Understanding Transformational Development in World Vision South Africa:

Conceptualisation and Operationalisation

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Disclaimer:

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Acknowledgements

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List of Acronyms

ADP   Area Development Programme
DW   Development Worker
FBDO   Faith Based Development Organisation
NO   National Office
SO   Support Office
TD   Transformational Development
WV   World Vision
WVI   World Vision International
WVSA   World Vision South Africa

Abstract

This paper explores the integration of secular and religious developmental discourses in integrated development approaches, focusing on the nature of such integration and the construction and operationalisation of meanings within integrated discourses. The investigation is pursued using the case study the integrated approach of Transformational Developmental within World Vision South Africa.

Understandings of Transformational Development within World Vision are found to be multiple, and are analysed in terms of the degree and functioning of the integration between discourses, and as dynamically constructed and contextually embedded.

Keywords

Chapter 1
Introduction

The intersection between religion and development has recently gained currency and momentum as a 'mainstream' development concern. Religious beliefs, values and organisations are recognised as playing an important role in generating religiously inspired development interventions; faith-based development organisations (FBDOs), as agents of this development, have emerged as important development role-players. However, much of the focus on the interrelationship between religion and development has centred on the practice of development. Less attention has been paid to religious perspectives on and conceptualisations of the ends and processes of development; exploring these may present opportunities to advance new and alternative visions of and pathways toward development. The extent to which and ways in which religiously inspired conceptions of development and the religious beliefs underpinning FBDOs motivate and impact organisational and development practice is an additional area of necessary research.

While both development and religion are concerned with the 'good life', human flourishing and the creation of a better world; these ends and concepts and the processes and resources mobilised in achieving development, or transformation, are often conceived of differently within religious and developmental frameworks. Prominent FBDOs often seek to integrate both discourses within their developmental approaches.

1.1   Research focus

This research seeks to explore the conceptual interrelationship between religious and developmental discourses and their synthesis in an integrated development approach, with some reflection on the operation of such an approach. This is pursued by using as a case study an explicitly Christian international FBDO, World Vision (focussing on its South African chapter) to explore the ways in which the integrated 'transformational development' approach advocated and pursued by the organisation is conceptualised and implemented by the organisation. The reflections of religiously inspired development practitioners, though relevant to the practice of integrated development, are often overlooked; they form the basis of this research.

My core research question is

- How is transformational development understood in World Vision South Africa?

This is pursued through the following sub-questions:

o How are religious and developmental discourses integrated in understandings of transformational development within World Vision South Africa?

o How is World Vision South Africa's conceptualisation of transformational development operationalised?

Transformational Development was found to be understood in a number of contrasting ways within World Vision South Africa (hereafter WVSA). These different understandings are analysed as being produced dynamically, in relation to 'official' constructions of transformational development (hereafter TD) presented by World Vision International (WVI) and in the official documentation of WVSA, as well as in relation to the socio-economic context of South Africa and of the particular contexts of the World Vision bodies within South Africa. Differing understandings of TD and of core concepts within the approach were found to be shaped by the manner in which the approach was operationalised, depending both on the purpose of the organisational body, and on the circumstances in which it operated: conceptions of TD were thus found to correspond to various organisational levels within WVSA.

The greatest variance in conceptions of TD was, unsurprisingly, discovered to exist between the strategic and implementing bodies of WVSA. The integration of religious and developmental discourses was found to be more intense at organisational levels concerned with developmental strategy (such as the National Office). Implementation of the approach at a practical level was found to give rise to contrasting understandings of TD, with considerable focus at field level being placed on the material concerns of development: the integration does not seem to hold to the same degree at the level of implementation.

This paper further found that understandings of TD throughout WVSA are tied to a popular discourse of 'dependency'; this dependency logic is analysed as functioning as a legitimating frame for the TD approach as implemented in South Africa, and particularly for recent changes in the implementation strategy away from direct service provision and toward the facilitation of capacity building for sustainability. The mobilisation of this dependency logic is argued to be misapplied, in South Africa and particularly in WVSA, and to produce unanticipated negative results. Drawing on a discourse of dependency to form understandings of TD and its core concepts has the potential unintended effect of undermining the transformational power of the approach.

1.2   Outline of the paper

Following this presentation of the focus of the research paper, the research methodology and methods used in its service are outlined. Chapter 2 presents the conceptual framework which informs the research and includes a critical review of literature dealing with the interrelation of religious and developmental discourses, and a critical review of the discourse of dependency. Chapter 4 illustrates various and contrasting conceptualisations of TD and the various forms of operationalisation which follow these through presenting ethnographic data and an analysis of the functioning of the conceptualisations of TD within WVSA. Particular focus is placed on the mobilisation of a discourse of dependency in such conceptions, and its significant impact. Chapter 5 synthesises and concludes the paper.

1.3   Methodology

1.3.1 Case Study Selection

Field research was conducted using a qualitative case study approach, and was undertaken over a period of a month during July and August 2011.

World Vision was selected as an emblematic case study as its 'transformational development' development approach is conceived of in terms of both developmental 'best practice' and the Christian values and beliefs taken to frame the work of the organisation. WVSA thus facilitated study of the ways in which an integrated development approach is constructed, providing the opportunity to explore the construction of 'transformation' as a developmental concept and approach, and the influence of religious beliefs and values in such a conceptualisation – both areas of interest in this research. World Vision further provides a good case study because, as one of the largest development and aid agencies operating with an annual budget of $2.61billion[1] globally and targeting millions of beneficiaries in 100 countries through its transformational development, reflections on the practice of such a highly influential International NGO and FBDO will be pertinent for World Vision's own practice and potentially that of FBDOs influenced by it.

WVSA agreed to accommodate this research; the intention and focus of the research was made clear to WVSA, while WVSA's expectations and requirements regarding Child Protection and protocol for visitors entering WVSA programmes were agreed to and signed on my part. Hope that the

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[1] This is more than double that of Save the Children and triple that of Oxfam International, see www.savethechildren.net and www.oxfam.org, both accessed October 30th 2011

research might prove useful to WVSA in their self-reflection and planning processes was expressed, by both myself and members of the organisation.

Research was conducted in two locations. The initial three working days of the research period were spent at the National Office (hereafter NO) in Johannesburg, which functions as the strategic headquarters of WVSA. The majority of the research period was spent at the Umzimkhulu Area Development Programme (ADP) in KwaZulu-Natal.

1.3.2 Research Methods

At both the NO and Umzimkhulu ADP I was assigned a desk and kept the same working hours as the WV staff. While staff members were asked to 'cooperate with me fully' on my arrival at the Umzimkhulu ADP and introduction as a researcher by the manager, a strong emphasis was placed on my 'being treated as one of the team' and as a staff member. Much of the research thus took the form of participatory observation: I attended and participated in daily morning devotions, daily and weekly staff meetings, three meetings between World Vision and community representative organisations (two Community Care Coalition, or CCC, meetings and a meeting of the Pastor's Fraternal), a community training event, a Registered Children training session and a weekend exchange excursion for Registered Children representatives, a gender baseline survey (conducted with both high school children and adult community members), and both formal and informal partnership meetings with established and potential government partners. While based in the Kokstad office, I travelled with World Vision staff frequently to the various villages in which these events were held, and spent a day accompanying one of the Development Workers (hereafter DWs) in her village-based work. Much of the data has thus emerged from participatory observation.

In addition to the above, interviewing was a core research method. The nature of the research was explained to all interviewees and full consent obtained from all who agreed to be interviewed; all interviews were conducted in assurance of confidentiality and protection of anonymity. Interviews or group discussions were only recorded when approved by interviewees. Eight semi-structured recorded interviews with staff were conducted at the NO, ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 hours long. At the ADP level, 19 of the 21 staff were interviewed (the two exceptions were the Accountant and one of the 13 Development Workers). Each of these interviews was semi-structured and averaged an hour in duration; all but one were recorded. Close proximity to staff enabled second interviews with some staff and the extensive collection of information through

informal conversation. Furthermore, two members of the ADP Committee[2] were each interviewed separately, and four CCC members were interviewed jointly. I interviewed an additional CCC member individually, and interviewed two groups of registered children (one group of boys, another of girls). [3]

Relevant WV documents (of both WVI and WVSA) were surveyed to gain a thorough grounding in WV's transformational development approach and organisational operational structure. The notable *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, the seminal work on TD published by Bryant Myers, a senior WV official and published with WVI in 1999 was reviewed, alongside additional academic analyses of WV's developmental work and organisational nature. A thorough critical literature review of concepts pertinent to the research was undertaken.

1.3.3 Limitations to Research

One of the key barriers faced in the process of research was language: I am not fluent in either of the predominant languages spoken in the area, isiXhosa and isiZulu. All interviews with WV staff were conducted in English, but participation in informal conversation or in certain meetings was limited without assistance in translation. World Vision kindly made one of their Development Workers available to assist with translation where required.

An additional limitation to the research conducted was the impossibility of conducting a comparative study at the ADP level due to constraints of time and geography. The research does contrast the conceptualisation of TD between the NO and ADP levels, however, further comparison between multiple ADPs would possibly have produced a more representative picture of the conceptualisation and operationalisation of WVSA as a whole. The research findings are limited in this respect.

A further potential limitation on the representativity of this research relates to the particular moment in which the research was conducted – the Umzimkhulu ADP was transitioning between phases within the project cycle. This process was accompanied by both a recent change in management staff, and a significant (international) change in implementation strategy away from direct service provision in favour of

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[2] The ADP is made up of community representatives and serves as a "board" to the ADP. ADP committee members communicate community needs and (project) ideas to WV and communicate WV's approach and activities to the communities in which WV works.

[3] A brief description of those interviewed in the research is found in Appendix A.

capacity building and implementation through partnership relationships. The research thus reflects a particular point within the ADP's project cycle, and possibly a moment of significant organisational transition. It is impossible without comparative research to determine how dis/similar the experience of the Umzimkhulu ADP is in relation to other ADPs in the country.

This research thus functions as a 'snapshot' case study. While 'isolated' to a degree in time and space, the study nevertheless analyses current constructions of TD in WVSA. Given that processes of meaning construction are dialectical engagements with "already-constructed (sedimented) meanings" (Maines 2000: 578), this research both reflects the dynamic process of meaning construction within the period of research, and will be relevant in shaping and understanding future constructions of TD.

Chapter 2
Building blocks in transformation: a conceptual framework for analysing transformational development

In order to elucidate reflection on the construction of Transformational Development in WVSA, this chapter provides an analysis of the interrelation between religion and development: the treatment of religion within the development studies discipline is explored, particularly as providing a frame of analysis for identifying religious resources (and motivations) mobilised within development processes. The intrinsic concern for and impetus toward development within (particularly Christian) religious thinking and practice is presented as providing conceptual tools and religious resources for framing and pursuing development. A social constructionist approach is used to analyse the integration of both religious and developmental approaches to development in TD through their dynamic re-construction in relation to each other and the contexts in which they are produced.

The developmental concepts mobilised within TD, namely the 'new orthodoxy' of empowerment, participation, ownership and sustainability, are presented and a brief critique offered. Finally, an overview of the 'dependency culture' popularly (and controversially) claimed to have emerged as a result of 'welfare dependency' in South Africa is offered. The presentation of this discourse provides the basis within which notions of dependency in South Africa can be understood and against which the legitimacy of claims of a 'dependency culture' and its relevance to the TD work of WVSA can be analysed. The dependency culture thesis is identified as ideologically laden and the important role of both political and moral agendas in the construction and characterisation of 'the poor' as a dependent category is briefly presented.

2.1   Conceptualising religion

TD is framed within a religious narrative, and appeals in this case to Christian beliefs and values in conceptualising the end and process of development. Religion functions as a core motivational factor for WV staff and as a key resource in interpreting meaning and ascribing value in the process of development. Religious perspectives function similarly in the communities in which and with whom WV implements its TD approach. The religious assumptions of these communities must thus be understood in order to contextualise the local conceptualisation and operationalisation of TD.

Religion is understood here as the acceptance of an invisible order and transcendent, supernatural dimension of life, populated by spiritual beings; this nonmaterial realm is integrated with the material: it provides meaning to the world and to people's existence in it, and affects the conditions of the material world (Ter Haar 2011:11)[4]. Wellbeing is considered by believers to be most fully achieved through right relationship (often managed through communication) with this order or the spiritual beings inhabiting it (Clarke 2011:1). Religion thus serves as a frame for interpretation and as a motivation for decisions and action in peoples' everyday lives (Tyndale 2006: 153). It is important to note that religion is dynamic and embodied in peoples' lives and socio-cultural contexts; core teachings are continually reinterpreted in dialogue with these contexts.

A particularly important aspect of religion in the context of Africa is the role of the spirit world and of the ascribed power of the spirit(s). The importance of the S/spirit resonates strongly in indigenous religions in Africa, Christianity and especially its expression(s) in Africa, which have a strong spiritual orientation. The S/spirit is understood and engaged with as having real power, effective to change material realities and transform lives as individuals and communities (Ter Haar 2011:13). The S/spirit is thus an empowering resource with "transformative" potential; it can be understood to enhance people's agency, enabling people to act in their own lives to direct and effect change and material transformation (Ibid: 13,14).

2.2   Religion within Development Studies

As with most value systems and ideologies, religion is concerned with matters of human wellbeing, the good life and good society, and the transformation of the world; it is therefore intrinsically concerned with and involved in 'development' work. Deneulin and Bano (2009:4) make a case that religion and development are inseparably interlinked with each other, bolding claiming that "there is no separation between religion and development". TD builds upon this premise.

As noted above, religion influences conceptions of development and provides resources to its adherents which may be mobilised in pursuing development. Ter Haar and Ellis (2006: 356) identify four such religious resources, each of which are operationalised in WVSA's conception and implementation of TD:

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[4] Distinguished from the definition of religion presented, spirituality is understood here to describe people's personal relation to and experience of this supernatural dimension of life, and faith to be one's belief and trust in such a transcendent reality (Lunn 2009:937).

Religious ideas, or people's beliefs, contribute to shaping the values and assumptions people hold as individuals and collectively. These influence the "moral base" of society, which in turn influences people's "perceptions of the concept of development and their response to circumstances of poverty or deprivation" (Clarke 2011:4), impacting what is considered legitimate or meaningful development. Sackey (1999) and others argue that such religious values and understandings of the 'good life' should orient discussion of the ends (and means) of development. It follows that conceptions of development and the means of achieving it informed by religious perspectives would not be "formulated in exclusively material terms" (Ter Haar 2011:11) and would draw on religious resources in achieving it.

Religious practices, including ritual behaviour, may function importantly in development: practices such as almsgiving or caring for the poor have direct developmental results. Church services, including sermons and prayer, may be mobilised in the service of developmental objectives, as is the case in WV's "Channels of Hope" HIV/AIDS stigma interventions which operate through church services.

Religious organisation may be mobilised in development as churches and their congregations, or FBDOs, function as important agents, partners and vehicles in development processes.

Religious or spiritual experiences, "such as the subjective experience of inner change or transformation" (Ter Haar and Ellis 2006: 356) serve as resources within the development process and an avenue of empowerment: inner transformation may be seen as a necessary dimension of or precursor to social transformation; both views are present in conceptualisations of TD in WVSA. Access to spiritual empowerment may also be considered necessary for or mobilised in social transformation; this too is reflected in the practice of TD – each developmental initiative, indeed, the daily work of WV, is preceded by prayer for its success.

Religion as an impulse toward development

The developmental concepts intrinsic to Christianity are framed within a concern for and narrative of progress, redemption and the achievement of a perfect society (linked to the concept of the kingdom of God), as well a particular concern for the poor.

Recognising that 'development work' can be religiously motivated and pursued as a religious expression – "The development work of religious traditions is part of what being a good Christian or a good Muslim is all about, together with prayer and worship", (Deneulin and Bano 2009:5) – and that spirituality may be constitutive of wellbeing opens up the possibility for engagement religion as adding to, critiquing or contributing alternatives to the ways in which 'development' is understood and practised (see Tyndale 2006). Conceiving of development from within religious value frames enables people to utilise their own (religious)

resources in such development (Ter Haar 2011:5). This presents an opportunity for community empowerment. Transformational development seeks to shape a form and process of development which reflects and operates in the service of the religious framework which inspires it.

2.3 Christian Development

Christianity is the world's largest religion and has over 2 billion adherents (Clarke 2011:109); it is impossible to speak of a singular 'Christian tradition': multiple interpretations of the main tenants of the faith exist between and within its various denominations and streams of Christianity. Discussion of Christianity within this paper is limited to the Protestant tradition, out of which World Vision originated and which characterises the religious landscape of the field site.

   Core elements of the Christian religion relate to the conceptualisation and practice of development directly. Special concern for the poor, often in the context of notions of Christian compassion and duty, for human wellbeing (sometimes conceived of as an 'abundant life' and in relation to the inherent dignity and equality of people as created in the image of God) and for social justice (related to the concept of the Kingdom of God) are all relevant in this respect[5]. Religiously motivated organisations and individuals pursue poverty alleviation, developmental and social justice projects as an expression of a Christian way of life and morality: "The engagement of religious communities in development activities derives from their core beliefs and teachings" (Denuelin and Bano 2009:4).

   The modern era of development has prompted Christian thinkers to systematically engage with their beliefs in response to massive developmental challenges and to the broader development project. World Vision's 'transformational development' is the product of such engagement, and follows a history of thinking and practice of 'Christian development'.

   Both religion and development discourses represent "visions of how the world may be transformed" (Ter Haar 2011:5). Development discourses typically conceive of transformation in material conditions and social, even structural, relations. Within religious discourses transformation is usually associated with the nonmaterial and spiritual dimensions of people's experience and wellbeing and is often conceived of in terms of individual 'inner transformation' (Tyndale 2006). However, religious understandings of transformation are not necessarily limited to the internal or to the individual, but may also include conceptions of societal change and social justice.

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[5] For discussion on core tenants of Christianity and their relation to developmental concerns, see Kim 2007 and Clarke 2011.

A holistic worldview understands reality to be simultaneously material and nonmaterial, correspondingly, 'integral development' stresses the importance of development responding to both material and immaterial needs and circumstances, and utilising both material and nonmaterial resources in doing so. Such development recognises that nonmaterial growth processes may have material effects: inner transformation may motivate, be expressed in or even considered necessary for societal change (Van Wensveen 2008, Ter Haar 2011). Material development processes may further impact nonmaterial dimensions, and may be meaningful and function importantly within religious perspectives and practice. Integral development thinking thus holds that development processes should not separate material and nonmaterial growth processes.

WV's TD approach represents substantial recent movements within Christianity integrating the concepts and processes of spiritual and social, economic and political transformation, all of which are captured within WV's concern for holistic "human transformation". This concern provides the developmental impetus for WV.

2.4 Development Discourses

Social constructionism argues that social phenomena are shaped and perceived by consciousness (framed by worldview and influenced by context) through social interaction. Social realities, or knowledge, are constructed through social interaction, and are then embodied in social transactions, which informs the reconception of social realities in a dialectical process of meaning (and reality) making (Maines 2000:578). Transformational development can thus be understood as a dynamic concept and process, constructed and reconstructed as it is operationalised through social transactions in relation to the particular needs, social conditions, local norms and values, as well as wider economic and political processes engaged characterising the context in it engages.

2.4.1 The New Orthodoxy

TD is officially constructed as sustainable and is pursued through the means of community empowerment, participation in and ownership of the development process; these methods constitute the 'new orthodoxy' of development and are mobilised in TD; a critical presentation of these practices is presented here.

A general consensus in the development field can be said to understand *empowerment* as the process whereby "poor and disenfranchised men and women come to be critically aware of their socio-political and economic situation"; empowerment thus implies "a qualitative change in an individual's self-perception" (Kelsall and Mercer 2003:293), which is seen as the basis for one's ability to act to change one's circumstances. Associated with empowerment, the concern for

participation in development is seen to translate apparently passive development recipients into active 'partners' who choose, design and contribute to the realisation of development goals (Kelsall and Mercer 2003:294). Participation is considered to enhance agency and function as a pathway to greater autonomy; indeed, as originally conceived is it a radically political concept aimed at reversing power hierarchies. Autonomy and participation in development processes is understood to produce *community ownership*, which is conceived in terms of involvement in and taking responsibility for community development. *Sustainability*, originally conceived in ecological terms, is understood as relating to economic and social spheres. Community ownership and participation are thought to contribute to social sustainability, which in turn supports the economic sustainability of development initiatives (Foladori 2005).

Henkel and Stirrat (2001) describe each of these concepts as comprising a 'new orthodoxy' in development, centred on concerns for people's agency and prioritisation of the local in 'bottom up' development processes. It is on this basis that they are envisioned as the means through which TD is pursued.

Conceptions of community empowerment and participation often rely on an unproblematized conception of 'community'. Such romanticized conceptions may construct the 'community' as homogenous and harmonious: this fails to recognise differentiated interests and power hierarchies within communities, and thus the differential impact that processes of empowerment and participation may have. Thus, processes that empower some within a community may simultaneously disempower others; the participation of some within the community may entail the marginalisation of others (Kelsall and Mercer 2003). These critiques are particularly applicable to WV, as the organisation's conceptualisation of a 'community' in relation to an individual, and the role of individuals or the 'community' within the process of transformation is perhaps underdeveloped. The above critique may apply equally to notions of 'community ownership' and to sustainability, which is often framed in terms of community.

2.4.2 Holism and the nonmaterial within development

Poverty and development are frequently considered in terms of ill- and wellbeing. Multidimensional approaches and a growing concern for holism and the inclusion of values in development enable the consideration of nonmaterial dimensions of wellbeing and development. The World Bank's influential 'Voices of the Poor' study (Narayan et al 2000) established the importance of nonmaterial dimensions of poverty, including spiritual dimensions, which emerged in their study as being important both in how poverty is experienced (as having a moral dimension, with wellbeing

experienced in spiritual terms) and in the process of moving out of poverty (religious and spiritual motivation and resources are often identified as important in this) (Afshar 2005: 534). This spiritual dimension of development constitutes a vital part of TD, and is equally evident in "African Christian culture", in which the realms of the spiritual and the material are thoroughly integrated (Thaut 2009:324; Akrong 1999:8). TD is thus conceived of by WVSA staff members (partly) through appeal to spiritual dimensions, and is implemented in integrated material/spiritual contexts.

2.5 Dependency

Discussion of a 'dependency culture' being created through people's dependence on state assistance is currently significant in South African public discourse has become popular in the media and in political debates; it was also widely referred to by World Vision staff in relation to their own development work and understanding of TD.

The overwhelming majority of academic research into the existence of 'welfare dependency' and its supposed symptoms of passivity and disconnection from the labour market in South Africa counter claims of widespread welfare dependency strongly (Devereux 2010; Surender, Noble, Wright 2008). While it is certainly true that conditions of mass and sustained poverty and chronic unemployment mean that many families do 'depend' on the social assistance they receive from the state and other sources, this does not necessarily translate into a 'dependency syndrome', in which people modify their behaviour in response to the support they receive to become passive, irresponsible or unmotivated to work. These findings are confirmed by similar findings in neighbouring African countries (Devereux 2010), as well as evidence emerging from the Northern Hemisphere (Surender, Noble, Wright 2008).

Despite this evidence, the discourse and logic of 'dependency culture' was mobilised in informing understandings of the transformational development approach and process. Every society must deal with issues of dependence, where members of the society are unable to provide for their immediate basic needs without assistance; in dealing with the 'problem of the poor', societies have to delineate who qualifies for or is 'deserving' of assistance and who is excluded from or 'undeserving' of assistance. Such delineations are made according to moral, economic and political imperatives. This distinction has traditionally been determined on the basis of the ability of 'the poor' to work - operating on the Classical economic assumption that it those (initially men) able to work to support themselves should do so and thus should not receive assistance.

The "deserving poor" are recognised as those permanently labour constrained and thus unable to provide for their own basic needs through labour – the infirm or disabled, mothers with many young children

(McIntosh 2005). The economically inactive without possibility of becoming economically active constitute a form of "positive dependency" (Devereux 2010: 4). Society recognises and adopts its responsibility for meeting the needs of this group. In South Africa, provision is made for this group through social grants (in particular, disability grants, old age pensions, child support grants).

The group of 'undeserving poor' were initially considered as the able bodied idle (McIntosh 2005); today the category of 'undeserving' has been modified to facilitate greater temporary support for those identified as economically active (or potentially economically active) individuals who, through circumstances (such as disaster, or ill-health, or unemployment) are made temporarily 'dependent' on assistance. Assistance is provided, for example, through welfare benefits, but is designed to be given for a limited period of time to support beneficiaries until they become economically active and self-sufficient again. The concept of moving out of a position of dependence on assistance is referred to as "graduation".

Those in this position are considered at risk of developing a 'dependency culture'. This 'culture' is linked to an understanding of 'dependency' as "an inevitable consequence of providing people with regular social transfers on a long-term basis" (Frontiers 2010:2). The assumption or concern is that regular support generous enough to sustain beneficiaries will function as a "perverse disincentive"; those assured of receiving such support are assumed to embrace such support as a rational strategy for meeting their immediate basic needs, losing the motivation to 'graduate' through becoming economically active and 'independent' once more.

'Dependents' are assumed/feared to modify their social and economic behaviour in response to receiving assistance in ways which are perceived to be negative: such changes are often cited as passivity, reduced personal responsibility and attachment to the labour market. These behavioural changes are perceived to diminish beneficiaries ability to meet their basic needs in the future, prolonging their dependence on welfare (and thus increasing the burden of society in providing assistance); this is considered "negative dependency" (Devereux 2010:4) and is understood to produce a 'dependency trap'. The underclass thesis holds that the passivity produced in dependency culture is reproduced generationally, and is accompanied by anti-social behaviour (Surender, Noble, Wright and Ntshongwana 2010:205).

Pejorative characterisations or associations with the 'undeserving poor' are informed by concepts of the problem of a dependency culture or syndrome: these people are characterised as passive, lazy or as 'scrounging' off the system while 'choosing leisure'.

In South Africa, and particularly the Umzimkhulu area, a massive portion of the population rely on external assistance to sustain themselves, a significant sector of the population face chronic unemployment with little

prospect of graduation due to the inability of the labour market to absorb their labour, rather than their inability to secure employment. Unemployment insurance covers a very small percentage of the population, and social grants do not support the unemployed. The unemployed can thus be considered a modern category of 'deserving poor' in South Africa. Devereux (2010:3) notes that distinctions between those in poverty with graduation potential and those without such potential "have limited applicability in the face of the widespread chronic vulnerability that is prevalent in rural areas of very poor countries"

One unfortunate result of the blurred distinction between those in poverty with and without graduation is that all those in poverty are potentially characterised in the pejorative terms associated with dependency culture. It is on the basis of this mistaken logic that the problem of poverty in South Africa can be described as a problem of, or characterised by, 'dependency culture'.

The logic and discourse of dependency often implicitly fulfils a political (and economic) role. The discourse operates on the assumption that able-bodied *individuals* should provide for their sustenance through their labour. The dependency discourse has recently been mobilised in the service of neoliberal macroeconomic policies and liberal political agendas which emphasise the responsibility of individuals to function productively within the market and promote the 'rolling back' of welfare support. This "responsibilisation" of individuals in conditions of poverty for their situation (Dean 2007:581) functions to place the cause of the problem of poverty with the behaviour and decisions of 'the poor', and obfuscates the structural causes of poverty from view, thus maintaining the macroeconomic status quo. While appeals to a discourse of dependency may not draw on the often implicit political ideologies closely associated with it, the use of this discourse nevertheless opens up space for such ideologies.

Chapter 3
Situating the study

3.1 World Vision

3.1.1 World Vision as a Faith Based Development Organisation

World Vision (hereafter WV) has an explicitly Christian identity and character, as evident in its mission, "World Vision is an international partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God."[6] WV describes itself as a "Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation": emphasis is placed on integrating each of these three foci as the organisation seeks to work with the "world's most vulnerable people" to "overcome poverty and injustice". [7]

WV's conceives of development as 'transformational': transformational development is described as "the process through which children, families and communities identify and overcome the obstacles that prevent them from living life in all its fullness".[8] Christian beliefs and values motivate and frame the development practice of WV.

3.1.2 World Vision Operational Structure

World Vision is one of the largest international aid and development organisations operating globally. Established in 1950 as a Christian child-focused relief agency, WV today works in relief, development and advocacy in 100 countries, operating as an international partnership of autonomous National Offices, coordinated by World Vision International (WVI). WVSA thus operates autonomously, but is linked together with other WV bodies both through a shared commitment to WV's Mission, Core Values and a 'Covenant of Partnership' agreed to by all WV entities (Whaites 1999:419), and further by common policies and standards (although it is understood that these should be adapted and 'contextualised' in light of country conditions). These common policies and standards, as well as tools, such as the Integrated Programming Model framework, which provides guidelines supporting development practitioners in terms project facilitation, are developed at the Global Centre in Geneva through reflection on WV practice globally.

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[6] www.wvi.org

[7] www.wvi.org

[8] www.wvi.org

Child-sponsorship contributes approximately half of WV's budget (80% of which is privately funded, with the remaining 20% coming from governments and multilateral sources), and functions to link individual children in poverty with sponsors from across the globe. Funding raised through sponsorship is coordinated through Support Offices located in the sponsor's home countries. National Offices thus coordinate with Support Offices, with WVI, and with their own local chapters charged with implementing development and relief programmes. Each of these organisational bodies' priorities and needs should be integrated in designing the transformational development programmes implemented: the Umzimkhulu ADP must report against priorities identified by WVI, as well as the NO[9] and SO[10].

The 'transformational development' advocated by World Vision is implemented through its ADPs. ADPs are long-term development projects (usually with a project life of 10 – 15 years) focused on the delivery of child-focused, community based, sustainable development[11]. ADPs pool funds from individually sponsored children within an area (often a cluster of villages) to implement community development initiatives intended to "help address the root causes of poverty". While WV seeks to improve childhood wellbeing, it pursues this objective through focusing its interventions not only on children, but on the communities in which they grow up. An ADP typically targets between 15,000 to 100,000 people; interventions seek to address developmental needs, potentials and challenges/threats relevant to the particular 'community/ies' (WV PPD 2011:27). WV often facilitates and implements this through partnerships with other relevant stakeholders, such as government or other NGOs/CBOs/FBOs. In the 2010 financial year, World Vision operated 1500 Area Development Programmes[12].

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[9]The 4 strategic objectives for WVSA are:
- To improve the HIV & AIDS, health and nutrition status of women and children.
- To increase the percentage of children in program impact areas who attain functional levels of reading, basic math and essential life skills.
- Households enjoying economic well being.
- To improve the effectiveness of National Resource Development.

[10] Australian Support Office priorities of gender and disability mainstreaming and community capacitation are included as cross-cutting concerns in all World Vision Umzimkhulu programming.

[11]www.worldvision.co.za
[12] www.wvi.org

3.2 South Africa

3.2.1 World Vision South Africa

World Vision South Africa was started in 1967. The National Office is located in Johannesburg, and WVSA is currently implementing 17 ADPs. The NO is a large office, concerned with the integration of the three pillars of World Vision: Humanitarian Emergency Assistance, Advocacy and Transformational Development; the office provides strategic guidance and monitoring for each of the ADPs in operation.

The Umzimkhulu ADP where the majority of the research was conducted is located in KwaZulu-Natal and was started in 2006. The ADP office is situated in Kokstad, an urban centre, but its programmes run in 32 rural villages in wards 8, 10 and 18 of the surrounding Sisonke District Municipality. The ADP targets 36500 beneficiaries, 2603 of whom are sponsored children. All sponsored children are sponsored by Australians, and so the ADP coordinates its programming with the Australian Support Office.

The ADP staff of 21 comprise of a small management core (the ADP Manager, and four programme or division heads[13]), who, along with the ADP Office Cleaner and Driver, are based in the Kokstad Office, but travel to the villages for workshops, etc as required. The remaining 13 members of staff are Development Workers. Development Workers (hereafter DWs) are field-based and only come into the Kokstad office for a weekly staff meeting. DWs are the operational force behind the sponsorship system: DWs monitor all sponsored children (known as Registered Children, or RCs) within the few villages that they are responsible for (one of which is their home village) and serve as an important connection point between WV and the communities in which it works. Each DW is typically responsible for monitoring approximately 250 children; this involves regular visits to the child or child's family, and completion of multiple reporting mechanisms and management of communication between children and their sponsors.

After five years of operation, the ADP has recently completed its first phase. This phase was focused on building relationships with the communities in which WV is working and was characterised by direct service provision. At the time of fieldwork the ADP was in the process of finalising its plans for the second 5 year phase it had recently entered. This phase displays a marked shift away from direct service provision in favour of community capacitation, with the intention that communities become self-sufficient and that the development impacts achieved through WV's involvement endure sustainably beyond WV's involvement in the communities. The transition of moving from engagement with

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communities as beneficiaries under a service delivery dominated paradigm, to engaging with communities as partners in development is ongoing.

The ADP's change in implementation approach follows a relatively recent re-envisioning of facilitation by WVI in which fresh focus on the importance of WV working through partnerships with other stakeholders and the community to ensure sustainable community development. Each WV body is required to align with these new foci in TD, but enjoys flexibility in terms of the timeframe and manner in which these foci are adopted/adapted.

This change in style of implementation coincided with a relatively recent change in the ADP Manager position. The apparently relatively rapid transition in implementation policy in the Umzimkhulu ADP may thus be linked to the prerogative of the ADP Manager.

3.2.2 Socio-economic conditions

South Africa's persistent poverty and deepening and severe income and socio-economic inequality is reflected in widespread absolute and relative poverty.[14] South Africa is ranked 123rd globally in terms of Human Development Indicators, and among the highest in the world in income inequality. According to the 2011 Human Development Report, 23 % of population live below the national poverty line, with an additional 22.2% are vulnerable to poverty (UNDP 2011:142). This poverty is structurally linked to high rates of unemployment (among other factors), which is currently at 25%[15]. South Africa has a young population: 41.5% of the population are aged 19 and below (Stats SA 2011:9). This contributes to a dependency ratio of 53% (UNDP 2001:164). The impact of high poverty, unemployment and dependency levels is exacerbated by an HIV prevalence rate of 10.6%, however, this rate among adult women is significantly higher at 19.4% (Stats SA 2011:5).

Umzimkhulu is characterised by "huge service backlogs, abject poverty, unemployment" and high dependency ratios (IDP 2011:32). Only 10.2% of the population are employed, with 77% of households earning less than R800 (approximately EUR 74) per month. 45% of the population are below the age of 14, leading to very high dependency ratios. 64.8% of households are headed by women.

Such conditions foster a strong and widespread reliance on social assistance through government grant provision. Similar patterns of reliance are found across South Africa, and have led to the rapid expansion of the social assistance programme over the past decade. Both relative and absolute poverty levels would be considerably higher in the absence of such government service provision.

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[14] http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_EN_Tables.pdf

[15] www.statssa.gov.za

3.2.3 Religious Landscape

As TD is an integrated developmental approach which appeals specifically to Christian beliefs to frame its conception and operation, it is necessary to understand the religious beliefs operating within WV, but also among the communities among which its transformational development is implemented.

South Africa's most recent census (2001) found that 84% of the population identified themselves as religious, with 79.79% of the country (35.7 million people) identifying themselves as Christian[16]. These people locate themselves within 'mainline' Christian, and African Independent Church traditions: approximately one-third of the population reported belonging to mainline Christian. A further third of the population indicated that they belonged to one of the independent churches, including Zionist and Ethiopian churches).[17] These churches emerged as a means of expression and accommodation of African worldviews within Christianity, or rather, of Christianity within African worldviews, and further to provide for political liberation from colonial and Apartheid state/white control and religious mediation.

Christianity has become firmly rooted in South Africa through processes of "inculturation and contextualisation" (Ter Haar 2000 in Ter Haar 2009:13). Christian expressions in South Africa have been shaped by the socio-economic and political contexts in which Christian teachings were interpreted: thus the nature of religious practice in South Africa has been shaped significantly by the presence of indigenous beliefs and religious practice and related cultural norms and values (as well as by Colonial and Apartheid domination). These churches, as elsewhere in Africa, emerged as a means of expression and accommodation of African worldviews within Christianity, or rather, of Christianity within African worldviews, and further to provide for political liberation from colonial, and in this case Apartheid state/white control and religious mediation.

In order to understand the religious and cultural landscape in which WV operates, it is important to have an understanding of indigenous religion in the area. The influence of these beliefs in the research site was expressed variously, through the presence of traditional African religious leaders, practitioners and believers in the villages, but also in various forms of Christianity present in the villages, integrated to different degrees with traditional religion. African Independent Churches express one form of this integration. A number of churches integrating indigenous religion with

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[16] Statistics SA, Census 2001 Primary Tables South Africa 2001:24
[17] Statistics SA, Census 2001 Primary Tables South Africa 2001:24
Accessed at http://www.statssa.gov.za/census01/html/RSAPrimary.pdf on October 14

Christianity exist in the area and were (perhaps pejoratively) referred to as practising "syncretism" by senior WV staff. Even more 'mainstream' denominations such as the Methodist and Anglican congregations which have a strong presence in the research site operate in the context of the socio-cultural value systems and norms of their communities.

3.2.4 Religious and cultural norms and values

Traditional indigenous religion in South Africa embodies a strong focus on the transcendent world understood to be integrated with the material world as well as a relational focus on practice. Social norms and values and a communal focus reflect these beliefs. These norms and values must be understood in order to analyse the ways in which World Vision's work and transformational development is received.

The aspects of traditional values and norms most relevant to the concept of 'transformational development' relate to the conception of the person, conceptions of ownership and wealth and appeal to spiritual power and influence.

Umntu ungumntu ngabanye abantu - A person is a person through other people

A core principle of traditional African culture is a principle of "humanness" commonly referred to as *ubuntu*; this conception of people is well expressed through the isiXhosa saying, a person is a person through other persons.

Identity among Africans is understood not in relation to individuated selves and ownership, but through interaction with other persons all participating in each other's identities (Akrong 1999:8). Accordingly, ownership of objects and spaces is not individuated, but held in commonwealth with others. The norm and value of communal ownership can be linked to the importance of "community ownership", a core aspect of TD. Furthermore, conceptions of the person in relation to others raises questions of how wellbeing is understood and whether it is considered to be experienced in community or as an individual. It is important that TD approaches in South Africa address this.

What wealth is for

In keeping with communal understandings of belonging and ownership, wealth has traditionally been understood to function to maintain networks of relationships, in which peoples' identities and statuses are situated; wealth may thus adopt a "subsistent utilitarian logic", distinguished from Western notions of wealth as individually accumulated and held (Akrong 1999:9). Wealth then, is ideally to be invested in upholding moral and social obligations to one's lineage community (Sackey 1999:6) and is thus not primarily for individual upward mobility. Such conceptions should not be overly romanced to the point of

their preclusion of the production of hierarchies of wealth and power. From this, the potential of investing in social networks and appeal to such networks as a resource within the transformational development process emerges.

Spiritual influence

As noted above, the spiritual is integrated into concepts of reality and recognised in everyday life, this may lead to causal attribution of spiritual agency to everyday circumstances and events (Akrong 1999: 5). Spiritual reality is understood as integrated into material and social conditions, such that spiritual agency may be drawn on in making sense of material conditions. This understanding could be mobilised within the TD approach

Each of these three elements has a direct impact on South Africans' conceptions of what 'development' should be, how it should be achieved and thus on how World Vision's conception of 'transformational development' is both constructed and received in South Africa.

Chapter 4
Conceptualising and operationalising 'transformational development'

This chapter explores the central question of how TD is understood in WVSA. Understandings of TD are identified and discussed as both integrated and multiple. The various understandings of TD produced within WVSA are placed in dialogue with each other through focusing discussion on constructions of the concept of poverty (the starting point for TD), on constructions of the end of this process (development and wellbeing) and of the process of transformation itself. Through this, the various contextual dimensions which condition the construction of understandings of TD, and the different conditions which affect the degree of integration achieved in constructions of TD are identified.

4.1 Transformational development: life in all its fullness

Drawing on official WV documentation[18], TD is, ideally, a holistic and sustainable development process which is community based and child-focussed, a process in which individuals, families and communities identify and work to overcome the root causes of their poverty or "the obstacles that prevent them from living life in all its fullness" [19].

TD adopts an "integrated physical-spiritual" view of people, the world and the development process (WVI 2003:6); the scope of TD is intended to be inclusive of social, spiritual, economic, political and environmental dimensions of life (ibid:16). The goals of TD and the process whereby it is pursued are framed within the biblical narrative of the kingdom of God (WVI 2003:3,6), but incorporate developmental insights and practice alongside the mobilisation of religious resources.

The 'domains of change' which TD seeks to impact include wellbeing (of children, their families and communities), empowerment (of children, to be agents of transformation, and of communities, to function sustainably and interdependently), transformed relationships (with self, God and others, reflecting both love and justice), as well as transformed systems and structures (WV 2003:24). WV is particularly concerned with

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[18] WVI's official framework for TD presented in this chapter expresses the approach as outlined in WV material, particularly TD Core documents made available on its specific 'transformational development' website (www.transformational-development.org), information made available on WVSA and WVI websites and used at the WVSA National Office and ADP Umzimkhulu office. "Walking with the poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development" (Myers 1999) is also heavily drawn upon here.

[19] www.worldvision.co.za

achieving child wellbeing, which is conceived of in terms of the 4 Childhood Wellbeing Aspirations which WV programming seeks to contribute to achieving, namely that all children: 1) enjoy good health, 2) are educated for life, 3) are cared for, protected and participate, and 4), love God and their neighbours (WVSA 2011:1).

4.2 An integrated conception of poverty

Officially then, the kingdom of God provides the framework and logic through which 'the problem of poverty' is recognised and responded to. Myers (1999) characterises the problem of poverty as primarily relational and holistic: dysfunctional (oppressive) relationships are regarded as impacting people negatively physically and socially, but also in terms of their identity and productivity.

The physical and social dimensions of poverty are explained through appeal to a combination of secular developmental approaches: poverty is conceived of as 'entanglement' in multiple systems of deprivation and oppression produced through unjust social and structural relations (as argued by Robert Chambers) and thus understood to be located in the space of the social and political (Myers 1999: 66-69). These systems of oppression are seen to impoverish individuals and communities through denying them access to social and political voice and economic opportunity (as argued by John Friedman) (ibid: 69-72).

Myers extends these secular conceptions of poverty through their application to 'transformational frontiers' which include spiritual dimensions. Through this, spiritual structures, powers and relationships are also regarded as producing poverty (through 'inadequate' worldviews, the influence over and deception of 'the poor' by spiritual powers, and the corrupting impact of sin in social structures) (Myers 1999:75). The experience of poverty is further examined as including a spiritual dynamic. Drawing on Jayakumar Christian (also a senior WV staff member), the impact of entanglement in material and spiritual webs of oppression and 'lies' result in disempowerment which produces an internal 'poverty of being' (ibid: 76).

This internal poverty is conceived of as 'marred identities' among 'the poor' in which 'the poor' are alienated from a sense of personal value and their own potential (Myers 1999: 130). Correlated with this, Myers holds that 'the poor' suffer a poverty of purpose or vocation as far as they fail to recognise their capability and calling to be 'productive stewards' (Myers 1999:3).

As seen above, official understandings of TD centre on both change at the *internal* level, in terms of restored 'true' identity and purpose, as well as at the more visible level of community (and beyond) through a focus on relationships. The former concern identifies the effects of poverty on individuals and connects this to a causal attribution of their poverty to factors within the individual: low self-value and alienation from their

vocation to be productive stewards leaves individuals in poverty and the households they comprise 'trapped' in unproductivity. The internal dimension of poverty is one dimension of the holistic and multidimensional experience of poverty, also including material and relational aspects; it is understood to inform their nature and experience. The relational aspect of poverty highlights the *structural* dimensions and causes of poverty, identifying the unjust or oppressive relational dynamics in which people in poverty are often situated and result in their disempowerment, both materially and spiritually. This relational focus enhances understanding of the experience of poverty and of the processes of transformation as collective.

4.2.1 Internal Dimensions of Poverty

Most interviewees (particularly at the NO and ADP Management levels) recognised that those in poverty expressed some form of internal poverty, which impacted the way in which they viewed themselves and the world, and consequently acted (in a manner perceived to reproduce their poverty). This internal poverty or 'poverty of being' was understood through relation to Christian beliefs and values or their absence. Alternatively, internal poverty was also conceived as a 'poverty of mind' - understood in relation to notions of productivity, worldview and dependency. This understanding relates to but differs slightly from the concern with the impoverished vocation of the poor within the official construction of TD.

4.2.1.1 Poverty of being

Conceptions of a 'poverty of being' relating to Myers' notions of identity in terms of self-worth, ability and purpose were not generalised across WVSA, but were present at the NO:

> ...chronic poverty mars the mind (…) if poverty gets to treat you like a nonhuman over a period of time, that's the image you have in mind.
>
> (Malachi. NO.)

> ...if people think, 'we are poor', 'we are nothing', 'we can't do anything', 'we are failures', then no project will be sustainable.
>
> (Lloyd. NO.)

This construction of a 'poverty of being' was understood in relation to a Christian frame, so that the overly limited view of the value and potential of 'the poor' (perhaps even shared by 'the poor') was understood in

contrast to their 'true' worth, dignity and potential possessed in the identity conferred on them through relationship to God; this dimension of poverty is understood implicitly in spiritual terms as the absence of the ideal spiritual connection/knowledge. The consequences of such poverty are not limited to the spiritual, but understood as expressed in material and social dimensions of deprivation. In light of this, the purpose and process of TD was presented as "bring(ing) about a paradigm shift in terms of how people view themselves" (Richard. NO.) or "restating the identity that poverty has taken away (...) restat(ing) them as those made in the image of God" so that 'the poor' "recognise their potential" and become "restored in their own eyes" (Malachi. NO.).

The church, as a core partner of WV in TD, plays a key role in operationalising the 'restoration' of identity and vocation through spiritual transformation in the lives of community members. Religious experience may be mobilised as a transformational resource.

This understanding of 'the poor' as having a distorted or limiting sense of self, and its consequent focus on identity as a transformational frontier, did not emerge strongly at the ADP level. Constructions of internal poverty at the ADP level related to 'the poor' being considered distorted or limited in their 'mindset' or thinking about the world and their role in/relationship to it.

4.2.1.2 Poverty of Mind- dependence

A more common understanding of internal poverty held at the NO and ADP Management levels was related to concepts of 'mindset' and the unproductive role and associated mental attitudes or inadequate knowledge/perspectives ascribed to 'the poor'. (While constraints on the productivity of 'the poor' may take the form of assumptions or attitudes held by 'the poor', externally imposed constraints on the productivity of 'the poor' are also significant - these are dealt with in a later section.) Constructions of the internal mental poverty of 'the poor' noted the apparent reluctance or inability of 'the poor' to proactively respond to improve their situation, or to lead economically productive lives. This alleged problematic mindset (framed in terms of the responsibility and self-motivation perceived to be absent among 'the poor', or of informational deficits) was considered a 'root cause' of poverty (Richard. NO.). The transformational process is thus here located in the mind: "Development, I always say, begins in the mind" (Michael. ADP. M.).

Such thinking is easily linked to notions of dependency, in which (individual) productivity is also a central concern. A discourse of dependency strongly informed by theories of 'welfare dependency' was widely appealed to by WV staff in shaping/expressing their understandings of poverty and transformation. Staff at both NO and ADP levels asserted the existence of a 'dependency syndrome' or 'culture' in South Africa and identified it "one of the biggest problems in th(e) country" (Peter. NO.).

> Dependency is definitely a problem (...) it's so entrenched in
> our country.   (Michael. ADP. M.)

As a result, understandings of the set of assumptions, attitudes or limited perspectives constructed as characterising internal poverty were heavily influenced by the concept of dependency and its supposedly associated 'dependency syndrome'. Through this, 'the poor' were constructed as unproductive and characterised as passive and unmotivated, even implicitly immature or rebellious in failing to take responsibility for and initiative in their own development.

> People don't want to take responsibility, they don't want to
> take action.
>
> (Lloyd. NO.)

> (the cause of poverty is) Laziness: people don't want to
> work, they prefer to be given the fish, not to be taught how
> to fish. They are thirsty, but their feet are in the water.
>
> (Richard. NO.)

Concepts of dependency were incorporated significantly into constructions of TD: interpreting internal poverty in terms of a 'dependency syndrome' foregrounds dependency as an important dimension to be addressed through TD. TD can then be conceived of in terms of moving communities from a position of mental and physical dependence to a condition of independence, or more rarely, interdependence. This process is pursued through encouraging and capacitating community members to take responsibility for and be involved in their own development. This understanding of TD is reflected by Thandiwe, an Umzimkhulu ADP board member:

> Transformational development is a change of mindset,
> because each and every time we really want to depend on
> government, most of the time, we want to say, 'the
> government will do this for me', although we are staying
> here, the government doesn't know what we want. We
> must really stand up for ourselves and do something and
> then we must go to the government and say: we are doing
> this, can you please help us get off the ground.

4.2.1.3 Dependency contested

Despite being widely drawn upon, the discourse of dependency and its mobilisation in WV is contentious and contested. While dependency is commonly understood by WV officials as functioning significantly within TD, understandings of 'dependency' itself draw on different discourses to interpret it and its relevance for transformation. At the NO, dependency discourse was either appealed to in light of (and absorbed into) or apart from a religious framework. In the case of the former, dependency was understood in contrast with the gifts and vocation that Christians are given and called to:

> Men are not created to be dependent. From a biblical point of view, man was created to do things for themselves; you have the ability, the potential in you to do something.
>
> (Richard. NO.)

Alternatively, dependency was regarded as a generalised South African problem, a typical and not 'spiritual' characteristic of 'the poor'.

> (Dependency in the communities is) so much, so much, so much. They don't want to think. ... They are lazy, they don't want to think.
>
> (Khethiwe. ADP. M.)

Understandings of internal poverty and of dependency mobilised at the ADP level did not make appeal to Christian interpretations.

Understandings of the concept of dependency and its functioning within poverty and transformation among DWs at the grassroots level of the ADP were varied and strongly contested. Some DWs felt, similarly to the ADP management and the NO, that dependency was an almost universal problem among those in poverty in South Africa, was present in the communities in which WV Umzimkhulu works, and was thus an important area for WV's work to address:

> (Dependency is) depending on someone/something. It's there in the communities – people always ask (for) something, for example, asking (for) handouts from WV – so they are depending.
>
> (Linda .ADP.DW.)

> The issue of ownership is still a huge problem, people don't want to own anything and say, this is ours, not WV's.

(Sipho ADP.DW.)

However, others felt very strongly that identifying or describing the communities in which they work (and live) or those within them as 'dependent' or displaying a 'dependency syndrome' was inaccurate, and perhaps even offensive. The case was made that

> There is not a dependency problem, the problem is that there are no job opportunities and a shortage of water and seedlings [because these require money].
>
> (Luxolo and Bonela ADP.DWs.)

From this perspective, communities were to be understood and engaged with in terms of such constraints on people's productivity, rather than a dependent predisposition:

> they are not dependent, they have their own projects, like poultry, and backyard gardens – they are working, they're doing things on their own. No problem (with dependency).
>
> (Nomvula.ADP.DW.)

> They need assistance, but are not dependent.
>
> (Luxolo.ADP.DW.)

Still others saw the situation as more complex:

> ...the communities are not the same: others [some], they sit and relax, waiting for handouts; others [some], if you give them the start to do the thing, they're doing what we want them to do.
>
> (Ayanda.ADP.DW.)

Ayanda's reference to communities not being dependent because they 'did what WV wanted them to do' reflects a tendency among a few DWs to interpret transformational development as the involvement of WV in the community through its facilitatory or capacity building role, such that a community member who has attended a WV workshop can be said to have been 'transformed'. These understandings are likely produced as a result of the process of transition that the ADP is moving through in terms of its programme implementation, as well as a simple communication breakdown about what the ADP intends to achieve through its TD approach.

This change in strategy has been interpreted (and justified) through appeal to dependency discourse: the service provision approach of the previous phase is described as inducing dependency, while the concept of sustainability on which the shift in implementation strategy is premised is constructed in terms of fostering interdependence and avoiding dependence on WV as a service provider, and in general.

> the old approach – (…) sometimes it developed dependency syndrome. (…) If you give people food parcels, you create a dependency, just like a social grant (does). (…) If you keep on buying food, seedlings and stuff for the community, they will not even do anything for themselves. So, it ends up being lazy, instead of developing and helping yourself.
>
> (Khethiwe. ADP. M.)

> So we don't want the communities to *depend*, to be dependent on WV. Niether do we want them to be dependent on partners; we want them to see themselves as development partners also in the development process
>
> (Michael. ADP.M.)

These understandings of TD, produced at the NO and ADP management levels, presented challenges when operationalised at field level. All ADP staff were responsible for implementing TD, however, DWs were described, by themselves and management staff, as facing greater difficulty in implementing such constructions of TD. As a result of their experience of operationalisation, DWs offered alternative constructions of TD.

As previously noted, the first phase of the Umzimkhulu ADP's operation focussed strongly on providing direct service provision and relief to community members, from the provision of school classrooms to school uniforms, etc. DWs, being based in the field, played a critical role identifying and delivering 'handouts' such as food parcels to families in need within the villages in which they work. WV's change in implementation strategy away from providing this type of direct assistance in favour of what is considered to be a more sustainable approach of facilitating capacity building and indirect service provision through partnerships has impacted the work and responsibilities of DWs significantly.

DW's now continue in their role of monitoring sponsored children, visiting these children and their families regularly. However, DWs now no longer have the capacity to mobilise resources on behalf of those they visit, and must face and disappoint the continued expectation for, as well as the dire need of, such practical assistance in many of the families they continue

to encounter regularly. DWs experience the contradiction of the expectations of those in the communities in which they work, their own expectations of what many of them feel their jobs *should* involve, and the limitations placed on them in acting in line with a facilitatory approach:

> We deliver post; people are waiting for handouts.
>
> (Phumi.ADP.DW.)

> They (WV) moved from handouts to transformation, so that thing makes us unhappy about our work, because every person is waiting for something in hand. They look at me: 'what do you have today?' – nothing, that is a challenge.
>
> (Mandla.ADP.DW.)

> ...this change, sometimes it's not easy, because people were used to handouts, so it's tough, very, very tough.
>
> (Busisiwe. ADP. M.)

The realities of the practical implementation of WV approaches at the ground level, given the severe and widespread basic needs poverty in the villages, exact a steep toll on DWs who reported the significant emotional difficulty of confronting such poverty and feeling helpless and disempowered through the change in implementation policy to respond practically to such difficulties.

> But now, I come to the poor family; I can't do anything. That's the change – I don't like it.
>
> (Nomvula.ADP.DW.)

This is reportedly compounded by the expectations of community members for tangible assistance and frustration at its absence. These difficulties were described by DWs as resulting in very low morale, which they connected directly to the change in implementation policy of TD. This undoubtedly shapes DWs' understandings of the TD approach.

> To be a Christian means to help the poor and oppressed. WV helps the poor from when it was here in 2006, but now – things have changed.
>
> (Nomvula.ADP.DW.)

> But now, it's very quiet, there is nothing happening. (…) There is nothing encouraging for us as Field Workers

(Bongani. ADP. DW.)

An important dimension of understandings of TD and of core concepts which function within it, constructed at the field level, is a strong concern for development to meet practical needs. This concern is reflected in conceptions of poverty, development, and the role that WV should play within the process of transformation as conceived by DWs.

4.2.2 Nothing to say grace over: Material Poverty

While understandings of poverty at the NO level incorporate a concern for material poverty into their constructions of both poverty and transformational development, this is held in relation to (perhaps more predominant) concepts of internal poverty. Unlike at the NO and ADP management levels, DWs' understandings of poverty are cast in absolute terms, without placing significant emphasis on internal, spiritual or even structural/political dimensions; understandings of poverty are expressed in relation to basic needs. Poverty is understood as:

> (having) nothing to eat, to dress, no money to go to school, you are struggling for everything.
>
> (Ayanda.ADP.DW.)

> When you have no knowledge, it's poverty; you don't know your rights; when you're vulnerable, which is when you are unemployed, hungry, can't meet needs, have no shelter.
> (Luxolo and Bonela. ADP.DWs.)

> When you are hungry, you have anger.
>
> (Thabisa ADP.DW.)

Subtle reflection on the internal dimension of poverty emerged in reflection on the effect of absolute poverty, as causing 'struggle', anger and hopelessness. DWs noted that, when encountering hopelessness in those they visit, or in themselves after emotionally taxing monitoring visits, prayer was an important resource for comfort, healing and endurance.

4.3 'Structures which keep people poor': relational poverty

Given South Africa's structurally violent past, and the continued determination of poverty or wealth through structural factors, one might anticipate a high awareness of the relational dynamics of poverty and the process of development within WVSA as a whole. The official (WVI) understanding of TD highlights the relational dimension in which poverty is

experienced: such an understanding leads to the association of poverty with oppression and injustice (and thus structural causes), as opposed to merely regarding or engaging with it as an apparently isolated condition of deprivation. This dimension of poverty is focussed on to a far greater extent at the NO than at the ADP level of the organisation – both in terms of addressing such structures through advocacy, and in terms of understanding poverty and development as situated in and produced through structural relations. The explicit engagement with poverty as situated within structural intersectionalities shapes expressions of TD at the NO.

> We recognise that you cannot do development without having to address the issues of systems and structures, policies and so forth. Central to the development programme is identifying systems and structures in the community which keep people poor. For example, traditional beliefs, such as women not being able to own property. These keep people in poverty.
>
> (Malachi. NO.)
>
> (Poverty is caused by) a lack of justice, by unjust structures and systems
>
> (Darrel. NO.)

In line with the sentiments of this quote, programming focussed on gender issues, as well as on the issue of child marriage, was pursued or anticipated at the ADP level. However, both of these initiatives address particular cultural dimensions of oppression and deprivation – broader economic and political issues were not dealt with at the ADP level. It is worth noting that the extremely high poverty and unemployment rates in the Umzimkhulu region, while highlighting these structural dimensions and elements of poverty, also make it difficult to deal with them.

Due to the focus of the NO on providing strategic guidance for WVSA as a whole and for ADPs, rather than on implementation matters, the focus on structural issues is concentrated largely at the NO level, with a relative lack of focus on these issues evident at the ADP level.

The influence of dependency discourse, through holding those in poverty responsible for their state, may be seen to distract from or obscure focus on the structural relations which constrain 'the poor' and reproduce the conditions of their poverty. This attitude is expressed in the quote below:

> People blame Apartheid for everything they don't have. We're 16 years out of Apartheid – and you're still blaming? What have you done? What are you doing? People don't want to take responsibility.

Most WV staff did not adopt quite such a strong position, but regarded structural factors as operating along with elements internal or particular to 'the poor' as producing poverty.

> (Causes of poverty include) Laziness; lack of access to inputs, resources; intergenerational poverty; lack of education and skills; laziness
>
> (Richard. NO.)

Recognition of the reality of the structural dimensions of poverty by those operating at the ADP was limited. DWs demonstrated a very limited engagement with broad structural issues, but were concerned and in some cases involved in political and service delivery structures at municipal level.

4.4 The 'better future' (wellbeing/development)

The kingdom framework of TD officially provides the vision of the 'better future' it aims to move communities toward, of "fullness of life" in the kingdom of God. Fullness of life clearly references the Biblical notion of abundant life[20], described as comprised of "dignity, justice, peace, and hope" (WVI 2003:3). This fullness of life is understood to include the recovery of people's "one true identity" as a child of God, as well as of their God-given capacities or 'gifts' and vocation as productive stewards. Indeed, Myers identifies 'changed people' (in terms of these elements), and 'changed relationships' or "just, peaceful, harmonious, and enjoyable relationships with each other, ourselves, our environment, and God" as the goals of transformation (Myers 1999: 113). The life of fullness conceived of is defined and operationalised in terms of the Childhood Wellbeing Aspirations, which incorporate the both secular and spiritual developmental goals.

Conceptualisations of 'development' at the NO level understood the goal of transformation as holistic and, through reference to the kingdom of God, corresponding very closely to official understandings of the same:

> (transformation) ... is holistic development, development that is beyond service delivery and is addressing the root causes of poverty. It brings about a paradigm shift in terms of how people view themselves (...) a deep change – change in terms of spiritual change, economic change, relationships, total change, change of mindset, attitudes, relationships –

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[20] See John 10:10 - The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

> moving towards the kingdom of God, towards life in its
> fullness, towards being able to do things for themselves.
>
> (Richard. NO.)

> The kingdom of God is not possible without the (spiritual)
> transformation of the person, the family, the community (...)
> transformation is primarily spiritual and translates into the
> physical.
>
> (Darrel. NO.)

Secular considerations of development, while appreciated, were largely discussed as fitting into the kingdom framework for development, and operating in service of it.

4.4.1 Contesting Development

Contrasting constructions of development and the process of transformational development were produced. While the NO and ADP management held similar understandings of the end and process of TD (outlined above), DWs were not uniform in their understandings of development.

Understandings held at the NO of TD as holistic and sustainable were reflected in similar positions by those in ADP management, and by a few DWs:

> Community development is when communities are able to
> self-realize, can help themselves, even 5 – 10 years to come,
> when WV leaves. (...) it goes back to holistic development,
> self-reliance. To be transformed is to have changed the way
> you are living, now you are able to change others because
> you are transformed, developed holistically (physically,
> spiritually, emotionally) ... and you are not dependent, are
> able to survive on your own means.
>
> (Khethiwe. ADP. M.)

> When you transform someone, you are trying to change the
> mind of a person.
>
> (Mbali.ADP.DW.)

The majority of DWs appreciated the importance of transformation as being "all about chang(ing) the person, the way he think, to let the person know the way of doing things" (Phumi.ADP.DW.). However, clear distinctions between the tangible and intangible aspects of development and the transformation process intended to produce it were drawn, with a heavy emphasis placed on tangible development.

According to World Vision, development is change, it's where people are lacking things so you are coming to give them things that they lack (like information), so you develop that community; developing the life. From the Government position, it's about giving them roads. Personally, I see the lack of development as the absence of electricity, roads, taps and schools, my understanding of development is more similar to the government understanding.

(Linda .ADP.DW.)

...at some point I think we really need to see some development happening, like changes. ... It's difficult, the sponsors come to see the change they contribute to, only to come to the community to find that nothing has happened really. We always take them to the village where the crèche and classrooms were built. If the same sponsor were to come all through the years, he will always see the same preschool and the same school, would go to the child and see (that) this child hasn't really developed at all, it hasn't really been helpful.

(Sipho ADP.DW.)

Both of these quotes indicate that, while WV has been operating capacity building workshops and training sessions for years, 'development' is associated by DWs, and it seems by the communities in which they work, with the visible infrastructure of school buildings. Apart from these buildings, 'nothing' is deemed to have happened in terms of development.

A similar position is put forward by Luxolo: while recognising that WV has trained community members in project management, WV's failure to offer financial support to these people for their projects in the form of start-up capital or initial stock is seen to undercut any contribution such training may have made to 'development'.

If we can't support people in doing their project, what development can we make? I have a problem with that word, 'development', because we can't assist people who want development, so we can't say 'development' – or is it a word only?

(Luxolo.ADP.DW.)

In fact, many DWs felt that, in the absence of tangible support offered to the community, the work of WV could not be appropriately considered development work, or as meeting the needs of the poorest of the poor.

Now we are facilitating development, we are no longer doing it.

(Busisiwe. ADP. M.)

Our mission is to work with the poorest of the poor, how to do that without handouts?

(Thabisa.ADP.DW.)

This set of understandings of development and transformation conceived of development largely in terms of meeting practical and basic needs (in line with conceptions of poverty discussed above), to the point that WV's 'facilitation' of the development process was not regarded as constituting development. Emphasis was placed on accessing necessary resources, including physical resources like income or start-up capital, seedlings, fencing, and other resources such as skills training or information, as opposed to experiencing personal or community transformation and effecting structural change. The integrated notion of development seems here to be challenged by the weight of immediate absolute need at the level of implementation.

4.5 Processes of transformation

WV TD Core documents describe the process whereby TD is shaped by the principles of community ownership and sustainability.

Within these core documents, community-based TD is considered to require active *community ownership* of all aspects of development, which casts community members as responsible for development processes and outcomes. Community ownership is conceived of similarly as outlined in chapter 2, and assumes the central role in the process of TD operationalisation. This prioritisation of community ownership, presented by WVI, is reflected in official reporting documentation at both NO and ADP levels.

Within this understanding, WV is cast as responsible for facilitating community ownership through the delivery of activities that empower 'the community' to envision, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate development programmes. This empowerment includes capacity building and fostering attitudes of responsibility for the development process among the community. WV is further considered responsible for facilitating the pursuit of such development through augmenting partnerships of interdependence with WV and other stakeholders, including NGOs, government and the community itself (WVI 2003:25).

Working through *partnerships* is intended to enable WV to facilitate the delivery of important developmental goods and to ensure that communities are inserted into partnerships with other stakeholders through which they are able to access the knowledge and resources

required to improve the well-being of children and to overcome poverty. Such a network of partnerships could be considered as the reversal of relational poverty. Where communities are capacitated to lead their own development process and do so, the gains from such a process and their continuance is hoped to be ensured through the functioning of such partnerships beyond the involvement of WV in the community. A community's impetus toward and capabilities for ensuring the long term viability and impact of development processes is understood as *social sustainability* (WVI 2003:11)*.*

Understandings of community ownership, empowerment and participation discussed in chapter 2 and the format of their mobilisation within TD outlined above are reflected in WVSA in official documentation; they continue to function as core operational concepts. However, understanding held by WV staff of these concepts are slightly different and have been influenced by appeal to dependency discourse.

The reconstruction of these terms through appeal to dependency discourse may be seen to result in an implicit migration of the meanings of the terms, with some impact on the operational aspects of TD. 'Official' conceptualisations of notions of ownership, empowerment and participation possess strong transformational potential and can even be described as politically radical in providing for the enhanced incorporation of the 'poor and oppressed' into political and economic processes.

However, where processes of empowerment and participation are interpreted under the influence of a dependency discourse, concepts of empowerment and participation may become 'hollowed out': where previously the position of disempowerment was understood as produced through structural hierarchies of power and inadequate access to or control over resources, a dependency-driven understanding of disempowerment is centred, somewhat reductionistically, on constructions of internal mental weakness, expressed in attitudes of passivity or in a lack of knowledge or skills. 'Empowerment' thus becomes interpreted as the absence or overcoming of dependency thinking, rather than a strengthened position within structurally unjust relations, increased political voice or control over assets. The radical political nature of the concept as it was originally intended is replaced by a depoliticised concept; a concern with macro or structural concerns and power hierarchies are elided through concentration on internal empowerment[21].

A similar pattern of interpretation can be identified in understandings of participation and ownership. In fact, the degree to which dependency has emerged as a key source for interpretation is evident in the construction of dependency and ownership as binaries:

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[21] See Leal (2010) for further reflection on this process.

> Dependency is the opposite of ownership, whereby you do nothing for yourself. You are dependent on someone to...
>
> (Sara. ADP. M.)

Community ownership is 'officially' understood as ownership over and responsibility in the process of development. While this entails a psychological aspect in the attitude of responsibility for directing and participating in development, it also implies a degree of authority and capacity to continuously maintain and expand development processes. Focusing predominantly on the psychological dimension of responsibility, seeing it in terms of the presence or absence of the dependency culture's apparently characteristic irresponsibility, thus narrows down the concept of community ownership, reducing its transformational potential.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to identify and analyse understandings of TD within WV. TD was investigated in the first instance as being constructed through appeal to elements of and the integration of both development and Christian discourses relating to the creation of a "better future". Within such an integrated approach, secular developmental insights and practices (such as community participation and empowerment) functioned as important components or means in the process of TD, along with religious resources. The motivation for and goals of the TD approach were framed in relation to Christian beliefs and values, and particularly within the Christian narrative of the kingdom of God.

The construction of TD was further analysed as contextually embedded, that is, understandings of TD in WVSA were analysed as constructed in relation to WVI and its related bodies (such as the Support Office and Regional Office) which shape the context in which TD is understood in WVSA through presenting and distributing the 'official' understanding and core principles of TD to all WV bodies. An additional contextual dimension in which TD in WVSA was identified as constructed in connection to relates to the different levels of organisational operation within WVSA. Distinct differences in the purposes of the NOs and ADPs impact the ways in which TD is understood and implemented at each level: different demands are made of the TD approach, accordant with the organisational purpose or role. These differing demands may cause staff to appeal to different aspects of the developmental and religious discourses comprising the approach. Linked to this, the process of operationalising the TD approach through implementation was analysed as dialectically producing new interpretations or re-constructions of TD, informed by the experience and differing demands of practice.

Another dimension in which the construction of TD was evaluated as contextually embedded was through relation to the particularities of the South African political-economy and socio-cultural context, and of the various ways in which this is expressed in the conditions pertaining at the NO and at ADP levels. The greater level of material need and contact with community members encountered on a daily basis by DWs differed vastly to the office conditions predominant at the NO, and staff members in each situation composed their understandings of TD in relation to their experience of engaging with it daily.

Notions of 'dependency' emerged as influential in shaping conceptions of transformational development throughout WVSA. The discourse of dependency appealed to functioned as a strong and influential source of interpretation for all aspects of TD. The discourse was described as functioning to legitimate or justify (contested) changes in the style/form of TD implementation at the Umzimkhulu ADP. Similar appeals to the dependency discourse could well take place at the NO.

Given that the discourse of dependency is rooted in an individualistic economic rationale, its highly significant functioning within conceptions of internal (and by extension, individual) poverty is not surprising. Related to this is the potential danger or tendency of dependency inspired interpretations of concepts grounded in the notion of community, such as ownership and participation, toward framing understandings of these concepts in a more individualistic sense, diminishing the transformational potential and function of these concepts. Such processes may occur implicitly.

Constructions of TD were explored along the dimensions of the developmental problems it seeks to address (poverty and oppression), its envisioned end, and the process whereby it is understood to take place. Understandings of key concepts within this approach, such as 'poverty' and 'wellbeing' are outlined. These concepts were found to be constructed variously. Differences in understandings of these core concepts and of the TD process itself were found to correspond broadly to the organisational level at which they were found to be held, which were further found to reflect greater or lesser degrees of integration. Constructions produced at the NO demonstrated a higher degree of intense or consistent integration than was evidenced at the field-level.

Chapter 5
Conclusion

In seeking to explore how transformational development is understood within World Vision South Africa, two complementary pathways toward uncovering the ways in which the meaning(s) of TD are made and understanding(s) of it framed and reframed were pursued: transformational development was firstly explored as the integration of Christian and secular developmental discourses, and secondly as a dynamic construction and reconstruction of meaning, produced dialectically in response to multiple contextual dimensions.

Official conceptions of TD demonstrated a strong degree of integration, 'secular' developmental concepts and practices were absorbed into a religious narrative (patterned after the kingdom of God) which provided the motivation for the development and vision of its end. However, the intensity of the degree of integration between Christian and secular developmental discourses varied, with either discourse functioning as a dominant discourse in different situations, often in response to the challenges of implementation.

Interestingly, many of the means of transformation employed within process of TD, such as community empowerment or participation, functioned almost entirely within a secular framework. I did not encounter any explicit engagement on the religious resources available to the organisation; such resources clearly existed but, where used, these may simply have been used parallel to, rather integrated with the 'secular' developmental practices. An opportunity thus exists for a more thorough practical integration of developmental and religious resources in TD within the organisation.

Evaluating conceptions of TD as dynamic constructions highlights the multiple understandings of TD present in WVSA. Each of the multiple understandings of TD evident within WVSA represents not only a dynamic integration of religious and developmental discourses into a constructed framework for developmental action, but the shaping of TD through relationship to the context in which concepts of TD are received and operationalised. The contextual dimensions identified as pertinent in informing such constructions of TD include: relation to the 'official' understanding of TD (is this discourse accessible? Is it absorbed as is, adjusted, or rejected?); the particularity of the South African context, especially as particularly characterising the contexts of the various WV bodies; and the relationship between conceptualisation and operationalisation (the operationalisation of constructions of TD is determined by both the context in which TD must be implemented and the purpose for which it must be implemented – both of these differ according

to the organisational level and their influence feeds back into constructions of TD). Finally, appeal to a dependency discourse is noted to have influenced understandings of TD at various levels of the organisation.

The dialogic interplay between processes of conceptualisation and operationalistion and the mutual impact of each in the process of meaning construction emerged as interesting and core finding of the paper; this serves as a sign of the dynamism of both developmental, and, contrary to stigmatisation to the contrary, of religious discourses. As the product of ongoing reconstructions of meaning(s), TD has the potential to adapt itself in new ways.

While the key findings of the paper have been summarised above, some brief reflection on a few dimensions of these findings which could usefully be explored further, particularly by WV, follows below.

As noted in the paper, but perhaps not fully explored, the treatment of the concept of 'community' within WVSA's constructions and operationalisation of TD seems somewhat ambiguous or unclear. It is apparent that tensions between the role of the individual within 'the community', or of 'the community' in TD relate to conceptions about the site or unit of change within TD, and the ways in which each is conceived in relation to the other. These tensions will likely never be fully resolved (particularly in a developmental model which pursues community development through and alongside individual child sponsorship). However, a lack of explicit engagement with these issues, particularly at the operational level, produces ambiguities in this area which may become exploited.

One manner in which this may manifest is through a homogenising tendency to construct 'the community' as similar and harmonious where no such social relationships exist in reality. Basing implementation on a false or inadequate community construct be harmful: constructs of unified 'communities' overlook diversities of interest and power within communties and invite the danger of activities relating to 'community participation' etc. potentially representing only a selection of the targeted people's interests or voice. As noted in Chapter 2, this may even disguise the disempowerment and exclusion of some within 'the community' at the hands of 'community-based' programming.

A second potential danger to emerge from the implicit ambiguities relating to constructions of the individual within and in relation to concept of 'community' in the TD approach relates to the ease with which analytical or interpretive lenses from each may be drawn on and switched between. While this is a potential strength of the dynamism and diversity possible in constructing transformational development, when shifts between a 'community-based' frame of analysis and an individualised or individualistic frame of analysis occur implicitly and are not consciously noted, ideological 'baggage' may be smuggled in and emerge in the

conceptualisation of concepts within the TD process in unanticipated ways which could impact the transformational potential or effectiveness of the approach.

The widespread presence and significant influence of a discourse of dependency in the organisation, despite staunch empirical evidence against the existence in South Africa of the 'dependency culture' on which this is based is a case in point. The 'rationale of dependency' is contained explicitly in WV planning documentation, but perhaps a greater degree of influence operates implicitly. The politically conservative and economically liberal ideological associations or implications of this discourse, and its individualistic interpretive lens do not appear to have been made explicit or problematised within WV. The potential of such a perspective to produce reductionist interpretations of important concepts within the conceptualisation of TD, which may in addition diminish the effectiveness of these concepts/processes as they are operationalised to give effect to TD, is raised in Chapter 4.

It is further important to note that the widespread usage of the logic of 'dependency' to explain evidenced social conditions, such as low rates of community ownership, prevents the consideration of alternative causes for these conditions.

A final point of reflection links to the conceptualisation of 'community' noted above, as well as to the brief discussion of local religious and cultural norms offered in Chapter 3. Given the importance of the concept of 'community' within a developmental approach that is defined as "community based", and given the importance of local contextual realities in shaping concepts discussed in this paper, an opportunity to extend the dynamic construction and reconstruction or TD, and to expand the discourses integrated together in this approach emerges.

Two WV staff, one involved in management at the NO and one a Development Worker at the Umzimkhulu ADP, both raised the issue of the need to conceive of development as communal, and as an experience of interdependence.

> The cause of a lack of development in the communities is "because people are losing their interdependency – that was the culture of the black people before, but now, they (we) are looking for their own, not for the community. What was happening before was not wrong. Transformation is trying to change minds from this thing of looking for yourself – suits, looking for the cities or townships, not for the rural, to return to interdependency"
>
> (Bongani ADP. DW)
>
> households and families would be interdependent, have the ability to be interdependent and the values to do that. (…) move from dependence to independence to

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interdependence, which is the ability to respond (interact with neighbour and the village to help them get out of the situation that they are in), people in a village should be interdependent in order to have a better life.

(Peter. NO.)

The notion of interdependence is not new in WV documentation, but does not seem to have been widely engaged with in WVSA. Certainly, the concept of 'community' has not been constructed in light of particularly South African context and system of norms and values.

The norms and values of indigenous African culture were identified in Chapter 3 as having significant relevance for developmental thinking: the notion of *ubuntu* places positive valuations on interdependence, in identity and in developmental progress, and the recognition of the integration of the spiritual nonmaterial into material reality seem to provide the necessary resources for conceiving of TD as a 'return to interdependence', incorporating local norms and values into new ways of conceptualising and operationalising TD in WVSA.

Appendices

Appendix A – Interviewee profiles, Umzimkhulu ADP

Name	Operational level	Sex*	Christian affiliation**	Origin
Michael	ADP Managment	Male	Evangelical	Elsewhere in KZN
Khethiwe	ADP Managment	Female	Methodist	Elsewhere in KZN
Sara	ADP Managment	Female		Free State Province
Busisiwe	ADP Managment	Female	Anglican	Local
Andile.	ADP	Female	Anglican	Local
Thabo	ADP	Male		Local
Linda	Development Worker	Female		Local
Mandla	Development Worker	Male	Pentecostal	Local
Ayanda	Development Worker	Female		Local
Phumi	Development Worker	Female		Local
Bongani	Development Worker	Male	Anglican	Local
Zihle	Development Worker	Female		Local
Siphokazi	Development Worker	Female	John Wesley	Local
Luxolo	Development Worker	Female		Local
Bonela	Development Worker	Female	Anglican	Local
Mbali	Development Worker	Female		Local
Thabisa	Development Worker	Female	Anglican	Local
Nomvula	Development Worker	Female		Local
Sipho	Development Worker	Male	Catholic	Local

* The significant predominance of women among the Development Workers reflects a cultural norm in the area framing community and

developmental work as 'womens' work'. The scope of my paper was unable to include reflection on the role of gender in processes of conceptualising and operationalising TD due to space constraints.

    ** All ADP staff attend church regularly, where the boxes have been left blank, it is because I was unable to determine which denomination each staff member associated themselves with. The majority of these staff attend either Methodist or Anglican churches. The patterns of church attendance among the staff can be considered reflective of the communities in which they live.

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