise citizens to reassert themselves as the sovereigns and shareholders of our country. What role will your generation play in rising to this challenge? What are the tools you can use to make such a reawakening possible and effective in shifting the grounds of reason towards a society you can be proud of? How will we use facts and figures to develop and implement evidence-based policies? How will we ensure honest monitoring and evaluation of our performance without allowing excuses to mask our failures? How will we ensure that there is a strong culture of accountability that will re-establish a link between hard work and excellence in performance to reward?

This PAR study and development project responded to these questions. I used and implemented the arts- and performance-based tools, such as Photovoice, photo documentation and role-play with the participants, to begin a plan of action that was aimed to develop and empower marginalised citizens in the South African context. Although these tools were implemented to train the participants and were thus used as training tools, they were also research tools in that their outcomes, like the outcomes of interviews and focus groups, were used to respond to the research question. Lorraine Blaxter, Christina Hughes and Malcolm Tight (2006:58) note that “the term method can be understood to relate principally to the tools of data collection or analysis: techniques such as questionnaires and interviews”. These tools parallel the methodology of this study.

This research project operated within the mode of community-based research; it fell under an initiative funded through the NRF’s CEP, led by my supervisor, Professor Kim Berman, in the Department of Visual Art at the UJ. The programme is entitled *Arts-based approaches to development*, and it attracts candidates from various academic fields to work with PAR methodologies, and in particular arts-based approaches, in order to contribute to positive social change. The rural chieftaincy of HaMakuya is the research site supported by the NRF CEP programme. Dr. Lara Allen of Tshulu Trust proposed to the university’s FADA
Department of Fashion that they identify a candidate who could start a sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust as a research endeavour, and I was the candidate nominated.

**Introduction to the study and research statement**

There is little literature that has contributed to community craft enterprises and the use of PAR in the interventions. This dissertation will thus be an important addition to this field of research, as well as having a vital practical application which meets an important need in HaMakuya. Previous dissertations within community-based action research at the UJ’s FADA include the works of David Motsamai Tshabalala (2005), Joao Maria Ladeira (2004), Vedant Nanackchand (2010), Cloudia Hartwig (2011) and Mphapho Christian Hlasane (2011). An overarching pattern in the literature is the implementation of PAR and using visual arts-based methodologies, such as Photovoice, mural-making, resource mapping, design, screen printing and paper-pulp making, as tools and methods to develop and hone the performance and operation of the craft projects, while simultaneously uplifting members from certain communities. The implementation of both PAR and visual arts-based methodologies has proven successful and has resulted in the formation of sustainable craft enterprises while simultaneously instilling agency amongst community members. Consequently, my aim in this study was to explore the approach of PAR and arts-based tools from the beginning, as a possible way of developing a new and sustainable sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust. In doing this, I attempted to explore and provide a methodology to establish a sustainable sewing co-operative. The charitable model used to develop the previous sewing co-operative (for example, the hand-out of a monthly stipend) and its subsequent collapse enabled me to critique this model. I attempted, with the study and project, to employ a regenerative and participatory model, provided by iterative action cycles, as a possible way to establish a sustainable sewing co-operative.

I also explored the practice-based and interactive nature of a PAR approach to question to what extent the research experience could be used to inspire, conceptualise and design a fashion range. As a fashion designer, my creative output in the form of my fashion range was drawn from and inspired by the experience and findings of the training interventions in HaMakuya. This is a proposal for fellow artists and designers to use the information embedded in community development work to inspire their own creations. Therefore this study was a PAR community training intervention that was Freirean in approach. It drew on the principles of Paulo Freire’s book *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1995, 2008) to provide a theoretical framework that underpinned the training used to develop the sewing co-operative.
Methodologically, this project explored action research iterative cycles with participants (who were newly-appointed members of the sewing project) to develop a new sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust. Each cycle involved arts-based training approaches in which we manufactured, embellished and sold Venda fusion fashion and homeware products. Venda fusion refers to Western style products made from Venda traditional cloth (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). Monitoring, evaluating and reflection took place after each cycle to establish a plan of action for the next cycle. Included in the study is a public showing of products made and modelled by the participants during the last action cycle of the research process. Essentially, I contributed new design products to facilitate the envisioned training and the participants could continue to produce these products independently once the research study concluded. With the production and showcasing of these design products, my goal was for the co-operative to expand its market access as these products were shown on the Tshulu Trust website. Lastly, the fashion range that was inspired by my experience in HaMakuya, and the products made by the participants, were presented in a catalogue accompanying the research document.

This methodological plan responded to the concepts expressed in Pedagogy of the oppressed, because the residents of HaMakuya are economically, geographically and educationally marginalised and disadvantaged. This was why the philosophy noted by Freire (1995, 2008) was central to the approach of the training intervention. Freire’s idea of true generosity “lies in striving for the hands of the oppressed to be less extended and less in supplication” (Freire 1995:27). In this way I attempted to involve the participants in enhancing their own economic circumstances and building their confidence. A PAR process supports a partnership model because, as Peter Reason (1994:12) states, the process “produces knowledge and action that is directly useful to a group of people.” Complementing my choice of Freire’s theory is Malcolm S. Knowles’ (1985) application of the term ‘andragogy’. Andragogy “values the learner’s life experiences and need to be self-directed, draws the learner into a commitment to learn by responding to the learner’s needs, and involves the learner in directing the content and process” (Knowles 1985:[sp]). In addition, andragogy involves adults in adult education as opposed to pedagogy which strictly refers to a child learning. Andragogy involves a participatory educational approach and therefore fits within the learning model of Pedagogy of the oppressed (1995, 2008) in the aim to engender ownership of the sewing co-operative by a group of adult participants.

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10 Venda traditional cloth and Venda fusion will be discussed further in Chapter One.
Within the PAR process, I assumed the roles of researcher, facilitator and change agent, all within the principle and model of partnership. These triple roles assisted the training cycles to adopt “collaborative inquiry approaches” (Reason 1994:13). Similar to andragogy, a collaborative inquiry approach valued the knowledge of every individual participant, including the researcher, in a research study. This influenced the designing, making, embellishing and selling of products. Ernest Stringer (1999:25) states that the researcher/facilitator “assists stakeholders in defining their problems clearly and supports them as they work toward effective solutions to the issues that concern them.” Collaboration in inquiry augmented my mission as a change agent by working with the participants, using a dialogical approach, to change a situation that challenged their daily lives. A dialogical and collaborative research approach was important because “through dialogue the subject/object relationship of traditional science gives way to a subject/subject one” (Reason 1994:13).

In light of this theoretical background, the main objective of this research study was to embark on the methodology of PAR and its action cycles as possible ways to establish a sustainable sewing co-operative for a rural community. I argue that the implementation of PAR increased the possibility of developing a long-standing community-based initiative. In addition, PAR offered a bottom-up perspective which allowed research to transpire at grassroots level. Ernest Stringer (1999:10) adds that with community-based action research “those whose lives are affected by the problem under study should be engaged in the processes of investigation.” Reason (1994:13) asserts that “the academic knowledge of formally educated people works in a dialectical tension with the popular knowledge of the people to produce a more profound understanding of the situation.” As such the inclusion of people in the research process (which, in this case, was the development of the sewing co-operative) allowed the possibility of drawing ideas and thoughts from different stakeholders, which broadened the scope to create a co-operative that was useful to the people for whom it was being created. The study also aimed to complement the PAR methodology using arts-based approaches because these arts-based approaches afford input, interaction and collaboration. Berman and Pamela Allara (2007:119) state that “artistic forms of expression... offer a rich and intense form of inquiry, and are effective in facilitating the expression of voices that have been silenced.”

The primary research question underpinning this participatory study is how best might arts-based training interventions through PAR, potentially support the sustainability of a sewing co-operative?
Aims and objectives

My first aim, in an attempt to address the primary research question, was to train a select group of participants to have an active role in the development of the new Tshulu Trust sewing co-operative. In order to attain this aim, I outlined the following objectives: (1) to design a limited range of Venda fusion products for the group to produce; (2) to work with the group collaboratively to make, embellish and sell Venda fusion products that I have designed and; (3) to critically reflect on and assess each iterative cycle with the group. These objectives were explored in the first year of the project and study (Phase 1). In Phase 1 the main focus was on engendering foundational training in sewing and business skills. I introduced my own designs in the first training year to equip the participants with sewing skills. However, in the second year of training I encouraged the participants to design, produce and sell their own products by adapting and using the imparted skills. The aim is to establish a sustainable mechanism and empower the participants to renew their own product designs after the research study is complete.

The second aim, which took place in the second year (Phase 2), was for the participants to produce a range of fashion products to exhibit publically, and to market the co-operative. In the second year sewing and business skills training continued, but the main focus was on marketing for enterprise development. In an attempt to achieve this aim I implemented the objectives and: (1) designed products that suit the skills base of the participants; (2) trained the group to produce these design products; (3) organised a public showing of the products in HaMakuya; (4) selected a range of products from the research process to include in the Tshulu Trust website. Throughout the research process I have collected photographs of the products that were manufactured by the participants to build up a collection for a catalogue accompanying my dissertation. This collection of the products was used to show how the participants’ sewing skills have developed.

A third aim of the study was to conceptualise, design and prototype my own range of fashion products which was inspired by my experience in HaMakuya. My design prototypes were not produced for the HaMakuya market but were merely developed through my self-reflection on the research process.

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11 In the second training year I continued with design support in order to focus on the training for marketing. The group continued producing the previous designs and designed and produced their products on the side for income generation. At this stage they assumed the positions of entrepreneurs as well as research participants.
How Arts-based approaches for development informed and influenced the study

Before the intervention of this study, I attended a series of workshops and lectures in the Community Engagement seminar by Professor Kim Berman that “provided an understanding of the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental context of life in HaMakuya” (Berman and Allen 2012:82). The lectures also introduced a wide range of visual arts-based and participatory research tools and methods used in previous community-based action research studies. Through these workshops I acquired and adapted tools to use for my own implementation of PAR and the methodology of action cycles. The most important of these tools were Most Significant Change (MSC), Photovoice and reflection. I also participated in the HaMakuya Home-stay Programme, through which the students gain an experiential understanding of living in HaMakuya by participating in home-stays, which are cultural exchange immersions, in which groups of students stay with a Tshulu Trust-trained translator-guide in a village homestead for two days and nights and participate in the daily activities of the household” (Berman and Allen 2012:82). It was in the Home-stay Programme that I first used Photovoice as a visual communication tool between the host and the students. I adapted and used the tool in my own intervention for developing the sewing co-operative.

The relationship between the research study and the project intervention

While the research study aimed to develop the sewing project, the study and project had their own specific goals which were interrelated. The research study was scheduled for the duration of two-years and was assigned to me as the researcher, to introduce and implement the action plans and to document the process used to develop the sewing project. The research study was my attempt to build knowledge within the mode of PAR community-based action research from an arts-based perspective. The study addressed the question of sustainable development by applying grassroots and participatory approaches, informed by the methodology of PAR. The sewing project, on the other hand, was designed to exist beyond the two-year long research intervention, and was targeted to operate as a long-term sustainable business, that generated sufficient income to support the members in an ongoing manner. This complemented the aim of PAR to create knowledge and practices that were useful to and remain with the participants. Essentially, the development of the sewing project served as an example that responded to the underpinning research question. It was

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12 The weekly workshops and lectures were provided by Berman at the UJ’s Department of Visual Art, Johannesburg for 11 weeks (9 February 2012 - 30 April 2012). Within this period there was an additional one-day practical course which was provided and facilitated by Shannin Antonopoulo, special projects and education manager at Artist Proof Studio in Newtown, Johannesburg (12 April 2012).

13 The MSC is a storytelling approach to data collection and an in-depth discussion of it is included in Chapter One.
also, with the various roles that I assumed, that I distinguished the research study from the project intervention. As a facilitator/trainer and change agent, I participated with the participants in developing the new sewing co-operative and addressing the research question. As a researcher, I reflected on the development process and wrote the dissertation to provide an outline, discussion and description of the training intervention explored through action cycles.

Outline of the study

In Chapter One I provide the underpinning theory, relevant literature, and the definition of terms and the paradigms that pertain to this research study. In addition to this I describe the models, tools, techniques and approaches that inform the implementation of the training during the process of developing the sewing project. I introduce the literature that provides the foundation for these action-based approaches and explain how they align with PAR. In Chapter Two I describe the methods and implementation of these models, tools, techniques, and approaches in the context of the research project. In order to align with action and reflection I also discuss the plans gathered from the reflections and how they influenced the actions as the cycles unfold. In Chapter Three I provide the evaluation and discuss the findings of the training interventions of iterative action cycles. In addition, I discuss how the findings respond to and justify the overarching aim of developing the sewing project. I also outline and discuss the indicators that I use to measure and evaluate change, growth and sustainability in the project. The last chapter, Chapter Four, begins with my reflections of the research study and project through analysing some research outcomes. I discuss how the research process has inspired me to conceptualise, design and prototype my fashion garment samples as a visual response to the research experience. The chapter ends with a conclusion of the dissertation.
CHAPTER ONE
THEORY AND PARADIGMS UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical paradigms, critical terms and the research methods pertaining to this research study and project. This chapter is divided into four main sections: the first two focus on the fields that underpin the research study. In the third and fourth sections I pay attention to the training, monitoring and evaluation paradigms respectively. Holistically, this study attempts to contribute to two main fields: design for social development and community-based action research. In the field of design for social development, I draw on and explain Design Thinking, a model propounded by design studies theorist Richard Buchanan (1995), and I expand this concept by adapting it to a community-based approach for user-centred design. This approach to design was explored through the Venda fusion design style, and in this chapter I attempt to explain this term and discuss the adaptation of traditional cloth to meld with contemporary westernised fashions which are pervasive in both urban and rural settings in the South African context.

In essence, the study is positioned within the mode of community-based action research and, in an area of arts for social change with a particular focus on visual and artistic methodologies. I therefore describe the sub-field of arts for social change, and contextualise it by providing the background of the UJ’s Arts-based approaches for development programme. The theory of visual and artistic methodologies employed in this study is explained in the third section, where I also discuss and provide the literature that covers the training paradigms. The principles and ideologies of PAR and co-operative inquiry, a branch of PAR, are reviewed. These methodologies enact the principle of partnership as the defining model that characterises the nature of the relationship between the researcher and research participants in aiming to fulfil the project’s goal, to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative. In addition, I analyse the theory that outlines the need for the methodology of iterative action cycles, which I employ in the arts-based training interventions. In this section I also provide definitions for terms of the tools that relate to the participatory training paradigms, and explain how and why I adapted the tools to suit the context of the study.

The chapter concludes with the introduction and discussion of the paradigms that underpin the monitoring and evaluation of the study and project. I define the tools that I employed to
monitor and evaluate the research study and project. In Chapter Two, I describe how these tools and methods were used through the iterative action cycles during the training interventions in the project. These tools and methods were implemented to examine the extent to which PAR and arts-based training might support the sustainability of a new sewing co-operative.

**DESIGN FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The design and manufacture of products in this community development project was largely influenced by the writings of design studies theorists Buchanan and Victor Margolin (1995) and Tim Brown and Barry Katz (2009). In the literature, Design Thinking is proposed as an approach to assist a designer’s contribution to social development, by including the community members for whom the product is being designed. The real goal of a design thinker is “human-centred tasks” (Brown and Katz 2009:7), and involves “helping people to articulate the latent needs they may not even know they have” (Brown and Katz 2009:40). This goal was liberating and was utilised to facilitate the participants’ active role in this participatory action research project and study. In addition, involving the participants in the design process fostered their input during the development process which facilitated the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. The liberating goal of Design Thinking enhances the definition of design as more than “a form of deliberation whose result is measured in production and in the careers of individual products” (Buchanan and Margolin 1995:sp) and added to this “the agency which serves and shapes our daily lives” (Buchanan and Margolin 1995:sp). Likewise, this study was an attempt at social development in the field of design, and the argument was that “design is an instrument of power... intended to satisfy needs, wants and desires, thereby effecting changes in the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of others” (Buchanan 1995:48).

A field that aligned directly with the study within the fashion design discipline stemmed from a community engagement perspective. Craft and sewing co-operatives have been developed in South Africa to empower local citizens from impoverished communities. In a co-authored chapter by Kimberley Miller and Brenda Schmahmann (2010) they state that “[d]uring the 1980s and 1990s, a number of art-making co-operatives were set up to address the dire poverty of communities in South Africa” (Miller and Schmahmann 2010:533). Although the co-operatives are described as art-making, the projects provide services that include garment and accessory manufacturing, embroidery, textile painting and printing and the use of images on garments to express political and social commentary. Through these
initiatives “numerous black women in South Africa found in co-operatives the opportunity and agency to support themselves and their children” (Miller and Schmahmann 2010:533). The chapter provides examples of some successful projects in various parts of South Africa, such as the Xihoko and Chivirika (Gazankulu of the Limpopo Province), the Mapula Embroidery Project (Winterveld in the Gauteng Province) and the Philani Printing Project (Western Cape Province) amongst others. Another important aspect of projects like Xihoko and Chivirika, which align directly with the study, is their use of the *nceka* in their embroidery items that are sold to non-Tsonga buyers.¹⁴ Likewise, the Venda fusion products from the sewing co-operative were disseminated to a market outside HaMakuya and South Africa.

Another example to distribute products from craft projects is the collaborative initiative by the DAC and the South African Fashion Week (SAFW). This collaborative effort also contributed to supporting and nurturing community craft projects in South Africa. This was the Fashion Fusion project (FFP) which was intended to combine craft with design to improve product design (DAC website [sa]). The project was introduced in 2004, and Lucilla Booyzen, director of SAFW (2007:[sp]) writes that in its initial year

> It [FFP] brought together ten craft designers and ten fashion designers to develop craft-enriched garments... By 2005, this fusion had become so successful that a similar programme was introduced in four provinces, which had risen to nine by 2009 to make it the world’s biggest fusion programme 225 crafters (25 from each of nine provinces) and twenty seven designers.

Although the FFP is no longer part of the SAFW roster, it has promoted a strategy for the fashion industry to work with community-based craft projects. In light of the support given to these craft organisations, which were established in order to improve the members’ quality of life, there is no doubt that fashion design in this sense contributes to social development.

**Design Thinking (Buchanan 1995)**

Richard Buchanan’s (1995) model of Design Thinking was adapted to fit with the iterative action cycles of PAR to design and make Venda fusion products. Although Buchanan (1995) provides a methodological explanation, Design Thinking is described more concretely by Tim Brown (2009) cited by Roger Martin (2009:62) as “a discipline that uses the designer’s sensibility and methods to match people’s needs with what is technologically feasible and

¹⁴ A *nceka* is described as “a rectangular-shaped cloth worn by many Tsonga-speaking women” (Miller and Schmahmann 2010:533).
what a viable business strategy can convert into customer value and market opportunity.” In this way, the essence of Design Thinking informed the approach to manufacture and develop products in the interventions that were suitable for the market of the co-operative. In this way, once the products were manufactured and sold, market response enabled the participants to refine both their products and services. This thinking and approach enacted the principles of PAR as it encouraged participants to play an active role in the process as decision makers, business women and manufacturers.

The stages of the design process (Aspelund 2010)
In continuation to establishing approaches for the design processes of this study, I explored the stages of the design process as promoted by Karl Aspelund (2010) to develop, design and manufacture garment samples in Cycle Five of this study. Aspelund suggests seven stages of the design process and they are inspiration, identification, conceptualisation, exploration/refinement, definition/modelling, communication and production. The rationale for adopting Aspelund’s approach was his holistic inclusion of the diverse design disciplines including fashion design in his writing. As a fashion designer, his description of the design process is similar to the process and stages that I have followed over the years to produce fashion garments. The objective of the proposed approach by Aspelund (2010:1) is “to successfully steer an idea on its journey from the world of imagination to the world of objects, a designer must keep focused on where the idea is going and make a number of important stops along the way.” These stops are defined as the different stages of the design process in the framework and they comprise the following:

1. Inspiration (something that drives your creativity)
2. Identification (examining and defining the project as much as possible and creating a design thesis that will guide the remaining stages)
3. Conceptualisation (exploring concepts fully and understanding their impact before translating them into workable ideas)
4. Exploration/Refinement (exploring the solutions to concepts in more detail)
5. Definition/Modelling (creating models for your designs and planning the creation of a concept model)
6. Communication (communicating and exploring the different venues, methods, and styles of presentation)
7. Production (putting designs into production)

Buchanan and Aspelund use the words ‘prototypes’ and ‘models’ to refer to the concept models described in the fifth stage. The equivalent terms used in fashion production are ‘samples’ or ‘garment mock-ups’, so I use these terms to refer to prototypes and models in this study. In order to remain within the frame of the iterative action cycles I employed the
stages as activities of my design process and the stages of Aspelund’s process form part of
the activities within Stringer’s (1999) ‘look, think, act and reflect’ routine.

Venda fusion
In Africa, textiles and more particularly the prints on textiles, play a major role in indicating
which ethnic group people belong to. This is evident in different parts of the African
continent. For example, the eastern Ghanaian people of the Ashanti region, according to
Suzanne Gott (2010), are identifiable through their kente and adrinka cotton textiles. Kristin
Knox (2011:24) describes the kanga as “a traditional cotton-printed fabric typical of the
region [which is] East Africa’s brightly coloured cottons”. In the southern African perspective
an example is the Ndebele people who, in terms of textiles, are identified by their use of
colour-blocked blankets. Likewise, the Vhavenda have a textile by which they can be
identified. It is, therefore, important to understand what Venda traditional textile is and what
constitutes it as such to the Venda people. In this research study the Venda traditional textile
refers to the cotton fabric that has brightly coloured stripes running across it, and is
commonly referred to as nwenda by the participants (Figure 4).15 Strictly speaking nwenda is
the term for a particular type of traditional outfit worn by mature women, and it is made up of
two rectangular pieces of cloth decorated with lines of embroidery that run perpendicular
to the stripes of the material. Interestingly, Lufuno Phophi (2005), in her research dissertation
which focuses on the Venda traditional female dress, states that the traditional garments are
mainly made of nwenda which looks like the nwenda I have described here. Historically, the
Vhavenda used animal skins to make clothes until a salempore [cotton cloth] was introduced
during colonisation which was became the preferred fabric (Phophi 2005:6).16

Bronwen Eunice Findlay (1995) in her dissertation provided a brief description of the Tsonga
traditional fabric, and distinguished the differences between the Vhavenda and Batsonga
traditional fabrics which look similar. Although they are both made out of salempore and both
have stripes, the Tsonga fabric is produced through weaving salempore to form the stripes,
whilst the Venda traditional fabric is printed (Findlay 1995:31). Theoretically, it appears that

15 This information was gathered in a discussion with the research participants about traditional Venda cloth, the
response was that Venda traditional cloth is nwenda which has stripes of many colours. The main colour (which
refers to a broader line of a different colour running in the same direction) may change but the imperative small
colourful stripes have to remain (Mukhada, Mutele, Sigonde and Tshikovhi 2013b [Recorded & Transcribed]).
16 In the Venda culture there are other forms of traditional attire but I focus on the cloth used to make the
products in the sewing co-operative more than the traditional garments.
Venda traditional fabrics, because of the different colours, are printed using rotary screen printing.\textsuperscript{17}

Figure 4: Mukhasi piece cut in nwenda fabric, the fabric identified as traditional Venda material. The broad orange is the main colour and according to the research participants, the stripes and ratio between the thick and thin stripes define it as a Venda traditional cloth. Photograph by the author.

There is also the notion of Venda fusion which is a term that Tshulu Trust and the co-operative use to advertise their manufactured products to a wider market. The term was coined by Allen and is defined as “western style products made from Venda traditional cloth” (Tshulu Trust website [sa]). This modification of traditional fabric and the distribution of modified traditional attire using this fabric is also noted by Findlay (1995:27) who asserts that:

\begin{quote}
[M]inceka may also be modified by the introduction of embroidery or beadwork, or at times with patterns created using items such as safety pins, mirrors or bells. Plain black or white fabrics, or a dark fabric with a darker pattern printed on it, are used for such embellishments. These more elaborate minceka are not worn for daily wear, but are made for very specific occasions and more recently they have been made for a white commercial market.
\end{quote}

However the term Venda fusion also suggests that there is the borrowing from and the subsequent merging of two cultures. This raises an imperative debate about the process of borrowing and merging and what is compromised in the process so that neither culture is diluted in the fusion. There has been some writing that shows how the assertion of tradition became problematic in the apartheid context. Knox (2011:47) mentions that in apartheid South Africa “[t]he government further exploited the differences among the country’s various ethnicities. Tribes were divided into separate ‘nations’ and denied South African citizenship. Operating along the lines of divide and conquer, white politicians cynically honed in on the

\textsuperscript{17} According to Billie J. Collier and Phyllis G. Tortora (2001:439) in their book Understanding textiles, rotary screen printing involves screens being “shaped into cylinders or rollers… a screen is prepared for each colour. The dye feeds through the unscreened area, pushed out from inside the roller by a squeegee. Fabrics move continuously under the rollers and up to twelve colors may be printed on one fabric.”
country’s vast array of traditional ethnic dress as a way of emphasizing the differences between local tribal groups.” Rayda Becker (2000) also highlights the use of cloth to create an identity called invented tradition. She uses the minceka as an example and asserts that:

[I]t [minceka] was a style that developed around the constructed centre at a particular time and their appearance clearly has some connections to identity politics, encoding difference in an area where borders and local authorities were contested. Minceka then, whether embroidered or not, carry with them a history of meanings linked to tradition and identity, and link a past and a present.

In her essay Women’s dress in Eastern and Southern Africa (1986), Valerie E. Vowles mentions that “[i]nevitably fashions are changing in Africa. Many younger women, living in cities and large towns, wear European dress. Yet traditional values have a way of reasserting themselves... others seek to ensure that traditional designs in fabrics and jewellery are not only preserved but adapted to suit contemporary needs” (Vowles 1986:40). The adaptation of traditional dress to suit a contemporary context seems to indicate that in the fusion, traditional textiles are cut into contemporary designs; for example, an A-line skirt in nwenda. Furthermore, the fusion of the traditional with the contemporary has been implemented in fashion to signify a post-apartheid South Africa, where people who were previously rural dwellers are now also residents in the urban areas. Knox (2011:49) reaffirms this notion and notes that “[i]n using dress to help create a post-apartheid identity, South Africans have not only expressed pride in their South African-ness but have also used fashion to express a new sense of being connected to the larger continent by infusing their Western wardrobes with a decidedly African flair”. This stance tied in with what I believe Venda fusion products represented, particularly with the target market being based in both rural and urban areas. Essentially, the design, manufacture and distribution of Venda fusion products was relatable to the participants who are Vhavenda, and I contend that by introducing a design aesthetic that is somehow significant to the community, the mode of community-based action research balanced with the participative aspect of PAR. It also supported the characteristics of the research mode which is identified by Stringer (1999:10) and includes democracy, equity, liberation and life enhancement.

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18 I am aware that the use of the words tribes and tribal groups is problematic in the South African context. I use this reference to indicate the division of people based on their language during the apartheid regime.
COMMUNITY-BASED ACTION RESEARCH

This research project and study was underpinned within a community-based action research framework. Community-based action research is defined as “a collaborative approach to inquiry or investigation that provides people with the means to take systematic action to resolve specific problems” (Stringer 1999:17). I adopted this mode of research in order to partner with the participants to develop the new sewing co-operative. The rationale was to facilitate meaningful contributions from the participants. It was also an acknowledgement of the participants’ knowledge, perspectives and their contribution to the research project that influences their lives directly. Community-based action research:

[...] is a more user-friendly approach to investigation than most. Unlike the elaborate routines of traditional scientific research, which, from the perspective of the practitioner, are often shrouded in the mists of technical language and mystified by complex statistical procedures, community-based action research is presented in terms that make it accessible to both professional practitioners and laypersons (Stringer 1999:17).

The ventures that aligned with the community-based action research approach were community engagement initiatives, which were strengthened by building mutually beneficial partnerships between members of the related community and the researcher. Committed to this research paradigm, Tshulu Trust encouraged and proposed this research project. This cohered well with the approach to community engagement advocated by the university that is closest to HaMakuya – the University of Venda (UNIVEN) in Thohoyandou (a little over an hour’s drive from HaMakuya). In her article entitled ‘Quality partnerships: The community stakeholders’ view’ (2010) Vhonani Netshandama suggests key issues to consider when building quality partnerships between higher education institutions and the community. In a referenced study from the same article by a researcher at the University of Venda, (UNIVEN) four main requirements were gathered from community members regarding their expectations from engaging with universities. These include a balance in the partnership objectives of both parties, ensuring an unexploitative partnership, sharing power and control in the partnership, and maintaining and monitoring the partnership (Netshandama 2010:71).

This article also recommends certain approaches that students should adopt in order to develop quality partnerships in community-based research. Netshandama (2010:74) emphasises “[t]he need for students to be properly prepared, the need to appreciate
communities’ knowledge, and the need for constant reflection are synonymous with conducting meaningful research on university-community partnerships.” Netshandama’s insightful thinking influenced my goal, which was to develop an understanding of a partnership approach in the HaMakuya context. Furthermore, I perceived that the arts could play a role in strengthening a partnership approach within a community context.

**Arts for social change**

In community-based action research the arts have been used in particular to contribute to community building and upliftment. The artistic disciplines, by which I mean drama, music, visual art and design, have been used as tools to address social ills such as poverty, lack of health education and violence amongst many others. The flexible capacity of the arts accompanied by narratives allows community members to use both art and narration as modes of expression and empowerment which fosters the agency of the community members. One example of this is the Paper Prayers campaign during which printed artworks are made in response to an HIV/AIDS awareness workshop. Kim Berman and Lara Allen (2009:4) describe the campaign as:

Implementing teams of artists, community facilitators and counsellors to work from the premise that visual literacies can compensate for the possible limited ability amongst many participants to express thoughts and ideas using words. On the other hand, the fact that participants produce explanatory verbal narratives alongside their visual art works generates two positive outcomes: first, participants often deepen their understanding of their predicament through the process of articulating it; second, the collaborative, interactive process of explaining their paper prayers tends both to generate discussion and to strengthen group support.

This study envisioned arts-based approaches and the associated capabilities of the discipline of fashion design, as mobilising tools for rural development, poverty alleviation and empowerment. In her article describing *Phumani* Paper, the papermaking initiative, Kim Berman (2009:229) asserts that the initiative “adopted the empowerment approach, using creativity and aspiration as a primary incentive, and training and capacity building as a major objective”. Empowerment was enhanced further by employing participatory approaches because “[t]he movement from awareness to action is the defining impact that supports the claim that an arts-based approach can facilitate social change” (Berman and Allen 2009:11). In this manner the participative characteristic of arts-based approaches contributes to PAR, which also assists in helping people shape their everyday lives. Arts-based approaches were
thus implemented in the HaMakuya context through the three year CEP programme in the Visual Art Department, funded by the NRF, called *Arts-based approaches for development*.

**UJ Arts-based approaches for development background**

Berman and Allen (2012) state in an article that the programme *Arts-based approaches for development* seeks to “bring together role players from the higher education and civil society sectors... to evolve an effective, context-specific model of community engagement in the domain of arts-based approaches for community development” (Berman and Allen 2012:77). The partnership programme between the University’s Department of Visual Art and Tshulu Trust is an attempt to achieve social development through community engagement. The NRF CEP-funded programme: *Arts-based approaches for development* invited interdisciplinary expertise to participate in the intervention. Participants have included APS, Visual Art, Fashion Design, Industrial Design, Department of Sociology at UJ and Wits University’s Drama for life programme and the Department of Music, in which two to five Master’s students joined the intervention in HaMakuya in 2012 and 2013 led by Kim Berman and Lara Allen. Methodologically, the programme promotes the use of arts-based approaches like Photovoice, Paper Prayers, mural-making, drama and music, as tools to achieve the ultimate goal of positive social change.\(^\text{19}\) These arts-based approaches were introduced to home-based care workers, nurses, teachers and students to facilitate their role in promoting awareness of health and socially-related topics such as gender-based sexual violence, HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

However, in a partnership model the stakeholders involved received as much as they gave. As such, the aim of the programme *Arts-based approaches for development* is to provide the university students with an opportunity for service learning. The foundational goal “is to facilitate substantive understanding of social problems amongst students and to cultivate their civic and leadership skills such that they develop the desire and capacity to become agents for positive social change” (Berman and Allen 2012:78). The programme is funded by the NRF for three years, and each year a theme is decided upon by the community members through local schools and health care service workers. As a service learning programme for the students, the HaMakuya experience ends in self-reflexive essays written

\(^{19}\) The campaign of Paper Prayers was launched in 1998 by Artist Proof Studio as a national HIV and AIDS awareness and action campaign that spreads its message through printmaking and craft. The campaign introduced a participatory, interactive and practice-based approach to HIV and AIDS awareness interventions (Berman and Allen 2009:2). Photovoice and its implementation in this research study and project is discussed in Chapter Two.
by each student to assess and analyse their own learning with regard to the three categories of service learning identified by Patti Clayton (2010) in her article ‘Integrating critical reflection and assessment to generate, deepen, and document learning’. These identified categories are academic, personal and civic learning. The programme has assisted me to identify some visual methodologies which I have employed in the research project.

**Visual methodologies for social change**

This arts-based research study and development project, although situated in fashion design, used other artistic methods in the training intervention which aligned with the ‘create, embellish and sell’ cycle. These arts-based methods included Photovoice, photo documentation and role-play, which were some of the visual and artistic (role-play) methodologies used to contribute to positive social change. In addition, the use of these methods aligned with PAR in their suitability for the research participants to use them to gain knowledge, voice their ideas and concerns, and apply their own learning.

- **Photovoice**

Photovoice, a method evolved by Caroline Wang (1999), is used to engage with the participants as collaborators in the design process for their first Venda fusion products. Photovoice:

> is a grass roots approach to research which puts cameras in the hands of some of the most marginalised populations as an approach to giving voice. Participants produce images which help to describe the issues that are pertinent to them. The resulting images [and narratives] are also central to ‘opening the eyes’ of the researcher as well (de Lange, Mitchell and Stuart 2007:4).

In addition Naydene de Lange, Claudia Mitchell and Jean Stuart (2007), in their book, *Putting people in the picture: visual methodologies for social change*, emphasise that Photovoice assists in “working to see how these images can be used for policy change” (de Lange et al. 2007:3). In this research Photovoice was used to gather the participants’ valuable experience and knowledge, and included them in the analysing of the pictures and process. Through this the “participants can be engaged in a reflective process, which also becomes an analytic process” (Mitchell 2011:11). This process aligned Photovoice with the approach of action and reflection of this study. Alan Radley (2010:1) asserts that “pictures are more than representations, because they are also resources [and] mediators that, along
with words, give shape to ideas.” It has been argued that, used in this way, Photovoice instigates a sense of agency in the participants, agency being described as the “capacity of an individual or group to make purposive choices” (Berman and Allara 2007:116).

- **Photo documentation**
  Photo documentation was used in the training process of the research project, to involve and augment participant learning in the training, as opposed to Photovoice which was employed to give voice to the participants. Photo documentation facilitated and complemented text-based and verbal-based training with a visual-based one. In the process, the participants used the camera to document various aspects of the training, such as capturing the different stages of using the sewing machine. The process of documenting, learning and teaching involved the research participants, which then promoted freedom and agency in the participants’ own learning. Jennifer Mason (2002:107) explains that “Documents and visual images are always constructed, and visualization is an accomplishment involving perspective and directional gaze.” Photo documentation was thus an integral aspect of the manufacturing of Venda fusion products, and formed part of the ‘create’ aspect of the cyclical routine.

- **Role-play**
  In order to support sales and marketing requirements of the iterative action cycles, I implemented role-play as a training method. Roy Killen (2010:308) explains that “Role[-]play [as a teaching strategy] can be used as a means of achieving a wide variety of outcomes, including acquisition of knowledge, application of knowledge to develop further understanding and skills, and attitudinal change.” In the research project I used role-play as a technique for the participants to rehearse how to interact with their English-speaking clientele. In this exercise an outside participant was invited to act in the role-play. The exercise was performed in order to develop strategies that the participants could employ when interacting with their clientele. Furthermore, role-play provided the sewing co-operative with an opportunity to conceptualise the whole selling process. In this way, visual and performance arts methods were used to involve the research participants in the processes which aligned with a PAR training intervention in a community setting.
THE TRAINING PARADIGMS

In this section, I discuss the models and approaches that frame the training of the participants by applying a Freirean model for education in the PAR training intervention. *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1995, 2008) offers a democratic approach to education that places both teacher and student on the same level of inquiry. This approach is known as problem-posing education, and it enables “teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and alienating intellectualism” (Freire 1995:86). I apply an understanding of active education according to Jean McNiff and Jack Whitehead (2010:36) as intentionally taking action in one’s learning. “It is not what one does for another, but what people do for themselves when they decide to take action to improve their own learning” (McNiff and Whitehead 2010:36). Dialogue facilitates both problem-posing education and active education and it is “the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person’s ‘depositing’ ideas in another” (Freire 1995:89). In this way, active education or training in this context was used to empower the participants to take ownership of the initiative and, through learning, enjoy increased freedom. The participants, by being active in the process, were given the freedom to question whether the training provided them with the necessary skills to operate the sewing co-operative, and they were able to assess their own learning as well as implement newly-acquired skills.

**Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

I adopted the approach of PAR in order to form both a partnership and a bottom-up approach to develop the sewing co-operative with the participants. The ultimate goal was to use the participative element offered by PAR to engender ownership amongst the participants of the sewing project. PAR extends out of the broader field of action research, and according to Peter Reason and Kate McArdle ([sa]:6) it is “explicitly political, aiming to restore to oppressed peoples the ability to create knowledge and practice in their own interests... PAR practitioners emphasize emergent processes of collaboration and dialogue that empower, motivate, increase self-esteem, and develop community solidarity”. PAR aligns itself with Freire’s (1995) philosophy in that it “encourages through participation a process of consciousness-raising or conscientization” (Reason and Bradbury 2006:10).

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20 *Pedagogy of the oppressed* has been re-published and although it is written by a man of South American (Brazilian) background, the similarities between socio-economic situations in Brazil and South Africa and the universal principles presented by the book make it an ideal model for this intervention.
Conscientisation is described as a process of self-awareness through self-inquiry and reflection (Reason 1994:12).

The implementation of PAR in the training interventions, was to empower and develop the participants through collaboration, and “at its best [Participatory] Action Research aims to educate the researcher and researched to develop their capacity for inquiry” (Reason and Bradbury 2006:10). Although the participants did not have expertise in fashion design and entrepreneurship, they provided insight into ways in which these fields could be adapted in the context of HaMakuya. By involving the participants, their capacity to implement fashion design and entrepreneurship successfully in their context was enhanced. For instance they analysed the types of products that would be of interest to the community, and the challenges and opportunities related to business in HaMakuya. This approach aligned with the participative element endorsed by PAR and co-operative inquiry.

Co-operative Inquiry
“Co-operative inquiry has its roots in humanistic psychology, in the idea that persons can, with help, choose how they live their lives free from the distress of early conditioning and restrictive social custom… and that working together in a group with norms of open authentic communication will facilitate this” (Reason 1994:5). This participative approach to inquiry offered an insightful methodological model for establishing the new sewing project. It is described as “involving all those in the research as co-researchers... whose thinking and decision-making contributes to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience, and also co-subjects, participating in the activity which is being researched” (Reason 1994:6).

Co-operative inquiry, in this project, was applied in the action and reflection processes. It was a form of inquiry that I introduced to the participants because it assisted to develop action plans for the action cycles. I contend that co-operative inquiry facilitated a democratic relationship between the participants and myself as researcher and facilitator. Furthermore, my role as change agent was reinforced as a result of the involvement and collaboration which occurred whilst applying co-operative inquiry, through iterative action cycles, to develop an empowering initiative like the new sewing co-operative.
Iterative action cycles

To provide a platform for PAR and co-operative inquiry, the research embarked on the methodology of iterative action research cycles, more particularly the “look, think, act and routine” (Stringer 1999:18). In the routine “look involves gathering relevant information, defining and describing the situation; think involves exploring, analysing, interpreting and explaining while acting includes planning, implementing and evaluating” (Stringer 1999:18). This action cycle routine is important because “[t]he routine is but one of a number of ways in which action research is envisaged... [and presented] as a spiral of activity: plan, act, observe, reflect” (Stringer 1999:18). The iterative cycles increased in complexity as the research process progressed and this made the content and plans of each cycle different. Iterative action cycles and the context-specific look, think and act, allowed action and reflection, which was associated with a participative approach to research, and it increased the opportunity to learn through the process. Stringer (1999:19) states that this complex process provides guidance, and suggests that “[a]lthough there may be many routes to a destination, and although destinations may change, participants in the journey will be able to maintain a clear idea of their location and the direction in which they are heading”. There was also a need for training tools that could complement the developing nature of the iterative action cycles.

Training tools

Within the research project, I implemented a number of training tools that are not to be confused with PAR tools such as Photovoice or other research tools such as interviews. However, in order to complement PAR I implemented these training tools in such a way to foster involvement and participation in the training process. The training tools such as the logic model, Gantt chart, trial balance and the frequency polygon graph were used to organise tasks and to record finances in order to assist the participants to establish a system by which to operate the sewing co-operative. Within the research study these tools assisted with the monitoring and evaluation of the research process, and the data garnered from them was used to provide indicators to measure sustainability which was used to establish the findings of the research study.

- Logic model
The logic model - sometimes called the logical framework model or log frame - is described as “a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities, and the changes or
results you hope to achieve” (W. K. Kellogg Foundation guide 2004:1). The model is a dominant framework to manage projects within the international development and aid sector. The logic model was a pertinent approach to organising and formulating action plans for developing this project. Its primary use was to provide an effective mechanism to monitor the activities and to organise the project by identifying and distributing the different tasks.

The purpose of the logic model is to provide stakeholders with a road map describing the sequence of related events connecting the need for the planned program with the program’s desired results. Mapping a proposed program helps you visualize and understand how human and financial investments can contribute to achieving your intended program goals and can lead to program improvement (W. K. Kellogg Foundation guide 2004:3).

In identifying and distributing the tasks, the use of the model encouraged dialogue and involvement which was participatory. The information from the logic model was used to monitor and evaluate the different tasks aimed to develop the sewing co-operative.

- **Gantt chart**
  Henry Laurence Gantt, an American mechanical engineer, is credited with the invention of the Gantt chart (Gantt chart website [sa]). It “is a graphical representation of the duration of tasks against the progression of time... [and]... is a useful tool for planning and scheduling projects” (Gantt chart website [sa]). As a planning and scheduling technique, a Gantt chart “lays out the order in which the tasks need to be carried out” (Gantt chart website [sa]). Thus in the project a Gantt chart was applied as an attempt to achieve the production of goods within a targeted time frame. In the training it also comprised text and a flat drawing of the product being manufactured. In the schedule, compiled by the Tshulu Trust, groups visit at different times of the year. A Gantt chart was appropriate in the project because with it the participants planned a time frame in which to build stock ready for the market. As a training tool it was a relevant structure for organising the production of products.

- **Financial records**
  The organising of the production process needed to be accompanied by organising the business aspects of the co-operative to ensure further sustainability. The participants required training in operating the sewing co-operative as a business; focus on the finances
of the co-operative assisted in achieving this. The training tools, which I outlined and employed to achieve this included recording sales and costs, and plotting monthly sales on a graph, in order for the participants to see the financial position of the business.

- **Recording sales and costs**
  Recording of sales and costs was borrowed from the idea of the trial balance. A trial balance is described in the Business Dictionary website as “The aggregate of all debit and credit balances at the end of an accounting period that (1) shows if the general ledger is in balance (total debits equal total credits) before making closing entries, (2) serves as a worksheet for making closing entries, and (3) provides the basis for making draft financial statements” (Business Dictionary website [sa]).\(^{21}\) I adopted the trial balance in the training intervention to emphasise to the participants the relationship between their monthly costs of production with the resulting monthly sales. The aim was to support the participants’ entrepreneurship, and by improving their skills as entrepreneurs, the co-operative could still function after the research study was complete.\(^{22}\)

- **Frequency polygon chart**
  The frequency polygon chart was introduced in the training as a system for recording sales in a graphical format. It was drawn from the monthly totals of the sales section from the trial balance. The drawing up of this chart assisted the participants to realise months of high sale volumes and months with lower sales. In light of this, the group was able to plan actions to substitute for the weaker and slower months. I assert that this idea is the catalyst for creative thinking, encouraging members to think of possible platforms to keep the sewing co-operative mobile. The frequency polygon graph, used in this fashion, was participative and empowered the group members to make decisions for themselves and the business. Although I envision these tools and methods as supporting structures to develop the sewing co-operative in a participatory manner, I have also differentiated techniques and methods to monitor and evaluate the study and project.

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\(^{21}\) The definition of the trial balance refers to the debit and credit and in the study these are equivalent to sales and expenses respectively.

\(^{22}\) I do not have the formal qualification or the expertise to provide the participants with business-related training. However, since my training in fashion design I have been dealing with private clients, and Tshulu Trust has enlisted a BCom Accounting graduate to assist in this aspect of the training.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION PARADIGMS

In order to monitor and evaluate each iterative action cycle, I employed Developmental Evaluation (DE), an approach promoted by Michael Quinn Patton (2011). The development of the new sewing project progressed in cycles that evolved and led to new challenges and planning. However, I adapted and applied the logic model (2004) and the MSC technique (Davies and Dart 2005) to complement the approach of DE. My aim was to draw indicators to evaluate whether the training intervention had effected change among the participants. These indicators paralleled the aim for the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. I adapted the Compass of Sustainability introduced by Alan Atkisson (2011) as a tool to provide categories by which to measure change; I also employed journaling, focus groups and semi-structured interviews as research techniques to collect data that I used to measure sustainability. These techniques assisted me to determine indicators for sustainability through my own observations that I documented in a journal, and through the perspectives of the participants which were ascertained through focus groups and interviews.

Developmental Evaluation (Quinn Patton 2011)

The framework of DE has influenced this study because it “supports innovation development to guide adaptation to emergent and dynamic realities in complex environments” (Patton 2011:1). The study adopted a ‘coming-to-know’ approach to inquiry and, as there was no formula to attain solutions to the various challenges of developing the co-operative, DE was an ideal model for evaluation. The action cycles unfolded in an unpredictable and evolutionary nature as the conclusion of one helped to set out action plans for the next. This justified Patton, a pioneer of DE, describing development as “best understood as a process”, and he likens it to “walking through a maze whose walls re-arrange themselves with every step you take” (Patton 2002:168). Tim Brodhead’s (2010:7) introduction to Elizabeth Dozois, Marc Langlois and Natasha Blanchet-Cohen’s (2010) article explains that “[DE] overturns many of the assumptions of more traditional approaches; it is embedded rather than detached, continuous rather than episodic, and - most importantly - it has as its goals learning, not judgement”.

Furthermore, Dozois et al (2010:10) state that DE is used in situations that are “highly emergent and volatile, difficult to plan or predict because the variables are interdependent and non-linear, socially complex, requiring collaboration among stakeholders... and innovative, requiring real-time learning and development.” Ownership, economic
enhancement and skills training (which were evaluated in the study) all evolved unpredictably as the progression of the training cycles influenced their development. For these reasons, DE was a pertinent framework for this research study because although each cycle focused on a particular training, the training affected the next cycle. Reflections at the conclusion of one cycle permitted the participants to modify how the training could be improved and applied in the future. For example the products that were manufactured by the participants could not be limited solely to the sewing skills training intervention (Cycle One) but continued across other cycles. In this case, DE offered the possibility to evaluate how the sewing skills of the participants improved over time.

**Most Significant Change (Davies and Dart 2005)**

MSC is “a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation. It is participatory because many project stakeholders are involved both in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data” (Davies and Dart 2005:8). The process involves “a collection of significant change (SC) stories emanating from the field level, and the systematic selection of the most significant of these stories by panels of designated stakeholders” (Davies and Dart 2005:8). In order to begin the story telling aspect of the technique, domains of change are identified and these domains are defined as “broad and often fuzzy categories of possible SC stories... [these may include] changes in the quality of people’s lives, changes in the nature of people’s participation in development activities, changes in the sustainability of people’s organisations and activities and any other changes” (Davies and Dart 2005:17). A full implementation of MSC, according to (Davies and Dart 2005:10) appears in ten steps, arranged in the following order:

1. How to start and raise interest
2. Defining the domains of change
3. Defining the reporting period
4. Collecting SC [significant change] stories
5. Selecting the most significant of the stories
6. Feeding the results of the selection process back
7. Verification of stories
8. Quantification
9. Secondary analysis and meta-monitoring
10. Revising the system

In this study and project MSC was applied in the 2013 training year (on the second site visit) in order to track the successes of the intervention and to continue implementing actions that worked within the co-operative. The domains of change in this case were inspired by the
indexes of sustainability provided by the Compass and these were nature (N), economy (E), wellbeing (W) and society (S). In both cases the changes were identified and communicated by the participants, which gave the members ‘voice’ as per a Freirean approach in this arts-based training intervention.

**Compass of Sustainability (Atkisson 2011)**

With the research study I aimed to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative and I adopted a systems thinking approach to sustainability. In attempting a participative approach to sustainability, I adapted the Compass of Sustainability initiated by Lee Hatcher and Alan Atkisson (2011). The ISIS Compass, alternatively called the Compass, “has been increasingly adopted as a simple, memorable symbol for the complex concept of sustainability. It has helped make the idea of sustainable development easier to digest... and it has helped bring people together from all points of the compass, to learn about sustainability, to assess progress or to act as stakeholders in strategic consultation processes” (Atkisson 2011:136). Although the Compass is measured on index scale points between 0-100, it can be used all on its own without numbers. This research study was based largely on a qualitative approach which was why the numbers were not always measured and tracked as indicators of sustainability. The Compass is an indicator tool, that as a metaphor assists people in “direction finding, and for gathering people to a central point” (Atkisson 2011:143). It uses the N, E, S and W of the traditional compass to form categories for sustainability and to measure and intertwine these categories in such a way that one category influences the other.

In the tool the (N) stands for nature and it “refers to the underlying health and sustainable management of key ecosystems, bio-geo-physical cycles and natural resources... Nature indicators usually get measured in terms of quality assessments, emission amounts, biodiversity counts, resource consumption and the like” (Atkisson 2011:145).

Economy (E) refers to all the ways human beings work with nature, with knowledge and with each other to produce the things and services that they need or want. The core concepts here are work, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness in whatever sectors are appropriate to the organization... In working with community organizations, a measure like ‘child poverty’ sometimes ends up here... because it can be seen as an indicator of whether the economy is working in ways that do or do not improve the lives of the most vulnerable citizens (Atkisson 2011:146).
“Wellbeing (W)... focuses on the individual, as well as on the smaller webs of intimate relationships that are crucial to health and happiness... Wellbeing covers many of the issues that people are most concerned about in their daily lives but that are sometimes left out of ‘triple bottom line’ approaches, which usually group all such ‘softer’ concerns under the heading social” (Atkisson 2011:146). The category is important in this study because “The social systems of company, community or other organizations might be working flawlessly, but the people might not feel terribly happy or healthy or vice versa” (Atkisson 2011:147).

Society (S) is the category for the social systems, structures and institutions that are driven by people acting collectively. The emphasis here is on the collective rather than the individual. General examples include quality and equity in leadership, overall levels of competence... and levels of active participation in relevant social processes... For a company or institution, one can rate the management, look at worker retention rates, assess equitable treatment, and look at how the organization relates to its ‘stakeholders’ (everybody inside and outside the organization who is affected by the organization’s performance and behavior) (Atkisson 2011:146).

In order to gather the indicators that expressed the argument of this research study, I drew on the idea of the four categories of the Compass of Sustainability. This offered a systematic style, where all categories were considered equally worthwhile without one being more important than the other. Although the model provided the four categories succinctly this did not limit me from forming my own categories that worked together systematically. Philosophically, the goal of the research study was to view and acknowledge all stakeholders as equals without any sort of hierarchy.

**Methods in monitoring and evaluation**

- **Semi-structured interviews**

  Robert Burns (2000:424) states that semi-structured interviews “permit greater flexibility than closed-ended types and permits a more valid response from the informant’s perception of reality”. In the study I employed semi-structured interviews to extract information about and background to the situation. In this case, the informant was the Tshulu Trust representative whom I interviewed while assessing the feasibility of the research study and project. I also utilised this type of interview style to allow the participants to comment on their own perception of the development of the sewing co-operative. I contend that semi-structured interviews have more potential for being democratic than structured interviews, because they allow an easy flow and have room for different opinions. Semi-structured interviews are like engaging in a dialogue with the participants, which is a Freirean-proposed element in a
participatory approach to inquiry. In the study, semi-structured interviews differed from focus groups in that the questions asked were driven at collecting specific data, while focus groups were used for reflexivity without preconceived questions.

**Focus group discussions**

In order to stimulate engagement and augment a participative approach in the reflections of the developmental cycles I used focus groups. Ernest Stringer and Rosalie Dwyer (2005:67) assert that focus groups “enable research participants to share information and experiences that trigger new ideas that provide greater insight into events and activities. A focus group may be envisioned as a group interview, where questions provide a stimulus for capturing people’s experiences and perspectives.” Furthermore, in bringing the ideas of different people together, focus groups allow collaboration because “respondents begin to ask questions of other respondents and the research facilitator. When participants work together, share ideas, and explore their collective experience and perspectives, the productive, creative, and innovative possibilities of action research emerge strongly” (Stringer and Dwyer 2005:68). The inclusive nature fostered by focus groups afforded the opportunity to discuss and reflect on themes that were related to the common goal of developing the sewing co-operative.

**Researcher's journal**

The usage of the journal in this study was for the documentation of the field observations and of my own reflections about the implemented actions and activities. Mason (2002:99), states that field notes may also be regarded as “developmental devices for formulating your understanding of your setting, for documenting your ‘hunches’, and for developing and testing out your analytical ideas.” As a documentation of observations, the personal journal served as a record of how change developed in order to provide a ‘picture’ of indicators as they appeared throughout the process. Apart from actions and activities the indicators were also drawn through casual conversations and subsequently documenting the data in the journal.

**CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I provided a discussion and explanation of the theory and paradigms that inform the training intervention implemented in HaMakuya. Additionally I explained why and how the theory underpinning the methods, research tools, and monitoring and evaluation models and techniques were used and adapted in the research project. In Chapter Two, I
contextualise and describe the application of these methods and methodologies in the
development of the new Tshulu Trust sewing co-operative in HaMakuya.
CHAPTER TWO
METHODS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION
In this chapter I contextualise, describe and analytically reflect on the research methods, models and tools as they were adapted and applied throughout the iterative action cycles of this study. I focus on the feasibility of the research study and development project, as well as the training interventions conducted to impart the different skills required. The Pre-phase and Cycles One to Four embark on the objectives set to achieve the primary aim to develop the new sewing co-operative. For the Pre-phase and each cycle of the four cycles I focus specifically on: (1) the feasibility of the study in HaMakuya (Pre-phase); (2) sewing skills (which comprises design and product development); (3) business skills; (4) enterprise development (which comprises developing formalised business structures); and, (5) marketing. The iterative action research cycles and trainings adopted the ‘look, think and act’ routine, which is entailed in the methods and tools specific to each cycle as presented in the table below (Table 2). I structured and outlined the tasks in order to address the research question about how arts-based training interventions through PAR might best support the evolution and sustainability of the sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust. In the last cycle (Cycle Five) I discuss the design approach of my own fashion range that is inspired by the experience of conducting this participatory action research project.

Project phases and cycles
The research project was divided into two phases. In Phase One, during the 2012 training year, I explored with the participants partially the pre-Phase and Cycles One and Two. In this phase, specifically, I conducted a feasibility study and trained the co-operative members in foundational sewing and business skills (Appendix 3). In January 2013 there was heavy rainfall that resulted in bad floods that destroyed many roads, houses and dams in HaMakuya. In response to this situation a municipality-funded Community Works Programme (CWP) was initiated for the reparation of this infrastructure in HaMakuya. The CWP guaranteed its employees a steady, if very low, income, whilst income from this action research project derived from sales generated and was more erratic. Two of the strongest participants recognised the opportunity for regular income, applied successfully to join the CWP, and left the sewing co-operative.
Therefore, in Phase Two, during the 2013 training year, the two vacated positions in the co-operative were advertised. However, this time, in order not to repeat all the training in Phase One, which would have delayed the project, only applicants with prior sewing and/or business skills were eligible (Appendix 4). Three new co-operative members were chosen: one member had some sewing and entrepreneurial experience and another had demonstrated entrepreneurship in her previous experiences. In the 2013 training year I continued training the new and remaining prior co-operative members in sewing and business skills, but focused more particularly on enterprise development and marketing which aligned with Cycles Three and Four respectively.

Finally, in a stand-alone cycle (Cycle Five), a totally new endeavour within the overall project, I designed my own fashion range. This range was inspired by my experiences in HaMakuya in that it consisted of my own self-reflection on the previous five cycles expressed through the medium of fashion design. The creative outcomes of this cycle are presented in the catalogue that accompanies this dissertation.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pre-Phase</th>
<th>Cycle One</th>
<th>Cycle Two</th>
<th>Cycle Three</th>
<th>Cycle Four</th>
<th>Cycle Five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>Sewing skills</td>
<td>Business skills</td>
<td>Enterprise development</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Understand the context &amp; access resources to conduct the study in HaMakuya</td>
<td>Train participants in different sewing skills</td>
<td>Develop business &amp; administration system</td>
<td>Formalise the co-operative according to RSA Co-operative Law</td>
<td>Market co-operative &amp; products to different clients</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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23 Although the heading is under the training row of Table 2, designing my HaMakuya-inspired fashion range is not a training intervention but rather an objective that is influenced and informed by my experience in HaMakuya. It is a continuation of the iterative action cycle that is based on my own self-reflections.
Tables and cyclical graphs
In each cycle I draft a table that outlines the training, its purpose and objectives and the methods, tools and models used in each intervention. In this dissertation I include the table that I used in the field to communicate the plans set for each cycle (Table 2). In addition to this I also present cyclical graphs for each cycle to show how certain aspects of the training interventions adopted Stringer’s ‘look, think, act and reflect’ routine. The graphs indicate the reflection and reflexive questions at the end and beginning of each cycle, and show how one training intervention influences the next training intervention. Furthermore, these graphs show the collaboration in cycle reflections between myself and the participants which were drawn from group discussions and interviews.

Ethical considerations
Appropriate ethical measures were considered in the research process. There was verbal agreement between myself and the applicants who completed the practical test for participant selection. The applicants were informed and they agreed that I could take pictures of the pot holders that they had manufactured for the test and that these pictures could be used in the research dissertation. This agreement was facilitated by a translator. A consent form was distributed, read with assistance from a translator, and signed by the chosen participants in both Phases One and Two (Appendix 8 and Appendix 12). All participants were fully aware that I would collect data in the process through photography and interviews and that the data was for a research dissertation that might be published. The participants were asked about how they preferred to be represented in the document and they preferred their full names and faces to be associated with the project. For the Photovoice exercise, before photographing any community member, there was verbal agreement between the participants and the photographed parties. The community members were informed that this was an exercise for a research study, the photographs may be published in a dissertation and that the photographs would not, in any way, be used for income gain (which was one of the community’s biggest concerns). In addition I considered appropriate ethical measures with the four women who modelled my garment samples. All four models were informed about the study and that their photographs would be included in a catalogue that would be viewed by the public. They were also informed about
the reasons for selecting them and that their names would not be used in the catalogue. The models were given the opportunity to decide if they wanted their faces to be shown on the catalogue. All negotiations with the models were verbal.

**MY ROLE IN THE INTERVENTION AND AWARENESS OF DIFFERENCE**

In the training interventions I assumed three roles: researcher, facilitator and change agent. As a facilitator I was involved in imparting to the participants the objectives outlined for each training cycle. These objectives included introducing training in the areas of sewing, business, enterprise development and marketing. In order to prepare the training outside of my area of expertise I researched, collaborated and implemented the knowledge to suit the context. For example, for printing on materials, I collaborated and consulted with Cloudia Hartwig, a printmaking and art teacher and her students from Artist Proof Studio (APS) and I worked with Ntanganedzeni Ngwana, a graduate in BCom Accounting, for certain business-related training. I recognise that the approach of PAR promotes equal collaboration in the research process, however I also introduced to the participants new concepts and knowledge. With this in mind I attempted to keep some parts of the training on a consultative level by encouraging the participants’ input through group reflections and discussions during which I facilitated the dialogue. I was also involved in the reflections of all action cycles in order to relate and use my expertise to address concerns, suggestions and shortcomings raised by the group. The participants were informed that the project was also a research study and understood that throughout the course of the intervention I recorded data about the process through photography, journaling and voice recordings as these activities fulfilled my role as researcher.

During the research process, it seemed vital to raise the question of power relations between myself, as an outsider, and the HaMakuya-based participants. The question was linked directly to the interplay between myself as a young, urban-based Zulu-speaking male, and elderly, rural-based Venda-speaking women. I was aware that I was entering a totally different setting to my own and that the difference could have stirred reaction from the community. My young age and inability to speak Tshivenda could be difficult for the women to accept or deal with as a result of them being used to interacting in Tshivenda. Additionally, my fashion design educational background could have also given the participants and community members the misconception that I had answers related to fashion design and its related capacities, such as sewing techniques, whereas I was hoping to interact with the members to solve a common problem. This design problem was the investigation of the
potential for fashion design capacities and alternative arts-based approaches to assist in the development of the community of HaMakuya. I was also aware that my introducing a skill that others could perceive as female-oriented could raise question about my sexual orientation or the perception of masculinity in the HaMakuya context. HaMakuya seemed to be a heteronormative and patriarchal community in which alternative sexualities might not be acknowledged, and are possibly not particularly socially acceptable. These statements about HaMakuya are based on my own observation and there is no study to support my assumptions.

In the development project, this difference did not deter the interaction between myself and the participants. During all cycles the participants have made me feel welcomed however; there were two instances where locally-based, male customers were shocked to encounter a male using a sewing machine. The different personal investments between the participants and male customers, I believe, influenced the varied reactions. These investments included the participants only being interested in learning new skills whilst the customers wanted a service rendered by the female seamstresses. My male identity, however, was advantageous during occasions when male customers required their waists to be measured for clothing orders or repairs. The participants were uncomfortable with measuring the males when another male (myself) could complete that task.

PROJECT ACTION CYCLES
In this section I describe the implementation of the methods and tools, including a discussion of how the models were adapted to achieve the objectives for each cycle.

Phase One (May 2012 - November 2012)
Pre-Phase and Cycle One
The aim of this cycle was to understand the context and access available resources in order to conduct the study. Additionally, I aimed to understand the background of Tshulu Trust, the community of HaMakuya and the situation of the previous sewing group. The purpose was to conduct a feasibility study of the proposed participatory action research initiative in the HaMakuya context and, if deemed feasible, to introduce the research project to the selected participants. By conducting the feasibility study, I also aimed to cultivate insight about the local context that may assist to design training interventions that would have supported the sustainability of the co-operative. In this cycle I explored and experienced the ‘look, think and
act' routine individually as the researcher (Cycle Graphic 1) and outlined key tasks. The data gathered from the feasibility cycle assisted me to facilitate the action plans in Cycles One, Two, Three and Four.

Graph 1: Cycle Graphic 1 'look, think, act and reflect' cycle in preparation for the training interventions.

Objectives of pre-Phase

Site background

In the initial stages I gathered information through a semi-structured interview with Dr. Allen (Appendix 5). The interview provided contextual information about the Trust and the previous sewing co-operative, and enabled me: (1) to establish and identify the goals that Tshulu Trust has for enterprises in HaMakuya; (2) to understand the rationale for wanting to re-start the sewing co-operative; (3) to investigate the approach used to establish the previous co-

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24 Please note that the cycle graphics represent only the outlined cycle training interventions and, although other challenges did exist, they were interwoven into the next cycle. These challenges were addressed during reflections and are not represented on the cycle graphics.
operative and; (4) to discover what the previous training and implementation lacked and fulfilled.

In an attempt to inform my engagement with the community of HaMakuya, I participated in the Home-stay Programme that Tshulu Trust organises for first-time visitors and researchers. I was hosted by a family of four in a village called Sanari. I shared the experience with two BTech Fine Art students from the University of Johannesburg. This experience enlightened me about the living conditions of HaMakuya residents by engaging with the host family in their daily activities. The activities included playing local games, sitting under the tree, using a toilet system different to my own, collecting water and firewood and watching children play games. My participation in the programme informed my perception and helped me to understand the possible impact that the living conditions of HaMakuya might have on the research project. For example the time consumed in the household chores of collecting water and firewood, and in starting a fire before preparing a meal (Figures 5a, 5b, 5c and 5d).

At a later stage the participants decided to attend training during certain hours of the day in order to complete their household chores. The insights I gained from the home-stays...
experience helped me to understand this decision. Moreover, by allowing the participants to make certain decisions such as their own working time, the intervention became more involved and participatory as per PAR.

Review documents and establish site assets
Tshulu Trust made business documents of the previous sewing co-operative available for me to review. These documents included prices of products, visuals of previously manufactured products and a list of available assets in order to conduct an inventory checklist. The first sewing group from 2007 had an assortment of products that ranged from homeware products such as kitchenware, linen and officeware. Bags, travel accessories and clothes were also produced. The price list accessed here assisted in deciding the pricing of products manufactured by the new group in order to remain within the price range. The sewing room had available assets and these included: four domestic sewing machines, a large working and storage space, one heavy duty safety stitch machine, one heavy duty twin-needle sewing machine, fabric surpluses from the previous sewing group, a pressing board and iron, patternmaking equipment, two large and two small cutting tables, and six chairs.

The information and assets contributed to designing the training intervention as well as the sample products that were viable in relation to the available assets. The number of sewing machines, tables and chairs also indicated the number of participants the training could accommodate. The outcomes of the interview and document analyses allowed for the proposal of new approaches and appreciation of previous successes. The appreciation of successes and sticking to what might have previously worked matched appreciative inquiry, a form of approach I was introduced to in the workshops before the intervention begun. As a result Dr. Allen and I formed the criteria for participant selection. With this information, the project was advertised by Tshulu Trust as a training opportunity in sewing and entrepreneurship and the applicants filled in an application form at the Resource Centre (Appendix 6).

Selection of project members and research participants
The applicants completed a practical test and an interview facilitated by a translator. The practical test involved the applicants cutting, sewing and embellishing pot holders in a step-by-step procedure (Appendix 7). The pot holder seemed a relevant product to manufacture
as female community members cook at most three times a day at their homes. I assessed the end-product and conducted informal interviews which assisted me to select the participants (Figure 6). I read the consent forms to the newly-appointed participants and thereafter signed the forms with the members (See Appendix 8). In order to interact with the participants I worked with a translator throughout the research project and the training interventions. (See Appendix 9 for the biography of the participants who joined the project in 2012).

Figure 6: Applicant with pot holder. Photograph by the author.

Reflections on Pre-phase
In this cycle I conducted the feasibility of the project and study and I was able to plan the intervention based on the situation and the available resources. With the outcomes of the feasibility, I was able to provide preliminary training. The preliminary training was imparted for two reasons: firstly, in order to establish a training style suitable for a HaMakuya context. This also included the use of Photovoice in the home-stays programme which was one of the arts-based tools in the training. Secondly, I was able to plan a participatory approach in the intervention. By conducting the feasibility study I aimed to ensure sustainable strategies that could work for the sewing co-operative. Consequently, I began the first training cycle which was to introduce sewing skills.

Cycle One
Sewing was a key activity within the project because it accomplished the manufacturing and embellishing part in production. Although it is discussed only in this section it featured in all training cycles as some products were suggested and manufactured through engaging in group reflections and by responding to market suggestions. Holistically, the products and services included Venda fusion products and other products and services apart from this niche, for example school uniform and garment mending. This constant development of the
sewing and transformation of products as the action cycles progressed aligned with the developmental nature of iterative action cycles.

In order to facilitate the training in sewing skills I employed other tools that I introduced to the participants, including the usage of the camera, Gantt chart and the logic model. A pertinent consideration for the training was to plan it according to the available resources, including the funding received from the NRF. Secondly, the participants decided to train on weekdays - for seven hours on school holidays and five hours on normal school days.25

In 2012 the research project attracted women who were all mothers and mostly wives (Mashudu Mphidi being the only unmarried woman). Grace Mutele and Seani Muntswu were the only participants with other extra commitments outside of the project. Grace Mutele was a volunteer at the local primary school and Seani Muntswu was completing her matric through Abet training. All the participants could not speak English fluently except for two who spoke vaguely (Seani Muntswu and Phumudzo Munwana). In light of this I planned a training approach that could balance the multiple roles of the women through the ‘look, think and act’ routine (Cycle Graphic 2). Rophiwa Mathelese and Mavis were also chosen as participants but remained for a very short time.

25 The times were decided by the group attracted in the 2013 training year.
Objectives of Cycle One
In this section I describe the approach and methods that I used to train the participants in different aspects of sewing. I identified four teaching and learning objectives: an introduction to sewing, the alignment of production with the Tshulu Trust mission statement, the organisation of the production process, and the production of items from remnant materials.

Introduction to sewing
I began by introducing the group to different sewing equipment and machinery and used the camera as a visual tool to train the participants to use the sewing machinery. The participants were, at first, given a camera to document the sequences and actions before using the machines. The second use of the camera included capturing common problems encountered during sewing, the actions to resolve the problems and the expected result (Figures 7 and 8a, 8b, 8c and 8d). In this way, the participants are given the opportunity to experience the action cycle routine by being enabled to explore ways to resolve the problem and apply their own learning by using the sewing machines.

26 In the project and study the camera is used to train the participants and as a tool to facilitate Photovoice. Photovoice is explored in another part of the production process.
In this cycle, the participants were encouraged to use less costly fabrics so that they could learn from their mistakes before using expensive fabrics like *nwenda*. I introduced foundation skills to sew different garment details that I incorporated on a single product, such as zip and sleeve insertion, different seam types and garment finishes (Figure 9). The outcomes from the discussions and reflections of the activities influenced the samples manufactured by the participants in the succeeding cycles. For example, a choice was subsequently made to incorporate certain design details on the template products that were manufactured in the succeeding cycles.

27 *Thaidzo* and *thandululo* are Tshivenda words that mean problem and solution respectively.
Align production with Tshulu Trust mission statement

I used the idea of Venda fusion for this learning objective and adapted Tshulu Trust’s mission to enhance responsible wellbeing and livelihoods by improving the capacity of community members to utilise their natural and cultural resources sustainably for product conceptualising and manufacture. I utilised the essence of the mission statement to form the objective for this activity by introducing Photovoice to the participants to use in the design process of the first set of Venda fusion products. I approached Photovoice in an appreciative fashion and tasked the participants to respond to the environment of HaMakuya. In the exercise, the participants were tasked to document, photographically, the unique features in the surrounding environment of HaMakuya. The photographs were interpreted into embellishment details on products.

Photovoice has been explained to begin with identifying a theme for the photographs being captured. However, in this exercise it began by: (1) identifying a theme; (2) discussing the images the participants wanted to capture; (3) photographing the images and (4) communicating the narratives. In a discussion for the exercise the participants outlined ideas
of images and looked at the path that they used daily to get to the project venue to find aspects from the environment that were consequently interpreted into embellishment details.

**Organise production process**

The quantity and complexity of products increased with time and consequently there was a need to organise the manufacturing process. The members identified school uniforms as a potential local market and girls’ school dresses were thus used as an example to monitor production by drafting the Gantt chart. The chart was drawn up to monitor the time to manufacture products, however it was also used specifically for the production of school uniforms because the production of the uniform offered a standard production flow and planning it seemed practical. In implementing the Gantt chart, I assisted the participants to write down the different steps to complete the garment. There was the first column for the participants to tick off a step as they completed it, a second column for time allocation of each step and thirdly a column for the actual time a step took (Figure 10). With this I intended for the participants to analyse if the target time had been attained once the product was completed. Although the Gantt chart was used to challenge an individual’s performance, it was drafted in a group setting prior to production.

![Image of Gantt chart]

**Figure 10: Initial Gantt chart plan. Photograph by the author.**
Produce from remnant materials
The sewing co-operative experienced some financial difficulties and the members were not comfortable with accepting a loan from Tshulu Trust. I asked the participants to identify the available resources that could be used to make products and reduce costs. This included remnant materials which were resources used to manufacture products such as money sacks, pencil cases and keyholders. In addition some clients preferred products with nwenda used as a small feature and remnants of nwenda material were used for such products.

Reflections: Cycle One
In this training I attempted to equip the members with various sewing and production skills. I also focused on preparing the members to maximise the opportunity to improve their finances by using available resources and increasing the possibility to generate sales. The tools and methods I employed to provide training in sewing skills allowed the participants to continue to manufacture products independent of me. The members now needed to focus on operating the sewing project as a business and the next cycle focused on business skills training.

Cycle Two

Graph 3: Cycle Graphic 3 the reflective questions for business skills training.
The Tshulu Trust manager gave the group a money box in which to save the generated profit. I advised the participants to develop a system for recording all finances (Cycle Graphic 3). This cycle focused largely on engendering entrepreneurial skills and I refer to such business-related training activities as bookkeeping, income statement and trial balance recording.\(^{28}\)

**Objectives of Cycle Two**

In this cycle I outlined the objectives to fulfil the purpose for business skills training and identified two main objectives for the training cycle. These objectives included: (1) to train the participants to interact with English-speaking clients and (2) to record finances.

**Interaction with clients**

The participants do not use English as a medium of communication and there was a lack of interaction with their English-speaking clientele. During some presentations the members were unwelcoming and not responding to customer requests. Additionally, they wanted the translator to assist with communication and this reality was disempowering and unsustainable. Consequently, I decided to introduce role-play as a method to support this limitation. The role-play session was enacted after products were manufactured and the Tshulu Trust manager took the role of an English-speaking client (Figures 11a and 11b). The purpose of the session was not for the participants to learn English in a short space of time but to encourage the group to develop plans to amend their interaction with customers. After this exercise, during a presentation for a client base I observed a change in the way the participants interacted with customers. All of them were welcoming and confident in saying the prices of the products to their customers.

\(^{28}\) I designed the training in business in 2012, however, it was implemented in 2013 again with help from Ntanganedzeni Ngwana. I will discuss her role in the later cycles. Although the business skills training cycle is discussed as a part of Phase One, it began in Phase One and continued to Phase Two in 2013.
Recording finances

As a result of the NRF funding covering only the training interventions, the group received training to keep a constant record of the costs incurred during production as well as the sales. This was done on a monthly basis and the group allocated the task to Mashudu Mphidi. The members were also given the opportunity to view the financial development of the co-operative by plotting the total figures of monthly sales on a frequency polygon graph. On the graph, the months (x-axis) are set up against sales (y-axis). Tshulu Trust informed the group that the Tshulu Camp visits happened generally between mid-March and late September, and many of the co-operative’s tourist-orientated sales occur at this time. With this information I also aimed, with the graph, to assist the members to distinguish between periods of high and low sales volumes. I aimed for the group members to use this information to plan other possible business ventures during periods of low sales volume. I kept a record of this data from the graph in my journal to measure the enhancement of the participants’ economic stability.

Reflections: Cycle Two and way forward

My attempt with this training was to arrange a system for operating the business side by using the methods introduced in the learning activities. However, the participants did not record and update the sales and costs on a regular basis and as a result the available data did not balance at times. In Phase One the attendance was poor and this exacerbated the poor financial record keeping (Appendix 10). Therefore there was a need to introduce a new approach to business skills training in Phase Two. Thus, the intervention continued into the new cycle to formalise its structure as a reputable business.

In Phase One I also assisted the participants to draft a constitution for the co-operative for two reasons. Firstly, the rules and policies provided by the constitution were an attempt to
formalise organisational structures. Secondly, the constitution formed part of the objectives that I had outlined for the next cycle. The final constitution draft was translated into Tshivenda by a Tshulu Trust employee during December 2012. The co-operative also attained a name. This was prompted by the presentation of a school uniform sample to a local primary school, and the participants did not want to present the co-operative without a name. During the presentation the title was the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative, a name that was suggested in a conversation with a client. The group and I also drafted ideas for a logo that would brand the products and co-operative. The design of the logo included collaboration with a group of art and printmaking second year students from APS, a printmaking school in Johannesburg. The images (including some unused images) from the previous Photovoice exercise were used as part of a brief for the students from APS. The images provided the art students with a visual picture of HaMakuya and inspiration for their design and art-making process. A request from the participants was the incorporation of the word ‘Zwonaka’ on the label and these labels were used on products manufactured in the 2013 training year (Figure 12). The inclusion of labels on products transformed the sewing process because the members had to think about the correct placement of labels on products.

![Figure 12: Final print design from APS. Photograph by the author.](image)

29 The name means ‘beautiful’ and was suggested by a client from the UJ writing workshop. The client suggested something beautiful in reference to the products the group made. Please note that from this point onwards I refer to the Tshulu sewing co-operative as the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

30 The students from APS worked in the research project as a community engagement project in their annual syllabus. The students also screen printed some fabrics which were used for the garments of the fashion show. I attended the printing classes with the students in order to sharpen my own screen printing skills in order to teach the participants in HaMakuya to print their own fabrics. (See Appendix 11 for the students’ brief given to them by their lecturer at APS and the brief from the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative).
**Phase Two (March 2013 – September 2013)**

There were some changes in the project at the beginning of Phase Two with the recruitment of new members. Due to the experience of the previous year, the participants of Phase Two already operated either as seamstresses or entrepreneurs. Grace Mutele continued as a member while Mashudu Mphidi remained for only two days of Phase Two. The intake of new members meant introducing sewing once again and checking the sewing and business skills of the new members against the already imparted skills of older members. A positive aspect to training the new members was that the problems encountered in Phase One and the work that was carried over to Phase Two were not implemented as revision (although it was revision for Grace Mutele) but rather as new training. The new members included Tendani Mukhada, Sylvia Tshikovhi and Ntshengedzeni Sigonda and they signed a new consent form and terms of agreement (See Appendix 8 for their biographies and Appendices 12 and 13).

**Sewing skills in Phase Two**

There was a general change in sewing with a sense of agency and a proactive attitude shown by the new participants to developing their own products. The participants combined some skills from the training with their own previous sewing skills to design and manufacture new products. This redirected my planned intervention, which included bringing pre-designed products, towards working with the members’ products and continuing to do what was of interest to them.

**Business skills in Phase Two**

After the poor record keeping in Phase Two, I consulted with Ntanganedzeni Ngwana, who was the new translator, to plan the business skills training. I interacted with the members to complete a trial balance as a chart in an attempt to make record keeping more effective and collaborative and to avoid allocating the task to one person. The trial balance chart was drafted into separate columns comprising the date, quantity, price and total (Figure 13).

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31 Ntanganedzeni Ngwana is a graduate in BCom Accounting and is studying correspondence with UNISA for her Honours Degree. She was employed by Tshulu Trust in 2013 to work on various projects for the trust. Her expertise is used to assist with the business of the sewing co-operative and this continues when I am not on site.
I introduced a systematic approach for financial recordkeeping by encouraging the members to initially record immediate sales in a book for every sale, and later use this information to complete the trial balance chart. A writing order was suggested and it comprised the date of the purchase, product name, quantity, price per unit and a signature. Therefore, the generated sales were used to complete the sales sections of the trial balance as well as the monthly sales totals plotted on the frequency polygon graph. The expenses incurred were recorded on the expenses section of the trial balance.
Cycle Three

Graph 4: Cycle Graphic 4 the routine developed for enterprise development.

Objectives of Cycle Three
There was a need to organise and plan more formalised structures to develop the co-operative according to the requirements in South Africa (Cycle Graphic 4). There were three objectives that underpinned this cycle and these were to: (1) draft a constitution; (2) open up a business account and; (3) register the co-operative with the Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office (CIPRO).

Constitution
In an earlier discussion with the participants during 2012, they decided to structure the co-operative as a saving scheme. This meant that a certain percentage of the savings was drawn in December as remuneration while another percentage was left to keep the business mobile. With this information, I downloaded a template of a constitution structure as a saving scheme - commonly known in South Africa as a *stokvel*. The template has different sections that were time-consuming and required group discussions. For this reason I split the different sections into hour-long daily discussions. Glenda Livhuaani Thanyani assisted me in engaging in these discussions.\(^{32}\) I collected notes of the thoughts communicated by the

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\(^{32}\) This task was completed in Phase One when Glenda Livhuaani Thanyani was the translator.
participants and consequently an English constitution draft was formed and interpreted in December 2012 by Reuben Tshitangano, the Education Outreach Officer for Tshulu Trust (Appendix 14). The final copies of the English and Tshivenda constitution were displayed on the wall for all members to read (Figure 14a). The new members read the copy and recommended some changes (Figure 14b). A major change was to rearrange the times to suit the new members’ availability as three of the four participants worked at a local primary school. The participants requested to start at 9:30 during school holidays and at 11:00 during normal school days.

Figure 14a: Constitution on the wall. Photograph by the author.

Figure 14b: Sylvia Tshikovhi reading the constitution. Photograph by the author
**Business account**

The next objective was to open up a business account for the sewing co-operative. The group decided to have Sylvia Tshikovhi call a bank and enquire about opening an account (Figure 15). The bank required a constitution and copies of the identity documents of three members who would sign for withdrawing funds. The members decided to give the signing power to Tendani Mukhada, Sylvia Tshikovhi and Ntshengedzeni Sigonde (Figure 16). Another document needed for this objective was a certified letter from the participants’ village headmen as proof of residence.

![Figure 15: Sylvia Tshikovhi during a co-operative-related cellular phone conversation. Photograph by the author.](image)

![Figure 16: Members filling in documents assisted by a bank employee. Photograph by the author.](image)

**Register the co-operative**

For the objective to register the co-operative with CIPRO, there were key documents required at CIPRO. These documents included: a completed CR1 form, a payment of R215, certified identity document copies, a co-operative constitution drafted according to a template provided by CIPRO, a letter from an auditor or an exemption form if there was no auditor, and a minimum number of five members. The last two requirements were challenges that resulted in the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative not being able to get registered within the research period. However, the members and the manager of Tshulu Trust did suggest some options to remedy the situation. There were four participants which meant that there were four founding members of the co-operative and a need for at least one extra member. The participants decided that I join the board as an advisor and this solution
also lengthened our working relationship. This decision addressed one challenge of this task, however there was also a need for an auditor or for the co-operative to be exempt from auditing requirements with CIPRO. The Tshulu Trust manager suggested that an auditor of the Trust who is based in Johannesburg could be asked to support the co-operative in this regard. As organising an auditor takes a long time to plan, in the meantime the decision was to reserve the working name of Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative with CIPRO for a period of three months. The co-operative registration fee of R215 was also paid, achieving this aspect of the objective.

**Cycle Four**

This training cycle focuses on marketing the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative and its products and services in HaMakuya to the South African and international market. The plans were developed through Stringer’s (1999) reflection cycle routine (Cycle Graphic 5). In addition I concluded the research study and my involvement as trainer and facilitator by tasking the participants to produce garments that were modelled in a HaMakuya-based fashion show. In order to introduce the sewing co-operative to the national and international market the products and information about the co-operative were included on the Tshulu Trust website and the Trust’s Facebook page.

Graph 5: Cycle Graphic 5 the routine developed for marketing the co-operative.
Objectives of Cycle Four

I outlined the objectives of the cycle and these were to organise a public showing of new products in HaMakuya and to select a range of products to be included on the Tshulu Trust website. These objectives addressed the second aim of the research study to produce a range of fashion products to exhibit to the public.

Community fashion show

I introduced the *Ukuswenka* fashion competition as a case analysis to train the participants to organise their own fashion show, as *Ukuswenka* remains within a community context. The competition was started in 2011 by Jonna Slappendel in association with HIVSA and involves collaboration between a Soweto-based fashion designer and a Soweto-based sewing group. The fashion designer trains the group to make clothes for an end-of-year fashion competition within the three categories: ‘gogo’ (granny), pregnant young women, and children. In all categories the contestants represent a sewing project from a specific township to make their own outfit which they model in a fashion show.

With this information I re-introduced the logic model to distribute different tasks among the members to plan the fashion show. We collectively focused on five categories for the logic model and these included: (1) clothing, (2) models, (3) venue, (4) music and, (5) audience (Figure 17).

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33 *Ukuswenka* is a Soweto township lingo word which means 'to look good when wearing clothes', which is probably derived from the English colloquial word, swank, which refers to being fashionable or stylish. The purpose of the competition is to begin conversation between the young and old in various social topics that range from accepted dress codes to HIV and AIDS and support and promote the Soweto-based sewing projects and fashion designers. Read further on *Ukuswenka* on www.jonnaworks.nl.
Audience, music and venue

Three local musicians Obed Ramashiya, Moses Maliasi and Reuben Tshitangano (who had recently started a band) agreed to provide music for the fashion show and thus the music column of the logic model was completed. The next responsibility was to advertise the fashion show to the community. This task responded to the audience column of the logic model. For advertising, a banner was painted and Mbali Dhlamini, a Visual Art BTech student who participated in the 2013 UJ’s Arts-based approaches for development programme assisted the participants with drawing and painting (Figure 18a). I suggested that the members display the finished banners in areas frequented by people in HaMakuya. The group thought that the Resource Centre and the Makuya Tribal Authority Council offices were appropriate display areas and the security of the premises guaranteed that the banners would remain on display until the fashion show (Figures 18b and 18c). The members also decided to set up a meeting with the Makuya Tribal Authority Council chairperson to disseminate the information about the show to different villages and I accompanied Tendani Mukhada to this meeting. The participants were asked to write an official invitation letter that would be presented at the next tribal meeting (a week before the fashion show).
Clothing and models

My responsibility was to assist the members to design a set of clothing for the event that was produced by each participant. The clothing included a two-piece skirt and top ensemble. Sylvia Tshikovhi (one of the fastest seamstresses) fell ill during the week of the fashion show and the other members decided that they would split the work to complete her outfit. The group visited Sylvia Tshikovhi at her home for fittings and for her to select her fabrics which helped the members to manufacture her clothes (Figure 19a). All the participants’ clothing were made from *nwenda* that had been printed by the students from APS (Figures 19b and 19c). Tendani Mukhada and Ntshengedzeni Sigonde who are members of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) requested that a headscarf be included for their outfits as it was expected of them to always keep their heads covered.

During the fashion show Tshulu Trust allowed the participants to use one of the rooms as a changing room and the veranda as the stage for parading (Figures 19d and 19e). After the fashion show I presented the participants with certificates for their participation in the training (Appendix 15). Sylvia Tshikovhi was still ill on the day of the fashion show but attended the event to receive her certificate for participation in the project (Figures 19f). The fashion event was intended to launch the sewing co-operative to the community of HaMakuya, so the manufactured products were sold to the community members at reduced prices and from this the members generated an amount of R570 (Figures 19h).
Figures 19a: Sylvia Tshikovhi fitting a sample sewn by the other participants at her home. Photograph by the author.
Figure 19b: Grace Mutele fitting the top. Photograph by the author.
Figure 19c: Final fitting before fashion show. Photograph by the author.

Figure 19d: Backstage before the show. Photograph by the author.
Figure 19e: Parade during the fashion show. Photograph by the author.

Figure 19f: Sylvia Tshikovhi receiving her certificate. Photograph by Fani.
Figure 19g: Tendani Mukhada celebrates receiving her certificate. Photograph by the author.

Figure 19h: Community members viewing the products. Photograph by the author.
Products on the Tshulu Trust website

I provided Dr. Allen with background information about the participants and co-operative and some visuals of the products to include on the Tshulu Trust website. The website was also uploaded with information about the services provided by the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. The sewing co-operative also received marketing by including some information on the Tshulu Trust Facebook page. This was an attempt for the co-operative to benefit from the tourism market provided by Tshulu Trust.34

After experiencing all the action cycles and implementing the objectives, I completed the cycles of the research study after providing the members with sufficient skills to manufacture and design new products, to manage the business and market the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

**Cycle Five**

This cycle responded to the third aim of the study in which I designed and manufactured prototypes of a fashion range inspired by my HaMakuya experience. The reflection on the cycles and experience were important aspects to cultivate the themes and concepts for the range and I kept a visual diary and journal to document my ideas. This approach to reflection is based on Patti Clayton’s (2010) notion of service-learning and her assertion that “[r]eflection is the element of experiential education (including service-learning) that helps students avoid ‘having the experience but missing meaning.’ When understood and designed as critical reflection and integrated with assessment, it generates, deepens, and documents learning” (Clayton 2010:1). In principle the fashion range was an expression of my learning and growth as a designer gathered from the project. Some students from the UJ’s *Arts-based approaches for development* programme expressed their learning through the DEAL model and its three categories for service learning: personal growth, civic learning and academic enhancement but I chose to do so with the fashion range. This cycle is described in greater detail in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

**CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I demonstrated the implementation of the training interventions to develop a sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust. The interventions followed the methodology of iterative

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34 Further reading and viewing about the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative is available on www.tshulutrust.org and the Tshulu Trust facebook page.
action cycles that each focused on particular purposes. I used arts-based tools and methods of Photovoice, role-play and photo documentation and participatory and interactive methods such as the logic model, Gantt chart and frequency polygon graph in the training. This chapter has attempted to promote PAR as a model that is both regenerative and participatory but also an approach that might ensure the sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. In the following chapter I present and discuss the findings drawn from the training interventions that respond to the research question about how best arts-based training interventions through PAR may support the sustainability of a sewing co-operative.
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss and analyse the outcomes of the methods implemented in the research project and described in Chapter Two. The methods are implemented in order to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative through establishing the participants as active role players in the development process. I present the outcomes from the training that I imparted to the seamstresses in sewing and business skills, enterprise development and marketing of the sewing co-operative and products. Arts-based and visual tools were employed in some of the interventions and in this chapter I evaluate their impact to the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. The evaluation for sustainability is based on the four pillars of the sustainability indexes provided by Atkisson’s (2011) concept of the Compass of Sustainability which are nature, wellbeing, economy and society. I present a table for each cycle that describes the objective, methods, tools and models used to achieve the goals of each cycle. The tables are followed by paragraphs in which I discuss and evaluate the outcomes and link these outcomes to indexes for sustainability. The last section of the chapter sums up the findings and addresses the question about the impact that PAR and arts-based training interventions might have on the sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. This approach to evaluating development work draws on the model of Developmental Evaluation (DE) as promoted by Michael Quinn Patton (2011).

Training interventions divided into iterative action cycles

Although I present the text in a neat and linear sequence and describe four training interventions within four cycles, the research process in reality did not transpire in an orderly manner, and actually required a total of eight visits to HaMakuya (four site visits in each year). As development is emergent, difficult to predict and non-linear (Dozois et al 2010:10), the additional visits were used to address the challenges that arose with the development process. The training focused on imparting sewing and business skills and developing the enterprise formally, as well as marketing. In addition I focused on the use of arts-based approaches within the frame of PAR to involve the participants in the development process. My approach was based on the understanding that citizen participation is a key element to sustainability for the sewing co-operative, as stated by Ramphele (2012:210): “sustainable
development is only possible through active engagement of citizens in all phases of the process”. For this reason, I planned with these engaged training interventions to inculcate ownership and control of the sewing co-operative amongst the participants as a result of the members being able to manufacture, manage and market their own products and business in the future. In this way, as part of the training process I introduced a number of techniques and tools to assist project management. These techniques and tools included the logic model, the Gantt chart and the frequency polygon graph. The extent to which the participants and I adopted and adapted these tools to forge a management approach specific to the co-operative responded to the ultimate sustainability of the sewing co-operative.

The Compass of Sustainability framework in the study

I employed the Compass of Sustainability by Alan Atkisson (2011) as a framework to measure the sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. In the evaluation process I identified indicators that I aligned with the indexes of nature, society, wellbeing and society for sustainability which are outlined by the Compass. This sustainability framework is used to assist people to find direction and to reach a central point (Atkisson 2011:143). The central point for the sewing co-operative was to be in a position where it incorporated and linked its activities and operations to the four indexes of sustainability. In the nature index, I considered the development of sustainable management of resources as well as the operation systems. The operation systems included the production and business operations. The economy index included the effectiveness and efficiency of work and productivity and how income improved the lives of the participants. For the index of society, I viewed the development of leadership among the members and the ways in which the community was incorporated into the sewing co-operative. In this way I also measured the participants’ transformation of their roles in society. The last index was the wellbeing and happiness of the individuals and the development of relationships among the individuals as business partners. With this strong and holistic framework the sewing cooperative may conceivably remain a sustainable initiative if it has a business and production system which is managed by satisfied business partners, and is a business that incorporates its community into its operation.
Phase One

Sewing and business skills training

Phase One was implemented in 2012 and focused on training the participants in foundational sewing and business skills as the members had not received any such training prior to the intervention. In this section I discuss and analyse the outcomes of the sewing and business skills training which I applied in Cycles Two and Three respectively. In Phase One the objective was to establish a team of business partners for the new sewing co-operative with sufficient skills to manufacture products and offer other sewing services. This objective responded to the first aim in Chapter One, which was to train the group to have an active role in the development of the new sewing co-operative. For sewing skills I framed learning and training objectives into four learning units and utilised Photovoice and photo documentation within the learning units to instigate interaction between the participants and myself. In order to augment participation and interaction further, I adapted and used the Gantt chart in a group setting. The learning and training objectives were: an introduction to sewing; to align production with the Tshulu Trust mission statement; to organise the production process, and to produce products from remnant materials. Although these objectives are separate, I form categories that I utilise to evaluate their outcomes. The categories are skills training and product development and these categories are integral to the sewing skills training of Cycle One. For business skills training evaluation implemented in Cycle Two, I focused on the participants’ interaction with their clientele and on the individuals being business partners. In the section below I tabulate the key outcomes and evaluation of sewing and business skills training drawn from my observation, activities, group discussions, interviews and reflections. I link, discuss and evaluate the findings according to nature, economy, wellbeing and society, which are the indexes for sustainability in this study.

Cycle One: Sewing skills training

In this evaluation rubric (Table 3) I unpack the training interventions for Cycle One and present the outcomes of the training and learning objectives. Additionally, I discuss in the critical evaluation column how the tools applied in the training contribute to the outcomes of the cycle.
CYCLE PURPOSE

Train participants in different sewing skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEWING TEACHING AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>METHODS, TOOLS AND MODELS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Introduction to sewing                 | Photo documentation to introduce sewing to the participants | • Different sewing steps are photographed and arranged on the wall as a point of reference for the participants to improve their use of the sewing machine  
 • Identify different steps to fix common problems encountered during sewing, for example stitch tension  
 • Photo documentation exercise used to train the members to use the sewing machine assists the participants in their sewing, and the increase in product assortment is testament to an improvement in sewing |
| Align production with Tshulu Trust mission statement and produce from remnant materials | Photovoice exercise aligned with the Trust's mission statement to conceptualise design ideas | • Three products manufactured and embellished with this approach. These products include: skirt, key holder and handbag |
| Organise production process            | The use of the Gantt chart to organise production | • Two Gantt charts drafted for time and task management for product manufacture |

Table 3: Cycle One evaluation rubric.

Discussion of outcomes from Cycle One

The two learning objectives - to train the participants to interpret aspects of the environmental surroundings into embellishment details on Venda fusion products, and to manufacture from remnant materials - are joined for this evaluation as they interlink. I adapted the Tshulu Trust mission statement to formulate the Photovoice exercise (as explained in Chapter Two on methodology) to facilitate this unit. The participants accrued nine photographs through which three products were embellished as an interpretation of three of the nine photographs.

The first product which was developed from the photograph was a skirt with an appliqué detail on the side, which resembled the baobab tree. However; in a discussion with the
participants it was agreed that the design did not work aesthetically (Figures 20a and 20b). The other product was a key holder that incorporated a flower detail resembling a plant from which small, grey flowers sprouted (Figures 21a and 21b). The key holder did not spark significant interest from the market. A handbag which referenced a rondavel was the most successful of the products and throughout the two years, it has sold well (Figures 22a and 22b).

The production of the handbag aligns with the second learning objective as remnant materials were used for embellishments. Although the embellishment on the handbag mostly used remnant materials, there was a need to simplify its production to reduce the selling price for the community, who also showed keen interest in the product. Seani Muntswu stated that “the people here say that the handbag is their favourite but they think it is too expensive” (Muntswu 2012a [Transcript]). The comment revealed that there was communication with the community about the services and products offered by the sewing co-operative. I assisted the group to design products using photographs as references, and the participants expressed that this was a new and worthwhile approach, indicating that the photographs may be useful in conceptualising design ideas in the future.

I introduced the Gantt chart to the participants from the 2012 training year, to monitor and organise production through initiating time and task management during periods of high workload. We applied the Gantt chart when the school uniform committee from Karel Ngigideni Primary School requested to be presented with a sample during a parents’ meeting (Figure 23). On the same day there was tight deadline to present Venda fusion products for sale. The members were able to fulfil both objectives (See Appendix 18). As a result of applying the Gantt chart, the school uniform sample was finished two days before the parents’ meeting which provided sufficient time to make Venda fusion products. Although there were no sales generated from the school uniforms, it is inspiring that the participants gained a valuable new skill outside of Venda fusion which can be used in the future. The sewing co-operative cannot solely depend on the Venda fusion niche market, which is seasonal. Targeting the school uniform market creates an opportunity to keep the sewing project active through periods when Tshulu Trust does not have the visiting student groups that are the main supporters of co-operative’s Venda fusion line.

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35 A discussion of the mid-term review is included in further detail in the next section of this chapter.
The Gantt chart was utilised once again in 2013 to organise large orders with close deadlines. The chart was used to work out a plan of tasks for the week to achieve the delivery dates. This time it was drawn up differently with new columns of the daily task accomplishments and another column for failure to accomplish tasks (Figure 24). At the end of each day, the group discussed the daily activities and organised ways to incorporate the unachieved tasks on another day. The group realised that on the first day of using the chart not all tasks were achieved. As a result of this realisation the members suggested that they work an extra hour for two days. Although not all goods were finished by the targeted time, the members’ decision to work an extra hour showed their ability and commitment as business women to think of ways to meet their deadlines.

Figure 20a: The baobab image from the Photovoice exercise is taken by Phumudzo Munwana on 5 July 2012. Her statement: “The baobab, donkey cart also is things you will only find in HaMakuya and they show the Venda culture really well” (Munwana 2012a [Recorded and Transcribed]). Photograph by Phumudzo Munwana.

Figure 20b: An appliqué detail on a skirt resembling the baobab. Photograph by Qimeng Gao.

Figure 21a: This image is taken on 5 July 2012 by Seani Muntswu and it is an image of a plant that she calls Nigeria. Seani Muntswu’s statement: “I have seen this flower in many Nigerian movies. I watch Nigerian movies a lot and I think maybe we can have this flower to decorate the designs” (Muntswu 2012b [Recorded and Transcribed]). Photograph by Seani Muntswu.

Figure 21b: Interpretation of the flower as a detail for keyholders. Photograph by the author.
Figure 22a: The rondavel in Grace Mutele’s house for the Photovoice exercise. Her statement: “I have a hut in my house that is something you can find in HaMakuya a lot. Maybe that can be included on our clothes” (Mutele 2012b [Recorded and Transcribed]). The image is taken on 5 July 2012 by Grace Mutele as part of the Photovoice exercise. Photograph by Grace Mutele.

Figure 22b: The interpretation of the rondavel on the handbag design. The remnants of materials are used to embellish the handbag. Photograph by the author.

Figure 23: Presentation of sample during parents’ meeting. Photograph by the author.

Figure 24: Gantt chart in Phase Two. Photograph by the author.
Additional outcomes from Cycle One

The participants’ sewing skills developed between Phase One and Phase Two. An influencing factor to the development of sewing skills was the customer demands for new products which continued to grow the participants’ production skills (Table 4). As a result, the training approach that I used for sewing skills training was modified in order to adapt to these changes. Specifically, I opted for more action-based approaches over a theory-dominated method that involved reading from a manual that I had designed for the training. This modification in the training was a response to a mid-term review that I conducted during the November 2012 visit, with ongoing observation of the participants’ responses to how I trained them. The participants regularly asked what was expected of them even though these expectations were stated on the manual. This suggests that the manual approach is not viable in the HaMakuya context.

### Products manufactured in 2012

By the end of Phase One, in November 2012 I trained the participants to produce six different products within the Venda fusion line. These products included handbags, skirts, tablecloths, table runners and placemat sets, aprons and key holders (Figure 26a). The sewing co-operative also ventured into the school uniform market by producing a sample for a primary school girl’s dress which is presented at Karel Ngigideni Primary School (Figure 26b).

### Products manufactured in 2013

In Phase Two, in addition to the products from 2012, there were three styles added to the skirt design from the previous year (Figures 27a, 27b & 27c), beaded jewellery products (bangles, necklace and headpiece) (Figure 27d), men’s Bermuda shorts (Figure 27e), two piece ensemble (top and skirt) (Figure 27f), pencil cases (Figure 27g), tray mats (Figures 27h and 27i), **mukhasi** (Figure 27j), two more apron designs added (Figures 27k and 27l) and pillow cases and cushion covers (Figures 27m and 27n). There were also products that the group experimented with, however, these products did not reach the market within the research period. These products included: sleeping eye shades (Figure 28a), hairbands (Figure 28b), laptop bags and Tshulu Trust staff uniforms (Figure 28c).

Table 4: Product development in 2012 and 2013. More photographs are included on the catalogue accompanying this document.

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36 A **mukhasi** is described by Phophi (2005:16) as “back apron made of fabric, worn by married women and sometimes by girls during initiation ceremonies. It is the attire of the bride’s mates [sic] during the marriage ceremony.” The members produce three pieces of the skirt worn one over the other. The **mukhasi** is a successful product as it is also bought by the camp visitors.
The training manual approach

Initially, I designed a simplified version of a training manual adapted from the UJ's Department of Fashion first year programme Garment Technology guide (Figure 25a). The manual used in HaMakuya was written in English and supported by illustrations. Although I attempted to use visuals and a translator to stimulate better understanding and facilitate the participants' learning, in my observations and experience of applying the manual approach I found that the manual was too advanced and the participants did not show interest as I had anticipated. The problem with the approach was largely based on it being presented in English and most of the participants did not speak and read English well. Perhaps a manual presented in Tshivenda might have worked better however; the group and myself preferred a live and personal approach. I then sought examples of training manuals developed for rural sewing projects. Particularly helpful was a manual developed for the Ametur Project by the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart which guided the modification of my training approach (See Appendix 16).37 The Ametur manual included a combination of text, photographs and drawn images and it was implemented in a community setting.

Figure 25a: Participants looking through the training manual designed by the researcher during the May 2012 training period. The approach is subsequently changed for a more participative approach. Photograph by Glenda Livhuaani Thanyani.

The combination of images and text in the Ametur Project manual was relevant to the training intervention as the camera and subsequent images were employed as references for learning by the participants. The Ametur Project manual paid particular attention to Venda traditional outfits, which was a major focus of the training in this intervention.

37 Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OSLH) is a Roman Catholic religious institute founded in 1874 in Australia. The institute has been developed in many parts of the world and in 1953 the institute was developed in South Africa. Further reading on the institute is available on www.olshaustralia.org.au.
Additionally, their manual focused on craft techniques such as crochet, knitting, patchwork and appliqué, some of which were incorporated on certain products manufactured by the participants (Figures 25b). I changed my training approach by implementing more action-based training instead of reading through a document written in English that the participants could not use independently. I used the *Ametur* Project manual personally to get an idea of training methods and implemented the ideas drawn from it in the sewing activities with the group. With this change in approach, the sewing skills training progressed and different products were manufactured.

The change in the training approach, specifically opting for an action-based approach, contributed to the sustainability of the intervention because the participants improved their sewing skills through practice, and by doing so they suggested and applied their own ideas for products. This agency and independence in production is sustainable for the future of production in the sewing co-operative.

![Figure 25b: Crochet detail on a product manufactured by the participants. Photograph by the author.](image)

**Mid-term review**

The mid-term review provided insight on the impression of the participants about the research project and their additional suggestions for the 2013 training year, particularly on sewing and business plans that I could consolidate into the 2013 interventions. For the review I focused on the project’s contribution to the participants’ skills development, economic situation and also to garner from the group opinions on the sustainability of the sewing co-operative (See Appendix 17). I also reviewed the frequency polygon graph to see whether sales and expenses were being recorded consistently. Although I completed the review myself, afterwards I discussed with the participants action plans to address some concerns. The inconsistent recording of finances was an example of this as it primarily
resulted from inconsistent attendance. The review was a way to reflect on the 2012 training year and establish a way forward.

The participants expressed collectively that they felt confident to sew independently the products they had been trained to make. Grace Mutele commented that the photo documentation helped her sewing and stated that “I am now able to see if I am going wrong in my sewing because I even look at the pictures on the wall” (Mutele 2012d [Transcript]). This testimony suggested that with photo documentation, the participants were capable of improving their sewing skills. However, the participants desired to be trained to manufacture more products such as traditional *nwenda*, seat covers and curtains. Seani Muntswu, who was the most forthright in her suggestions, expressed that “we need to include seat covers and sell the apron with a hat [head cover] as a set because people have to cover their heads when they cook, maybe we can include this next year” (Muntswu 2012a [Transcript]). Phumudzo Munwana concurred with Seani Muntswu’s idea and added that “we have to include shirts for school boys, as we currently only have uniforms for girls, I have a son I would like to sew things for too” (Munwana 2012b [Transcript]).

In further interrogation of the two responses, and recalling the interests of the participants in their biographies, I realised that the responses from Seani Muntswu and Phumudzo Munwana suggested that they wished to align their participation in the project with their domiciliary lives. Seani Muntswu, in introducing herself at the beginning of the interventions, expressed a love for decorating her home and wanting to learn how to sew seat covers (Appendix 9). Phumudzo Munwana, on the other hand, has a son who attends a different primary school from the children of the other participants and thus may possibly have wanted to include the shirts to benefit another customer such as parents with sons like herself. Phumudzo Munwana’s suggestion indicated that the participants were inspired to make products by the potential use value of such products in their own lives. Since their lives are so similar to that of other community members, this experience was useful in targeting product development.

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38 At this time Mashudu Mphidi gave birth and did not attend some training classes prior to and after her delivery. She was not a part of the mid-term review however; I did manage to conduct the interview from her home. I was only able to gather her input on the training that she received which was not the same amount of training that the other members received.
An encouraging manifestation of ownership and motivation core to the sustainability of the co-operative was demonstrated by the ability of the participants to transfer the model of an idea that worked to a different product line. For instance, the development of the product offering of the three-piece *mukhasi*, the jewellery set (bangle, headpiece and necklace) and the top and skirt ensemble (as shown on Table 3), which was included in Phase Two was informed by Seani Muntswu’s suggestion to include sets of products sold as one, such as the apron and hat ensemble discussed above.

Figure 26a: Products manufactured by the end of 2012. Photograph by the author.
Figure 26b: School uniform sample worn by Seani Muntswu’s daughter. Photograph by the author.

Figure 27a: The mini skirt developed by the participants is one of the three skirt styles. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27b: Tendani Mukhada wearing the second skirt design. It is the skirt worn under the mukhasi three piece and alternatively can be sold as a sole product. The skirt was developed independently by the participants. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27c: Third skirt design introduced during the process. Photograph by the author.

Figure 27d: Beaded jewellery. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27e: Bermuda shorts. Photograph by the author.
Figures 27f: Two-piece ensemble. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27g: Pencil cases. Photograph by Ntanganedzeni Ngwana.

Figure 27h: Tray mats with embroidery detail. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27i: Tray mat with an embroidered Venda phrase. ‘U fhata mudi ndi lufuno’ is a Venda phrase which means to build a home is love. Photograph by the author.

Figure 27j: Mukhasi. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27k: An additional apron design added in the 2013 training year. The hem detail is inspired by the hem detail of the mukhasi. Photograph by the author.
Figure 27l: Another apron design which is designed and manufactured by the participants independently. Photograph by the author.
Linkage: Sewing skills and indexes for sustainability

The use of offcuts to embellish certain products, as can be seen on Figure 22b, reduced the amount of unused surplus materials as well as material costs whilst simultaneously expanding the possibility for increased sales. Additionally, focusing on embellishment, for example on the handbag, elevated the aesthetic quality of products. The development of a systematic technique to manufacture the products parallels the nature index for sustainability. Additionally; by reducing materials costs and heightening the aesthetic quality of a product this generates the possibility of increased sales which contributes to the economy index.

The participants adapted and transformed certain products such as the skirt designs and the apron, which were modified through incorporating details such as pleats to the hem of a basic skirt style (Figure 27b) and adding an embellishment detail used for a mukhasi on the hem of a mini-skirt (Figure 27a). This sustainable use and management of key resources like the basic garment style continues to indicate the development of a sustainable production approach but it also shows the development in the participants’ sewing and designing skills. The mini-skirt embellishment idea was also applied on an apron design (Figure 27k). The examples of the mini-skirt and apron demonstrated an expansion in the interpretation of the Venda fusion idea: moving beyond the use of Venda cloth, the traditional embellishment associated with a mukhasi is incorporated into other garments. In addition, words in Tshivenda were incorporated as a new element to Venda fusion as can be seen with the tray mat (Figure 27i).
Through involving the participants in inviting them to contribute photographs to inspire and conceptualise embellishment details on products, the group fulfilled a role that surpassed the seamstress title. In this way the arts-based training approach of Photovoice involved the participants in the design process and this design approach can be implemented for future conceptualising sessions. The idea of drawing inspiration from the surrounding areas instigates an appreciation of society and environment and as such denotes society as a resource.

Apart from conceptualising design ideas, Photovoice was also used by the participants to express individual hopes and dreams as demonstrated by Grace Mutele (Figures 28a and 28b and her Photovoice narrative). The dreams that some participants shared demonstrated that the sewing co-operative had a significant impact on the participants' ability to realise and accomplish their goals. The use of Photovoice in this sense indicates the intimate detail that is linked to daily life and as such is lodged within the wellbeing category.

**Photovoice Narrative**

Figures 28a and 28b: Visuals photographed by Grace Mutele on 05 September 2012 as part of a Photovoice exercise.

*Ri tshi bva hafta u runga ri bva ra ya hayani u reğa khuni ḡuvgha jo kovhela ra vhuya ri tshi bika. Ri khou sedza kha fagi je ja hwaliwa. Ri khou ṭuwa na fagi hune ha rengiwa maḍi ra swi̊ka ra kelula maḍi n tshi vhlı̊sa. A si tshinepe tshavhudi ngauri ri khou tambula u wana maḍi. Arali bindu ḡi̊shi khou tshimbila ri ḡo kona u wana tshelede ya u renga maḍi na khuni.*

When we knock off at [from] our sewing co-operative we go back home so that we can go and collect the firewood and it was already late and dark. We are looking at the drum that is been carried to buy water and when we reach there we pour the water inside the drum and then again pour the water inside our container and take [it] back home. It is not good because we are struggling but if our business is working we can have money so that we can buy water and firewood.  

The narrative by Grace Mutele  
Narrative collected and translated by Glenda Livhuaani Thanyani on 06 September 2012
An indicator for wellbeing was also expressed by Phumudzo Munwana that “when we have enough money in the future, we can renovate our space here, clean the floors, paint the walls and polish it. We can even buy material to sew curtains. My family life will change - I will build a big house, have a big lawn and make my own borehole and not use the community borehole” (Munwana 2012b [Transcript]).

Although this training intervention was intended for skills development, the process also revealed the positive impact that the attainment of skills can have on the participants’ economic situations and wellbeing, as well as the extent to which sewing can be inspired by the participants’ engagement with their environmental surroundings.

**Cycle Two: Business skills training**

In this evaluation rubric (Table 5) I present the training that was implemented for business skills training and how the tools that were used in the training contribute to the outcomes of the business training intervention. I also outline the training and learning objectives in order to assist the participants in business operations. In addition to translating, Ntanganedzeni Ngwana also assisted to design and tabulate the trial balance chart. This intervention was related to the objective of establishing a business account which was presented in Cycle Three. In this cycle the funds generated through sales and marketing were still physically in the possession of the participants, in contrast to Cycle Three where the funds were deposited into the business account.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CYCLE PURPOSE</th>
<th>BUSINESS TRAINING AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>METHODS AND TOOLS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop business and</td>
<td>Planning participants’ interaction with</td>
<td>Role-play</td>
<td>• Role-play exercise to train the participants to interact with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration system</td>
<td>English-speaking clientele (Implemented in</td>
<td></td>
<td>English-speaking customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase One)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receipt bookkeeping (Implemented in</td>
<td>Carbon paper</td>
<td>• An established book to record receipts of purchases (Carbon paper book)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase One and Two)</td>
<td>booklet/receipt</td>
<td>• A document for recording client orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recording sales and</td>
<td>Trial balance chart</td>
<td>• A trial balance chart stuck on the wall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expenses on a trial balance (Introduced in Phase Two) • Recorded sales and expenses

Plotting sales on frequency polygon graph

Frequency polygon graph • A chart with a frequency polygon graph for sales generated in each month

Table 5: Cycle Two evaluation rubric

Linkage: Business skills and indexes of sustainability

In a discussion at a later date the participants explained that they used hand signals to engage with English-speaking clients as a communication technique. Thus, role-play did not achieve the goal to train the members to interact verbally with customers. However, the role-play did assist the group to plan and prepare their interaction with customers in another non-verbal way. Although the role-play exercise did not prove successful in establishing verbal interaction between the participants and English-speaking customers, and therefore did not contribute to sales improvement, I had not assumed that role-play alone could have contributed to sales improvement. The quality of sewing was not high yet, for example inconsistent stitching and slow stock build-up, as it had been only a few months since the participants began sewing. I believe that the quality of sewing and quantity of stock, or the lack thereof, were the main reasons for the limited sales generated in Phase One. Regardless of the low profit, it was reassuring that in just under seven months of being active, the sewing co-operative generated an amount of R2180. This showed that the participants were able to generate sales regardless of the language hurdle. Additionally, the success and sustainability of the co-operative could not be solely based on monetary value because the sewing co-operative required improvement in other aspects for it to function in its full capacity as a business.

In the mid-term review I implemented in the November 2012 visit, I also attempted to find out if the participants’ personal economic status had been enhanced by the project. According to the participants, the income only improved the viability of their business, not their personal economic position as income from one production was enough to fund the materials for the next round of production but not enough to derive any income. However, this outcome provided a good structure for handling the business and it is a typical occurrence for a business to not generate profit in its initial stages. Furthermore, the participants agreed to treat their profit as a saving scheme: they did not draw a monthly income but planned to

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39 As common with Developmental Evaluation, the frequency polygon graph was introduced in the 2012 training year. However, through modifying its implementation it continued in the 2013 training year and receipt bookkeeping and the trial balance were introduced in 2013 as a continuation of business skills training.
save and share the savings in December. This financial investment in production and business indicates a sustainable management and consumption of funds, which has proven beneficial for the sewing co-operative as well as for the participants. I use these indicators to measure economy and nature in the Compass of Sustainability. In the 2013 training year (first bank deposits began in June), the frequency polygon graph exceeded the R8000 mark in one month and did not go below R1000 for the other months. As a business and a source of income this was a positive indicator that the participants could, in theory, draw a monthly income of about R395 per person (Table 6) from the sewing co-operative.

By September 2013 the sewing co-operative saved a total of:
R9495 / 6 (months of the first generated sales)  
= R1582,50 / 4 (number of co-operative members)  
= R395,63 per person per month

Table 6: Envisioned idea of regular income in relation to accumulated sales of 2013.

The saving scheme structure that the participants adopted for the sewing co-operative revealed a lot about the nature of the relationships amongst them. In my personal analysis, drawing on my experience as a Soweto resident with an understanding of saving schemes, generally known as stokvels, I consider the participants to have developed faithful friendships and a significant level of trust. In my primary school years I was a member of a stokvel group and my experience is that for success a stokvel has to be developed among friends or acquaintances that trust each other personally and financially. Although the members from the 2012 training year eventually withdrew from the project, the foundation of building a business partnership as a friendship continued well into the 2013 training year. This outcome revealed the interplay between the wellbeing of the individual participants within the co-operative, and how the happiness within the organisation influenced the group’s interaction with people outside of the co-operative.

Another economically measurable influence of good interpersonal relationship within the group was acknowledgement of each individual's strengths. This influenced the participants’ productivity positively with regard to product quantity and quality, which in turn affected sales generation positively. The participants distributed different tasks between themselves based on the strengths of the individual members in order to ensure efficient and effective productivity within the co-operative. For example in Phase Two Sylvia Tshikovhi and Grace
Mutele focused mostly on sewing while Tendani Mukhada and Ntshengedzeni Sigonde focused on beadwork.

The participants used the receipt book during their presentation of products at Tshulu Camp. At times clients wanted to place orders and the group recorded these orders in the receipt book as accumulated sales. The receipt book was used to record the sales immediately and the data was utilised as reference to record sales on the trial balance as well as the frequency polygon graph. While this was an unorthodox way to use a receipt book, it was nevertheless positive that the group did use the receipt book as a record keeping mechanism.

The co-operative members recorded the trial balance constantly and they continued using this method independently without my presence. I organised the trial balance in a chart format in order to foster group participation in completing it. During my September 2013 visit the group decided to stop presenting the trial balance as a chart because in this way, their financial information, which was private, was displayed for outsiders to view. They proposed that at the end of the research phase they wished to use the trial balance in a book format rather. The participants’ interest in applying the trial balance method in the future shows that it has worked effectively in the co-operative for finance management and record keeping.

The frequency polygon graph in 2012 did not show a good financial picture of the sewing co-operative as the highest sales income was R900 in August and the finances continued to spiral downwards towards the end of 2012 (Graph 6). During telephone conversations with the participants at the end of November and December 2012, they reported that no sales were generated during these two months. In 2013 there was an increase in sales for the sewing co-operative after March. However the year started off badly with no income between January and March. The failure to generate sales in this period was first a consequence of the withdrawal of two participants and the recruitment of new members who also required some training, and secondly because of a limited number of visitors to Tshulu Camp in the hot summer months. However, when the members closed off April, the accumulated sales for the month reached a total amount of R1720. This was a positive start for the second group of participants and the sewing co-operative began to grow from strength to strength. Although the sales were inconsistent it was reassuring to have sales remain on the R1000 per month mark, and that expenses did not surpass the monetary value of sales (Graph 7).
Graph 6: Frequency polygon graph for 2012. Designed by the author.

Graph 7: Frequency Polygon graph for 2013. Designed by the author.
Phase Two

Enterprise development and marketing

Phase Two occurred in 2013 and although sewing and business training continued, the phase largely focused on marketing and developing the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative formally. It was in this phase that Cycles Three and Four were implemented. The focus for Cycle Three was to develop formal structures for the co-operative. These included: (1) draw up a constitution; (2) open a business account and; (3) register the co-operative as a legal entity. Cycle Three continued the first aim of the study, which was to develop the sewing co-operative in collaboration with the participants. In Cycle Four, the co-operative was marketed on a wider spectrum by organising a HaMakuya-based fashion show and the images of the products and information about the co-operative were included on the Tshulu Trust website. Cycle Four addressed the second aim of the study, which was to produce products to showcase publicly and to market the co-operative.

Cycle Three: Enterprise development

In this evaluation rubric (Table 7) I present the training objectives that were implemented to establish formal structures for the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative as well as the subsequent outcomes of each objective. This intervention takes the objectives of the business skills training (Cycle Two) further by exceeding the ‘piggy bank’ stage of the generated funds to actually banking the funds as savings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CYCLE PURPOSE</th>
<th>Establish a business account</th>
<th>Develop a company constitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>Document arrangement &amp; bank visits &amp; group discussions</td>
<td>Group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOMES</td>
<td>• Business account with Postbank</td>
<td>• A four-page long English version of the constitution and five-page long Tshivenda version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Select a name for the co-operative in which to register an account</td>
<td>• The constitution in both languages is displayed on the wall in the work space and two English version copies used for registration with CIPRO. One English copy used to open up a business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7: Cycle Three evaluation rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Register sewing co-operative with CIPRO</th>
<th>Site visit, group discussion &amp; document arrangement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Payment of R215 into the CIPRO account to register the co-operative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An inclusion of a fifth member into the advisory board of the co-operative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CR1 Form completed as a requirement from CIPRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The constitution adapted to meet the requirements stipulated at CIPRO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identity document copies of all five members are certified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion of outcomes from Cycle Three**

In addition to forming a business account, the network between the members as business partners (which was evident from Phase One) was tightened and their responses to some of my questions were expressed in the plural form. When I asked the participants about their experience of establishing a business account and how it made them feel (I expressed the question in the singular form). For example the question during a focus group discussion was, ‘how do you feel about opening up a business account?’ Tendani Mukhada responded that “we are proud of ourselves and we feel great with the account now” (Mukhada 2013d [Recorded]). Sylvia Tshikovhi responded to the same question that “I am happy now because there’s somewhere to put our little money” (Tshikovhi 2013 [Recorded]). With this activity, I observed the sewing co-operative developing gradually, but more importantly the participants made this observation as well. Grace Mutele stated that having a business account was a way to maintain a sustainable business because “like when we get little amount we just put it in our account so that our firm can grow every time” (Mutele 2013a [Recorded]).

In the feasibility research I did not research the South African co-operatives law. I based the number of participants I worked with solely on the available resources and accepted working with four members. However, in order to register a co-operative, CIPRO required a minimum of five members and there were only four members of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. In the first cycle, I worked with six participants but this was merely to protect the research study in cases of possible withdrawals. The challenge raised by the CIPRO requirements was addressed by me joining the board as a fifth member. This amendment clarified that the members continued to have a plan for further growth of the co-operative, but it also showed the constant resilience of the members to adapt to changes and challenges that were evident in the development process. Grace Mutele’s statement in her closing words, during the final reflections on my last visit to HaMakuya, indicated the participants’ desire to grow
as business women: “my last word is to thank you Khaya for teaching us how to sew and run this business. You were very patient with us from the time we did not know anything to now. We decided to include you as a fifth member of the co-operative to register the business because we want to grow with you” (Mutele 2013d [Recorded]).

**Linkage: Enterprise development and indexes of sustainability**

In this section I discuss some key findings from Cycle Three and frame the findings as indicators for sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative in terms of enterprise development.

Establishing the business account contributes to the society category of sustainability regarding the quality and equity in leadership that is portrayed with the objective. Based on preconceived expectations I anticipated that Grace Mutele would want to be included as one of the three members with signing power since she was the longest serving member and often took a leadership role. Her action in allowing others to have the signing powers instead revealed a selfless leadership style, and also suggested that she saw herself as an equal to the others. This outlook enhanced a harmonious work environment within the sewing co-operative. Her action continues to promote the values of group work which is especially valued in a South African context as noted by Lily Becker (2005:7): “[g]roups can be used to create a more efficient and effective working environment in an organization. In groups we can transform prejudice and intolerance of difference. Groups can be used to problem-solve and to resolve conflicts interpersonally, on an inter-group, inter-societal, and on the broader international level.”

The constitution of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative was drafted and finalised in Phase One with participants from the 2012 training year. However, the new participants were granted an opportunity to suggest new ideas to modify the constitution in order to make it relevant to new and old group members. The new members accepted the rules and regulations originally agreed on apart from requesting that the starting time be changed since they had other commitments outside of the project. This can be interpreted as indicative of the society index of the sustainability rubric because the minor change and overall accepting of the constitution was influenced by the openness and inclusiveness in drafting the constitution with the older members in 2012. As a result of the equal
participation with the previous members to create the policies, their insight and thoughts were applied and the constitution was adapted to a HaMakuya context, instead of a party from a different context imposing ideas upon the members. In this light, the constitution was formed by ‘HaMakuya for HaMakuya’ which reflects the participative and collaborative elements promoted by PAR.

Witnessing the growth of their savings undoubtedly invigorated the participants’ ability to envision potential savings for December 2013. Sylvia Tshikovhi and Ntshengedzeni Sigonde both predicted respectively that R10000 and R8000 would be saved up. The participants showed me, during Cycle Five in the beginning of September 2013 that they had savings of R8495 in the business account. Additionally, when I telephoned the members at the end of September from Johannesburg, they expressed their excitement and happiness with a sale of R2000 from a student group resulting in an additional deposit of R1000 into the business account. The total savings by the end of September stood at R9495. In this way, an increase in savings contributed to the economy index for sustainability. Arguably, it was a satisfying feeling for Sylvia Tshikovhi to see her profit predictions manifest, and for Ntshengedzeni Sigonde’s predictions to be exceeded, and I contend that these instances contribute to the wellbeing index of members of the co-operative.

Although Cycle Four did not encompass any arts-based training, the results which I extracted from it indicated the effects that the approach of PAR had in enhancing the participants’ ability to establish a sustainable sewing co-operative. The acceptance of the company constitution, the occurrence of selfless leadership and the participants treating each other well and in a trusting manner as business partners, indicated a good foundation for forming a sustainable sewing co-operative. Additionally, the members revealed plans for the future such as having future savings and including me in the board as advisor. These examples offered evidence to suggest that the participants had a vision for how the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative could function in the future.

**Cycle Four: Marketing**

In this evaluation rubric (Table 8) I present the objectives and methods that were implemented to market the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative and present the subsequent outcomes and critical evaluation of each objective. This cycle was the final iteration for the
research study in the attempt to develop a new sustainable sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust through the four training action cycles. Cycle Four addressed the aim to showcase the products in public in order to market the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative further.

### Cycle Purpose
Marketing co-operative and products to different markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARKETING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>METHODS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organise a community fashion show and market day</td>
<td>Logic model</td>
<td>• Specific task allocation to organise the fashion show written on the logic model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Diverse products presented at a community level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A total of R570 generated from community sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A new set of products (skirt and top ensemble) presented to the older female market and modelled by the participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A new-look design to nwenda material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include products and information on the Tshulu Trust website</td>
<td>Online marketing supported by Tshulu Trust</td>
<td>• Information about new members and photographs of products included on the website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The name of the co-operative (Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative) included on the website to identify it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Cycle Four evaluation rubric.

### Linkage: Logic model categories and indexes of sustainability

The group attempted to complete some of the tasks that were outlined on the logic model in order to complete the preparations for the fashion show and addressed the challenges that they faced during the preparation week. These challenges included a big order and building products for the fashion show, Sylvia Tshikovhi falling ill on the week of the fashion show and the other work commitments of the participants. As a result of me arriving at the production room (which is the research venue) earlier than the participants, the group requested that I assist them with cutting their garment pieces. My assistance helped the group to focus only on sewing the garments on their arrival at 12:30 from their alternative commitments. This plan enabled the garments for the fashion show to be ready in time for final finishing before the event.

The logic model was drawn up by the participants and myself into five categories that were outlined to fulfil the main tasks. These categories included music, venue, models, clothes
and audience and each category contributed significantly to the sustainability of the co-operative. An initial plan was for each participant to have individualised set of garments which they manufactured independently. However, as per the nature of development work, this plan did not transpire as it was envisioned. All participants had the same style but cut in different materials as well as my assistance with manufacturing. Additionally, as a result of Sylvia Sigonde becoming ill during the week of the fashion show, the other co-operative members decided to manufacture her garments nevertheless.

Within the categories of audience, clothes and music there were unexpected results vis-à-vis the purposes for each category. A revealing and unexpected response was the community’s reaction to the banner used to advertise the fashion show. Ntshegosedzeni Sigonde reported a conversation she had had with a community member about the banner. Looking at the banner a woman asked what was happening on the day and when and where the fashion show was taking place (Sigonde 2013b [Transcript]).\(^{40}\) This is enlightening as the questions that the woman asked were detailed on the banner in Tshivenda, indicating that word-of-mouth is the more commonly used form of marketing in HaMakuya. Further, when the fashion show begun at the advertised time, there was a small adult presence and a large number of children. It was the music, which was provided by a live band, for the parade and entertainment that drew the attention and presence of more adults. Some adults came into the premises to view the event while others who did not stay far away from the Resource Centre observed from their homes.

The outcome about the role of music in the process provided a comparison between visual art (banner) and performance art (music) and the extent to which their contribution assisted in marketing the fashion show in HaMakuya. Certainly in the HaMakuya context, music immediately drew an audience from people that were within the vicinity of the event premises at the time. The banner, when displayed in various areas theoretically had the capability to attract the attention of a wider audience, and could do so prior to the event. However, it would appear that the banner concept was new to the community and was not well understood. The newness of the concept in HaMakuya was revealed approximately three months before the event when the banner was displayed and Grace Mutele commented that “You [myself] are showing us things we would never think of doing like to

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\(^{40}\) By the final stages of the research process and through constant interactions with the participants, there was communication between the participants and myself in Tshivenda.
advertise like this [referring to the banner] we would never think of doing it like this” (Mutele 2013c [Transcript]).

However, visual art has impacted positively on the clothes category through the inspiring reaction to the nwenda that was screen printed by the students from APS and used to manufacture the two-piece ensemble which the participants modelled during the fashion show. After the fashion show, older women in the audience (approximately seven women from villages close to the Resource Centre, including one executive board member of Tshulu Trust) expressed their appreciation of the two-piece ensemble and the uniqueness of the material as a result of the prints. There were two print designs: a group of girls doing the domba dance, and two elderly Venda women kneeling and grinding grain included on the fabrics and printed in Johannesburg. In an earlier intervention, I trained the participants to print textile, a skill which they can continue doing in future. Fundamentally, this skill seemed worthwhile and sustainable since printed nwenda was of interest to the older female market of HaMakuya (Figures 29a and 29b). However, the screens that hold the mesh through which ink is transferred to the material had the Zwonaka logo design on them which means that, at this stage, only the logo can be printed on textile. While the participants did appreciate the textile printing skill it did not flourish at the time to the same extent as other skills training. It was possible that the large amount of water that screen printing required made textile printing overly labour intensive in the context of water scarcity in HaMakuya and this accounted for its moderate reception. The reaction to the screen printed nwenda at the fashion show, however, is likely to reinvigorate interest in screen printing. To cater to this market the group can plan to print their textiles during their quiet periods when they have more time to collect the water needed and less pressure from other tasks. Water is also plentiful in the summer months which can also be provided by rain.

Figure 29a: Ntshengedzeni Sigonde screen printing a test piece. Photograph by the author.
Figure 29b: The result test printed by Ntshengedzeni Sigonde. Photograph by the author.
It is probable that the female attendees’ interest in the two-piece ensemble was a result of the participants modelling the garments themselves. In my opinion the fact that the participants modelled the clothes made it easier for female audience members to imagine themselves wearing the same outfit. In this case the participants, through modelling the outfits, used themselves and their bodies to market products to a particular target audience. This form of marketing, however, is common in urban settings when urban-based fashion designers design and manufacture clothes that they wear to promote their services to a possible target audience. Likewise, in HaMakuya, the communication and further marketing can spread through word-of-mouth referrals, for instance the female fashion show attendees informing friends and neighbours about the two-piece ensemble or other products. This form of marketing (attracting customers by wearing self-produced clothes) also attracted a male customer. The Trust manager, who was also the Master of Ceremonies for the show, wore the Bermuda shorts (Figure 30), which resulted in one of the musicians showing interest in this product. He stated that he liked the Bermuda shorts especially because of the shorts’ convenience in relation to the warm weather temperatures in HaMakuya. Such an opinion is adventurous as it is not usual for grown men to wear short trousers.

Figure 30: Bermuda shorts worn by the Tshulu Trust manager. Photograph by the author.

The product that sold the most on the day of the fashion show was the pencil case (at R20 per unit). This was motivating for the co-operative members because this product had a large profit margin: it is fabricated from off cuts and the only non-labour costs of the product are the zip and electricity. The participants responded to the massive market reaction to the pencil cases by suggesting that more offcuts should be collected in order to manufacture more pencil cases, possibly even a special package before schools re-opened for January 2014. In this way the fashion show revealed to the participants which products were of interest to the community and the prices that the community could afford. Furthermore, there
were two loans granted to the attendees of the fashion show and this situation stimulated the group to consider developing an offer for clients who request services or products on credit.

The logic model implemented for the fashion show with the different categories provides indicators of the nature index for sustainability. Through the outcomes of the fashion show and market day, a sustainable management of both the co-operative and production was established. The successful incorporation of the community as a target market for the co-operative was a step towards penetrating a difficult market. However; the positive reaction by community members proved the importance of the society index to the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. The fashion show offered some important learning with regard to the usefulness of the logic model as a project management tool. The changes that occurred with the planned activities and expected outputs and outcomes demonstrate that the logic model should not be regarded as an unchangeable blueprint for project success. Rather it should be regarded as a plan that can and should be adapted in response to unforeseen circumstances, and also that unforeseen outputs and outcomes can contribute significantly to the positive results of an initiative.

**Linkage: Online marketing and indexes for sustainability**

Marketing the co-operative also included the use of the support system surrounding the sewing co-operative. There was a need, for example, to establish mechanisms for marketing the co-operative beyond HaMakuya, and one way of doing this was through the internet which was available through the support and capacities provided by Tshulu Trust. As such on the Tshulu Trust website the co-operative was presented as the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative, unlike the previous sewing project which was called the Tshulu sewing co-operative. This marketing also suggested that the co-operative belongs to its members and not to Tshulu Trust and this ownership enhances the sustainability of the initiative.

The inclusion of information on the website was rewarding in that the co-operative attracted the interest of a possible long-term partner. A boutique owner from the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province discovered the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative through an online search and from this relationship the co-operative generated a first sale of R5250. The participants were also in a good position because as a Zulu-speaking member of the co-operative I am able to liaise between the participants and the boutique owner.
The network with the boutique marketed the products of the sewing co-operative in a Zulu national newspaper called *Isolezwe* (Figure 31a and 31b). Although the newspaper coverage did not market the co-operative directly, the inclusion of the products by the boutique owner gave the participants confidence in their sewing abilities and pride in their Venda culture. A statement by Ntshengedzeni Sigonde in her final reflections showed her attained confidence and pride: “We are very happy and proud because what we have sewn is very important, it is shown on the newspaper. And it makes me very proud to be Venda because there are other clothes from the Xhosa’s, Basotho, Mashangaana [Tsonga] in her shop but she took pictures with a Venda outfit (Sigonde 2013c [Recorded]). From these outcomes from online marketing it is clear that the participants are not entirely dependent on Tshulu Trust for the growth of the co-operative beyond the market of the local community but that they are able to use the resources available and provided by the Trust to develop and operate their business further afield.

Figure 31a: Participant wearing the *mukhasi* and a skirt that was subsequently included in the newspaper *Isolezwe*. Photograph by Ntanganedzeni Ngwana.

Figure 31b: Boutique owner displaying an outfit in her boutique manufactured by the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. Photograph sent by Funeka Dlamini. Photographer unknown (*Isolezwe* 2013).
Online marketing was beneficial for the sewing co-operative and fitted into the four indexes for sustainability. The large order that was attained from the KZN-based boutique showed that online marketing assisted the co-operative to penetrate the national boutique market. The inclusion of products on the Tshulu Trust website had the potential to make the sewing co-operative accessible to an international tourism market. Marketing on the internet increased the opportunity of attracting a more diversified market, both national and international, which enlarged further economic possibilities for the co-operative.

Although the order to the boutique was delivered, it was completed under intense pressure associated with limited production time. In order to address planning production for future orders, Tendani Mukhada suggested an outsourcing idea that “I know a woman from Sambandou who makes vhulungu [bead jewellery] for a cheaper price maybe next time we can buy from her and build our own stock some more for when the woman from Durban orders again” (Mukhada 2013e [Transcript]). Tendani Mukhada's idea was appreciated by the group and in the September intervention they invested in bead jewellery stock from Sambandou. The notion to create a sustainable system of production through local outsourcing is not only a manifestation of the nature index but denotes the sewing co-operative as a socially-responsible business that supports, appreciates and incorporates local craft skills provided by locally-based individuals into its system of operation.

Additional indicators for sustainability

In different ways the outcomes from the Most Significant Change exercise implemented in Phase Two, and the attendance of the participants, are further indicators that provide evidence of the co-operative's sustainability.

Most Significant Change stories and sustainability

In the different cycles I have drawn outcomes which I interpret into indicators for sustainability based on the Compass. However, it is equally important to apply the four indexes more directly so that I can derive the indicators directly from the source, the participants. Therefore, in Phase Two I adapted the categories from the Compass of Sustainability to form questions for the MSC exercise to draw out further indicators for sustainability. The indicators included themes that range from the development of esteem,
pride and confidence, improvement of economic situations, skills development and enhancement and societal inclusion to the business. Equally important, the exercise, because of the MSC approach, was able to capture the significance of these themes for the participants. Sylvia Tshikovhi’s and Tendani Mukhada’s stories are examples of responses of considerable depth (Tables 9 and 10). I employed an MSC approach because during the research process whenever I reflected on the experience with the participants it was in a group discussion and the participants sometimes found the questions that I asked difficult to respond to. The MSC exercise, which uses storytelling as a medium of data collection, was more approachable and enabled the participants to respond to questions more comfortably.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sylvia Tshikovhi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Tell me how you first became involved with the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I joined this year (2013) in March. One time I was sitting outside my house and I saw the Tshulu van coming and stopping at my house. But I only recognised Fhatuwani and not the others. I was asked to join and I was happy because I wanted to join the first one but did not. So I was called later during that day to come in because I was successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Has your confidence in sewing and business improved since you joined the project?</strong> Describe a time you felt confident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes of course. Before I could only sew <em>mukhasi</em> and <em>nwenda</em> without using the tape measure and only by looking at the customer’s body size and guessing it, but now I use a tape measure. What is also nice now is that I can sew more things like bags, pencil cases and skirts with zips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is important to me because some people paid thousands for this opportunity and I paid nothing and on top of that I make money for myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>How has making money from the project changed your life? Describe some examples of instances that you feel changed your life.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The one moment that I can tell you is that whenever we sew things we make money and save it for December. When we share it in December I will have a lot of food for Christmas which makes me happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This just makes me happy that’s all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Have you been able to share the skills you learnt from the training with others? Describe an example of how you shared this skill.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I just tell people around about what we can do here, but more about alterations because that how the community will support this business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <strong>Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By telling people around the villages we are able to grow the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <strong>Have you changed as a person, woman and community member since you joined the project? When did you realise this change?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s a change because there’s an improvement and change compared to what I knew back then and what I know now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <strong>Why is this instance significant to you?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is important because I have learnt a lifetime knowledge something I can use in the future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9: Tshikovhi MSC response, collected by Mchunu on 02 May 2013, translated by Ntanganedzeni Ngwana on 02 May 2013.

Tendani Mukhada

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tell me how you first became involved with the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I joined this year in March after I heard people talk about interviews for sewing happening at Tribal. I came in the following day for an interview which we did under the tree outside Tribal. I was happy when I was chosen on the same day and immediately I was introduced to sewing by Khaya and the older ladies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Has your confidence in sewing and business improved since you joined the project? Describe a time you felt confident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, but I am more amazed that I learnt how to sew after a short time of training and people really like what I am sewing and that makes me really happy. For example the moment I learnt how to sew I decided money sacks was a good product to sell to people and I made a few and took them to school where I sell some food during break time the school people really liked them and I decided we should make this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Why is this time significant to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is important because I am self-confident and if it wasn't for self-confidence I wouldn't be here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How has making money from the project changed your life? Describe some examples of instances that you feel changed your life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After the big sale on Sunday I thought it was important to learn from what the people from the previous group did. They used to sell and eat the money now we invest in the company and buy fabric to make more stock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Why is this time significant to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is important because I knew nothing... not to sew, no management skills, but now I know this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Have you been able to share the skills you learnt from the training with others? Describe an example of how you shared this skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, always at the shops after our training I tell people around the villages about all we do and I carry this bag so I can advertise the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Why is this time significant to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is important because this is what I do to grow the business, so I can also grow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Have you changed as a person, woman and community member since you joined the project? When did you realise this change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am so proud and realised something about myself... I am eager to learn more and more. For example this bead work that we are doing now happened one time when I was in Thohoyandou and I asked how much it was from a woman who was selling I was not happy with her price of R240 so I decided to buy the things used for this and decided to learn and do it for myself with the help of my friend. This skill is now working here for this business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Why is this instance significant to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This will help us grow as a business.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Mukhada MSC response, collected by Mchunu on 02 May 2013, translated by Ntanganedzeni Ngwana on 02 May 2013.42

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42 See Appendix 19 for other MSC responses.
Participant attendance as an indicator of sustainability

Throughout the research process, I noted the daily attendance of the participants at the trainings I offered in my journal. These records tracked change in participant attendance over time. There was particular contrast between the first cycles when I engaged with a new group of participants for the first time, during May 2012 and March 2013 (Appendix 10). In May 2012 one member was absent each day after their recruitment as participants, and there was also one withdrawal during that week. At the trainings for the second intake in March 2013, in contrast, there was full attendance by all members. I predict that the reasons for the contrast in attendance are influenced by a divergence in individual expectations from the project. This reasoning is based on the fact that Tshulu Trust and I stated upfront that there was no monthly remuneration for participation in the study and project. This situation indicates the differences in attracting an entrepreneur and a person longing for a more regular income, even though in both cases the intervention was advertised as an opportunity for business and sewing training. There were no sales generated during these cycles, thus the hope to receive money on a regular period may have been a motivation for some individuals to remain whilst others may have enjoyed the risky and unpredictable nature of business. Holistically, attendance in 2013 was more consistent than in 2012.

Interestingly, the difference in attendance was noticed by other members of the community who required services from the sewing co-operative. For instance, on Fridays the co-ordinators of the Community Works Programme (CWP) have a meeting in the premises close to the sewing co-operative. Some co-ordinators visit the sewing co-operative regularly to view the work, and in some instances to place an order. Mercy Munyai, a CWP co-ordinator, commented on the changes in attendance in 2013. She observed that “this group [2013 group of participants] is serious and much better than the group last year.” I asked her the reasons for the comment and her response was that “I always visit the women when we have our Friday meetings and I always find them here working. Last year this room was sometimes locked and we would not [be able to] buy from it [them]” (Munyai 2013 [Transcript]). This comment suggests that the group formed in 2013 is a more solid and entrepreneurial group of members, however, the amount of work that the 2012 group executed did lay a foundation for the approach in 2013.

Attendance was important for the sustainability of the sewing co-operative because it indicated an investment in the business on the participants’ part, and showed that the co-
operative and its related activities were integrated into the individuals’ daily lives. The interest and effort to come, whether during my training interventions or on their own, showed ownership of the co-operative, which is a sign of sustainability.

Conclusion

In this research study I aimed to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative and suggested that a possible model for co-operative sustainability was through the involvement and active role of the participants in the development process. Specifically, in the development process I gave four training interventions in which I imparted skills that I envisioned the participants using to operate the new sewing co-operative. Apart from assisting the individual members to better their financial position, I wanted to train the participants to manufacture and market their products as well as manage their business independently.

This chapter analysed the four training interventions against the framework of the Compass of Sustainability. The results suggest that this participatory action-based development project has achieved the main goal of co-operative sustainability, at least as far as this can be assessed at this point. Through the process it became evident that the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative is not only a co-operative that enhances economic freedom but also implants confidence and social participation within its members. This understanding is based not solely on my observations as researcher, but is shared by the participants as evidenced in their interview comments, MSC narratives and by actions taken during the project.

During the training process, the participants manufactured and marketed a total of 24 different products and experimented with an additional four new products. The group improved significantly in their production and design capabilities: they can now produce and design the same product in various styles and I am confident that the four products we experimented on during the cycles will be modified and marketed independently. In addition to a production system, there was also a business system that functions harmoniously, and there was disciplined management of finances within the sewing co-operative which developed overtime. I personally observed, on multiple occasions, the group dividing the funds generated from sales into different categories that include electricity bill, material funds, petty cash (for daily lunch) and funds for bank savings. The group has also actively participated in the development of a sewing co-operative that has a constitution, a business
account, a name, and is in the process of being registered. The Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative has emerged as a socially-responsible business that nurtures the talent and skills of those in the surrounding communities. I have also observed the participants transform as seamstresses, mothers and community leaders. According to the four indexes of the model of sustainability which are nature, wellbeing, economy and society, the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative is now a sustainable enterprise.

In this chapter I discussed and analysed the outcomes of the training interventions. I also provided indicators for the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. In the concluding chapter I discuss how the interaction with the participants during the research process has empowered, enriched and nourished my design process, as a fashion designer, and inspired me to develop design ideas for a fashion range. I also conclude the research study by discussing the limitations, way forward, and results of the intervention in response to the question of using arts-based approaches to inform the sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.
CHAPTER FOUR
VISUAL RESPONSE TO THE INTERVENTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I discuss the outcomes of the final aim of the study which addresses the objective to compile the products manufactured by the participants into a catalogue. In addition I conduct a final self-reflection of the research experience and sum up some experiences from the field in order to cultivate inspiration to design and create garment samples as my creative output. I draw on the stages of the design process as developed by Karl Aspelund (2010) to describe my design process and integrate these stages into Stringer’s action cycle routine to ‘look, think, act and reflect’. The garment pieces are shown in the catalogue along with the products from the co-operative, but are presented as mock-ups as they are in the process of development. In the second section, I conclude the dissertation and sum up the findings to explain how the research question has been addressed. In this section, I reflect on the research study and discuss the limitations and shortcomings, the outcomes and contribution, and the way forward for the possible sustainability of Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

Products for a catalogue

Throughout the research process I have collected the products that the participants have manufactured to include in the catalogue that accompanies the dissertation. The inclusion of the products in a catalogue is significant both for the study and the sewing co-operative. This catalogue is not only an objective of this research study but also shows how the sewing skills of the participants have developed over time through the varied types of products manufactured under the Venda fusion product line. In this way, with the catalogue I am able to show the work of the participants in an accessible way so that further marketing options are increased for the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. Therefore the products included in the catalogue are more experimental and demonstrate the group’s versatility, which is an attempt to continue to market the co-operative to a wider audience. In the production stage discussed in this chapter, I explain other possibilities for marketing and sustainability.

I also include photographs of mock-ups from my own creative output in the catalogue. These mock-ups are a visual representation of the themes that have transpired through the
HaMakuya experience. Later in the chapter, I discuss how I contextualise my HaMakuya experience to develop the themes underpinning the creative output. I also discuss the methods employed to conceptualise and design the garments. In this chapter I present the design sketches of each garment piece, whereas the catalogue presents the sketches with the garment mock-ups.

**SELF-REFLEXIVE PROCESS**

I follow the guidance provided by Aspelund (2010) through his suggested stages of the design process to design the garment samples. The stages are inspiration, identification, conceptualisation, exploration and refinement, definition and modelling, communication and production. In this section I unpack the action plans for the objective to design and manufacture the samples and present the subsequent outcomes from my design approach. Although this is a self-reflexive cycle, as I reflect on the actions of the interventions, I suggest ways through which some outcomes of my design process can cycle back into the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative for its development and sustainability. The options for continuation are discussed in the communication and production stages.

**Linking Aspelund’s (2010) stages to Stringer’s (1999) PAR routine**

Aspelund (2010) offers a linear approach to the design process which is contrary to how PAR is envisaged. Consequently, in my own design process I link the seven stages of Aspelund’s design process to Stringer’s ‘look, think, act and reflect’ routine (Cycle Graphic 6). The reason for adopting Aspelund’s stages is their similarity to how I have previously designed a fashion range. Additionally, in Aspelund’s stages, the design discipline of fashion is discussed along with other disciplines such as graphic and industrial design, whereas Buchanan’s Design Thinking steps pay limited attention to the design process of fashion.

In Stringer’s (1999) routine, to ‘look’ involves gathering relevant information, and defining and describing the situation. These actions are similar to how I explore the first two stages which are inspiration and identification. I employ the stages of conceptualisation, exploration and refinement, and definition and modelling in the same way that I explore, analyse and interpret the findings to inform the activities in Stringer’s routine. Therefore, I align these stages with stages three, four and five of my design process as the activities for the ‘think’
aspect of the routine. In the communication and production stage, I manufacture the samples and present them in the catalogue, and I parallel these activities to planning and implementing in the ‘act’ aspect of the action research routine.

Graph 8: Cycle Graphic 6 the ‘look, think, act and reflect’ cycle of my visual response to the HaMakuya experience.

**LOOK:** CULTIVATING AND IDENTIFYING INSPIRATION

**Cultivating inspiration from HaMakuya**

I embarked on a personal reflection of my experience in HaMakuya to cultivate the inspiration for the garments that I use as my visual representation. This visual representation includes design garments that are particularly inspired and influenced by my interactions with the women of the sewing co-operative and being in HaMakuya. I kept constant record of the experience through journaling and photographs from the field which I used to formulate the design concepts and ideas. My pre-conceived impressions of HaMakuya, before physically being in the chieftaincy, were informed by the images available on the Tshulu Trust website (images that are principally tailored for the tourist market) as well as conversations with previous students from the UJ programme. However, being in HaMakuya and on first entry, I noticed its difference from other places that I had previously visited in South Africa. An instant difference is the rocky, gravel roads that I encountered on my first visit. This was significant for me because I had previously travelled on gravel roads but
never on roads as bad and rocky as those in HaMakuya. The condition of the roads at that time was a glimpse of the under-development of the area and it became a minute indication of the importance of development work. Whilst travelling to HaMakuya, I became aware of the large numbers of vehicles on the roads of Johannesburg. However, on the roads of HaMakuya, the presence of copious cattle replaced the vehicles found on the Johannesburg’s roads. There were so many cattle in HaMakuya that around Tshulu Camp the only sound I heard, apart from people talking and humming, was that of cow bells.

One of the most frustrating realities of HaMakuya was the difficulty of accessing drinking water at Tshulu Camp (although drinking water was made available on a daily basis). The water available from the taps was for cleaning and showering purposes while drinking water was collected in containers from a communal borehole. Water was at times collected by the community members from the river, as a consequence of the communal taps being dry, resulting in women accessing water from alternate sources. This challenge with water seemed in certain instances life-threatening, for example my home-stay host collecting water from the Mutale River (Figure 5a in page 43). Although the people of HaMakuya fish, swim and wash in the river they have also communicated their fear of crocodile attacks in the Mutale River, as these do happen from time to time. The river is also used by women to wash laundry, as Tendani Mukhada explains: “I go to the river to wash my clothes. The water that I have at home I use mainly for cooking and bathing” (Mukhada 2013f [Transcript]).

During one of my cycle visits, I offered my assistance to collect water from a borehole close to the Resource Centre in order to experience the task. I can conclude, from this experience, that the task was labour intensive as it involved carrying heavy water containers and pumping the water by hand into these containers. Additionally, patience seemed an important characteristic whilst collecting water as there were long queues in the water collecting areas. Access to drinking water continued to be a challenging and eye-opening reality during my home-stay in a village called Sanari where municipal water is available from communal taps. During the time in Sanari, the Tshulu guide suggested that we collect drinking water from a borehole in Tshikondeni Village. The water in Tshikondeni Village was less salty and tasted better than water from Sanari. This situation continued to form contrasts between my experiences of Soweto and HaMakuya, as in Soweto it seems natural for all townships to have the same quality drinking water.
In the two years of visiting HaMakuya I also interacted regularly with community members not involved in the project. A unique and pleasant trait of some people was their courtesy to call only to send their regards. This was significant for me because I expected to receive such treatment from a close friend or family member. An important aspect of these interactions was that they involved, for the most part, the women of HaMakuya. I observed the diverse roles assumed by the women as mothers, wives, home tenders, teachers and entrepreneurs as well as indirect roles such as dreamers and believers. The experience of developing the sewing co-operative with the women, I maintain, resulted in a more holistic and greater human development for the women and myself. As such I am inspired to adopt an approach, in my creative process, that celebrates the women of the sewing co-operative. The positive impact of women empowerment initiatives and the more specific, craft-making co-operatives is well documented in the writings of Miller and Schmahmann (2010) and Berman et al (2012a). Berman et al (2012a:10) in their book Women on Purpose: Resilience and Creativity of the Founding Women of Phumani Paper assert that the establishment of craft-making co-operatives has been successful in addressing other types of poverty apart from economic poverty. The authors hold the view that the success of Phumani Paper has been its ability to incubate and nurture resilience and imagination within the participants to dream of a better future along with developing the capacity and skills to achieve their dreams.

Likewise, imparting sewing skills to the participants in the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative has given the women hope for the future and the capability to dream of a better one. For example Ntshengedzeni Sigonde (2013c [Recorded]) revealed in the MSC exercise that the financial gain from the sewing co-operative was significant for her because “I will no longer ask for credit and in December I won’t have much to [re]pay.” Whilst on the subject of December, or rather Christmas, I can imagine the participants incorporating their sewing skills into their homes. For example, the women now have the capacity and skill to produce clothes for their children or grandchildren for the December holidays, and manufacturing their own clothes would result in some financial savings. A similar dream was shared by Seani Muntswu during the mid-term review “I think in the future we will stop going to shops to buy but be able to make everything” (Muntswu 2012a [Transcript]).

The book by Berman et al (2012a) on Phumani Paper documents narratives by South African women who share their life stories that in many ways are similar to the stories of the women from the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. Likewise I wanted to share celebratory
stories of women communicated through themes. With these I continued to promote how life-enhancing artistic and creative practices such as needlework and textile printing are for some women. I do, however, acknowledge the involvement of men in these initiatives but a majority of the members are women which was why my creative thinking was framed within a women empowerment approach.

A further motivation for this approach is Miller and Schmahmann’s (2010:533) assertion that the majority of the initiatives cater for women who, in some cases, are denied economic opportunities. Some of these challenges were certainly evident in HaMakuya, as revealed in the data on the Mutale Ward 13 district from STATSSA (See Appendix 2). The statistics reveal that wood is the most widely used resource for heating and cooking. Through my observations, wood collection in HaMakuya was a task assigned to and completed only by women. My assertion in this case is that it is amazing that the women find a way to increase their economic opportunities whilst having to complete tasks that are time-consuming such as collecting wood and water. I can attest further that in the research study there was inconsistent participant attendance during the 2012 training year, as well as requests for shorter training hours as a result of the members having to collect wood before it was too dark (Figures 32a and 32b).

Figure 32a: Phumudzo Munwana collects and carries firewood during an outdoor exercise. Photograph by the author.
Figure 32b: A group of women from Seani Muntswu’s Photovoice exercise carrying water. Photograph by Seani Muntswu.

Another challenge faced by women of the Mutale Ward 13 district as shown in Table 1c (Chapter One of this dissertation), is access to education. The statistics show that more men than women have completed secondary schooling and have had the privilege to receive
higher education. In addition, the census labour force statistics also show that fewer women are employed in Ward 13 than men, even though many more women than men live in the area. Although addressing the lack of employment in HaMakuya was the driving force behind this research study, it is important to note that the women empowerment theme and approach is particularly suited to addressing the gender inequalities of labour and education in the HaMakuya context.

The statistics and challenges may have seemed disheartening, however, it was encouraging to encounter women like the members of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative who were and still are agents of their own lives and who found solutions in the midst of difficulties. For example the participants opted for self-employment when jobs in other sectors were limited. The pro-active nature demonstrated by the participants indicated their capability to achieve their own success amidst socio-economic challenges in HaMakuya. The strength of the participants to strive further designated them as activists of the present and most probably of the future. The women of HaMakuya bear powerful stories that I, as a fashion designer, can relate through the medium of fashion design.

Through the experience, the participants have consistently demonstrated hard work and determination as well as the strength and power that they possess. Therefore, with this background insight I wish, with the garment samples, to recognise and celebrate these women through identifying aspects of their lives and representing these aspects as sub-themes that promote further the positive impact of women empowerment. I am interested in the manifestation of these themes into garment samples as an expression of my inspiration.

**Identification of themes from my HaMakuya experience**

In this section I reflect on the inspiration to identify the stories of the women that I conveyed through the garments succinctly. In light of the experience and inspiration from HaMakuya and the positive impact of sustainable empowerment to human development, I have identified five themes to convey through the garment samples. The identified themes are celebratory and honour the women from the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. I specifically celebrate and honour the hard work, determination, strength and power that has been demonstrated by these women. The diligence and determination of the women to take charge and realise their own independence denotes them as activists and change agents.
These themes have been revealed through the process of developing the new sewing co-operative. My identified themes are: (1) celebration, (2) hard work and determination, (3) strength and power, (4) voice and activism, and (5) ownership, prosperity and future.

**Theme One: Celebration**

The first theme was celebration which commemorated and praised the women of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. This theme was influenced by the project attracting women hence its narrative was intended to celebrate the women participants. The idea of the theme was to encourage women to continue to grow and rise towards their potential while simultaneously celebrating them for doing so. This idea originated from how some of the co-operative members experienced the training intervention and exemplified how they subsequently continued to improve and build themselves up. For example Sylvia Tshikovhi (2013c [Recorded]) revealed in the MSC exercise that she thought of the intervention as learning for free, saying “this is important to me because some people paid thousands for this opportunity and I paid nothing and on top of that I make money for myself”. Grace Mutele stated that the knowledge gained from the training continued to build her image as a woman and a wife. She described the image according to a scripture from the Bible (Proverbs Chapter 31 verses 10-31).

“A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ‘Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.’ Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.”
Theme Two: Hard work and determination

The second theme centred on the hard work and determination that was shown by the participants. I was inspired by their willingness to be part of the co-operative even with other pressing commitments in their lives. The hard work and determination required for the participants to succeed in their endeavours became clear when one of the participants gave a brief description of her daily life. Ntshengedzeni Sigonde described the changes that have occurred in her daily activities since starting work at Zwonaka: “I wake up at four o’clock in the morning to prepare food for my husband and children and then I go to work in a feeding scheme at Karel [the primary school where she works] at five o’clock until midday and then I come here at Tribal to sew” (Sigonde 2013a [Transcript]).

Interestingly, in the same discussion, Grace Mutele shared a previous conversation with her daughter who said to her “But mom you no longer cook for us as you used to before”. Her response to this claim was “Well I cannot cook for you as before because now my life is very busy now. In the morning I have to go to school for my volunteer work, and then from there to Tribal for my sewing and come back home when it is already too late and I am too tired to prepare a meal” (Mutele 2013b [Transcript]). These examples inspired me to appreciate the amount of work that the participants put in a single day. A phrase that was introduced to me by the participants is Asa shumi hali (‘If you don’t work you don’t eat’) and it was the essence of this phrase that summed up and inspired the theme of hard work and determination.

Visuals supporting Theme Two

In figure 33a Phumudzo Munwana tests her drawing ability, indicating her determination to improve her skills. In figures 33b and 33c, Grace Mutele and Tendani Mukhada teach each other new skills and this shows the hard work and determination of both participants. Hard work was also demonstrated in the duties that some women of HaMakuya do at home such as Phumudzo Munwana collecting firewood during a research exercise (Figure 32a) and women collecting water for their homes (Figure 32b). This theme was exposed in these duties but it also indicated the women’s strength and power in being able to accomplish such tasks. The audacity and courage of the women to perform more than household duties not only showed hard work and determination but also demonstrated their resilience. It was indicative of the fact that in spite of the difficult conditions that the women face they aspired to move beyond their circumstances for other opportunities.
Theme Three: Strength and power

Strength and power is the third theme and the inspiration was derived from my admiration at the diverse works that the hands of the participants can and have accomplished. The diverse works completed by the participants can be witnessed in different contexts, for example, the much tougher activities in and for their homes, such as physically chopping and collecting firewood and carrying piles of water, as opposed to delicate activities such as sewing and crochet. Although this theme is similar to hard work and determination, strength and power focuses specifically on the physical accomplishment of work. My background gave me the perception that heavy-duty physical work such as chopping firewood and starting a fire is work associated with men. This was not the case in HaMakuya. Through this observation I realised the power and strength of these women through the diversity of the work done using their hands.

Visually supporting Theme Three

Figure 33a: Phumudzo Munwana drawing. Photograph by the author.
Figure 33b: Grace Mutele learns beadwork with coaching from Tendani Mukhada. Photograph by the author.
Figure 33c: Learning exchange as Grace Mutele coaches Tendani Mukhada to use the sewing machine. Photograph by the author.

Figure 34a: Phumudzo Munwana chopping firewood which is an example of a tough task. Photograph by the author.
Figure 34b: Grace Mutele harvesting tree bark for an exercise is another example of a tougher role accomplished by the hands of the women. Photograph by the author.
Theme Four: Voice and activism

The fourth theme was inspired by the ways in which the participants found the means to express themselves. They have used different forms such as preaching and communicating Tshivenda phrases as well as using media such as Photovoice and the camera. The examples from the field include the phrases that were used by the women such as Tharamu dzani phapha dzanu (‘Spread your wings’ in Tshivenda); the participants using the camera in their learning; the group speaking with each other and on behalf of the co-operative, such as Tendani Mukhada representing the co-operative at a meeting for the fashion show; or Sylvia Tshikovhi telephoning a bank on behalf of the co-operative (Figure 15, page 58). I contend, with these examples, that the awareness of voice intermingled with the idea of empowerment and sustainability because it was through being able to think, do, and speak for themselves that women progressed in their various roles. This theme was inspired by the sense of agency that was anchored in being able to express oneself. It was the expression of their voices that in many ways made the women activists in their own right.

Visuals supporting Theme Four

Figure 35a: Phumudzo Munwana uses the camera. Photograph by the author.
Figure 35b: Grace Mutele shares a scripture from the Bible to a crowd. Photograph by the author.
Figure 35c: Grace Mutele talks to new members about sewing. Photograph by the author.
Theme Five: Ownership, prosperity and future

The development of agency as shown with the discussion of Theme Four was the foundation from which the last theme was grounded. The idea that the participants attained ownership of the business and of the insight to develop a sewing co-operative through their participation and co-creation in the development process was an important factor of PAR. In my opinion it was this agency and ownership of the initiative that increased the opportunity for the women to grow and be prosperous. Stringer (1999:11) states that through the collaborative element of an action-based approach “[a]s they collectively investigate their own situation, stakeholders build a consensual vision of their life-world”. Therefore, in addition with owning and managing the co-operative, the participants also envisioned their own future within the context of themselves and of the sewing co-operative.

In this regard I formed a linkage between ownership, prosperity and future that made them read as a unified theme for the concepts of the fashion representation. The linkage emanated from the positive image that the frequency polygon graph and the trial balance illustrated for the participants in 2013. This positive image gave the women a sense of achievement and prosperity. However, this sense of achievement exceeded monetary values and included the development of confidence and character building. Tendani Mukhada’s closing statement proved this claim: “With our increased sales I realise that I am very proud of myself, when I started I couldn’t do a single thing, not even to use a sewing machine but now I sew pencil cases, I can sew a two-piece, I can sew a bag I am very proud of myself” (Mukhada 2013g [Recorded]). With a feeling of prosperity, the members were able to express how they envisioned the future for themselves and for the co-operative which linked future to ownership. Tendani Mukhada’s idea of outsourcing products and services from Sambandou, a nearby village outside HaMakuya, in order to build stock and increase possible profit for the co-operative, was a small but a vital example of the three themes working systematically as a unit. On a much broader scale, the participants were involved in marketing the co-operative, managing its finances and strengthening it as a reputable business, and this participation not only showed a sense of ownership for the initiative but also demonstrated that there was the potential for prosperity with the group visualising and planning a future for the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.
Visuals supporting Theme Five

Figure 36a: A trial balance and how it influenced the frequency polygon graph. Photograph by the author.

Figures 36b: Ntshengedzeni Sigonde completes papers for the co-operative's business account. Photograph by the author.
Figure 36c: Sylvia Tshikovhi documents the finances of the co-operative. Photograph by the author.

Figure 36d: Participants launch the co-operative to the community and exhibit their products. Photograph by the author.
THINK: CONVERTING IDEAS INTO DESIGNS

In this section I discuss and describe my creative process to developing the sample designs. I continue exploring the stages of the design process documented by Aspelund (2010) and explore the ‘think and act’ aspects within Stringer’s (1999) routine. In the process, I illustrate the design ideas based on the fabric swatches and my chosen colour scheme. I also discuss how I finalise the designs before they are produced as mock-up garments and the presentation of the garments in a catalogue.

Conceptualise themes into design ideas

In this stage of conceptualisation Aspelund (2010:71) recommends that “analogies, metaphors, similes and intuitive thinking are helpful tools to visualize, describe and explain non-existent objects.” Therefore, in this section I discuss the concepts underpinning my visual interpretation of the themes for the garment pieces. I also provide the rationale and inspiration for the choice of materials, colour palette and silhouettes of the mock-ups. The choices of materials, colour palette and silhouette are symbolic and are a metaphoric representation of inspiration drawn from HaMakuya. Since the fashion range is inspired by women empowerment in a rural context and each garment piece carries a story and theme, I entitle the fashion collection ‘Narratives of women empowerment’ (2013).

Conceptualisation of design silhouettes

The silhouettes of the garments are square and rectangular in shape which is inspired by Venda traditional female attire, particularly the rectangular and square shape of the nwenda and mukhasi (Figures 37a, 37b and 37c) which the participants have manufactured.

Figure 37a: Mukhasi held. Photograph by the author.  
Figure 37b: Mukhasi worn. Photograph by the author.  
Figure 37c: Traditional nwenda. Photograph by the author.
Conceptualisation of colour palette and material choices

At first glance HaMakuya appeared extremely impoverished and its surroundings were dry as a result of limited water. During hot periods, like in my November visit, one is likely to see people lying and even sleeping on their verandas during the day. Yet if one observed attentively there were hints of resilience and creative expression, which was contrary to the dullness perceived on first view. Examples of resilience included the small food gardens that were seen in some houses, schools and the local clinic in Domboni Village. Some walls in this dry environment, for example in Makuya Secondary School and the local clinic, were painted in vibrant colours.

Creative expression continued to be exposed through music that was heard in many homes as well as the use of music and dance as activities of play particularly by young girls. In this case old buckets were transformed into drums that accompanied the children’s singing and dancing. Some young boys of HaMakuya have also employed their creativity through the creation of their own toys in the form of cars made from wire. Moses Maliasi, a local artist from Guyuni, collected material for his wood carvings from his surroundings and a retired woman from Musunda (whose name I unfortunately do not know), used discarded plastic bags to weave mats for homes. These examples continued to reinforce the wealth of creative expression by community members.

These small flashes of hope inspired my colour schemes and fabric combinations. Therefore, although each piece had an identity and a story of its own, I attempted to create a cohesive set of garments through the colour palette and the use of zips as fastening methods on all garments. The colour palette of the collection was natural and consisted of shades across the cream and beige colour scheme (Figures 38a and 38d). This colour palette was an attempt to convey the sandy and dusty appearance of HaMakuya, and was inspired by some of the photographs collected by the participants and myself in 2012 to inspire the embellishment of products (Figure 38e). In my constant attempt to create a cohesive range, all garments had hints of black as a trussing colour. The reason for the use of black was because technically I want to use it to highlight the silhouette and details of some garments. Additionally, black, particularly the thin black stripe, is a very common contrast and defining colour in ntenda.
The natural colour palette was complemented with the use of some natural and textured fabrics like cotton, linen and suede, which in some instances were loosely woven and other instances textured. The choice of fabrics was an attempt to replicate the texture and feel of cattle skin (through suede) and the mud and cow dung plastered walls of some rondavels in HaMakuya (through linen and loosely woven cotton). I also used the brightly-coloured traditional Venda material as reference to the place and ethnic group from which the inspiration was drawn. Furthermore the bright colours of nwenda symbolised the hints of resilience and hope that have often been revealed in HaMakuya. I found the idea of including a small portion of a multi-coloured fabric on a neutral coloured garment appealing, and I have discovered aspects of this idea around various areas of HaMakuya (Figures 39a to 39d).
Illustrate and sketch the design ideas

In the field of fashion, design ideas are represented through figure sketches or illustrations and the ideas are drawn from a pictorial board representation commonly known as 'mood and look boards'. Similarly, Aspelund (2010:101) suggests that in this design stage the “most recognizable method of exploring a design is to visualize it through sketching and modelling. With all the visual prompts available from the concept boards and brainstorming… To use your sketches and illustrations most efficiently, clearly, and consistently, you must develop a visual language.” Therefore, I present the design sketch for each theme and explain briefly how I attempt to convey the themes.
Figure 41: Design Two illustration. Illustration by the author. ‘The whole world on her shoulders’ illustrates the multiple roles that the participants perform in addition to being entrepreneurs. The piece is a coat-like garment that is embellished with a collage of imagery that symbolises the various facets of the women’s lives. These include symbols within the themes of religion and spirituality, family life, marriage and household duties such as foster parenting, cooking and cleaning and business-related symbols such as paper and money clips. The iconographies comprise toys, jewellery and hand crafted pieces that are clustered on the shoulder area of the garment to accentuate the shoulders. The idea of the coat-like garment is in response to the emergence of power dressing of the 1980s when women began participating in the business world. Likewise, the members of the sewing co-operative have begun to participate in their own co-operative society in a rural context.

Figure 42: Design Three Illustration. The third theme is conveyed by the garment entitled ‘Hand of a woman’. Illustration by the author.

The garment is a dress made out of black material attached to a hand casting across the shoulder area that is bejewelled with bangles worn by Venda women. The hand is cast in a grip position so that it appears to be holding the dress from the top. The dress is constructed through draping, a technique that uses a lot of fabric, which results in the increased weight of a garment. I use the idea of a hand holding a heavy object made out of a light material and compare this idea to how the women of the sewing co-operative persevere in the midst of difficult situations but also as a reference to the diverse works that their hands can do.
With ‘Voice of a woman’ I attempt to communicate the theme of voice and activism. The garment is a sleeveless dress with appliqué and embroidered text presented in the English language. The dress is cut in black sheer material and linen and I use nwenda to appliqué some text so that visually the dress looks like a collage of words that are worn. The words are phrases that I use to empower women and they include the phrases: “speak woman speak”, “rise up high”, “fly! the sky is the limit”, “spread your wings” and “reach for your peak”. The garment also has a breast pocket with an MP3 player and two speakers positioned around a neckpiece (relatively near the voice box area). I use the MP3 player and the speakers to project the phrases appliquéd and embroidered on the garment and the participants utter these phrases in both Tshivenda and English. The phrases are spoken over a sewing machine playing in the background as a musician would play musical instruments to support their performance. In this regard I comment on how the fashion design capacity of sewing can be used as an instrument to mobilise and empower women.

A close-up of the sales figures embroidery is included to represent the inspiring image of the
frequency polygon graph.

The theme of ownership, prosperity and future is presented through the final piece entitled ‘Fly up high’. It is a dress with kimono sleeves; the idea of wings addresses ownership and compares the participants’ ownership of the co-operative to a bird taking its first flight. The back of the garment is entirely covered with a bird to strengthen the notion of flying. The hem of the garment is finished off with rows of fabric strips that resemble a mukhasi (the Vhavenda female traditional attire and one of the garment items that sold well at the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative). The rows of fabric strips instead of being linear like a mukhasi are presented in a graphical, up-and-down style. This signifies the frequency polygon graph of the sewing co-operative where members looked at their financial position in high and low sale volumes. The rows of stitches are complemented with a button detail and embroidered sales figures. In order to end the piece on a positive perspective, the final row of fabric strips hit the highest point as a metaphor and sign of my well wishes for the prosperity and future of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

**Finalise the designs before production**

In the definition and modelling stage, according to Aspelund (2010:117) “you [the designer] are encouraged to explore approaches to creating models for your designs and plan the creation of a concept model. Finally, you have an opportunity to revise your design thesis with any new developments that have occurred”. During the development stages of the garments I re-visited and re-worked the design ideas in order to enhance and strengthen the outcomes of the samples before manufacture commences. As such the modifications and changes to the designs were drawn from personal reflections of my creative process.

The first modification was to incorporate different sizes of the samples as a metaphoric response to the diversity of women and their physical appearances. In this way, I experimented with the shapes, structures and sizes of the garment pieces. This approach continued to reinforce the idea of each garment carrying its own story, just as the different women carried their own unique stories. Therefore, the models that I used to present the garment samples came in different body types and physical looks. This decision was contrary to how models are at times cast by fashion designers to represent and communicate the designer’s envisioned look.

The second modification was to include a sixth garment (Figure 45). This garment carried aspects of all the other themes and garments and served the purpose of introducing the succeeding five samples.
Garment One, entitled 'Journaling narratives of empowerment'. The garment introduces and explains, through embroidered text combined with fabric embellishment treatments, the themes for each garment that the viewer is about to encounter. I plan with this piece to resemble the idea of a book or journal embedded with five pages made out of fabric. Each page indicates the ideas linked to the succeeding five themes of the upcoming five pieces. The choice of fabric for the five ‘pages’ are fabrics that are closely associated with paper - either a white plain fabric or a fabric with stripes on which the text is printed or embroidered. The silhouette of the garment is square with a book-like appearance which looks like a wearable book. This journal idea is inspired by my task in the process of journaling as well as keeping a visual diary; however it is also inspired by the participants writing their own stories of possibility: aspirations, dreams and creativity to reach out of poverty. In this way, some pages remain clean as a message for women to continue to write their life stories.

I also made adjustments to each garment developed in Stage Four. I decided to include handcrafted earrings for the black silhouette figure on the first garment. The shoulder area of the second garment was emphasised much strongly with the incorporation of more prominent embellishment objects that were reflective of a rural setting. Instead of casting a female hand for the third garment, I decided to use the wood carving expertise of Moses Maliasi, a HaMakuya-based artist, to carve the female hand. In this way first, I linked aspects of the production directly to HaMakuya and, secondly, the wood carving referenced the work of Jackson Hlungwane, the late Venda-based artist (Figure 46) and the strong wood-carving traditions in the region. For the fifth garment, my decision was to combine embroidery with appliqué for the texted Venda phrases. Furthermore, the sound from the MP3 player was mixed with Venda songs which were sourced from the music played during the tshigombela and tshifase ceremonies.\(^{43}\) In addition I planned, with the fifth garment, to replace obvious

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\(^{43}\) The tshigombela is a female dance traditionally performed by married women while the tshifase is traditionally performed by boys and girls during the evening. This references both former and current married and unmarried participants.
elements with more poetic and symbolic suggestions. For example the idea of the bird and 
the wings at the back of the garment were replaced with an ambiguous detail cut in sheer 
fabric that was bow-like as well as wing-like. The button detail used to plot the frequency 
polygon graph was also replaced with small bags filled with various amounts of beads in 
each bag. This was symbolic of the fluctuation of sales depicted by the frequency polygon 
graph. These changes influenced the changes of the production stage.

![Image](72x502 to 169x646)

Figure 46: Jackson Hlungwane (artist), Russel Scott (photographer), *Hand of God*, 1989 (Jackie May 2010). The idea of the hand is also drawn from the carving of Jackson Hlungwane, an artist who was based in Gazankulu, who once carved a piece called *Hand of God* (1989). On the contrary, because of the women empowerment frame, my garment piece is entitled ‘*Hand of a woman*’.

**ACT: PRODUCE AND PRESENT GARMENT SAMPLES**

**Produce the finalised designs**

Aspelund (2010:169) states that “[production] examines decision-making in terms of budgets, schedules, materials and sustainability… [and] highlights the documentation that should result and lessons that should be learned from the end of a project”. The fabric choices, colour palette, embellishment and production options for the design samples were finalised resulting in the production of the garment mock-ups. The samples were not produced by the participants; however, there was an option to include the co-operative in the production stage.

**A mode for presentation of designs**

“[Communication] is simply presented as the sixth stage because at this point you are ready to present the design in its finished state. You must consider, in addition to the actual ideas and designs themselves, the best way for you to present them. You will have to see which
media and presentation methods are most ideal, so you can get your design thesis’s message across” (Aspelund 2010:142). The garment mock-ups of my own work have undergone the various stages and production options have been offered to strengthen the manner in which the themes are transmitted. Thus, each garment sample is presented in the catalogue with the suggested options from the different stakeholders as well as personal decisions.

REFLECTION: LINKING PERSONAL PROCESS TO PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Linkage of personal work to the sustainability of Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative

“A designer must be a leader and a team player… creating a prototype is a good way to finalize any ideas that still need exploring… [and] every project as a learning experience can leave you with fuel for your next projects” (Aspelund 2010:169). The sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative was the basis of this research study. Although I have used the influence of the research participants to develop my practical work, some design ideas can be converted into marketable products that can be manufactured by the members of the sewing co-operative. The notion of the inspiration drawn from the women cycling back into the women in a different but beneficial form was an idea to prolong options for sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. In this way, I considered the current skills base of the participants and propose that garment four, because of its simplicity, was most likely to be converted into a marketable product. The design may be adapted into a simple dress embellished with Venda phrases. The participants have experience in screen printing as well as embroidery (for example tray mats), and the text on the marketable dress can be screen printed or embroidered, or embellished with a combination of these two techniques. In this way, the participants implement their skills in a different product and thus can continue to create a diversity of products. The idea of adapting the design for the sewing co-operative aligns with the iterative cycles for the aims of supporting the sustainability of the co-operative. This example promotes further the reflection and revising of actions within the methodology of iterative action cycles.

Linking garment presentation to Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative

I will be in a position to incorporate the products from the sewing co-operative in the catalogue in order to promote the products to a different and urban-based market. The quality of the products has improved, and the product variety has also increased, which is
why the products are included on the catalogue. At the end of the project, I agreed to remain involved in the co-operative as a board member. This role allows me to continue to support the project at an advisory level. For example, as board member there is a possibility for me to use the catalogue to promote the co-operative in Johannesburg. The Johannesburg-based clients can view the products on the catalogue (for clients without access to the internet who cannot visit the Tshulu Trust website) before placing an order. This possibility also reduces the inconvenience of carrying actual garments to Johannesburg to show to customers.

Conclusion

In this section I described the design process that took place in developing my own garment samples. My reflections on the PAR research and development experience in the context of HaMakuya have assisted me to formulate themes within a broad frame of women empowerment that I convey through samples and present in the catalogue. The design ideas reflect and embody the inspiring achievements of the participants in HaMakuya. I have attempted to document the cyclical process and the transformation of the participants from ordinary women who wanted a source of income, to motivated and confident business women who generate their own success (monetary and otherwise). I also provided an option to inject one of my designs into the co-operative in order to continue the aim to support the sustainability of the sewing co-operative. In order to increase options for marketing, products from the co-operative are included on the catalogue. In the concluding section I sum up the main findings and reflect on the research study.

REFLECTIONS OF RESEARCH STUDY

Limitations and shortcomings of the study

The key limitations of this study include the geographical distance between my place of residence, which is Soweto, and HaMakuya in the north-east of Limpopo Province. This distance entailed approximately an eight-hour bus ride to Thohoyandou and another hour and thirty minutes from Thohoyandou to HaMakuya. The frequency of the training interventions was affected by the distance and my visits to HaMakuya resulted in high expenses. The expenses included time, travel and accommodation costs and the logistical costs of getting to Domboni Village from Tshulu Camp on a daily basis. Fortunately these expenses were subsidised through an NRF grant and Masters bursary that I received.
As the sewing co-operative is based within the premises of the Makuya Tribal Authority Council, access to the premises during the weekends for further training was problematic. This challenge transpired due to the key of the main gate of the council being in possession of the Council's employees. On occasions when access to the site was granted during the weekend unexpected risks were faced. For example on an occasion in 2012 community members helped themselves to the water stored in Council's water storage tank. As a result all the people working at the Council offices the following week, including ourselves, had limited water all week.

The issue of participant attendance was addressed in the reflections of each training cycle. Inconsistent participant attendance was influenced by various factors in HaMakuya, for example all members collected water from a community borehole and most participants were eligible for social grants, which resulted in a lack of attendance on the third or fourth day of each month that I was in HaMakuya. I used cycle reflections to address the challenge of attendance, for example in Phase Two I opted to visit on days outside of the social grant payment days and went to HaMakuya during school holidays in order for the participants to attend training.

Some of the activities of the objectives were not completed; however, I found ways to integrate them into the research study and for further sustainable development of the sewing co-operative. In order to continue establishing formal sustainable structures for the co-operative it was imperative to register the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. This outcome was not achieved because there was a need by CIPRO for either a co-operative auditor or an accountant to sign a form that exempts the co-operative from auditing requirements. However, the Trust manager plans to request intervention from the Tshulu Trust auditor, to write a letter of auditing exemption to send to CIPRO with the rest of the documents. The Trust manager's contract expired and was not renewed by the end of 2013. Although the task of getting an auditor was not completed within the research period, I was able to submit the required documents to CIPRO during early 2014. I was able to represent the co-operative and sign an oath for this agreement on the participants’ behalf. The co-operative will require a bookkeeper to submit annual statements.

A personal limitation was the communication between the participants and myself. Although this challenge was reduced by the translators that I worked with throughout the training interventions, some sentences were challenging to convert from English to Tshivenda or vice
versa. On a personal level it was also uncomfortable using English as a medium of communication with women of African descent. This is influenced by my belief that by communicating in indigenous languages we nurture these languages. In this way, there is an opportunity for indigenous languages to be maintained and sustained for generations. Grace Mutele did speak a bit of IsiZulu, therefore I would at times communicate in IsiZulu. However, in order avoid causing tension between Grace Mutele and the other participants, by alienating them from the conversation, I worked on basic Venda words and sentence construction, particularly words and sentences that were relevant to the training interventions, and by the end of the project I could have a basic conversation with the participants in Tshivenda.

Outcomes and contribution

This development research project and study has contributed significantly to the field of community-based action research and development work in HaMakuya. The main objective was to develop a sustainable sewing co-operative for Tshulu Trust and in terms of the four indexes for sustainability, which are nature, wellbeing, economy and society, some indications based on these indexes have been identified. Through the development process a group of four business partners now operate the new sewing co-operative independently with a fifth member as an advisor. The use of PAR and co-operative inquiry, complemented by arts-based approaches to developing the sewing co-operative, assisted in creating a regenerative, participatory and collaborative model for developing a sustainable sewing co-operative or craft enterprise.

A strategy to evaluate the sustainability of a sewing co-operative in a systematic way has also been advocated through the four pillars of sustainability. The indications include the participants’ capability to manufacture and re-design products independently, for example the different skirt designs. The members have developed the capability to formulate a design from conception to product and I am confident that this can be demonstrated in the future through them conceptualising and designing other products. This proactive attitude indicates the development of their agency.

The reflections of the training interventions provided the opportunity to experiment and it was through experimenting that lessons were learnt. By experimenting I refer to testing out actions and revising these actions for future purposes as per the action and reflection of
iterative cycles. However, it has also been through the actions that stock was built and consequently an expanded opportunity for increased sales. All these occurrences also indicate the growth of the participants in managing business finances through the use of the trial balance, receipt book and frequency polygon graph. It is encouraging that the participants requested to record sales and expenses in a book instead of a chart which indicates their intention to continue using the trial balance approach. These tools and methods assisted the members to adopt disciplined financial management and the total savings of R9495 in their business account is evidence of the rewards of sound managerial skills.

Similarly impressive, is the reality of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative escaping the ‘piggy bank’ style of saving by opening a formal business account. The sewing co-operative paid the amount of R215 into the CIPRO account, a considerable achievement that means that the sewing co-operative is a recognised client of CIPRO with a reference name, number and a password. In addition to this, the paperwork between CIPRO and the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative has been signed and lodged. This situation can continue to feed into the iterative action cycles, which also means that the cycles do not end with the research study but may continue as short-, medium- and long-term goals of the sewing co-operative. In my opinion, communal support can be encouraging and nurtures the members to continue growing and developing their business. As such, the community fashion show was an attempt for the co-operative to establish a relationship with community members. The event provided the participants the opportunity to identify products that appealed to the people of HaMakuya. This plan demonstrates that the continuation of the co-operative is envisioned beyond gaining support from the tourist market provided by Tshulu Trust, and that there is also a need to incorporate the surrounding villages as another potential market. Furthermore, the fashion event also enabled collaboration between the participants and certain community stakeholders such as local musicians. Collaboration that occurs in action-based approaches is imperative and has been rewarding in this community-based action research. In the process of collaborating, learning and the exchanging of ideas transpired amongst the community members, which Stringer (1999:10) believes is democratic, equitable, liberating and life enhancing. Likewise, I contend that if the members continue to collaborate with key players from the community, further options for the development of the co-operative and the collaborators are enhanced. For example, the musicians promoted their talent whilst providing music for the fashion show.
The aspect of the objectives outlined and undertaken in this study have proved to be a desirable approach to designing a fashion range which is inspired by and enriched by the chieftaincy of HaMakuya. The work implemented in HaMakuya and the concepts and samples presented for my own fashion samples also present a model that may be inspiring in the creative processes of designers and/or artists. My use of the seven stages of the design process within the iterative action cycles frame has resulted in products that have undergone rigorous research and reflection. In this way, my HaMakuya experience has been communicated not only in textual and visual forms (journaling and photographs) but as well as in the creative output that has potential to loop back into the sewing co-operative.

**Way forward**

There are a number of future plans in place to ensure the expansion and continuity of the sewing co-operative. Since this project is based on a partnership and collaborative model and the fulfilling outcomes of such an approach, the manager of Tshulu Trust proposes to implement collaboration between the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative and students from the Vega School of Photography, a Pretoria-based photography school who visit HaMakuya periodically. From the collaboration, photographs of products from the co-operative, developed through the expertise of the photography students, may be included on the Tshulu Trust Facebook page resulting in further online advertising. The purpose of including the photographs of products on the Facebook page is for the visiting groups to be able to view the products before being in HaMakuya. Through viewing the photographs of products online, options for future visitors to pre-order products from the co-operative can be offered. This idea responds to the situation when the members of the previous sewing co-operative retired in the middle of a large order. In this case from the previous sewing co-operative the limited time may also have contributed in the failure to deliver, especially because student group visits are usually a duration of one week. Consequently, with this new plan by the Trust manager, the participants may receive more time to produce orders and reduce the frustrations of completing an order in a week.

The UJ Visual Art’s intervention can continue to offer support in some aspects of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative through further training in screen printing. The expertise of the artists from the UJ may be used by the sewing co-operative to increase the number of print designs for *nwenda* material. In this way, the profile of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative can be enhanced as a group which specialises in fabric design through screen
printing. This idea provides a platform for the members to operate a diversified sewing co-operative that offers sewing as well as printing services.

I plan to address further the challenge for marketing and to increase the opportunity for the sustainability of the co-operative. I link this challenge to my background with the boutique market. I have spent about two years (between 2009 and 2010) as a fashion designer supplying a Johannesburg-based boutique with fashion accessories. However, this venture halted as a result of the overwhelming responsibilities of production as well as business. I continue to have a desire to restart this venture to supply products to more boutiques. The link with the sewing co-operative provides the opportunity for me to renew my business relationship with boutiques and to supply an assortment of fashion products. The members of the co-operative offer a diverse range of craft techniques such as crochet, embroidery and beadwork that can be utilised on my own fashion products. In this way I can feed the group with production and contract work and enable further growth for the sewing co-operative.

The first example for possible contract work for the co-operative is to adapt a product from my personal garments which I used in the self-reflexive cycle into more marketable products that are produced by the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. The idea of employing the sewing co-operative for production services can be applied further and continued through referring and inviting contract work from other fashion designers. Such contract work enables the sewing co-operative to operate as a production hub. In this way the products of urban-based designers can be produced locally and as a consequence the plan contributes to developing further the sewing co-operative whilst attempting to address unemployment in a rural-based poverty node and growing local businesses. I have initiated the interest of three Johannesburg-based fashion designers. The two of the three designers own accessory brands and the remaining designer creates embellished evening gowns. The involvement of these three designers can continue to provide more training and production commissions to the participants beyond the training that I have already offered.

**Conclusion**

This project has demonstrated that iterative action cycles play an enormous part in developing the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative with the participants. Establishing a new initiative like a sewing co-operative has proven to be a massive task that is shrouded with
some unpredictable and at times problematic situations. For example, the co-operative almost collapsed at the end 2012 when two members left to take up another job opportunity. However, reflection of actions as per a PAR approach and the methodology of action cycles, coupled with the dedication of the participants, have provided an opportunity to address the problems that may arise with development work and open the scope to modify future approaches. These reflections and revisions of actions have been rewarding because, through them, support networks for the co-operative were realised. The involvement of Tshulu Trust during these challenges and my involvement in an advisory capacity continue to feed and renew a healthy system for the business and are examples of support networks for the co-operative.

By involving the participants in all stages of the development process; particularly in production, marketing, financial and business management, I am confident that the possibility and capability for sustainable development is augmented. The challenges have resulted in the development process being flexible as it involved adapting creatively to the changes that occurred within the process. The members deciding, in collaboration with me (amongst many other decisions), which products worked best for their market and which business approaches were viable, are examples of the openness and engagement in the process which was, by and large, enabled through action planning provided by the logic model. Although I do not envision the members drafting a logic model in its physical state, I do imagine the members utilising the essence of a logic model to dream of outputs and divide the tasks to achieve that output. As such the process confirms Ramphele’s (2012:210) view that “sustainable development is only possible through active engagement of citizens in all phases of the process”. I do acknowledge that continuity of the co-operative is up to its members, however, I believe the processes identified and initiated in this project can maintain the continuity of a co-operative that has a system of operation and improves its members’ financial situation whilst enhancing their confidence on an individual and societal basis.

The arts-based tools and methods employed within the interventions of sewing and business skills training and marketing have augmented the participatory nature of PAR and co-operative inquiry. The effectiveness of arts-based approaches has proven once again in this community development project that the “arts and creative cultural practice have an important role to play in social transformation and in placing people at the centre of their own development” (Berman et al 2012a:12). The appreciation and owning of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative by the participants, revealed by the hopes and dreams that the
members have for the business, indicates that the group envisions the co-operative being active in the future. These examples continue to reinforce indications for the sustainability and growth of the sewing co-operative. In this research study I investigated the extent to which arts-based training interventions may ensure the sustainability of a sewing co-operative. I believe the project has not only answered the research question, but has surpassed the expectations by empowering the participants as active citizens, agents of change, leaders, business and community developers, and as a co-collaborator I have also enjoyed these rewarding benefits.

The primary objective of Tshulu Trust is to contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation in HaMakuya, and through the development of the sewing co-operative this study and development work has contributed to this objective. However, the outcomes of the interventions are testament to an achievement that surpasses community development based solely on economic empowerment. Without question, the participants became more confident and were able to achieve a lot with the income that they generated from the co-operative. However, the participants are, in their own words, better versions of themselves and, importantly to me, agents of their own lives. These examples continue to expose the continuing relevance of Amartya Sen’s book Development as Freedom (1999) to development work, more so women empowerment. Sen (1999:191) asserts that improving women’s earning power and economic role outside family, literacy and education, poverty and rights, contributes to adding force to women’s voice and agency through independence and empowerment. He continues to emphasise that this empowerment of women has a clear impact on enhancing the social standing of women in the household and society because they become less dependent on others. In addition, Sen (1999:191) declares that the limited role of women’s active agency afflicts the lives of all people - men, as well as women, children and adults. This perspective shows the importance of sustainability of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative to the HaMakuya society as a whole, and not just in terms of the livelihoods that this study has attempted to establish.

I have also experienced immense personal growth on various levels. The experience of working with members of HaMakuya has challenged me as an active researcher, as a contributor within the field of community development, as a South African citizen, but most importantly as a fashion designer. It has introduced to me the positive impact that the design discipline of fashion can have on the marginalised citizens of rural South Africa. In a greater sense the experience in HaMakuya has been a cultural exchange that propounds the ability
for me to be inspired to create fashion garments. With the PAR approach I immersed myself in cycles of participation that influence, inspire and inform my approach to develop ideas and concepts for the garment samples. I wanted to conclude my research study with the design and manufacture of these clothes but I did not have any concrete preconceived ideas of how the range might look. As I encountered the cycles and development process, the concepts started building and unfolding themselves into themes in an organic and spontaneous way. The development of the sewing project is aimed as an establishment of empowerment for the participants, however the influence of the mothers, wives, thinkers, and now entrepreneurs, has empowered my approach to develop concepts and themes. It is this exchange of empowerment, a symbiotic relationship of sorts that has enlightened and introduced me to the research mode of community-based action research. With this range I also attempt to promote the possibility for fellow designers and artists to link their artistic thought process, whether directly or indirectly, with community-based art projects and the richness to their work such linkages can offer. Holistically, this study has contributed to my existence as a fashion designer in a community context and by placing my design discipline in a social development framework has shown the democratic potential of designing for a common good.
REFERENCE LIST

Allen, L. 2012. History of first Tshulu sewing co-operative. E-mail to Khaya J. Mchunu, 6 June 2012.


Mukhada, T, research participant, HaMakuya. 2013g. Focus group discussion with author translated by Khubana, M. [Recorded]. 07 September. HaMakuya.


Mutele, G, research participant, HaMakuya. 2013d. Focus group discussion with author translated by Khubana, M. [Recorded]. 06 September. HaMakuya.


Sigonde, N, research participant, HaMakuya. 2013c. Focus group discussion with the author translated by Khubana, M. [Recorded]. 06 September. HaMakuya.


APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Additional STATSA data on Ward 13

Education electoral wards.

Educational institution by Gender for person weighted,

93402013: Ward 13, 05 – 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational institution</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school including day care; creche; Grade R and Pre-Grade R in an ECD centre</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary school including Grade R learners who attend a formal school; Grade 1-12 learners &amp; learners in special class</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>2197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special school</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Education and Training College FET</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Educational Institution University/University of Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Basic Education and Training Centre ABET Centre</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy classes e.g. Kha Ri Gude; SANLI</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home based education/ home schooling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Dwellings Electoral Wards.

Annual Household income for Household weighted,

93402013: Ward 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Household income</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 - R 4800</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 4801 - R 9600</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 9601 - R 19 600</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 19 601 - R 38 200</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 38 201 - R 76 400</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 76 401 - R 153 800</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 153 801 - R 307 600</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 307 601 - R 614 400</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 614 001 - R 1 228 800</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 228 801 - R 2 457 600</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 2 457 601 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source of water for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of water for Household weighted</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regional/local water scheme (operated by municipality or other water services provider)</td>
<td>1514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borehole</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Water</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain water tank</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dam/pool/stagnant water</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River/stream</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water vendor</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water tanker</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Piped water for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water inside dwelling/institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water inside yard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water on community stand: distance less than 200m from dwelling/institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water on community stand: distance between 200m and 500m from dwelling/institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water on community stand: distance between 500m and 1000m (1km) from dwelling/institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piped (tap) water on community stand: distance greater than 1000m (1km) from dwelling/institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to piped (tap) water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy or fuel for heating for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Dung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy or fuel for cooking for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Dung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy or fuel for lighting for Household weighted, 93402013: Ward 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles (not a valid option)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3

Project Advertisement in 2012
ANNOUNCEMENT OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN SEWING AND DESIGN

Tshulu Trust (IT: 12/08) is pleased to announce four entrepreneurship opportunities in Sewing and Design.

The four successful candidates will form a sewing cooperative and will be provided with the following:
• Training in sewing and design from a qualified designer;
• Ongoing mentorship from this designer for at least a year;
• Equipment;
• A workspace;
• Assistance with product design;
• Assistance with quality control;
• A market in the form of visitors to Tshulu Camp;
• Seed funding for materials to start up;
• Training in, and assistance with, basic business and financial skills.

No salaries, stipends or any other forms of financial payment will be paid to the successful candidates at any stage. Therefore this opportunity is suitable for entrepreneurial people who wish to run a business. It is not suitable for those who wish for a job with a regular salary.

Prior experience in sewing is an advantage but is not necessary if the following essential skills, attitudes and experience can be demonstrated.

Required Skills

**Essential:** Good leadership, decision making, and communication skills.
Have basic sewing skills (e.g. can mend a ripped seam, sew on a button, cut fabric).
**Desirable:** Be able to speak and read in TshiVenda and English.
Have basic skills with numbers; analytical.

Required Attitudes

**Essential:** being open-minded; able to work under pressure; being prepared to work after normal working hours if a finishing a contract demands it; able to work independently and effectively; able to work in a team.
Able to appreciate fabric, colour and design in craft (such as crochet, embroidery, mat or basket making)
**Desirable:** have an interest in fashion, design, or craft; and interest in business.

Required Experience

**Essential:** Have at worked with fabric in some way, such as basic mending, or embroidery (i.e. must have used a hand needle).
**Desirable:** Have taken part in a business activity of some description; have calculated sums.
The application procedure

Applications in writing must be submitted to the Tshulu Office by 3pm on Friday the 11th of May, 2012. No late applications will be accepted. Application forms are available at no charge from Mrs Melita Makuya at the Tshulu Office. Photocopies of IDs are not necessary.

10 candidates will be shortlisted and will be invited to attend a one day training on Monday 14th May from 8.30am to 3.30pm. This training will also serve as a practical interview. These 10 candidates will be informed by telephone on Sunday 13th May. Please make sure a reliable telephone number is provided.

The best 4 candidates will be chosen to continue as the permanent sewing group. These four candidates will be offered further 6 days of initial training:
Tuesday 15th – Thursday 17th May
Monday 23rd – Wednesday 25th May

Further information and the application forms are available, free of charge, from the Tshulu Trust office.

The application forms are free of charge.
An ID photocopy is not necessary.

Tshulu Trust Contact Details

Tshulu Office: Tshulu Resource Centre
Domboni Village (near Makuya Clinic)
Postal Address: P.O. Box 181, Makuya, 0973
Tel: 082 223 7605
Email: makuyamd@tshulutrust.org
Website: www.tshulutrust.org
Appendix 4

Project Advertisement in 2013

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN SEWING AND DESIGN

Tshulu Trust (IT: 12/08) is pleased to announce business opportunities in Sewing and Design.

The successful candidates will form a sewing cooperative and will be provided with the following:
- Training in sewing and design from a qualified designer;
- Ongoing mentorship from this designer for at least a year;
- Use of equipment and aworkspace;
- Assistance with product design and quality control;
- A market in the form of visitors to Tshulu Camp;
- Seed funding for materials to start up;
- Training in, and assistance with, basic business and financial skills.

No salaries, stipends or any other forms of financial payment will be paid to the successful candidates at any stage. Therefore this opportunity is suitable for entrepreneurial people who wish to run a business. It is not suitable for those who wish for a job with a regular salary.

Required Skills

**Essential:** Good leadership, decision making, and communication skills;
Have sewing skills using a machine and cutting fabric.

**Desirable:** Be able to speak and read in Tshivenda and English.
Have basic skills with numbers; analytical.

Required Attitudes

**Essential:** being open-minded; able to work under pressure; being prepared to work after normal working hours if a finishing a contract demands it; able to work independently and effectively; able to work in a team.
Able to appreciate fabric, colour and design in craft (such as crochet, embroidery, mat or basket making)

**Desirable:** have an interest in fashion, design, or craft; and interest in business.

Required Experience

**Essential:** Have sewed using a machine and cutting fabrics.

**Desirable:** Have taken part in a business activity of some description; have calculated sums.

To apply, please come in person to the Tshulu Resource Centre (Domboni Village, beside Makuya Clinic) on **Saturday 16th March 2013** between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. for interview.

This opportunity is open to all residents of HaMakuya. For further information, please contact 073 2630042.
Appendix 5

Interview with Dr. Lara Allen

History of first Tshulu Sewing Co-operative interview
With Lara Allen – Programme Manager, Tshulu Trust, 18 May, 2012

Khaya: Hi Lara how are you?
Lara: Hi Khaya I am good thanks.
Khaya: I would like to know just about the old sewing co-operative, things like how was it established, why was it established? And Tshulu's involvement in different initiatives. Please inform me about this.
Lara: This is our second attempt at starting a sewing group / co-operative as a micro enterprise. We started the sewing group as one of a number of initiatives in a project called the “Tshatai Arts and Cultural Heritage Tourism Programme”. We received R750 000 in 2007 from the Limpopo Department of Culture's 'Investing in Culture programme'. This was within their poverty alleviation programme at the time and included all the aspects of that style of government job creation programme – i.e. paying as many beneficiaries as possible a low stipend (usually lower than the minimum wage and/or equivalent to a pension grant). The aim of the project was job creation. This was a response to the request from the community – job creation was, and continues to be, the primary contribution the community wants from Tshulu. The project designed to create jobs through arts, culture and heritage in two ways: educational cultural tourism (the Home-stay Programme) and design SMMEs. The main design SMMEs that the project created were sewing and metal work. The metal work studio produced – I think – some very nice wrought iron furniture. But we did not manage to establish a reliable enough market and eventually the metal workers left for other employment and self employment (using the skills they had learnt from us).
Khaya: By ‘us’ what do you mean? Who is ‘us’?
Lara: That is Tshulu and to continue. Other micro-enterprises in the same broad initiative (but funded by another funder) were
- building and maintenance (they built the camp)
- catering (still going – but this is the third group of caterers we have trained)
- the agriculture project failed (This was not our fault. The Dept of Agriculture took it over and never delivered). There was to be a bakery was to be funded in the 3rd year - however the broader funding scheme collapsed and this funding was never forthcoming)
Khaya: What do you think were some of the reasons for the failures of these projects including the sewing group?
Lara: Many of the parameters that define how we have started this group [new sewing group] are a direct response to the ultimate failure of our first group. We hope not to make the same mistakes. At the broadest level the first Tshulu Sewing Co-operative failed because of a tension at the most abstract theoretical level: between capitalism and socialism. This tension underwrites a great deal in post-apartheid politics and economics. Sometimes South Africa is accused of being neo-liberal, but (about 15 million people) receive government grants of one sort or another. The problem is that we (at
Tshulu) accepted the conditions of our funder when we set up the group, without seeing the problem in the pre-defined project design. The DAC funding paid for administration (for the whole project), training, equipment, refurbishment of the building, some start up materials and stipends for two years – average of R800/month/person. There was never a marketing budget (definitely a mistake). Basically the sewing co-operative was our most successful and most long-lasting group. There were 4 ladies who worked together from June 2007 to October 2010. They did everything as a group – worked together, saved together, and shared the money equally. Then, in the middle of a very large student order that would have made them quite a lot of money each, they resigned – all together.

The reasons they gave were:
- they did not like the fact that sometimes there was no work and sometimes there was too much work. They did not like the pressure of working on big orders for students that had to be finished by a certain date. They did not like having to work weekends or evenings to finish such orders.
- the shops that sell the traditional cloth in Thohoyandou had put up their prices and they thought that I was keeping the prices they could charge the student down unfairly. [Understanding pricing was something we never cracked. Sometimes they charged too little and sometimes too much. They couldn’t understand that items needed to have some relationship to each other price wise.]
- they believed that the house keepers at Tshulu were making more money than them.

At the time I suspected there was more to the sudden resignation than the above. And over time this has been somewhat confirmed. The two ladies that still make items for students when possible say that they were forced to resign by the other two. The other two are related/married to Makuya ‘strong men’ who were behind much of the political trouble occurring in HaMakuya at the time, and Tshulu Trust was one of the targets. Be that as it may, in terms of the design of your project, we can only really take on board the first set of reasons. To put the situation simply: the way we set up the first sewing co-operative was flawed conceptually from the start. Because we were using government poverty alleviation funds we had to employ people at R800 / month for 2 years. This is so the government could claim it had ‘created jobs’. The idea was that this stipend would subsidize the first two years of the micro enterprises and after that the businesses would be able to stand on their own. Perhaps this is not such a bad model – if you can be sure that the people participating are deeply entrepreneurial, and really want to make their businesses work. Unfortunately this was not the case – not any of the 32 people initially employed by Tshulu could really be said to be entrepreneurial in this way. The burning question is how to find such people …

What happened was that we attracted the kind of person who wanted to earn R800 / month reliably for 2 years. Most were not in the slightest bit interested in the stresses and strains of running a business after that. The idea that someone who is satisfied with a grant-type income would be an entrepreneur is flawed. Yet it underwrites so many government-funded poverty alleviation job creation programmes. Kim has written something in her thesis about this – you could find and refer to this. In her project (Phumani I think) she actually had to switch halfway through from the ‘reconstruction and
development’ of the Mandela era to the neo-liberalism of the Mbeki era. This is an example of how donor priorities and policies can affect (and undermine) projects on the ground. Although admittedly, we didn’t know it was a problem at the time – we learnt that the hard way. Anyway, this time around there is no donor. While this means there is no money for extras like machines etc. it does mean that we are free to design the initiative in the way that we think best. So the idea this time is – start the way you intend to continue. I.e. if you want to start a long term, sustainable business, then start it as a business. This is why we have been very firm that we are not giving salaries. We don’t want to create any expectations or any dependencies (at least financially). I hope I don’t look back on this stance and have to admit that I was too tough … but keeping a business going is tough. You have to really want to do it. So let’s hope this works.

I have to admit that saying there is no donor is not strictly true in that there are significant inputs – from Tshulu, from UJ, and very particularly from you. Without you this would not have been possible. As is evidenced by the fact that nothing happened with sewing for the 18 months without you. What I’m interested in is the idea of a different kind of donor model that perhaps you are an example of. I see the structure more as a set of partnerships – between you and the sewing ladies most directly, but also between Tshulu and UJ. What cements these partnerships is mutual interest – everyone gets something of value out of the initiative. Maybe this is more viable than the donor/beneficiary model. One thing I’d be interested in you thinking about, and keeping a track of, is the idea of self-interest and mutual-interest as binding and motivating aspects that might keep a project going in a difficult context. What do all the players/partners/stakeholders get out of it? Perhaps you could ask everyone now at the beginning – again in the middle and then at the end. It would be a good way of tracking progress. It would also be a good way of checking your project design and seeing whether everyone is, in fact, on the same page. If not, what can be done to change this. One method/structural way to think through this might be to look at the ‘theory of change’ approach. I’ll send you refs. This approach fits well with the approach of the whole UJ intervention, and also of Tshulu. I realize it might be quite useful to find out just how successful the first sewing co-operative was financially. I’ll ask Melta if she has the financial records.

Two sort of ideological things about our first attempt – and these related more broadly to the whole Tshulu initiative:
1) We (I) wanted to utilize Venda culture and heritage sustainably – and respectfully – but also did not want to be stuck with the (untrue) notion of fixed tradition or heritage. This is where the notion of Venda fusion came in – the idea of taking the old and making it new and relevant to today.
2) We wanted – with all Tshulu projects – to serve both local and non-local customers. To make products that would be appreciated and used locally also. I.e. not just to cater for a tourist market. In fact this worked well previously with product design – you still see shirts and skirts from the previous sewing group around Makuya. What worked less well is local people paying for their purchases. Apparently they often wanted credit, and took ages to pay it off.
Other things we didn’t get right the first time round:

1) Quality.

   The ladies didn’t really get enough training. But also some were more careful and neat than others.
   I’m not sure everyone’s attitude was quite right. And one lady with a great attitude couldn’t really see
   properly (it took a while to discover this …)

   DAC was always going on about quality.

   The thing is that our main market (students) accepted not great quality. So there’s wasn’t a great deal
   of stimulation to improve.

2) Design.

   The lack of training meant that they could make some things well but couldn’t do others.
   Skirts were great but tops for women were … well un-wearable …
   Trousers were okay as were shirts.
   Some ladies could follow patterns others couldn’t. It didn’t help that the patterns were in English.

3) Marketing.

   The ladies themselves did very little of their own marketing.
   They tried the school uniform market but gave up after a few schools. The rest of the marketing was
   left up to Tshulu (basically me).
   Somehow I always ended up organizing the selling to students.
   I tried getting them into Kruger and managed to get their stuff into the two independent curio shops (at
   Punda and Shingwedzi) and at the fancy private Pafuri River Lodge. I also got their stuff into Shiluvari
   Lodge near Elim. None of this sold very well.
   I was following a lead into selling to Kruger staff when they closed up shop.
   My biggest lead was a contact with the women who runs SA Fashion week – also in Oct 2010. I’m
   pretty sure I could reinvigorate this connection for your group if you wish.
   I did a lot of work trying to get them in with Out of Africa – the crowd that runs all the shops in Kruger
   and SA airports. I seemed to make headway, but ultimately wasn’t successful. I think if the ladies had
   made the samples requested faster and to better quality the outcome might have been different. I
   never managed to put across the importance of quality and delivery etc – of what it would mean to get
   a big contract. I don’t think they could imagine it, and therefore didn’t take me seriously. I hope you
   fare better.

I hope I have answered all your questions.

   **Khaya:** You certainly have Lara and this gives me enough to begin to design my training intervention
   thank you very much.

   **Lara:** Okay Khaya. Thanks.
Appendix 6

Application form for 2012

ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN SEWING AND DESIGN

APPLICATION FORM

Name: ___________________________ Date: ______________

ID: ___________________________ Gender: ______________

Home Language: ________________ Age: ______________

Home Address (House number): __________ Village: ______________

Cell: __________________________

Formal Qualifications:
a) School level reached. Grade of Final year: _____

Subjects and grades of final year:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Further training (Provide details of qualification, including subjects and grades):

Language Skills: (write yes or no in each box)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Language</th>
<th>Good Written</th>
<th>Average Written</th>
<th>Basic Written</th>
<th>Good Spoken</th>
<th>Average Spoken</th>
<th>Basic Spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tshivenda</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7

Practical test for applicants in 2012

Name: ________________________________

Contact Details: ________________________________

Complete the exercise below and follow the instructions of each step carefully. Good Luck!

**How to make a Pot Holder:**

**Step 1:** Draw on a piece of brown paper a rectangle that is 50cm in width and 20cm in length.

![Rectangle diagram]

**Step 2:** On all four corners measure and draw in a 45° line that is 5cm long.

![Line diagram]

With your drawing pencil and a curved ruler, draw in a curved line so that the new line touches the end of the 5cm line and the 20cm & 50cm line of the rectangle.

![Curved line diagram]

**Tip:** Draw the curved line with broken lines as this will be helpful for the next step.
Step 3: Cut around the curved corners so you end up with a similar shape to the one below.

Use the paper to cut the provided fabric. Use your drawing pencil to mark in a 1cm line on the wrong side of the fabric all around the shape. Place the piece aside.

Step 4: With a provided pattern, trace the shape on any fabric of your choice X2. Decorate the centre of the shape (while still on fabric), using the provided decorations. When decorating make sure to stay as far away from the straight edge as possible.

Step 5: Cut out the already decorated shape. Measure and iron in a 1cm seam on the straight edge of the fabric piece.

Step 6: Place the decorated piece on top of the piece you worked on before so that the wrong sides of the fabrics are facing you. Stitch on the line you marked in before, starting from where the decorated piece is and stopping where it ends. Turn the piece over (so that the right sides of the fabrics face you). Iron in 1cm of the raw edges of the first piece.

Your Pot Holder is now complete.
Appendix 8

Consent form 2012

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

My name is Khaya Mchunu and I am a Master’s in Technology (MTech) student in Visual Art from the University of Johannesburg. I am conducting an intervention research study in HaMakuya. I intend to revive the Tshulu Sewing Cooperative and that will involve you. I will train you in basic sewing and pattern cutting. We will also collect inspiration from HaMakuya so we can collaboratively design and produce Venda-and HaMakuya-inspired fashion products. Your input will be valuable in developing solutions to the identified problem. Whatever you learn in the research will equip you with entrepreneurial, sewing and designing skills. These skills will be used by you to run the Tshulu Sewing Cooperative which can serve as an income-generating source.

In the research:

- I will take photographs of you working and of the designs produced.
- I will interview you during the course of the study.
- You will be required to operate the different sewing machines and other equipment at your own risk.
- You will be required to make use of a visual diary to document your inspiration and come up with some design ideas.
- You have the right to withdraw from the research.
- You are free to ask questions.
- There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.
- The findings will be documented as an Mtech dissertation and you can get a copy should you wish to.

I am asking you to sign this form so you show that you were not forced to partake in the study, you understand what it involves and so I can proceed with it.

Participant’s Response:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khaya Mchunu</td>
<td>23/05/2012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9

Biographies of participants

Each participant signed a consent form which gives permission to include their names and physical identities including photographic representation. All the members preferred to have their full names used in the study (See Appendix of consent form).

Phase One participants

Mavis joined the project in 2012. She is originally from Vhurivhuri and both her parents are still alive. She got married with a man from HaMakuya hence her stay in the village chieftaincy. She has three children one son and two daughters. Mavis expressed in the introduction that she enjoyed sewing and was looking forward to using a sewing machine. Her motivation for applying for the opportunity was as a result of her unemployed status (Mavis 2012 [Transcript]). She remained in the project for a few days and stopped attending the training.

Rophiwa Mathalese was 21 years old when she joined the project in 2012. She came to HaMakuya to visit her grandmother and got married resulting in her permanent residence. Both of her parents are now deceased. She expressed that she loved sewing and has a passion for co-ordinating colours (Mathalese 2012 [Transcript]). Rophiwa Mathalese remained in the project for Cycle One and had moved to Johannesburg to be with her husband on my return for the next cycle.
Phumudzo Munwana was 38 years old when she joined the project in 2012. She was born in Gunda and came to HaMakuya in 1982 when her father passed on. She was unemployed at the time and married with five children. She was interested in the project because she enjoyed needlework, and had done it at school. Her excitement with the project was that she was going to learn how to use the sewing machine (Munwana 2012 [Transcript]). Phumudzo Munwana and one other participant understand English relatively better than the other four participants. She is one of the participants that withdrew from the project in the end of 2012.

Seani Muntswu was 32 years old when she joined the project. She is a married woman with two children who came to HaMakuya in 2000 from Vuwani. At the beginning of the project she was re-writing some of her Grade 12 subjects through ABET training. She loved sewing and covering furniture, and through the project, would like to learn how to sew seat covers in order to decorate her own home (Muntswu 2012 [Transcript]). On her arrival she was known by her peers to enjoy needlework immensely. She also understood English relatively well. Subsequently, Seani Muntswu also withdrew from the project to take up a job with the public works programme that could guarantee her a more dependable income.

Mashudu Mphidi came to HaMakuya from Musunda in 1994 and was 27 years old when she joined the project. She left school in Grade 8, and had since given birth to two children whom she raised as a single parent. She requested that she be awarded a certificate at the conclusion of the training.
Mashudu Mphidi did not mention any prior interest in sewing but was interested in the project because she was unemployed (Mphidi 2012 [Transcript]). During the project, Mashudu became pregnant and gave birth to a boy child. Mashudu Mphidi joined the project in 2012 and remained for one week of the 2013 training year.

Grace Mutele was 48 years old when she joined the project in 2012. She was born in Meadowlands, Soweto and came to HaMakuya for consistency in 1976. She married in 1982 and has four children. An active woman in the community, she used to clean voluntarily at a local primary school called Karel Ngigideni Primary School. Grace expressed her joy with the project as she is passionate about sewing. She also likes business and had planned to start a chicken enterprise with a friend (Mutele 2012a [Transcript]). Grace is quite a religious woman, who is well respected in the community. In 2013, she joined the cooking group for the feeding scheme of the same primary school and still remained active in the project.

Phase Two new participants

Ntshengedzeni Sigonde is a 40-year-old woman from the village of Phaphama. She was born and bred in HaMakuya and came into the project without any knowledge of using a sewing machine. She prides herself in sewing by hand but joined the research project in order to learn how to use the sewing machine. The motivation to remain in the project was her eagerness constantly to satisfy her customers by providing them with the best service. Ntshengedzeni Sigonde divides her time between the research project and volunteering in a local primary school feeding scheme. This is in the same school that Grace Mutele works (Sigonde 2013a [Transcript]).
Sylvia Tshikovhi is 46 years old and from the village of Tshambuka. She came to HaMakuya in 1992. She is a skilled seamstress and started sewing in 1986. In the community she is known for selling female traditional Venda attire that she produces from home. Her village is one of the few in HaMakuya without electricity and as a result of this produces her products without an electricity-powered sewing machine. She targets the pay point market area to sell her goods. By joining the project she hopes to learn different ways of production as well as to make other products apart from the traditional attire. She also is eager to experience product manufacture with electricity powered machinery and equipment ([Tshikovhi 2013a [Transcript]]).

Tendani Mukhada is a 51-year-old woman from the village of Mutshikilini. She has previous experience in using the sewing machine but has not used it in a long time. She is also a well-known local business woman in other villages as people from other faraway areas know of her. Her first business venture is the lunch she sells to primary school learners at a local primary school. Apart from this she also sells clothes that she stocks in Johannesburg and Durban. Tendani Mukhada expressed a lot of passion for the sewing project and said that it was a dream of hers to have someone train them in sewing. She also expressed her excitement to learn and concluded by saying that she would avail herself of the opportunity ([Mukhada 2013a [Transcript]]).
Appendix 10

Participant Attendance

Cycle One: The cycle began with six participants who were chosen through the interview and practical test. I only recorded the attendance for the training days and this excluded the interview and practical test days.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of present members</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 May 2012</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
<td>Grace Mutele absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
<td>A member is absent/ Seani Muntswu took half day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 May</td>
<td>5 / 6</td>
<td>A member pulls out of project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 May</td>
<td>5 / 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle Two: At the beginning of this cycle one original member once again pulled out of the project. Therefore I began this cycle with four participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of present members</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03 July 2012</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 July</td>
<td>2 / 4</td>
<td>Phumudzo Munwana and Mashudu Mphidi absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 July</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td>Mashudu Mphidi absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 July</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
<td>The earliest member to arrive came in 50 minutes late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 July</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td>Grace Mutele absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 July</td>
<td>2 / 4</td>
<td>Grace Mutele and Phumudzo Munwana came in late at 11:11 and 12:04 respectively. Water was not delivered for two consecutive Saturdays and everyone had to collect water today. Grace Mutele offered to work overtime until 18:00.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 July</td>
<td>2 / 4</td>
<td>Had shopping in Thohoyandou with Phumudzo Munwana called and Grace Mutele was the only one in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 July</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
<td>Phumudzo Munwana and Seani Muntswu left at 12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 July</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
<td>All members worked on Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 July</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 July</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 August 2012</td>
<td>2 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 September 2012</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle Four: Mashudu was constantly absent since the previous cycle and I was enlightened that she gave birth at this time and had previously taken maternity leave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>14 November 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 November</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 November</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 November</td>
<td>1 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 November</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle Five: Seani Muntswu and Phumudzo Munwana got employment with the Public Works programme and I spent the first two days of this cycle interviewing new members and as such only started taking attendance records from the third day. I selected three new members and as a result this cycle had five participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of present members</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22 March 2013</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>Ntshengedzeni Sigonda and Mashudu Mphidi absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 March</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 March</td>
<td>4 / 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cycle Six: Mashudu Mphidi stopped attending training and going to the co-operative even without my presence after she had not stuck to the rules of the constitution she was ruled as no longer part of the sewing co-operative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>29 April 2013</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 May 2013</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 May</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 May</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
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Cycle Seven

<table>
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<td>26 June</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 June</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 June</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 July 2013</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 July</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle Eight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September 2013</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 September</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 September</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
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<td>4 September</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 September</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 September</td>
<td>3 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September</td>
<td>4 / 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 11

APS student brief from Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative and brief from APS lecturer

This is a draft design of a logo for the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative. The design currently represents aspects inspired by the environment of HaMakuya. For example there are depictions of cattle, huts and the baobab in the three panels that make up the ‘Z’ for Zwonaka. The image does not convey the craft and sewing aspects associated with the co-operative.

Project tasks:

- Using the ideas from the draft design adapt this image to represent aspects of the craft/sewing and the environment of HaMakuya.
- Use the images from the PowerPoint presentation to inspire you for further development of the draft design idea.
CLASS: Screen-printing (2nd year)
TERM: One
DATE: 12 February 2013

Printing Drawing Visual Literacy Cultural Studies Other:

FACILITATOR/S: Khaya Mchunu, Cloudia Hartwig

LESSON TITLE: community engagement project: Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative (refining of concepts)
PURPOSE: Aim/Why are you teaching this lesson?
The students have come up with a few different ideas for the design of the logo and repeat pattern. This lesson requires them to re-visit these ideas and strengthen their concepts and visual elements, use of colour etc. the students will look at the fabric provided and begin to ascertain what colours would complement the material and enable the repeat pattern to be the main focus of the material, and not to allow it to disappear between all the lines of colour present on the fabric. The students are to present these ideas to Khaya and he must have a discussion of what is working and what is not and provide suggestions for a way forward.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of the lesson the student should be able to...
1. Have three final ideas for the repeat pattern
2. Have one final idea for the logo
3. Have an idea of what colours they feel will work well with the fabric
4. Have developed an understanding of what elements are important for a repeat pattern
5. Have developed an understanding of what elements are important for an eye-catching and cleverly designed logo
6. Prepare for the next class where they will all take the best element of their design and combine it into one image

LESSON TASKS: How am I going to teach them how to achieve the above learning outcomes?
1. the students are to present their concepts and as a class discussion we will motivate what works and what doesn’t and what we would like to see in the refined concepts
2. the students are to present their concepts and as a class discussion we will motivate what works and what doesn’t and what we would like to see in the refined concepts
3. we will analyse the fabric and its colours and place the drawings onto it and discuss how each colour would work in relation to the fabric, after which it will be placed on the board and viewed from further off, in this way we can see if the repeat pattern is clear and eye-catching or not.
4. Discussion of what is important for repeat patterns, linking to what they are learning in visual literacy and drawing.
5. Discussion of what is important for successful and cleverly designed logo’s, linking to what they are learning in visual literacy.
6. Presentation and discussion with Khaya. Taking notes of what he says and applying the suggestions at home for homework.

PRODUCTS/EVIDENCE TO BE ASSESSED? What can be used to assess whether the student has achieved the learning outcomes?
The presentation of their concept drawings which are displayed on the wall. Their presentation to Khaya.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY (Mark the relevant boxes)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Written Test</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS (for the whole lesson all the students included)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coloured pastels</td>
<td>1 box</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured pencils</td>
<td>1 box</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartridge paper</td>
<td>1 pad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prestit</td>
<td>1 blob</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STIMULUS/RESOURCES Visual aids including existing artwork, demonstrations of techniques, key cards with words stuck onto wall, notes, hand-outs

Examples of fabrics
Colour swatches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPACE NEEDED FOR LESSON</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>Gallery</th>
<th>Drawing Space</th>
<th>Screen printing space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS: None
Appendix 12

Consent Form in 2013

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
My name is Khaya Mchunu, a Master’s in Technology Fine Art (MTech) student from the University of Johannesburg. Since 2012, I have been conducting a training intervention in HaMakuya as a research. You are joining the mid-term process of this research to develop the Zwonaka Sewing Cooperative further. Your input is valuable to achieve the aims and objectives of my research study. We (Mashudu Mphidi, Grace Mutele and myself) will share with you how we have been working for the past year and how your skills can work with the co-operative. Whatever you learn in the research will equip you with entrepreneurial and sewing skills. These skills may be used by you to develop the new Zwonaka Sewing Cooperative which can serve as an income-generating source for your benefit. By joining this research study you automatically become a new member of the co-operative.
In the research:

- I will take photographs of you working and of the designs you will produce.
- I will voice-record our discussions of the activities during the course of the study.
- You will be required to operate the different sewing machines and other equipment like scissors, needles etc. at your own risk.
- You may be required to contribute ideas for the embellishment of designs.
- You have the right to withdraw from the research aspect of the project at any stage of the project.
- You are free to ask questions.
- You have the right to anonymity.
- There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.
- The findings will be documented as an MTech dissertation that will be available for the public to read and view.
- I will collect and keep examples of each design that you will make for my exhibition in Johannesburg scheduled for 2014. I will acknowledge your contribution to the research.
- You agree that I may use the voice/video recordings, photographs and your artefacts, for exhibition, publishing and conference purposes.

I ask you to sign this form so that you show that you are not forced to participate in the study and that you understand what my study involves and that you agree with the conditions listed above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tshikovhi T.S.</td>
<td>Tshikovhi T.S.</td>
<td>25 March 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of Researcher | Signature | Date
Khaya Mchunu      | Mchunu    | 25 March 2013
Appendix 13

Terms of Agreement

TERMS OF AGREEMENT
This AGREEMENT (hereinafter referred to as an AGREEMENT) is made and entered into as of the 25th (day) of March (month) of 2012 by and between:

(1) The Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative a co-operative by making, decorating and selling different fashion and homeware products and operating under the Co-operatives Act, 2005 (Act 14 of 2005) and;

(2) Moady Jendary (name) a newly appointed member of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

(Both the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative and new members are referred to as parties)

BOTH PARTIES AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:
1. Term of Agreement
1.1. This agreement shall become effective as of the date first written above.

2. Scope of Work
2.1. The newly appointed members shall come to work every week day as agreed and may be required to work during weekends if need be. The daily operational time during the week is between 10:00 – 16:00. As a new member to a co-operative that already exists you are to keep to the rules and regulations as stipulated in the co-operative constitution which is made readily available to you. You are required to assist in the producing and selling of fashion and homeware products. As this is a business of which you partly own, there will be no monetary compensation but you get paid according to what you sell. Some of the products may be completed by client orders.

3. Rules and regulations and conditions
3.1. You are required to stick to the rules and regulations stated on the co-operative constitution.
3.2. During the selling of products you are not allowed to sell any of your private works but those produced by the co-operative (You are however, allowed to contribute products you may wish the co-operative to produce and sell).
3.3. A working system has already been introduced by a researcher, you are required to stick to this system but you are allowed to suggest amendments and these will be applied if agreed upon by a majority.

You sign here as proof of you accepting the agreement

Signed: Michele Thabo (for and on behalf of Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative)        Signed: Moady Jendary (newly appointed member)
Appendix 14

Co-operative constitution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZWONAKA SEWING CO-OPERATIVE CONSTITUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The name of the co-operative is Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The abbreviated name is Z.S.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2) Form of Co-operative**

This is the constitution of a sewing business formed as a Primary Financial Services Co-operative and keeps to the terms of the provisions of the Co-operatives Act, 2005 (Act 14 of 2005), which operates as a saving scheme (society).

**3) Definitions**

In this constitution, unless the context indicates otherwise, a word or expression to which a meaning is attached in the Co-operatives Act, 2005 shall have a similar meaning and:
- "the Act" means the Co-operatives Act, 2005 (Act 14 of 2005);
- "co-operative" means the ZWONAKA SEWING CO-OPERATIVE that is incorporated in terms of the Act;
- "gender" a reference in this constitution to the masculine gender shall also include the feminine gender and vice versa.

**4) Place of Business**

The main place of business of the Co-operative is situated at HaMakuya, Venda, Limpopo Province.

**5) Objectives**

The objectives of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative are:
- Members will be trained to operate their co-operative by making, decorating and selling different fashion and homeware products. The training will also include exploring other markets and training aims to achieve these other markets.
- To market and supply sewing services to the local public.
- To provide fashion and homeware products made with the incorporation of Venda traditional fabric to the visiting national and international tourism and local market in HaMakuya.
- To operate in terms of Co-operative Principles.
- To do, if possible, a monthly deposit of sales made during that month. As per the saving scheme structure, the 70% of the money saved shall be divided among the members during December of every year.

**6) Record keeping by co-operative and access to information**

The co-operative must keep at its offices the following:
- Its constitution, including any changes and amendments thereto.
- A list of members /register of members setting out:
  - The name and address of each member
  - The date on which each member became a member
  - A weekly recording of the number of products at the beginning of the week and of products at the end of that week.
  - A monthly plotting of sales made during the month on a graph, in order to keep track of the sewing business.
  - An order book recording measurements of clients, drawing of the clients design and date of the order.

**7) Membership**

Requirements for membership: Any person, who is over the age of 18 years may become a member of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.

**8) Rights and obligations of members**

Members rights:
- Right to know how finances are managed.
- Right to use the machinery and equipment available in the work space for the manufacture of products to be sold by the co-operative and render sewing services to the market.
**Obligations of members:**
- Members must adhere to the constitution, laws, rules and policies as agreed on collectively by the members.
- Members must participate in the business of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative.
- Members must notify (verbally or written) the other members whenever any of their personal details change, e.g. home address, cellular phone number or if they cannot make it to work on a particular day.

9) Conditions and processes of co-operative operation

9.1.) The daily operational hours of the co-operative is 6 hours, starting from 10:00 – 16:00. However, if orders require more time than the 6 hours, this should be discussed amongst the members.

9.2.) Conditional of the death of a member: In the case of the death of a member the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative must contribute an amount of R150 to the family of the deceased.

9.3.) In case a member gives birth and requires maternity leave; the co-operative will give three (3) months of leave. To this condition the member is required to help the production process by doing menial work from home. The particular work will be discussed according to the situation at the time.

10) General Meetings

The co-operative must hold:
- Its first annual general meeting within 3 months of registration of the co-operative.
- Subsequently annual general meetings within 6 months after the end of the preceding financial year (according to Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative this is during November).

The annual general meetings must: (these can vary from time to time)
- Discuss successes and challenges experienced by the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative within the 6 months.
- Agree on plan of actions to address the challenges.
- Agree on plans to maintain and improve the successes.
- Discuss expected changes for the future in light of challenges and successes.

11) Special General Meetings

The co-operative may hold Special general meetings in addition to its annual general meeting to discuss any matters that need immediate resolution.

12) Notice of Meeting

Each member is responsible for remembering and recording the date of the meeting OR this can be marked on the calendar in the work space. The agenda for the general meeting must be discussed before the day of the meeting.

13) Banking Account

The Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative must open a banking account in the name of the co-operative in which all money received shall be deposited as soon as possible or alternatively act according to the objectives listed in (section 5) of this document.

Cheques drawn on the banking account shall be signed by the elected leader and must be countersigned by the second elected person OR this can be arranged according to the procedures of the chosen bank.

14) Financial Year

The financial year of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative shall end on the last day of May of each year. This means that the group shall reflect on the year and see the financial standing of the co-operative and set plans for the year that follows.

15) Financial Records

The Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative must keep financial records through plotting graphs, order books and receipts from purchases. This must be fair and reflect the state of affairs and business of the co-operative. The financial records shall be kept in a file at the co-operative and shall be available at all times.

16) Amendment of Constitution

The constitution of the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative may be amended by special resolution only.

**NOTE:** This must be signed by all members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full names and surnames of members</th>
<th>Signature of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CERTIFICATE

Awarded to

for completing a sewing skills and entrepreneurship training from May 2012 to September 2013 delivered by Khaya Mchunu supported by Tshulu Trust and the UJ’s Department of Visual Art

The courses and modules fulfilled in the training include:

Basic Sewing Skills Training
  Pattern cutting
  Basic women’s wear and menswear
  Craft and embellishment skills

Basic Entrepreneurship Training
  Basic marketing
  Basic bookkeeping
  Co-operative development

Date

Trainer’s Signature

Tshulu Trust Chairman

Supported by:
Appendix 16

Ametur Project training manual excerpt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenth set of tasks</th>
<th>Trainee’s Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional Outfits</strong></td>
<td>Place two samples here:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. one of the trims you would use when making a traditional skirt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. one of the designs you would like to sew for the back of a skirt wrap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time on your own choice of traditional dress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you finish your outfit have it assessed and then go back and complete any other tasks you behind in.

Make a plan together for a good spring clean of the workplace during the next two weeks. Windows, floors, ceilings, tables, chairs, equipment ... all washed.

Eleventh set of tasks:

1. **Making adjustments to trousers or pants** don’t do samples for the first three points, just study them and ask questions if it is not clear to you on what to do. The bead work in d) is the one to do a small sample of.

   a) A simple hem just needs careful measuring, pinning into place, tacking and then sewing by machine or hand.

   b) A hem that is tighter than the pants leg needs a little unpicking down the seam to adjust it to the width of the pant’s leg. Be sure to tie off the end of the unpicked leg and the slip stitch the v-shaped seam allowance you undid before sewing the hem.

   c) If pants are too flared then taper them in on the wrong side using a fitted pair of pants as your guide or by making a careful judgement of what might be a good width. Check that they fit nicely and then hem.

   d) A change for teenage girls is a beaded finish instead of a traditional hem sewn. Not for shorts as beads are hard to

   1) mark a line about 9 cms up from the raw bottom edge and cut small strips evenly.

   2) thread a bead on each strip and tie it off in a knot tightly and securely.
Appendix 17

Mid-term review 2012

**Mid-term review interview**

This interview is a mid-term review on the experience of starting the sewing co-operative. The purpose for doing this interview is to get your experience in the sewing project and work towards plans for the future and sustainability of the sewing co-operative.

Please mark with X your answer in the provided boxes and you can give comments/suggestions related to each question. Your responses will be treated with respect and confidentiality.

Khaya Mchunu
Department of Visual Art
Faculty of art, design and architecture

- **Has the training taught you sufficient skills to participate in the sewing co-operative?**
  - YES
  - NO
  - MAYBE
  
  Expand: ____________________________
  ____________________________
  ____________________________

- **Are you satisfied with the range of products you have made so far?**
  - YES
  - NO
  - MAYBE
  
  Comments/suggestions: ____________________________
  ____________________________
  ____________________________

- **Have your sales increased in the past six months?**
  - YES
  - NO
  - MAYBE
  
  Comments/suggestions: ____________________________
  ____________________________
  ____________________________

- **Has the income from sales improved your situation? Do you draw a monthly income? Do you see the income generated as a saving scheme?**
  - YES
  - NO
  - MAYBE
  
  Comments/suggestions: ____________________________
  ____________________________
  ____________________________

- **Do you think the sewing co-operative is on track to becoming a sustainable business to run?**
  - YES
  - NO
  - MAYBE
  
  Expand: ____________________________
• Are there currently any problems in the sewing co-operative?
  YES
  NO
  MAYBE

Comments/suggestions:________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

• Do you envision any future plans or different approaches for the co-operative for the upcoming six months?
  YES
  NO
  MAYBE

Comments/suggestions:________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

• Do you have suggestions to strengthen the project?
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

• What do you think the project needs to grow?
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

• Do you think you have the necessary skills to market your products and interact with clients?
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

• What are your hopes/dreams for this project?
_________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 18

Journal excerpt

Day 3 : 3 September 2012
Today we did some of the tasks that were written on the chart. We managed to go to Thohoyandou to buy some fabrics for the presentation on Friday with Phumudzo. Grace organised the meeting with the principal from Karel and it was a success as we managed to book a meeting on Wednesday with the school uniform committee. The ladies did some sewing and Seani managed to finished one apron today. Grace and Phumudzo did not sew well today as they were extremely slow. Mashudu felt ill and did not sew at all.

Day 4: 4 September 2012
Phumudzo and Grace showed up today and worked smoothly and diligently. Grace experimented on a dye technique and the result looked beautiful. Phumudzo finished her table set and it looked good too. Her sewing is improving at a slow rate. The ladies got an order from a camp visitor; Lieza Louw for a full table set and she wants this order for Friday a day before she leaves. The school uniform is worrying me because for tomorrow we need to show the school committee something in the meeting. The pieces for the school uniform sample have been cut it is just the sewing that has to happen now. I need to help with the sewing for the ladies to reach the target.

Day 5: 5 September 2012
Grace and Seani came today and the rest of the ladies did not come because it was social grant payment. This is worrying me because we are running out of time for Friday with the products for the presentation and the school uniform sample. I introduced the Gantt chart to distribute the different tasks to different members. At least with tasks distributed Grace made a few key holders which came out quite nicely. The crochet on the place mats for Lieza was completed. Seani started sewing the school uniform, she completed the skirt part with the pocket. I helped out with stitching the breast pocket and fixing the overlocker as it gave a lot of problems. The collar gave a big problem so I have to show them how to fix that. At least there was progress with the two that I worked with today.

Day 6: 6 September 2012
Today three ladies came in- Seani, Grace and Phumudzo. In the morning I managed to fix the collar, stitched it on the garment and cut out a belt without them there and this bothers me. Luckily Grace came in earlier and I managed to show some of the steps for her to share with the others. The meeting at the school was successful they have decided that we should be a part of the parents’ meeting and show the parents what they may be willing to buy. The meeting is at 8;30. The school committee has decided that Grace not speak during the presentation because she works at school. Seani said that she would do the talking. The school uniform sample was finished off nicely and on time. Seani decided to do buttonholes by hand for the presentation. Phumudzo continued with her tasks to complete the products for the presentation tomorrow and managed to finish a lot of products. There was a lot of excitement after the ladies heard about the school wanting to include them in the parents’ meeting. At the end of the day the products were ready to sell, Lieza’s order was completed and the school uniform sample was fitted on Seani’s daughter, fixed the changes and ironed ready for tomorrow. It has worked well to divide the tasks among the different members. Mashudu’s attendance is really worrying me though.
### Appendix 19

**Additional MSC responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grace Mutele</td>
<td><strong>1. Tell me how you first became involved with the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative?</strong></td>
<td>I came in last year (2012) May. I came in late on the first day and came back the following day where I was interviewed and was given a test to hand sew the thing you use for baking [oven mitt or pot holder - I this case]. After that we were told that we would be contacted, then they called me. We were divided into two groups one that passed and another that did not do well. I thought the group I was in was unsuccessful but I passed. I was happy and we started sewing till today we are selling and sell at Tshulu Camp too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2. Has your confidence in sewing and business improved since you joined the project? Describe a time you felt confident.</strong></td>
<td>Yes, after learning how to use the machine I felt proud and we are still going on moving forward with the project. People like what we sew which means we know what we do, we don’t wait for you to come back and people still buy our stuff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>I share this because I love it… sewing. My mind is in sewing and that’s all I think of.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4. How has making money from the project changed your life? Describe some examples of instances that you feel changed your life.</strong></td>
<td>It has changed my life because we sell and save and sell and save and at the end of the year we will have more savings. When we share the money in December we leave some for the business so we can have more and more in years to come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>Because it is important for me to see this business working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6. Have you been able to share the skills you learnt from the training with others? Describe an example of how you shared this skill.</strong></td>
<td>Yes, I tell people about our products as much as I can. The business skills that I learn here I use them in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>This is important because I will use it to grow the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8. Have you changed as a person, woman and community member since you joined the project? When did you realise this change?</strong></td>
<td>Yes, my knowledge has improved a lot. I can’t choose one moment because I keep improving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9. Why is this instance significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>This is something I will do all of my life… I will do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntshengedzeni Sigonde</td>
<td><strong>1. Tell me how you first became involved with the Zwonaka Sewing Co-operative?</strong></td>
<td>I was told by Mashudu about this training and that I should come for the interview this year. I went to the Resource Centre at 9 o’clock but was told to go to Tribal. When I did the interview and was taken in I felt really good. I remembered when I asked last year if I could join and you told me I was too busy at school with my job there and this business needs someone to be here all the time but look now I am here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2. Has your confidence in sewing and business improved since you joined the project? Describe a time you felt confident.</strong></td>
<td>I feel confident right now because on the first day I knew nothing not to cut or sew nothing but now I can and I feel proud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>It is important to me because I can do all these things by myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4. How has making money from the project changed your life? Describe some examples of instances that you feel changed your life.</strong></td>
<td>It has changed my life because I am no longer asking for credit and in December I won’t have much to [re]pay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>This makes me happy because I will have more money on me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6. Have you been able to share the skills you learnt from the training with others? Describe an example of how you shared this skill.</strong></td>
<td>I tell everybody everyday that we sew many things and sell them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7. Why is this time significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>This makes me happy because it is good for business and also good for me if business is going nicely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8. Have you changed as a person, woman and community member since you joined the project? When did you realise this change?</strong></td>
<td>I am more involved with the community because now I take products to school to advertise and I tell them that I made this and they place orders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>9. Why is this instance significant to you?</strong></td>
<td>This is nice because I besides only cooking at school I now can show them other things that I can do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>