DEVELOPING A RESILIENCE BUILDING STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN A NON-PROFIT HUMAN SERVICE ORGANISATION:

THE CASE OF CIVIC FORUM ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, ZIMBABWE

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by

Absolom Masendeke

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ABSTRACT

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Non-profit human service organizations are increasingly becoming key actors in providing essential human services for the resource poor and marginalized communities in turbulent political, social and economic environments. Despite their increasing role and importance, these organizations are now under extreme pressure to perform their mandates due mainly to their limited resources and dependency on external resources. This study aimed to explore and understand the key processes and attributes that can shape the development of a resilience building strategy for implementation in a non-profit human service organization. The specific objective was to develop a resilience building strategy for implementation with the participation of organizational members. This would enable the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to challenges and dynamics in the internal and external environment. The primary research ques-

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tion that directed the study was: *How can a local non-profit human service organization develop a resilience building strategy (RBS) for implementation with the participation of its members?* Using a single case study approach, the study identified key resilience building processes and attributes of anticipation, coping and adaptation guided by the conceptual framework synthesized from the empirical review of literature. Data was collected through document review, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Six cycles of action, learning and reflection with organizational participants were conducted to establish the essence and meaning of resilience building processes, strategies and attributes based on action research approach and the social constructionist perspective underpinning the study. Nine resilience building themes were generated leading to the adoption of a four-pronged resilience building strategy that emphasize knowledge based leadership and management, flexible organizational systems, reliable partnerships and alliances and maintaining a competitive edge of the organization. Action knowledge was generated throughout the action learning research on how organizational members could work collectively to develop and implement a practical strategy for organizational resilience building. A major new knowledge insight created was that resilience building is not just about getting financial resources into the organization, but a collective process of understanding how different processes of anticipation, coping and adaptation can influence organizational decision-making and response in crises situations. The conclusions drawn from the study suggest that resilience building strategies that are developed collectively with the participation of organizational members can enable the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt effectively to risks and opportunities in a changing environment. Future research

need to be directed at resilience building benchmarking for effective management of the resilience gap in non-profit human service organizations.

DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I hereby certify that this thesis constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions or writings of another.

I declare that the thesis describes original work that has not previously been presented for the award of any other degree of any institution.

Signed,

Absolom Masendeke

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Accompanying Attributes and Capabilities
AS	Anticipation Strategies
CFHD	Civic Forum on Human Development
CRS	Coping and Recovery Strategies
DBA	Doctorate in Business Administration
DLC	Document Log Sheet
EBMs	Executive Board Members
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
HRM	Human Resources Management
IDIs	In-depth Interviews
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
NPHSO	Non-Profit Human Service Organization
OLCA	Organizational Life Cycle Analysis
OST	Open Systems Theory
RBS	Resilience Building Strategy
ResLAP	Resilience Learning and Adaptation Strategy

RCA   Resilience Continnum Approach

SCA   Social Constructivism Approach

STMs   Secretariat Team Members

TCMs   Technical Committee Members

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Human service organizations provide essential support to society in order to address the needs of the underprivled.   However, in any society, these organizations rely on donations, external funding and limited inome generation initiatives. In this context, it is important that they organize to ensure that they have a strategy that can ensure resilence of the services even during turbulent times. One way to address this is through the development of a resilience strategy to be able to adapt with an ever changing internal and external environment. In this thesis, I will explore actions taken to develop a resilience strategy in a local human service organization, the Civic Forum on Human Development(CFHD) in Zimbabwe.I start out in this chapter by providing a fuller discussion about the the background and context of my research, the organisation context and research problem, the literature setting on resilience and the research aim and objectives.

1.1 Background and Context of the Study

In developing economies, one of the major social challenges is to provide the institutional framework that can support human development in society. One way to do this is through the strategic involvement of the nonprofit human services sector as the agency of change at the community level (Bonilla,2015). However, the non-profit human services sector in Zimbabwe has been affected by a highly polarized and regulated environment with high dependence on external donor funding which tend to weaken their capacity to evolve effective resilience building strategies for their long-term survival and support to their clients (Masiyiwa & Kaulem, 2010). Since 2000, Zimba-

bwe's social and economic landscape, experienced a sudden jolt when international financing for the country was halted due to disagreements with the international community over the land reform policies and human rights violations which were being experienced in the country (Moyo et al, 2000).

Increasingly over time, public service delivery performance was affected, and public resources were mainly allocated towards meeting salary and running costs for public servants at the expense of service delivery to the public (Curristine, et al, 2007). The gradual withdrawal of the state from the provision of essential services created a huge spike in poverty, unemployment, company closures, and access to basic services such as health, safe water, and sanitation. For example, 7.9 million now live below the poverty line and will require significant humanitarian and social protection programmes (World Bank, 2021). Consequently, the period 2000 to 2015 witnessed a rapid growth in the formation of non-profit human service organizations registered as both Trusts and Private Voluntary Organizations primarily to respond to the needs of vulnerable communities affected by the crisis. In 2022, these organizations were estimated to be around 2500 with three quarters of them having come onto the scene in the last 10 years (NANGO Survey, 2013). However, most of these local nonprofit organizations were equally affected by the crisis through relocation of donors out of the country, funding cuts, de-prioritization of contested issues and areas of work, stiff competition for resources with International NGOs, and weak organizational systems (NANGO Survey, 2013).

Despite these mounting challenges, donors have remained supportive of the non-profit human service sector as they are the closest to poor communities affected by the long-term crisis in Zimbabwe. However, funding levels for local non-profit organizations have remained inadequate to be able to respond effectively to the needs and priorities of communities and domestic funding mechanisms are almost non-existent (Masiyiwa & Kaulem, 2010). Thus, local non-profit human service organizations lack knowledge and capacity of resilience building processes that can enhance their ability

to anticipate, cope and adapt to changes in their environment triggered by the long-term crisis in Zimbabwe (Masiyiwa & Kaulem, 2010). A focus on resilience building for the non-profit sector can strengthen their capacity to respond resiliently to crisis situations that are faced daily in their operations and to develop skills, knowledge and competencies that enable them to adapt and thrive under adverse situations (Bonilla, 2015, van Breda, 2016). Research has shown that several avenues can be explored to strengthen resilience building in an organization through enacting strategies that enhance organizational resilience (Denver, 2017, Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011).

1.2 Organizational Context and Research Problem

The Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) was formed in response to the need for providing an effective institutional framework for institutional dialogue on social and service delivery challenges affecting low income and marginalized communities in 1995, just before the onset of the prolonged crisis in 2000. I was part of the team that facilitated the formation of the Forum and served in the Board of the organization from 1995 to 2009. I was then appointed the Chief Technical Director responsible for strategy development and implementation, technical oversight, and overall reporting to the Board as a member of the Management Team in 2o19. CFHD initially focused on human settlement, environment, and civil society capacity building areas of work through its members drawn from various sectors of the economy representing communities, technical service providers, financial sector representatives, local authorities, and central government. After five years of successful operations, the organization exhausted its funding from two donors in 2000. However, one of the donors subsequently left the country after 2000, an indicator of how the organization was directly affected by the crisis.

The CFHD experiences epitomizes the impact of the crisis on local non-profit organizations in Zimbabwe. Firstly, its primary members were drawn from the local community-based organizations, referred to as service consumer organizations, as they expected quality services from service organizations such as local authorities, banks and government departments especially in accessing land, housing and infrastructure services for promoting their local level development. Secondly, the members to the Forum, represented community and stakeholder interest groups, to articulate their priorities in high level planning and advocacy meetings with government, financial institutions, and other regulatory authorities to ensure people-centred decision making on service delivery practices and policies. In essence, while 80 members were representative members, every one of them represented an average of at least 10 other interest groups making the Forum one of the biggest civil society networks in Zimbabwe.

> *''The mission of the Civic Forum then, was to foster positive dialogue, communication and consensus building on housing and service delivery issues so that the needs and priorities of low-income communities would be coherently articulated to inform decision-making and policy''(Civic Forum Constitution, 1995)*

The occurrence of a national social and economic crisis in 2000 had not been foreseen by the members of the organization and caught everyone by surprise. However, the consequences that followed were very visible and negative for the growth of the 5-year-old organization. The organization lost 80% of its members affecting the coordination and resource mobilization capacity of the Forum to the point of near collapse within two years of the crisis. The Forum lost four employees with the exception of the Coordinator, who remained working on a voluntary basis. Within a further year, only two Board members had remained in the organization paving the way for a new Board elected in 2008. The organization was only rescued from collapse by a new Strategy developed in 2010 that broadened its focus based on continuing environmental scans by a new Board that had a strong belief in business turnaround strategies in the face

of adversity and uncertainty in the operational environment. The renewed focus imme-diately enabled the organization to bounce back through securing funding from major donors such as the European Union (EU) and the United States Agency for Interna-tional Development (USAID) on the strength of the new Strategy and Vision. I was part of this turnaround strategic planning process following my appointment as the Chief Technical Director.

While the recovery process was miraculous in an environment where both pri-vate companies and small local nonprofit organizations were still closing shop in large numbers, an internal dialogue started in the organization on how to build a resilient and sustainable organization into the future. This was driven by the continued intensi-fication of the crisis in Zimbabwe in the pre- and post-2013 highly contested harmo-nized Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government Elections in Zimbabwe.

By 2014, national statistical indicators showed that unemployment rate had ris-en to 80% (ZCTU,2014) while 94.5% of all jobs were now in the informal sector (ZIMSTAT,2015). In the same year, there were reports that 4,610 companies had closed business between 2011 and 2014 (Zimbabwe Independent, 5 Dec. 2014) and 55,000 people had lost their jobs and, by 2015, 400 jobs were being lost weekly (Kanyenze, 2014). Earlier surveys conducted in 2011 had shown that human liveli-hoods were at significant risk as 62.6% of the population were reported as poor (PICES, 2011) and 16.2% were suffering extreme poverty.

For an organization that was on the brink of collapse, the external indicators were frightening for the management, board and employees in the organization as they were similar to trends we observed in 2000. The fear was worsened by internal realities as the funding cycles were ending without any clear picture of new funding opportunities. Then, the members of the organization had experienced traumatic expe-riences and survival battles after running out of funding. As I reflected on the options of

managing through this crisis, this raised a fundamental question:: ''*How can a resilient organization be achieved?''* As this issue had been recurring in three annual reflection meetings in 2014, 2015 and 2016, we debated the issue in the monthly staff meetings and in the quarterly management meetings with a view to identify the core problem that needed to be resolved and what issues we needed to explore as well as exploring potential ways of resolving the problem.

Organizational members participating in the debate were Executive Board Members (EBMs), Secretariat Team Members (STMs) and Technical Committee Members (TCMs). The core questions raised were ''*why were some organizations succeeding in difficult times, when our organization seemed so vulnerable to the changes in the external environment? What strategies would we need to implement to be able to withstand the pressures created by the operational environment? How do we mobilize resources to remain viable and sustainable? How do we empower board, staff, and technical members to be resilient in a time of crisis?''.* From all these questions within the broader organizational debate, the issue of how to an organizational resilience strategy to be able to withstand threats in the environment and be able to continue operating sparked my interest for further exploration in my DBA course*.

Various ways of addressing the problem were explored including learning from successful individuals and organizations, developing explicit strategies for building resilience to environmental threats, resource mobilization and capacity building of organizational members. Ultimately, the development of a resilience building strategy involving all members of the organization was mapped as the key resilience gap that needed to be addressed. The culmination of this dialogue helped in shaping the thesis research objectives for my DBA.

1.3 Literature on Resilience

Resilience has evolved over time from the environmental and physical sciences to depict the capacity of a system to return to its original form following a disturbance or a disruption from its internal and external environment (Holling, 1973, Cumming, et.al, 2005, Dinh, et al., 2012. The literature suggest that this is mediated through the ability of individuals, groups, and organizations to anticipate risks to avoid failure and potential harm in turbulent and adverse situations and the capacity of the organization to make counter-intuitive resilience choices (Holinagel, et al., 2006, Weick, 1993). While much of the resilience literature and organizational research is based on the traditional perspectives of resistance and recovery from shocks and traumatic events, these are being increasingly challenged and are becoming limited in understanding the resilience building dynamics and processes in organizations. For example, Sheffi and Rice (2005), Rose(2007) and Texeira and Werther (2013) emphasize that building a resilient enterprise is a strategic decision-making process that transforms the way the organization operates leading to the development of strategies for determining its competitiveness in a dynamic and ever-changing environment.

Resilience capacity of an organization is determined by multiple factors that relate to individual, group and organizational levels informed by relevant attributes such as individual confidence, group learning and adaptive organization structures (Luthans, et al., 2006, Cunha et al, 2013, Edmonson, 2007). These multiple dimensions of resilience help in understanding the key cognitive, behavioral, and contextual attributes that make individuals, groups, and organizations resilient (Lengnick-Hall et, al, 2011). While this research critically acknowledges both the traditional and multi-dimensional conception of resilience, research on how organizations develop and enact strategies for resilience is sparse in the literature (Vegt et al., 2015, Linnenluecke, 2017).

The literature suggests that weaving in the resilience paradigm across the entire organization can transform their leadership, management, and service delivery systems in a way that integrates the core resilience principles of thriving in adversity through successful adaptation to threats, shocks and stresses in the environment (van Breda, 2016). However, several scholars, acknowledge that the process of weaving resilience into organizational systems is extremely complex as it depends on dynamics and changes in the external environment (Bonilla, 2015, Hope *et al.*,2016, Rhoden, 2014), existing internal capacities for integrating multiple resilience dimensions into the system (Gibson & Tarrant,2010, Weick & Sutcliffe, 2011), the collective understanding by organizational members of key resilience principles and approaches applicable to their context (Weick,1993).

The criticality of understanding the dynamics and changes in the external environment is based on the view that organizational performance is often influenced by its relationship with the external environment (Kimberlin, et al., 2011, Ortiz-de-Mandojana, 2015). Non-profit human service organizations are extremely dependent on external donor funding within the context of the research (Bonilla,2015, van Breda,2016) as well the regulatory environment that determine the operational space and functions that an organization can conduct legally (Moyo, et al.,2000). The analysis of the external environment also helps the study to understand the type and quality of strategies that are often employed in response to threats in the environment (Duchek, 2019, Linnenluecke, 2017).

Organizational resilience as a concept influences the foundation of the study by providing the multiple levels of resilience in organizational systems (Van Der Vegt, et al, 2015). In addition, it provides an understanding of the factors that drive resilience processes in an organization through an emphasis on attributes that contribute to individual, group, and organizational resilience (Cunha et al., 2013, Edmonson, 2007). While the attributes at various levels are different, they tend to interface each other at

the organizational level through organizational learning, adaptive structures that accommodate multiple interests. The organizational unit of analysis is used in the study to be able to understand the aggregate resilience capacity of the organization.

The literature reveals four critical research streams that have been dominant in understanding organizational resilience. These include crisis management response through restorative interventions (Boin & Eeten, 2013, Linnenluecke, 2012), reliability of organizational systems to withstand shocks, stresses, and threats in the environment (Limnios *et al,* 2014), strengthening employee resistance to trauma and shocks (Coutu, 2002), adaptive business models to changing environments (Vogus and Sutcliffe, 2007 and strengthening supply chain resilience (Christopher & Peck, 2004). Thus, research has been exploring different components of organizational resilience as if they are independent of each other. A critical glaring gap in the research is the lack of focus on understanding how the resilience processes and strategies are integrated in the organizational system to help managers to anticipate, cope and adapt to unpredictable daily challenges in their operational environment (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2011). The research streams also fail to explain some of the critical dynamics and learning processes that are often manifest in small to medium organizations (Holinagel et al., 2011, Valikangas, 2007, Kayes, 2015).

Owing to daily survival challenges faced by small-to-medium organizations, resilience building should best be understood as a process-based phenomenon (Duchek, 2019, Somers, 2009). The predominant focus on resilience recovery and coping strategies creates a research major gap in scholarly research on understanding elements of pro-active response and anticipation processes (Tengblad and Oudhuis, 2018) that can shape future resilience interventions of the organization. An increasing number of scholars and practitioners now recognize that the process of resilience building in an organization hinges more on anticipation which implies an ability to forecast and prevent unexpected events and situations from happening which requires

everyday awareness and mindfulness (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2011). Therefore, the critical point of departure in this study is the shift from the research obsession with crisis management and recovery to integration of new process-based resilience perspectives that are focused on strengthening capacity of organizational systems to anticipate, cope and adapt to threats in their environment before these even manifest themselves (Somers, 2009, Duchek,2019). Hence, the study is based on pro-active resilience response framework that integrate environment factors and the mindful organizing capacities of organizations. Such an approach can help address the everyday challenges of organizational vulnerability by small to medium non-profit human service organizations who are the primary focus of the study.

A resilience building response to addressing the challenges being faced by a local non-profit human service organization is critical in understanding the systemic and operational resiliency gap in our organization. The significance of the study is based on the need to manage organizational risks resulting from inadequate funding and alignment with external trends for long-term survival of the organization. A resilient organization also ensures a highly motivated and committed workforce and can deliver quality services to communities thereby fulfilling the organization's mission and vision.

A resilience building conceptual framework would be needed to help managers integrate the most relevant strategies and attributes for building a resilient organization that can continuously respond to and withstand shocks and stresses in the environment. Drawing from these emerging perspectives, a strategy should be able to identify attributes that help the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to changes in the environment to avoid any damage to its functional capabilities and future ambitions (Duchek, 2019, Burnard and Bhamra, 2011, Andersson *et al.,* 2019). If the organization is agile, there are high prospects for it to realize significant gains out of potentially bad situations (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003).

1.4 Research Objectives and Aims

The primary aim of the study is to develop a resilience building strategy with participation of organizational members for implementation in a non-profit human service organization. This can be broken down into the following research objectives:

(1) To understand the process of resilience building in the context of a non-profit human service organisation,

(2) To explore how a resilience strategy is developed by members in a practical organizational setting.

(3) To learn new knowledge on the potential of the resilience approach and its limitations for informing practitioners and the human development community.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviews literature on organizational resilience within the context of non-profit human service organizations. The first part focuses on review of the nonprofit context and its challenges highlighting the characteristics of the environment within which the research problem is being explored in the study. The second part addresses the role and meaning of organizational resilience and its relevance to the study. The third section examines the organizational resilience building theory to understand the core concepts and principles shaping resilience in the organisation. This provides a good foundation for examining the emerging relevant debates and themes and potential lines of inquiry based on the existing literature. Finally, a conceptual framework exploring the resilience change processes and dynamics that informed the development of resilience building actions for implementation in a human service organization is presented and discussed.

2.2 Resilience in the Non-Profit Context

2.2.1 Enduring socio-economic crisis and risks

Confronted with the realities of macro-economic instability, poverty, increasing vulnerability of the poor in society, Non-Profit Human Service Organisations (NPHSOs) have been struggling to need the needs of the people in Zimbabwe. This has mainly been as a result of the failure of the state system to fulfil its development obligations leading to the overburdening of NPHSOs to bridge the

gap in response to the crisis. This is aptly captured by Stewart (1997) in his analysis of the demise of traditional state-led development theories and approaches in the 1970's and early 1980's which were superseded by market-based approaches. This has seen rapid proliferation of NPHSOs stretching their mandate beyond the traditional welfare focus (Sachikonye, 1997). Within this contextual setting, most NPHSOs were set up to provide an institutional mechanism for responding to the human development needs and priorities of vulnerable people and groups within the framework of people-centred development (Moyo et al.,2000, Sachikonye, 1995, Masiyiwa and Kaulem, 2010). This shift in emphasis and narrative for NPHSOs was evident throughout Africa, when the State in Africa was increasingly failing to address the worsening social and economic needs of its citizens (Curristine et al, 2007). This has inevitably created a context of high demand for NPHSO services which means massive resources and aid to support the vulnerable populations.

The expanded role of the NPHSOs has been extensively debated by researchers and scholars in the context of the dynamics in state-civil society relationships, resources implications, institutional sustainability of the NPHSO sector and more recently in terms of resilience. Political economy literature suggests that the State-NPHSO relationship tend to be compromised under conditions of poverty and under-development as the State seeks to closely control and monitor NPHSOs through regulatory mechanisms as they suspect NPHSOs to be conduits of foreign funding meant to destabilise their domestic economies and remove their governments (Sachikonye, 1995, Moyo and Makumbe, 2000, Masiyiwa and Kaulem, 2010). For example, the State in Zimbabwe has been attempting to promulgate a draconian piece of legislation regu-

lating the registration of NGOs since the year 2000 and this agenda has remained active to debate just to stifle the growth of NPHSOs and limit their role in development. This has become a dominant narrative in shaping the terrain of conflict between States in Africa and other third world economies and NPHSOs stifling their ability to respond more effectively to socio-economic challenges confronting them and to demands for increased services to cover for the gap left by the State. Inevitably, this creates a resilience gap for the NPHSOs to operate viably and achieve their long term goals.

In theory, non-profit human service organizations have been viewed by the state as having a humanitarian and development role that should complement government under a stringent monitoring and control framework to ensure compliance (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014). In Zimbabwe, for example, the existence of a contested terrain between the state and non-profit sector has been evident ever since the emphasis of market-based development with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme in the 1990s (Moyo, et al, 2000). The programme resulted in high levels of poverty, unemployment, growth of social movements advocating for change of government and attempting to influence public policy sowing the seeds for conflict between the state and human service organizations (Sachikonye, 1995, Moyo et al., 2000). The relationship has continued to deteriorate for the past 20 years leaving the NPHSOs more vulnerable, under-resourced, unable to deliver essential services to needy people and facing multiple challenges (Kang'ethe & Manomano, 2014).

In terms of resource dynamics and implications, it has been observed that the proliferation of NPHSOs in Africa has been associated with the re-channeling of development resources through the non-profit human services sector (Chabal and Daloz,1999). This trend has generated more conflict with the state as NPHSOs became the new preferred partners in development compared to the State with their increasing focus on pro-poor development. Set within a wider economic context, resources for supporting NPHSOs, have been predominantly, from international donors, which strengthened the globalist integration theory which viewed NPHSOs as surrogates of the global community advocating for regime change in Africa (Moyo, S, 2000). In theory NPHSOs are free to receive income from government and private sector and to generate own institution-based income, but it has generally been observed that the operating environment has very limited opportunities for leveraging funding from other sources beyond donations and external grants by donors (Moyo, S,2000).

In the context of socio-economic deterioration and the trend to push NPHSOs towards a welfarist focus, NPHSOs find it difficult to charge service fees for their products especially as their target group are resource-poor communities, leaving them with no option except to rely on external donor financing (Kabongo, 2017). External donor financing towards NPHSOs has been declining over the years due to a broad array of factors including world recessions, change in aid architecture, increased demand leading to increased rationalization and more complex conditionalities (Nazneen, Moyo, 2009). The functionality and success of NPHSOs under these adverse conditions is seriously compromised (Sachikonye, 1995, Moyo and Makumbe, 2000).

A common challenge NPHSOs face is how to equip themselves techni-
cally, financially and organizationally to maintain functionality and fulfill their
mandate in the face of social, economic and political crises and how they can
enhance their capacity and ability to manage change. Not much attention has
been paid to institutional development support by the external donors who have
been mainly involved in building capacity of communities without an under-
standing the institutional vulnerability of local NPHSOs (Islam,2016). Without
adequate institutional support, they have struggled to maintain their core opera-
tions and ensure the wellbeing of their employees (Shava,2020). According to
MacCabridge and Cohen, 2010), NPHSOs are dealing with severe cuts in fund-
ing and yet anticipate an 80% increase in demand for their services. Small non-
profits with annual budgets of less than US$500,000 tend to constitute over
80% of the non-profit human services sector in most developing economies
and these face extreme challenges with inefficient programme delivery, staff
capacity to cope with multiple stresses and severe cash flow problems (Simon,
2001). The effect of these challenges on local human service organisations is
institutional vulnerability of the organisation itself consequently to failure to de-
liver services to clients in a sustained way.

Research has found out that local NPHSOs tend to experience more
suffering during crisis situations as they are least prepared compared to inter-
national NGOs who have better crisis management systems and broad re-
source networks (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014). Local
NPHSOs are vulnerable to funding fluctuations and cash flow and like small to
medium size enterprises (SMEs) they have to overcome numerous operational
barriers such as legislative requirements, changing demands from their clients

and political instability usually with very limited resources at their disposal (Bhamra and Dani, 2011).

However, local NPHSOs are better in using reactive approaches and strategies when responding to turbulent and disruptive situations as they have more simplified decision-making processes and high level of flexibility. For example, Bonilla(2015) acknowledged that local non-profits have many unique feature that can contribute to their resilience. They tend to be more adaptable and responsive to change in their environment although they lack long-range strategic planning processes, have a limited resource and expertise base which impacts negatively on their chances of survival in the market place. As observed by Moyo and Makumbe (2000) and Sachikonye (1995), NPHSOs functionality and success is linked to economic performance of the country. In most stable and more developed contexts, NPHSOs operate along state and private sector to provide complimentary services with significant funding from the state system unlike in developing countries where NPHSOs are seen as externally funded non-state actors, both local and international. International NPHSOs tend to be more globally linked and have better governance and compliance systems to account for donor resources (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2013).

Despite challenges facing mostly local NPHSOs, Bonilla (2015) views them as ''hidden gems with so much potential'', p.8). This localized perspective provides an interesting perspective from the context of this study. Research has shown that local NPHSOs are flexible and innovative to provide community-based services where government and the private sector models would not work (Raetze & Duchek, 2021). NPHSOs have become significant actors on

the global arena as they contribute significantly to human development, employment creation, economic growth and ensuring equity and socially inclusive development (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014). Yet research on resilience from the local NPHSO perspective is extremely limited. Research has tended to focus on the change management capacities of NPHSOs in the face of growing financial challenges and losses in human resource capacities and skills (Curristine, et al, 2007). Some have used the crisis management theory to strengthen crisis management responses of NPHSOs in view of increasing disasters and unpredictable events (Curristine, et al, 2007). It has since emerged that such responses have not been effective in NPHSO sector as the responses have largely been reactive rather than taking a proactive and strategic initiative to pre-empty threats and to grow the resilience of the organisation. The lack of a proactive approach in detecting potential and taking steps to prepare for them is a major weakness of NPHSOs which lead to major resilience gaps. This has often been worsened by the tendency of their leaders who usually have the founder syndrome influencing the response pattern of the NPHSO to crisis situations unnecessarily creating threat rigidities (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014).

The success in the NPHSO is dependent on a range of exogenous and endogenous factors ranging from an enabling environment through supportive legislation and regulations, access to broad resource networks that are flexible, human resource skills and competences, strong competitive positioning and the ability to deliver quality services (Biekart & Fowler, 2018). At the strategic level, the need to embody a more strategic resilience approach is quite evident across the whole non-profit sector (Biekart & Fowler, 2018). Local NPHSOs are

able to create resilience if they engage in longer-term strategic planning and thinking to enhance their strategic readiness for change (Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012). Looking at them from that agility perspective, local NPHSOs are able to operationally and strategically position themselves for developing their resilience capabilities by thinking through more structured responses to threats on their operations. This means they are able develop their capabilities for proactive resilience which enables them to engage in more targeted resilience building processes (Scearce & Wang, 2020).

2.2.2 Resilience challenges facing non-profit human services sector

There are several challenges for resilience of non-profit sector arising from their different contextual realities. As for Zimbabwe, Masiyiwa and Kaulem (2010) who have explicitly highlighted lack of resources, extreme dependence on external donor funding, ineffective governance and collaboration systems, weak leadership and membership control of organizational decision-making processes and lack of long-term strategies for organizational development and resilience building as the more critical factors inhibiting their resilience. The scale of these challenges is more pronounced in Zimbabwe due to a number of factors that include governance and political factors, a prolonged social and economic crisis, a disconnect with global financial systems and a contested leadership system (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014).

The context imposes several challenges for resilience of NPHSO. Acute resources challenges increases their external dependency and capacity to invest in the growth and resilience of their organisations (Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012).

The capacity to manage change requires leadership that is well resourced and informed. Limited resources also contributes to ineffective leadership and capacity and poor corporate governance practices leading to vulnerability of NPHSOs to threats and adverse events (van Breda, 2016). Leading in an environment of uncertainty has become a huge challenge in terms of bridging the finance, human resource and technical expertise to navigate the work of the organization and to motivate employees when the resources are not matching the demand for services for local NPHSOs (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014).

Despite their human development intentions, NPHSOs operate in complex environments where their operational space is restricted and tightly monitored by state systems. This makes less agile as the state perceive them as threats to their power base through working various civil society organisations (De Graff, Moyo and Dietz, 1991). To maintain a control environment for non-profit human service organizations, tight operation conditions are set by the state to ensure NPHSOs compliance with government long-term goals and objectives.

However, more donors have been skeptical about government accountability and commitment to citizen inclusion and democracy, and view non-profit organizations as an avenue for channeling resources for local development and for building accountability systems (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014). This dual perception of non-profit organizations have often created challenges in building resilient non-profits as local state systems do not want them to develop deeper and long-term roots within communities for fear of influencing them to challenge the system. On the other end, the non-profit sector de-

pendence on external funding, makes their relationship with the state more complex in that they are increasingly viewed as instruments for regime change (Zimbabwe Delegation of European Union, 2014). This more visible in Zimbabwe where the government has been making amendments to the Private Voluntary Organisations Act (Murisa & Nobela, 2021) to completely keep the sector weak and ineffective especially in its socio-enonomic transformational role.

Despite the challenges experienced in complex contextual contextual environments, local non-profit human service organizations are expected to become more resilient in the face of multiple risks and threats (De Graff, Moyo and Dietz, 1991). In 2015, a research on non-profits found that they continue to evolve despite facing social challenges in their operational environments with a long-term desire to achieve a competitive edge as well as operational effectiveness, infrastructure and asset capabilities, maintaining legitimacy to authorities and constituencies they serve and achieving growth and stability in the longer-term (The non-profit marketing guide, 2015). The imperative for a resilience response is critical to the survival and growth of NPHSOs working in unstable and turbulent socio-economic and political environments. Such environments need more entrepreneurial and innovative leadership and resilient strategies for navigating the work of the organization and to motivate employees working in stressful environments (Duchek, et al, 2019.

What does this demand mean for the NP sector? The sector is still considered as agency for change in terms of their emerging role and function in society (Potter, 1996, Moyo et al, 1995) prompting accelerated interest in not-for profit research. The research focus has been shifting from mere organiza-

tional change and funding literatures (Gies, Ott and Shafritz, 1990) dominant in the 1970s to literatures on organizational effectiveness, performance and capacity in the 1990s as shown by a publication on High Performance Non-Profit Organisations (Letts, Ryan and Grossman, 1999). Since then issues on adaptive capacity, organizational learning and organizational resilience have become topical due to the high frequency and increased scale of adverse events that have caught organisations by surprise. Research in this sector has been on the increase despite limited focus on resilience in the non-profit sector.

Resilience has emerged as a multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional concept associated with complex dynamic systems before it permeated the business management arena in the last 40-50 years (Bonilla, 2015). The interest in organizational resilience in non-profit human services sector has been driven largely by rapidly changing environments globally in terms of funding dynamics, unstable social, economic and political situations in the light of the increasing importance of the sector globally (Scearce & Wang, 2020).

2.2.3 The quest for resilience in the NPHSO setting

NPHSOs operate in complex enviroments to deliver essential services to communities but with limited capacity to adapt to changes in their environment (Seville et al, 2006; Boyne & Meier,2009, Smith & Fischbacher, 2009). In these complex environments , the quest for a resilience approach is to enable the organization to continuously adapt to multiple risks and challenges that they face. (Bunard and Bhamra, 2011). More specifically, research has shown that they lack in systems for anticipation, preparing and adjusting their strategies if they are to thrive under such conditions (Linneluecke, 2017, Robert, 2010).

This study aims to understand how resilience can be developed in an organization with the participation of organizational members. An understanding of the resilience process and how it can be integrated into the organization is therefore critical (Anderson,2018, Boin and van Eeten,2013). Bonilla (2015) and van Breda (2016) have both emphasized the need for human service organizations to develop systems that are able to respond to everyday challenges and risks due to challenges in accessing funding and inadequate financial resources. Human service organisations have become an important vehicle in improving the well-being of underserved communities at local level and need to resiliently respond to challenges in their environment and exploit new opportunities as they emerge (Holloway, 2002, Worline et al, 2004).

2.3 The Meaning of Organisational Resilience

There are multiple definitions of organizational resilience within the business management field with some meriting detailed attention. One of the researchers ,Hamel and Valikangas (2003) observed that organisations need to dynamically re-invent and renew their strategies in line with changes in the environment as part of developing their strategic response to crisis situations. In the same perspective, Dever (2017) explicitly defined organizational resilience in terms of the ability of an organisation to anticipate, prepare for, respond and adapt to incremental change and sudden disruptions in order to survive and prosper. The key message is that the organisation ought to react when faced with uncertainty, natural calamities, economic crisis or any other disruption which impacts negatively on its operations (Bhamra et al., 2011, Zolli and Healy,2012). As the UN has noted in its 2015 report, the high prevalence of high

risk events worldwide has led to increased organizational failure owing to operational disruptions.

Arguably, resilience as a key word also applied in fields such as ecology, psychology to depict the ability of a system to bounce back and maintain stability (Holing, 1973, Walker et al.,2002, and Hollnagel, et al.,2006). However, organisations are systems, with ability to bounce back or make appropriate adjustments in the face of adversity (Sutcliffe and Vogus,2003). Unlike other systems, organisations are unique in that they are able absorb pressures while developing situation-specific responses to threats and can engage in transformative activities to come out of crises even more stronger (Lengnick-Hall, et al.,2011) but this requires a strategic capacity and awareness by organisational members (Nonino,2016).

2.3.1 Adaptive Capacity

The notion of adaptive capacity is key as a major organizing principle underpinning organizational resilience, which denotes the organisation's ability to adapt to adverse and unexpected situations through absorbing or shielding the organisation from disturbances thereby enabling it to continue functioning (Zhang and Lia,2012). Researchers such as (McMunus,2008) have added weight to the notion of adaptive capacity by emphasizing the importance of situational awareness and management of keystone vulnerabilities. Hollnagel et al,(2008) was more explicit in spelling the set of abilities contributing to organizational resilience:

- ability to respond to regular and irregular threats

- ability to monitor what is going on flexibly

- ability to anticpate disruptions

- ability to learn from the experience

The way an organisation adapts is dynamic and complex involving self-organisation, learning and adapting to changes in the environment enabled by certain attributes within the organisation such as ''flexibility, agility, adaptability and efficiency'' for rapid adjustments and/or improvements to be made (Raetze & Duchek, 2021). Madni and Jackson (2009) emphasizes the ability to prevent disruptions through proactive anticipation and absorbing impacts of such disruptions through the robustness of the system while adapting and learning through re-configuration.

The conceptual content of the field is diverse and multi-faceted reflecting two broad themes: firstly; the ability to absorb and recover which places more emphasis on the reactive elements or processes of resilience and secondly; defining resilience as a capacity for reinvention or adapting to change for continuous positive functioning or even the competence required to be able to proactively anticipate and/or adapt (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003).

While the literature goes deep in looking at the various definitions and their similarities, the focus seems to be around four themes:

(i)   avoidance

(ii)   survival

(iii)   recovery

(iv)   adapting and thriving

The themes correspond to resilience strategies used by Gibson and Tarrant (2010) on resistance which emphasizes the ability to withstand any disturbances in the environment, reliance strategies, which are designed to quickly recover from negative situations, redundancy strategies, usually designed for responding to foreseeable volatile situation linked to capacity to anticipate and avoid and flexibility strategies which are mainly designed to enable the organisation to adapt to extreme situation, for example, by changing its course or reconfiguration. The significance of this conceptualization of resilience is captured by Diamond (2005) who attributes the collapse of societies to the failure to anticipate a problem ahead of its arrival, failing to even notice that the problem has arrived and worse still failing to solve it when it has been noticed.

Similarly, this study orients itself to this conceptualization of organizational resilience which encourages organisations to proactively perceive problems and actively take steps to resolve them. The non-profit context review noted the tendency for the sector to rely on reactive approaches to dealing with challenges in their operational environment which is aided by their relatively small size and flexibility in adapting to changes taking place (Antony et al.(2008). However, their behavior tends to exhibit lack of a long-term strategy which has an impact on ability to respond effectively. They behave like SMES in times of reliance on short-term reactive actions or strategies which focus on fire-fighting (Sullivan-Taylor and Branicki, 2011, Trim and Lee,2008). Such an approach makes it difficult to detect threats in the environment as well as to prepare for and avoid any potential collision with adverse events. Further internal stakeholders, such as staff, management and board members are deprived

of making rehearsed and knowledge-based responses and the strategic readiness to respond in extreme circumstances (Ismail et al.2011).

It is essential that non-profit human service organisations embody a strategic resilience response in the face multiple challenges in their operational environment through using a pro-active approach in building their resilience. There is not much focus on building resilience in small to medium non-profits within the literature to inform this study except a few studies that have explored role of internal and factors (Kimberlin et al.2011), resilience workplace and organizational systems (van Breda, 2016) and leadership and culture issues (Bonilla,2015). In this study, organizational resilience was used as a framework for learning and understanding the process of building resilience and actively identifying a strategy for fostering resilience in the organisation. In the context of this study organizational resilience is defined from a process perspective as:

'' the ability of a non-profit human services organization to timeously react, protect and anticipate challenges and potentially harmful situations while learning to adapt and maintain essential services to beneficiaries through creating, modifying and implementing actions for survival, recovery and thriving in disruptive environments (Scearce & Wang, 2020)''.

In the face of worsening social, economic and political crises, NPHSOs' ability to survive, recover and thrive will depend on their ability to develop organizational resilience, identify situation-specific strategies/actions and develop ways of quickly adapting to complex situations. This requires the organization to quickly learn how to develop organizational resilience and an action learning intervention forms the basis of this study. The main research questions to be

investigated is (i) how do organizational members gain improved understanding and knowledge of organizational resilience and use the knowledge gained in the process to develop resilience strategies for implementation in a local non-profit human organisation setting? and (ii) what organizational resilience attributes contribute to effective resilience building of the organisation?

It is essential to explore some of the key debates on organisational resilience before discussing the theory and themes pertinent to the conception of organisational resilience adopted in this study.

2.4 Debates on organizational resilience

The literature on organizational resilience tend to be fragmented in the analysis of critical issues and themes that help one to understand the existing body of knowledge in relation to the operationalization of the resilience concept in organisations and the strategic issues and factors that lead to some positive outcome as well as the challenges that can be encountered. Despite the dominant focus on capacity there has been debate on whether capacity equates to capabilities following the efforts of some researchers such as Duchek (2014) and Williams at al.,2017) to use a capability-based approach to organizational resilience. Emphasizing the need for a clear distinction, Lengnick-Hall et al.,(2011) argued that possession of a resilience capacity is not the same as having a resilience capability as having a capability means the capacity for resilience has been transformed into action to translate into an organizational capability (Ritchtner and Lofsten, 2014,p.139).

Secondly, the tendency is to study resilience in relation to some event such a drought, flood or cyclone or economic hardship, which represents a change phenomenon that prompts a quest for resilience. As Martin-Breen and Andries (2011) pose a question on 'resilience to what' which points out to the importance of the context-specific of nature organizational resilience interventions.

Thirdly, organizational resilience cannot be confined to one level and aspect of the organisation as it achieved through the employees and teams which represents a collective organizational effort. Leading proponents of this argument such as Lengnick-Hall at al,.(2011) believe in the ability of the organization to integrate or re-configure capabilities, routines, practices and processes through human resource policies. At the same time, individuals within the organisation also ought to be resilient to contribute to resilient organisation. As Coutu (2002) points out an organisation can only be as resilient as its employees although resilient individuals do not necessarily equate to organization resilience precisely due to purposive interventions by the organisation that are needed to achieve organizational resilience. Riolli and Savicki (2003) note the existence of a reciprocal link between individual level and organizational level resilience although it has been emphatically pointed out by Horne and Orr (1998) that having too many resilient individuals may pose a challenge in creating a shared vision needed for a collective resilience response. The benefit of collective resilience is that actions and decisions are enacted at the collective level (Attunes,2011). Further, the collective level embeds social relationships that influence the resilience process and outcomes (Gittel, et al.,2006).

2.4.1 Resilience Strategies

Debates have also surrounded the choice of strategies adopted for organizational resilience in the literature. Assumably, strategies vary from one organisation to another depending on resilience resources and capabilities and other factors. Horne (1997) emphasizes this point stating that there is no 'magic ten-step formula' although there can be variation is strategies adopted by small and medium sized compared to large scale organizations (Ortiz-Mandojani, Bunard and Bhamra, 2011).

More importantly, is the debate whether resilience is a strategic or operational issue but this differs with the resilience typology. For example, for supply chain resilience emphasis might be on operational issues while the strategic perspective focuses on alignment of both levels to build resilience in the organisation (Carmeli and Markman, 20ll, Hamel and Valikangas and Oliveira Teixeira and Werther, 2013). The importance of the strategic lens is that an organisation is able to balance its growth strategies with governance issues (Carmeli and Markman,2011) leading to increased ability to build resilience using both operational and strategic lens (Ismail et al,.2011, Valikangas and Romme, 2012).

2.5 Resilience theory and relevant themes

2.5.1 Resilience and Self-determination Theory

The resilience theory can help in understanding the resilience process in the context of adversity and trauma and in critically discussing underpinning principles and characteristics of resilience at the individual and organizational level

(Ledesma, 2014). At the individual level, resilience is linked to key concepts of survival, recovery and thriving as the building blocks for bouncing back from adversity (Ledesma, 2012). The literature suggests that this is possible through the existence of positive coping mechanisms that are linked to the concept of thriving. Thriving tends to be associated with positive stress-coping mechanisms such as hardiness, strong coping skills, self-efficacy, and adaptability, high tolerance for risk and uncertainty and perseverance (Carver, 1998, Paterson, et al., 2002, Ungar, 2004). While different authors describe the phenomenon of survival, recovery and bouncing back in different terms such as ''positive response to stress and adversity (Rutter, 1987), ''bouncing back from adversity, frustration and misfortune (Janas, 2002) and ''capacity to face stressors without significant disruptions'', there is consensus among researchers that resilience can be used interchangeably with positive coping, adaptation and persistence (Greene et al., 2002). Depending on the strengths of these components in individuals, some people would succumb to stressful and adverse situations while others survive and rise above challenges that exist within their environment. Nishikawa (2006) acknowledges that the concept of thriving in individuals is pivotal in the resilience discourse as it manifests itself in three practical outcomes which relate to surviving an adversity that one is confronting, recovering from the adversity and thriving after experiencing the hardship. The net effects are positive at different levels of functioning with recovery depicting low level functionality and thriving depicting some transformative results which may lead to adaptation using experiences gained from the process.

Thus thriving has longer term impacts in terms of gaining mental strengths to confront challenges, new knowledge and skills, risk tolerance leading to growth

and strengthened resilience in the future (Amir & Kant, 2018). Based on its centrality as a foundation of resilience in the literature, thriving is an important theme which is linked to another important theory in resilience building referred to as the constructivist self-determination theory (Raetze & Duchek, 2021).

The criticality of discussing the self-determination theory is that it links individual and organizational resilience within an institutional, cultural, social and developmental setting by explaining how individuals adapt to adverse and traumatic situations (Saakvitne et al., 1998). The theory also helps in the analysis of thriving from both an internal and external perspective thereby shaping resilience thinking and action planning for thriving to be achieved in a given context. This theory is applicable to my setting in NPHSO institutional, cultural, social and development setting and provides a context within which organisation resilience processes should nurtured. It is pertinent to discuss the key themes linked to resilience and self-determination within the context of organizational resilience.

The resilience and self-determination theory suggests individual resilience is a foundation of organizational resilience. Ledesma (2014) has pointed out resilience stretches from the individual to the organizational level. The individual resilience narrative is primarily rooted in psychological and sociological schools of thought and tend to be focused on behavioral, social and cognitive factors that shape resilience thinking and strategy at the individual level (Raetze and Duchek, 2021). One such perspective has been advanced by Lengnick et al., (2011), who argued strongly that individuals have the knowledge, skills and capabilities to be able to evolve a capacity for resilience and that individuals are able to develop such skills in order to anticipate and respond to adverse situa-

tions (Pearson and Clair, 1988, Williams et al., 2017). The cognitive skills and competences enable individuals to make sense of the crisis affecting the individual and the organization through analyzing, understanding the signals and make strategic decisions on possible responses to the crisis (Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2015, Lindberg and Rantatalo, 2015, Sutcliffe, Vogus and Dane, 2016). The literature suggest that individuals are an asset in resilience building through their stock of knowledge and experience (Bananno et al.,2010), and through a range of behavioral capabilities such as sense-making capacity to search for new opportunities during crisis (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010), they provide emotional capital (Maitlis & Sonenshein, 2010) and a strong drive for creativity (Amabile et al, 2005). However, the individuals also tend to be limited in terms of the organizational design and culture and hence the need to unpack the key dimensions of organizational resilience (Perrow, 2011).

For most organizational resilience researchers, the organizational level has been the most attractive area of interest in the past 40 years (Bonilla, 2015, Tasic et al.,2020). Focus has been on understanding how organizations respond to crisis and how they prepare for crisis and ensure mitigation of negative impacts (Bain and van Eeten, 2013, Comfort et al, 2001). Emphasis at organizational level is on the collective cognitive, behavioral and relational capabilities of the organization (Williams et al., 2017), as well as understanding organizational roles and culture (Bundy, et al., 2017), Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011) have also emphasized the role of internal governance and internal control issues that can affect the strategic performance of the organization and its ability to recover from short-term setbacks. Unlike the focus on individuals, organizational level emphasises a collective mindset and culture and

mutual support mechanisms that ensure a collective response to crisis response (Weick & Roberts, 1993, p23), Weick, 1993, Bigley and Roberts, 2001), flexibility and responsibility (Lengnick-Hall et al, 2011). Organizations focus on building formidable relationships of trust which allows team members to interact, bond, exchange new ideas and to collaborate towards ensuring organizational resilience through collective sense making processes (Gillespie and Dietz, 2009, Tasic et al, 2019), and the wider use of human resource strategies as intervention approaches in order to generate the desired resilience outcomes.

The key learning points from the organizational narrative in the literature revolve around the idea that organizations have the capacity to cultivate the skills, knowledge and social capital required for improving organizational resilience and to identify and implement strategies that can change organizational behavior in organizations (Orlikowski, 2007). However, organizations are complex systems (Amir and Kant, 2018) and all necessary steps must be taken to ensure continuous adaptation to changes in the external context (Pearson & Clair, 1998, Williams, at al, 2017.

This study focuses more on the organization level being cognizant that analyzing the relationship between individual and organizational resilience is a complex process in terms of how they respond to crises. This study assumes that organizations have the capacity to integrate resilience to strengthen their systems through promoting collaborative learning and problem solving at the multiple levels in the organization (individual, team, group, management) to generate a more solid and coordinated response to crisis in

the organization (Heinimann & Hatfield, 2017). Individual employees contribute better to resilience through combining their learning experiences which influence organizational processes and modifications in their favour (Mananno et al, 2010, Madsen and Desai, 2000). Collaborative learning outcomes at organizational level, may involve learning from errors over the years (Hallgren et al, 2018, p123), enactment of single and double loop learning (Argris and Schon, 1996, Metallinoun, 2017).

2.5.2 Dynamics of Thriving in Adversity

Organizations face significant internal and external challenges that affect their capacity for resilience within their operational environments (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003). Individuals tend to adopt positive coping strategies to cope with any stress and trauma following a crisis in the organization (Eagland et al., 1993). Porter (1996) observed that organizations affected by crisis situations focus on strategies that are designed to further improve employee performance in order to overcome any stress caused by the crisis for organizational survival and continued success. This logic is derived from the reality that a number of cost cutting measures taken by organizations facing a crisis tend to increase stress and anxiety among members (Ledesma, 2014). These traditional actions, which are still being used in many organizations, usually involve layoffs, redesign of positions and other organizational changes that often cause job insecurity affecting long-term employee commitment and contribution to resilience of the organization (Horne and Orr, 1998, van Breda, 2016). The pressure for organizations to thrive and achieve results is worsened owing to the reality of a double—edged

challenge affecting all types of organizations (Robb, 2000). On the one hand, the organizations need to manage their performance targets assuming there are no disruptions in operational environment (business as usual approach) and on the other they have to manage for adaptation to accommodate changes and threats in a rapidly changing operational environment to survive and re-main competitive (Davies and Cobb, 2010, Kimberlin et al, 2011, Westerly, 2013).

It is therefore essential for any organisation to explore diverse pathways for building to ensure it can thrive in adverse situations. However, such inter-ventions are necessitated by changes that occur in the organization's resilience cycles which depending on whether its deterorating, recovering, adapting or growing which in turn would shape its choice of strategies for survival, coping and adaptation (Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012).

2.5.3 Recovery and Coping

Organizations as systems recover, meaning they can bounce back into their original state (Raetze & Duchek, 2021). However systems would behave differ-ently, as they tend to evolve into a new form (Chakravarty, 1982). Resilience would also be different from coping, which refers to the process of managing internal and external demands that would have exceeded available resources (Pargament, 1997, Tugade et al., 2004). Further, coping, which is prevalent in most local non-profit organizations does not reflect resilience but is just an ef-fort towards resilience building (Compas et al, 2001,p89). It therefore can be regarded as an essential building block towards fostering the resilience capaci-ty of an organization. However, some coping strategies can be detrimental as

they cause maladaptation and can damage the resilience capabilities of the organization (Cocotto et al, 2014), meaning that coping can provide a false picture of resilience in the organization.

A key lesson from this literature is that there is need to focus on multiple strategies that can be blended at the organizational. In the context of small to medium sized non-profits, the quest for resilience has largely focused on how to thrive in turbulent times (Hamel and Valikangas, 2003) and how to remain resilient despite the existence of challenges threatening the survival of the organizations (Bonilla, 2015). The literature show emphasis on some factors influencing choice of response strategies. For example, Cameron(et al., 2003) have focused on the role of leadership in providing the social, emotional and material resources to foster staff commitment and to collectively use their knowledge, skills and motivation to ensure organizational-level resilience is developed. Based on a study of 471 companies, MacCann, et al., 2009) found that turbulent environments pose a serious challenge to organizational survival if they do not develop adaptive capacity to align with the new environment. Organizational agility is required for quick action and adoption of new strategies in the event of a crisis. For non-profits it has been argued that this agility can be created through strategic networks to essentially minimize costs through sharing operational costs to achieve their goals (Bonilla, 2015).

2.6 Potential Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Resilience building can pose several challenges which range from cognitive, strategic, political and ideological (Hamel and Valikangas,2003). One potential

challenge especially in an AR setting is the cognitive dimension, which require organizations and their members to be aware of the changes taking place in their own world of work and why they are being involved in the resilience building process. The second issue relates to the capacity to come up with realistic strategic options and choices in the process of organisation resilience building. Thirdly, a political challenge is about managerial willingness to invest in a future strategy that draw resources from committed budget lines and belief and commitment (Gibson and Tarrant 2010). The ideological challenge is the openness and flexibility towards renewal as an on-going culture in the organization (Zitkiene, et al, 2018). It would appear organisations would need to overcome such challenges before undertaking a resilience building change process.

Sullivan-Taylor and Branicki (2011) points that the failure to recognize the need for resilient response itself is a manifestation of the capabilities of the organisation and often results in organizational leaders failing to allocate resources for resilience building processes. Secondly, aggregating the different individual, team and organizational resilience strategies can be a difficult task because of the different sizes, make-up in terms of previous experiences and lessons, knowledge and skills to deal with specific challenges affecting the organization (Duchek, et al, 2019). Thirdly, organizations have different levels of maturity within their life-cycle (Kimberlin et al.,2011) which affect the type of resilience strategies than can be adopted for implementation. For example, a small and medium sized organization with a desire for growing its portfolio or business, may express a need for developing a resilience strategy much earlier than well-established big organizations (Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012) Small to medium sized organizations also tend to be much more quicker and agile in responding to ad-

verse conditions in their organization due to their speedy decision-making compared to large organizations (Bonilla, 2015).

The lessons learnt from the literature so far is that organisations tend to fall back on their resources and capabilities to turn adverse challenges into opportunity. How this requires an organisation to consciously identify and activate certain attributes unique to its context. If the organisation has shortcomings in its capabilities, it must seek innovative ways of expanding them within identified constraints and opportunities. Lastly, resilience building requires taking concrete steps along the proactive resilience pathway without undermining its reactive capabilities.

2.7 Towards A Theory of Organisational Resilience Practice: A Pro-Active Perspective

The literature explored so far indicates that NPHSOs need to build resilience under very difficult conditions and to be pro-active in their approach. Pro-active resilience involves intentional strategies for preparedness planning to cope with sudden events in the environment and to turn potential threats into opportunities for individuals, teams and organizations to grow and prosper despite existence of adverse situations (Story et al., 2013, Valikangas and Romme, 2013). Proactive resilience implies an action of anticipation and consciously and actively waiting (SUII, 2005, Waugh et al., 2008) depicting readiness action steps for an organizational change (Armenakis, et al.,1993). This kind of organizational behavior is anchored on preparedness planning and the internal desire of key organizational stakeholders which is applicable to my research context. The current situation of passive or reactive resilience depicts a

behavior that waits for the event to strike before activating any resilience build-ing processes, a situation that results in increased institutional vulnerability to social, economic and political turbulences in the operational environment.

NPHSOs, in practice, achieve resilience by turning the challenges they are facing into opportunities through strategic use of their capacity resilience (Me-gele,2014, Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011). Capacity for resilience depicts collective resilience by organizational members which appreciates the role and strengths of individual members and the effectiveness of their interactions in driving the organization forward based on collective efforts (Lengnick-Hall et al.,2011).

There is a shift in the literature from focusing on recovery processes of resil-ience to strategically-driven resilience building processes that aim to ensure organizational responses to adversity reflect their capacity to identify new op-portunities while expanding their capabilities to emerge stronger from crisis sit-uations (Sullivan-Taylor and Wilson, 2009; Jamrog et al.2006).Hamel and Vali-kangas (2003) is one of the leading proponents in arguing that organizational resilience reflects the ability of an organization to build on its strengths (super-powers) to overcome its weakness and eliminate threats within its external en-vironment.

Based on the review it is possible to delineate the ingredients that lead to a conceptual framework of this study. Firstly, the environment shapes the resili-ent context which in turn influences behavior, resources and capabilities of the organisation (Hillman and Guenther,2021). In practice, when organizations are exposed to threats, they have a tendency to disregard their organizational ca-pabilities for making strategic resilience responses in times of crisis (Lengnick-

Hall and Beck, 2009). In that situation they make an impulsive reactive resilient response. Thus a pro-active resilience does not necessarily undermine the capacity for reactive resilience building but builds on it. The element of making a instinctive response that is embedded in reactive approach is a good foundation for a pro-active response strategy especially within individual employees in the organisation (Tonkin et al., 2018, Taylor & Sao, 2012).

Secondly, the net effect of these instinctive responses by individuals when confronted by a crisis require some level of mindful organizing to be able to harness individual skills and abilities to create a capacity for resilience at the organizational level (Mutizwa, 2014). The organisation uses a pro-active approach to mobilize critical resources for recovery, coping, adaptation and thriving through exploiting three capabilities in the organisation namely cognitive, behavioural and contextual (Lengnick-Hall et al, 2011). The cognitive and contextual elements placed emphasis on key elements of the system robustness, redundancy, resourcefulness and rapidity as catalytic in the resilience building process while also observing the phenomenon of organisation evolvability which enables the recovery, adaptation and renewal of the systems (Kantur and Iseri-Say xxxx). Contextual variations are bound to happen and researchers are urged to immerse themselves fully in the context of their research (Bhamra, Dani and Bunard, 2011).

Linking these critical components together is a framework that shows how the environment shapes the key resilience behaviours, resources and capabilities of the organisation. The framework also shows how mindful organizing is influenced by key stakeholders with a context to ensure positive adaptation,

learning and renewal all contributing to improved improved organizational within the framework of a pro-active approach. The pro-active model builds on the positive elements of reactive approaches usually associated with small and medium sized non-profit organisations. Below is the framework adopted for the study based on strengths of the pro-active resilience response.
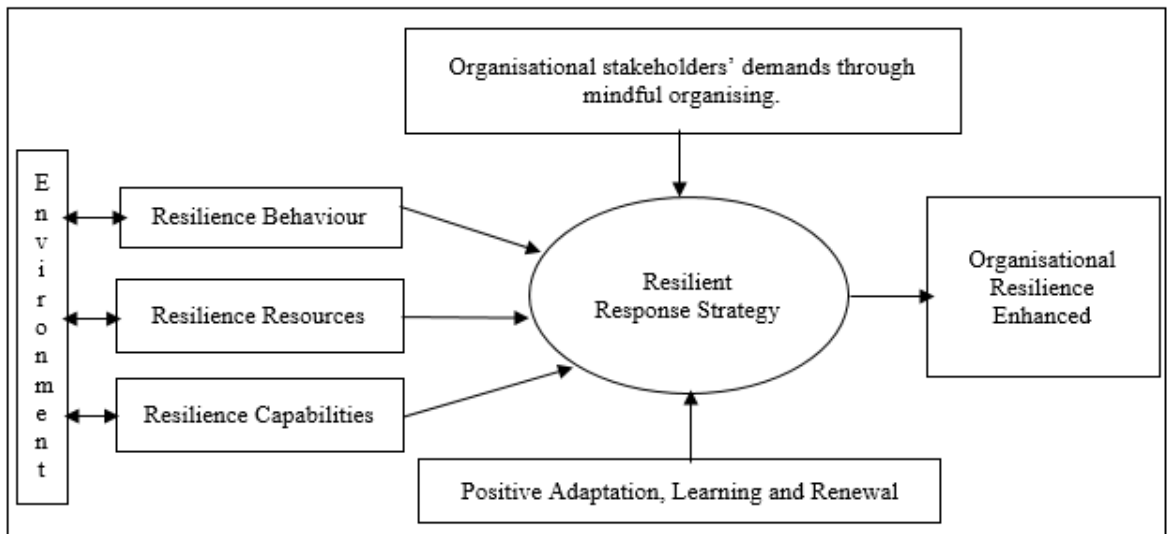
Figure 2.1: Pro-Active Resilience Conceptual Model (Adapted from J.Hillmann and Guenther,2017, Conceptual Integrative Model)

This framework is grounded on the theoretical foundations of the pro-active resilience model and is adapted from Hillmann and Guenther (2017). The framework highlights key drivers of the resilience building process that emanate from the environment and how this combines with the ability of the organisation to maintain its functions while recovering fast from adversity building on its strengths (capabilities, resources) to thrive and prosper.

2.8 Influence of Local Context

I have reviewed literature on organizational resilience on the basis of global literature. I fused this with local literature with the intention of providing an alternative perspective on organizational resilience in practice in the Zimbabwe context. Resilience is socially constructed within an organizational system with diverse individuals influencing the process in practice. The organizational resilience response may be negatively impacted by the founder member mentality in the organization which tend to be based on the command and control philosophy (Cameron et al, 2002) creating a threat-rigidity within the organization (Dutton et al., 1981) which tend to induce a more conservative mindset and a more defensive approach to resilience building (Bonilla, 2015). In my view, the way organisation resilience is fostered in local NPHSOs is influenced by the local contextual realities as well as internal and external factors which require careful intervention in bringing about change.

However, resilience remains a versatile concept and underlies an important desire by individuals, organizations, and communities' (p.145) to survive in adverse and stressful situations in their environment Darkow (2018). Such a conclusion suggests that the integration of resilience into systems at individual, group, organizational and community level should strengthen ability to cope, absorb and transform the situation for the better (Holling, 1973, p.14).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Three provides the study rationale and methodology to address the key research questions. It starts by examining the philosophical basis of the study focusing on the ontological and epistemological assumptions. The chapter then outlines the methodology of the study providing contextual information of the single case study and the qualitative methods used for data collection. The action research emphasis is then explained through providing details on the cycles of data generation and analysis and the repeated cycles of participants' interactions that underpinned the study process.

The research instruments used for data collection/generation and how these were integrated to address the key research questions of the study are clearly described. The participants' selection criteria is also presented and justified. Being an insider researcher, the issue of role duality is discussed in detail in terms of the possible biases and how these were minimized in the study. The data analysis section describes how the data was analyzed, the coding system and categorization processes used, the themes emerging and a presentation of key themes from the data analysis leading to a discussion on trustworthiness and credibility of information used in the study. The final part of the chapter provides details on the ethical considerations, approval processes and limitations of the study.

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions (Ontology and Epistemology)

The importance of one's assumptions and philosophical orientation (ontology and epistemology) in conducting qualitative research is critical in thinking through the problem that need to be addressed, the types of research questions that need to be asked and the processes of data gathering and analysis (Creswell,2013, p18). Ontology refers to the basic assumptions that are made by the researcher concerning the nature of social reality being examined while epistemology refers to the best ways of investigating into nature of the world (Easterby-Smith, *et al,* 2012, p17). This chapter merely draws out some key insights from the scholarly debates on these assumptions in relation to the study.

3.3 Research Paradigm

Creswell (2013, p20) define ontology as beliefs about nature of reality and contends that epistemology is what gets depicted or claimed as knowledge (epistemology). Creswell also argues that research paradigms relates to values role in research (axiology) and to the process of conducting research itself which is the methodology. In practice, ontological assumptions envisage multiple realities, epistemological assumptions are based on subjective evidence and tend to close the gap between the researcher and the researched (Creswell, 2013, Easterby-Smith, 2012). The research uses the authority of verbatim quotes from the participants as part of the evidence to enhance objectivity of what has been studied. Axiology is more of the values that makes the research recognize and acknowledge some form of bias inherent in the different levels of interpretation by the researcher or by the participants themselves (Creswell, 2013,

p21). The philosophical assumptions are regarded as essential interpretative frameworks for conducting qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) present these as positivism, post-positivism, interprevitism, constructivism, hermeneutics, feminism, racialized discourses, critical theory and many more are still part of the emerging post-modernism and transformative perspectives. Easterby-Smith (2012) has observed that positivism and social constructivism has dominated debate owing to their contrasting paradigm assumptions. For example, positivism places emphasis on independence of the researcher, scientific research design with strict hypothesis and statistical processes while social constructivism focuses on ensuring an in-depth understanding of the situation, incorporating participant perspectives and can work with small number of cases. Post-positivism tends to take a more scientific research approach with strict emphasis on quantitative techniques guided by a specific theory (Easterby-Smith, 2012). Other emerging philosophies include pragmatism which is mainly concerned with what works without committing to one system of belief (Creswell, 2013, p28), critical realism, which tends to be a compromise between prositivism and constructivism (Easterby-Smith, 2012).

This research uses a social construvionist paradigm which views reality as shaped by people instead of objectives and external parameters. Its strengths compared to other paradigms is that it relies on multiple sources of data and is ideally suited for a process based inquiry despite its time consuming nature (Easterby-Smith, 2012). Other advantages of employing this paradigm are its assumptions on existence of multiple realities informed by lived experiences of research participants and the notion of co-constructed reality

involving research and research participants (Lincoln, at al, 2011) which creates room for sharing and exchanging experiences.

3.4 Constructivism Ontology and Epistemology as applied in the Study

Based on the definitions of ontology and epistemology discussed under philosophical assumptions, both the research and the participants in the study do not conform to the existence of objective truths but intended to understand reality in subjective terms based on multiple views and lived experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Evidence from literature suggest that the constructivist perspective on the ontology and epistemology of this study places more emphasis on human interactions in the interpretation of multiple realities based on some influences from their background, experiences and contexts.

Participants in the study are viewed as the initiation point for data collection and analysis and these may be looking at reality in a different manner from the researcher. But the interpretation of the perceptions will however depend on the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher which may not bring a measure of independence often found in positivist research. The risks of subjective evidence may be inevitable despite the argument that the constructionist perspective tends to reduce the distance between the investigator and the participants (Creswell,2013,p 21). Within this setting, there is a high likelihood that the close interaction with participants 'generates' findings from the interactive research process. Consequently, reality becomes co-created between researcher and participants blurring the distinction between ontology and epistemology (Creswell, 2013, 36). The practical implication was that feasible

solutions for the development and implementation of a resilience building strategy were generated through the ontological and epistemological approach that is based on multiple views and perspectives of participants across the entire organization which emphasised social interaction, mutual knowledge and action planning towards the goals and objectives of the study.

Guba and Lincoln (2004) argues that the researcher essentially needs to interpret the mutual perceptions and expressions of the social actors as a constructivist who makes sense of his or her own interpretation and the interpretations by the participants. The multi-stage design of this study involved six cycles of direct interaction with the participants which created adequate room for validation of the researcher's intepretations by the participants thereby minimizing room for biased interpretation by the researcher.

3.5 Case Study Methodology

The methodological choice for this study flows from the constructivionism ontological and epistemological assumptions discussed in the above sections which allowed the selection of methods for collecting and analyzing the data to address the research questions and objectives of the study. The case study methodology links up very well with the constructivist ontological and epistemological perspective as it generates multiple views of reality from the voices of the research participants who have varied levels of knowledge and experience (information-rich). The case study approach is considered appropriate as it enables the research to concentrate on an issue of concern (Wargo, 2014) which is connected to the work based environment of the researcher. The significance

of the case study methodology to this study is that it enabled the resilience building phenomenon to be understood within its real life context (Yin, 2003 b, p13). The case study ensured detailed focus on the reality of people's experiences while at the same time situating the socially constructed realities in a wider context (Stake,2008, p120). Yin (2003,p13-14) has also emphasized the importance of a case study approach where a real life phenomenon is being researched where the distinction between the phenomenon and the context is often blurred. In this study, resilience building is regarded as an everyday phenomenon (Linnenluecke,2017) and is part of the contextual realities of local non-profit human service organizations to find ways of surviving, coping and adapting on a daily basis (Bonilla, 2015).

According to Collins and Hussey (2007) a case study is appropriate in exploring a single phenomenon in its natural setting through use of a range of methods that lead to the generation of indepth knowledge and understanding. A qualitative case study approach can also be historical enabling participants to provide narratives of their resilience journey through their in-depth knowledge of the organizational life cycle (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011). The selection of the case study strategy is based on key considerations recommended by Yin (2003, p55) which stressed the importance of type of research questions, degree of control by the researcher over actual events and degree of focus on contemporary issues. In this argument, Yin also recommends that a case study would be mostly preferred where the research questions assume the form of 'how and why'. This connects well with the thrust of the study in understanding how a resilience building strategy can be developed for implementation in the organiza-

tion and understanding why certain resilience building processes and attributes are critical for effective resilience building for a non-profit human service organization.

Consistent with the constructivist ontology and epistemology perspective, a case study methodology enables multiple constructions of reality through hermeneutical techniques which refer to contextually and culturally-relevant interpretations (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2012) which lead to consensus based filtration and distillation processes to establish the multiple realities of the phenomenon. In this case study, the different cycles of learning, reflection and action ensured consensus building on the strategic anchors and attributes of a resilience building strategy with each cycle acting as a filtration and distillation point of the process.

Case studies can also provide a platform to explain why and how certain outcomes have been experienced and promotes meaningful interactions between key elements of the case and can magnify hidden patterns on the phenomenon to all involved in the case (Creswell, 2013, Easterby-Smith, 2012). Embedded in the case study approach used in this research were the principles of collective sense-making, understanding emerging trends, patterns and norms in addressing resilience building issues and challenges and understanding some of the hidden responses that have been happening for collaborative decision-making and action towards a shared resilience building strategy.

Using a single case study approach in this research created an avenue for researching a complex problem on how to develop a resilience building

strategy in a human service organization with the participation of organizational members. As observed in the literature review, resilience building is a dynamic process that goes beyond mere understanding of resilience factors and/or drivers in the organization to understand how individual, organizational and environmental processes shape different resilience building pathways and outcomes (Mallack, 2016). A qualitative single case study approach provided a broader spectrum for exploring the key resilience building processes using multiple data sources that include documentation review, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews with key informants.

The use of multiple methods in a case study inquiry has been recommended by Yin (2003b).The use of the three complementary data gathering methods for this case study research is appropriate to fully understand the resilience building phenomenon which is somewhat under-researched and complex and often results in institutional failure. While a document review creates an opportunity for the researcher to draw on the internal thought processes in the organization, the focus groups helps in amplifying, contextualizing and interpreting the diverse participant perspectives on resilience building processes, experiences and realities.

The in-depth interviews provides an opportunity for the participants in the case study to provide more independent and deeper perspectives to some of the complex and technical issues explored in the documentation review and focus group discussions.

While the use of a case study imply flexibility, Stake (2008,120) warns against case for generalization of findings placing more emphasis on the need to understand the case and the data generation and analysis process can occur simultaneously as it marks the beginning of an engagement process between the researcher and the research participants. Case studies are expected to provide analytical generalizations and not scientific and statistical generalizations (Yin, 2003,p33).

The key elements of the social constructivism approach used in this research is summarized in Table 1 as adapted from Guba and Lincoln (2004,p.24):

Table 1: Key Elements of the Social Constructivism Approach

Research Element	Constructivism Perspective	Research Application
Ontology	Relativism	Generation of multiple, contextually relevant and socially constructed realities by key organizational actors.
Epistemology	Ongoing co-generation of findings	Ensuring close interactions with research participants to generate findings in six cyclic and iterative processes.
Methodology	Focused on action research and dialogic processes	Employing a Case study Approach
Methods	All qualitative	Document Review, Focus Group Discussions and In-depth Interviews

Source: Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (2004, p24)

3.6 The Case Study Organization

The Civic Forum on Human Development (CFHD) is a non-profit human service organization that was founded in 1995 which has grown from a one employee organization to over 12 employees supporting over 45 community-based organizations in their community development work. The organization has a three-tier organizational support system comprising the Executive Board Members (EBMs) who provide policy direction and institutional oversight, the Secretariat Team Members (STMs), who are responsible for implementation and administration and Technical Committee Members (TCMs), who provide technical advice to STMs based on their broad technical knowledge and experience. The three tiers of the organization are pivotal in driving the strategy of the organization, and hence the research participants were all drawn from the three tiers.

The resilience building challenges facing the case organization affects the entire non-profit sector in Zimbabwe making this study a pioneering one in the sector. The action research approach used in the study is designed to generate actionable knowledge that will enable the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to its changing environment. The engagement of the case study participants and data collection started in March 2017 throughout the six cycles of interaction with study participants through to March, 2019.

3.7 Rationale for Action Research for the Study

The study employs action research as the inquiry process to ensure under-standing of the resilience building strategy development in a local non-profit human service organization. The literature revealed limited research on resili-ence building strategy development, especially, in the non-profit sector. Action research ensures a collaborative inquiry process with organizational members in diagnosing existing organizational knowledge and can generate new knowledge for addressing an identified organizational problem (Shani and Passmore, 1985). Reason and Bradbury (2008:1) identify the main strength of action research are rooted in its participatory nature as well as its emphasis on practical knowledge. Action research is appropriate in addressing the purpose of the study to understand how a resilience building strategy can be developed with the participation of organizational members.

Consistent with the social constructivism paradigm guiding this study, a par-ticipatory action research process was designed with multiple interactive cycles for understanding the resilience building strategy development phenomenon from the various organizational levels. Following a document review to provide context and background to the organizational resilience building discourse and narrative in the organization, the first cycle focused on exploratory focus group discussions with members of Executive Board (EBMs), Technical Committees (TCMs) and members of the Secretariat Team (STM). The iterative cycle brought together representatives of the participants into a focus group to reflect and dive deep into the critical issues for resilience building strategy develop-ment and to map out convergent and divergent issues for deeper exploration

through interactions with individual organizational members, The third cycle created space for learning about the resilience building processes at the individual level through in-depth interviews. This ensured some of the hidden perceptions and dimensions of the resilience building process could be understood to ensure multiple view points that contribute to problem solving. In the fourth cycle, the emerging strategies and themes were reviewed and categorized through a construction and deconstruction process while building consenus on the most critical themes for resilience building strategy development in the organization.

Drawing from the collective mapping of resilience building themes and attributes in the the fourth cycle, cycle five focused on identifying actionable outcomes from the action learning process for anchoring the resilience building strategy. for implementation in the organization. There were deep conversations on each of the identified resilience building action priorities in the light of the objectives and work based problem. The final sixth cycle, focused on drawing lessons, experiences and future improvements in resilience building strategy development.

The research cycles were sequentially inter-connected with cycles one to four focusing on participatory diagnosis based in the assumption that actors in the organization are always engaged in developing socially-contructive meanings of processes within their complex systems (Marshak, 2008). Therefore cycles 1 to 4, were mainly dialogic processes meant to construct what the nature of the issues were, while the researcher documented the dialogue, chang-

ing perceptions and meanings around resilience building processes, strategies, attributes and capability for future strategy development.

Cycle 5 created an opportunity for collective sense-making based on emerging issues from the dialogic processes by organizational members drawn from all the departments in the organization. In this cycle focus was on reframing and developing coherent thematic categories, contrasting and comparing different strategies, shared understanding of key attributes for development of a resilience building strategy for implementation in the organization. The cycle required systematic documentation of the reflective issues and action priorities to ensure quality participation by the participants.

Cycle 6 focused on reflective learning bearing in mind that two processes of learning and reflection were taking place. As emphasized by Mezirow (1991), reflection can be structured around the content issues and/or questions that were posed at the start of the inquiry and around the process which is about strategies and around the premise of the inquiry and how worthwhile it was to the participants and the organization. Finally reflection also focused on actionable knowledge generated from the action research process and future improvements.

The participants engaged in the different cycles of interaction are shown in Table 2, below:

Table 2: Participants in the Cycles of Action, Learning and Reflection

Cycles	1	2	3	4	5	6
Participants	24	12	12	12	12	12
Profile						
EBMs	8	4	4	4	4	4

TCMs						
	8	4	4	4	4	4
STMs						
	8	4	4	4	4	4

EBMs = Executive Board Members, **TCMs** = Technical Committee Members, **STMs** = Secretariat Team Members

3.8 Criteria for Selection and Participation

Cycle 1 was open to all departmental members to be able to construct the broader resilience building issues, strategies and their characterization in as open a manner as possible. Cycle 2-6 participants were selected based on a balanced representation of participants with long-term memory of the organization and those who recently joined the organization. The balance was achieved through ensuring that participants represented a broad range of the research participants within the age cohorts of 1-5, 6-10, 11-15 and 16-20.

The six action research cycles are shown in Figure 5, below:
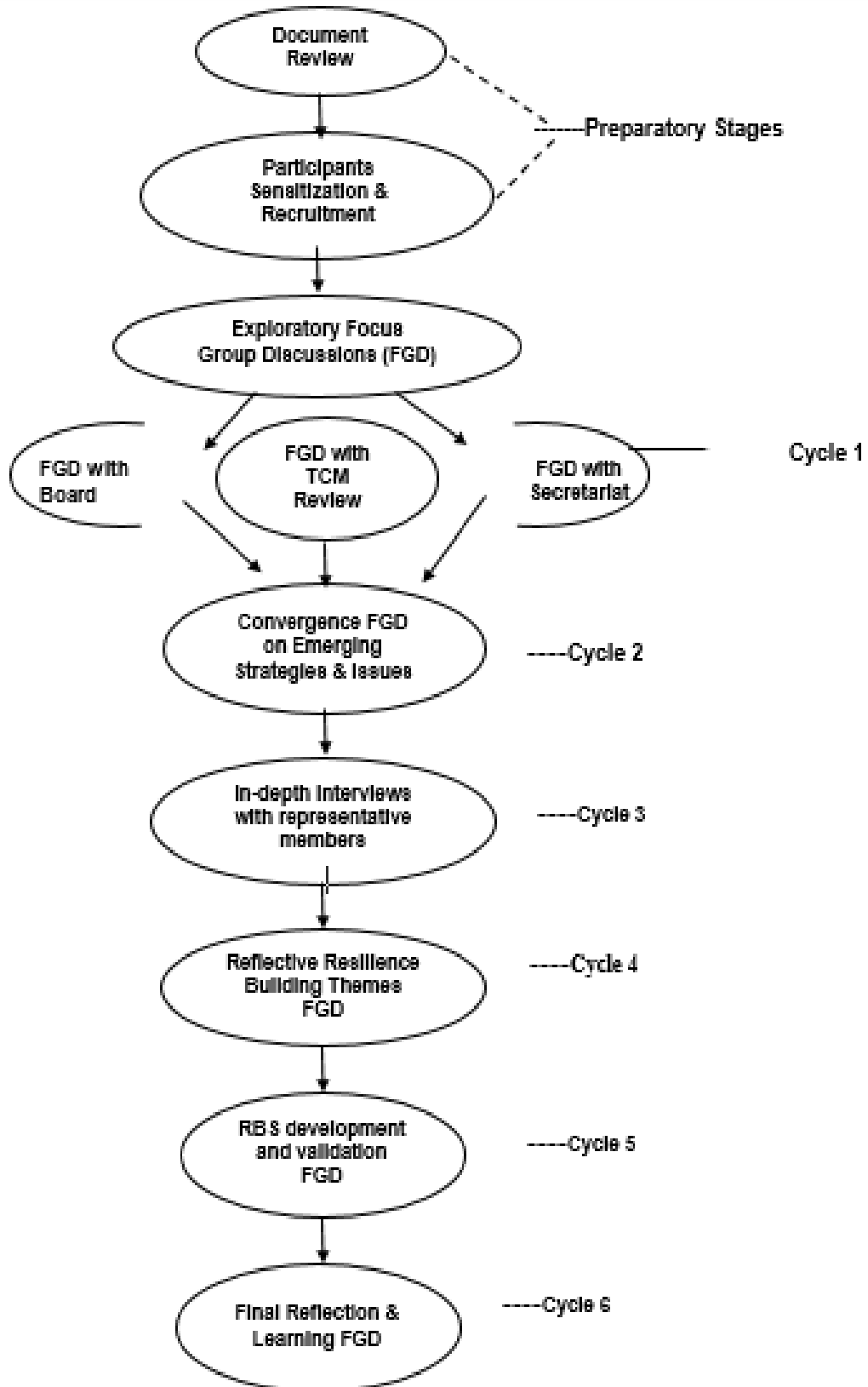
Figure 1: Action Research Cycles Used in the Study

3.9 Data Collection Methods

The study used three data collection methods comprising document review, focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs). The sequencing of data collection followed the cycles of action research and data generation discussed in the above section consistent with the research objectives to explore the development of a resilience building strategy with the participation of organizational members. The unit if analysis for the study was at the organizational level and hence data collected was mainly at organizational level focusing mostly on understanding the resilience building phenomenon in the organization. An overview of the data collection methods used and the rationale is shown in Table 3, below:

Table 3: Overview of Data Collection Methods

Data Collection Method	Rationale	Applicable Cycles
Document Review	Gather documented background information on resilience conversations in the organization and emerging resilience building strategy issues for informing initial focus group setting and discussions	Pre-focus group discussions and across all cycles for triangulation
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	The first four FGDs were designed to broadly explore the resilience building trends, issues, desired resilience attributes and build some level of	Cycles 1 and 2 which involved 3 FGDs with departmental units and a combined FGD, Cycles 4, 5 and 6 which involved resilience building thematic reflection and analysis,

	consensus on issues for deeper exploration through in-depth interviews.	resilience strategy development and reflections on lessons learnt.
In-Depth Interviews	Understand deeper perceptions, understanding, challenges and opportunities for developing RBS.	Cycle 3 which involved in-depth interviews with research participants drawn across all levels of the organization.

The key data collection methods are described below:

3.10 Documentation Review

First, data was collected through documentary review targeting primary and secondary data. Primary data sources were mainly Secretariat Minutes, Board Minutes, Technical Committee Reports, Annual Reflection Reports, Annual Reflection and Learning Reports, Five Year Strategic Plans and policy documents. Secondary data sources were mainly evaluation reports and knowledge management reports. The main purpose for the documentary review was to understand what is documented on the resilience building journey of the organization, understand periods of stress, coping and adaptation, quality of response strategies used for recovery (pro-active or reactive) and for managing performance of the organization on a five-year cohort basis which is a period of time normally used to review and renew the organizational strategy. Strategies identified in the literature were coded in line with the conceptual framework in the literature in terms of Anticipation Strategies (AS), Coping and Recovery Strategies (CRS) and Adaptation and Thriving Strategies (ATS) and

Accompanying Attributes and Capabilities (AACs) for each category. A log of the key documents reviewed during the documentary review process was developed capturing document number, type, date produced, resilience building themes identified and key implementation issues and challenges and lessons learnt.

The log was kept by the researcher with a catalogue of emerging resilience building issues in the organization for use in the triangulation of data at the end of the data collection process. The documentation selection limited itself to strategic planning reports and plans developed from 2008 when issues on resilience building first emerged. 48 documents (at least 2 per year) and emerging issues were recorded in the documentation review log sheet (RLS).

On-going documentary review analysis was critical in continuously interrogating the emerging resilience perspectives and challenging the resilience building models in the literature. The document review process also enabled collection of historical organizational information useful for the interpretation of relevant themes contributing to the resilience building process in the organization.

3.11 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The FGDs were the main method for data collection as they enabled greater interaction among the participants and allowed for reflexivity and consensus building on the most appropriate resilience building strategy.

FGDs were conducted in cycles 1,2, 4, 5 and 6 of the action inquiry process. In cycle 1, three FGDs (FG01 to FG-03) were conducted with members in their

home departments which constituted a natural setting targeting 8 Executive Board Members, 8 Technical Committee Members and 8 Secretariat Team Members (STMs). The initial round of FGDs were largely exploratory and ensured all the functional roles in the different departments were represented in the initial FGDs to be able to understand the diverse views of organizational members on organizational resilience buiding issues, strategies and desired attributes for the organization. In Cycle 2, a reflective focus group discussion (FG-03) was held with 12 participants comprising 4 representatives from each department. The 12 participants selected at this stage were expected to participate throughout the cycles of interaction with participants. The participants shaped the criteria based on years of service in the organization as follows:

Table 4: Selection of Research Participants for FG-04 to FG-06

Funclional Department	Years of Service in the Organization			
	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16 years+
Executive Board	1	1	1	1
Technical Committees	1	1	1	1
Secretariat Team	1	1	1	1
	3	3	3	3

This criteria was justified in terms of understanding the historical knowledge on organizational resilience building knowledge and analysis (Kimberlin, *et al*, 2011) and inter-generational representation of organizational members as well as ensuring a realistic focus group discussion of not more than 12 participants.

The FG-04 brought the representatives from explorative FGDs involving EBMs, TCMs and STMs to reflect on emerging issues, broad resilience building strategies (RBS), desired attributes for future RBS and issues for detailed internal dialogue and discussion. The issues generated from this reflective FGD, were used to develop the IDI interview guide. 12 IDI interviews were conducted with the same representative members from EBMs, TCMs and STMs to dive deep into the most appropriate strategies and attributes for consideration in a resilience building strategy development process.

FG-05 was primarily concerned with mapping critical strategic issues and themes for resilience building strategy development, identifying key patterns in the data and triangulating the data from FGDs and IDIs to define and align key categories. This was followed by FG-06 which focused on trimming the issues to identify strategic resilience building priorities for implementation in the organization. FG-07, focused on final reflection, learning and recommendations for future improvement in resilience building strategy development for implementation in a human service organization.

3.12 In-depth Interviews (IDIs)

While the main data collection process was primarily conducted through dialogic focus group discussions, IDIs were necessary to understand emerging issues from the exploratory focus group discussions, to capture insights on processes and strategies that have worked and not worked for the organization and to be able to compare and contrast the resilience building processes and strategies within the organization. The IDIs were designed to take about 40-45

minutes of the respondents time within their own natural working spaces. The rich information/data from the IDIs was necessary to be able to substantiate some of the broad issues emerging in the FGDs and to triangulate emerging issues and themes with those from the focus group discussions.

3.13 Research Instruments

The research instrumentation-for the study was based on the need to integrate the flow of the action research process from the broader exploratory FGD questions, and then diving deep to explore the emerging broad organizational issues with organizational members from all levels of the organization. Key questions were open ended for both FGDs and IDI guides. The detailed questions in these instruments are shown in Appendix C. A simple template was designed to capture responses from each interview for easier data review and analysis. The data forms from the IDIs were completed in electric format for easy of storage in password locked files on the researcher's laptop. IDIs and FGDs were recorded and later transcribed and analyzed as an additional measure to ensure accuracy of data (Creswell, 2013, p160).

3.14 Data Analysis

The data analysis methods draw upon the recommended single case study qualitative data analysis procedures (Stake, 2006, Creswell, 2013, p54) guided by the constructionist ontology and epistemology framework discussed earlier in this chapter. The objective was to ensure that the resilience building

processes, strategies and their attributes are properly abstracted across all the cycles through the data collection tools used for data collection. In line with recommended single case study qualitative data analysis procedures (Stake, 2006, Creswell, 2013), the researcher used multiple level of data abstraction processes (Creswell, 2013, p54) where the data was merged into broader themes and categories at each of the cycle stages.

The step by step guide by Braun and Clarke (2006) for thematic analysis was used. Six key steps are suggested and these are shown in Figure 6, below:

Step 1
Familiarization with one's data

Step 6
Producing the Report

Step 2
Generating initial codes for the data

Step 5
Clearly defining and naming the Themes

Step 3
Reading through each transcript to get immersed in the data

Step 4
Reviewing emerging themes
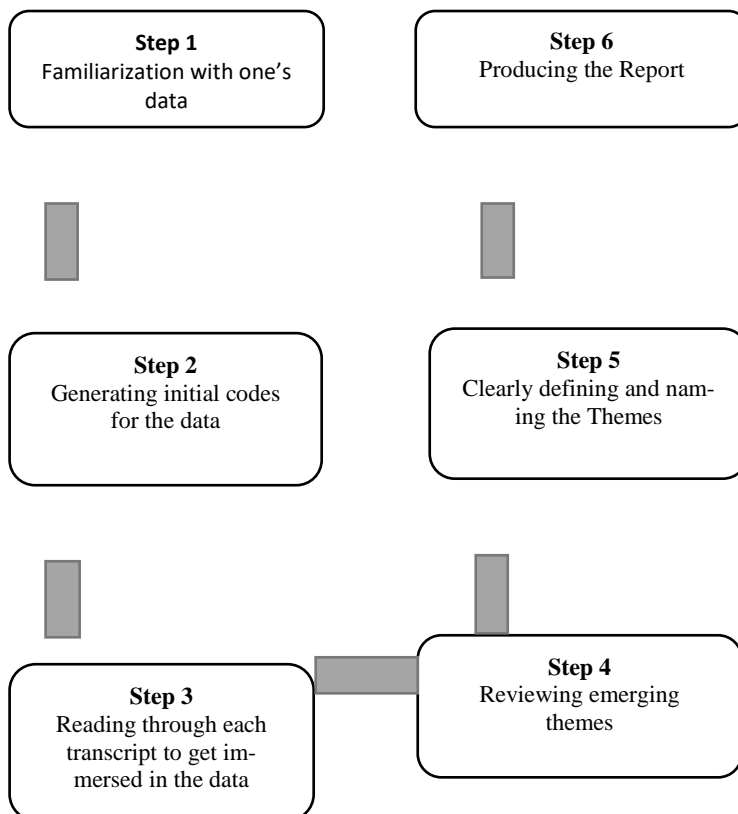
Figure 2: Braun and Clarke Analytical Framework (Clarke,2006)

All these key steps were found to be useful and were compatible with the action learning cycles used for ensuring participants interaction and participation. Consistent with concurrent data collection and analysis procedures in qualitative research, these analytical steps were appropriate. First, familiarization with the data generated in the document review, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews always informed each of the next steps of the action learning process. For example, after creating a log of the main resilience building issues, strategies and desired resilience attributes from the documentary review, the synthesized issues set the framework for the exploratory focus group discussions involving members of the Board, Technical Committee and Secretariat. Likewise, the agreed resilience building pathways and critical issues emerging from the combined focus group involving the representatives from the three departments of the organization contributed a set of strategic resilience building questions for inform the in-depth interview (IDIs). By the time the process reached the themes review stage as envisaged in the data analysis process, the participants were curious to find out how the diverse themes would be developed to inform the resilience building strategy for implementation in the organization. The final categorization, renaming and definition of themes and attributes that formed the resilience building strategy was guided by procedures for merging findings that are recommended by Stake (2006).

The process of analysis was essentially deductive as the coding approach was influenced by the conceptual framework of the study which emphasized the need to understand the resilience building processes of anticipation, coping and adaptation (Duchek, 2017, Linnenluecke, 2019) and analyzing the evidence from participants' perspectives and experiences. For the process to be

managed smoothly, codes were assigned to the different cycles, data collection methods used and the participants involved. Examples of these generated codes are shown below:

Cycle		Cycle Code	Method Code	Participant Code
• Cycle 1	-	CYC-1	FG-01 to FG-03	FG-EBM=01
• Cycle 2	-	CYC-2	FG-04	FG-TCM-01
• Cycle 3	-	CYC-3	IDI-01	IDI-STM-01
• Cycle 4	-	CYC-4	FG-05	FG-EBM-02
• Cycle 5	-	CYC-5	FG-06	FG-TCM-02
• Cycle 6	-	CYC-6	FG-07	FG-STM-02

The codes were constructed in a way that made it easy to develop an excel spread sheet for creating a case study database showing responses to questions posed in cyclic processes involving interaction between the participants and the researcher. Consistent with the social constructionist perspective of the study, it was critical to understand the relationship between the first order constructs on participants construction and understanding of resilience building strategy development and using the data generated to generate second order constructs by the researcher with a link to the literature based conceptual framework as recommended by Blaikie (1993). This implies that the researcher was able to organize the everyday perceptions of the organizational participants involved in the study into desired second order constructs through correct interpretation of the meanings and value of these contributions to knowledge and theory (Blaikie, 1993). These considerations in this qualitative study were pertinent for the researcher being immersed in cycles of reflection, analysis and collective sense-making ensuring that the research essentially links data gen-

eration and scholarly theories and perspective facilitated by the researcher (Blackie, 2010) as the researcher becomes a social constructionist in the process.

The two main strategies of data analysis involving categorization and direct interpretation for building successive impressions, evidence and interpretations as the cycles unfolded was recommended by Stake (1995, p71). These were shared in the reflective focus group discussions in cycles 4,5 and 6 to ensure shared synthesis and meaning creation (Merrian,1998) from the data generated through the cyclic dialogic process.

The coding process for emerging strategies, attributes and key strategic issues and considerations was linked to the respective cycles and the research method to link the analysis and interpretation to the conceptual framework of the study. The data generated by the participants was rich to distill and categorize the attributes associated with the key resilience building strategies within the process-based RBS domains of anticipation, coping and adaptation. Themes emerging in each cycle were extensively debated, defined and interpreted until all possible scenarios and explanations were exhausted (reaching saturation point). The results from the action research process are presented in Chapter 4.

3.15 Trustworthiness and Reliability of Information

The validation of the data was done through a process of triangulation. Schwandt (2007, p289) defines triangulation as a way of checking the integrity of deductions one is drawing through the use of multiple data sources and mul-

tiple methods. The notion of triangulation is based on the principle that data that is derived from different sources should converge at some point thereby displaying some pattern of truths (p.298). The researcher used a three-step approach recommended by Wargo (2014) involving:

- Conducting in-depth interviews to check the trustworthiness of information generated through the exploratory focus group discussions at the start of the action learning process.

- Providing successive feedback to participants at each successive cycle of the iterative process involving participants and the researcher.

- Rigorous checking of the emerging themes and categories of generated information and maintaining a well-coded case study database with detailed information in place from Cycle 1 to Cycle 6 and participants verbatim statements as evidence.

The researcher also ensured that the transition from first order constructs highlighting participants reflections and interpretations of their world to second order constructs of the researcher's interpretations were based on credible literature review process and the secondary and analytic categorization and presentation of data by the researcher would be legitimate and credible.

Most of the case study tests suggested by Yin (2003) for validity and reliability were also met. In terms of construct validity, the researcher used multiple sources of data with successive evidence generation and inbuilt feedback mechanisms for informing the entire research process in line with the constructionist ontological and epistemological perspective of the study. In terms of internal validity, there was continuous pattern-matching and explanation building in the dialogic process and open debate on opposing views and perspectives

before arriving at a consensus. In terms of external validity, some of the categories are based on the conceptual framework which build on the most recent perspectives on resilience building within the discourse (Duchek, 2017, Linnenluecke, 2018). In terms of reliability, the researcher adhered to the recommended case study protocol (Stake, 2006, Yin, 2003) and developed a case study database as part of a systematic data collection process through the action research cycles used by the researcher.

The rigorous methods in the data collection methods also contributed to reliability. Focus group and interview data were documented through notes and audio recordings and these were transcribed and verified in successive cycles. Some of the verbatim quotations have been systematically documented and have been used in the final analysis and discussion chapters to preserve their clarity and richness of the results generated. These quotations from participants across all the cycles have been systematically coded by cycle, method of data collection and by the participant code. English was used as the main language throughout the data collection and analysis process as all the participants were very conversant with it.

3.16 Role Duality

The social constructionist implies that reality is co-constructed between the researcher and researched and that it is also informed by individual experiences (Creswell, 2013, p36). However, the researcher already played an technical advisory role within the organization which also encompass research tasks which helped in minimizing potential for role conflict. However, there were

issues that emerged that needed to be managed as a result of the social constructionist approach of the study.

First was the issue of defining the action learning steps that required reflective and deductive analysis by the researcher that required the researcher to play a dual channel role (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010) linking what was being heard from the participants and developing these ideas into new insights for action based learning and organizational transformation while at the same time minimizing the influence of the researcher in the learning and decision-making process of the organization. This became such a delicate role duality issue with some organizational members wanting to see immediate actions being taken without having exhausting the exploration of various ideas and strategies for informing the resilience being strategy. Potential negative impacts were avoided through ensuring the collaborative and independent roles were separated in the action learning cycles. While the collaborative roles were concerned with interaction with participants in the six cycles of the action learning process and understanding the participants interpretations and desired actions, the independent role of the researcher focused on ensuring ensuring links with the conceptual framework to guide data collection and analysis, synthesis of learning outcomes from the cycles of learning, reflection and action, critical analysis of emerging themes and explanation building, data triangulating, regular feedbacks to research participants and final reporting guided by the Zuber-Skerrit model (Zuber-Skerrit and Fletcher, 2007). A model is presented on how to balance independent and collaborative roles by the action researcher (p.421). The approach worked in building trust and confidence of the researcher and the re-

search participants on the cycles of interaction and in the outcomes from each of the cycles.

The key challenges in maintaining a balanced dual role also emerged. . The research used reflective notes for each cycle of interaction with participants to track the changing thought processes on the resilience building discourse in the organization as it unfolded from the start to finish. This was a process of meta-learning involving integration of the researcher's understanding and what the researcher is discovering from the action learning process (Coghlan and Brannick,2010).

Some lessons were learnt on minimizing role duality in this action research process. While role boundaries were collectively defined with the research participants it was important to maintain some flexibility in conducting a scholarly research on the one hand and ensuring the desire of the system to develop a practical strategy is met. In the end the process was mutually and socially constructed with clear mechanisms for joint knowledge sharing (Ashforth *et al,* 2000)**.** The research participants were able to appreciate the role detachment in terms of providing a critical analysis of the emerging issues, themes and action priorities with outcomes being openly discussed with the co-participants. This approach to ensuring the maintainance of a neutral and unbiased analysis of outcomes has also been highlighted in the literature (Adler and Adler, 1987) and tends to minimize any role conflicts.

3.17 Ethical Issues

Ethics approval for the study was granted in February, 2017 by the University of Liverpool. The approval for conducting the study in the case study organization was provided by the Chairman of the Civic Forum on Human Development in December 2016. However, there were several other ethical considerations in this study. Firstly, the social constructionist approach required the research to collaborate with the three departments while ensuring issues of confidentiality and anonymity are addressed especially in all the six cycles of interaction with the participants. The Participant Information Sheet (PIS) gave all the participants information about the objectives and detailed description of all the cycles involved in the study to ensure voluntary participation. Most of the issues and questions explored were not about individuals but focused on organizational resilience building. This was also emphasized during all the FGDs and IDIs to avoid any name labelling and personal references. The data collected in all the cycles used codes to avoid names of participants. Where positions were used for the reporting consent was obtained from the individuals concerned as these voices needed to be distinguished in the analysis.

Where individuals felt constrained to reveal their views and feelings during focus group discussions, the one-to-one in-depth interviews created an opportunity to share any confidential views that were relevant to the study and their consent to sharing the outcomes of interviews with others was also secured. It was important for the consent process to be conducted for each cycle as per the ethical approval and any participant feeling any level of discomfort could withdraw from the process at any point of the process. This was done to

accommodate any discomforts associated with an exploratory study which may not have been clear at the start of the process. As co-participants, research participants were free to ask for any outcomes and interpretations from the action learning process. The researcher was guided by all the ethical requirements of the University of Liverpool.

3.18 Limitations

The main focus of the study was to develop a resilience building strategy with the participation of organizational members for implementation in a non-profit human service organization. This meant that data collection was mainly limited to the level of understanding of existing organizational members and there was no time to explore alternative perspectives from those who had left the organization who may have richer information for the case study. Secondly, not much was documented on resilience building strategies and hence there was significant reliance on the focus group discussions and interviews conducted to obtain as much detailed information as possible. The researcher ensured all participants had a level playing field for their participation and voice during the action learning process.

Finally, this study only focused on understanding the development of a resilience building strategy in a non-profit human service organization. And yet organizational resilience building remains a largely huge and insufficiently explored research area. The study explored an organizationally relevant problem and there may be some limitations in disseminating the results and recommen-

dations to similar human service organizations beyond the case study organization.

3.19 Summary

There is currently limited research and information on understanding the resilience building phenomenon in local non-profit human service organizations. To address the research aim and objectives of the study, this chapter discussed the philosophical approach to the study and concluded that it was appropriate to use constructionist ontological and epistemological assumptions and framework. The chapter presented the research design and explained the rationale for the use of a qualitative single case study approach and the multiple methods that were used in the data collection process to capture the multiple perspectives and interpretations of the participants. The chapter also highlighted the benefits of using the single case study methodology and the rationale for using qualitative data collection methods. The data analysis process and procedures were also discussed as well the trustworthiness and reliability of the data. The issue of role duality and how this was minimized by the researcher is also discussed before detailing the ethical processes and highlighting the limitations of the study. The results of the study are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM CYCLES OF ACTION, REFLECTION AND SENSEMAKING

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three discussed the philosophical and methodological approach used in this study. Through use of the constructivism ontology and epistemology,the participants were actively enaged in all the six cycles of action, reflection and sensemaking allowing for close interaction between the participants and the researcher. The case study methodology made it possible for detailed information to be collected through qualitative methods mainly involving interactive focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Data analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection using thematic content analysis methods and a two-stage abductive analysis process. The conceptual framework developed from the literature review synthesis guided the structure and framework for the data collection and analysis across the multiple steps of the action inquiry process.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the study with the guidance of the conceptual framework to help analyse the resilience building strategies (RBS) and their attributes from the different cycles of action, reflection and sense-making. The initial exploratory steps were designed to generate a deeper understanding of the evolving RBS that needed to be implemented in the organization with the participation of the members. A brief overview of the case study organization is presented, the key cycles of action, reflection and sense-making conducted in the action learning process, the data collection and analysis pro-

cedures that were used to make interpretations of the data and eventually ar-
rive at the key findings, their analysis and interpretation.

4.2 Case Study Participants

The research targeted the recruitment and participation of organizational mem-
bers from all the departments of the organization which are the Executive
Board Members (EMBs), Thematic Committee Members (TCMs) and the Sec-
retariat Team Members (STMs). Eventually eight members from each of the
departments signed the informed consent form and participated in the different
cycles of action, reflection and sense-making that took place from March 2017
to March, 2019.

4.3 Cycles of Action, Reflection and Sense-Making

Six cycles of action, learning and sense-making were used to facilitate focus
group discussions, in-depth interviews, thematic analysis and reflections, resili-
ence action planning and final reflective learning on resilience building strategy
development and recommendations for improvements in the future. The key
objective was to obtain an indepth understanding of the resilience building phe-
nomenon through cycles of interactive action research with the participants.
The six cycles were:

Table 5: Cycles of Interaction with Participants

Cycle	1	2	3	4	5	6
Data col-	FGDs	FGD	IDI	FGD	FGD	FGD

lection Method						
Participants	24	12	12	12	12	12

Cycle 1 involved three exploratory focus group discussions to explore broad resilience building issues and strategies and Cycle 2 brought representatives from the different units of the organization to agree points of convergence and identify issues for deeper exploration in the indepth-interviews (Cycle 3). Cycle 4 focused on thematic reflection and analysis to identify domain themes for informing the resilience building strategy development and Cycle 4 focused on comparing and contrasting emerging issues, themes and their categorization and identifying key relationships, mapping key components and attributes of a resilience building strategy for the case study organization. Cycle 6 focused on collective reflection on the outcomes of the process and action plan for implementation. Participants representativity was based on years of service to be able to capture organizational life cycle resilience building experiences and perspectives for informing future resilience building strategy development as explained in Chapter 3.

4.4 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data collection and analysis protocols for document review, focus group discussions for each cycle and in-depth interviews were developed and refined successively to reflect issues emerging from the action learning cycles consistent with the constructivism ontological and epistemology philosophy. Following acceptance by all staff members to participate in the study, a preliminary

list of documents with resilience building information was compiled and senior staff members in the three departmental units of the organization checked for the availability and location of the documents and relevant files. The information was then abstracted mainly from annual reports, annual review and reflection meeting reports, thematic dialogue meeting reports, Secretariat Team Meetings, Executive Board Minutes and Thematic Committee Annual Thematic Reports. A document log was used to identify, cluster and analyse issues using recommended thematic qualitative data analysis procedures.

For effective engagement between the researcher and the participants, the focus group meetings lasted for one hour and the English language was the medium of communication. The questions were open ended leaving room for probing emerging isues from the discussion and for the researcher to pose issues that were connected with the key research questions. The proceedings of the focus group discussions were digitally recorded and later transcribed by the researcher as these were primary data sources for the analysis. This data was then organized into excel templates with codes identifying the Focus Group, Participant Number and key themes for cross-referencing and cross triangulation purposes. In-depth interviews lasted between 30 to 40 minutes and these were also digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher and were later formatted into an excel template with assigned line numbers to be used as identifiers in the analysis.

4.5 The Initial Data Analysis

The initial data analysis was guided by recommended qualitative analytical procedures (Stake,2006, Cresswell, 2013) focusing mainly on thematic analysis based on the Braun and Clarke, model (2006). The steps involved familiarization with the data emerging from each cycle, generating initial codes which assigned codes to key issues and strategies emerging from the key methods of data collection, in-depth reading of each transcript for immersion into the data, reviewing of emerging themes which involved analysis and relating them to the main coding scheme in relation to the conceptual framework and then clearly defining and naming themes for final interpretation and analysis. The key components of the conceptual framework and the associated attributes provided a basis for coding and analysis throughout the action learning process. Through the creation of clearly documented data analysis matrices, a case database was created for triangulation, on-going analysis and final interpretation of the outcomes from the cycles of action, learning and sense-making. Some of the key verbatim statements were documented and used as evidence for the final reporting.

4.6 Descriptive Data Analysis

Drawing from the case study database, the transripts from the document review, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were critically reviewed and analyzed to identify key resilience building strategy themes and attributes needed for effective resilience building. The analysis also involved the two-

stage process of decoding first order constructs of participants perceptions into the second order constructs through correct interpretation of the meanings and value of these contributions to resilience building knowledge and practice as suggested in the research methodology literature (Blackie,2006).

4.7 Themes

A resilience building strategy is an intervention designed to help the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to a changing environment (Duchek, 2019, Anderson,2018). This study aligns with the perspective that organizational resilience building deals with how organizations maintain their daily organizing processes to enable them to continuously adapt and maintain viability in unpredictable environments (Tengblad & Oudhuis,2018, Linnenluecke,2017).

A process based conceptual framework was developed to help structure and direct the theoretical and practical understanding of the resilience building strategy phenomenon as it related to local non-profit human service organizations. The conceptual framework is rooted in the process-based resilience building processes of anticipation, coping and adaptation (Duchek, 2019,Andersin,2018) which are inter-linked and feed into each other's functioning. The key components of the conceptual framework and the associated attributes provided a basis for coding and analysis throughout the action learning process. The emerging findings presented in this Chapter show the complementarity of the qualitative tools used to gather, triangulate and analyze the data from document reviews, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews as they relate to the conceptual framework for consistent flow of the interpretation

and analysis. The following sections present the emerging themes, the nodal points of the strategy and the resilience building strategy from the action learning process conducted in the case organization. The themes are organized into three resilience building domains that underpin the conceptual framework of the study which are anticipation and preparedness planning, coping and recovery and adaptation and thriving. The summary of these themes is presented below followed by a deeper analysis of the findings:

Table 6: Emerging Themes

Resilience Building Domain	Themes
Anticipation and Preparedness Planning	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that create opportunities for emergent leaders to make quick decisions and lead actions that strengthen resilience building in the organization.
	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement flexible strategies that exploit their collective skills and knowledge base to prepare for any disruptions and threats in their operational environments.
	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement financial stability and diversification strategies to successfully respond to future risks and threats in their environment.
Coping and Recovery	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable the organization to fully restore its operations and surpass its previous level of performance.

	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to build capacity to reflect and learn from experience.
	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to bounce forward to capture new opportunities.
Adaptation and Agility	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that promote on-going learning and adaptation to avoid failure and collapse
	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to be agile to quickly detect, sense and seize opportunities to modify its direction if needed and to avoid collision.
	Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to overcome and absorb pressures within their environment and adapt so as to emerge stronger and more competitive.

The detailed thematic findings from the rich data generated from the different cycles of action, learning and sensemaking are presented below within the context of the case study organization.

4.8 Anticipation and Preparedness Planning

Theme 1: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that create opportunities for emergent leaders to make quick decisions and lead actions that strengthen resilience building in the organization.

At the formation stage of the case organization, a core team of four organizations formulated the vision, mission, goals and objectives towards creating a vibrant network for promoting citizen participation in human development in anticipation of sustained growth and development. This was emphasized in the Executive Board Members (EBMs) initial focus group discussion (EBM-01) as having impacted on the roles and behaviours of network members joining the Forum. The current Chairman of the case organization who was a member of the core group in its formative stages reflected on this issue when he said:

> ''…we had wanted to create a resilient organization from the very outset when we broadened the network from four core organizations to an eight-five membership-based organization to advocate for stronger citizen participation from the grassroots to the national level. We saw leadership of the network as a shared responsibility.''

Another ordinary EBM participant remarked in the EBM-01 meeting that despite the networked leadership approach envisaged at the beginning, core founder members remained in control of all the decision-making processes thereby undermining the participation of other member organizations. This was viewed as a weakness that made it difficult for the organization to forsee the social, economic and political crisis that resulted in the withdrawal of international funding support which inevitably affected operations of human service organizations. He observed that the crisis unfolded too quickly to be detected in the absence of adequate preparedness planning. He continued his argument on leadership preparedness in the context of a crisis by saying that:

''…leaders are born out of crisis situations as they create opportunities
for showcasing leadership skills and qualities on how to manage the sit-
uation and transition from a crisis prone situation to a crisis resilient situ-
ation.''

This argument recognized that lack of awareness and preparedness planning on key environmental challenges can have negative impacts on the operational resilience of the organization. Non-profit human service organizations lack effective mechanisms of monitoring external threats that can impact on them. In this case, the fall-out between Zimbabwe and the international community over human rights violations as a result of a chaotic land reform process in 1999-2000 was an unforeseen threat to the case organization Such lack of preparedness planning disrupted the functioning of the network-based organization. A member of the Technical Committee (TCM) in FG-TCM-01 meeting, highlighted the negative impacts of being hit by an unforeseeable crisis situation when she said:

''…..in the first 5 years of our membership in the Civic Forum, we were in
a great comfort zone hoping our happiness would last forever. We all
were thrown into disarray when we suddenly realized that most donors
had frozen their funding. We also noticed that avenues for growth were
frozen even for non-profit human service organizations as well. Some of
us seized the opportunity to engage in innovative decision-making in or-
der to weather the storm. In the end we learnt that if space for decentral-
ized decision-making is created, members can also lead initiatives that

ensure the resilience of the organization is maintained and protected

against sudden shocks that happened in 1999/2000.''

While acknowledging the lack of anticipation and preparedness planning, the crisis situation induced a sense of leadership responsibility and innovativeness by the members of the Technical Committee in responding to the situation. There was an element of agility in the thought processes of this team based on own sense-making skills and judgement. This raises the issue on the role of emergent leadership in reading and sensing danger in the environment by organizational members outside the management team. This discussion underscored the need for a collective approach to resilience building supported by robust information systems that can help a local human service organization to regularly sense, learn fast and detect trends in the geo-political environment. (Duchek,2019).

Having listened to the emerging discourse on role of leaders in crisis preparedness and response, a member of the EBM-01, noticed the blame for lack of preparedness planning and anticipation was being placed on the event and its rapidity and suddenness without the leaders of the organization not wanting to take any blame for it (blame-shifting). This prompted him to throw a divergent argument into the discussion when he said:

''…i am not happy that most of the blame is being put on the event and

not on the leadership response. Today is an opportunity to see things

differently for all of us. The events around us will always happen in their

own way and at their own speed. The important thing is to be able to see

and prepare for these events before they hit us so that we can make a collective response.''

This argument introduced a different dimension of crisis interpretation and response. It acknowledged that the organization is always prone to crisis within its environment of operation. What makes a difference is the capacity to collectively read that there is an impending crisis and its potential impact so that it can pre-emptied before impacting on the organization. Most members in the FG-EBM-01 concurred with this observation citing several leadership gaps in the organization to be able to anticipate and detect threats before the organization is hit. The gaps highlighted in the discussion related to lack of pro-active culture by network members to understand the operational environment as a network, failure by network members to think about their leadership role and self-awareness on challenges that need to be addressed. As the FG-EBM-01 began to build some consensus on leadership gaps in the organization, they lamented the lack of investment in building resilient leadership habits when members are recruited into the organization and the lack of focus on anticipatory leadership qualities for building a collective approach to resilience building in the organization. The importance of resilient leadership habits is highlighted in the literature (Bonilla, 2015, van Breda, 2016, Kimberlin *et al,* 2011).The organization Chairperson summarized the importance of a collective and networked leadership approach when he said:

''….in this conversation, we have now learnt that without a collective and networked leadership approach, there will be no collaborative decision-

making and planning for impending threats in our environment creating high levels of vulnerability for the organization.''

Such an approach would also ensure a collective sense-making process (Weick, 1993, Ledesma, 2014) about risks and threats in the environment leading to improved coordination in detecting challenges and in getting early warning signs about potential negative impacts of events.

When the issue of emergent and collective leadership approach was explored in the in-depth interviews (IDIs), it was seen as '*''highly critical but extremely challenging''* by some of the interviewees especially in a network based organizational context. Major issues were raised on challenges related to diversity of membership as a potential source of tension and opportunity for leaders to emerge to deal with threats in the organization. Eight out of twelve interviewees concurred with the view that diversity that is not properly nurtured and managed can cause serious tensions in the organization as emerging leaders start pulling in different directions to wrestle the organization to their advantage. Interviewee IDI-EBM-03 felt that developing leadership out of diversity is a challenging process as one has to be able to deal with competing ideas that are often hidden from each other. IDI-EBM-03 participant had this to say:

''People often think diversity in leadership is positive before they learn more about the challenges in real practice. Every leadership environment has its challenges. In an environment like ours, where individual members want to use the organizational platform to make themselves more visible and more important than others, the organization becomes fragile because of competing interests.''

Most of the interviewees concurred with the view that the organization should not assume that leadership diversity is a strength before they actually 'reflect on the nature and quality of their diversity'. It was also seen as important to build a collective understanding on how the organization can build on the positive diversity elements for accelerating the resilience building process in the organization. Ten out of twelve interviewees held the view that diversity is often cultivated as a positive value for sustained resilience building in the organization rather than just focusing on the observed diversity in the organization. All the four Secretariat Team Members (STM) saw leadership diversity as a potential source of resilience in the organization that needed to be tapped. IDI-STM-02, emphasized the need to apply leadership diversity to embrace every member of the organization who can lead an initiative that contributes to the long-term survival and resilience of the organization as this would show a commitment towards collective responsibility within the organization. The entire STM openly advocated for an all-inclusive leadership diversity approach arguing that such an approach creates a capacity for leadership creativity and innovation within the organization ensuring shared commitment towards resilience building of the organization. Participant IDI-STM-02 justified such an approach by lamenting that the case organization lacked shared leadership commitment when it was hit by massive funding withdrawal by donors into Zimbabwe with three quarters of members leaving the organization quietly. The participant observed that:

> *''.... when a member is committed, that is already an initial step into leadership and then you start becoming more accountable to yourself*

and other network members in the organization. With a certain level of commitment and accountability, a member cannot simply walk out as this tends to undermine resilience building efforts in the entire organization. But committed members will always take some calculated risks to explore the possibilities in the future despite challenging times.''

Another key finding from the in-depth interviews with STMs was the strong assertion that emergent leadership is nurtured from the top leadership through inculcating values of collaborative leadership, team work and good corporate governance. IDI-STM-01 participant emphasized this issue when he said:

''When we were hit by a multi-year crisis since 1999 until 2010, there was no decision-making guidance and support from the top leadership about a response strategy. Issues of timely communication, preparation and readiness assessments are critical in anticipative resilience building for a local non-profit organization. We need properly designed communication and information systems that ensure all members of the organization can come out guns blazing in the event of a crisis.''

The argument suggests that while emergent leaders are needed for quicker understanding of the environment and for timely activation of response systems, the case organization lacked robust information and communication systems that could have inspired all members of the organization to play a leadership role in the resilience building process of the organization. It was acknowledged in FG-EBM-TCM-STM combined meeting that lower level employees need good signals and communication to be part of the leadership response to

crisis situations. In other words, emergent leaders do not just emerge without cultivating the necessary conditions for such a positive response to occur without any delays. This suggests that certain attributes and capabilities need to be cultivated by organizational leaders consistent with findings in the literature (Lengnick-Hall, *et al,* 2011, Bonilla, 2015, van Breda, 2016).

The four TCMs who participated in the IDIs were emphatic that conflicts in leadership as a result of diversity may happen and hamper resilience building processes in the short-term but tensions also create a system of leadership renewal which helps the organization to build a fresh picture of what is happening in its environment. The IDI-TCM-03 participant said:

"I am aware of the potential conflicts and risks about having diverse leadership in an organization but I believe that without conflict and tension no leadership renewal can happen. Creative tension is necessary for critically exploring new avenues for the growth and long-term sustainability of the organization."

While this view sounds ambivalent, it suggests that it is tension that brings some change in the organization if managed creatively. As already observed from both the focus group discussions and the in-depth interviews, emergent leaders can play a vital role in ensuring quick decision making on resilience building strategies that strengthen anticipation and preparedness planning in a human service non-profit organization.This is consistent with the literature where agile and nimble decision-making processes in small to medium organizations have been found to contribute to better anticipation and prepatedness planning (Bonilla, 2015, Linnenlueckek, 2017, Duchek, 2019).

The overarching findings from this theme suggest that developing a resilience building strategy for implementation in a non-profit human service organization requires the organization to create 'a new culture of thinking and leadership' as well as expanded responsibilities for all organizational members to play some key roles in the anticipation and preparedness planning phase of resilience building strategy development. The EBM needs to be equipped to be able to support emerging leadership development to drive resilience thinking and action across the organization.

The key attributes that were linked with the emergent leadership interventions are anticipative leadership skills, decentralized decision-making/expanded responsibilities, collaborative decision-making and innovativeness. This is consistent with the literature on anticipative leadership and decision-making in small to medium non-profit organizations (Bonilla, 2015, van Breda, 2016, Duchek, 2019).

Theme 2: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement flexible strategies that exploit their collective skills and knowledge base to prepare for any disruptions and threats in their operational environments.

Ensuring a balanced knowledge and skills portfolio is one of the key strategies for fostering resilience building in non-profit human service organisations. The literature revealed that flexible strategies are critical in the management of risks and different resilience building scenarios through bringing together the key competences and capabilities to prepare for effective responses to potential internal and external environmental changes (Gunnigle,2013). Knowledge and

skills also tend to shape the resilient behaviours of management and employees in the organization (Klamer and Raisch, 2013, van Breda, 2016, Gibson & Tarrant, 2010). Knowledge and skills often reside in both management and employees and management is responsible for creating the most appropriate resilience behaviours in the organization to ensure effective implementation of resilience building strategies (Mitchel, *et al,* 2012).

In all the FGDs and IDIs conducted, the issue of having a quality resource base was emphasised especially in relation to ensuring development of innovative products and services, generation of multiple ideas for responding to crisis situations, resilience knowledge orientation of leadership and employees and understanding of resilience history and trends and the diversity of knowledge resources within the organization for internal learning and external influencing.

In the FG-EBM-01, it was emphasised that a balanced knowledge base in the organization was needed as a strategy for ensuring continuous development and testing of new products and services that are aligned to new trends and opportunities in the development market place. One member of this group said:

''We lack a balanced knowledge and skills base in our organization to be able to generate new products and services. The world is moving at a very fast pace in terms of new innovations and technologies that address the needs of clients. CFHD needs to review its knowledge base at the leadership and employee level to ensure its balanced''.

In the same group it was observed that out of a staff compliment of twelve, only three people have the capacity to conceptualize new proposals and ideas for future growth and these were mainly the Chief Technical Director, the Coordinator and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. A participant in the FG-STM-01 also observed that a team-based approach was needed to bridge the knowledge and skills base in the organization as the constant exchange of ideas will help to broaden the knowledge of other team members in the organization. A member from this group observed that:

> *''We are a very skewed team in terms of knowledge and skills. We have others with over twenty years of service in the organization and they know all the ups and downs that have happened and the strategies that have been adopted to bring us to where we are today. This group only constitutes 30% of the team. It is logical that the organization invests in team building processes that ensure knowledge sharing on a continuous basis. This will create a lot of momentum in our resilience building processes as a collective force.''*

There was a recognition that knowledge and skills reside in individuals and that those who stayed longer in the organization understood the resilience history of the organization and the strategies that were developed to deal with threats and respond to opportunities. Team based knowledge sharing strategies would ensure re-balancing of the knowledge base in the organization for co-sensing threats and opportunities in the internal and external environment. The FG-TCM-01 group predominantly focused on the need to generate multiple ideas

taking advantage of the diversity in the team and one of the members observed that:

> *''If there is diversity in the team, there is some richness that need to be exploited to expand the knowledge and skills base of the team. It means having multiple ways of analysing the threats and opportunities in the environment based on our strengths and weaknesses. In the end we are able to complement each other's knowledge and skills for a common purpose''*

The position adopted in the FG-TCM-01 group was that rather than looking at the diversity of knowledge and skills as a challenge, it would be more progressive to regard diversity as a resource for broadening the knowledge and skills base in the organization by creating opportunities for harnessing the skills for the growth and resilience building processes in the organization. In the combined FG-EBM-TCM-STM-01 meeting, the emphasis was on the need to strengthen multi-skilling of employees to create multiple competences through the guidance of a knowledge-oriented leadership and management team. It was observed that if the leadership were to prioritize knowledge-based resilience building processes in the organization, then there would be better containment of threats in the adverse operational environment. One of the participants in the IDI-TCM-01 meeting remarked in the interview that:

> *'' Multi-skilling and competence development are priorities that should be taken up by leadership and management for effective resilience building of the organization. Team members are in need of multiple skills as*

there are no resources for adding staff members without undermining the future resilience of the organization."

In the FG-EBM-TCM-STM meeting, the issues of multiple skills and capabilities were strongly raised as well as self-motivation and the development of strong information and knowledge management systems in the organization. The development of multi-skilling and competence development strategies were suggested as an effective resilience building pathway by nine out of the twelve respondents in the in-depth interviews which shows the criticality of such an intervention in the organization. In the critical reflective cycles of the action learning process, Cycles 4, 5 and 6, the need for a strong knowledge base and skilled human resource portfolio was emphasized for enactment of effective resilience processes in the organization,

A number of key attributes were identified as pertinent for strengthening the knowledge base and human resource capabilities in the organization. These included a proactive-learning culture, critical understanding of the prevailing situation at all times, strategic thinking-oriented, possession of resilience knowledge and awareness by organizational members, appetite for information and knowledge acquisition internally and externally by members and elastic decision-making and knowledge boundaries. An organization's knowledge base was considered critical in building the driving force for anticipation through enabling quick and knowledge based responses to challenging situations, timely environmental scans and intelligent mobilisation of resources required to match the scale of the threats facing the organization.

Theme 3: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement financial stability and diversification strategies to successfully respond to future risks and threats in their environment.

Achieving financial stability is an essential part of the resilience building process in a non-profit human service organization in order meet its operational requirements and service costs. The empirical literature review on non-profits showed that organizations with poor systems for market intelligence and forecasting revenue trends may not succeed in meeting their financial targets as they often miss out in capturing new funding opportunities (Duchek, 2014, Anderson, 2018). Generally, non-profit human service organizations in the environment of the case study, rely on external funding for over 90% of their budgets (Chikoto and Neely, 2013) which makes them vulnerable to any changes in financial resource inflows into their systems. The issue of financial resources mobilisation and diversification came up in all the initial focus group discussions involving EBMs, TCMs and STMs and in the in-depth interviews. This highlights the importance of financial resources in the resilience building process at the organizational level.

The review of literature highlighted that non-profit human service organizations that relied on diverse income streams were more likely to survive a crisis than those with limited sources of income (Dey, 2011, Bonilla,2015). Several studies on non-profit human service organizations have shown that dependency on own funding does not make the organization financially resilient and stable as non-profits often get service demands that far exceeds their financial capacity due to massive decline in public funding for human

services in fragile situations (Bonilla,2015, Kimberlin et al.,2011). The re-source dependency theory that underpin the financial planning processes of most non-profit human service organizations suggest that dependency on limited revenue sources creates financial instability which threaten any resilience building initiatives in the organization (Drees and Heugens, 2013).

The documentary reviews conducted on a five-year cohort basis indicated that there were consistent efforts to strengthen financial stability and ensure diversification in the organization as shown in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Financial Mobilization Trends in the Case Organization

Years of Operation	Donors Secured	Own resource contributions	Proposals in search of new revenue	Resilience Potential/Data Sources
1995 – 2000	2	Yes	6	Medium
2001 – 2005	0	Yes	9	Low
2006 – 2010	1	No	12	Low
2011 – 2015	4	No	15	Medium
2016 – 2020	7	No	25	High

Source: CFHD Resource Mobilization Files

From the documents reviewed, three sources of revenue were projected comprising mainly membership fees, international donors and the private sector, especially building society banks in the financing of infrastructure initiatives. In the first five years, it seemed the plan was going according to schedule. Initiation funds for the organization were secured from HIVOS, an international Dutch organization, involved in human development. It provided a five-year grant for organization development and programme initiation

from 1996 to 2000. Within the same period, a short-term funding was secured from FOS Belgium to cover the cost of training materials for the organization's outreach services. Those became the two organizations that had contracts with the organization and the budget averaged about US$80,000 per year in the first five years. The FOS-Belgium funding was just one-off. No funding was secured from the Building Society to fund infrastructure development programmes.

Only four proposals were developed and presented to donors in the first five years as the focus was more on the establishment of the organization and its network structures across the country. A senior Secretariat Team Member (STM) who was a member from the start of the organization, clarified the financial mobilization strategy of the organization when he said:

''.....when the organization was formed, we did not embark on an aggressive fundraising programme because we wanted to set up the network so that we could build accountable and transparency systems as well as a credible organization to be able to secure international funding. From 1995 to 2000, we depended mainly on membership fees and donors we had partnered with in developing the idea of establishing the network to address the lack of dialogue and citizen participation in housing service delivery and infrastructure development.''

By the end of the five years, the organization had exhausted all its resources and members were expecting to scale up the work through securing more funding. Unfortunately, the period 2001-2005, marked the height of a social, economic and political crisis triggered by the withdrawal of donors from Zimbabwe

after disagreeing with the government on protection of fundamental human rights in its land reform programme. Consequently, no donor resources were secured in the entire five-year period, and the situation almost forced the collapse of the organization. Documents show that 80% of the membership was lost during this period alone because there was loss of hope in terms of coping and recovery. Fortunately, the Coordinator of the Forum did not resign, and became more of a volunteer worker surviving on small consultancies from some international NGOs. In the FG-EBM-01, a senior Board member who was a founder member of the organization had this to say:

"The period from 2001 to 2005 was the most devastating period for the Forum in terms of its financial resilience. We were literally broke and could not even convene meetings for the members to converge and share any new thoughts and ideas about how to overcome the situation. We lost all our key members who just thought the organization was dead. Without financial resources nothing could be planned and executed, simple."

Financial resources and reserves are critical for the functioning of a non-profit human service organization (Bonilla,2015). The FG-TCM-01 pointed out that due to resource scarcity during the second five year period of the Forum existence, Technical Committees were temporarily disbanded because they depended on the programmes being implemented and all members became redundant. The Technical Committee Members argued that programmes tend to give a non-profit organization a lot of visibility, and failure to show that visibility can negatively affect prospects for future funding.

Around 2005, about 50% of the Board members had resigned including the Chairperson and the Treasurer creating an end game scenario for the organization. An Interim Executive Board Committee was set up to initiate financial recovery strategies for the organization for the period 2006-2010. The Coordinator reflected on this emergency transition process in the network:

''…..The end of 2005 was the saddest day in my organizational life within the Forum as I observed general members and Board members leaving the organization. I thought the organization had now reached an end and did not anticipate anything new could be done in the prevailing environment. When the new Board came in, they assured me that the organization would develop new strategies for recovering and coping with the situation.''

The new Interim Board started by insisting on an inclusive strategic planning process, that saw the issue of financial stabilization and diversification as well forging strategic partnerships and alliances to leverage resources into the organization. The changes that took place were noticed by one of the members in the FG-TCM-01 session when he said:

''…..within the period 2006 to 2010, we started noticing a new visioning process as we participated in scanning the environment, understanding the new funding trends and positioning the organization in the new environment. We just used to write proposals without understanding what was happening in the environment. We realized that it is better to work with strategic partners and consortiums than work as a single organiza-

tion. We also realized we had to rebrand the organization to be able to

diversify our funding base which had gone down to zero.''

The need for financial stability and diversification was mentioned by all the twelve respondents in the in-depth interviews underlying its importance in resilience building processes in the organization. An IDI-EBM-02 participant acknowledged the insights generated in the period 2011-2018, in ensuring rapid financial recovery demonstrating the link between understanding environmental and funding trends through investment in market intelligence. She had this to say:

''…..we live in a fast changing world, and it is important for the organiza-

tion to invest in scanning the environment and in reading what others are

doing in order to plan for anticipated risks and down turns in the econ-

omy. This should be our way of doing business in the future.''

As the organization looks into the future, the main emphasis was placed on strengthening strategies for reducing dependence on external resources, accelerating donor diversification, ensuring portfolio diversification, engaging in collaborative funding arrangements and consortiums, engaging in training and consulting services, building pro-active fundraising skills and knowledge in the team, mapping current and new donors to be able to follow the money and adopting an aggressive fundraising approach.

There were varied levels of emphasis with each proposed strategy for the future. EBMs emphasised reducing the dependence on external donor funding and accelerating diversification of new donors which may not break the

dependency situation of the organization. TCMs wanted to see more product diversification, collaborative fund-raising and consortiums as avenues for scaling-up existing practices. STMs also wanted to see product diversification and new revenue streams through training and consultancy services and the development of fundraising skills for staff. All the members wanted to see the broadening of fundraising skills and investment in market intelligence for ensuring financial security and stabilisation of the organization.

4.9 Coping and Recovery

Theme 4: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to fully restore operations and exceed previous levels of performance.

When organizations are exposed to a crisis situation, they should have the capacity to respond in a resilient way and develop solutions that enable them to overcome the challenges without damaging the system (Hamel and Vaelinkangas, 2003, Liminios et al. 2014). The literature revealed that social networking and shared visioning can provide an effective avenue for tapping into relational reserves and social capital resources that enable a resilient response and successful recovery (Lengnick-Hall & Beck, 2009, McGuinness & Johnson, 2014, Weick, 1993, Gittel, 1993). The social networks and resources help in ensuring better coordination and concentration of mental resources around bottlenecks and challenges which can result in respectful interactions by organizational members and an extra-ordinary unity of purpose and sense of

responsibility by different actors within the organization (Weick, 1993, Sawalha, 2015). The shared sense of awareness and responsibility on the need to take recovery and protective measures can trigger the development of appropriate coping capabilities that are needed for effective recovery from crisis situations (Duchek, 2019).

Within the case organization, the document review, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews indicate that several crisis response meetings were held to map out strategies for responding to the crisis situation. Some of the key strategies for coping and recovery discussed across all the FGDs were strengthening the multi-skilling of staff to be able to be innovative, creating new products and services building on emerging opportunities in the crisis, identifying new funding sources and building strategic networks and partnerships. In the FG-EBM-01 group, it was emphasized that recovery would require multi-skilling and participation of all organizational members so as to accelerate levels of performance and manage any disruptive effects of the crisis. A member in the group argued that:

> *''A crisis situation presents a good opportunity to learn from each other's knowledge and skills so as to confront the challenges with better coordination and wisdom. We cannot recover if we don't act with unity of purpose and a shared vision.''*

A participant from the FG-STM-01 observed that the first few steps of recovery response are critical for the success of subsequent steps which implied the need for concentration of mental and cognitive processes to conceptualize novel solutions to the challenges and threats facing the organization. The key

observation was that ''*if we are not careful in what we plan to do first, we will plan to fail*''. This reflected some level of consciousness of past recovery knowledge and experience from some of the organizational members. Another member in the same STM group emphasised the need for learning from other similar networks on what first steps could be crucial for making a quick recovery. Eight out of the twelve participants in the in-depth interviews emphasised the need for intelligence gathering on practical recovery strategies from crisis situations.

In the combined FG-EBM-TCM-STM meeting, several strategies for action were agreed for ensuring quick recovery from set-backs. These included:

- Forging strategic partnerships with International NGOs for exposure to best practices as they tended to have deeper pockets and broad resource networks, extensive knowledge and experience.

- Establishing new networks to bring new ideas which can rejuvenate the organization.

- Ensuring continuous rebranding of products and services to restore the competitive edge of the organization.

- Building on the track record and good historical performance of the organization to attract new funding and partners.

- Establishing long-term partnerships with regional and global organizations to ensure revenue continuity.

With regard to formation of partnerships with international NGOs a long-term serving member in the EBM group noted:

''*When our financial resources dried up in the early 2000, it was a good strategy to partner with International agencies such as Practical Action,*

as they were able to absorb some of our bed rock costs such as rentals and communication costs which helped us to maintain our visibility and presence in the development market place. The partnership created some buffering that prevented us from collapsing. Such partnerships need to be strengthened in the future as part of our resilience building strategy.''

The importance of forging international partnerships was also described as a way of creating a breathing space which gives an organization the holding space for suspending the routine operations while recovering from shocks and stresses. Creating a breathing space allows the organization to reflect on emerging opportunities for it to bounce back and build back better even in the midst of a crisis. In this case the remaining core members of the case organization were sheltered by Practical Action, an international development organization. While working in such a purposive partnership, they were exposed to proper business planning techniques, development and marketing of proposals to international donors and how to recover from setbacks. This was achieved through direct mentoring and co-partnering in planning and implementation of projects. An Executive Board Member, summarized the results achieved from the partnership with Practical Action in the FG-ECB-01 meeting, an international organization:

''As many organizations of our size and nature were being swept underground by the social, economic and political crisis in the country, we remained hanging onto a cliff with hope and optimism while creating new avenues for coping and recovery. We learnt that this partnership helped

us to regroup and recommit ourselves to the mission, goals and values

of the organization. We came up with brilliant ideas and proposals that

attracted funding from multi-lateral agencies like European Union and

the United States Agency for International Development which gave us a

new lease of life''.

The partnership that was created with the international NGO shows that it is possible for organizations affected by crisis to develop recovery plans and implement interventions that can lead to recovery from multiple setbacks and shocks. Such buffering strategies can absorb the negative consequences of a crisis (Pal *et al,* 2014). Another valuable lesson from this buffering strategy is that retaining core employees in a crisis helped in ensuring there was continued functioning of some parts of the Secretariat when the outreach activities were almost impossible. For organizations to recover, they would need to retain some form of functionality to be able to translate the shock being faced into opportunities. This observation is also consistent with literature (Linnenluecke and Griffiths, 2010).

With regard to new networks, it was observed that it would be prudent to focus efforts in working with organic networks of the organization who understood what the organization stands for and can be relied upon. A senior member of the STM said:

''We have now learnt a lot about networks that join us to milk us of our

resources and ideas and when a crisis comes, they just disappear. As

we develop our resilience building strategy for the future, we need to fo-

cus on reliable networks who really understand where we are coming

from and where we are going and can stand with us in good and bad times."

Networks are supposed to allow members to tape into each other strengths in response to adverse events with greater insights and collective power (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003) and can improve quality of coordination and implementation of recovery plans (Gittel, 2008). They also enable creation of novel and innovative solutions in a crisis through information sharing, resource exchanges and more effective collaboration (Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2009). An area of concern was how the products and services of the organization had remained narrowly focused in a fast-changing world as it was limiting the networking drive in the organization. A member of the TCM in the FG-EBM-TCM-STM-01 meeting observed that:

"In crisis situations we would need to provide a range of products and services to diversified range of clients to survive and to avoid failure and collapse. We need to abandon the traditional approach where we wait for people to demand services but we need to start broadening the range of services and even charge a fee for some of the services for the sake of our recovery".

This issue of continuous rebranding of products and services also links with the earlier suggestions on broadening the knowledge base of the organization so that it acquires some creative and imaginative capabilities to be able to think outside the box. As observed in the literature, the knowledge base sometimes acts as a mediator between anticipation, coping and adaptative processes

(Gressgard and Hansen, 2015). This process tends to impact on cognitive abilities in the organization to develop creative products and services for the organization to recover rapidly and to be able to exceed normal performance in some cases. One of the STM participants in the FG-EBM-TCM-STM meeting remarked that:

> *''We need to continuously interrogate the relevance of products and services during our annual review processes. Given the frequent crisis situations we are encountering; we would need to reduce the review period to a quarter. This places a burden on us as the Secretariat to continuously gather new knowledge in the market place about new possibilities to inform quick decision-making on our products and services.''*

Another STM participant observed that for the new products and services to be taken seriously in the development market place, there was need to build on strong track record and reputation to be able to unlock new resource transactions in the marketplace. The participant said:

> *''These days organizations need to be on the cutting edge of service delivery and need to have a proven track record of who they are, what they do and what they offer best. A resilience building strategy that fails to showcase the unique track record of the organization in providing extraordinary service delivery cannot be expected to succeed in this environment.''*

Ayling (2009) observed that organizations need to identify the multiple service delivery channels that are at their disposal in a crisis situation as they should

not behave like monolithic systems. There should be other sub-systems at local level that can help in the implementation and coordination process. This means the identification of relevant complementary actors can help the acceleration of service delivery especially to difficult to reach communities thereby reducing delivery costs to a bare minimum allowing the organization to recover quickly from setbacks in the environment. To cope with the demands of multiple service delivery mechanisms, the organization should be willing and committed to manage multiple resource transactions with different actors until its capacity and functioning is fully restored and even exceeded. This suggestion is consistent with literature (Griffin, 2002, Hope and Sarmiento, 2016).

Establishment of regional and global partnerships during a crisis was seen as challenging for a local non-profit human service organization. But all the EBM, TCM and STM participants agreed that if the knowledge base of the organization is secured and the track record is in place, it is important to focus on 'low hanging fruits' from the potential regional and global organizations especially to support the recovery process towards fulfilling the mission, goals and objectives of the organization. An EBM participant in the FG-EBM-TCM-STM meeting said:

> *"While regional and global partnerships are difficult to harness results where the social, economic and political image of the country is battered, it would be worthwhile to have a strategy in place for immediate response to emerging opportunities especially around low-hanging fruits that are within our reach. We cannot give up too easily as we will be overtaken by our competitors."*

The issue of recovering while trying to safeguard the competitive edge of the organization was seen by participants in the reflective FGD-05 meeting as the most difficult one although the most desirable. The fear of being overtaken by others while focusing on recovery was seen as real. One FG-05-EBM-01 participant noted that:

'' Recovery efforts are critical but at the same time we need to anticipate any potential disruptions in the future and we need to identify coping and adaptation strategies as we are learning from our recovery efforts.''

The main issue from the discussion that emerged was that, even when the organization is in a recovery mode, it cannot stop to think about anticipation and adaptation as that is a continuum that provide the organization with a platform to identify the most appropriate measure(s) for resilience building that need to be applied depending on the situation. This implies that even when the organization is in an anticipation mode, it can concurrently consider coping and adaptation mechanisms that are needed for implementation in the organization. This suggests that the processes of anticipation, coping and adaptation overlap with each other in the resilience building process of an organization.

Theme 5: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to evolve, reflect and learn from innovative responses for effective coping and recovery.

The literature suggests that non-profit organizations take their time to evolve into fully functional organizations (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011). They gradually build

their capabilities over their lifecycle sometimes unaware of some of the risks and threats affecting their potential growth. As they grow their assets and resilience capabilities, this tends to affect their coping and response behaviours and strategies in crisis situations (Ho,*et al,* 2014, Vivian and Hormann,2015). A documentary review of the case organization showed that it evolved and experienced different crisis situations in its twenty-five year journey. There were negative and positive experiences in the journey with some potential impacts on its recovery. The Chairperson of the case organization, who was part of the founders team observed that:

> ''*We have been evolving as an organization from a project to an organizational network advocating for effective mainstreaming of human centred approaches for sustainable development. We have evolved from the stage when we were a bridge in understanding issues affecting citizen participation (1995-2000) to facilitating integrated urban development (2000-2005) to working on supply and demand side for improved governance and social accountability to the stage where we are influencing policy and practice from local to national and regional levels''.*

The literature review revealed that for organizations to map out effective recovery strategies they have to accept reality about their current status and positioning as well as their current strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities (Ho, *et al,* 2014, Robb, 2000). One of the STM participants in the reflective FGD-05 meeting noted that each phase the organization passed had its unique lessons and experiences that can be used for effective coping and recovery as each phase is essentially contributing to the maintenance and credibility of the

continuum from anticipation to adaptation. If the organization were to be allowed to evolve gradually, it would be able to capture new strategic opportunities for growth and eventually gain some visibility. There were some mixed views in the reflective FG-05 meeting about whether a gradual evolvement process would be better than a faster and more rapid one so as to avoid losing opportunities. 60% of the participants felt that a gradual evolvability model was better rather a rapid one.

The gradual process creates time for learning and for internalizing the learnings into the system (Kimberlin et al 2011). The remaining 40% argued that a slow process would miss opportunities that come and go fast in a crisis situation. The final consensus was that it was better to have a two-pronged approach where the organization could move fast where there were opportunities to be exploited and then come down to its normal pace to reflect and re-energize. Such an approach focuses on creating breathing space while strategically enhabling the organization to reflect and learn from positive and negative experiences. One of the key challenges in maintaining a fast-paced momentum was the issue of low levels of assets and infrastructure in the organization. The literature suggested that assets of an organization that contribute to resilience building are broad and include knowledge, social capital, networks and material resources (Mastern and Reed, 2002). These assets are essential in sustaining the pace of change in the organization. The Coordinator of the STM gave his reflections on the role of assets in the recovery and resilience building process:

> *"As a result of the prolonged social and economic process that affected our funding, our asset base has been shrinking and yet assets and infrastructure are the foundation for the growth of the organization."*

Despite the challenges encountered by the organization, most of the participants in the reflective FG-05 meeting pointed out the need to learn from the historical insights of the organization on the most efficient recovery strategies for the organization. A participant from the TCM in the same meeting observed that:

> *"Nothing can be greater than the sum of us all working together to learn from all the experiences that have been shared through our conversations and turn these into opportunities for the future."*

There was a recognition that several ideas for bouncing back had been shared during the lifecycle of the organization but most of these have not been processed into opportunities. The participants agreed to convene several internal learning platforms to explore future possibilities. It was also emphasised that this required self-less commitment, shared sense of purpose, team work and robust information systems to feed into the learning platforms.

Finally on evidence based recovery, it was recommended that the organization needed to strengthen its monitoring, learning and evaluation systems to move towards the development of a learning organization. One of the EBM participants in the FG-05 meeting observed that:

> *"Our coping and recovery strategies should recognize that the world is moving towards becoming a knowledge economy. This means for organ-*

izations to recover from stresses, it must strive to be knowledge based and ensure a knowledge-based leadership and management system that has orientation towards innovation-based solutions to problems so that it becomes a new norm in the organization."

Some of the key attributes underpinning coping and response behaviour were cited as resilience orientation by all members of staff, multi-skilling and competence development at all levels, strong performance measurement and accountability systems, non-rigid and flexible management, rigorous reporting and information management systems and emergency response management skills and knowledge. Discussions in the reflective FGD-05, showed that the case organization had been creating opportunities for peer-to-peer multi-skilling and competence development through a flexible management system. However, there were some fundamental flaws in having more robust and reliable information systems as well as emergency response competences. An STM participant in the same FG-05 meeting had this to say regarding attributes for ensuring effective coping, recovery and bouncing back:

"So far, we have demonstrated that we are a strong multi-skilled and resilience aware team as we work together sharing knowledge and skills on how to remain resilient to threats. However, we need to work hard to develop reliable and efficient information systems as well as our emergency response skills."

Theme 6: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to bounce forward to capture new opportunities.

The literature and conceptual framework suggests that an organization with forward thinking leadership can build on its assets, risk knowledge and experience and innovative approaches to bounce forward from crisis situations (Lengnick-Hall and Beck,2009, MacCann,2004). Lengnick-Hall and Beck (2009) have emphasised the role played by existing assets and human competences in the organization to develop rapid, nimble and timely interventions in riding over threats and disruptions. McCann (2004) emphasised the need for organizations to use their resilience capacities and competences to effectively prepare for changing conditions for the rapid restoration of operations and to use the experience and knowledge gained to design flexible strategies for capturing new opportunities based on understanding of new realities. To be able to drive all the resilience capabilities in the organization towards the future, the leadership need to focus on strengthening the absorptive attributes of the organization to deal with any disruptive and surprising situations (Lee *et al,* 2006, Valikangas, 2003). The bouncing forward possibilities tend to be focused on visionary leadership that is capable of pro-active alignment of systems, re-invention of business models, and human resource systems before, during and after the crisis (Hope and Sarmiento, 2016, Bunard and Bhamra, 2011).

In the case organization, the leadership that existed when the crisis started in 2000 was simply frozen by the crisis and 80% of them stepped out of the organization. A new visionary leadership team which came in 10 years after the crisis had started was committed to work within a new visioning framework

for inclusion of all members for change and transformation. The new vision entailed a rebranding and change of name for the organization, a re-alignment of the operating business model and a new human resource system that emphasised competences and decentralized responsibilities and decision-making. This new approach brought some evident changes that enabled the organization to bounce forward in a significant way. Future resilience building processes should embrace the lessons and experiences generated in this process of change. In the final reflective FGD (FG-06), the Chairperson of the case organization said:

> *''When we came in as a new Board, there was no flicker of hope and optimism in the organization and we decided to re-engineer all the functional aspects of the organization with the hope of seeing positive change and adjustments. We saw the problem that had caused inertia in the organization as a leadership failure.''*

In the ensuing discussions, the focus was on examining the role of leadership in sharing future resilience strategies of the organization. One of the participants in the FG-EBM-03 meeting remarked that:

> *'' We now need a vision that ensures our resource mobilization strategies go beyond our traditional local funders as getting resources from international funders will ensure we bounce forward. If we remain focused on local funding partnerships, we will stay where we are for decades.''*

In the reflective discussion, a number of action ideas and proposals for rapid recovery and bouncing forward were suggested for the future. These focused

on competitive funding proposals, quality and reliable networks, innovative marketing, flexible working systems and dynamic information management systems.

It was emphasized that the main focus should be ensuring that the organization bounces forward to capture new opportunities in a highly contested and competitive environment. A senior STM participant in the final reflective learning FG-07 meeting said:

> *''If we develop high quality proposals that meet international standards, we will be able to compete with international NGOs which are currently taking most of the money from international donors. These tend to partner with local NGOs without caring about their long-term needs and priorities''.*

The conclusion from the discussion on development of high-quality proposals was that it was better to partner and learn from the international organizations while at the same time developing independent and competitive quality proposals for submission to international donors. The competitive proposal development skills could also be enhanced through active participation in knowledge networks to deepen staff understanding of key trends in the market place. A senior member in the Secretariat remarked that:

> *''It is not adequate to have quality proposals if they are not backed with a sound knowledge base of the technical issues and programme development we are building for the future as an organization. This knowledge should inform the types and quality of proposals we can develop.''*

The discussions on quality proposals and expanding in-house knowledge on technical issues and areas of focus for the organization created a tense dialogue on the extent to which both the leadership and employees could claim to be resilient-oriented to be able to drive the resilience building processes in the organization. One of the EBMs remarked during these reflections that:

''It is good for us to talk about quality proposals and expanded knowledge systems but the key question is how resilient are we as leaders and active participants in this process. I think we need a resilience-oriented team to facilitate this whole process of change for the organization.''

The conclusion on this issue was that there was need for continuous resilience benchmarking and analysis for leaders, employees and all systems that support resilience building processes in the organization to assess how the organization is bouncing back and/or forward and how it is processing new opportunities through the leadership, employees and institutionalized systems of the organization. As observed in the literature, organizational resilience building requires resilient leadership, workforce and systems (van Breda, 2016)

To achieve success in bouncing forward, there are a number of attributes that are implied in the priorities from the reflective focus group discussions. These include strategic marketing skills, value-for-money orientation, flexible working systems, explorative-driven mindset and dynamic information systems within the organization. It has been observed that some non-profit human service organizations that want to compete with international NGOs are embarking on vigorous fundraising and on-line marketing campaigns on the products and

services that they offer to attract attention of funding agencies (Bonilla,2015). Again, the resource dependency syndrome pushes local non-profit organizations in the direction of innovative fundraising if they are to compete for resources with the powerful and well connected international NGOs. Flexible working systems give more power to employees to identify opportunities for the organization to bounce forward as there are immediate rewards once the organization is receiving more support and funding. Finally, a vibrant information management system is critical for continuous motivation, learning and understanding of the changes taking place in the organization. A TCM participant in the final reflective learning (FG-07) commented about the bouncing forward phenomenon in a networked based organization:

> *''When positive change is coming, we all can feel and smell it because it will be within our touching distance – the bouncing forward effects are more exciting for all members of the organization. This has been happening slowly in the organization with more resources and contracts coming into the organization after the turn-around strategy was launched.''*

4.10 Adaptation and Thriving

Theme 7: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that promote on-going learning and adaptation to avoid failure and collapse

The review of non-profit literature revealed that local non-profit human service organizations depend on external resources and have to learn and adapt quickly to avoid failure and collapse especially in fragile social, economic and political systems (Bonilla, 2015, van Breda, 2016, Weick, 1993, Wilson, 2016). Such organisations have to adopt a persistent attitude and drive towards engagement, learning and adaptation with support of their leaders in a changing environment (Ledesma, 2014). Without a focus on learning, organizations may rely on traditional approaches that may lead to increased stress and anxiety by members of the organization leading to withdrawal of commitment to the resilience building process (Wilson, 2016). Leaders have to be knowledgeable together with their employees for positive adaptive behaviours to be generated across the whole organization.

The case organization shows that when the social, economic and political crisis was ravaging in the early 2000, there was total unpreparedness and disillusionment by the members and 80% of the members left the organization and this almost led to the collapse of the organization. The organization was young and the crisis tended to be perceived negatively and as a result positive adaptive behaviours were not generated until after change of leadership ten years after the start of the crisis. One of the long-standing EBM participants in the reflective FG-06 meeting remarked that:

> *''Our slow response to the crisis has made us learn a lot from experience. When we were hit by the crisis in 2000 most members thought it was a temporary setback and jumped out hoping to come back when things have normalized. We now know that what the crisis has generated is the 'new normal' and we have to continue learning and adapting.''*

As a result of the withdrawal of most members of the organization, a core team remained. It was surprising to see the core team seeking new ways of working together in the changing context and developing several coping and adaptation strategies such as collaborative working with supportive international NGOs and providing short-term training and consultancy services. A new attitude of wisdom was just coming into the team organically. Pati and Kumar (2010) observed that resilient building processes thrive better in environments that are flexible, adaptive and organically structured as they create room for learning processes and mutual interactive discourse with different relevant actors (Lengnick-Hall *et al,* 2011).

Due to the massive observations that were made in the reflective FG-06 meeting about limited learning and adaptation processes in the context of a long-term social, economic and political crisis, a member of the EBM said:

''We have to promote adaptive learning in all our work if we are to grow in the future and improve our practices in human development. This means we need to know and understand what is really happening around us and need to be more open to information and knowledge and all of us need to be learning-oriented to be successful''.

The issues on learning to map out new possibilities and to learn and listen from every member of the organisation were highlighted in the literature as key in anticipative resilience building processes in an organization (Wind and Crook, 2006, Sheffi, 2005). All the participants in the reflective FG-06 meeting con-

cluded that a continuous learning and adaptation process would be needed as part of the organization's resilience building strategy in the future. The literature has revealed that such a deep learning process can lead to rapid shifts of mind sets and high levels of mental preparedness to be innovative and to take the necessary risks for the growth of the organization (Coutu, 2002).

In the final reflective and learning FG-07 meeting, an STM member observed the need for widening the learning process through collaboration and network-based learning as the case organization is a network-based organization. He argued that both vertical and horizontal learning is critical for shared decision-making on the values and growth trajectories of the organization. He observed that:

> *''Resilience building requires an alignment of all these vertical and horizontal learning and structural processes within the organization to build a sense of shared purpose and future.''*

In the literature, the issues of aligning vertical and networked decision - making structures and systems was highlighted by Sheffi (2005) who argued that the simultaneous alignment of processes and structures for decision-making ensures effective adaptation to any changes that happen in the environment. The emerging conclusion from the discussions on the learning and adaptation processes emphasised the need to emerge in a challenging environment more knowledgeable and able to compete. The focus in the resilience building strategy should be on knowledgeable and resilient-oriented leadership and workforce. However, the practical challenges of promoting learning and adaptation

were highlighted in the concluding remarks by the STM coordinator when he said:

> *"Learning for adaptation sounds a very noble idea. However, there are several roadblocks we will encounter which include our everyday busy schedules, multiple demands of donors on our time, limited resources and the challenges of harnessing knowledge in an environment of competition. We all need to work hard to create a learning culture in our organization and within our network structures."*

The key attributes discussed in the reflective FG-06 meeting for ensuring ongoing learning and adaptation included new technology orientation, social marketing skills, self-drive mind-set by all members of the organization, flexible working culture, mental preparedness to take risks, listening skills and engagement and communication-oriented. These coincide with attributes that were highlighted in the literature (Sheffi, 2005, Coutu, 2002, Wind and Crook, 2006, Kimberlin, 2011, Bonilla, 2015).

Theme 8: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to be agile to quickly detect, sense and seize opportunities and to change direction if needed.

The review of literature on resilience building strategies and their implementation showed that small to medium non-profit human service organizations experience several challenges in resource mobilization owing to their dependency

on external donor funding. However, several scholars have highlighted their comparative advantages. Bonilla (2015) highlighted their use of informal systems and flexible structures and systems as a strategic strength as they are able to make quick decisions and to respond swiftly to threatening situations unlike bureaucratic organizations which need to undertake several processes and procedures before a decision is made. Similar strengths have been highlighted by other researchers such as Lengnick-Hall, *et al,* 2011, Fiskel, 2003) with emphasis on their strategic agility which implies organizations go beyond mere restoration to be innovative and identify new opportunities and capabilities for their transformation. The action learning process showed that:

- The development of a competent and knowledgeable human resource base is critical for strengthening resilience building in the organization and this is consistent with the literature (Haimes, 2012, Lengnick-Hall *et al,* 2011, Bonilla, 2015).

- Leadership, people and knowledge capabilities should be integrated and mutually-supportive for effectiveness and agility of the organization during crisis and non-crisis situations. This is consistent with literature (Gibson and Tarrant, 2010)

- There is need to strengthen the understanding of risks by all members of the organization to be able to prepare, cope and respond to threats in the environment. This finding is consistent with literature (Gunnigle, 2013)

- Resilience building requires a cultural change in terms of quick turnaround time, sensitivity to environmental changes (internal and external) and resilient-oriented behaviours and this has also been highlighted in

the literature (Klamer and Raisch, 2013, Mitchel *et al,* 2012, van Breda, 2016).

In the reflective resilience strategy development FG-06 meeting, an EBM participant highlighted the importance of a competent human resource base in ensuring the organization is agile in responding to new opportunities. He observed that:

''Our human resource base is still in the process of re-building in terms of the competences we need to respond to new opportunities. If our competences are weak as a team, we will not be able to develop quality proposals for funding and yet we depend on external funding for all our operations.''

The discussion concluded that the human resource base was still very narrow and hence all the levels needed to work closely as a team and this required better coordination by the STM. There was also need for flexible team working arrangements within agreed flexible standards to maintain a cohesive team structure. The in-depth interview responses from the participants emphasised the need for developing shared values, quality standards and collaborative working norms across the different levels of the organization being mindful to avoid any form of bureaucracy.

An issue of concern raised by a TCM participant in the relective FG-06 was lack of unity of purpose between leadership, technical advisers and staff members to be able to take advantage of the knowledge resources that exist in the organization. The TCM participant noted:

''I am concerned about the lack of unity of purpose among the key functional units of the organization. For example, when the organization was hit by the social and economic crisis, everyone started pulling in their own direction and that affected our ability to move with speed to contain the impacts of the crisis. Unity of purpose should be a key ingredient of our resilience building strategy going forward''.

This observation is consistent with observations in the literature. For example, Bonilla (2015) noted that small to medium organizations do not have formal consultation mechanisms and when there are crisis-threatening situations, leaders are expected to tip the organization in the direction of resilience. But the experience in the case organization was that the leaders drifted away leaving a huge vacuum which was filled by the Secretariat. Fortunately, this dynamic led to the onboarding of committed and visionary leadership. Hence the lack of integration of leadership, staff and the knowledge capabilities of the organization is a constant worry for local non-profit human service organizations and this can negatively affect their capacity to move with speed to detect, sense and capture new opportunities that would ensure enhanced anticipatory resilience building processes. It was also noted that the lack of integration of existing capabilities within the organization has impacted negatively on the shared understanding of risks that face the organization with potential to affect its ability to anticipate, cope and adapt to changing situations. One of the STM members in the reflective thematic FG-06 meeting noted that:

''We do not seem to prioritise issues of risk knowledge and communication within the organization because of so many other challenges for the

survival of the team which is always prioritized as the biggest risk in a small organization. We all need to understand the nature of risks that can potentially harm our operations if we are going to sense danger and timeously respond.''

The multiple concerns on the agility of the organization shows that there are several considerations needed for an organization to respond with speed in avoiding crisis situations and capturing new opportunities. Some of the attributes will take time to nurture within the organization but the agility of the leadership and staff is critical. In the final mapping of the resilience building strategy the issue of knowledge and resilient based leadership and workforce was regarded as one of the key pillars of a four-pronged strategy for implementation in the organization.

Theme 9: Non-profit human service organizations develop and implement strategies that enable them to overcome and absorb pressures within their environment and adapt to emerge stronger and more competitive

The literature revealed that it is normal for organizations to succumb to pressures brought to bear on by environmental challenges especially when the are rapid and sudden (Carver,2010). However, overtime effective resilience building measures can be developed to absorb the pressures and ensure effective adaptation and thriving of the organization (Comfort, 1995). The organization can be transformed into a competitive entity depending on the measures adopted for implementation. The case organization showed that when it was

exposed to the social, economic and political crisis that happened in its context, it succumbed to the pressures for a decade resulting in a lot of haemorrhage in terms of members leaving the organization. The organization eventually managed to bounce back slowly after 10 years of succumbing to the pressures. A senior EBM participant who witnessed the succumbing process said:

''When an organization has no preparedness plan to counter foreseen and unforeseen threats, it remains vulnerable to different types of disturbances. When the case organization was affected by the social, economic and political crisis, no one had thought of a preparedness plan, and the whole organization succumbed to the situation and operations were substantially affected and could not be sustained.''

Overtime the organization has managed to develop some level of risk tolerance and has now accepted the reality of the situation acknowledging that the crisis situation will not just disappear and the organization has to learn and to adapt to cope with the pressures in the environment. The literature suggests that organizations begin to realise the need for risk information that help in detecting threats. Organisations also need to continue making sound business decisions on a daily basis based on reflective learning processes to develop effective resilience building (Gibson and Tarrant, 2010). The Coordinator of the STM reflected on these issues and said:

''After experiencing a lot of hardships and suffering, we learnt that the situation needed action-oriented thinking and we tried everything possible to raise resources for resuming our operations and we failed to raise

significant resources for ten years. We were successful in a few collabo-

rative initiatives but not to the envisaged scale of operations."

After ten years of no substantial contract with donors, the organization was on the edge of collapse. The action learning process presented an opportunity to identify the main pillars of a resilience building strategy for CFHD which form the building blocks of the Resilience Building Learning and Adaptation Strategy for Civic Forum on Human Development.

4.11 Emerging Resilience Learning and Adaptation Strategy

The key nodal themes for the development of a resilience building strategy took place during Cycle 5 (FG-05) in the thematic clustering of the emerging themes from action learning cycles. Each of the domain themes is linked to accompanying attributes and capabilities that enhance resilience building in the organization from the perspectives of the participants as shown in Figure 7, below:
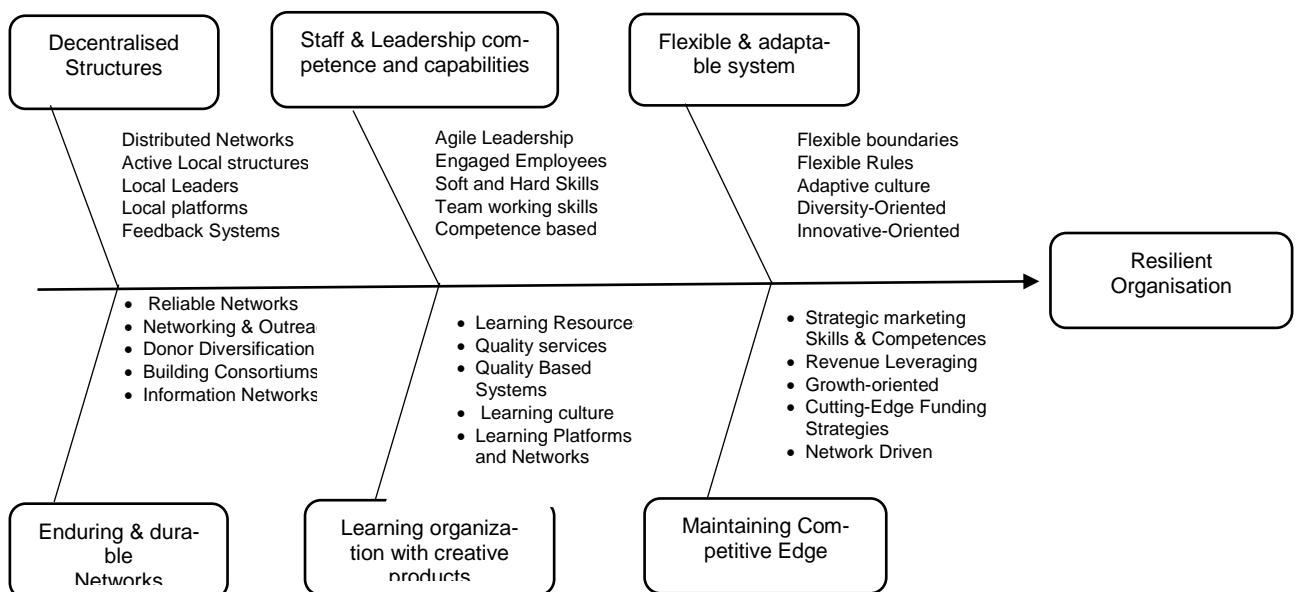

Figure 3: Resilience Building Domain Themes

4.12 From Action Learning to Resilience Building Strategy

The main objective of this study was to develop a resilience building strategy with the participation of organizational for implementation in the organization. Discussions in FG-06 enabled deeper reflections on the essence and meanings of the different resilience strategy domains and their associated attributes and capabilities. Six domains emerged in the reflection process. The linkages with key resilience building processes were also discussed in terms of their contribution to anticipation, coping and adaptation. The table below summarises these domains and their linkages with anticipation, coping and adaptability of the organization.

Table 8: Links with Organizational Resilience Building Processes

Emerging Resilience Building Domain Theme	Links with RBS processes
Decentralized Leadership Structures	Anticipation and Preparedness Planning
Leadership Competences and Capabilities Development	Anticipation and Preparedness Planning Coping and Recovery Adaptation and Thriving
Flexible and Adaptible Working System	Coping and Recovery Adaptation and Thriving
Enduring and durable networks and partnerships	Anticipation and Preparedness Planning Coping and Recovery Adaptation and Thriving
Learning organization with creative products and services	Anticipation and Preparedness Planning Coping and Recovery Adaptation and Thriving
Maintaining Competitive Edge	Anticipation and Preparedness Planning Coping and Recovery

	Adaptation and Thriving

The resilience building domain themes support the conceptual framework for this study and the objectives of the study. However, the critical strategic themes for anchoring the resilience building strategy needed further reflection with the research participants to build an understanding of how they can be linked in the final strategy for implementation. Four resilience building themes were identified as critical for enactment in the organization and these are shown in Figure 8, below:
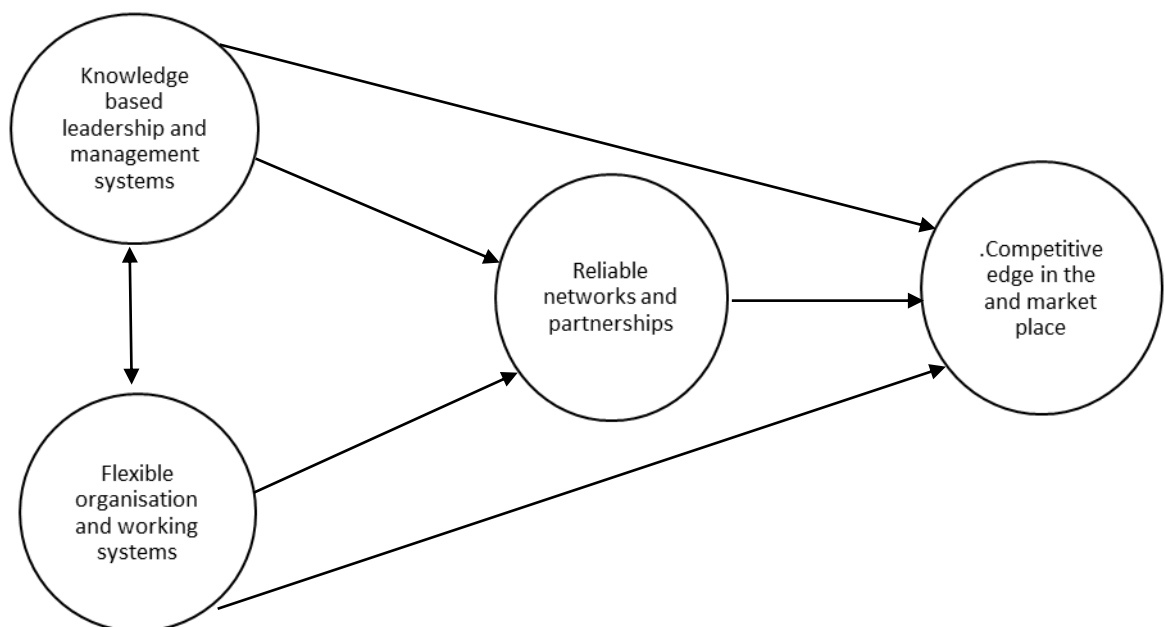
Figure 4: The Resilience Learning and Adaptation Strategy

The emphasis on knowledge based leadership and management system development is consistent with the case organization's goal to develop a resilient and learning organization that will make a difference in people's lives. The strategic importance of being a learning organization are well documented in the literature (Duchek,2019, Lengnick-Hall et al.,2011, Burnard and Bhamra,2011). Most critical is that it enables all members to engage in continuos

learning processes to be able to make some intelligible responses to crises.

Organizational flexibility and adaptation processes are key to the survival of the organization as the crisis in the case study 's organization has been going on for over two decades. Organizational flexibility enables the organization to combine soft and hard components of resilience to recover and bounce forward while capturing new opportunities (Robb,2000, McCann,2004, Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2009). Flexible working empower members of the organization to commit their knowledge, skills and competencies towards the success of the organization even during adversity (McCann,2004).

The partnerships and networks drive new thinking and knowledge into the organizational system to be able to address anticipation, coping and adaptation strategies in an integrated manner. It is therefore not surprising that the final action reflection meeting endorsed this component to be part of the resilience learning and adaptation strategy for the organization. Last but not least is the focus on maintaining the competitive edge of the organization which benefits from the operationalization of resilience building processes in the organization. Although competitive edge is hardly used in the non-profit sector, the concept challenged the organizational members in the case organization to see change from a competitive lens to catalyze innovative approaches to resilience building in the organization. This has potential to ignite a new way of thinking in small to medium non-profit sector.

4.13 Linking Resilience Building Strategy and Attributes

Without harnessing the appropriate attributes and capabilities, it will be impossible for any organizational strategy to succeed. Figure 8 shows that each arm of the strategic pillars can be supported by certain attributes and capabilities that make it possible for the organization to thrive under adverse conditions. Analysis of the core attributes showed that they emphasise importance of cognitive skills, flexible working culture, network and partnership-orientation and strategic agility skills which are all resilience attributes connected with the human resources management theory highlighting the relevance of the human resources approach applied in this study.
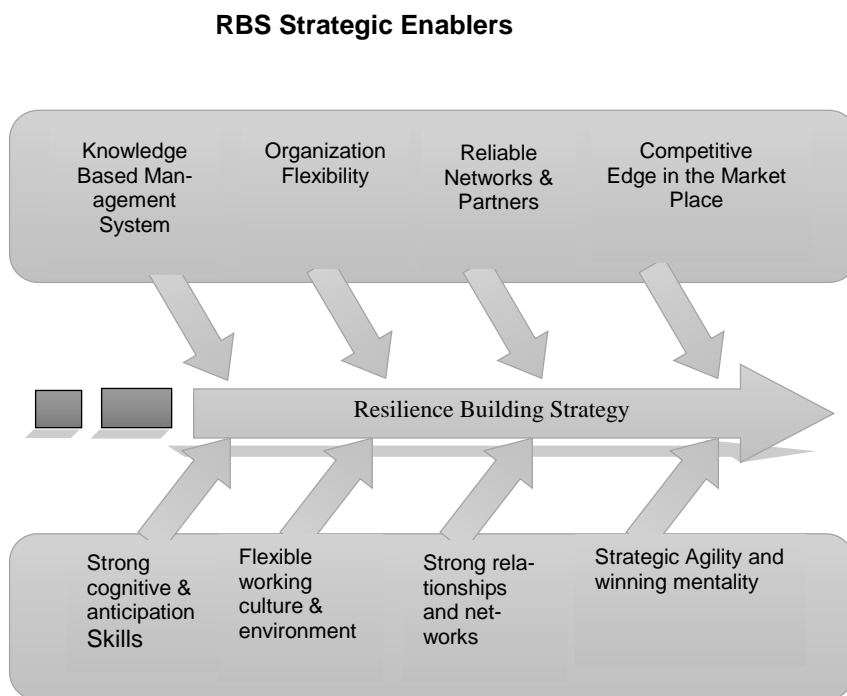
RBS Strategic Enablers

Figure 5: RBS Associated Attributes

4.14 Summary

In summary, the findings presented in Chapter 4 about the development of a resilience building strategy for a nonprofit human service organizations and associated attributes conform with the elements of the conceptual framework syn-

thesized from the literature. The data show that many of the themes emerged repeatedly from the document review, focus group discussions and indepth interviews throughout the action learning process invoving organizational participants. The data showed that resilience building strategy development can be guided by the three inter-linked processes of anticipation and preparedness planning, coping and recovery and adaptation and thriving. This shows emphasis on use of a continnum approach in resilience building strategy development for implementation in an organization which provided a range of options for organizational decision-making. The Chapter discussed nine themes that emerged in relation to resilience building in the case study organization. Through the action learning and reflection processes, a four-pronged strategy was developed for implementation in the organization. The key components of the resilience building strategy are:

- Development of a knowledge based leadership and management system,

- Flexible organizational and working systems,

- Reliable networks and partnerships.

- Maintaining the organization's competitive edge.

These strategies are also supported with a range of resilience attributes that relate to strong cognitive and anticipative skills, flexible working culture and environment, strong relationship and networking skills and strong mental agility and preparedness to compete.

The final discussions on the emerging themes, resilience building strategies, conclusions, organization implications, action knowledge, own reflections and recommendations for future research are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to develop a resilience building strategy for implementation in a human service organization. The study conducted a qualitative action-learning enquiry involving Board, Secretariat and Technical Committee members of the case study organization. Document reviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) were used for data collection to understand how a resilience building strategy could be developed with the participation of organizational members. The key research question that directed the study was:

How can a resilience building strategy be developed with the participation of organizational members in a non-profit human service organization? The specific sub-questions were: (i) What resilience building strategy can be developed with the participation of organizational members? (ii) What resilience attributes are considered in the development of a resilience building strategy for implementation in the organization?

Six cycles of action learning and reflection were used to explore the research questions that were aimed at understanding the resilience building strategy development phenomenon in a local non-profit human service organization operating in a volatile and fragile environment. The outcomes of the action learning process are aligned to the conceptual framework developed for this study and fully described in Chapter 3. The participants selected for this

study were fully involved in the different interations based on the social constructivism approach.

The findings from the cycles of action, reflection and sense-making that are fully described in Chapter 4 lean back to the case study organization and the action research process outlined in Chapter 3. Twenty-four participants drawn from the Board, Secretariat and Technical Committee participated in this study across the different cycles. The study also explored the associated attributes that are linked to RBS development in a non-profit human service organization. The social constructivism approach helped in exploring the diversity of ideas, strategies and attributes across the cycles of action, reflection and sense-making to understand the resilience building phenomenon based on multiple perspectives from organizational members. Chapter 5 presents the discussion of the findings and stories from action research process, the emerging conclusions and recommendations for future research.

5.2 Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of the study was to explore how a resilience building strategy could be developed with the participation of organizational members in a non-profit human service organization. The study developed a conceptual framework for helping to understand the resilience building strategy development phenomenon based on three successive resilience building processes as discussed in the literature review. The three processes are anticipation and preparedness planning, coping and recovery and adaptation and thriving. An understanding of how these successive processes work in practice is of funda-

mental interest to scholar practitioners especially in the non-profit human service sector where the knowledge of resilience building processes is seriously lacking.   The literature revealed that resilience building strategies are critical in helping the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt in the face of adversity. Despite the importance, there is not much scholarly literature on the resilience building strategies, strategic development phenomenon especially in relation to local non-profit human service organizations that provide insights on how these organizations can prepare, cope and adapt to threats in their environment. This study aimed to address this gap through exploring how a resilience building strategy can be developed with the involvement of organizational members within the context of a non-profit human service organization,

The emerging findings from the document reviews, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews showed consistency with the conceptual framework that was developed to guide the study. The resilience building strategies emerging from the different stages of the action learning process show a clear picture of the key components of the resilience building strategy that was developed through the participation of organizational members. Table 9 provides a picture of the resilience building strategies identified in the exploration of the literature review and themes emerging from the action learning process in the case study organization with the participation of organizational members.

Key RBS from the Conceptual Framework and RBS emerging from the Action Learning Process in the Case Study Organization.

Table 9: Conceptual Versus Action Learning RBS Themes

Key RBS from the Conceptual Framework	*Themes Emerging from the Action Learning Process*	*Description of Attributes Associated with the Strategies*
ANTICIPATION AND PREPAREDNESS PLANNING		
Flexible and decentralized structures can create room for creativity and innovation for all members of the organization to contribute to crisis management and response (Ledesma, 2014, Robb, 2000, Lengnick-Hall *et al*, 2011, Perrow, 2003, Weick, 1979).	Non-Profit Human Service Organizations (NPHSOs) develop and implement strategies that create opportunities for emergent leaders to make quick decisions and lead resilience building processes	Flexible structures and management systems, soft managerial practices, crisis readiness and preparedness planning,
An organization with diverse financial, social and network resources and partnerships can positively influence the anticipation capabilities of the organization (Duchek, 2019, Weick, 1993, Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2009,	NPHSOs develop and implement financial diversity and diversification strategies to successfully respond to future risks and threats in their operational environment	Attitude of wisdom, preparedness planning culture, communication and stakeholder engagement skills, pro-active mentality, ability to maintain positive & effective relationships with key donors, partners and networks, respectful interaction, ability to foster collective sense making

An organization's knowledge base is critical in helping the organization to anticipate and detect changes in its environment (Duchek, 2019, Carmeli and Markman, 2011, Lewin, at al, 2011, Bhamra, *et al,* 2011)	NPHSOs develop and implement strategies that exploit their collective skills and knowledge base to detect, analyze and prepare for any disruptions and threats in the operational environment.	Pro-active learning culture, critical understanding of situations, strategic thinking-oriented, resilience knowledge and awareness among organizational members, appetite for resilience information and knowledge acquisition from internal and external sources, intuitive acting and ad hoc decision making, expanded and elastic knowledge boundaries.
COPING AND RECOVERY		
Resilient organizations have capacity to develop and implement measures that enable the organization to fully restore its operations and exceed its pre-crisis situation (Van der Leeuw, 2008, Mallack, 2016, Dutton *et al,* 2002, Sufcliffe and Vogus, 2003, Weick at al, 1999)	NPHSOs develop and implement strategies that enable them to fully restore their operations and surpass previous level of performance.	Learning culture to bounce back from setbacks, coping knowledge, skills and experience, appetite for resilience information and knowledge acquisition from internal and external sources, acceptance of reality followed by sense making, improvisation, cognitive resilience skills, ad hoc knowledge networks to develop and implement solutions, openness and freedom for creative action.
Organizations develop and in-	NPHSOs develop and	Psychological resilience orien-

ternalize dynamic capabilities that are enacted in the lifecycle of the organization that influence their coping and response behavior in crisis situations (Ho, *et al*, 2014, Comfort, 1994, Vivian and Hormann, 2015, Kimberlin et al., 2011).	implement strategies that enable them to learn and reflect from their coping and recovery process to bounce back better.	tation, staff motivation and competence development, rigorous accountability systems for performance behavior, non-rigid and flexible management and governance systems, rigorous and robust reporting systems, efficient information management systems, emergency response teams and/or groups.
Organizations with visionary leadership are capable of proactively realigning systems, business models and HR systems towards re-inventing themselves before, during and after crisis situations (Andrews, *et al,* 2012, Hope & Sarmiento, 2016, MacFadden, 2013, Kinmann & Grant, 2011, Jordan, 2013, Adamson, *et al,* 2014, Campbell and Taylor, 2014, Kantur and Iseri-Say, 2012, Kimberlin *et al,* 2011, Mastern and Powell, 2003, Bunard and Bhamra, 2011, Scott & Davis, 2007, Reid, 2009/10, Mallack, 2016, van Breda, 2016, Wright, 2013,	NPHSOs develop and implement strategies that enable them to bounce forward to capture new opportunities	Robustness of systems, manageable workloads, emotional work satisfaction, peer support systems, managing boundaries, emotional and social competences, capacity for self-reflectivity, mutual interdependence, professional sense of self, self-perception of personal resilience, emotional intelligence, passion of team behaviors and competences, multi-skilled teams, self-managed teams, forward visioning, efficient operational systems, strong internal systems and processes, strong willingness by leaders and employees to

Ramlall, 2009, Kammeyer-Mueller & Liao, 2006, Boin, at al, 2013, Fairhurst, 2011,Doefel, 2013, Bonilla, 2015, Zimmerman and Dooley, 2001, Dees, Emerson and Economy, 2002, Dey, 2011, Ayling, 2009, Orr, 1998).		accept reality, collective and collaborative spirit by organizational members, desire to preserve meaningfulness of organizational and personal life, improvisation skills and capacity,
ADAPTATION AND THRIVING		
Organizations create multiple learning mechanisms to manage disruption related risks in volatile environments (Gibson and Tarrant, 2010, Hamel and Valikangas, Poole, 2014, Chikoto and Neely,2013, CAFOD, 2013, Reid, 2009/10, Ratliffe and Moy, 2004, Goatman and Lewis, 2006, Hao Jiao, 2011, Bonilla, 2015, Mastern, 2001, Lengnick-Hall, 2003, Linnenluecke, 2017, Shin at al, 2016, Martin-Breen and Andries,2011, Denyer and Pilbeam, 2015, Griffin, 2002, Dey, 2011, Rhoden, 2014, Gorzen-Mitka, 2015, De Smet, 2015, Tengblad & Oudhuis, 2018).	NPHSOs develop and implement strategies that promote on-going learning and adaptation to avoid failure and collapse	New technology orientation, social media and online marketing skills, self-drive mindset, non-bureaucratic decision-making culture, flexible working system, adaptability to change, culture of employee engagement, networked decision-making systems, mental preparedness to take risks, innovation orientation, listening skills, effective employee engagement and communication systems.

Agile human resources systems that emphasize competence development and quick decision making can strengthen collective ability to adapt to changing environment while responding to opportunities for endurance and continuity (Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2009, MacCann, 2004, Akgun and Keskin, 2014, Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003, Fiskel, 2003, Lengnick-Hall, 2011) , Weick, 1976, Pati and Kumar, 2010, Holloway,2002, Worline at al, 2014).	NPHSOs develop and promote strategies that enable them to be agile and to quickly detect, sense and seize emerging opportunities and to change direction if needed.	Effective leadership, positive self-esteem, strong appetite for self-change and transformation, organically structured relationships and organization, tolerance for uncertainty, agility oriented, possession of critical assets, adaptive capacity, learning from unexpected events, ability to learn from failures in the non-profit sector for system-wide realignments, taking action on previous generated knowledge
Organizations are able to absorb and tolerate disturbances while preventing any damages to the organizational system through turning challenges into productive and competitive opportunities for growth, learning and increased innovation (Zollie, at al, 2013, Westerly, 2013, Longstaff at al, 2013, Davis & Cobb, 2010, Drees & Heugens, 2013, Smith, 2015, Eikenberry & Klover, 2004, Jaffe, 2001, Folke, 2006, Ates	NPHSOs develop and implement strategies that enable them to overcome and absorb pressures within their environment and adapt to emerge stronger and more competitive.	Risk tolerance, self-learning, perseverance, innovation oriented, virtual role systems, presence of improvisation ideas, attitude of wisdom, norms of respectful interaction, team-resilience oriented, persistent engagement skills in exploring new opportunities, positive employee attitudes, knowledge of resource based transactions, change management leadership skills, use of soft managerial practices

and Bititci, 2011, Seville at al, 2008)		

The conceptual framework provides the context for the interpretation and discussion of the emerging research findings from the action learning process. Based on the analysis of the literature and key findings from the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

First, the conceptual framework suggests that flexible and decentralized structures can create room for creativity and innovation by all organizational members to contribute to everyday resilience building of the organization (Van der Leeuw, 2008, Mallack, 2016, Dutton *et al,* 2002, Sufcliffe and Vogus, 2003, Weick at al, 1999). Consistent with the literature, the findings show that the case organization had created decentralized structures and technicial committees on finance, technology and civic communication and education for quick decision-making and promotion of local innovation hubs as part of strengthening a networked communication and mutual support systems by all actors within the network. This had created a sense of collective sensemaking of the operational environment to identify, analyse and ensure a quick response to new opportunities for pursuit by the organization.Through this networked structure and system, network members were able to quickly share information on the deteriorating social, economic and political environment and to activate multiple survival strategies for the case organization.

The key attributes of having flexible structures and management systems enabled some quick decisions to be made on reducing operational costs

through hosting of the organization through collaborating with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) while retaining critical staff only in line with the principle of maintaining minimum operational capability standards in the organization to avoid collapse (McCann,2004, Ledesma, 2014). However, as noted in the action learning process, decentralized structures of decision-making require key attributes such as long-term commitment (Griffin,2002), collaborative culture (Bonilla,2015, van Breda, 2016) and hope and optimism (Sarantakos,2005) which had not been entrenched within system when the case organization was caught up in a crisis in 2000. While the spectrum of decision-making was kept open and wide as recommended by Bonilla (2015) the lack of entrenchment of key attributes supporting the decentralized structure led to the disintegration of the the entire system.

The research suggests that decentralized and flexible working systems should remain fluid to allow enough time for the cultivation of attributes on long-term commitment, collaborative working culture and having durable hope and optimism by the members. The conclusion conveyed through the action learning process is that without genuine leadership commitment in times of crisis, members quickly loose hope and optimism which can lead to withdrawal behavior impacting negatively on organizationa growth and performance. This withdrawal phenomenon signifies Weick (1979) observations on the collapse of collective sense-making in organizations which can be catastrophic to the survival of the organization. This collapse negatively affected the functionality of decentralized management systems across the entire organization.

The collapse in collective sense making can also be understood in the context of challenges in managing complex systems (Ayling, 2009). A network

based organization is complex as it has diverse membership with conflicting expectations which may complicate the development of a consensus based resilience building strategy. Robb (2000) observed that an organization tends to have two systems governing it, a performance system based on business targets to be routinely achieved in normal situations and an adaptation system that deals with any fluctuations in the external environment. The case organization was just caught up in a crisis without having developed and internalized any adaptation mechanisms as it was in its formative stages.

The experiences shared in the action learning process show that resilience building processes in an organization take some time to develop in an organization before bearing any meaningful fruits. The research results suggest that, it is critical for decentralized strategies to be properly aligned with clearly identified anticipation,coping and adaptation strategies for effectiveness and impact. If the quality of anticipation, coping and adaptation strategies is poor, the organization risks several collisions with adverse situations (Duchek, 2019). Bonilla (2015) suggested that poor quality resilience building strategies are often a result of rigidity controls of the organization processes by founders and Executive Boards in small to medium organizations which reflect their reluctance to embrace change. Such rigidity trends were evident in the early phases of establishment of the case organization and were instrumental in keeping the network as an in-ward looking organization.

Second, the conceptual framework suggests that an organization with diverse financial, social and network resources and partnerships can positively influence the anticipation capabilities of the organization (Duchek, 2019,

Lengnick-Hall and Beck,2009). Consistent with the literature, the case organi-
zation showed that as it broadened its financial, social, network and partnership
resources, it started to invest in strategic planning, periodic environment scan-
ning, annual partner reflection meetings which helped it to gain more
knowledge on trends, signals on donor environment, funding sources and pos-
sibilities. All these habitual practices are associated with anticipatory strategic
thinking (Duchek, 2019, Anderson,2018). This created a strong foundation for
the organization to start developing and implementing financial diversification
strategies to be able to respond to future risks and threats in the operational
environment.

While the diversification of strategies is creating positive avenues, the
action learning processes revealed a number of challenges that needed action
in relation to the speedy enactment of attributes that improve the attitude of
wisdom by all staff in identifying more lucrative donor opportunities, stakeholder
engagement and maintaining up-to-date information systems, effective rela-
tionships with all key donors, partners and networks to optimize supportive rela-
tionships towards the work of the organization. While the avenue of networks
and partnerships is the most realistic for an organization that is transitioning
from small to medium size organization, it raises the issue of continued de-
pendency on external resources (Bonilla,2015, Dey, 2011) which was identified
as a major challenge for growth and development of non-profit human service
organizations in the literature (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011).

The action learning process that involved organizational members as
participants showed that dependency relationships that exist with donors were
making the organization vulnerable to any changes in donor funding priorities.

This scenario emerged vividly in focus group discussions with the Executive Board Members (EBMs) (FG-EBM-01) where the case organization conceded that donor funding is the only realistic pathway to follow in the current environment. The literature on non-profits clearly indicated that dependency on external resources is a major 'growth trap' for local non-profit human service organizations as there is usually no compensation for the bedrock costs that are incurred by the organization (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011, Bonilla, 2015).

Throughout the action learning process, the case organization has shown that the network and partnership based strategy is its most effective strategic weapon for gaining quick knowledge on environmental dynamics and changes and for attracting donor interest and support, for building effective information and knowledge systems and for maintaining a competitive edge in the development market place. However, the major downside for depending on networks and partnerships is the issue of realibility given that the case organization once experienced massive withdrawal of members from eighty to less that thirty members during the crisis period from 2000 to 2010. Consequently, the resilience building strategy for the case organization need to focus on development of reliable partnerships and networks so that they can be counted upon during crisis situations.

As discussed in the literature reliability strategies have been the most predominant domain theme for organizational research in the private and public sector (Gibson and Tarrant, 2010). However, reality has already shown that it is impossible to always come up with design standards that ensure everyday reliability and hence the recent shift to more flexible strategies which emphasise use of both soft and hardware components in building resilience. Reliability

strategies tend to put more emphasis on hard components of resilience such as information technology, hi-tech financial management systems, technology hardware, which may not be available for the small to medium organizations such as the case organization (Bonilla, 2015).

Third, the conceptual framework suggests that an organization's knowledge base is critical in helping the organization to anticipate and detect changes in its environment (Duchek, 2019, Carmeli and Markman, 2011, Lewin, at al, 2011, Bhamra, *et al,* 2011). Consistent with the literature, the case organization's strategy is to become a learning organization with creative products and services as evidenced from the action learning process in Chapter 4. Evidence from the literature suggests that an organization with a broad and diverse knowledge base is well positioned to use its knowledge of different crisis situations affecting the organization to generate multiple ideas on possible response actions to crisis and can employ more effective coping strategies to avoid damage to the organization (Gomes *et al,* 2014, Pregenzer, 2014). The action learning processes across all focus group discussions and interviews highlighted issues of strengthening the knowledge base of the organization primarily targeting the leadership and all key employees. The case organization showed potential to benefit from learned experiences from its past emphasizing the need for collective resilience building efforts in the organization (Catino, 2008, Gressgard and Hansen, 2015).

In addition, a diverse knowledge base lubricates the learning process across all the phases of resilience building through learning for crisis anticipation, learning in crisis (coping) and learning from crisis situations and events

(Lengnick-Hall, *et al,*2011). In the conceptual framework, learning connects all the resilience building phases and links up with the strategic attributes that are needed when a resilience response is activated. In the final reflection focus group (FG-07) discussion, learning was considered as the anchor of a resilience building strategy, hence the members of the case organization have called it the Resilience Learning and Adaptation Strategy (Figure 8). The significance of learning in the literature is consistent with the significance attached to learning in the action learning process. This is understandable given that learning can positively influence resilience capabilities in an organization (Duchek, 2019) through practicing learned responses to deal with adverse situations. If learnability becomes a culture in non-profit human service organizations, then response to crisis situations can be internalized by small and medium size non-profit human service organizations.

A dominant cross-cutting finding across all the cycles of action, reflection and sense-making related to the development of good information and knowledge management systems across the organization accessible and usable by all members of the organization. It was also learnt through the literature and action learning process that a learning organization should have a proactive learning culture for critical understanding of diverse situations confronting the organization and a strong appetite for information and knowledge acquisition from internal and external sources (Duchek, 2019).

Fourth, the conceptual framework suggest that resilient organizations focus on developing implementing measures and interventions that enable the organization to fully restore its operations and to exceed previous levels of performance (Van der Leeuw, 2008, Mallack, 2016, Dutton *et al,* 2002, Sufcliffe

and Vogus, 2003, Weick at al, 1999, Bonilla, 2015). Consistent with the literature, the findings show that the case organization embarked on multiple initiatives to recover from the social, economic and political shocks affecting the organization since 2000. These initiatives include multi-skilling of staff, creating new products and services for strengtheng income generation for the organization, continually identifying new funding sources and building strategic partnerships and relationships with other stakeholders. The case organization started as a small non-profit human service organization with an annual budget of US$50,000 to US$80,000 per annum between 1995 and 1999 which reduced to between US$10,000 to US$25,000 during the crisis period from the year 2000 to 2010. After implementation of multiple funding initiatives, there was a change of fortune in 2010 when the annual budget rose to between US$100,000 and US$150,000 per annum between 2010 and 2015 due to successes achieved with the targeting of major donors such as the European Union (EU) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). With the accumulated experience of 'learning in crisis', the annual budget rose to between US$300,000 to US$400, 000 between 2016 and 2020. The literature suggests that the small non-profit organizations often build on their track record to access diverse resources from multiple donors within their environment (Bonilla, 2015).

There is no evidence of this knowledge of the recovery process being documented for future reference and sharpening of future strategies. Some individuals have excelled in fundraising, a factor that has contributed to the recovery process in the organization. However, the factors contributing to recovery for an organization that nearly faced collapse deserve their own analysis.

This kind of research would reduce the rate of collapse and failure by many local human service organizations. The need for additional research on the coping and recovery phenomenon has also been echoed by many reseachers(Linnenluecke,2017, Ougland , 2018).

Despite the existing information and knowledge gaps on how recovery processes can be accelerated to reduce the rate of failure in the human services sector, the action learning process noted that it is possible to accelerate recovery from a slump through networking and collaboration, improvisation and enacting effective information management system in the business delivery systems of local human service organizations. The concept of improvisation which was being advocated as a low hanging fruit in accerating recovery process links well with the bricologe concept advocated by Mallack (2016) and echoes other research sentiments on the need to accept reality (Scearce and Wang,2020) when crises have become inevitable.

Fifth, the conceptual framework suggest that organizations develop and internalize dynamic capabilities that are enacted in the life cycle of the organization that influence their coping and response behavior in crisis situations (Ho, et al, 2014, Comfort, 1994, Vivian and Hormann, 2015, Kimberlin *et al,* 2011). Consistent with the literature, the findings from the documentary review, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews show that the case organization has been evolving over the past twenty-five years and experiencing different response behaviours depending on the nature of the crisis and the lessons learnt by the organization. In the literature the phenomenon of organizational evolvability is very much linked to the range of dynamic capabilities that an organiza-

tion can acquire as it grows from one level of organizational development to the next (Kimberlin, 2011) As organizations evolve, they learn and grow from their experiences with the support of leadership. The implementation of successful recovery and coping strategies depends on psychological resilience and motivation levels of the members of the organization (Lengnick-Hall, *et al,* 2011), flexibility of management and governance systems as well as the quality of information and knowledge management system. The action learning process revealed that the case organization has been investing in competence based staff and leadership development systems that entail problem-solving, team working and collaborative networking.

Sixth, and building on from the theme on dynamic capabilities, the conceptual framework suggest that organizations with visionary leadership are capable of pro-actively re-aligning systems, business models and human systems towards re-inventing themselves before, during and after crisis situations (Andrews, *et al,* 2012, Hope & Sarmiento, 2016, MacFadden, 2013, Kinmann & Grant, 2011, Jordan, 2013, Adamson, *et al,* 2014, Campbell and Taylor, 2014, Kantur and Iseri-Say, 2012, Kimberlin *et al,* 2011, Mastern and Powell, 2003, Bunard and Bhamra, 2011, Scott & Davis, 2007, Reid, 2009/10, Mallack, 2016, van Breda, 2016, Wright, 2013, Ramlall, 2009, Kammeyer-Mueller & Liao, 2006, Boin, at al, 2013, Fairhurst, 2011,Doefel, 2013, Bonilla, 2015, Zimmerman and Dooley, 2001, Dees, Emerson and Economy, 2002, Dey, 2011, Ayling, 2009). Consistent with the literature, the case organization has gone through a significant re-alignment of systems in line with a new vision of human centred development after under-going re-branding with the involvement of or-

ganizational members in line with the vision, mission and goals of the organiza-tional strategy. The re-branding process led by a new leadership culture suc-cessfully led to the recovery process of the organization. The renewed leader-ship is now keen to develop and implement a resilience building strategy for the organization to continue to adapt and thrive in the future.

It was revealed during the action learning process that the leadership that was in place during the pre-crisis period were not prepared to confront any crisis situation. Yet the literature suggests a number of leadership attributes that are needed for leaders to play a significant role in the resilience building of their organizations. Leaders should play a key role in building robust systems for managing people, workloads and work boundaries (van Breda, 2016). Leaders should embody principles of resilience, mutual interdependence and emotional intelligence to be able to successfully lead the development and im-plementation of resilience building strategies (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011, Bonilla, 2015). Leaders occupy a unique position of influence within the organization to be able to drive change management processes while advancing a collective and collaborative agenda for advancement of the organization.

The pivotal role of leaders in driving resilience building processes in the organization was a major point of reflection across all the focus group discus-sions and interviews in the action learning process. However, beyond setting the broad direction of where the organization should be going, the findings suggest that a much more open and supportive leadership style is needed for catalyzing resilience building processes so that it becomes a collective process in which all members are involved with informal roles and responsibilities. This echoes the new emphasis on process based resilience based approaches

which challenge traditional managerial approaches and practices as these cannot successfully respond to everyday resilience challenges which have influenced the conceptual framework of the study.

However, resilience building processes cannot be left to the leadership and management of a non-profit organization as every member has a role to play. This raises the question about how to develop a distributed leadership network for driving resilience building in a non-profit human service organization which has capacity to lead in the implementation of resilience building interventions. The conception of leadership is also too broad as it also relates to the values, principles and institutions governing relationships around resilience building processes and strategies in the organization (Robb, 2000, Ledesma, 2014). Finally, the literature indicates that the role of leadership in resilience outcome-oriented studies has been well researched but there remains a huge gap in understanding how organizational leaders in non-profit human service organizations facilitate the change process in the non-profit sector (Bonilla, 2015).

Seven, the conceptual framework suggest that organizations create multiple learning mechanisms to manage disruption related risks in volatile environments (Gibson and Tarrant, 2010, Hamel and Valikangas, Poole, 2014, Chikoto and Neely,2013, CAFOD, 2013, Reid, 2009/10, Ratliffe and Moy, 2004, Goatman and Lewis, 2006, Hao Jiao, 2011, Bonilla, 2015, Mastern, 2001, Lengnick-Hall, 2003, Linnenluecke, 2017, Shin at al, 2016, Martin-Breen and Andries,2011, Denyer and Pilbeam, 2015, Griffin, 2002, Dey, 2011, Rhoden, 2014, Gorzen-Mitka, 2015, De Smet, 2015, Tengblad & Oudhuis, 2018). Consistent with the literature, the findings indicate that having multiple learning

mechanisms ensures on-going learning and adaptation which protect the organization from failure and collapse through ensuring all members are involved in adaptive learning and growth and in sharing good practices for learned responses to crises. In all the action learning cycles, the case organization revelead that it had invested in the creation of several learning platforms that enabled mutual reflections, awareness of risks and threats and rehersals by members on the most appropriate responses linking individual and organizational learning processes.

However, reflections in the focus groups revealed that some opportunities for learning are always being crowded out through busy schedules and heavy reporting requirements that emphasize donor compliance and reporting at the expense of learning. The non-profit literature showed that learning processes are disrupted due to the pressures of coping and survival as well as high levels of attrition of staff as a result of resource limitations for small to medium non-profit organizations (Bonilla, 2015, Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011). The literature on resilience building indicate that if small disruptions are allowed to accumulate and pile up overtime they will grow into huge threats and impediments to the organizational growth process (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011). The non-profit literature indicates that small non-profits allow these small disruptions to grow until they find themselves in the deep end of the survival crisis (Bonilla, 2015). This raises a question on how risk profiling and benchmarking is being mainstreamed and internalized in small to medium non-profit human service organizations to trigger timeous interventions to ensure the organization is fully protected and is able to adapt to daily minor disruptions that are often neglected.

Some key constraints in ensuring effective operationalization of multi-learning mechanisms in the case organizations were linked to limited use of new technologies, poor use of social media and online marketing of the organization products and services, poor self-learning culture and lack of effective communication systems. These limitations can frustrate the ambition of the case organization to be a learning organization with best practice products and services in the development market place. Another major challenge in ensuring continuous learning and adaptation was seen as the loss of key staff when their projects have ended which raises the question on what staff retention policies can be developed within small to medium non-profit human service organizations for effective resilience building of the organization.

Eight, the conceptual framework suggest that agile human resource systems that emphasise competence development and quick decision-making can strengthen the collective ability of organizational members to adapt to a changing environment while responding to opportunities for endurance and continuity (Lengnick-Hall and Beck, 2009, MacCann, 2004, Akgun and Keskin, 2014, Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003, Fiskel, 2003, Lengnick-Hall, 2011) , Weick, 1976, Pati and Kumar, 2010, Holloway,2002, Worline at al, 2014). Consistent with the literature, the case organization has established competence based training and capacity building for existing and new staff to ensure team work and collective learning processes can strengthen internal capacity to deal with shocks while at the same time the products and services continue to meet expectations of clients. The action learning process revealed that as a result of ongoing competence development systems, a capable team has been established and is well-geared to dealing with any environmental challenges. However, the action learning process also revealed that human resources agility require effective leadership to be able to chat new territories, risk taking orientation and

culture as well as organically structured relationships across the organization. In practice the responsiveness of individuals to new opportunities tends to be slow and this raises the question on how to effectively monitor individual contributions to resilience building processes in a non-profit human service organization.

Nine, the conceptual framework suggest that organizations are able to absorb and tolerate disturbances while preventing any damage to the organizational system through turning challenges into opportunities for growth, learning and increased innovation (Zollie, at al, 2013, Westerly, 2013, Longstaff at al, 2013, Davis & Cobb, 2010, Drees & Heugens, 2013, Smith, 2015, Eikenberry & Klover, 2004, Jaffe, 2001, Folke, 2006, Ates and Bititci, 2011, Seville at al, 2008). Consistent with the literature, the case organization revealed in the action learning process that it now has a high level of risk tolerance having learnt from the previous experiences that the resilience building process respond to everyday challenges amid continued social, economic and political crisis. While organizational members who remained in the organization have shown peserverence and innovation orientation which has helped in building over time absorption mechanisms that have allowed the case organization to successfully adapt and become stronger than it was before the crisis. The literature has shown that while some individuals generate new ideas quicker than others, the collective process of turning these ideas into action for the benefit of the organization is what matters for increased organizational growth and sustainability (Kimberlin, *et al,* 2011).. Again, the action learning process further revealed that the focus on strengthening the capacity of individual members to create multiple relationships internally and externally, can turn challenges into opportunities for the case organization. This raises the question on how to create and sustain employee engagement for continuous growth of the organization.

5.3 Resilience Learning and Adaptation Strategy

Finally, conclusions are drawn on the emerging resilience learning and adaptation strategy that was adopted for implementation by organizational members after their participation in a series of iterative action learning cycles. The emphasis leans back to the links drawn in the conceptual framework with the human resources theory which emphasize the cognitive and knowledge base within the organization as well as flexible systems and structures that promote decentralized management systems. Further, the pillars networking and partnership building are emphasized as well as maintaining the competitive edge of the organization. The four-pronged resilience building strategy has potential to strengthening the capacity of the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to changing environment.

5.4 Organizational Implications

The resilience learning and adaptation strategy has several implications for the organization. First, to promote a knowledge based leadership and management system requires embracing the ethos and principles of organizational learning before, during and after crisis situations as well as a culture of self-learning and transformation towards pro-active resilience behaviours at the individual and organizational level. These changes need to be augmented with robust information and knowledge management systems which are accessible to all members of the organization. Such knowledge will enable the organization to effectively anticipate, cope and adapt to a changing environment.

Secondly, for system-wide change, the resilience building strategy would need to be integrated into the strategy of the organization so that all facets of the organization can work together to achieve organizational resilience. The collective approach to resilience building has been emphasized in the literature and in the action learning process.

Thirdly, the organization would need to systematically review and sharpen its networking and partnership approaches as these are at the heart of the resilience building strategy for implementation. When the three critical drivers of resilience, that is, knowledge based leadership and management systems, resilience strategy institutionalization and networks and capacity building are taken together, the competitive edge of the organization can be sharpened to ensure growth and sustainability in the future. The culture of competitive thinking needs to be embraced at all levels in the organization although most organizational practitioners want to confine competitive edge philosophy to the private sector.

5.5 Generation of Action Knowledge

In the context of the study organization and other non-profit human service organizations organizational resilience building strategy development has been constrained by limited knowledge on how the process can be initiated and managed to enable organizations to respond resiliently to threats and challenges within their operational environments. The notion of resilience building as a daily organizing process in organizations significantly inspired the use a social

constructionist approach to explore how a resilience building strategy could be developed in a non-profit human service organization.

Essentially, resilience building as a process, can empower organizational actors to participate in organizational resilience building processes and to be co-creators of organizational transformation for local non-profit human service organizations. Most of the research focus has been on containing crisis instead of taking a more holistic resilience building approach (Linnenluecke, 2017, Weick & Sutcliffe, 2011,Tengblad & Oudhuis, 2018). Proactive resilience building requires a collective and holistic approach without which the organizathe tion can be vulnerable to threats in the environment. This means that organizational change management and survival should not be the prerogative of managers but all organizational members have a role to play.

The action learning process used in understanding the resilience building strategy development phenomenon generated new thinking by organizational members which was evident in their progressively rich contributions to the organization's resilience building strategy development. The new thinking was reflected through improved quality of ideas in the successive cycles of interaction with the participants.

These is room for all the co-participants to practice reflective thinking in their day to day decision making processes within their workplaces. The action learning process used by the study also demonstrated that resilience traits and attributes can be infused into existing and new organizational strategies depending on the relevance and fit for organizational development. This means

management can focus on cultivating the characteristics of resilience in their context of working and operations for long-term sustainability.

5.6 Reflections on Own Learning as a Scholar Practitioner

Apparently in the context of the inquiry, resilience building is often applied to programming rather than to institutional development processes. At the time of initiating the study, most local and international non-profit human service organizations were grappling with responding to the impacts of the social, economic and political crisis that has been there since 2000. The lack of internal capacity for developing a resilience building strategy (RBS) for the organization emerged as a problem as organizational members lacked knowledge and information on how they could develop it. Even the researcher did not have any prior knowledge and information on developing a resilience building strategy in any organization. And yet a strategy was needed in the context increased social, economic and political threats in the operational environment.

Before setting up the action research cycles for the study, the researcher dived deep into the literature exploring which approach and methology would be useful to address the problem of resilience building with the participation of organizational members. Social constructivism emerged as a philosophy to guide the thinking on the approach and methodology as it reinforces collaborative research methods and principles from conception to the end (Cresswell,2013, Easterby-Smith, *et al,* 2012). The research knowledge gained on social-constructivism and other related research methodologies led to design of

the action learning cycles which created meaningful interaction between the research participants and the researcher.

The researcher was able to construct all the action learning steps with the knowledge gained from the literature process with purposefully designed cycles of interaction with research participants. Research tools for data collection and analysis were developed and applied intelligently within corresponding cycles. One of the key qualitative data analysis that helped the analysis was the two step process of understanding first order constructs and meanings from the researcher participants and the second order constructs by the researcher to infer linkages with the literature and the conceptual framework. This analysis process was particularly insightful as it confirmed and challenged my own beliefs and world view on the resilience building phenomenon in non-profit human service organizations.

The researcher has learnt that action research can help in generating multiple realities of resilience building through sharing the lived experiences of organizational members and it requires genuine consultation and participation of research participants as co-leaners in the process. The process results in co-constructed realities (Lincoln *et al,* 2011)leading to a collective learning and decision-making on actions that are needed to improve the situation. A key outcome of the action learning process was the generation of knowledge based decision-making processes within the organization, a culture that have emerged from the six cycles of engagement with the participants. By the end of the process, one could observe that participants were able to ask insightful questions about resilience building within their context.

5.7 Reflective learning in relation to management practice

The literature tend to emphasize the role of leadership in directing and influencing resilience building processes in the organization (Bonilla, 2015, Kimberlin, 2011). The case organization however showed that there is more power in distributed leadership for resilience building processes to be better managed in a non-profit organization. For distributed leadership to work there is need to bring the most appropriate resilience leadership values and ethos into management practice that is more broad based, open and dependent on mutually agreed principles and flexible ways of working (Robb, 2000). However, the existence of these values, principles and routines should never be taken for granted as they need to be cultivated all the time given that resilience building is an everyday phenomenon. This is currently a weakness in the case organization that needs to be addressed and periodic reviews need to be conducted to collectively sense, anticipate and monitor any risks that have potential to harm the organization.

An organization can respond to crisis in a proactive manner if it has internalized the core resilience attributes aligned with anticipation, coping and adaptation which is a huge management challenge facing non-for- profit human service organizations (Lengnick-Hall, *et al,* 2011). For the internalization to happen, there is need for adequate financial and human resources, vibrant systems to detect crisis situations before they to be be able to adjust timely to changing situations.

The study has shed more light on the need to ensure 'learning in pre-crisis situations'. This implies management practices should be sustained by a

learning culture that permeates all levels of the organization for enhanced forward planning and visioning. As Burnard and Bhumra (2011) have recommended, organizations must invest in regular understanding of their vulnerabilities to be able to make timeous response decisions to different types of crisis situations affecting them. Responsiveness and mindfulness to crisis situations require a pro-active mindset (Weick,2001), capacity for learning in action and adaptation (Carpenter, *et al,* 2001) and improved tools for characterizing and conceptualizing the threats (Harms, *et al,* 2009). This means management practices need to focus on both staff and systems development so as to detect and respond to threats in the environment in an effective manner. In practice, organizations need to conduct regular self-assessments of their existing and potentially new vulnerabilities to trigger appropriate resilience building processes and responses (MacManus *et al,* 2007).

5.8 Reflective learning in relation to professional development

The study has sharpened my professional development especially in extending my knowledge beyond the consensual boundaries of humanitarian development management. Having worked in the development sector for 27 years, I worked along with the traditional norms and ethics of a development worker who is bound by several codes of conduct. These codes of conduct and humanitarian guidelines are a major barrier to professional growth and development as I have now learnt through my engagement with the thesis and the process of resilience building in the organization.

I have been able to problematize resilience building strategy development as an organizational issue within my organization but the problem transcends into the broader the non-profit human services sector. I have learnt how to rationalize the issue with participation of organizational members and to critically challenge existing responses to crisis. I learnt from the power of reflective conversations with the situation (Schon,1991) that professionals can learn in action to solve daily problems confronting them to improve their managerial craftsmanship (Schon, 1991). In the end I learnt that to be effective as a professional development practitioner, there is need to practice 'thinking in action' for a manager to resolve the modern complex challenges such as resilience building in the context of crisis and to focus on organizational learning systems that do not inhibit thinking, new ideas and attitudes of wisdom in order to thrive.

5.9 Recommendations for Future Research

Several organizations have not been able to find the right combination of strategies and attributes that contributed to the creation of a resilient organization that can withstand the shocks and surviving challenges in turbulent and unpredictable environments (McCann, 2016). This area needs future research exploration so that organizations can find a way of addressing context specific resilience building challenges within their operational environments. This requires understanding the resilience benchmarks showing the resilience gap that need to be addressed at the organization level.

Second, the case organization and the exploration of the non-profit literature combined with findings of the study have identified attributes that are linked to the resilience building strategy development process at organizational level which raised some questions in the discussion about their relative role and importance in shaping the resilience building strategy of a non-profit human service organization. This creates an opportunity for future research focus to understand which attributes are more critical in shaping the RBS of an organization. Such a research could be useful in ensuring more evidence based enactment of resilience attributes for improved performance and adaptation to changes taking place in the environment.

Third, researching how small to medium non-profit human service organizations can develop their human capital development strategy for strengthening resilience building processes in their organizations is a future research priority. The results points to the need for knowledge based leadership and employee recruitment and development, flexible working and decision making systems, reliable networks and partnerships to ensure competitive survival and resilience.

5.10 Limitations

A major challenge in this action research thesis has been the existence of few researches on the non-profit sector let alone researches focused on small sized organizations such as the case organization, Civic Forum on Human Development. This makes this study one of the pioneering research studies focused on a small non-profit human service organization. Resilience building has now become a broader area of inquiry and the conceptual framework was mainly de-

veloped with the objective of understanding the resilience building strategy development phenomenon as it applied to a non-profit human services organization and also to help in the analysis and interpretation of results.This study was not able to research all components that inform resilience building thinking and practice as it focused on components that are critical for resilience building strategy development and implementation.

The study focused on understanding the key stages in the development of a resilience building strategy that involve three inter-linked processes of anticipation, coping and adaptation which to a large extent overlap and are underpinned by complimentary attributes that create the resilience traits in a strategy. The action learning process has shown that the strategies adopted in the three stages are not static and reflect interventions that continue to evolve in response to internal and external changes in the environment. As already noted, a resilience building strategy is an intervention to help the organization to anticipate, cope and adapt to changes and dynamics in the environment (Ledesma, 2014, Duchek, 2019, Linneckluecke, 2017). It is impossible for this study to have explored all the multiple dimensions of resilience building given the resources and time available limiting itself to the development of a resilience building strategy for implementation in the organization.

The non-profit human service sector is very broad and diverse and this study confined itself to a single case analysis for in-depth exploration of the resilience building strategy development phenomenon with organizational members as the participants of the study.

5.11 Summary

Social, economic and political crises will continue to be a major source of threat to resilience building processes of non-profit human service organizations especially in the low income development context such as Zimbabwe. Resilience building strategy development is not just about ensuring the bouncing back of organizations affected by these crises but more importantly about building the strategic capabilities to anticipate, cope and adapt while emerging stronger than before, after acquiring lessons from the cycle of crises that have been affecting the organization. Resilience building processes are a response to 'everyday resilience challenges' and not to sporadic big threat events which tended to attract more focus and resources in the past.

The case organization operated in a social, economic and political crisis for a period of twenty-years through conscious and unconscious application of a range of resilience building processes that were the subjected to rigorous scholarly analysis and interpretation in a case based study of a non-profit human service organization in Zimbabwe. The study explored the key resilience building processes and attributes that inform the development of a resilience building strategy in a human service organization. The study was intended to generate a critical scholarly discourse on how understanding of the resilience building strategy development phenomenon could improve organizational resilience in the non-profit sector especially when organizational members are a crucial part of the strategy development process. The findings of the study can provide useful insights for other local non-profit human service organizations that have been struggling to recover and survive from socio-economic and political crises that have become an endemic feature in fragile state systems.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – RECRUITMENT LETTER

Participants were invited to participate in focus group meetings and a variation of the text below was used.

Dear (Participant Name):

My name is Absolom Masendeke and I am a DBA Student at the Univesity of Liverpool conducting my thesis research on ''**Developing a Resilience Building Strategy for Implementation in a Non-Profit Human Service Organization: A Case Study of Civic Forum on Human Development in Zimbabwe''.** The aim of the study is to understand how a local non-profit human service organization can develop a resilience building strategy with the participation of its members for implementation in the organization. Specifically, my research seeks to explore the resilience processes, strategies and attributes shaping the development of a resilience building strategy in relation to a local non-profit human service organization working in a crisis prone environment. The employs documentation review, a series of focus group discussions with organizational members from the Executive Board, Technical Committees and Secretariat levels of the organization to provide detailed information information on resilience strategy development processes, experiences and future priorities for the organization to be able to anticipate, cope and adapt to risks and adverse

challenges in its operating environment. The research will help to understand the key resilience attributes that support resilience building strategies in a non profit human service organization. .

This action research has been designed to generate actionable knowledge within the organization for informing the development of a resilience building strategy that is co-created with organizational members for implementation for improved organizational resilience. The lessons learned from the research can be shared with members of the organization and other interested non-profit human service organizations with no resilience building strategies of their own to enable them to respond resiliently to adverse situations.

I am very interested with your participation in the different phases of this exploratory study. A schedule will be sent to you with possible dates for indication of your availability. I will be able to accommodate your schedule. If you are willing to participate in this study, I will be happy to send you the Informed Consent Form and then we can discuss the criteria and guidelines for your participation in the different phases of the study. Please feel free to contat me at absolommasendeke@yahoo.com or Telephone +263773390843.

Kind Regards,

Absolom Masendeke

DBA Student

University of Liverpool.

APPENDIX B – INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Committee on Research Ethics

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research: Developing a Resilience Building Strategy for Implementation in a non-profit human service organisation: Case of Civic Forum on Human Development.

Researcher(s):

ABSOLOM MASENDEKE

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet dated [DATE] for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in this cycle is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my rights being affected. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

3. I understand that, under the Data Protection Act, I can at any time ask for access to the information I provide and I can also request the destruction of that information if I wish.

4. I understand and agree that my participation will be audio recorded /video recorded and I am aware of and consent to your use of these recordings for the research report purposes

5. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the researcher to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research outputs, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report that result from the research.

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<div style="text-align: center;">

_____   _____   _____

Participant Name   Date   Signature

</div>

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Name of Person taking consent   Date   Signature

</div>

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_____   _____   _____

Researcher   Date   Signature

</div>

Principal Investigator:	**Student Researcher:**
Name **Professor Nobanee Haitham**	Name: Absolom Masendeke
Work Address	Work Address: 15 Atkinson Drive, Hillside, Harare
Work Telephone:	Work Telephone: +263773390843
Work Email	Work Email: absolommasendeke@yahoo.com

[Please insert version number & date here] Ver1.1

APPENDIX C – FOCUS GROUPS AND IDI INTERVIEW GUIDE

Title of Research: Developing a Resilience Building Strategy for implementation in a non-profit human service organization: Case Study of Civic Forum on Human Development in Zimbabwe

- ✓ Give participants a copy of the Consent form for all FGD Sessions and obtain signatures,

- ✓ Obtain permission to record the discussion and capture key points on flipcharts

Meeting Reference Code: (eg FG-01)

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer/facilitator:

Interviewee/Participants:

Cycle 1: Exploratory FGDs with Unit Teams (Executive Board Members(EBMs)), Technical Committee Members (TCMs) and Secretariat Team Members (STMs)

1.1 What has been the core vision and mission of the organization since its establishment?

1.2 What major successes have been achieved in pursuit of this vision and mission?

1.3 What challenges have been encountered in the past in fulfilling this mission?

1.4 Which of these challenges pose a threat to the smooth operation and success of the organization in implementation of its programmes and services?

1.5 What strategies has the organization been using to respond to these challenges and threats?

1.6 Which strategies can help the organization to achieve long-term resilience currently and in the future?

1.7 Which aspects of these strategies would need to explore in detail to help understand their significance in developing a resilience building strategy for the organization?

1.8 What would be key ingredients of a good resilience building strategy going into the future?

Cycle 2: Combined FGD: Co-sensing future strategies for RBS

1.9 What strategies have helped the organization to succeed in the past?

1.10　What challenges pose the greatest threat to organizational survival?

1.11   What major shocks have been affecting the resilience of the organiza-

tion?

1.12   When and how did the organization respond to these shocks and chal-

lenges?

1.13   What mechanisms were used to detect potential threats and dangers

facing the organization?

1.14   What were the roles played by the different members of the organization

in mapping and implementation of response strategies to crisis situations?

1.15   What resilience attributes, capabilities and weaknesses were exhibited

by the organization in responding to crisis situations?

1.16   What strategies, attributes and capabilities were more useful in helping

the organization cope, recover and prepare for future crisis situations?

1.17   What issues should be explored further with organizational members to

develop an effective resilience building strategy for implementation in the

organization?

Cycle 3: in-depth Interviews – 12 Participants

1.18   What is your role and function in the organization?

1.19   How long have you been in the organization?

1.20   What crisis situations have witnessed over the years?

1.21   Were these crisis situations foreseen or unforeseen?

1.22   What were the key impacts of these crisis situations?

1.23   Which ones were resolved fully?

1.24   What strategies were used on each of them?

1.25   How did the different organizational members react to the crisis situations?

1.26   It it important to have adequate knowledge of potential threats and dangers facing the organization before they harm the organization and why?

1.27   What resilience attributes, capabilities and weaknesses were exhibited in the organization during the times of crisis and/or stresses?

1.28   What attributes and capabilities helped the organization to cope, recover and adapt to the situation?

1.29   What was your lowest point of morale in the organization? What triggered that?

1.30   What strategies and attributes would you consider in developing an effective RBS for implementation in the organization?

Cycle 4: Focus Group – 05: Resilience Building Themes

1.31   What are the key resilience building themes are emerging from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews so far?

1.32   What strategies and attributes are being exhibited in these emerging themes?

1.33   What strategies and attributes would enhance the capacity of the organization to anticipate cope and adapt to crisis situations that have affected and are likely to affect the resilience of organizations to shocks?

1.34   What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that need to be managed as part of day to day resilience building process in the organization?

Cycle 5: Focus Group Discussion – 06 Resilience Building Strategy Development

1.35   Bearing in mind, the need to develop a resilience building strategy that can be implemented in the organization which themes and attributes should drive the resilience building strategy of the organization in the future?

1.36   What is strategic about these strategies and attributes to the organization?

1.37   What will happen to the organization if the strategy is implemented?

Cycle 6: Focus Group Discussion – 07: Final Reflection and Learning

1.38   What have we learnt about the development of a resilience building strategy in a non-profit human service organization?

1.39   What knowledge has been generated and how will it be used in the organization?

1.40   What are the action implications of the emerging resilience building strategy for the organization currently and in the future?

1.41   Beyond this organization, what lessons from the RBS process can be shared with other non-profit organizations?