

# EMPOWERMENT BY HOPE:

A phenomenological study on the health and  
wellbeing of African refugee migrants

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## **Declaration**

I, Barnabé ANZURUNI MSABAH, hereby declare that, by submitting electronically this dissertation, the entirety of the work herein contained is no one else's but my own original work (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated). I also declare that proper acknowledgement has been duly credited to all the sources quoted or paraphrased. I have not previously submitted the dissertation in its entirety or in part, at any university, for obtaining any academic qualification. I am the sole author thereof.

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## Abstract

Ours is a century of migration. It has become more necessary for people to migrate than ever before in human history due to a variety of reasons including political instability and economic opportunities. The rate at which migration is increasing, nevertheless, poses serious challenges to various countries. South Africa is not immune. However, not all migrants migrate at will. For some, migration suggests recreation or acceptance of a job offer; but for others, it is a dangerous movement. It is forced and could mean permanent expulsion from home. Such is the case for refugee migrants. Theirs is a case of inconvenience; a case of expulsion from their territorial space and exclusion from socio-economic ownership. Although the end of the refugee migration is somewhat beneficial to an émigré for the reason that, in such a case, life is spared from various forms of persecution, the process of migration is itself detrimental since it involves serious challenges that affect refugees' health and wellbeing.

This study aims to encourage a paradigm shift in Theology and Development, proposing that hope and empowerment are an inseparable binary with affective dimensions on being and belonging. In this way, putting hope into practice is fundamentally an asset for improved wellbeing and significant in the process of recovery from illness. The study begins with a review of existing literature by six prominent scholars from various academic fields who have dealt intensively with hope. This is then followed by a discussion and analysis of the relationship between hope and empowerment in the development discourse within the African context. Finally, qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants, and through focus group discussions with representatives of the refugee community in Cape Town is presented and analysed in view of understanding empowerment by hope. In addition to being an indicator of human dignity, the findings of this research indicate that, amongst other things, hope is a practical tool for holistic development. In the end, recommendations that collate hope and empowerment are proposed in order to assist role players such as faith communities, researchers and policymakers in developing appropriate responses for managing the refugee phenomenon, particularly as it relates to the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants.

## Opsomming

Die huidige, is 'n eeu van migrasie. Weens 'n verskeidenheid redes, waaronder politieke onstabielheid en ekonomiese geleenthede, word mense meer as ooit vantevore in die geskiedenis van die mens, genoodsaak om te migreer. Die trant waarteen migrasie toeneem skep dus ernstige uitdagings aan verskeie lande. Suid-Afrika is nie immuun teen hierdie verskynsel nie. Verder, nie alle migrante migreer egter uit vrye wil nie. Vir sommige beteken migrasie vernuwings of die aanvaarding van werkseleenthede, maar vir ander is migrasie 'n gevaarlike beweging. Migrasie is dan gedwonge en kan permanente uitsetting uit hul tuiste beteken, soos in die geval van vlugteling-migrante. Hierdie tipe migrasie veroorsaak vir vlugtelinge groot ongemak, aangesien dit gepaard gaan met verlies van hul lewensruimte en uitsluiting uit sosio-ekonomiese eienaarskap. Alhoewel die uiteinde van migrasie in 'n mate voordeel vir die vlugteling-migrant inhou, byvoorbeeld dat sy/haar lewe gespaar word van verskeie vorme van vervolging, is die proses van migrasie inherent afbrekend aangesien dit ernstige uitdagings meebring wat die vlugteling se gesondheid en welstand bedreig.

Moedig die huidige studie 'n paradigma skuif in die Teologie en Ontwikkeling aan deur voor te stel dat hoop en bemagtiging 'n onlosmaaklike skakelpaar met affektiewe dimensies van "wees" [being] en "behoort" [belonging] is. Aldus gesien, is hoop wat omgeskakel word tot praktyk, fundamenteel tot voordeel vir die verbeterde welstand van migrante en dra dit merkbaar by tot die herstelproses. Die studie begin deur 'n oorsig van bestaande vakliteratuur deur ses prominente kundiges vanuit 'n reeks akademiese areas, wie intensief hoop bestudeer het. Dit word opgevolg deur 'n bespreking en analiese van die verhouding tussen hoop en bemagtiging in die ontwikkelingsdiskoers binne die konteks van Afrika. Kwalitatiewe data wat versamel is deur semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met sleutel informante asook fokusgroep besprekings met verteenwoordigers van die vlugteling-gemeenskappe in Kaapstad, word dan aangebied en geanaliseer na aanleiding van die begrip van bemagtiging deur hoop. Die bevindings van hierdie navorsing voer aan dat hoop nie net alleenlik 'n aanduiding van menswaardigheid is nie, maar hoop is ook 'n praktiese instrument vir holistiese ontwikkeling. Laastens, aanbevelings wat hoop en bemagtiging voortdurend saambind word aangebied, ten einde rolspelers soos geloofsgemeenskappe, navorsers en beleidmakers te ondersteun in die ontwikkeling van toepaslike optredes om die vlugteling verskynsel te bestuur, veral met betrekking tot hoe dit die gesondheid en welstand van vlugteling-migrante raak.

## Acknowledgements

A thesis goes through different phases. Its final shape is often an outcome of comprehensive contributions from different people and various sources of knowledge or support. I, therefore, acknowledge that the final shape of this thesis owes its existence to all the people, events, experiences and even unforeseen circumstances that accelerated its progression or delayed its completion.

First, I am thankful to my dear wife, Dr Susan Nyaga, with whom I have experienced great joys and great sorrows during the course of this academic journey. She encouraged me and provided the much-needed suggestions over and above the many hours of hard work she put into a comprehensive edit of the final document. I must confess; she made this academic burden a delightful and bearable load. I could not have done this so well without you, Babe! Thank you for being my life companion, my partner, my friend and my faithful love.

I am thankful to Dr Nadine Bowers-du Toit, my academic advisor and mentor, for her remarkable supervisory guidance demonstrated through her timely feedback, informed suggestions, needed support, and the freedom with which she had let me work. During the course of this doctoral pursuit, she helped me unlock the ability to refine my existing research skills and acquire even more. Her attention to detail and passion for Theology and Development have greatly influenced the way I exert myself as a researcher and a scholar. Thanks, “Doc”!

The financial assistance received through the University’s HOPE Project from the Faculty of Theology as well as the scholarships awarded through the Postgraduate & International Office towards the completion of this research are hereby acknowledged. I also acknowledge the usefulness of the facilities and services availed by the University of Stellenbosch for postgraduate students, particularly the prestigious Carnegie Research Commons and the reliable internet connection, without which the completion of this thesis would have been unspeakably a challenging task.

The course *Migration and Integration in Urban Contexts* taken at the University of Oslo opened an exciting world of research for me. I here present many appreciations to Prof David Ley of the University of British Columbia in Canada. His lecture series had a major impact on my research prowess, specifically having introduced me to the concept of gentrification among many other theories relevant to the question of human migration within social science.

A deep expression of gratitude is also accredited in a special way to my parents, Byelongo Sangara & Justine Mlebinge, who always fall to their knees presenting my case to God in prayer, as well as Germano Nyaga Rukangu & Margaret Kamene Mbwera, my parents in law. The Rev. Dr Hyung Kyu Kim has been to me a father figure, a prayer partner and a source of inspiration in many ways throughout my academic journey; the Gilchrists (George & Gael) supported me faithfully since my undergraduate years although I have never met them. The Limbouris (Achilles & Jacqui) have been there for me during my difficult moments. Similarly, many thanks to the entire family at Stellenbosch International Fellowship, the local congregation where I served under the pastoral headship of Rev. Jurie Goosen throughout my postgraduate years.

I thank the refugee community in Cape Town for their willingness and courage to participate in this doctoral project by narrating their lived experiences at will, without which this study would have lacked its phenomenological edge. Their trust in me and their active participation have contributed to the success of my academic journey. A special “thanks” to you all, symbols of hope!

Finally, I acknowledge that God saw it fit to end this chapter of my life so I could be ushered by His grace into the new. I remain forever thankful for His manifold wisdom revealed, at least in part; at least in my life, as frequent gift of love otherwise unaffordable. I thank Him, our Abba Father, for opening seemingly impossible doors and presumably fortified storehouses in order to increase my faith and empower me with renewed hope out of His own nature. Now, may I know Him more clearly; may I love Him more dearly; may I follow Him more nearly. He, who empowers us immeasurably with the grace of unshakable hope; He, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28) for “from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things” (Romans 11:36) seen and unseen, felt and unfelt; now and evermore.

Jesus is Lord!

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to:

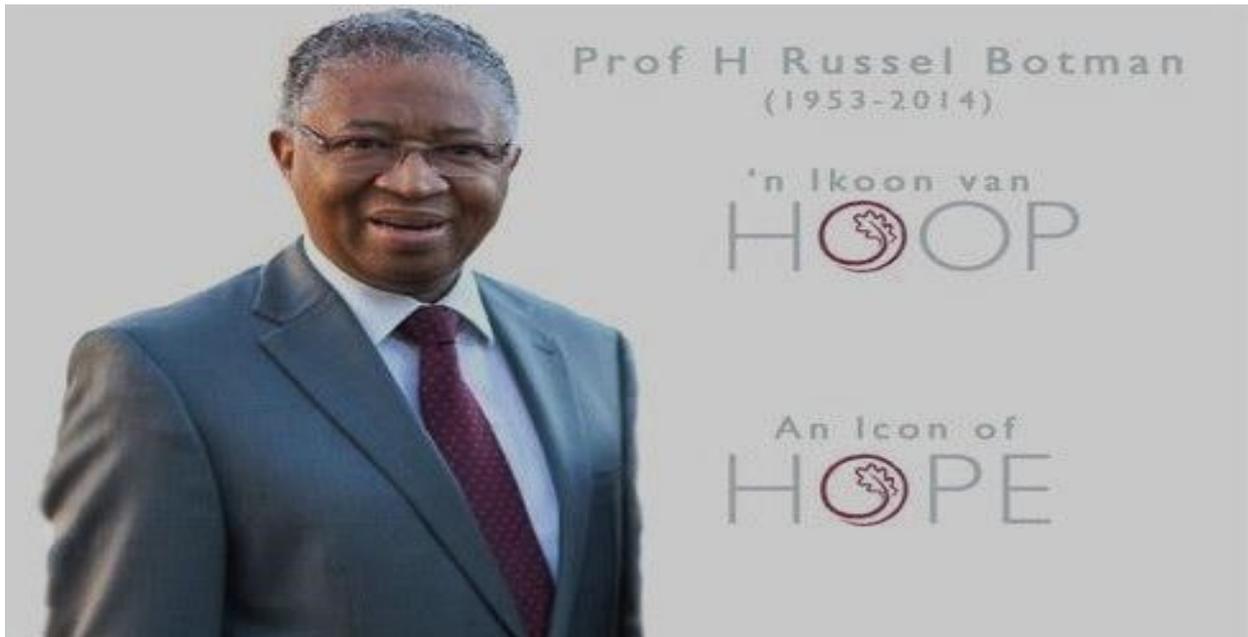
Our daughter TUMAINI (Kiswahili for Hope). We loved you, named you and called you by name even before you were conceived. To us, your parents, you are a constant reminder of God's faithfulness and the hope we have in Christ...

&

The millions of refugee migrants around the world today who strive day and night in perpetual quest for improved wellbeing; I personally acknowledge that you did not wait for this research to empower you with hope. You have been always engaged in strategies and struggles for survival – making efforts, in your own small ways, to influence decisions that could prompt consequential policies that effect renewed hope for improved wellbeing. This is but a minor contribution to your endless and brave efforts. To you, and all those who side with you in your noble struggle... I dedicate this thesis!

## In Memoriam

It was with deep sadness in my heart that I received the news of and grieved over the passing on of one of the humblest academics I have ever met, the late Prof H Russel Botman, immediate former Vice Chancellor & Rector of the University of Stellenbosch; architect of the HOPE Project. May we find solace in the Lord of all comfort and translate this heart-breaking loss into an opportunity for hope as we soldier on to keep his legacy alive. Rest peacefully in God's embrace, Prof!



In memory of my inspirer, “an icon of hope”; the man who taught me that

**HOPE WILL CHANGE THE WORLD!**

Prof H Russel Botman

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## Acronyms and abbreviations

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| AIDS   | Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome                  |
| AU     | African Union  |
| CAPD   | Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis            |
| CAQDAS | Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software |
| CBD    | Central business district                            |
| CCP    | Concept, Context and Practice                        |
| CSVR   | Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation  |
| DD     | Demographic data                                     |
| DHA    | (South African) Department of Home Affairs           |
| DRC    | Democratic Republic of Congo                         |
| ED     | Experiential data                                    |
| ESRD   | End-Stage Renal Disease                              |
| EU     | European Union                                       |
| FBO    | Faith-based organisation                             |
| FGD    | Focus group discussion                               |
| GLR    | (African) Great Lakes Region                         |
| HIV    | Human Immuno-deficiency Virus                        |
| ID     | Identity Document                                    |
| IDP    | Internally displaced person/people                   |
| IOM    | International Organization for Migration             |
| KII    | Key informants interview                             |
| NGO    | Non-governmental organisation                        |
| OAU    | Organisation of African Unity                        |
| ODA    | Official development aid                             |
| PD     | Practical data                                       |
| REC    | Research Ethics Committee                            |
| RRC    | Refugee Reception Centre                             |
| SA     | (Republic of) South Africa                           |
| SADC   | Southern African Development Community               |
| SAPS   | South African Police Service                         |
| STI    | Sexually Transmitted Infection                       |
| SU     | Stellenbosch University                              |
| UN     | United Nations                                       |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme                 |
| UNGA   | United Nations General Assembly                      |
| UNGLA  | United Nations Global Appeal                         |
| UNHCR  | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees        |
| US     | United States (of America)                           |
| USD    | US Dollar  |
| VIDEFI | Vision for the Development of Fizi                   |
| WCC    | World Council of Churches                            |
| WDI    | World Development Indicators                         |

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|------|-----------------------------------|
| WHO  | World Health Organisation         |
| WHR  | World Health Report               |
| YMCA | Young Men's Christian Association |

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

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As a human being I acknowledge that my wellbeing depends on others;  
And caring for others' wellbeing is a moral responsibility I take seriously.

It's unrealistic to think that the future of humanity can be achieved  
on the basis of prayer or good wishes alone.

What we need is to take action.

~ His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

# Chapter 1 – Introduction to Empowerment by Hope *vis-à-vis* Refugee Migrants

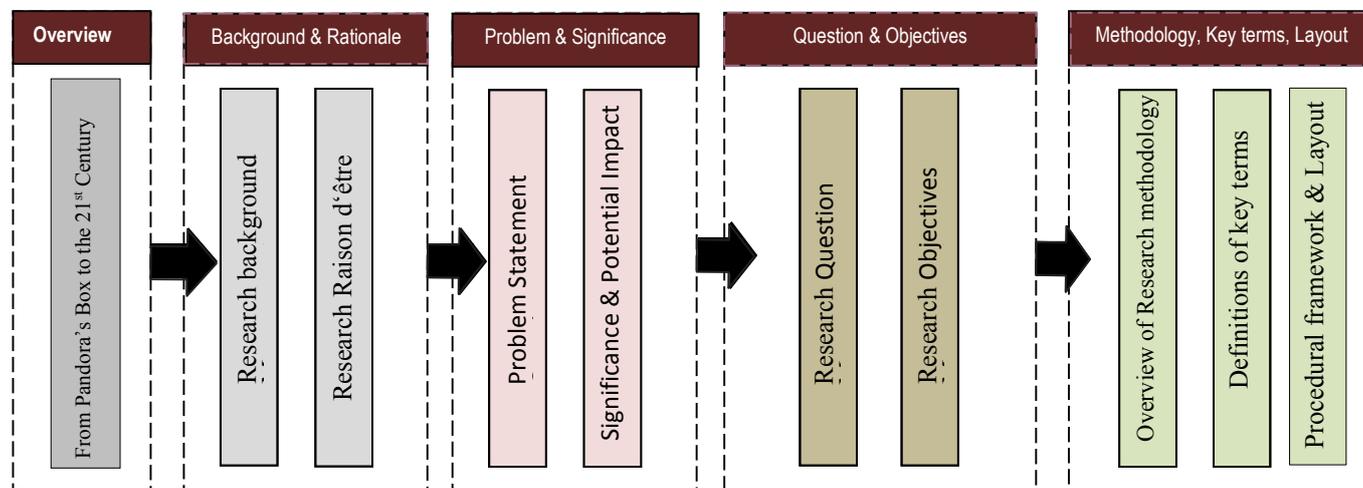


Figure 1: Chapter 1 Road map

## 1.1. Overview: from Pandora's Box to the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Something makes humanity distinctive from the rest of the creation. A human person is a dual being composed of two selves: the material self and the immaterial self. The material is the tangible part composed of the physical aspect of the self (i.e. the body and all its parts). The immaterial is the intangible part and, as commonly accepted, it comprises two selves: the spiritual (i.e. the soul and the spirit) and the emotional/rational (i.e. the feelings/the mind) aspects of the self.<sup>1</sup> The spiritual aspect of the immaterial part of the self exists beyond the physical lifespan of a human person. René Descartes (in Grossmann, 1984:5, 6) attempts to explain how these selves of the human person connect with or relate to each other this way:

There are two kinds of individual thing: one kind uncreated and one kind created. The uncreated kind is God. The created kind is matter. Matter has two kinds in itself: bodies and minds. Every matter is either a body or a mind. The body is a spatial substance and the mind is a thinking substance. Bodies are essentially distinct from minds. But existentially the two substances interact with each other. Of course, there are many bodies which are not combined with minds

<sup>1</sup> Here, I'm not being dualistic or promoting dualism. I only recognise it as I seek to make a point on holism from this Cartesian philosophy.

(my typewriter is one of them), and there are many minds which are not combined with bodies (angels are of this sort). The essence of the substance exists in the mind of the perceiver.

This Cartesian premise signals the relation and interaction between the material and the immaterial self. Why does this matter in this research? On the one hand, this Cartesian premise provides pointers to the reality according to which Practical Theology does not only concern the immaterial part of the self; it is rather a holistic practice. On the other hand, it indicates that a study of phenomenology does not only focus on the material part of the self but also on the immaterial. This is reminiscent of how significant this research is as it stands at the crossroads of theology and other social science disciplines. Furthermore, a human person has the capacity to make free choices and wilfully take actions. Here, it could be argued that a human person is also a volitional being.<sup>2</sup> This study is, therefore, an attempt to bring together both the material and the immaterial parts of the self as they relate to the volitional self. In other words, it is about bringing the whole of a human person into making a conscious choice for action. As I embarked on the journey to this discovery, it was evident that it is hope that connects the parts of this dichotomic self (i.e. the material and the immaterial) to the volitional aspect of the self. Thus, as “an anchor for the soul, [which is] firm and secure” (cf. Hebrews 6:19), I would argue that hope is firmly and securely sustained in the conscious choice to act.

Arguably, it was hope that made the three hundred men of Gideon choose to engage in battle against an overpowering military force of the Midianites (cf. Judges 6-8). It was hope that made King Hezekiah choose to make a conscious choice to pray although the criticality of his condition was fatal and on the verge of taking his life without ado (cf. Isaiah 38).<sup>3</sup> It was hope that made William Wilberforce consciously choose to resist the British legislature by raising motions of the abolition of the slave trade for eighteen years in the parliament because he knew the struggle he was leading was noble and would have resulted, someday, in a legal recognition of slaves as human beings, the respect of their dignity and even their complete liberty (cf. BBC History, 2014). It was also hope that made Nelson Mandela choose to spend

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<sup>2</sup> The Online Free Dictionary defines volition as the “wilful act of making a conscious choice for a specific decision or action. The Online Free Dictionary is available at – <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/volition>

<sup>3</sup> This is not an in depth exegesis of biblical texts or an attempt at textual interpretation of biblical pericopes. I am simply trying to demonstrate the pre-eminence of hope in various spheres of influence, particularly as it relates to both the biblical and secular narratives; hence, the use of two historical accounts from the Bible (i.e. Gideon and Hezekiah) and from secular history (i.e. Wilberforce and Mandela). Both these historical accounts reinforce the point I will make in Chapter 4 that empowerment (arguably a secular concept) and hope (arguably a theological concept) form a coherent binary.

twenty seven years of his life in prison and be prepared to die rather than compromise the ideal of a cause he deemed valid – that of a free and democratic South African society. These instances and many more combined are reminiscent of the pre-eminence of hope in social life, on the one hand, and evidence of the need to keep hope alive in every circumstance however unbearable, on the other.

We live in a time of a very rapid and unprecedented change. Globalisation increases the need to migrate, and this poses a challenge to the contemporary society because of the interconnection between the various factors that characterise human migration. Our world has resulted in a completely new era that presents us with progress and regression, gains and losses, new challenges and new opportunities, new hopes and a new sense of despair. New strategies are, therefore, needed to address and respond to the needs and/or situations related to this new era. Wars and violent conflicts, diseases and poverty, worrying signals of deteriorated climate change, etc. continue to claim victims throughout the world and push large numbers of people to forced displacement (Amit, 2013). Economic crisis, one of the main facets of our globalised world, continues to intensify our uncertainty for social futures. Africa is not immune to this global change and challenge. Is there any recourse?

It appears that only retreat in hope avails much. On the one hand, there are times when the prospects of the horizon darken, especially when the prevailing circumstances directly affect one's health and wellbeing. On the other hand, Bauckham (1995:52) observes, "there is no greater authority that will propel a person to withstand in the face of [such] hardship and trial than the power of hope". The Christian tradition, however, has often tended to relegate the relevance of hope to the hereafter (cf. Moltmann, 1967:24), placing a significantly imperative accent on love and faith. One can presume, therefore, that it is in this context of relegating hope to the hereafter, or that of accrediting it a less significant role in human affairs, that most of the ancient accounts of hope are but myths in the otherwise known as the mythology of Ancient Greece.<sup>4</sup>

Among the common legends unfolding the story of hope in Ancient Greece was the tale of Pandora (Myths and Legends, 2006),<sup>5</sup> according to which, once upon a time, the first human

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<sup>4</sup> The Mythology of Ancient Greece is a collection of legends that mainly recount the adventures of and interactions between gods and the human race.

<sup>5</sup> The tale of Pandora's Box has many versions. This version is a paraphrase of the version written in *Myths and Legends*. Source: <http://myths.e2bn.org/mythsandlegends/textonly562-pandoras-box.html>

race lived on earth in a state of perfect innocence and bliss. The air was unpolluted and gentle; the sun shone brightly all the year; the earth brought forth delicious fruits in abundance; and beautiful, fragrant flowers bloomed everywhere. Humanity was at ease and pleased. Hunger, sickness and death were unknown to humanity. Zeus, the god of gods, lord of thunder and cloud-gatherer, had fire at Mount Olympus and did not want his subjects, the mortal human race, to have some. Prometheus, a lesser god, who sympathised with humanity, took some fire from Mount Olympus so people could warm themselves up in the cold. He kept going for more from time to time. Such passive aggression infuriated Zeus, the supreme god, although he did not know who the guilty party was.

Pondering how to extract revenge and, thereby, punish the culprit who repeatedly stole fire from him, Zeus launched a plan. He created a box that contained all sorts of evils, illnesses and negative forces that could cause harm and bring death to humanity. Zeus gave the box to Pandora, the most beautiful woman on earth, who had been beautifully fashioned and artistically shaped considering that each god adorned her with some special charm and irresistible splendour. Zeus presented the box to her with strict instructions not to open it under any circumstance. Pandora, gifted with not only such magnificence but also curiosity, one day, opened the box bequeathed to her by Zeus, the god of gods, to tend. All the evils therein flew into the world and, as a result, humanity could no longer laze around all day in the comfort of their paradisiac habitat but would have to work hard, go through sufferings, and even succumb to illnesses.

One last item, however, remained lying at the bottom of the box: *Elpis*, the personification and spirit of hope. Despite her fears for having not obeyed Zeus' instructions, Pandora was relieved that *Elpis*, the only 'good thing' in the box, remained. Pandora's fears of Zeus' wrath were, thus, appeased since she knew that, if released from the box too, *Elpis* would empower humanity with resilience and, thereby, soothe the pain and suffering caused by the evils that had already flown into the world (cf. Snyder, 2000:3). This study can, therefore, be seen as an attempt to contribute towards the constant efforts to release '*Elpis*' from Pandora's Box. *Elpis* can empower humanity with resilience, render pain and suffering bearable while minimising the ills that thwart the prospects of improved wellbeing.

As per the tale, hope is a form of punishment – one of the many evils bequeathed to humanity. In this view, hope is but an extension of suffering. Arguably, this perception

contributes to the negative stance by most ancient scholars towards hope, who considered it as unhelpful just like the other negative forces that flew into the world from Pandora's Box. For instance, in Plato's *Republic*, the father of ancient philosophy refers to hope as a "foolish counsellor" (in Jowett, 1892). Sophocles, another celebrated Greek philosopher, considers hope as a "twist of fate" (in Jebb, 1904). Aristotle, the famous disciple of Plato, insisted that the "youth is easily deceived because it is quick to hope" (in Gravlee, 2000:464), which utterly implies that hope deceives. A century ago, Friedrich Nietzsche (in Menninger, 1959), one of the finest products from the German school of thoughts, referred to hope as the worst of evils for the reason that, he reckoned, it extends and sustains the suffering and torture of humanity. Nietzsche was referring to those instances where hope seems to promote nothing else but mere dreaming, denialism and a delay in confronting reality. Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the USA, cautioned the Americans that "he who lives in hope will die fasting" (in Snyder, 2000:3), while Francis Bacon, the 17<sup>th</sup> century English philosopher and statesman, maintains, in a culinary analogy, that "hope serves as a good breakfast but as a bad supper" (in Snyder, 2000:3). Perhaps such cynicism about hope is encapsulated in the following couplet in Shakespeare's dramatic piece, *The Rape of Lucrece* (Shakespeare, 1998 [Etext #1505]), as the maestro playwright writes:

Those that much covet are with gain so fond,  
 For what they have not, that which they possess  
 They scatter and unloose it from their bond,  
 And so, by hoping more, they have but less;  
 Or, gaining more, the profit of excess  
 Is but to surfeit, and such griefs sustain,  
 That they prove bankrupt in this poor-rich gain

Shakespeare's piece suggests that hope misleads by inviting a person to hope for 'more' but, in the end, he/she ends up with 'less'. Here, hoping is seen as an attempt to gain more or a way of trying to get profit from excess, and, according to the Shakespearean acumen, such an act is proof for bankruptcy and leads to sustainable grief. In other words, the more one hopes, the more they grieve. According to Jaklin Elliott (2004:4-6), such attitudes explain why hope, as a subject matter, did not appear influentially in scientific research until later in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As such, scientific approaches for doing research on hope did not begin

until the 1950s. It is during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that scholars increasingly turned their attention towards research on hope (Elliott, 2004:5; Daley, 1991:211).

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, emerging theories of hope put emphasis on people's strengths rather than their weaknesses (cf. Hryniewicz, 2007:29; Elliott, 2004:8). Elliott (2004:4), for example, points out that some of the previous writers within science suggested that hope was a personal matter that required curiosity from those in the religious sphere of influence, not from scientific researchers. This reluctance to include hope in the everyday scientific practice is somewhat based on the meta-theoretical philosophy of Auguste Comte's positivism, which asserts that the quest for truth and meaning are exclusively a prerogative of scientific investigation (cf. Copleston, 1972:27). In other words, only 'scientific knowledge' was presumed to be authentic and valid in the positivist school of thought because it allows verification of evidence and, thus, gives cognitive prestige to science. This is reminiscent of how hope was (and still is, to some extent) viewed by many as negative or not-so-helpful; thus, an illusion or temporary influence.

All these perspectives, however, are in contrast with that of the Judeo-Christian tradition, according to which hope is an asset and a beatific virtue. In Christianity, hope is based upon the acts of God in the past, the love of God in the present, and the promise of God in the future (see Keshgegian, 2006:32; Daley, 1991:22; Brueggemann, 1987:105). This study presents hope as a significant part of human existence that renders life bearable. Hope, however, is not passive; it needs to be put into action to form a binary with empowerment in the practice of development, which is the thrust of this dissertation. The study is quite distinct in that it provides contributory evidence from both the scholarly literature and the narratives of research participants in order to offer different perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation.

Given that what hope is, how it functions, and why it is essential to humanity continue to raise debates among scholars (cf. Elliott, 2004:53; Cousins, 1974:26; Alves, 1969:21), hope is explored here through the lenses of theology albeit insightful interpretations and understandings are drawn from various areas of expertise. Besides, the interest for social welfare and the promotion of refugees' <sup>6</sup> wellbeing is not restricted to theologians of

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<sup>6</sup> Throughout this thesis, the use of the term "refugee" or "refugee migrant" is inclusive of recognised refugees (in South Africa, recognised refugees hold a Section 24 permit) and asylum seekers (these hold a Section 22 permit), as well as those who may currently be without recognised official documents but are already in the hosting country in the process of seeking asylum.

development. Sociologists, geographers, philosophers, policymakers and health professionals, etc. are involved in the identification of strategies to implement in order to improve the quality of life of individuals and community groups such as, in this case, refugee migrants.

This first chapter is an “outer layer” of the entire thesis. It provides basic information on the study. In the chapter, I present the background and the rationale for undertaking this research, the problem statement as well as the significance of the study and its potential impact on the refugee population, the wider community and the field of Practical Theology. Also, herein explained are the objectives of the research along with the question that guided the entire research process. The chapter also provides an abridged version of the research methodology then it closes with an outline of subsequent chapters, showing how they are all linked to one another in an attempt to answer the main research question and, thereby, achieve the objectives of the study.

## 1.2. Research background and *raison d’être*

### 1.2.1. Background to the research

Scores of people are on the move. Their compulsion to move is necessitated by various forces. More than 10 million people worldwide today are refugees while more than 20 million are internally displaced within the borders of their own countries (cf. Nail, 2015:2). Antonio Guterres (UNHCR, 2012), the UNHCR High Commissioner, has described the 21st century as one of “people on the move”. Ours, therefore, is a generation on the move. Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa, has faced development challenges similar to other cities in the country over the last few years (cf. Amit, 2013:105; Jacobsen, 2012:31; Palmary, 2002:41). These challenges include but are not limited to the demanding task to manage the refugee phenomenon in the city (Belvedere, 2007:52; Amit, 2013:94). This is because the city of Cape Town is also home to a great number of refugee migrants.

Most of the previous studies and interventions have focused on improving the wellbeing of the local population due to the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’, which indicates the level of social polarisation in the city of Cape Town (cf. Sutton *et al.*, 2011:163). For that reason, data on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants in Cape Town is relatively

insufficient, particularly within the context of Theology and Development.<sup>7</sup> On the one hand, there is little information on how to empower refugee migrants so that, in spite of their daily challenges, they can be more productive and contribute to the socio-economic development of the hosting country. On the other hand, there is little information on how refugee migrants should empower themselves so as to improve their health and wellbeing. Schmid *et al.* (2010:138) assert that “(h)health is increasingly understood in terms that go beyond the bio-medical dimension”. They argue that the broader definition of the concept of health includes “aspects of well-being with a scope much larger” than the narrower definitional context provided by certain individuals (Schmid *et al.*, 2010:138).

Because globalisation and the advance of science and technology (e.g. easier and faster transport system, better infrastructural facilities, communication services, etc.) make it easier for people to settle wherever they wish, within weeks of being uprooted from their homes, refugee migrants from Africa or the Middle East could reach as far as the United States (cf. UNHCR, 2012; Keshebo, 2011:9; Buscher, 2011:31; Roux, 2009:32; Wa Kabwe-Segatti, 2008:66; Ferris, 1993:165). However, upon arrival in the hosting country, most refugee migrants go through difficult moments as they try to adjust to new ways of life in new settings and cultures (UNHCR, 2011; Groody, 2009:34; WaKabwe-Segatti & Landau, 2008:104; Eldridge, 1967:21). According to Schmid *et al.* (2010:137), “(i)n South Africa and elsewhere on the continent, health conditions, alongside other dimensions of social development, have changed dramatically under the impact of recent political and economic developments, and under the increasing burden of disease”. In view of this, most of the challenges facing refugee migrants affect their health and wellbeing.

In this regard, Jackson (2006:15, 16) notes that the African continent faces several serious challenges when compared to the other continents, which often result in the quest for improved wellbeing by many Africans elsewhere. Carballo (2001:269) finds that the refugee phenomenon, even though not new, is one of the most painful and complex realities of our time. There is, therefore, a need to be more proactive than reactive in matters regarding the wellbeing of refugee migrants considering that the conditions that they live in have become a global concern while their refugeeeness is often “replete with health and social challenges”

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<sup>7</sup> Here health is understood as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellness and not merely the absence of illness or infirmity.

(Carballo, 2001:271). Even so, refugee migrants in South Africa are entitled to various legal rights such as the right to access basic social services including education and healthcare as well as the right to work (Chan & Bowpitt, 2005:143; Harrell-Bond, 2002:231; Ferris, 1993:73). Such entitlements, however, are not often enjoyed by most refugees as they have to compete with the local population for jobs, housing, social services and many other opportunities. At times, such competition begets grave tensions with the local population and aggravates xenophobic attitudes.

There has long been agreement that development and migration are fundamentally linked but the debate about whether or not the link is positive swings like a pendulum (cf. Amit, 2013:104-106; Weissberg, 1999:193-195; Baker, 1992:33, 34). Optimists see migration as a mechanism for achieving balanced growth by “restoring the equilibrium between labour-rich-but-capital-poor producing countries and oppositely endowed hosting countries” (Baker, 1992:33). As such, migration lowers wages and raises production in hosting countries. At the same time, it raises wages and encourages development in producing countries. Here, there are two ideas worth considering: (i) well-managed migration generally supports development, and (ii) unmanaged or poorly managed migration undermines development (Weissberg, 1999:194).

Current consensus holds that refugee migration is intrinsically ‘good’ for the wellbeing of refugee migrants. As the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) points out, according to Amartya Sen’s (1999) notion of “development as freedom”, freedom of movement is both intrinsic to development and associated with striking welfare gains. On the one hand, hosting countries benefit from the migration of refugees since highly skilled migrants bring new ideas and technologies while contributing more than they consume in taxes. Low skilled migrants, on the other hand, take jobs that local workers despise, thus, keeping wages low, combating inflation and raising overall production. It is worth noting that migratory movements have a historical depth in Africa. Indeed, as Harzig, *et al.* (2009:8) put it, “the history of humanity is a history of migration”. Among the many reasons for migration are people’s survival (e.g. the quest for ‘greener pastures’ or escaping for one’s life), and exploratory journeys. Yet, today, the biggest migratory movement is the refugee phenomenon (cf. Groody, 2009:105; Ferris, 1993:22; Baker, 1992:21).

Migration has been a fundamental part of the South African history. According to Watters (2003:224), however, the “[refugee] phenomenon dates from 1993 following the

introduction of asylum determination procedures for individual applicants”. Here, migrant labourers formed the foundation of South Africa’s mining industry during the *apartheid* years. This is because immigration policies in South Africa were specifically designed alongside radicalised lines to support the segregationist goals of the *apartheid* regime. As migration across African borders continues, government officials of the current regime hold a renewed responsibility to ensure that the written rights of refugee migrants are not only theoretical. Acknowledging the potential socio-economic value offered by refugee migrants is a step towards their empowerment and hope for improved wellbeing.

The refugee phenomenon involves a series of losses both emotional and physical (Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:3). In view of this, Bhugra *et al.* (2011:139) indicate that one of the key factors during the process of migration is what individual refugees carry with them, and what they leave behind in social, material or emotional terms. When refugee migrants leave their homes, they leave many things behind, which were dear to them. These may include homes, families, friends, belongings and relationships. The loss of or detachment from such things often creates a constant inner mourning, which gradually develops into a feeling that pioneers trauma-related disturbances (Bhugra *et al.*, 2011:141; Watters, 2003:230). This, in turn, results in various other social disorders. So, whether pulled towards the new setting and space or pushed out of the old, refugees carry with them such burdens (Bhugra *et al.*, 2011:140; Sutton *et al.*, 2011:102; Refuge, 1994:32; Moussa, 1991:81). Whether they had time to prepare for their departure from their original space or they had to leave suddenly, they still carry with them those burdens. This is reminiscent of the fact that refugees are “the most vulnerable of all groups of migrants” (Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:9; Besseling, 2001:32), and that their lived experiences are a major factor to elevated rates of stress and various other forms of disorders. Such vulnerability begets a high level of frustrations and disillusionment, resulting in new cases of illnesses.

According to the UNHCR report on the health of refugee migrants, the combination of poverty and joblessness begets in them the feeling of hopelessness and a sense of helplessness (UNHCR, 2012; 2011). These, in turn, lead to a set of other new problems that come up due to the absence of social structures, which normally serve to support individuals. However, many refugee migrants remain oblivious of the state of their health and seek medical attention when their conditions have worsened (cf. Watters, 223:225–227). Such oblivion results from a constant feeling of helplessness owing to the daily social pressures as they try to adjust to their

new settings and cope with all the stress involved. Bhugra *et al.* (2011:201) point out that refugees' oblivion *vis-à-vis* their own health condition could also be a consequence of their financial restriction and/or the attitudinal reception they get in most health care facilities in their new setting.

A report by the Secretary-General of the UNHCR on international migration and development indicates that Africa remains the continent hardest hit by the refugee phenomenon considering the constant increase in the number of refugee migrants during the past few years (UNHCR, 2010:3). South Africa, being a stable country in the region in recent years, attracts a substantial number of refugee migrants (Wa Kabwe-Segatti, 2008:29; Gutto, 2001:66). However, their migration to South Africa causes conflicting responses as some consider that their flows into the country should be rigorously controlled. Writing on refugee migrants in the Netherlands, Jeroen Corduwener (2001) contends that refugee migrants "should be cared for in their own regions because [most hosting countries are] unable to provide them with the reception they deserve". Here, Corduwener's argument signals the extent of indifference towards refugee migrants in most countries and the unwilling attitude to take care of them, which often results in xenophobic treatment. As it were, xenophobia weakens efforts towards local integration and affects refugees' hope for improved wellbeing (cf. Rosenkranz, 2013:92; Belvedere, 2007:43; Besseling, 2001:127).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2007;<sup>8</sup> 1996),<sup>9</sup> refugee migrants are at high risk of contracting various infections and/or diseases since a large number of them suffer physically and/or emotionally. In this regard, the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2013) requires that refugee migrants benefit from an improved standard of wellbeing (physical, mental and social), which will enable them to substantially contribute towards the welfare and socio-economic development of their hosting country as well as their countries of origin.<sup>10</sup> Because refugee migrants are a "people with strong determination to survive" (WHO, 1996), they often suffer in silence with little or no help. Eventually, such

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<sup>8</sup> *Tuberculosis care and control in refugee and displaced populations*, UNHCR/WHO 2007, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Available at [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9789241595421\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9789241595421_eng.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> *Mental Health of Refugees*, UNHCR/WHO 1996, Available at [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/41825/1/9241544864\\_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/41825/1/9241544864_eng.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> IOM's Vision on Migration Health, available at <http://www.iom.int/cms/migration-health>

suffering leads to serious health problems that affect their holistic development and improved wellbeing.

Dealing with the refugee phenomenon from the perspective of health and wellbeing is an attempt to instil refugee migrants with hope notwithstanding the complexities of their lived experiences or the reality they find themselves in. Living as a refugee can be a painful experience because refugee migrants are often vulnerable to violence and exploitation (sexual and/or economic) in the process of flight and/or even upon arrival in their new setting (Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012:32; Watters, 2003:225; Cochrane, 2003:201). Despite these factors, most refugee migrants are often not in their best emotional condition since they often experience particular stresses having lost family members, friends, valuables or homes (Refugee Health, 2011; Besseling, 2001:211; Carballo, 2001:32). This explains why without combining our hope for a better society with concrete efforts, the lives of the most vulnerable in the society would be severely threatened. In contrast, empowerment by hope<sup>11</sup> could rekindle their simmering ambitions and propel them to find meaning in life despite the unfortunate circumstances they find themselves in. In this regard, Moltmann (1972:59) notes that “[a] hope which is not the hope of the oppressed today is no hope for which [one] could give a theological account”. In a similar vein, Paulo Freire (1994:9) observes that:

[T]here is no hope in sheer hopefulness. The hoped-for is not attained by dint of raw hoping. Just to hope is to hope in vain. Without a minimum of hope, (...) hope, as an ontological need, dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness. And hopelessness can become tragic despair. (...) Hopelessness and despair are both the consequence and the cause of inaction or immobilism.

Here, Freire indicates that hoping aimlessly is vain. He lays emphasis on putting hope into action because, for him, it is pointless to hope without making an effort to attain the hoped-for. Hope must get us into action. It must be concrete and inspire the hoper to do something positive so as to achieve the imagined. Tutton, Seers and Langstaff (2009:121) observe that hope is an antidote for fear since it enables the hoper to rise above the currency of his/her painful experiences. Their reflection explains Glenn Tinder’s (1999:13) observatory assessment that,

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<sup>11</sup> Empowerment by hope is a coined term to refer to the practical theology of integral mission that believes in the balanced use of zealous advocacy, evangelism (i.e. the spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness) and social responsibility in addressing the needs of those for whom despair is their “daily bread” in order to instil them with renewed hope. It offers a unique paradigm through which the biblical concept of Theology and Development could be understood with a different lens and applied in modern development discourse.

to a human being, hope is as necessary as light and air. Therefore, unless different ways of perceiving and understanding hope are identified and measures to actuate it are taken, hope will remain a mere abstraction in the phenomena of life.

This is why without rage and love, observes Freire (1994:10, 11), there is sheer hopelessness. Hope is meant to be “a defence of tolerance” (Freire, 1994:10). Thus, the idea that hope alone can transform the world is “an excellent route to hopelessness” (Freire, 1994:10). In other words, having hope abstractly as a scientific approach to change social ills is illusive. Seeing that hope is “an anchor of the soul”, it requires, therefore, “an anchoring in practice” (Hebrews 6:19; see also Freire 1994:9). Thus, the dynamics of the refugee phenomenon with its consequential challenges affecting the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants along with the insights of Brueggemann (2001), Botman (2001), Moltmann (1967) and Freire (1994) lead to the deduction that hope is not a passive emotional reaction to suffering or a doubtful longing for something but an assured and purposeful pursuit for a specific end in the face of circumstances, however unbearable. In this regard, hope is a resource in the development equation. Put differently, hope empowers.

### 1.2.2. Research *raison d'être*

Illness is an unbearable burden that sometimes affects the patient's likelihood to hope for recovery. For refugee migrants, this likelihood is even more at risk because theirs is a community in which suffering, in all its forms, is prevalent – resulting in despair and anxiety. The *raison d'être* or rationale for doing research on the role and meaning of hope in the lives of refugee migrants is generally motivated by my personal lived experiences of the power of hope. Firstly, I have lived as a refugee in various African countries, both in the camps and in urban cities. This experience propelled me to carry out a phenomenological investigation on the living conditions of refugee migrants in general.

Secondly, if you have ever experienced pain of any kind, you will be familiar with the conflicting feelings of wanting to “hang in there” and wishing to give up. I was diagnosed with a terminal illness: End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) or chronic kidney failure. My condition required Continuous Ambulatory Peritoneal Dialysis (CAPD, a renal replacement therapy) in anticipation of organ transplantation to ensure my physical survival medically speaking. My nephrologist indicated that dialysis (peritoneal or haemodialysis) and/or transplantation were

the only means of sustaining life for patients with ESRD. After further consultations, considerations and prayers, I gave my consent for the CAPD therapy. However, the medical practitioner made it clear that although transplantation appears to be the treatment of choice for many, the number of kidney donors is often limited, and at times transplants fail if the patient's body reject the transplanted organ. It was also made clear to me that many patients with ESRD require long-term or even life-long dialysis therapy (cf. Vale *et al.*, 2004:2, 3; Rabindranath *et al.*, 2008:7; Kovačević *et al.*, 2014:3). In other words, neither dialysis (in my case, CAPD) nor organ transplantation is 100% a solution to ESRD. Thus, the solution could only be outside the realm of clinical pathology in particular or scientific knowledge in general. We, however, started looking for a possible donor from among the members of my family and willing friends.

All such detailed information leaves no room for hope in patients with ESRD. Although the condition was extremely unbearable, it is hope that empowered me to withstand. The power of hope produced strong effects on my consciousness, my attitude, my faith and even my physical self to never give up. Furthermore, hope in action as expressed socially and otherwise by friends, loved ones, family members and the medical staff, over and above the grace of hope found in the Word, kept me going until both my kidneys started to regain their normal function in less than a year on the CAPD renal replacement therapy. Such an experience of hope in action and the awareness of the hopelessness bred by the refugee situation intensified my interest in the phenomenon but narrowed it to a specific focus on the role, meaning and power of hope in refugees' health and wellbeing.

Thirdly, despite the wide range of literature on (i) the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants, (ii) the perspectives of hope, and (iii) the parameters of community empowerment in the development equation, the dearth of information and of research on the relationships between them remains extensive (Carbonnier, 2012:231; Belvedere, 2007:110; Cochrane, 2003:199; Castles & Miller, 1998:34; Daley, 1991:32). This possibly arises from the difficulty associated with assessing hope scientifically and the tendency to relegate it to a lesser important place in the professional world (cf. Moltmann, 1999:67; 1971:89; 1969:21; 1967:43). The awareness of such dearth also, in part, fuelled my longing for an investigative exploration into refugees' holistic development and improved wellbeing. It has further added to my desire of being *au fait* with the role of hope in their lived experiences.

In the context of this study, empowerment by hope is a theoretical perspective within Theology and Development that requires putting hope into action in an attempt to improve the wellbeing of those in despair holistically. It is “hope in action” as theorised by Russel Botman (2001) in accordance with Walter Brueggemann (2001:148) and Jürgen Moltmann’s (1967:19) reflection that “hope must prove its power”. As a patient with renal impairment, I sensed and witnessed the role and power of hope in the process of my recovery. In the words of Jerome Groopman (2005:xvi), “I felt I had been given back my life”. I am, therefore, keen here to explore the role and meaning of hope in the lives of other refugee migrants who face health and wellbeing challenges.

### 1.3. Research focus

Migration, besides birth and death, has always defined human populations and, today, it is one of the most powerful currents shaping the global society (Blavo, 1999:19). Being one of the biggest migratory trends, wise management of the refugee phenomenon is arguably one of the greatest challenges of our time. This is because, with it, comes a people with various and great problems including health-related ones. As it were, conflicts and wars are among the great contributors to the global burden of disease (Refugee Health, 2011). Information systems break down during conflicts, contributing to uncertainty and fear. Fragile public health structures and facilities may also be damaged (Refugee Health, 2011; Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:126). The lack of strong infrastructure contributes to the emergence and/or upsurge of various diseases such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

On the African continent, South Africa is practically a high-income country for most African migrants. Considering that refugee migrants are often a minority community when compared to the overall population of the hosting country’s citizenry, they tend to be at a disadvantage in accessing basic services at their disposal for a variety of reasons (Amit, 2013; Gutto, 2001). One of the reasons for being at the disadvantage end is the language barrier since a good number of refugee migrants in South Africa come from non-English speaking countries. Most of them are from French-speaking countries and from the Horn of Africa (i.e. Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti) with the exception of Zimbabwe, which has the largest number of refugee migrants from an English-speaking country. In view of this, refugees from non-English speaking countries are less likely to access basic information or even know about their

availability as they are unable to read or understand the local South African language or the predominantly spoken English.

In his introductory note on the health of migrant communities, James Cochrane (2003:197) notes that “even among relatively homogenous local populations, it is difficult to provide for health when resources are severely limited, infrastructures overloaded or negligible, and the conditions that promote ill health widespread”. Cochrane’s remark signals the challenge of the hosting countries in providing adequate support structures to refugee migrants because, in most cases, the local population also faces the same challenges as the refugee community. Nevertheless, refugee migrants encounter relatively difficult challenges when they arrive in their country of asylum, which indicates that ‘refugeeness’ comes with circumstances and challenges beyond refugees’ control (Cochrane, 2003:200). Such challenging circumstances often push them into all kinds of economic activities for survival. In some cases, women even engage in prostitution and/or behave promiscuously with various partners to acquire extra cash. This is because most refugees migrate without their partners – leaving behind structures and values that identify them. Thus, they satisfy their sexual desires promiscuously outside stable relationships (Cochrane, 2003:214; Harrell-Bond, 2002:95; Carballo, 2001:142; Besseling, 2001:99; Blavo, 1999:43). Such situations put them at high risk of getting infected with HIV and/or other STIs. Communicable diseases such as these affect the wellbeing of refugee migrants in both economic and social terms, while their psychosocial equilibrium also gets disturbed.

According to Majodina (2001:vii), the African continent has the de-structuring of its social structures due to long-lasting political and economic instability consequently resulting in high levels of forcible uprooting of people who are then compelled to seek asylum in other countries. At the root of human displacements are reasons ranging from poverty, since people move from one country to another in the quest for improved wellbeing, to the on-going civil wars and other forms of violence (Ruiz *et al.*, 2011:159; Rutinwa, 2001:13). Thus, among the consequences of the refugee phenomenon is the complexity of its health implications related to the poorness of refugees’ living conditions (Carballo, 2001:269). The impact of such ill health on an individual refugee, according to Bhugra and Gupta (2011:2), is multi-layered and affects various aspects of the individual biologically, socially and/or psychologically.

Improved wellbeing is more than just the absence of ailment or infirmity (Refugee Health, 2011). A human being ought to be well in every aspect of the self. That is what constitutes holistic wellbeing. Refugees are among the most vulnerable of all migrants, and their vulnerability stems from several factors, ranging from pre-migratory dynamics such as wars, persecution and many other forms of violence to post-migratory ones such as human rights abuses, uncertainty of the future, stereotyping and/or ill-treatment by the hosting community (Baker, 2006:42; 1992:153;). In this regard, Jackson (2006:15) finds that illness, poverty, socio-political insecurity, the lack of medical infrastructure and adequate public services are “a far greater threat to life than armed conflict in most African states”.

Although some “*nouveaux riches*” in South Africa happen to be members of the black community while there are now a number of “*nouveaux pauvres*” in the white community (cf. Maluleke 2007:53), Bowers-du Toit & Nkomo (2014:2, 3), writing from the perspective of restorative justice, argue that South Africa as a nation is yet to be considered reconciled mainly because “educational, institutional and systemic advantages to white people during apartheid continue to ensure their employment and therefore [their] escape from poverty”. The obviousness of this reality in South Africa is such that refugee migrants are written off as a burden to the national government and, thus, a parasite community to the country’s resources. Robin Cohen (2003:1) puts it rather well when he points out that “the population of the rich countries see poor outsiders as the overriding threat to their health and welfare”. This may partly explain why the South African government feels the need to “repair the past”, to borrow the words of Bowers-du Toit & Nkomo (2014:12), instead of ‘wasting’ time and resources caring for foreigners whom many believe come into the country in perpetual quest for greener pastures. Here, one may establish, therefore, that refugees’ health and wellbeing in South Africa has complex repercussions, which result in increased hopelessness.

Mahatma Gandhi (in Mbeki, 2015)<sup>12</sup> sought to address these global pressing issues we face today calling them “Seven Social Sins”. These are (i) “wealth without work”, (ii) “pleasure without conscience”, (iii) “knowledge without character”, (iv) “commerce without morality”, (v) “science without humanity”, (vi) “worship without sacrifice”, and (vii) “politics without principle”. On these “social sins”, Africa as a continent must reflect with obligatory depth and

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<sup>12</sup> Statement of former South African president Thabo Mbeki on Adv. Willie Hofmeyr's affidavit, Johannesburg, 9 April 2015 available at <http://www.thabombekifoundation.org.za/Pages/Statement-of-former-President-Thabo-Mbeki-on-Adv-Willie-Hofmeyr%E2%80%99s-affidavit-%E2%80%93-April-9,-2015.aspx>

seriousness knowing that, as Mbeki (2015:9) puts it, “a society without a moral proposition is destined nowhere”. In this regard, both Brueggemann (2001:147) and Botman (2001:56) signal the necessity of a paradigm shift in the ways we do mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in an attempt to address the many “social sins” facing the continent so that, as a society, we are not “destined nowhere” to borrow from Mbeki’s words. As it were, Brueggemann (2001) and Botman (2001) further argue that palliating the social sins we are facing entails putting hope into action (cf. Brueggemann, 2001:3; Botman, 2001:74). In this context, it is hope put into action that empowers refugee migrants, restores their dignity and brightens the horizons of their future.

I argue, therefore, that refugee migrants in Cape Town, South Africa, have gone through painful experiences and most of them have seen extremely traumatising incidents that remain fresh in their memory. These incidents could have long-term effects on their psychosocial stability even when they physically settle in their new setting. Thus, being an already vulnerable minority community in South Africa, refugee migrants require attention from researchers, development agents, faith communities and the wider society.

## 1.4. Significance of the research and potential impact

As indicated in the previous section (cf. Section 1.3.), the refugee phenomenon is, arguably, the vastest migratory movement when compared to other forms of human migration. It involves millions of displaced individuals and, as Castles and Miller, (1998:43) find, it has turned into a structural reality of contemporary society. In other words, the refugee phenomenon has become an increasingly complex problem from all points of views including the theological one. Taking into consideration the magnitude of the dynamics of the refugee phenomenon in our contemporary society, I embarked on this research project with the hope that it will assist the church in responding to the needs of refugee migrants and become an opportunity for integral mission by transforming their painful experiences into opportunity of hope for improved wellbeing.

The study demonstrates how theoretical and phenomenological techniques in Practical Theology such as the use of narrative to study lived experiences and/or explore the rhythm of social life inform understandings of the issue under study. By focusing on details of how refugee migrants and the local community construct perceptions of hope, how they experience empowerment, and how they theorise about their own lived experiences, the nuances of

everyday life are revealed in ways beyond imagination. Although the research provides a serious and challenging theological perspective on a range of issues relating to the binary of hope and empowerment, I remain cognisant of the fact that the refugee phenomenon today requires an ecumenical vision considering the presence of numerous refugee migrants not in ecclesiastical sameness within the Body of Christ and the increasingly growing number of religious otherness as observed in refugee migrants belonging to other religions such as those confessing the Islamic faith. In this regard, this research significantly promotes the necessity of active engagement in the society both within the Body of Christ in particular and within the broader religious otherness in general. It encourages participatory action that is both faithful to the Christian tradition and open to the new developments of this global era.

Empowerment by hope is conceived and structured as a theological perspective that offers a unique angle of vision from which to consider how we can respond effectively to the pressing needs of refugee migrants. It also presents strategies that policymakers may use to devise policies and programmes with the aim of protecting the dignity and improving the wellbeing of refugee migrants. It is also worth mentioning that social scientists have long sought to develop interdisciplinary models in an attempt to understand and explain the underlying perspectives in the theory and practice of hope (cf. Bielawski, 2007:32). Thus, this research falls within this category as it seeks to examine the meaning and relevance of hope in refugees' lives and evaluate, in particular, the extent to which hope features in their lived experiences.

The uniqueness of this research is particularised in the way it investigates the components of wellbeing such as the resources, potentials, competences and abilities, which refugee migrants can develop in order to enhance their quality of life and achieve a certain level of developmental growth. Its specific attempt, in this regard, is the contextualisation of hope in time (i.e. 21<sup>st</sup> century) and space (i.e. Africa, most particularly South Africa), taking into account varied contextual elements related to their health and wellbeing. Here, I interpret hope as not merely a subjective human feeling but as a purely objective reaction stemming from the daily interactions between the material self and the immaterial self in the face of the situations they find themselves in.

As it were, handling people with health problems requires a certain level of awareness and sensitivity, which stem from a characteristically good practice (Bhugra *et al.*, 2011:143).

This study will focus on the ways in which refugee migrants improve their wellbeing and enhance the quality of their lives through active hope in the face of their vulnerability. It would appear that the social life that refugee migrants lead, particularly the conditions they live in, have serious impacts on their holistic wellbeing – causing hopelessness and despair (Besseling, 2001:132). The significance of this study is further affirmed in that it contributes to the scientific body of knowledge that reflects on and explores a specific context of the refugee phenomenon (i.e. the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants) from the perspective of empowerment and hope. In so doing, the study will equip various role players with the needed ‘tools’ to assess the manifold health challenges that refugee migrants face while optimising the care and/or advocacy for them.

The study is, therefore, trans-disciplinary.<sup>13</sup> It draws from integrated knowledge to identify and facilitate relevant ways of overcoming the current challenges that the society is facing, particularly the refugee community, which thwart its sustainability. It is in this context that David Turton (in Souter, 2013:15) argues that “there is no justification for studying, and attempting to understand, the causes of human suffering if the purpose of one’s study is not, ultimately, to find ways of relieving and preventing that suffering”. In view of this, I address the dearth of empirical research on the parameters of health and wellbeing from the perspective of the refugee phenomenon within the spectrum of Theology and Development but with a special focus on the binary of hope and empowerment.

I here acknowledge the works of some researchers in the field who have done extensive research on hope from a Theology and Development perspective, particularly a recent study by Selina Palm and Clint Le Bruyns, *Transforming Hope? A Theological-ethical Vision, Virtue, and Practice for the Common Good* (2013), where they look at how hope can be sustained in the face of so much suffering and evil. They point out that hope is “a social vision” or “a way of seeing” (Palm & Le Bruyns, 2013:109), “a social virtue” or “a way of being” (Palm & Le Bruyns, 2013:112) and “a social practice” or “a way of doing” (Palm & Le Bruyns, 2013:116). While Palm and Le Bruyns’ article is a great contribution within Theology and Development discourse on hope, I wish to state that it lacks a phenomenological cutting-edge because it is

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<sup>13</sup> My understanding of a trans-disciplinary study is that it provides researchers with the opportunity to expand their studies and knowledge beyond their own academic disciplines through a ‘multi-layered’ approach that focuses on a variety of scholastic categories (e.g. theology, sociology, human geography, etc.) in order to find solutions to problems that cannot be as readily solved within the confines of a single discipline. Herein, this word is used throughout interchangeably with “interdisciplinary”.

not based on an empirical study. In addition, not much has been written on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants from the perspective of Theology and Development. This, too, is a knowledge gap this research hopes to fill. Thus, there is a need for a paradigm shift if, as the church, we are to understand and respond effectively to the pressing needs of the society and bring hope to this despairing world, particularly, in the context of the health and wellbeing needs of the refugee community in South Africa. A change or shift in paradigm leads the church to being actively involved in the community, and with the community. This is a call for the church to become a valuable partner in development practice as Hendriks (2010:285) argues.

Because there is a universal sense of despair deepened today by diseases, natural disasters, ecological crises, widespread poverty and rising conflicts between nations and societies, etc. (Brown & Falkenroth, 1976:12), this research contributes to the on-going quest for ways in which refugee migrants, characterised by despondency due to the challenges bred by the refugee phenomenon, could be invested in so they can become more productive in their day-to-day lives and contribute to the development of both their hosting countries and their countries of origin. It also contributes to the many academic attempts to fill that gap in knowledge within Theology and Development. As Swart (2010:205) puts it, to date, there is not enough thoughts on “the mode of involvement or discourse” to effectively address the development problem. Thus, this research is an attempt to provide an alternative mode of involvement or discourse for effectively addressing the development problem we are faced with. Here, the gap in knowledge is even more evident in the dearth of literature on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants from the perspective of Practical Theology or, even more specifically, within the subfield of Theology and Development. However, the main contribution of this research to the broader society is that it identifies ways of addressing the refugee phenomenon, which would open up newer developmental avenues and impregnate an empowerment by hope attitude into the consciousness of both refugee migrants and role players.

Countless institutions operating in global development sectors would like to contribute to and/or influence policy change in the society. These could be small non-governmental organisations working towards improving the health and wellbeing of a marginalised group such as the refugee community or large research institutions trying to develop urban planning. These could even be governments or faith communities such as the church. While changes to legislation are often seen as the most concrete ways of making change happen, public policy comprises many non-legislative issues such as decision-making on whose voices to include in

debates or what evidence to base decisions on. This research, therefore, seeks to ensure that the voices of refugee migrants would be considered in debates of development as concrete evidence to influence change within the global development discourse.

In general, this study investigates whether hope provides motivation for empowerment and whether, in so doing, it becomes a social asset for improved wellbeing and resource for holistic development. It explains the theological understanding of hope from a variety of scholarly contexts with a specific focus on its relation to community empowerment. This it does by attempting to theorise a socio-theological perspective of hope that can be visualised and demonstrated as a core value for integral mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Academics, researchers, policymakers, healthcare providers, and those interested in the refugee phenomenon and its related dynamics will hopefully find this research pertinent, not only for its relevance in applicability, but also for the purpose of constructive debates on matters pertaining to refugees' health and wellbeing. Practically, this research will likely result in a rich harvest of insights, trainings and strategies of hope, which the church can put into practice and, in the process, translate its traditional "*orthodoxia*" into (or balance it with) a progressive and much needed "*orthopraxia*" particularly on the binary of hope and empowerment in Theology and Development.<sup>14</sup>

Besides the challenging orthodoxies on matters pertaining to the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants within Theology and Development as framework, this research was carried out with the hope of generating and applying knowledge that makes a difference in the wider society. Here, data provided by the research will hopefully contribute to raising awareness among role players including policymakers, healthcare providers and practical theologians on the seriousness of the problem, and how it affects the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants. The findings will therefore inform a more effective response from the role players as a step

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<sup>14</sup> Religions are generally defined by one of two things: "correct belief" (of the scriptures) or "correct conduct" (i.e. practice of the scriptures), which represent *orthodoxy* and *orthopraxy* respectively (in Greek, *orthodoxia* and *orthopraxia*). In Christianity, one side of the divide emphasises the former (i.e. "correct" beliefs) and thereby tends to neglect the latter because "salvation is based on faith, not works". The other side of the divide puts more emphasis on "correct" practices to the detriment of the former because "faith without action is dead". However, it is my theological conviction that both orthodoxy and orthopraxy constitute the two sides of the same religious coin. True Christianity is (or ought to be) a good balance of both. It is about living out / putting into practice the full gospel; thus, translating what we preach into action. In other words, while salvation is based on "faith alone", faith is nevertheless dead if not practiced or put into action. Here, the premise is thus: "correct belief" compels "correct action" (or practice), and incorrect actions result from incorrect beliefs.

towards the obligation to eliminate disparities in the healthcare services, and towards the responsibility to empower the less privileged.

The research is designed in such a way that it becomes a resource for those interested in the study of migration and integration, and the consequences of it on refugee migrants. As such, it will seek to provide the faith community, particularly the church, with a well-grounded theoretical framework based on empirical research as a tool for instilling renewed hope to those for whom pain and sorrow are characteristically a daily affair. This explains why our responsibility to humanity is an aspect of putting hope into practice as beautifully put in this 13<sup>th</sup> century poem by the Persian poet Saadi Shirazi:<sup>15</sup>

The children of Adam are limbs of each other,  
having been created of one essence.  
When the calamity of time affects one limb,  
The other limbs cannot remain at rest.  
If you have no empathy for the troubles of others,  
You are unworthy to be called the name of a human. (trans. 2006)

Christianity is as much about palliating physical suffering (i.e. care for the material part of a human person) as it is about saving human beings from eternal damnation (i.e. concern for the immaterial part of a human person). Such practical steps reveal the depth of one's spirituality of hope, which Apostle James considers as "true religion" (cf. James 1:27). In other words, true religion is lived religion. It is care and concern for both the material and the immaterial aspects of a human person. It is putting hope into practice.

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<sup>15</sup> Source [http://www.iranchamber.com/literature/saadi/books/golestan\\_saadi.pdf](http://www.iranchamber.com/literature/saadi/books/golestan_saadi.pdf)

## 1.5. Research question and objectives

### 1.5.1. Research question

This study seeks to answer the following twin question:

*How do the health challenges that refugees in Cape Town face impede their wellbeing; and how can such challenges be turned into opportunities for hope in order to ensure holistic development and human dignity?*

### 1.5.2. Research objectives

In an attempt to answer the leading research question (cf. Section 1.5.1.), the following guiding objectives were formulated:

- 1) To investigate the various perspectives of hope in order to understand its role and meaning in human suffering
- 2) To identify the challenges that refugee migrants face through an analysis of their lived experiences
- 3) To situate the hope-empowerment binary within Theology and Development
- 4) To determine the impact of the refugee phenomenon on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants
- 5) To make recommendations on how hope could be put into action both within the context of the Christian faith community and the broader society in their engagement with the refugee phenomenon

## 1.6. Overview of the research methodology and approach

Considering the need for rich data and thick description of lived experiences, the study needed an in-depth exploration. A qualitative approach was adopted to serve this purpose and to allow detailed descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation during data gathering. This was done in keeping with the words of Mason (2002:2) that a qualitative approach to research helps to explore the “understandings, experiences and imaginings of research participants”.

For this research, data was collected through a triangulation of methods, namely, focus groups discussions (FGDs)<sup>16</sup>, key informants interviews (KIIs), a short survey with a very small population, and document analysis. Data was analysed by using both ATLAS.ti<sup>17</sup>, which is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS)<sup>18</sup> tool, and the traditional qualitative content analysis method. The sample of the research was also selected through a triangulation of methods, i.e. purposive sampling and snowballing. Confidentiality and other ethical considerations were adhered to throughout the research process to ensure the protection of dignity and the privacy of those involved in the research.

Also, the use of the first personal pronoun “I” in this research should not be regarded as “too subjective”. Its use is aimed at reinforcing my voice as the researcher in an attempt to bring in personal experiences or explain particular actions undertaken during the course of this research practice in a more specific way. A comprehensive account on the use of personal pronouns in this research is provided in Section 5.4 of Chapter 5.

Since this research is conducted within the context of Practical Theology, I also used a practical theological approach to guide the methodological procedure.<sup>19</sup> This was done in view of the fact that in Practical Theology, one moves beyond mere doctrinal theologising to actually applying those doctrines in the daily life, which makes it an interaction between theory and praxis (Heitink, 1999:151). A practical theological approach to research methodology is a dynamic process of reflective and a critical inquiry into the praxis of the church in the world. Here, I use the Zerfass Practical Theology model in order to point out how theory intersects with praxis. Praxis and theory may not be divided and separately discussed in this research but Zerfass (1974:164-177) accentuates the connection between theory and praxis. The use of Zerfass’ model enriches the research since the theological theory and existing praxis are

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<sup>16</sup> A focus group is a small circle of people led through an open discussion by a facilitator

<sup>17</sup> ATLAS.ti belongs to the genre of CAQDAS programmes. ATLAS.ti is a German acronym for *Archiv für Technik, Lebenswelt, AlltagsSprache* [English for: Archive of Technology Lifeworld and Everyday Language]. The abbreviation *ti* stands for *text interpretation*. Source: *Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Friese, 2014).

<sup>18</sup> The Acronym CAQDAS was developed by the directors of the CAQDAS networking project at the University of Surrey, Guildford, UK (<http://caqdas.soc.surrey.ac.uk/>). Source: *Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Friese, 2014:1).

<sup>19</sup> This approach is about applying God’s revelation as directly and as purely as possible to the concrete situations of life. Therefore, a practical theologian moves from revelation to the human, from theory to practice, and from revealed knowledge to application. The emphasis of a practical theological methodology is on how all the teaching of scripture should affect the way we live today in this present world, and not to simply contemplate or comprehend theological doctrines.

granted room to influence each other. In this regard, following Zerfass' model, the interaction between theory and praxis may result in new theory and praxis. A detailed exposition and a more comprehensive explanation of the research methodology are given in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

## 1.7. Defining key terms to understand the conceptual

### 1.7.1. Practical Theology

John Swinton (2012:449) provides pointers to the fact that theology is by essence “designed for practice”. That is to say, “all theology is practical” and, for that reason, it is primarily aimed at “enabling the church to participate faithfully in God’s mission”. Swinton (2012:449) further argues that “it is very easy for this to be forgotten within the day-to-day thrust of the academy” because all other theologians such as systematic theologians, historical theologians, philosophical theologians, New and Old Testament theologians, etc. “tend not to want to be seen as ‘practical’, and practical theologians often have little desire to be seen as ‘theoreticians’”. Nevertheless, the point Swinton makes is valid and agrees with the broader understanding of Practical Theology in this research; that is, all theology is by essence practical.<sup>20</sup> This is why Jaco Dryer (2012:506) asserts that, as an academic discipline, Practical Theology is shaped by the political, social, cultural, economic, and religious aspects of a specific context. According to Sharp (2012:425), this explains why Practical Theology starts “with concrete lives and practices of human beings”. As such, Greider (2012:452) further notes that most “practical theologians commonly assert that the primary text of our field is lived experience”. Thus, as Sharp (2012:425) observes, doing Practical Theology involves maintaining tensions between subjects and objects.

Practical theology as a field of study deals with the praxis of God, salvific and eschatological involvement, and engagement with the trajectories of human lives and the suffering of human beings (Louw, 2008:71). This partly explains why Heitink (1999:2) finds that Practical Theology is not only about the application of findings from the so-called

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<sup>20</sup> Karel August also argues that practical theology does not refer only to a specific discipline within theology. His understanding is that everything within theology is practical, and without this practicality nothing would be deemed theological. Professor Malan Nel shares similar views in his editorial note on Practical Theology in which he says Osmer and Gräß's (1997:1-10) reasoning resonates with this conception. Cf.: <http://www.hts.org.za/index.php/HTS/issue/view46>

“foundational disciplines” of theology such as systematic theology. Instead, Practical Theology is a reminder that all of theology is practical. In other words, Practical Theology reminds all theologians of the practical nature of their profession or vocation. Heitink (1999:3) argues that “many of the great theologians of the past, from Augustine to Martin Luther and beyond, were in fact practical theologians”. Practical Theology is, therefore, “empirically descriptive and critically constructive” and, because Christianity is neither restricted to the church only nor to a clerical paradigm (Heitink, 1999:2). As such, Practical Theology concerns not only the church but also the society and the individual person.

According to Browning (1991:154), the main aim of Practical Theology is to create “A kind of knowing that guides being and doing”. As such, Fowler (1983:155) indicates that “Practical Theology investigates Scripture and the tradition, on the one hand, and the shape of the present situation of ecclesial ministry, on the other, for the sake of constructive and critical guidance of the church’s praxis”. In this regard, Bevans and Schroeder (2004:xix) assert that “[t]heology is always a communal enterprise”, which is reminiscent of the fact that the spiritual edge of a Christian church finds contextual resonance in the practicality of its theology. In the same vein, August (2009:17) indicates that, generally, theology is a public matter because it is always done “the public way”. He further argues that theology is “neither private nor [...] a distinctive communal identity” (August, 2009:17). Here, August (2009) contends on the premise according to which Practical Theology is not just about theologians practicing theology in its narrowest context of congregational milieu. Rather, it is also about doing theology in the public square so that the Christian message will have global relevance even to those at the periphery such as refugee migrants. Practical Theology should, therefore, not be viewed only within the pulpit-pew context because its relevance goes beyond the walls of church buildings. This is what Botman (2000:221) terms “a practical theology of transformation” because it rises “out of a *status confessionis* and a prophetic theology”. As such, it has a strong emphasis on liberation.

In addition, Daniël Louw (1998:16) argues that theology is all about reflecting on God in an attempt to understand Him well and know Him better. In this regard, theology is the discovery of the ultimate truth, on the one hand, and the quest for truth concerning the issues of global relevance, on the other. Louw (1998) also suggests that theology happens within a unique field of tension: a tension between the spiritual and the rational – that is, faith and

reason. The essence of Practical Theology is, thus, to minimise the tension between faith and reason by building a bridge of agreement between the spiritual person and the rational person. In other words, Practical Theology is actualised when theology is a public practice and its ‘publicness’ practical. Furthermore, in his editorial note in the Practical Theology Journal, Malan Nel (2012) points out that the old understanding of Practical Theology was solely limited to its disciplinarity. However, the new way of approaching Practical Theology is to see it not only as an academic discipline but also as an applied “reflection on the practical reality of theology as a whole” (Nel, 2012). Considering these definitional contexts, it is evident that Practical Theology is foundational to the practical reality of all theology.

Heitink (1999:4) further refers to Practical Theology as “a theory of crisis” due to the apparent crisis between church and society, to which Practical Theology constantly attempts to adapt. The “crisis” facing Practical Theology particularises its praxical nature,<sup>21</sup> which befits this research project considering that it is conducted within the context of a societal crisis: the refugee phenomenon. Thus, Practical Theology is both the mediation of the Christian faith and the praxis of modern society (Heitink, 1999:6). In other words, apart from being a theological discipline, Practical Theology is also a theory of action that provides all of theology a contextual paradigm for praxis. In this research, the term “Practical Theology” is used, not only as a theological discipline but also as a theory of action or a praxical engagement of the church in the society. As such, Practical Theology is an appropriate field within which this empowerment by hope research had to be conducted.<sup>22</sup>

According to Bonnie Miller-McLemore (2012:6-13), Practical Theology is four-fold. She asserts that the term “practical theology” is generally used as (i) a way of life, (ii) a method (iii) a curriculum, and as (iv) a discipline. As a way of life, the role of Practical Theology is to shape faith among believers both in a home setting and in the society while, as a discipline, it defines both the content and the context in global setting (2012:7, 8). As a method, Practical

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<sup>21</sup> The coined term “praxical” is used throughout this research as an adjectival form of the term “praxis”. However, I am not the coiner; the term is used by many other researchers in the theological circles. See for example Robert Wuthnow’s *Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion* (1998) where he sees the need to “develop a praxical theology”. Another example is Sweeney, Simmonds and Lonsdale’s *Keeping Faith in Practice* (2010) in which they discuss “the desirability and vision of a praxical theology” (p. 140), or Gloria Schaab’s *The Creative Suffering of a Triune God* (2007) where she emphasises that “the triune God demonstrates a praxical value of feminist theology” (p. 169), etc. Iain Matheson’s *Ontologised Cryptanalysis and Praxical Ethics* is another example [https://www.academia.edu/2185975/Ontologised\\_Cryptanalysis\\_and\\_Praxical\\_Ethics](https://www.academia.edu/2185975/Ontologised_Cryptanalysis_and_Praxical_Ethics)

<sup>22</sup> At the University of Stellenbosch, Theology and Development as a theological discipline is a sub-field within the field of Practical Theology

Theology studies theology in theory and practice whereas, as a curriculum, its role is to educate for ministry and faith in what could be termed “the three Cs”: classroom, congregation and community. Thus, as Richard Osmer (2008:176) points out, the pragmatic task of Practical Theology is to formulate “strategies of action” that shape events desirably. In this regard, the Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch has the following as a description of what Practical Theology entails:

In the discipline group Practical Theology and Missiology we try to understand how the Word and acts of God take shape in the words and deeds of man in the world. We try to understand what it means to be sent out by God to the world where we live and work. How do we cross the boundaries of culture, race, class, gender, place and age to reach those in need? Theology is witness and words about God. When we see and hear God, God guides us to the needs of our neighbours. What are these needs? What causes these needs? How do we deal with them? How do we equip leaders, members, congregations, to become involved in God’s mission to the world? In the light of these questions, Practical Theology deals with the issues of church ministry, the life of faith communities in different contexts, and the transformative actions within society (development). The homiletical process of the church service embedded in liturgical rituals forms the meeting point between God and humankind. We also focus on spirituality development, pastoral care, diaconal outreach, missional involvement, inculturation, as well as contemporary youth questions.<sup>23</sup>

The above provides an indication on the vastness of the field. In brief, Practical Theology is the application of theological truth to all of life. While the other disciplines are arguably oriented toward understanding God, Practical Theology is about human participation with God in bringing that revelation to the church and the world. As an applied discipline, Practical Theology is concerned with how theology in general ought to be applied to life within the context we live in. That is to say, Practical Theology has both theoretical and lived dimensions. Its primary purpose, therefore, is to ensure that the church’s public witness and praxis faithfully reflect the purpose of God’s continuing mission to the world and authentically address the contemporary context into which the church seeks to minister.

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<sup>23</sup> Source – Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch, website  
<http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/theology/Pages/Practical-Theology---Missiology.aspx>

## 1.7.2. Theology and Development

### 1.7.2.1. Positioning the field theologically and ecclesiology<sup>24</sup>

According to Swart (2010:249), “(t)he explicit and distinctive role of the churches in development is the creation of an alternative consciousness at large”. He notes that “(i)t is this mode of involvement that belongs to the authentic task of the churches, not the execution of projects – which naturally presumes a movement from the rich to the poor, something to be executed among the poor and underprivileged” (Swart, 2010:249). That is to say, the involvement of the church in development is not only about empowering the community but also, and most importantly, about showing the community how to empower itself.<sup>25</sup> Such is the driving thrust for the practice of Theology and Development. Thus, in the context of this research, empowerment by hope “comprises a process in which [refugee migrants] take charge of their own empowerment” to borrow the words of Swart (2010:249, 250) when he explains the importance of empowerment.

Biblical narratives give expression to a remarkable vision of development (Chung, 2014:303). God’s intentions are for the emergence of a world filled with healthy, vibrant human beings living in safe, just, welcoming and equitable communities and lovingly engaged with God because “once communion with God is broken, humanity becomes incapable of leading a life pleasing to God and is no longer fully capable of being God’s faithful steward” (Ajulu, 2001:49). Central to the realisation of this vision is the role of humanity. Created in God’s image, human beings are to function as God’s representatives, sharing equitably in the earth’s abundance and the construction of their communities and being steward of the earth and its resources in such a way that God’s purposes are fulfilled. Humanity, however, fails to live as called, resulting in the fracturing of relationships with God, within communities and with the

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<sup>24</sup> Ecclesiology is the study of the church. The term comes from two Greek words *ekklesia* (from which the English word ‘church’ derives) and *logos* meaning ‘assembly’ and ‘word’. Ecclesiology is crucial to understand God’s purpose for Christian believers both in the church and in the world today as well as the history of the church.

<sup>25</sup> The church enters the public arena because it is mandated to do so by Christ in the Great Commission. Therefore the primary concern of the church in the public arena is not church growth in order to fill the pews of the sanctuary; it is to proclaim the Kingdom of God. In entering the public arena, the church stays true to itself and remains faithful to the Lord since it is sent into the public arena with the same mission as the Lord (*Missio Dei*). Action by resolution is another means by which some churches seek to engage the public arena. The church has the moral obligation to train its members and the nation to think and act democratically. However, the church has to work out in partnership with government and civil society tactics for equipping the nation to live responsibly in our young democracy.

earth (Chung, 2014:306). Violence, poverty, exclusion, oppression, injustice, greed and false worship become part of the human experience.

In His love, mercy and grace, God does not abandon creation but sets about redeeming and restoring it because He had put it on earth “as a sign of his majesty” (cf. Ajulu, 2001:41). In many ways, but most completely and definitively through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God sets about overturning injustice, violence, poverty and exclusion; and creates communities of faith, justice, inclusion and peace, ultimately bringing sustainable hope. Such a divine undertaking is inclusive of those who found themselves uprooted from their territorial space such as refugee migrants. That is, this work of re-establishing shalom, which has begun, will be finally and fully realised upon Christ’s return. This provides a rich basis for a Christian understanding of development as the process by which people are able to realise right relationships with God, one another and the earth, which constitutes life in all its fullness. According to Chung (2014:302), this is akin to “the biblical notion of *diakonia*, which articulates the mandate of service and love of neighbour”.

Rowan Williams (2009:4) argues that thinking about development needs to involve thinking about human agents as three-dimensional beings. Without this concern, development becomes no more than opening up a universal market for consumers and, in such a perspective, it does not matter much whether or not those who are less privileged in the community are made really able to be subjects of their own history and agents of their own economic future. The morality of power is no longer an issue; who exactly brings about material prosperity and maximised options is of no significance, which also means that development loses contact with authentic politics (cf. Williams, 2009:6). As soon as this element of recognising human dignity in the freedom to shape a community’s future is allowed, we have moved beyond a material account of what is needed and a myopic focus on rights as claims because all humanity retains inviolable dignity (cf. Ajulu, 2001:34).

Material poverty and powerlessness are a problem for the Christian believer because they represent one outworking of the structural sin or failure into which we are born, and the various ways in which our humanity is compromised or reduced (cf. Williams, 2009:5; Ajulu, 2001:73; Myers, 1999:12). To be stuck in a reactive relation to the material world while incapable of getting beyond subsistence and survival is a tragedy in the light of what humanity could be. To recover the image of God must mean recovering an intelligent and creative way

of relating to and working with the environment – not by being set free from dependence on the environment but by being able to shape it and direct it in certain ways so as to both express and increase the creative liberty of human persons in harmony with the flourishing of all creation. Development is an aspect of this self-recovery and self-awareness as an agent within the world, capable of making a difference that will serve human dignity.

Thus, in Christian theological terms, dignity and identity are inseparable human attributes that need to be recovered in order to discover our true vocation (Ajulu, 2001:32, 33; Myers, 1999:115). First, there is the belief in creation of humanity in the divine image, with the implication spelled out in the book of Genesis that this entails responsibility for cultivating the material world around and giving names to the animals. To be human is to be consciously involved in giving meaning to the world you inhabit; and so a situation in which you have no power to exercise that creativity, where you are expected to be passive in relation to what lies around you, is a situation in which the image of God is obscured. The Christian belief is that we all begin in such a situation as a result of “original sin”, but that salvation restores the image and allows us to take up the position we were made for within creation.

There is a second dimension to this. Once the basic breakthrough has been achieved – by the coming of God in human flesh – the recovered or restored divine image is understood as involving a responsibility, not only for the world at large but for each other in particular (Ajulu, 2001:36). The welfare of each individual and the welfare of all are inseparable. This means the poverty of another is also my diminution and the liberation of the other is likewise mine as well. Thus to take responsibility for nourishing the creative liberty of someone who would otherwise be threatened with a life less than properly human is to open myself to a gift of greater fullness in my own humanity. In other words, this is not merely about the prosperous giving of something to the poor but about a gift that contributes to the liberation of both poor and prosperous, which transforms both. No one’s identity or destiny in the Christian framework is to be understood individually since, as Ajulu (2001:36) puts it, “creatures stand alongside each other [...] on equal footing”.

Theology and Development reveals that God’s mission is to bring wholeness to all creation, which includes bringing human beings into the right relationship not only with Him (God), but also with one another and the rest of creation. Because “poverty is a complex human phenomenon”, the restoration of right relationship between God and humanity is achieved

through the life, death and resurrection of Christ to which the church bears witness (Christian, 1999:17). As such, God's wider mission to human communities is accomplished through a variety of agents including the church. In promoting development, the church should never surrender its unique role as witness to Christ and the centrality of this role in the restoration of right relationship between God and human beings. In this regard, Myers (1999:20) argues we need to do theology if we are to frame our lives and our understanding of the world because, in essence, "the development process is a convergence of stories". No other agent can fulfil this role. Nor should the church forget that when pursuing the wider developmental vision of Scripture (i.e. right relationships within communities and with the creation), the church is but one of many agents God uses. The church's knowledge of God allows it to champion a vision of an inclusive, equitable, just and peaceful world, on the one hand. The reality that the church is one of many agents for bringing such a world into being, on the other hand, should see it collaborating with individuals, households, communities and governments to realise that vision.<sup>26</sup>

Steve de Gruchy (2003:20) argues that the call for Christians to be involved in some form of development action is perhaps best summarised by the powerful statement from James that, "just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead" (James 2:26). This is a reminder that the Christian faith is not just about intellectual approbation, but about a life lived in compassionate service to others, especially the vulnerable. This approach emerges as the key message in the vast array of writings calling the church in Africa to be involved in issues of social development. According to de Gruchy (2003:22), it is simply wrong to assume that poor people are unable to do anything. It is actually the case that poor people are always engaged in strategies and struggles for survival, which is the case of refugee migrants in South Africa.

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<sup>26</sup> According to Chung (2014:307), the responsibility of the church portrays *diakonia* as an essential element of ecclesial life. *Diakonia* upholds the church's engagement with issues of both public and global relevance with the aim to bring about God's *shalom*, justice and the integrity of life. It could be argued, therefore, that the practice of *diakonia*, like empowerment by hope, is seen in the horizon of divine *oikos* – God's household. It is the right perspective of God's *oikos* that constitutes *diakonia* and cultivates an empowerment by hope consciousness. Such is an ecclesial perspective from which to undertake empowerment by hope as the church.

### 1.7.2.2. Positioning the field within the academy

Three publics require theological attention for the purpose of “analytic starting point” according to Swart (2010:206). These are (i) the academy (ii) the church and (iii) the society. Here one would contend that Theology and Development finds resonance in all the three publics of theology in its quest for socio-theological relevance. However, the third public mode of involvement does not seek to “replace or undermine the existing modes” in the practice of Theology and Development but plays an important role in development discourse (cf. Swart, 2010:207). In view of this, Theology and Development is done in the public, with the public and for the public and the thesis itself seeks to both address the academy’s discourse about Theology and Development as well as the church and society’s praxis.

De Gruchy (2003:23) points out that the Apostle James addresses the poor also with a call to translate their faith into works, and that this is crucial for the church’s involvement in social development. This means recovering the theological vision of the vocation of the poor themselves, as a key element for Theology and Development. However, he argues that, to do this, we need to build upon the descriptive and interpretive task that helps us uncover this agency but also encourage it as a key element in the future. The latter as illustrated in the previous section as key elements of Practical Theology and it is indeed important to note that within an understanding of ‘empowerment by hope’ within this thesis lies the desire to uncover the agency of refugees as activated by hope. These elements of the descriptive and interpretive tasks are then indeed “praxical” and, as noted in the previous section with reference to the field of Practical Theology, deal with the lived experiences of refugee migrants.<sup>27</sup> This is why, as de Gruchy (2003:21) adds, in order to recover a theological vision of vocation, we need to “integrate issues of identity with a focus on agency”. Therefore, it would seem that faith, without the works of development, is not only dead, but it deserves to die (cf. de Gruchy, 2003:21). The call is, therefore, a call for holistic development of the kind, which this thesis seeks to address – hope as an issue of identity integrated with empowerment as a focus on agency.

It is nevertheless important to note that while Theology and Development is positioned as an academic sub-field within Practical Theology in certain theological faculties<sup>28</sup> and as it

<sup>27</sup> As exemplified by the empirical component of the study.

<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that at the University of Stellenbosch it is positioned within Practical Theology.

has been shown indeed engages from this perspective, August's (2010:93) pointers to a six-fold definitional context of Theology and Development as an academic sub-field also highlights its intra (within the field of theology) and interdisciplinary nature (outside of theology). He notes that Theology and Development is (i) an interdisciplinary subject, and as such, it partners with various other fields in social science including sociology, human geography and political science. It is (ii) missional in its focus because it crosses the divide from the explored to the unexplored.<sup>29</sup> It is (iii) systematic in nature since it deals with traditional teachings of God's covenantal relationship with people. It is (iv) practical as it studies the activities, organisation and structure of the church in response to basic human needs. It is (v) ethical in nature considering that it asks for kingdom values in development practice as a way of life.

Finally, Theology and Development is (vi) people-centred in its approach and, as such, it prioritises responding to the pressing issues that affect humanity in an attempt to restore human dignity. This conviction may provide us with "a framework for understanding the agency of the poor in development, and have thus rooted our theological vision of vocation within a wider discourse" as the celebrated South African theologian, Steve de Gruchy (2003:30), puts it. He also asserts that this may provide "a powerful bulwark against the dehumanising experiences" of violence, xenophobia, diseases like AIDS and Ebola, and scourges like poverty and unemployment (de Gruchy, 2003:23), which further highlights the importance of Theology and Development in academia and the criticality of agency by the less privileged.

Therefore as noted by Bowers-du Toit (2010:262) with regards to the concept of development as both complex and dynamic and as giving "rise to many varying interpretations and schools of development thought", so too can it be said of the field of 'Theology and Development'. Throughout the world (depending on their geographical location and affiliations) what we call 'Theology and Development' in South Africa is referred to by various scholars in different ways. For example, evangelicals from the US and Europe refer to the field as *Transformational Development*.<sup>30</sup> Evangelicals from Latin America particularly those

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<sup>29</sup> Hendriks' (2010:284, 285) notes too that Theology and Development as "a missional theology" should be expressed, *inter alia*, on personal, ecclesial and societal levels. Here, Hendriks argues that the Christian vocation is that of involvement. That is, the church has an important role to play by being involved in creating joy and hope (Hendriks, 2010:284)

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Wayne Bragg, *From Development to Transformation* in Samuel and Sugden, 1987.

belonging to the Micah Network prefer the term *Integral Mission*.<sup>31</sup> Those from the ecumenical alliance prefer the term *Diakonia*.<sup>32</sup> It is, therefore, important to note that while I recognise that there remain nuanced differences and histories surrounding these discourses these schools of thought are referenced variously throughout the thesis.

### 1.7.3. Community empowerment

The concept of community has definitional problems considering the contestations associated with its many implications. However, Worsley *et al.* (1987:239-241) find that the only common factor about all the definitions ascribed to the term “community” is that they all deal with people. Thus, a community is understood in a threefold definitional expression. It is understood as (i) a locality – that is, a human settlement located within a fixed and bounded local territory. This way of defining community is *geographical*. It is also regarded as (ii) a local social system – that is, a set of human relationships that take place entirely or partly in a local setting. This way of defining community is *relational*. Finally, Worsley *et al.* (1987:240) find that a community is (iii) a type of relationship – that is, a sense of shared identity. This corresponds most closely to the colloquial use of the term as in “the spirit of community”. In this case, those with the same spirit or experiences, albeit not locally or relationally connected, share the same identity and, thus, form one community. The term “refugee community” in this thesis is used in reference to “a type of relationship”, not in allusion to the geographical or relational definitions. In other words, refugee migrants are here considered a community because of their shared identity and lived experiences. They may or not be geographically or relationally connected.

Similarly, the word ‘empowerment’ is multidimensional in its meaning. According to Baines and Francisco (2001:3), empowerment has become a significant concept in the theory and practice of developmental attempts albeit interpreted with a greater level of ambiguity in most cases. Insofar as the term empowerment provides pointers to the notion of power, it is widely accepted by various scholars (see for example Baines & Francisco, 2001:43; Evans, 2008:21; Kinlaw, 1995:32) that the term entails a process through which a person makes a conscious choice to increase his/her access to knowledge, resources, livelihoods, decision-making power and awareness. He/she then uses those choices as assets and transforms them

<sup>31</sup> See for example, René Padilla, *An Ecclesiology for Integral Mission* in Yamamori and Rene Padilla, 2004.

<sup>32</sup> See for example, Paul Chung, *Diakonia and Economic Justice*, 2014.

into desired action. He/she does so in order to participate in the local or global community and reach a certain level of control over his/her own surroundings. This may explain why Bowers (2005:55) points out that “the church as an agent of transformation is imbued with power”. Therefore, it is the position of this study that community empowerment requires, *inter alia*, challenging the structures of society that block holistic development.

Additionally, August (2010:11) provides pointers to two different interpretations of the term “empowerment”. He notes that, on the one hand, empowerment is the development of skills and abilities that enable an individual or the community at large to manage and/or negotiate better with the development delivery system. On the other hand, he argues that empowerment is a process of equipping an individual person or the community at large in decision-making, and on taking action within the context of their development needs. In view of this, Ajulu (2001:14) indicates that “empowerment necessarily presupposes not only power that brings about empowerment but also powerlessness, which gives the reason for empowerment”. It could be said, therefore, that empowerment is concerned with making power available to those for whom hopelessness and powerlessness are a daily affair so they can use the available resources to achieve their development goals. Thus, there is empowerment when people have been “able to articulate and assert, by words and deeds” their needs and thoughts (August, 2010:11).

In this study, the term “empowerment” is used to mean a process of hope, which aims at expanding a variety of conscious choices that a less privileged community (in this case, the refugee community) makes. As such, it should not be taken as a *cliché* or a one-dimensional, unidirectional formula for holistic development. It must, instead, be understood in particular contexts while considering the specific needs of the people in need of empowerment and, in this particular research, the refugee migrants. When those in position of power are not expanding the conscious choices of people, that community of people is being disempowered. Thus, disempowerment is any action, policy or process through which people’s priorities, needs and interests are constantly overlooked by those in position of power (cf. Kinlaw, 1995:43). Disempowerment reduces people’s participatory awareness and access to decision-making (cf. Weissberg, 1999:43; Moussa, 1991:14). It reduces their volitional consciousness and their ability to act. As such, disempowerment poses as an obstacle to people’s perpetual quest for improved wellbeing.

In view of these definitional contexts, community empowerment is, therefore, the power given to and/or gained by a community of people so they can control their own lives or adapt to all circumstances, however threatening. In other words, community empowerment is “holistic empowerment” (Ajulu, 2001:137). It is the process of enabling communities to increase control over their lives. Thus, refugee migrants play the role of agency in the process of their own empowerment. The concept of power and empowerment within Theology and Development is explained in detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

### 1.7.3. Hope in action

The concept of hope is equally complex. It could be approached from a variety of disciplines including theology, psychology and philosophy. As much as people have a general idea of it, the manifold contexts of hope make it a difficult notion to grasp. Some consider hope as somewhat illusory; that is, as nothing else but wishful thinking or a strong desire to see things get better (cf. Keshgegian, 2006:43; Cousins, 1974:31). Others see it as an abstract optimism, according to which everything will be fine (cf. Alves, 1969:52). In Christian theology, however, hope is indicative of assurance and certainty, and it is active (cf. Botman, 2001). As such, hope entails acting or working towards achieving the hoped-for.

In explaining the notion of hope in action, Botman (2001:67) argues that action arises from our hope to be meaningful and, at the same time, hope shapes our attitudes to action, which explains why hope transforms and empowers. In other words, hope exerts courage and resilience to see the hoped-for achieved in spite of the challenges encountered. In this study, most of the interpretations of hope are looked at and further developed in order to analyse the existing literature on the theme under investigation. Thus, despite the obvious interdisciplinary nature of this research, the Christian view of hope takes precedence since the study is conducted from the viewpoint of Christian theology. The concept of hope in action is expounded throughout the thesis but with a special focus allocated for it in Chapters 2 and 3, with its positioning alongside the concept of empowerment in Chapter 4.

### 1.7.4. Human migration

No outline of human migration is commonly established and agreed upon because types of migration unavoidably intersect, making it difficult to distinguish between “forced” and “free”

migration. It is important, however, to categorise human migratory trends in keeping with these two extremes of “forced” and “free”. In view of this, three significant indicators provide pointers to this forced–free spectrum of human migration, namely (i) lifestyle migration, (ii) labour migration, and (iii) survival migration (cf. Nail, 2015).

#### 1.7.4.1. Lifestyle Migration

The term “lifestyle migration” suggests a voluntary movement. Often, this type of migration is driven by factors related to the quality of life and definable life transitions. These include, for example, young adults leaving their parents’ home and going abroad for educational purposes; getting married and relocating elsewhere; retiring; etc. (Nail, 2015; Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014).

#### 1.7.4.2. Labour Migration

Much like lifestyle migration, labour migration is also a voluntary movement. The only difference is that labour migration is done for the sole purpose of employment. However, there is no universally accepted definition for it (Nail, 2015; Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014; Palmary, 2002).

#### 1.7.4.3. Survival Migration

Between the two extremes of labour migration and lifestyle migration lies survival migration, the focus of this research. Survival migrants are people living outside of their home countries due to an existential threat to their lives, of which the remedying solution is beyond their control. The primary group of survival migrants are definitely asylum seekers and refugees. Both the 1951 UN Convention<sup>33</sup> and its 1967 Protocol define a refugee migrant as a person who is outside his/her country of origin or of nationality. That person has a well-founded fear of persecution due to his/her race, religion, nationality, ethnic group, membership in a particular social or political group, and he/she is unable or unwilling to return to his/her country of origin or of nationality (UNHCR, 2012). State parties to both these treaties ratified a resolution to protect and take care of refugee migrants.

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<sup>33</sup> In full: United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

As it were, crossing a national border is the only definitional context within which a person can be considered “refugee”. However, following the internationally accepted terminology, the crossing of the border for asylum seeking alone does not automatically make the migrant “refugee”. A migrant in this category of survival migration remains an asylum seeker until his/her claim has been approved or the local immigration authorities have accepted his/her application for asylum. In other words, one is primarily an asylum seeker before becoming a refugee migrant. Nevertheless, both the process of determining this “shift” of status (i.e. from being an asylum seeker to becoming a refugee) and the resulting waiting period by the claimant or applicant depend on the organisational structure, work ethic and personal considerations of the local immigration authorities (cf. Mayotte, 1992). In South Africa, for example, the waiting is practically open-ended to say the least; it can take as long as it takes.

### 1.7.5. Holistic development

The term development is defined as a “constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals” (UNGA, 1986). From this definitional context, a human being is, therefore, the heart of any development practice. Thus, to achieve sustainable goals, development activities must specifically focus on improving the wellbeing of human beings. Thus, development can be understood as “a process and method aimed at improving the capacity of the community to identify and respond to its needs, and at improving its capacity” (Yates, 2010:162). This explains why Tamas (1999:7) describes development as “a process in which people become more active agents in improving their circumstances”. Thus, a development initiative not aimed at improving the wellbeing of a human person is no development at all. That is to say, efforts that do not achieve this goal reduce the effectiveness of the practices of development and minimise the research and interventions vital to its sustainability.

In *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen (1999:76) argues that freedom is not only the goal of development but also “a good thing in itself”. He advances clear empirical evidence and economic theory to support his contention that development is nothing other than “the process of expanding human freedoms” (Sen, 1999:45). Greater freedom enhances the ability of people to help themselves and to influence the world, and these matters are central to the process of development. This affirms the agency aspect of the individual, and resonates with Swart’s (2010:249) argument that the ecclesial role in development is not merely “the

execution of projects” or “something to be executed among the poor and underprivileged”. What people need is to play an “agent-oriented view” in their own development as Sen (1999:49) asserts.

Burkey (1993:35-39) further observes that development involves the use of physical, financial and human resources. However, the use of resources depends on who controls the available ones and how decisions are made with regard to such use. Unless motivation comes from within, efforts to promote change will not be sustainable. That is why any development initiative must consider people first, which calls for a self-reliant participatory development (Burkey, 1993:39, 40). In other words, development is about social transformation and, according to Bragg (1987), “transformation is hope” because “without an attitude of expectation, change rarely occurs”. It is more than the provision of social services and the introduction of new technologies. Rather, it involves change in the awareness, motivation and behaviour of individuals; and this change must come from within. This inward change demands that besides acknowledging the political, social, economic and even psychological dimensions to development, the spiritual should also be acknowledged.

The church that engages in social action should never have to choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger or between healing bodies and saving souls because “poverty is a scourge to human life... and the gospel does not distinguish the haves and have-nots” (cf. Ajulu, 2001:73). Instead, the love of God (i.e. *agap *) should lead the Christian to serve holistically. To be involved in community development by serving the poor is not an option in terms of Christian doctrine; it is rather a Christian way of life. It is a practical mandate for social awareness and concern for humanity. The point is not whether the church should be involved in society or not, but how it should be involved. The church prefers to affix an adjectival prefix such as ‘holistic’, ‘transformational’, or ‘people-based’, etc. to the word ‘development’ so as to draw the line between the predominantly secular concept of development and the advocated ecclesial one. While contending with a predominantly secular worldview and advocating the need for holistic development, the church needs to be clear about their own faith-based distinctiveness.

Since this thesis focuses on empowerment as a development context and hope as a theological perspective, it is important to set the limits of a working definition of development first. In this research, I adopt a human development approach, accepting Amartya Sen’s idea

of development as “a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” (Sen, 1999:3). Having considered these definitional terminologies, an epigrammatic meaning of the term ‘community development’, as espoused in this thesis, is paraphrased here along the lines of the UN’s definition of the term: a process where community members at a grassroots level are empowered to take collective action in an attempt to generate solutions to their problems and, therefore, build a more resilient community (UNHCR, 2012). Here, this definition is contextualised to the refugee community.

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### 1.7.6. Improved wellbeing

There is no consensus on a single definition of wellbeing. However, there is general agreement that, at least, wellbeing includes the presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g. contentment, happiness, etc.), the absence of negative emotions (e.g. depression, anxiety, etc.), and satisfaction with life (cf. Buscher, 2011:65; Chan & Bowpitt, 2005:35). Simply put, wellbeing can be described as judging life positively and feeling good. For public health purposes, physical wellbeing (e.g. feeling very healthy and full of energy) is also viewed as critical to overall wellbeing (cf. Carbonnier, 2012:18; Buscher, 2011:72). In view of this, Schmid *et al.* (2010:138) indicate that the concept of wellbeing “goes beyond the notion of health as defined negatively by disease or illness”.

Wellbeing is, therefore, a holistic concept centred on what is positive and desirable with regard to people’s lives, particularly on how they are doing or feeling (cf. Chan & Bowpitt, 2005:35). In this regard, a study on wellbeing would look at how poor and marginalised people can become conscious of and further develop their potential. Thus, finding out how refugee migrants can become conscious of their full potential and put their hope for improved wellbeing into action is one of the main reasons this research was carried out. Wellbeing is meaningful for people and for many sectors of society because it tells us whether people’s lives are going well. Thus, good living conditions (e.g. housing, employment, etc.) and better quality of life are fundamental to wellbeing. Enhancing such conditions is concomitant to improved wellbeing. One would contend that the act of improving refugees’ wellbeing contributes to the process of holistic development.

Many indicators that measure living conditions, however, fail to measure what people think and feel about their lives such as the quality of their relationships, their positive emotions

and resilience, the realisation of their potential or their overall satisfaction with life; that is, their wellbeing (Carbonnier, 2012:25; Kinlaw, 1995:92). Therefore, a qualitative phenomenological research on improved wellbeing, such as this, is of critical significance. Various researchers (see for example, Chan & Bowpitt, 2005:29; Marshall, 2001:12; Weissberg, 1999:31; Worsley *et al.*, 1987:95) have examined different aspects of wellbeing that include but are not limited to physical wellbeing, emotional wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, economic/financial wellbeing and social wellbeing, to which one could add spiritual and volitional wellbeing.<sup>34</sup> While the academic debate continues about precisely how “wellbeing” should be defined, the term is most usefully thought of as the dynamic process that gives people a sense of how their lives are going, through the interaction between their circumstances, activities and psychological resources or mental capital (cf. Carbonnier, 2012:63; Chan & Bowpitt, 2005:33; Worsley *et al.*, 1987:51). In this regard, the health and wellbeing of the less privileged in society such as, in this case, refugee migrants is “a valuable lens” on the interface of religion and development (cf. Schmid *et al.*, 2010:142, 144).

### 1.7.8. Church

Many people today understand the church as a building. This is not a biblical understanding of the church.<sup>35</sup> The term ‘church’ comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which can be translated as ‘an assembly’, ‘gathered people’ or ‘called-out ones’ (cf. August, 2010). In this regard, a church is neither a place where one goes on Sundays for a worship service nor a building into which people enter for religious purposes. It is rather an assembly of redeemed people called to form a *shalom* community. This may explain why Bowers (2005:54) argues that the essence of the church is to activate hope in context. As a “Kingdom community”, the church is called to be “a visible sign of [God’s] presence and [the] demonstration of His [rule] in situations of poverty”. In this same context, she further points out that the church is “a beacon of hope” *vis-à-vis* the system that dehumanises the poor and renders them powerless (Bowers, 2005:56). In

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<sup>34</sup> My definition of volitional wellbeing is the state of being in a good condition to wilfully make a decision, act or take initiative.

<sup>35</sup> The church is the universal body of Christ, of which he is the head. It is important, however, to distinguish the church consisting of those who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (i.e. the universal body of Christian believers) from the local church where members of the universal body of Christ belong individually and regularly gather to encourage, teach, and build one another up in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (i.e. the different denominations or congregations).

other words, the church is a “servant community and a source of encouragement”, which is a truer embodiment of what *diakonia* is all about (cf. Bowers, 2005:56).<sup>36</sup>

Elliott (1987:57) argues that “(t)he church has to identify and ally itself with alternative structures that seem to have less evil consequences for the poor”. Such alliance with alternative structures indicates that, for the church, development has two dimensions: theological and contextual: Theologically, the church’s vision of its mission and motivation must emerge out of its fundamental understanding of the nature of God. Contextually, this development process must promote self-reliance in meeting basic human needs. Thus, the church is a valued catalyst for community empowerment within the holistic development paradigm. In this prospect, there is binding connection between social development and transformation from the ecclesial point of view.

Dirkie Smit (in Bowers, 2005:20), one of the celebrated South African theologians, provides a thorough portrayal of the nature of the church. For him, the definitional context of the church is six-fold, namely, (i) church as a worshiping community, (ii) church as a local congregation, (iii) church as a denomination, (iv) church as an ecumenical body, (v) church as believers in their involvements with voluntary organisations, and (vi) church as individual believers in their daily lives. My understanding of church within the context of this research is used interchangeably to refer to any of the above manifestations of church. The church as a community of hope embodies a “holistic spirituality” for both the present and the future, and it is suggestive of the “transformational power of the hope of the Kingdom” (cf. Bowers, 2005:22, 29). Thus, the church is specifically defined in this research as a community of people of hope called out of the world and sent back to the world to live *coram Deo*.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> August (2010:55) finds that the role of the church is basically that of solidarity in terms of poverty and to be a network between people and institutions in terms of the network and macro-level factors. In addition, (v) holism (i.e. the holistic perspective) is also a challenge confronting the church because, according to August (2010:56), it was only in the 1980s that a holistic perspective on development emerged in ecumenical thinking. For instance, that is when it was realised that racism was deeply connected with economic injustice; and that sexism constituted a resistance to social development, etc. finally, the church faces what August (2010:57) calls (vi) “the challenge of information”, which is a twofold conflict between the traditional content of its ministry and the explosive amount of information forced on it by its responsibility to the world.

<sup>37</sup> The central idea of the Christian life is *coram Deo*. The expression is a very important Latin phrase in Christian theology that concisely describes and, thus, summarises the essence of the Christian life. This phrase literally refers to something that takes place in the presence (or before the very face) of God. To live *coram Deo* is, therefore, to live one’s entire life in the presence of God, under the authority and reign of God, to the honour and glory of God.

Finally, as the Lausanne Covenant (1974) declares, “the church must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology” because it is a community of a people called to live for God’s glory.<sup>38</sup> This could be the reason August (2010) argues that the church is mandated by Christ to enter the public arena for the Great Commission; hence, its primary concern is not (or at least should not be) numerical growth to fill the pews but the proclamation of God’s Kingdom.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, as Smit (2015:5) points out, “the ekklesia is a peculiar people, called out of the world to embody a different life and conduct”. In entering the public arena, the church stays true to itself and remains faithful to the Lord since it is sent into the public arena with the same mission as the Lord (*missio Dei*). Action by resolution is another means by which some churches seek to engage the public arena. The church has the moral obligation to train its members and the nation to think and act democratically. However, the church has to work out in partnership with government and civil society tactics for equipping the nation to live responsibly (cf. Hendricks 2010:281, 282).

## 1.8. Procedural framework and layout of the thesis

In this research, the literature ranges across the arrays of Practical Theology with some resources from the social science studies. That is to say, although the prime focus of this research is the field of Theology and Development (which is a discipline within the field of Practical Theology at the University of Stellenbosch where this research was conducted), the framework and the structure of its discussion move freely across a range of social science disciplines. The content of this thesis progresses sequentially through seven chapters. As I expounded on the chapters one by one, I began by paying particular attention to empowerment by hope as a concept for introductory ends as observed in this first chapter. The chapter is a general introduction of the research. In the chapter, the skeleton of the topic under investigation is presented as an attempt to explain the study briefly. The motivation for doing this research,

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. Lausanne Covenant (1974) – *Church and Evangelism*

<sup>39</sup> The church is important not only because of its potential to create participatory communities at the grassroots. The church will have to assist the nation in dealing truthfully with its past. In this context, August (2010:54) argues that the church needs to set an example in accepting “our neighbor, the stranger, those who are suffering – which involves speaking against racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc.” In brief, it requires the congregation to be bold in its vision, and committed to its mission to develop an effective public (advocacy) ministry. Most of all, it requires faith and the knowledge that God’s righteousness and justice will prevail. In our incarnational, transformational, and missional approach to development, the church will always be, on the one hand, challenged and, on the other, directed by God’s measure for development.

the background to the study, the significance of the study and a brief overview of the methods employed in executing the chosen design, *inter alia*, are outlined in this chapter. The layout of subsequent chapters of the thesis is presented below.

## **Chapter 2 – The Theoretical Perspectives of Hope**

This chapter explores literature relating to the conceptual perspectives of hope from a wide variety of sources as presented by different enthusiasts and proponents. The chapter provides a diachronic impression of hope from three celebrated masterpieces in order to be *au fait* with the developments of the hope concept and understand how the concept was subjected to various forms of interpretations throughout the years.

## **Chapter 3 – The Dynamic Contexts of Hope**

This chapter presents a contextual exploration of literature on the topic under study. In the chapter, I review various materials in order to situate hope as a marker of improved wellbeing amid despairing, ever-changing circumstances facing the society today. I explore relevant texts by selected notable exponents of hope in order to understand its contextual prospects and establish how meaningful its dynamics are in this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Chapter 4 – Concepts in Context**

This chapter concludes the series on literature review. The chapter is a theoretical exploration on the practice of the topic under investigation. In the chapter, I use reliable sources to portray hope as a convenient and pragmatic resource that could be used to improve the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants, which is in essence “empowerment by hope”. I further discuss the role of and need for hope in human life. I delve into relevant materials to find how hope actually functions, and what the most probable corollaries are when put into practice.

## **Chapter 5 – Research Methodology**

In this chapter, I provide a detailed description of the research methods and instruments that were used for both the collection and the analysis of data. I specifically draw attention to the theoretical paradigm and approach chosen, the research design and a detailed account of the

procedures taken for the selection of participants to ensure data accessibility and completeness. I also present the justifications for all the choices made.

## **Chapter 6 – The Narratives of Hope and Hopelessness**

Here, I present, analyse and interpret the findings of the research obtained from the narratives of the participants on their health and wellbeing. The chapter answers, in part, the research question by meeting two objectives of the research.

## **Chapter 7 – Applicability and Conclusion**

The last chapter of the thesis presents a *résumé* of the findings in a methodical manner following the main themes of the findings. Here, I draw a theological connectedness between hope and empowerment to underpin the practicality and convenience of empowerment by hope in Theology and Development. In the end, the chapter draws conclusions based on the preceding arguments before closing with some recommendations.

## **1.9. Conclusion**

Here, empowerment by hope is formulated as a theological approach to awaken the social consciousness of role players including researchers, faith communities and policymakers in response to the needs of the marginalised. Its particular strength lies in the fact that it provides space for the Christian community to grow together in their understanding and practice of Theology and Development in this global world affected by a number of pressing issues such as the refugee phenomenon. As it were, this research presents an analysis of the theory and practice of empowerment by hope as a lens through which we can do theology in the community. It is, however, not a replacement of established approaches to ministry in the society. The thesis reports on a research that puts special emphasis on the case of refugee migrants but empowerment by hope as a theory of practice is about the proclamation and demonstration of the gospel message in a way that role players and/or all who are concerned about holistic development become agents of hope in their specific contexts.

Empowerment by hope, thus, addresses the question of social responsibility and active involvement in community in a way that protects and cares for those in need. It is my hope that this research will provide the church with a strategic paradigm for integral mission and equip

individuals with practical tools to restore the *imago Dei*. I too hope that the concept of empowerment by hope will cause in us the “revival of a kairos consciousness”, to borrow the term Swart (2013) used at the UNISA inaugural lecture, even as we respond to the pressing issues facing our world. It is also my hope and desire that the findings of this research will be instrumental in repairing the fabric of communities torn apart by the many ills or “social sins” we are confronted with, most of which lead to the deterioration of our health and wellbeing. The premise of this research is, therefore, rooted in the notion that the grassroots (that is, the local communities) hold the important key to solving the most critical problems that directly affect them. All they need is a glimmer of hope.

This chapter presented a preview of the entire thesis. The next chapter provides a review of existing literature in the exploration of the theoretical perspectives of hope in order to understand the role of hope in the affairs of humanity.

## Chapter 2 – Theoretical Perspectives of Hope

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To affirm that men and women are persons,  
And as persons they should be free,  
then do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality;  
it is a farce!

~ Paulo Freire

## Chapter 2 – Theoretical Perspectives of Hope

### A focus on Ernst Bloch, Jürgen Moltmann, and Paulo Freire

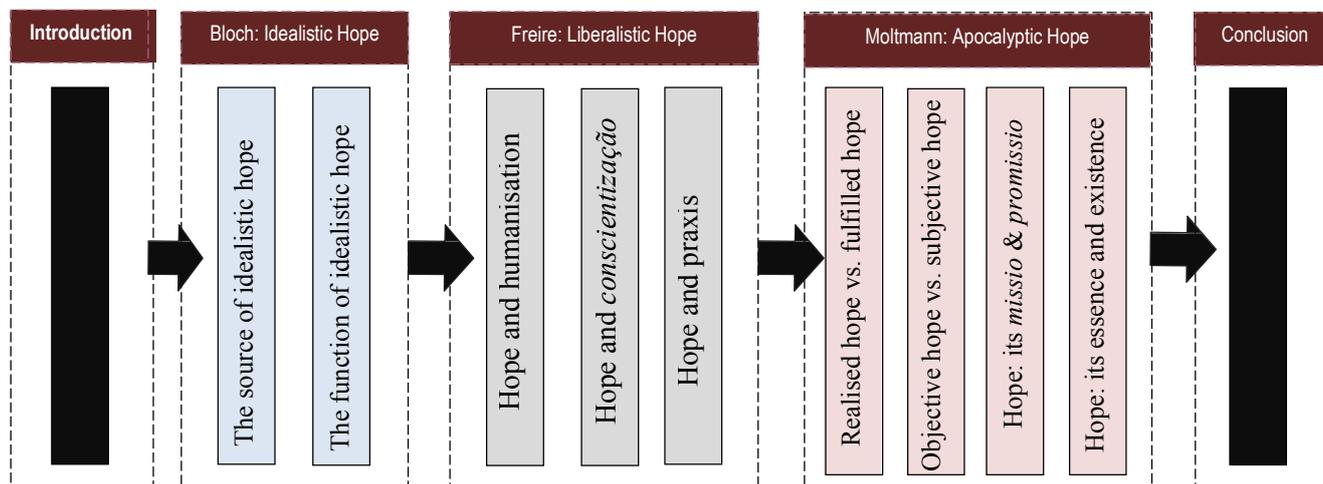


Figure 2: Chapter 2 Road map

### 2.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I briefly explained the phenomenon under investigation. As an introductory chapter, it outlined, among other things, the motivation for doing this research, the background to the study, the significance of the study and a brief overview of the methods employed in executing the chosen design. In this second chapter, I review existing literature on the main themes of hope from a wide variety of contexts. I integrate insights from literary and theoretical perspectives of hope, drawing out its characteristics, which are part of our society today.

The chapter surveys the way the conceptual developments of hope have been unfolding throughout the years idealistically, apocalyptically, and from a liberalistic point of view. A look at the unfolding of these developments through such a rich set of literature presents a solid ground that provides pointers to a body of topics related to the theme of hope, which are explored and explained comprehensively throughout this chapter. Part of the reason for this conceptual review of literature is also to integrate other scholars' thoughts in an attempt to

interpret critically the themes of hope as explored by these authors in a manner befitting the objectives of the research. That is to say, through this review of literature, I will not merely summarise the body of existing literature but will attempt to engage with the authors in order to decode the various perspectives of the concept of hope.

In other words, the task of this chapter is not to develop a theological ethics of hope as a comprehensive thought system, the scope and horizon of which would have been so vast as to include every possible theme and issue that would effectively render the task impracticable. Instead, I would like to explore, in much more limited and modest terms, what the implications of placing hope within a developmental discourse might be, and what would be required to translate it into action. In order to do so, I will present a conceptual perspective of hope and discuss how these different approaches may help us engage each other in a practical way so that we make our everyday living space and place better and more sustainable.

In discussing these theoretical perspectives of hope, I will follow a thematic order starting with Bloch's *Principle of Hope*, which constitutes an idealistic exposition of hope as a secular theorisation of the hope concept. This will be followed by Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*, which constitutes one of the strongest Christian positions on hope. Lastly, I will touch on *Pedagogy of Hope* by Paulo Freire in order to discuss some of the practical implications of hope in the educational sphere of influence. Against this background, I will articulate a few thoughts on the theoretical perspectives of hope, and how this may contribute towards the practice of Theology and Development.

## 2.2. Idealistic hope: Ernst Bloch and *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*

Ernst Bloch (1885-1977), one of the leading German philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, signals the hopeful condition of the world despite the feeling of confusion caused by anxiety and fear. He finds that the “feeling that suits us better is [long] overdue” (Bloch, 1986:3). The feeling that Bloch signals here is that of hope. He further points out that, “it is a question of learning hope. Its work does not renounce; it is in love with success rather than failure. [This is because] hope, superior to fear, is neither passive like the latter, nor locked into nothingness” (Bloch,

1986:3). Here, Bloch (1986:3) announces the possibility of dreaming “daydreams” in contrast to the anxiety of life and “the machinations of fear”. *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* is a trilogy.<sup>40</sup>

The first volume, published in 1954, introduces two basic theories namely, (i) the concept of the Not-Yet-Conscious, which is a continuation of his other magnum opus that brought him to prominence, *The Spirit of Utopia*. Bloch finds that developing the concept of the Not-Yet-Conscious is essential to human thought because it “can be contained in [human] past, present and future” (Bloch, 1986:xxviii). The other basic theory introduced in this first volume is (ii) the interpretations of utopian “Wishful Images” (Bloch, 1986:1103). Here, Bloch indicates why wishful imageries are essential for the realisation of utopian hope.

The second volume (published in 1955) also outlines two main concepts – that of a “Better World” where he points out that “a dreamer always wants even more” (Bloch, 1986:451) from the perspective of socio-political utopias. The other main concept in this second volume highlights the quest for a progressive utopian thinking as it relates to the life of leisure, free time and peace. Here, Bloch discusses the “bourgeois pacifism” and compares the state of capitalism with the state of socialism, among other things (Bloch, 1986:885).

The third and last volume of *Das Prinzip Hoffnung* was published in 1959. It discusses further the concept of Wishful Images along the lines of the “Fulfilled Moment”, and proposes ways in which a human being can get to a place where hope for social justice and transformation is a real possibility. Here, Bloch (1986:1103) explains how the “images of hope” work “against the power of the strongest non-utopia: death”.

Bloch’s insights of hope are geared towards the need for social transformation. For him, social transformation is humanity’s noble attempt towards developing the world beyond the self. As such, *The Principle of Hope* presents itself as an intersection and important channel of communication between theology and philosophy. For this reason, any attempt to summarise this work published in three voluminous books over a period of five years, which Bloch himself calls “an encyclopaedia of hope” (Bloch, 1986:xxviii), is a demanding task. Wayne Hudson (1982:1, 2) asserts that attempting to interpret the Blochian thought always comes with monumental difficulties owing to the fact that Bloch always “expresses himself in a wealth of metaphors that remain ambiguous” (Hudson, 1982:2). Regardless of the difficulty in

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<sup>40</sup> A trilogy is a book published in three separate volumes.

interpreting Bloch's philosophical thinking, in the following sections I will attempt to unravel the source, the nature and the function of Bloch's idealistic hope.

## 2.2.1. The source (and nature) of idealistic hope

### 2.2.1.1 Dystopia and Abstract Utopia

Hope is no longer an attempt by the self to persuade the other using abstract theories and ideas (Bloch, 1986:498). It is now about the transformation of both the self and the other by means of active involvements. One can deduce, therefore, that Bloch's idealistic hope is sourced in either *dystopia* or *eutopia*, and the source of idealistic hope determines the nature of utopia. Thus, a utopia that has dystopia as its source is abstract in nature; and a utopia that has *eutopia* as its source is concrete in nature. Bloch (1986:1354) emphasises that "it is not enough to portray what exists, it is necessary to think of what is wished for and what is possible".

Bloch indicates the value of the hoped-for as opposed to the existent, which asserts to the biblical truth that *Deus spes*.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, Gabriel Marcel (1944:94), one of the leading Christian existentialists, finds that hope originates in spirituality, specifically from an encounter with God. Bloch, however, goes further to attest that hope is an attempt to unearth utopianism. This explains why the Blochian philosophy is predominantly utopian and why utopia is idealistically active (Bloch, 2000:98; 1986:472; Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:97). Thomas More (1516:1–3),<sup>42</sup> the man credited to have coined the term "utopia", in Book II of his work of fiction, *Utopia*, describes it in the following fictional terms:

The Island of Utopia is in the middle 200 miles broad, and holds almost at the same breadth over a great part of it; but it grows narrower toward both ends... and spreads itself into a great bay, which is... well secured from winds. In this bay there is no great current; the whole coast is, as it were, one continued harbour, which gives all that live in the island great convenience for mutual commerce; but the entry into the bay occasioned by rocks on the one hand, and shallows on the other, is very dangerous. There are fifty-four cities in the island; all large and well built... inhabitants are sent by turns from the cities to dwell in them. They sow no corn,

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<sup>41</sup> That is Latin for "God is our hope"

<sup>42</sup> The original version of Thomas More's *Utopia* text Book II from the 16<sup>th</sup> century was rendered into electronic form by Jon Roland of the Constitution Society and converted to PDF by Danny Stone as a community service to the Constitution Society. Source: < <http://www.constitution.org/tm/utop2.pdf>> Also find an eBook for *Utopia* Book I designed and published by Planet PDF available at [http://history-world.org/Utopia\\_T.pdf](http://history-world.org/Utopia_T.pdf) and by the Literature project at <http://literatureproject.com/utopia/index.htm>

but that which is to be their bread; for they drink either wine, cider, or perry and often water sometimes boiled with honey or licorice, with which they abound.

More's Utopia is an ideal society with some sort of perfected social order. Arguably, his interpretation is that of humanism but the utopian island he describes seems unreachable. Likewise, in *A Modern Utopia*, Hebert George Wells (1905:61), a prolific English writer in many genres, describes the term utopia as “a planet that is essentially the double of Earth, which reconciles progress with political stability through the rule of an open, voluntary élite”.<sup>43</sup> Based on these early notions, in common parlance, the term utopia is deemed a non-existent place or a place of nowhere (Dayton, 1995:115, Godfrey, 1987:42). For that reason, some consider utopia as an imaginary ideal society where human relationships are automatically and harmoniously attuned, and which embodies a social standard that never materialises, much to the likeness of a horizon line to which one tends, without ever reaching it. To others, the term ‘utopia’ means impossible; and utopian hope is, therefore, an illusion – a purely imaginary construction of which the realisation is beyond human reach.

Bloch opposes such negative connotations and use of the word “utopia”, and presents it, not as something for rational construction to be projected into the future, but as something present here and now (Bloch, 2000:63). Hudson (1982:1) describes Bloch as a “philosopher of hope, of utopia, of the future” because he finds that Bloch’s concept of utopia broadens the scope of possibility. This is because, for Bloch, ‘imaginary’ does not mean ‘impossible’ (Bloch, 1986:1260). Instead, his interpretation of utopia mortifies the thought according to which the term talks about “a place of nowhere” or “a distant non-existent island” and advocates that it is a purposeful and concrete objective, which lives in the inner self to achieve the goal of human hope (cf. Bloch, 2000:21). This is central to the Blochian philosophy of hope, and which Oscar Wilde (in Sargent 1994:1) summarises as follows:

A map of the world that does not include utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which humanity is always landing. And when humanity lands there, it looks out, and seeing a better country, sets sail.

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<sup>43</sup> *A Modern Utopia* was intended as a hybrid between fiction and philosophical discussion. Like most utopists, Wells has indicated a series of modifications that, in his opinion, would increase the aggregate of human happiness. Basically, his idea of a perfect world would be if everyone were able to live a happy life. Source: <https://librivox.org/a-modern-utopia-by-h-g-wells/>

Here, Wilde stresses the importance of utopia in the world and remarks that development is its direct product. As Sargent (1994:25) states, for Wilde, developmental progress proves the realisation of utopia. This explains why only retreat in hope prevails and why hope is what the human soul needs. Thus, the primary function of utopia is to ensure that humanity does not live in total darkness with meaningless life considering that its dynamics (i.e. the dynamics of utopia) constitute the mechanics of the human soul, which is utopian pro-activity (Libânio, 1998:267).

Dystopia is an abstraction of utopia (cf. Levy, 1990:32). The Collins English Dictionary (2009) defines dystopia as an imaginary place where everything is bad, which indicates human misery. Dystopia exhausts hope due to its abstract nature and cannot satisfy humanity's hopeful longings or wishful dreams (Levy, 1990:31). It is, therefore, negative (Collins English Dictionary, 2009) and lacks what Bloch (1986:1118) refers to as the "utopian function". That is to say, it does not project the utopian dream towards the hoped-for. As such, human nature is venturing beyond the present reality to reaching the hoped-for, which appears at the horizon as a transformed future (Bloch, 1986:1103). It is pursuing, in one way or another, one's hopeful dreams. However, when utopia is abstracted, all the hopeful imageries in the present or all of human 'Not-Yet', amount to nought (cf. Bloch, 1986:1103). Notwithstanding the familiar definitional meanings of the term 'utopia' as a non-existent, imaginary place, a fitting and relevant explanation in this case is expressed thus Libânio (1998:281):

Utopia expresses a human aspiration toward a truly just order, a social world that is wholly human, which corresponds fully to the dreams, needs, and deepest aspirations of human life.

Here, utopia is reminiscent of and, therefore, represents the earnest imaginings, the sincerest desires, the deepest ambitions, the fairest purpose and the profoundest ends of a human being – the realisation of which parallels a utopian "social world that is [truly] human" (Libânio, 1998:281). Abstract utopia, however, imagines the state of the existing world without any orientation towards the future (Douglas, 2013:331). That is to say, abstract utopia presents the ugly side of the world with the consequences of its actual flaws.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> In relation to Bloch's interpretation and his concept of idealistic hope, Libânio (1998:279) finds that the death of utopia is actually the end of hope. This situation does not arise from a desperate set of circumstances or darkening horizons because "what it expresses is euphoria"<sup>44</sup> (Libânio, 1998:279). It is this euphoric state that expresses the togetherness of hope and utopia, marking "the end of the long march of individualism" (Libânio, 1998:279). In other words, the euphoria effected by hope and utopia is indicative of collectivism. Libânio

The climax of the Blochian philosophy is hope because the latter inspires social transformation, which Bloch advocates utopianly. In this vein, Bloch (1986:753) finds that transformation is being what one is not in an attempt to unearth a better world. To be human is to wish utopianly and strive for the realisation of that utopian wish. Utopian wishes are part of the human activity due to the “unfinished-ness” of the material world (Bloch, 1986:756). Thus, Bloch (1986:800) argues that the fact that the world is in an unfinished condition makes its completion imperative. He finds that in reactionary hope (that is, dystopia), Being-ness overlaps with Been-ness, and leaves no room for Become-ness. This overlapping of ‘Being-ness’ and ‘Been-ness’ without human’s ‘Become-ness’ is the decline of revolutionary utopia and the collapse of the rigid divisions between future and past. In other words, the future in reactionary utopia is abstract and therefore ‘Un-become’ because it is only visible in the past. Utopian hope does not give up because it is in love with success and, therefore, superior to fear. Yet, the spirit of dystopia succumbs to fear.

#### 2.2.1.2. Eutopia and Concrete Utopia

Bloch (1986:1016) argues that as the hope of Messianism is established in the knowledge that a messiah would come to bring salvation, so does the hope of Marxism lie in the coming of a revolution that would result in social transformation. In other words, Messianism embodies the hope of *returning* to the lost paradise while Marxism presents the hope of *building* a new paradise. Messianism is, thus, reactive and exemplifies an aspect of abstract utopia, while Marxism typifies concrete utopia due to its pro-active inclination. Simply put, for Bloch, Messianism is reactionary and Marxism is revolutionary. Bloch (1986:1099) stresses that it is in a situation of crisis that “real” hope takes a social and political level, whose aim is the establishment of a classless society. This hope is realised through concrete actions. Concrete utopia is neither passive nor locked into nothingness unlike failure.

Similarly, Hudson (1982:25) contends that it is a powerful emotion that makes a person to be “inwardly aimed of what is outwardly allied”, which is what Bloch attempts to explain when he affirms that the ultimate work of this powerful emotion is to enable the hoper to throw him/herself actively into what is becoming, to which he/she belongs. According to Bloch

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(1998:279, 280) observes that the death of utopia and hope is suggestive of an opposition to the resurrection as a victory over death while the rise of utopia and hope equates faith in the resurrection. In this way, utopia gives birth to a renewed awareness of both the historical hope and the eschatological hope (Libânio, 1998:280).

(1986:1019), by being active in this ‘Become-ness’ to which the self already belongs, one works against the machinations of fear. Utopian hope is, in this regard, not abstract visualisations because it takes the hoped-for as something that is although extreme effort of will by the hoper is required for such hoped-for to be revealed.

At the heart of Blochian philosophy is the premise that nobody ever lives without daydreams because daydreaming is concomitant to hoping (Bloch, 1986:77–108). Bloch (1986:86) argues that daydreaming stimulates the powerful emotions of hope and gives the hoper the energy to throw himself/herself actively into the Become-ness of the hoped-for. Thus, the fuller daydreams grow, the clearer they get. In the end, daydreams take the form of a sober glance and become less random and more agreeable (1986:86). This explains why “we never tire of wanting things to improve” (Bloch, 1986:77). Put differently, daydreaming leads to a concrete utopian consciousness of hope when the daydreams get fuller and clearer.

Here, daydreaming is akin to thinking and the realisation of it akin to fulfilled hope. It is like “a grain of seed that is maturing” (Bloch, 1986:82), which should be left to grow and be harvested at the fullness of time. Thinking involves venturing beyond, while real venturing knows and activates the tendency that is inherent in history. It is for this reason that in *The Spirit of Utopia*, Bloch (2000:142) asserts that the gap between a dream and its reality is slim but not risky; if only the dreamer takes his/her dream seriously. Likewise, the gap between hope and reality is within reachable possibility only if the hoper believes in hope and works towards the realisation of the hoped-for. This concomitance attests to Bloch’s contention that daydreams and hope co-occur (Bloch, 1986:83).

The co-occurrence of hope of dreams emphasises the co-occurrence of the present and the future bringing to bear another key premise in the Blochian philosophy of utopia that the future is inherent in the present. This premise is suggestive that the present is pregnant with the future and, according to Hudson (1982:63), the content of this pregnancy is “a concrete utopian heritage, which remains to be realised”. For Bloch (1986:1134), the co-occurrence of the present and the future indicates that a human person lives in the future because everybody strives for the future. The past only comes later since one knows of it in the present, and the present is almost never there due to the presence of the past in the present and the striving for the future in the same present.

For Bloch (1986:114–178), both the Not-Yet-Conscious and the Not-Yet-Become are concepts that fulfil the meaning of life and the horizon of all being. As such, they present knowledge as contemplative in the form of Become-ness over the Un-become (Bloch, 1986:117). For example, it is in the context of the utopian principle of hope that the breakthrough of merging the haves and the have-nots become a possibility. In other words, albeit a Not-Yet-Become, the possibility of merging the haves and the have-nots is within Become-ness – it is not an Un-become reality. This is what constitutes utopian hope. It is a “formally Possible” hope (Bloch, 1986:224) because, even though a Not-Yet-Become, it is developing into the “objectively-real Possible” (Bloch, 1986:235).

The consciousness of utopia looks far into the future in order to get through the darkness lived in the present. Thus, a “polished utopian consciousness” is, according to Bloch (1986:147), “the most powerful telescope” of “the most immediate immediacy”. The Not-Yet-Conscious of human cognizance has its place in and interacts with the Not-Yet-Become in order to explore the anticipatory consciousness (Bloch, 1986:150). In view of this, utopian hope is in love with success rather than failure because, being superior to the spirit of fear, it is neither passive nor locked into nothingness (Bloch, 1986:3). Instead, revolutionary hope makes someone aim at throwing himself/herself with passion into what is becoming.

Bloch (1986:17; see also 2000:46) makes a distinction between concrete utopia and the ideological function of the utopian dreaming by ascribing to concrete utopia an objective element of the anticipatory Not-Yet-Consciousness. Because the Not-Yet-Conscious human state is not necessarily unconsciousness, concrete utopia is, therefore, associated with consciousness and reason (Bloch, 1986:118). Not-Yet-Conscious is used phenomenologically to express the thought after which intentionality covers the objects that are in a Not-Yet state. According to Levy (1990:42), the Not-Yet-Conscious substantiates the reality of intentional Not-Yet-Existence, which is an ontological deepening of intentionality. This is why Bloch (1986:118) contends that the Not-Yet-Conscious ought to be made intentional to become conscious.

The becoming conscious of this Not-Yet-Consciousness is in itself an expectation of hope because “it is in such a manner that the consciousness-knowledge of an intentional expectation has to prove itself to be the intelligence of hope” (Bloch, 2000:107). Thus, the fear of the Not-Yet-Conscious is the fear of the Not-Yet-Become, which is a kind of fear that

hinders concrete utopia from getting to the level of Become-ness (Levitas, 1990:26). Such fear undermines the possibility of hope whereas a human being has the capacity of going beyond what *is* without subjecting himself/herself to some abstract imagining.

In this regard, Livingston (1986:39) argues that one lives in the future as the genuineness of the present is never readily available, while the future contains either the feared or the hoped-for. The future of a satisfied mind contains only the hoped-for whereas a frustrated mind is confronted by “the fear to hope and the fear against hope” (Livingston, 1986:39). To this, Bloch (2000:87) adds that a human intention characterised by fear is unhealthy, and not fit for active involvement in social transformation or revolutionary utopia. This is because hope invades human consciousness as humans are unfinished beings (Bloch, 1986:434). They are motivated by dreams of improved wellbeing or “a better life”, as Bloch (1986:438) puts it, and by the utopian desire for fulfilment.

Ze’ev Levy (1990:4–9) endorses the Blochian utopian argument according to which the Not-Yet does not completely exclude the role of a “primordial cause” driven by a relatively concealed drive called “hunger”. In this context, hunger is allegorically a main drive expressive of the essential reality of the subject and the object. It is “vital for the most important emotion called hope” (Levy, 1990:7). Thus, hope is not only the opposite of fear but also, and more essentially, a directing act of human cognition. This primordial hunger activates two possibilities called “desire and hope”. Hunger, a primordial cause, produces hope, which is an expression of Real Possibility: the utopian Not-Yet as Bloch (1986:436) contends.

The concrete utopia is an effort of human’s imaginations to explore Real Possibility. Bloch (1986:21–22) maintains that the present is, of course, a reality, but it signals that reality without Real Possibility is “like the world without the future, which does not deserve a glance”. In this respect, concrete utopia stands on the horizon of every reality while Real Possibility surrounds the open dialectical tendencies and invisibilities to the very last (Bloch, 1986:223). This is simply a question of realism because everything real, according to Bloch (1986:27), has a horizon.

There are various layers of utopian hope within the context of concrete utopia. These layers constitute what Bloch terms “Real Possibility”. Bloch (1986:223-248) breaks up the concept of Real Possibility into various layers. According to him, the reality of hope can be “formally Possible” (1986:224, 225), “factually-objective Possible” (Bloch, 1986:225–229),

“fact-based object-suited Possible” (1986:229–235) or “objectively-real Possible” (Bloch, 1986:235–241). These layers point to the Blochian concept of Anticipatory Consciousness (Bloch, 1986:1286) and indicate that Bloch is devoted to an essentially concrete investigation of the utopian hopeful possibilities. All these layers form a “Realising possibility” (Bloch, 1986:246–248) of concrete utopian hope.

Bloch (1986:224) explains the formally Possible layer dialectically. He indicates that some constructions are impossible. For example, the statements “something round or”; “a person and is” are both “*sayable*” (Bloch, 1986:224) but, in actual sense, there is nothing possible in them. They constitute dialectic impossibility. That is to say, although the statements are merely sayable, they are what Bloch calls “*meaningless nonsense*” (Bloch, 1986:224). However, a statement like, ‘I am eating the food that he had already finished’ may be semantically illogical and absurd (because of the impossibility to eat non-existent food) but it is definitely not a “merely sayable nonsense” but rather a “countersense” (Bloch, 1986:224). Although the latter construction is a countersense, it is “conceptually possible [and, thus,] a formal Can-Be” (Bloch, 1986:224). Here, Bloch argues that despite the ‘countersense-ness’ of this statement, it is a formal possibility. There can be flaws in human thinking or dreaming due to inaccuracy or lack of precision and the thinking could be self-contradicting or deemed countersense, but that does not make it nonsense. Thus, utopian hope can, at times, be a countersense but it is formally possible and, therefore, concrete. In other words, eutopia may present itself as a ‘countersense’ but it is never nonsense. It is conceptually possible and, therefore, a formal Can-Be.

As for the factually-objectively Possible, Bloch finds that a factually valid statement does not exist in a complete form. He argues that every ‘Can-Be’ is partially conditioned because it has a grounded possibility that is both factual and objective. This grounding is the partial condition for its completeness or fulfilment. Every possibility beyond the merely conceptually possible (i.e. formal possibility) indicates that the Not-Yet is not completely sufficient. Therefore, a factually-objective possibility describes the level of scientifically objective grounded-ness in line with “the incomplete scientific ‘known-ness’ of the factually existing conditions” (Bloch, 1986:227). This factually-objective Possible is, according to Bloch, a ‘factual inevitability’ because it is scientifically grounded and reveals the particulars of empirical knowledge (Bloch, 1986:228). What is factually possible is factually necessary because in the factual there is an area of real possibility, which is mostly connected to the life

of research. The factually-objective is, therefore, a process of hope, which has its groundedness in utopia.

The fact-based object-suited Possible derives from “emerged conditional grounds” (Bloch, 1986:227). As such it does not reveal sufficient knowledge. This possibility is objectively real and indicates that human beings function within a multi-dimensional field of possibilities with proper realisability. This fact-based object-suited Possible is realisable. This realisably possible fact happens even when there is hidden knowledge of the existing conditions. For Bloch (1986:232), this “fact-basedness” or “object-suitedness” concerns human cognition. In other words, the fact-based and object-suited Possible is understood and defined in terms of the theory of objectivity. The objectively-real Possible indicates that the Can-Be amounts to almost nothing if it is without consequences. Only the Possible has consequences albeit it is not “formally permissible or objectively supposable” (Bloch, 1986:243). The hope of the objectively-real Possible is genuinely symbolic and its content is ‘at a distance from its full appearance’ (Bloch, 1986:239). Bloch, however, makes mention of the ‘more or less abstract’ nature of the objectively-real Possible in that its illumination is a ‘pre-appearing light on the horizon’ (Bloch, 1986:238).

Bloch (1986:16) further asserts that utopia is critical to both the human existence and the ontological proof of God. Without utopia there would be no hope, and without hope there would be no thinking. This explains why utopian hope is also concerned with absolute perfection. In other words, hope as a matter of absolute perfection concerns the ontological proof of God. Hope operates as the opposite of naïve optimism. However, the characteristics of vulnerability are found in hope, which is why hope is not immune to disappointment. Utopian hope being susceptible to disappointment does not mean it is unrealisable. Both the opposite (i.e. the disappointed element) and the hindrance (i.e. hindering element) are within perfect reach of the real possibility. Thus, hope is not confidence because, if it were, it would not be hope. Being subjected to disappointment or frustration does not make hope an unrealised possibility. Hope, in that case, is simply the consciousness of danger and, therefore, “the practice of concrete utopia” (Bloch, 1986:17).

Bloch (1986:1201) equates the consciousness of utopia with science fiction brought about by modern technology. He finds that the science of fiction in modern technology is purely a utopian thinking notwithstanding its improvement. On the one hand, he contends that

technology, however advanced, cannot bring about the depreciation of utopia. On the other hand, he finds that even the perfection of technological world does not necessarily cause the depreciation of utopia either as a term or as a concept (Bloch, 1986:1201). For Bloch technological perfection is not as complete and awesome as people think because it is limited to a select number of wish dreams. Technological utopia albeit revolutionary in many regards is not the actual real possibility. Thus, he refers to concrete utopia as “militant optimism”. For him, true militant optimism fosters both the knowledge of decision, and the decision of attained knowledge (Bloch, 1986:246). Such militancy is utopianly realised in the realm of real possibility. That is, it is determined through a concretely mediated participation and action.

The concept of concrete utopia indicates that humanity is *en route* towards naturalisation and, thus, the world is still in progress. It shows that human beings have to work for social transformation. The layers of the category possibility as termed by Bloch (1986:1012) emphasise the intellectual influence of concrete utopia on human life. They tell of the transcending consciousness of utopia. The layers constitute a reprise of militant optimism, which “disguises the future as past, because it regards the future as something which has long since been decided and thus concluded” (Bloch, 1986:198). Militant optimism is not “quietism”, argues Bloch (1986:198), because quietism in utopianism is false optimism. Militant optimism, however, is the concretely and utopianly fulfilled possibility decided through work and action. It is concrete because it brings about a new class of consciousness, which is the Not-Yet-Conscious. This is why, according to Hudson (1982:51), concrete utopianism sets the goal for humanity by concretising a revolutionary consciousness “at a time when traditional absolutes have collapsed”.

### 2.2.2. The function of idealistic hope

The concept of utopia is often considered unpractical and, perhaps, inappropriate when images of a perfect world do not embrace the anticipated change necessary for the social order. People construct a new society with the old while considering idealistic (both literal and metaphorical) utopianism, and establishing likelihoods for alternative social futures. One could establish, therefore, that the function of Bloch’s idealistic hope, which determines types of settlements akin to desired social futures, is twofold: it is either reactionary or revolutionary.

### 2.2.2.1. Reactionary hope

Bloch (2000:78) critiques the philosophy of Plato, which, he argues, assumes that knowledge is the remembering of something previously forgotten and that of Augustine of Hippo, which presumes that salvation represents a return to a lost paradise. For him, such a perspective focuses on the negative side of the utopian function. Instead, he argues, knowledge is the projection of a future state of perfection while salvation is the creation of a new paradise rather than a return to the lost one (Bloch 2000:82). Bloch is not contented with interpreting the world on the basis of the past because such interpretive approach is reactionary. Humanity ought to actively plan for the future; that is, a better world (Bloch, 2000:89). Reactionary attitudes to socio-economic development in this 21<sup>st</sup> century that focus on the past as the point of reference are likely to result in non-realisation of the hoped-for. Thus, reactionary utopia discourages excellence in the world.

To counter the Platonic and Augustinian thought, Bloch (1986:479) exploits further the philosophy of Messianism and argues that the history of the Judeo-Christian Messianism begins with paradise, which later was lost. A return to such a lost world is retrogressively negative and thus reminiscent of sheer passivity. Holistic development would require a creation of a new paradise in which the latter glory would surpass the former. In other words, in lieu of the yearning for a return to the lost paradise, humanity's greatest desire should be craving a new one. Such cravings would result into working towards the realisation of the hoped-for.

Bloch (1986:481) further contends that the earliest societies according to the history of Judeo-Christian Messianism did not have classes or private properties. That is because they lived à la communism. A capitalistic society is, in actual sense, the loss of paradise; and the loss of paradise is what constitutes the beginning of social class and, therefore, capitalism. Bloch (1986:484) finds that equating the Marxian philosophy of communism to Judeo-Christian Messianism provides pointers to the fact that Marxism is a secularised form of Messianism. The Blochian utopia is, here, characterised by the desire to correct the conceptions of materialism by building a classless society, which is a philosophy that goes beyond the theoretical dimensions of utopia to its actual realisation. Bloch sees the future as a 'Not-Yet' occurrence that lies in the realm of real possibility through a constant unfolding process of becoming actual (Bloch, 1986:287).

The fact that abstract utopia begets reactionary hope is proof that its hopeful imagining is not supplemented by the desire to realise the imagined. If a transformed future is imagined, it should be worked for if one were to get hold of it (Bloch, 1986:283; Bloch, 2000:89). When utopia is abstract and hope reactionary, the imagined future is never realised. Abstract utopia does not carry hope though it may express the desire for a transformed future. For Bloch, reactionary hope is as immature as abstract utopia because they both have a tendency of being submerged by memory and getting lost in the imagination without reaching the real possibility (Bloch, 1986:284; Bloch, 2000:99).

Improved wellbeing is always desired or dreamed of. Such a wishful desire or hopeful dream results in a choice of utopias. Bloch (1986:1184;) presents utopia as an ontology of human existence, which according to Hudson (1982:19) could be summarised thus: “we are what we are *not yet*”. Hudson (1982:19, 20) indicates that the Blochian ‘Not-Yet’ is very complex and, at times, ambiguous because it refers to both the present and the past. With regard to the present, it shows that something *is* but it is *not* actual as *yet*, because it awaits a realised possibility. With regard to the past, the Blochian ‘Not-Yet’ means ‘not so far’ or ‘still not’ – indicating that what was expected failed to happen and remains in “the past of non-occurrence” (Hudson, 1982:20). Thus, the failure for it to happen in the past increases the possibility of happening in the future (Bloch, 1986:1186).

Reactionary hope is a reality that embodies dehumanisation and totalitarianism (cf. Bloch, 2000:71–79). Here, Bloch (2000:72) finds that reality is usually regarded as absolute and, therefore, what is real is often considered accurate and sincere. From this point of view, utopian ideas are deemed figurative and outside the realm of reality. Bloch (2000:75) further postulates that realism is in itself an unfinished reality. The utopian function provides the future with a realising possibility. The future is not expected subjectively as a product of the ‘Not-Yet-Conscious’ because it has an objective reality as the Not-Yet-Become which, in essence, is the real possible future whether it becomes actual reality or not (Bloch, 1986:1103). Thus, reactionary hope is an “informed discontent of hope”, which is historically ungrounded (Bloch, 2000:102). This explains the need for another and better function of human hope: the revolutionary hope.

### 2.2.2.2. Revolutionary hope

Being an outspoken follower of Karl Marx, Bloch contributed much to renew and enrich the Marxist thought as he championed ideas of communism and supported all efforts to establish it as the dominant political order of the time (Ruitinga, 2012:16; Levy, 1990:46). Ruitinga (2012:24) indicates that Bloch spoke for the less privileged in the social structure although radically and with an unorthodox stance in his opinions. Seeing that in Marxism true hope is realised through a revolution, Bloch (2000:149) contends that the encounter of utopianism and Marxism is inherently revolutionary. Revolutionary utopia is a way of thinking about the world, which values the imaginary, and a practice that releases hope for a better future (Levy, 1990:42). In other words, revolutionary utopia is venturing beyond the present to the future. It is anticipatory consciousness. It is human's desire for perfection in the here and now. It is such because it visualises the end of human suffering as Bloch (2000:12) further contends.

Revolutionary utopia is a positive venture.<sup>45</sup> For instance, it is revolutionary hope that makes an individual fight a chronic disease, oppose violence and resist oppressive systems (Pruyser, 1986). It is in the same revolutionary context of hope that researchers and the whole academia would engage in advocacy for the wellbeing of refugee migrants, for example. Thus, active hope is revolutionary. Its radical objective is revealed in a concrete utopian nature. In this regard, Bloch (1986:xxvii) observes that transformation is imperative for humanity. This is why all freedom movements are guided by utopian aspirations. The militant function of true optimism is its active side. If this active side of militant optimism is not allied with the real, present tendencies, it ceases to be revolutionary. However, militant optimism is said to be false when its intent is nothing else but putschism.<sup>46</sup> Hudson (1982:51) further observes that Bloch rightly understands utopia as revolutionary and constitutive in human history because, for him, concrete utopia is a commitment to fight the materialism of industrial civilisation. Seeing that

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<sup>45</sup> Revolutionary utopia regenerates hope due to its concrete nature and makes social transformation a possibility. It causes someone to move against all odds or in a seemingly wrong direction as Ofelia Ortega (2001:115) attests in agreement with Bloch.

<sup>46</sup> A 'putsch' is a sudden and violent uprising or plotted in an attempt to overthrow a government or any established system in power. A putschist tendency is not revolutionary; it is rather reactionary. Militantism becomes putschism when its subjective factor or militant function remains isolated from the community. Therefore, revolution – and not putschism – is a reflection of human's desire for perfection due to its constructive militancy intended for social transformation. In this way, the Marxist thought is a revolutionary imperative of utopia because its aim is to change people's lives and end human suffering.

humanity is always disposed to move towards something, the ‘thing’ towards which it tends is the climax of the utopian goal: a world free of suffering, anxiety and alienation.

The revolutionary aspect of utopian hope presents a dual function in Blochian philosophy, namely the “cold stream” and the “warm stream” (cf. Bloch, 1986:275–289). The cold stream is the knowledge of present trends and, as such, it avoids the hope of sinking into historical realism by engaging in a critical analysis of capitalistic materialism. It is a “science of conditions” (Bloch, 1986:280) and, therefore, “a science of struggle and opposition against all ideological reservoirs” (Bloch, 1986:281). The warm stream of utopia is the goal of the whole utopian practice. It ensures that hope does not fade away. It is the liberating intention and real tendency. The critical goal of warm stream is, at best, the naturalisation of the human and the humanisation of the natural (Bloch, 1986:282). Bloch finds that the end of this ‘warmth-doctrine’ of Marxism is the practice of freedom through a classless society. The warm stream is embodied in utopia and culture by the principle of hope. It is this current that is fundamental to Bloch, and that we must unite with the stream cold.

To ensure that revolutionary hope is realised, it is first necessary to merge the two currents of Marxism (Bloch, 1986:282). This amounts to combining reason and hope, emotion and sobriety, scientific rigor and artistic creation (Bloch, 1986:284). The warm stream of Marxism is the most fundamental because it is the one to end the alienation of humanity to profound self-realisation called ‘freedom’. However, Bloch (1986:285) finds that there can be no objective freedom without the advent of a classless society.<sup>47</sup> This is connected to the idea of temporality, which signals the new perspective of utopia: what is temporarily imaginary but which has to be realised (Bloch, 1986:1189). Bloch understands that hope exists and flourishes only where the subject is ontologically constituted by a ‘Not-Yet’ expressing the temporality in which it is projected. This means, a human being exists but he is not yet what he really is and, therefore, being human is living in constant tension of identity between oneself and nature (Bloch, 1986:1190). Thus, a human being is a traveller thrown into temporality, between the past and the future; between his/her origin and his/her ultimate goal (Bloch, 1986:1191). It is

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<sup>47</sup> Here, Bloch articulates some fundamental points. Firstly, the analysis of mechanisms of oppression of capitalism is the basis of all revolutionary thought. Secondly, political struggle, which passes through the labour movement, must establish a classless society. Lastly, to avoid falling into the cold waters of “economism” as Bloch (2000:95) puts it or in the “statist drifts” of some revolutionary streams, there needed a framework of commitment to social transformation.

safe, therefore, to conclude that Bloch's idealistic hope is anchored in the process opposed to the notion of the after-world; it is the realised truth of the future (Bloch, 1986:1209).

Bloch (1986:1205–1208), in his utopian philosophy, presents the variations of hope and the dimensions of human temporality through a dialectical analysis of the past. For him, the past lights up the present and leads people to a better world. This temporality is put into action by an anticipatory consciousness that simultaneously identifies the unrealised emancipatory possibility in the past, the tendencies of the present, and the realisable hopes of the future (Bloch, 1986:1207). Libânio (1998:282) takes Bloch's line of reasoning further and argues that utopia is a secular equivalence of hope. That is to say, what hope is theologically; utopia is philosophically. He observes, in this regard, that hope is vertical-bound because it is pointed in the direction of God (Libânio, 1998:282). He also provides pointers to the horizontality of utopia as it is aimed at humanity (Libânio, 1998:283). Both the verticality and the horizontality of hope make revolutionary hope a necessity in Christian life. Thus, utopia refuses to satisfy the established unjust situation and takes action to change the *status quo* for a desired order and hope accepts the situation, however painful, but still takes action to correct and improve it. An explicit deduction could, therefore, be drawn that utopian hope says “no” to an established situation of oppression or dehumanisation dictated by external forces but takes a revolutionary nonaggressive action to correct and/or improve the existing order.

The revolutionary context of utopian hope excites human consciousness and strives to attain what Bloch (1986:1003) calls Real Possibility. Real possibility in his utopian thought is a hopeful assurance that one's utopian dreams would be realised. The consciousness of one's own hopeful dreams provides pointers to actuality and alternates between dreaming and awakening. In other words, human consciousness finds its expression in the dream and its meaning in the awakening. Thus, concrete utopia is revolutionary and, therefore, a link between dreaming and awakening. The moment of awakening happens when one realises that he has been dreaming. Revolutionary hope takes place when the society realises that their hope had been all along reactionary and their utopia abstract. In order to not fall into such abstraction or be destroyed in the violent confrontation with the existing social conditions, Bloch (2000:783) suggests that utopia be “informed” because the subjective desire from which utopia emerges is certainly a pre-condition for its realisation.

## 2.3. Liberalistic hope: Paulo Freire and *Pedagogia da Esperança*

Paulo Reglus Neves Freire (1921-1997) is, arguably, one of the leading pedagogues of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – a proponent of critical pedagogy.<sup>48</sup> The Freirean pedagogy involves not only “reading the word” but also “reading the world” as Schugurensky (2011:1) indicates. It is a literacy education that focuses on the development of critical consciousness – a process known in Portuguese as *conscientização* (to be expanded later in Section 2.3.2). Owing to his activism and advocacy for the poor and the marginalised on matters relating to education, Freire was found guilty of treason in June 1964 and was put behind bars for 70 days.<sup>49</sup> His incarceration led to the subsequent writing, in 1968, of his *tour de force*, the famous *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (translated in English as *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*).<sup>50</sup>

Decades after the first publication of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which had been hailed by many as the canon of critical pedagogy, Freire unveiled its meaning so as to validate its relevance within the context of progressive post-modernity (cf. Freire, 1998:1, 2).<sup>51</sup> In his *Pedagogia da Esperança* (translated in English as *Pedagogy of Hope*),<sup>52</sup> Freire accomplishes these tasks by highlighting the notion of dialogue and anti-authoritarian practice in education system. The writing of *Pedagogy of Hope* was, according to him, “an adventure in unveiling” and, thus, an opportunity to experience again and unearth the process and journey that directed the development of his pedagogical thought (Freire, 1998:7).<sup>53</sup>

Both books explain why education and social transformation are intimately linked. *Pedagogy of Hope* takes a slightly different context by focusing on the perspectives of hope in the face of adversity imposed on the proletariat by the dehumanising conditions of oppressive education systems. Schugurensky (2011:4) indicates that while the implicit role and essential meaning of hope can be outlined generally in nearly every Freirean thought, it is in these two

<sup>48</sup> Freire was born and grew up in Brazil. Having lived among poor rural families and labourers, Freire knew hunger and poverty at a very young age. His childhood experiences greatly influenced and shaped his life and subsequent career. When he was appointed director of education at an institution that helps the working class, Freire began to see how disconnected the elitist educational process was to the real lives of the proletariat.

<sup>49</sup> Freire died of heart failure in 1997 leaving, among other things, a radical and far-reaching legacy of hope.

<sup>50</sup> Published in English in 1970, this book was banned in South Africa during the Apartheid years (cf. Botman, 2007). Quotations from this book are taken from the 1994 English edition.

<sup>51</sup> Much of the above biographical information is from Daniel Schugurensky (2011)

<sup>52</sup> The renewed copyrighted English translation of 1998 translated by Robert R. Barr is used throughout this thesis

<sup>53</sup> He wrote *Pedagogy of Hope* to relive *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

books that the pre-eminence of hope in Freire's pedagogical theory is represented the most. In these books, hope is portrayed as a *sine qua non* for learning in education and, therefore, a necessity for meaningful human existence. Thus, the Freirean philosophy of critical pedagogy is liberalistic<sup>54</sup> – established on an ontological premise of hope for justice and humanisation.

### 2.3.1. Hope and humanisation: breaking the cycle of oppression

Freire utilises the concept of hope as an opportunity to provide a discerning assessment of education because, for him, hopelessness paralyzes and immobilises. He explains his understanding of hope and its role in everyday practices as follows:

I am hopeful, not out of mere stubbornness, but out of an existential, concrete imperative. I do not mean that, because I am hopeful, I attribute to this hope of mine the power to transform reality all by myself, so that I set out for the fray without taking account of concrete, material data, declaring, 'my hope is enough!' No, my hope is necessary, but it is not enough. Alone, it does not win. But without it, my struggle will be weak and wobbly. We need critical hope the way a fish needs unpolluted water (Freire, 1998:3).

Here, the Freirean thought is an explicit inference that hope alone is weak. It requires imperative action because modern societies and systems are altogether oppressive and dehumanising (Freire, 1998:4). Those living in such undignified conditions gradually develop a sense of powerlessness and hopelessness. As fish require unpolluted water, so does humanity require hope. In other words, hope is to humanity what water is to fish. In order to fight against the situation in humane ways, therefore, Freire proposes a pedagogy that is part of a utopian vision for horizontal social relations based on a dialectic perspective. Such a utopian pedagogy condemns the dehumanising reality of the world and announces a theory of action that aims at transforming the situation and securing the freedom of a human person. Being utopian does not imply being unrealistic because, for Freire, utopia does not suggest a purely idealistic or impractical idea (see also Section 2.2). Rather, it denounces a world that dehumanises and announces that which is purely human.

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<sup>54</sup> The adjectival form 'liberalistic' is here used to mean '*that which pertains to the socio-political ideology of liberalism*'. According to *Dictionary.com*, liberalism is, among other things, a political or social philosophy advocating the freedom of the individual, parliamentary systems of government, nonviolent modification of political, social, or economic institutions to assure unrestricted development in all spheres of human endeavour, and governmental guarantees of individual rights and civil liberties. Source: cf. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/liberalistic?s=t>

Freire's critical pedagogy advocates that belief in hope for a humanising society and the ability of people to resist the weight of oppressive ideologies is to be forged in a spirit of struggle tempered by the realities of one's lived experiences. In this regard, hope involves listening to and working with the poor and the marginalised, enabling them to act against and correct the dominant lies of power. In other words, the oppressor-oppressed dichotomy calls for a need to fight for humanisation and break the cycles of oppression in all its forms. This explains why Chatterji (1972:185) finds that humanisation is both a matter of concern to both theologians and secular factions. He argues that humanisation objectifies change and revolution whether as an eschatological dimension or "within the framework of an earthly existence" (Chatterji, 1972:185). Freire (1998:41), however, maintains that the perpetrators of injustice, the oppressors, do not only deny freedom to those they oppress, but they also put their own humanity in jeopardy. For this reason, agreements and accords between the antagonistic parties are part of the struggle for humanisation (Freire, 1994:62).

Freire also argues that oppressors have a tendency to transform all that surrounds them into an object of domination (Freire, 1998:27). However, the roles of both the oppressors and the oppressed are so rooted in the social order that, in the initial struggle for liberation, the oppressed often strive to emulate the oppressor's role as they consider it as an ideal model for what it means to be human (Freire, 1998:27). To break this cycle, in an attempt to bring about hope for humanisation, a revolution of ideas is required because freedom can only be within the range of possibility when the poor and the oppressed let go of this image and substitute it with independence and responsibility (Freire, 1998:29). The struggle for humanisation (i.e. breaking the cycles of injustice, exploitation and oppression) lies in the perpetuation of the oppressor versus the oppressed (Freire, 1994:37; 1993:12).

In addition, hope is rooted in human incompleteness, from which people move out in perpetual quest for something (Freire, 1998:64). It is in such incompleteness, of which humanity is aware, that education as a permanent process is grounded. Hope and education, therefore, have the same ontological basis and are indivisibly tied up. The very possibility of education is based on the perception of hope as a continued pursuit birthed by the human consciousness and out of its own incompleteness (Freire, 1998:58). However, this is not only the possibility of education but also the purpose of this education because, if hope is characterised as a perpetual quest, then the purpose of education is to act as its constant and standard guide (Freire, 1998:61). It is for this reason that Freire (1998:3) argues in favour of

the need for a kind of education that brings hope because he considers hope as essential and primordial for human existence. The connection between hope and humanisation is of necessity in the theological spectrum because “the struggle to humanise the world is brought into closer relationship with God’s offer of a new humanity” (Freire, 1998:3).

There is little interest in both public and higher education, and most importantly in many schools of education, for understanding pedagogy as deeply a civic, political and moral practice; that is, pedagogy as a practice for freedom (Freire, 1997:56). How do the oppressed reach this realisation, how do they resolve the oppressor-oppressed incongruity? Freire (1998:34) proposes that it is through the pedagogy of the oppressed, which is a pedagogy forged *with* and not *for* the oppressed. By confronting reality critically and acting upon that reality, the oppressed can begin experiencing hope for transformation and humanisation.

Freire (1998:8) points out that a pedagogy of hope is about “rage and love”. Without those two, there is no hope. Pedagogy of hope is about liberation; it is about defending the virtue of tolerance (Freire, 1998:10). In other words, hope is liberalistic in that it entails engaging in a struggle to liberate oneself from oppression (Freire, 1998:9). As such, it is a means to humanisation and transformation because it awakens people’s consciousness and stirs up within them the need to promote solidarity and justice through a mutual exchange of ideas and/or participatory engagement. In other words, as Schugurensky (2011:39) rightly puts it, hope is a project of social change. It focuses on the freedom of the oppressed and the humanisation of the entire society. This, it does by liberating those to whom shame and pain are their daily experience. Liberating them could only be made possible through a pedagogy created and shaped *by*, not *for*, the oppressed (Freire, 1998:25; 1994:42).

The oppressed can also participate in the struggle for transformation in order to change concretely the conditions in which the oppression prevails (Freire, 1998:31). Doing so would enable them to restore both their humanity and that of the oppressed and, thus, transform themselves into new selves. This is because permanent liberation results from critical consciousness. The formation of this critical consciousness allows people to question the nature of their historical and social situation (Freire, 1998:21; 1997:28; 1993:35). According to Swart (2010:249), in the practice of development, critical consciousness “involves a double entry point in which the rich and powerful are to be brought to an alternative consciousness determined by the interests and point of view of the poor”. In other words, it allows people to

read their world with the goal of acting as subjects in the creation of a democratic and free society, which would entail the unmasking of the dominant socio-political propagandas and prevalent lies.

### 2.3.2. Hope and *conscientização*: unmasking the dominant lies

By making humanisation his central problem, Freire's pedagogy of hope is a project of social transformation (Schugurensky, 2011:9). It marks the beginning of a critical consciousness or *conscientização*, which results in a serious examination of the social construction of reality. The establishment of *conscientização* allows questioning the nature of historical and social situation. As such, it permits people "to read their world with the goal of acting as subjects in the creation of a democratic society" (Smit, 2015:5). The concept of hope is, thus, concomitant with the construction of reality and it is both "dreams and utopia" requiring a deep understanding of the prevailing reality in society in order to change the *status quo* (Freire, 1998:7, 28). Freire (1998:8, 9) points out that we are surrounded by a world that disregards dreams and utopia by referring to them not only as useless but also as impediments to any pragmatic discourse despite the fact that they have inherent power to expose the lies of any educational practice. That is to say, like dreams and utopia, hope is "positively impeding" and, therefore, it is "an intrinsic part of any educational practice" (Freire, 1998:7). As such, hope has "the power to unmask the dominant lies" (Freire, 1998:7).

The practice of education is in itself the bearer of either liberation or alienation. This, however, is not by the content of the ideas it conveys but the educator-educated relationship it establishes (Freire, 1994:28). This is well evidenced in the South African *apartheid* system of education where the oppressor had a different and better education system while the oppressed was allocated a separate and lesser form of education. Such practice endorsed alienation and called for a more progressive reform for liberation. Progressive educational practice is "an adventure in unveiling" and an experiment that aims at bringing out the truth (Freire, 1998:34). Hope, therefore, confronts the on-going struggles and challenges that the social fabric faces (Freire, 1998:54). It provides an inner ability and vitality to those facing unexpected or circumstantial realities of life.

The Freirean approach to hope is not only pedagogical but also liberal. Education is a practice for the transformation of both an individual human being and the society in general. It

is a practice of freedom and, therefore, a tool that brings hope to the oppressed. It is here that *conscientização* is regarded as the discovery of reality and/or the unmasking of established dominant lies. Thus, *conscientização*, as a process, involves a dialogical exchange between the oppressor and the oppressed, where they both learn, question, reflect and participate in meaning-making (Freire, 1994:32). Any educational system that considers a human person as an object of training is in opposition to the premises of hope and calls for *conscientização*. In this regard, Freire argues that the *status quo* of the learning process is dehumanising due to the banking system of education.<sup>55</sup> He describes the concept thus:

Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor...This is the ‘banking’ concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits...In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing (Freire, 1998:45-46).

This has been the most common method of adult education where the teacher has all the knowledge, and the aim is to pour that knowledge into the empty cup of the student. This method is still largely employed in higher education including theological education. In contrast to the ‘banking’ method of education, Freire proposed a method of *conscientização*; that is, a method of developing a critical consciousness of the conditions of life and, thus, the ability to transform those conditions. He sought to encourage students to develop a critical consciousness, rather than simply learn knowledge through the banking concept. It is indeed the case that “the banking approach to adult education, for example, will never propose to students that they consider reality critically” (Freire, 1993). One would argue that the Freirean impulse of cultivating a critical consciousness relates well to the aims of theological educators. That is to say, the banking system of education contributes to the dehumanisation of the powerless and the increase of their hopelessness. As it were, Freire (1994:18) finds that the transmission of knowledge is from the knowledgeable to the ignorant, that is, from the Subject to the Object. It is a banking system, which is why it needs to change.

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<sup>55</sup> Being one of the great educators, Freire is most famous for drawing a nexus between the traditional form of education and the banking system. The banking system of education requires that students memorise the narrated content of the narrator and thereby be filled with calculated knowledge. The banking system turns people into “receptacles” (Freire, 1994:55). In this way, the more one allows oneself to be filled, the better student one turns out to be. Knowledge then becomes a present given by those who regard themselves as well-informed or educated to those they consider uninformed or uneducated; those who know nothing.

The banking system of education turns knowledge into a gift given by the one who knows to the one who does not know; that is, from the teacher to the learner. As such, the concept infringes people's creative power by displaying their lack of knowledge, which is characteristically a technique of oppression. However, the oppressed are not marginal nor outsiders; they are also insiders and are entitled to enjoy the established structures (Freire, 1998:17; see also Chatterji, 1972:138). Freire (1998:19) further argues that finding a solution to this problem does not require integrating the oppressed into the established social system but to transform the system because it is oppressive. Thus, people will cease to be "beings for others" and become "beings for themselves" (Freire, 1998:5). Such transformative social justice undermines the banking concept of education – the sole purpose of the oppressor – by raising people's consciousness so that they can consider critical reality. The users of the banking concept serve to dehumanise because the deposits they infuse in people often contradict the reality. It is this dehumanising power that a pedagogy of hope aims to break.

Freire (1998:21; 1994:34) further argues that this system affects the students negatively as it objectifies them and leaves them unable to be critically conscious. In other words, "the more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world" (Freire, 1994:55). Thus, instead of banking methods, progressive educators employ problem-posing methods because "[i]n problem-posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which, and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation" (Freire, 1994:64). It is in this regard that education needs to be constantly remade because it helps people to hope and plan for the future (Freire, 1994:67).

Freire, having spent much of his life in North-East Brazil, had seen in that deeply polarised society the psychological as well as the social effects of extreme poverty and the unequal distribution of power (Freire, 1994:103). For him, there is no enduring approach to the former without a solution to the latter. As long as peasants are caught in a web of exploitative and oppressive relationships with the powerful in the society such as the money-lender, the store-keeper, the landowner, the merchant, the police, the politicians, etc., their combined operations will ensure that poverty and marginalisation will, at best, be relived; that is, it could never be eliminated. In this regard, Freire (1994:105) argues that peasants are not 'simple' or 'primitive', even though the vast majority of them may not be conversant enough or perhaps

be uneducated to the modern standard. Instead, they are perfectly capable of thinking things through but lack a critical awareness of their own position in the scheme of things. Often they are conscious that, for example, the price in the town store is twice the price in the local stores, or the police have to be bribed; or that the landowner was holding land that he neither uses nor allows others to use, etc. For the poor and marginalised, these are taken as facts of life.

Freire argues for an explanatory frame. He finds that, for example, the fact that the landowner will not let the landless poor provide for their goats on his unused fields needs explaining. Also needed is the confidence to look for, find, and act on that explanation is also needed. These constitute what Freire calls critical consciousness or as beautifully put in his native language Portuguese, *conscientização*. This explanatory frame is *critical* in that it looks for explanations and subjects them to ethical critique. For example, “is it right that the landowner accepts rent from me when he/she already has great wealth and my child is malnourished?” The explanatory frame is also *consciousness* or awareness because it invites the participants to a deeper knowledge of their whole environment.

Freire’s further claims that hope is both a practical quest for freedom, and a feasible utopia (Freire, 1998:197) – a claim validated in the foregoing discussion. As such, it explores by what attitudes or techniques critical consciousness replaces the one that is naïve, or by what values the fully conscious self could replace the blind one. Thus, hope entails action in order to render despair powerless (Freire, 1998:199). It faces the forces of dehumanisation and makes empowerment not only a choice but an existential imperative. For Freire (1998:43), it is only critical consciousness that is integral in attaining true hope since both the oppressed and the oppressor are immersed obliviously in situations that they cannot change themselves. Raising awareness about this immersion in or adherence to the unjust established order is the first step towards hope for humanisation and transformation (Freire, 1998:48). The possibility for such hope, however, requires a path and guidance. In this regard, the pedagogy of hope is a pedagogy of awakening the consciousness of both the oppressor and the oppressed. It is a pedagogy that opens the prospects of opportunities for every person regardless of culture, race, education, religion, etc. (Freire, 1998:49).

Put simply, Freire’s pedagogical concept of hope is basically the awareness of human sense of right and wrong. In other words, without *conscientização*, the prospects of hope would be shuttered. However, with *conscientização*, there is hope for those deprived of freedom, that

is, the poor and the oppressed. Here, hope is implicit in liberalism (Freire, 1998:103). Pedagogy does not need anything from elsewhere, which explains why pedagogy of hope simply acts and does not hesitate to defy fear (Freire, 1998:107). In other words, pedagogy is a science of hope, and such hope is not vain. It is not a helpless hope. It is the hope of those who are involved in the activities of change; those who take initiative to execute or implement the hoped-for.

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The process of *conscientização* is based on two main phases (Freire, 1994:24) namely “*transitive consciousness*” (Freire, 1994:26–28) and “*critical consciousness*” (Freire, 1994:28–34). Transitive consciousness emerges when people abandon their consciousness and collect the existing relations of domination within an existential situation, themes and ideological arguments that support and legitimise them (Freire, 1994:26; 1993:47). Freire (1994:28) finds that this elementary transitivity is naïve and immersed in the immediacy of life. It is based on readings of the common, the emotional, and the generalisation of meaning that simplifies the issues at stake without having them in their structural social dimensions.

In this regard, hope results more in controversy and frustration, than in dialogue (Freire, 1998:28). However, the transition to the second phase, which is “*critical consciousness*”, involves the intervention of a mediator and trainer of critical pedagogy. It leads to the analysis of the existential situation, the identification of both the reasons and interpretative factors of the situation as well as the potential actions to solve the social problem (Freire, 1998:128; 1993:59). Critical consciousness, which is the second and most important phase of *conscientização*, is the basis of an emancipatory approach unlike the educational banking system that does not engage students in critical thinking but requires them to be passive and adapt by serving the purposes of the oppressor (Freire, 1998:42). Educational banking system, therefore, prevents creativity; it resists dialogue, and it is fatalistic by nature.

This is why progressive educators help students to reach a certain level of critical consciousness as well as the awareness of oppression and of being an object in a world where only subjects have power (Freire, 1998:129). In this context, the process of *conscientização* involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and becoming a subject with other oppressed subjects (Freire, 1994:34), which is becoming part of the process of changing the world (Freire, 1998:56). Freire’s claim that education is about the making and changing of contexts, seized the political and educational prospects of social practices, which include but are not limited to the school environment. He also challenges the separation of culture from

politics by calling attention to how diverse technologies of power work pedagogically within institutions to produce, regulate and legitimate particular forms of knowledge, feeling and desire (Freire, 1998:102).

Most critical educators experience rage due to the unjust situations that confine the learning processes of the oppressed. They experience both rage and love without which, Freire (1998:9) argues, there is no hope. It is with rage that one can draw a strong criticism of sectarianism without being radical. Rage and love are empowered by hope, which is meant to be a defence of tolerance. While being entirely aware of the struggles to be confronted in order to accomplish the objective of social justice, critical educators remain committed to the idea that education is a transformative practice and, thus, a practice of hope. To unveil opportunities for hope notwithstanding the obstacles is, therefore, the primary task of a progressive educator.

The Freirean pedagogy of hope could be transmitted even to social and theological circles because oppression has no specific sphere of influence be it in terms of human characteristics or in terms of geographical location. Oppression is simply a situation that dehumanises humanity. It dehumanises both the oppressor and the oppressed – thus, it is neither a fate nor a given ontological order (Freire, 1994:19). It is the result of an unjust order that engenders violence and the “less-than-being” attitude (Freire, 1994:20). This explains why oppression is reversible – and it must be reversed. Thus, a pedagogy that focuses on hope is relevant. It is urgently needed to clarify the deformed analyses of the world and the self that are caused by the situation of oppression (Freire, 1998:7). Doing so is to unleash the forces of critical consciousness and hope for transformation.

Moreover, liberalistic hope goes beyond pessimism and the fear of being disappointed. It outshines the fear of failure or the fear of suffering disastrous consequences of what one wishes to undertake. Freire (1993:84), therefore, argues that fear is the enemy of hope but the confidence of those who do not want or feel unable to act. It eliminates the permanence and validity of human hope for social justice, genuine democracy and human dignity (Freire, 1998:89). Fear is viewed here as the consciousness of an impasse where the human self takes the trap of a story that dehumanises them. The defence reaction is found in the principle of utopia, which, according to Freire (1997:34), “is an engine of subjective emancipation” whose effects propagate collectively.

Fear, the enemy of liberalistic hope, makes the oppressed become “a dual being” as Freire (1994:27–29) finds. The oppressed welcomes within them the values of the oppressor by virtue of their (i.e. oppressors’) presumably objective situation. Here, the oppressed becomes himself/herself and, at the same time, he/she becomes the oppressor. That is, the oppressed is strongly attracted by the person of the oppressor and their way of life. He/she wants access to the oppressor’s lifestyle and being. He/she desires to think like the oppressor and adopt the oppressor’s worldview. Here, the oppressed depreciates as he/she internalises the judgement of the oppressor and believes he/she is unable to do something or anything. Thus, on the one hand, the oppressed is afraid to hope for his/her own freedom and autonomy, and tends to adapt to the *status quo* even as he/she does as everyone else does without arriving at a genuine solidarity (Freire, 1998:25). On the other hand, the oppressed wants to be but he/she is afraid of being because he/she is immersed in the order established by the oppressor for his/her (i.e. oppressor’s) own benefit.

The use of *conscientização* as an approach for social transformation calls for a revolutionary paradigm shift from mere social analysis to actual change as Freire (1994:160; see also 1993:49) argues. In this regard, for *conscientização* to be put into effect, Freire (1998:52) suggests a new paradigm that challenges the *status quo* of capitalism and its consequential hierarchic classes in the society. This is because *conscientização* is both a process of social justice and a call to community empowerment (Freire, 1998:112; 1993:85; see also Schugurensky, 2011:124). As a dialogical-pedagogical process, *conscientização* becomes the actual education of people’s cognizance, argues Freire (1998:122). That is, it empowers people’s consciousness so that the past does not shape their present or impede them from building their future. In this respect, *conscientização* entails the cultivation of an ethical attitude towards social transformation. This ethical attitude requires that the reactive consciousness of the seemingly hopeless in the society be converted into active prospects of hope for their own empowerment (Freire, 1998:123).

Because hope has a lot to do with social transformation, *conscientização* is a proper way to awaken people’s consciousness and give them hope for transformation – a kind that challenges the established educational banking system, after which students are expected to be “mechanical containers of knowledge without understanding the true significance of the information” (Freire, 1998:115). This banking system of education, bestowed upon the oppressed by the oppressor, requires a revolution of hope in order to free the oppressed from

the oppression of the oppressor, and the oppressor from oppressing the other (Freire, 1994:55). This is because oppression dehumanises both the oppressor and the oppressed. However, such a liberalistic pedagogy of hope requires a “reconciliatory prelude” between both parties, which is a critical consciousness for both the oppressed and the oppressor (Freire, 1994:57).

Liberalistic hope fascinates the self because it alone responds to the despondency of dehumanisation and oppression. It alone discharges the strength of the soul that allows someone to look to the future by living passionately in the present world. As such, liberalistic hope vibrates in the field of ethics and not in that of materialism (Freire, 1998:45). In other words, liberalistic hope is ethical hope. As such, it improves the wellbeing of a human person considering that an ethical person always proves to be more dangerous to the corrupt powers. Thus, liberalistic hope releases needed ethos in a human person because when empowered by liberalistic hope, the oppressed becomes an ethical person, and his/her hope becomes dangerous to the irresponsible policies of the powers that be (Freire, 1998:125).

In this regard, Freire (1994:29) argues that pedagogy ought to birth hope. It must begin by restoring the teacher-learner relationship through the process of reconciliation. In so doing, both the teacher and the learner become simultaneously teachers and learners. This is because hope for reconciliation between the oppressor and the oppressed cannot be realised if the banking system is still in practice since the system regards students as mere objects of education while the teacher is the subject. It is an inadequate and inappropriate system to achieve reconciliation (Freire, 1994:21). As a result of the banking system of education, the more people work on taking in the deposited knowledge, the less they develop the critical consciousness they need in order to change the *status quo*, and the more the prospects of their hope become a forgotten horizon (Freire, 1993:48).

One could argue that the Freirean approach is about “*working with*” and not “*working for*” those who do not have a voice, as evidenced in his concern for *conscientização*, which requires developing consciousness but a consciousness that has the power to transform the *status quo*. According to Freire, the formation of critical consciousness allows people to question the nature of their historical and social situation (i.e. to read their world) with the goal of acting as subjects in the creation of a democratic society. For education, Freire suggests a dialogic exchange between teachers and students, where both learn, both question, both reflect and both participate in meaning-making. As far as the desire for people to invent their own

identities and realities is concerned, the Freirean praxis challenges every person towards social freedom, in both thought and deed – and that calls for dialogue.

### 2.3.3. Hope and praxis: the need for dialogue

Freire (1998:221) asserts that not all conversations fall within the frame of a dialogue.<sup>56</sup> When an interlocutor dominates a conversation, for example, and other voices are silenced, it is more of a monologue than a dialogue. Also, if these other voices are heard but no one is paying attention to what is actually being said, then they are just talking to the wind and are not involved in a dialogue. Dialogue, in its broadest sense is a conversation involving at least two people, which suggests an exchange of ideas as one comments on what the other said and *vice versa*, or as one raises a question and the other answers (Miranda, 2010:265).

A dialogue needs not necessarily deal with a problem to be solved (Miranda, 2010:266), because it is a form of socialisation in which people engage as they talk about a wide range of topics or ideas with no intention to teach or convince another of the substantiality of their utterances. In view of this, no one is an epistemic authority over another, which is exactly what Freire (1994:27; 1998:105) advocates unlike the banking system. Thus, conversations are not rule bound but politeness, courtesy to each other and respect for one another are always expected.

Additionally, if there seems to be no point to talk, and all sounding like “clanging cymbals”, each one going on his/her own way, it becomes a “multilogue” and not a dialogue (Miranda, 2010:266, 267). In other words, dialogue has to do with mutuality or reciprocity. It entails mutual transformation, mutual understanding, mutual listening and questioning, mutual respect and trust, etc. It is a reciprocal relationship; an interchange or sharing of the same feelings (Miranda, 2010:267). In view of this, dialogue that prompts hope must be a state of equivalence. Thus, engaging in a dialogue entails that, on the one hand, two or more parties must converse. On the other hand, it indicates that conversing is not necessarily dialoguing because there is more to dialogue than just conversation as a form of socialisation (Freire, 1998:221).

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<sup>56</sup> For Freire, dialogue is a key component of problem-posing and problem-solving. It is the encounter between people adjudicated by the world in order to change the world (Freire, 1994:76). Thus, dialogical encounters help students to develop critical consciousness of socio-political and economic contradictions so that they can take action against them (Freire 1994:43).

Furthermore, dialogue is a human phenomenon “objectified by the power of the word” (Freire, 1994:68–70). However, the word is not simply a tool that makes dialogue possible; it also comprises essential constitutive elements, namely action and reflection (Freire, 1998:69). Both these elements are primordial in the process of dialogue. Thus, when a word is deprived of action, its dimension of reflection suffers as Freire (1998:98–103; 1997:124; 1993:111) argues. This is because human existence can never be wordless or be constantly nourished by fallacies. Thus, Freire (1998:103) contends that only by means of true words can the world be truly transformed.

For education, Freire suggests a dialogic interchange between educators and learners where both acquire knowledge, both interrogate, both think and both take part in meaning-making (Freire, 1994:69; see also Smit, 2015:5). Thus, dialogue is an existential necessity for a human being to attain meaning. It imposes itself as the truest way through which action and reflection are addressed to the world for the purpose of transformation and humanisation. Without reflection, the dimension of action becomes mere activism, while the latter negates true praxis and makes dialogue impossible (Freire, 1994:69). This means, for Freire (1994:72), verbalism is an empty word or a word without action, and transformation cannot happen without action. However, transformation is also impossible with activism alone because, without reflection, action is empty; that is, there can be no commitment to transformation (Freire, 1998:125; see also McGeer, 2008:239; Dolamo, 2003:36). Thus, with action and reflection you get praxis, and this enables transformation to take place.

Freire (1998:124) places dialogue at the heart of his pedagogical system. Using the principle of dialogue, Freirean pedagogy opens the door to new ways of relationships between learners and teachers. Freire (1998:122) finds that dialogue is an existential necessity for humanity and an essential requisite for birthing hope. The idea that hope alone can transform the world is naïveté, for him, and an excellent route leading to despair, inability and fatalism (Freire, 1994:9). As such, hope is best at work when with a purest quality of struggle. Thus, depriving oneself of the opportunity to hope in the name of making the world a better place is a “frivolous illusion” (Freire, 1994:10). In other words, an attempt to do without hope is tantamount to denying oneself the opportunity to live. In contrast, allowing oneself the opportunity to live is the same as putting hope into practice (Freire, 1998:19–22; also Botman, 2001:104). Hope, therefore, is a necessity that needs to be grounded in historical reality, and

the lack of which is enough for a remarkable unimportance and sheer frivolity (cf. Freire, 1994:8).

Dialogue is not only about deepening understanding, argues Miranda (2010:211), but also about making a difference in the world. As such, it becomes a co-operative activity that involves respect. The process of dialogue is very important because it enhances community and builds social capital. Miranda (2010:121) further finds that dialogue also leads people to act in ways that make room for justice and improved wellbeing. Therefore, the need for dialogue requires a meeting between hope and praxis (Freire, 1998:129; 1994:103; 1993:33). Here, Freire (1994:133) looks into the question of how we can transform men and women who have become objects of oppression. This, for him, calls for a change in the way education is done. This dialogue necessarily demands that those who claim to be educators work with (not for) those who consider themselves oppressed.

In this regard, the need for dialogue in the Freirean discourse involves *conscientização* considering that dialogue is a social tool for community empowerment, manifestly expressed through the awakening of human consciousness (Freire, 1998:103). Thus, dialogue is an instrument of hope in the society, on the one hand, and a method of reviewing the way social structures are constituted, on the other. In this regard, dialogical education is a “democratic tool” (Freire, 1994:132) for dealing with complex conflicts such as imbalanced social development. Such imbalance calls for active involvement and critical consciousness. The expansion of critical consciousness is, therefore, a job that involves all. Here, Freire (1993:101; see also Schugurensky, 2011:91) contends that the challenge of increasing awareness or deepening critical thinking does not arise in terms of a consciousness that is acquired or not acquired but from attitudes of questioning every ideology that presents itself as truth.

It could be said that Freire’s overall argument is established on the need for dialogue if we are to make hope a praxis. A human person is ontologically a communicational being, which explains why the praxical activity of hope is dialogical (Freire, 1993:126). This praxical activity is empowered by hope. Thus, Freire (1994:179) points out that the oppressed does not communicate, which is why a pedagogy of hope uses the “dialectical method” to encourage dialogue, without which real communication between the oppressor and the oppressed is practically impossible (Freire, 1994:56).

Dialogue does not mean holding a casual conversation or talking in a permissive manner; it is rather discussing methodically based on a defined objective (Freire, 1994:132). It is a dialogical interaction. Thus, the dialogue that could be deemed praxical, and which stimulates hope for humanisation, limits verbosity and advocates for both conversational discussion and confrontational interchange without tension. It is a dialogue between those with power and those with no or less power. In other words, dialogue empowers. It is a way of bestowing and acquiring power. Thus, dialoguing for the sake of human empowerment and hope allows different points of views that will construct new understandings with respect to an existential situation.

The same principle could be applied to the refugee phenomenon. On the one hand, human mobility is a universal trend; thus, it is impractical if not impossible to prevent migratory movements. On the other hand, the refugee phenomenon involves a great number of refugee migrants whose choice to return to their countries of origin does not entirely depend on them. This is why Schugurensky (2011:12) highlights the need for a positive discourse that hypothesises another truth and admits a different opinion that may be meaningful, but which synthesises a confrontation between opposing views. Here, refugee migrants are to be involved in the decision-making of matters concerning their integration and wellbeing.

According to Freire (1998:28), the dialogue that produces the knowledge of hope should not be “reduced to an encounter that is purely abstract” in the name of conversation because “it is by acting on the world that we learn to know”. Freire (1994:122) further asserts that education that empowers and transforms is dialogically strategic because it is part of a broader socio-political practice for change. Thus, pedagogy is primarily a science of hope, which explains why a pedagogical methodology that does not rekindle hope to those living in despairing situations is to be stopped. It is for this reason that Freire (1998:203) refers to his method of pedagogy as “liberating” as opposed to that of “domestication”, according to which information is transmitted passively and oppressive situations are tolerated.

The Freirean concept of hope is best seen as a process leading to the practice of freedom. Adopting this process implies that education is never neutral but transformational – leading to higher forms of critical consciousness for active involvement. Freire’s emphasis on hope is also utopian in that it denounces the existing world and announces a better one by making a universal call to not give up on dialogue amid oppressive situations however painful.

Critical consciousness calls for an interactive or dialogical analysis of who is and/or is not allowed access to resources and opportunities, and how such access is allowed or denied (Freire, 1998:162–164). In other words, critical consciousness requires questioning the *status quo* instead of taking it as a given.

Dialogue cannot exist in the absence of a profound hope for the world and individuals (Freire, 1998:123). This is because hope is the foundation of dialogue and it is, at the same time, dialogue itself. It is necessarily the task of responsible subjects, which cannot exist in a relation of supremacy (Freire, 1998:126). This is because “supremacy exposes the pathology of hope”, which is “sadism in the oppressor and masochism in the oppressed” as Freire (1998:128) explains. Because hope is an act of courage, not of fear, it entails commitment to both the self and the other. Thus, no matter where the oppressed is found, the act of hope is commitment to his/her cause — the cause of liberation. This commitment is dialogical because it comes out of hope. As an act of bravery, therefore, hope cannot be sentimental and, as an act of freedom, it does not serve as a pretext for manipulation (Brown & Falkenroth, 1976:34, 35). Instead, it generates other acts of freedom; and if it does not, then, it is not hope at all (Bauckham, 1995:14; Brown & Falkenroth, 1976:35). Freire takes the idea further when he says that it is “only by abolishing the situations of oppression [that it would be] possible to restore the hope which that situation made impossible” (Freire, 1993:53). In other words, if one does not have hope for the world, they cannot enter into dialogue at all.

In this regard, Freire (1998:26) strongly contends that hope is a necessary pre-condition for dialogue and freedom. The premise seems to suggest that, inherently, empowerment is to hope what development is to freedom, which substantiates Amartya Sen’s main postulation in his masterpiece on human development, *Development as Freedom* (1999). As such, development is affiliated to freedom, and both are put into action by dialogical praxis. Thus, dialogue is a praxical activity because it is both a “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1998:112). Praxis, being both the reflection and action that truly transforms the reality, is equally a source of knowledge and creation, whereas knowledge coexists with action and reality (Freire, 1998:124).

Dialogical pedagogy is praxical because the production process of reality is at the same time a process of creating hope (Freire, 1998:212). That is to say, a human being is an active being and a subject of the historical process in the fundamental process of social production.

This process could also be described as praxis because “praxis is an active unit joining theory and action and determining human existence as a development of reality” (Schugurensky, 2011:73). In this way, practice becomes fully praxis when its purpose is human emancipation and when it uses autonomy as means of action (Freire, 1998:71; 1993:83).

Liberalistic hope is objective and, therefore, a constituent element of both the process of *conscientização* and that of praxis (Freire, 1994:126; 1993:36). It requires human beings to better understand the socio-cultural reality that determines their existence and provides, through praxis and *conscientização*, the ability to transform this reality. Thus, the Freirean pedagogy expands the Blochian philosophy of utopian hope. In other words, it is a pedagogy grounded in the hope that provides a horizon of new possibilities and avenues of opportunities. Both dialogue and *conscientização* are just techniques requiring praxis if hope is to be realised. That is, dialogue does not exist without a deep love for the person who is in need for dialogue regardless of his/her social condition. In this regard, Freire (1994:11) further observes that hope births a horizontal relationship that contrasts the vertical relationship previously established between the oppressor and the oppressed. One could deduce that horizontality, rather than verticality, in dialogue makes praxis a positive practice.

As it were, human existence is all about humanisation. A humanising vocation takes shape in the struggle for what Freire calls the “most-being” (Freire, 1998:52). This expresses the search of humanisation and personal fulfilment for which the human person is always in the quest, which is the quest for hope. In this regard, human existence, understood as a planned project, must be marked by ethical behaviour after which historical and cultural beings may choose to intervene and make decisions for their own humanisation (Freire, 1994:42). Thus, a human being is ontologically an ethical being.

If the human self chooses to embrace his/her existence as an end, the only purpose for his/her being is to, at least, recognise the existence of the human other so they can be able to assist one another. This is foundational to the Freirean concept of liberalistic hope – an asset that propels the human self to be in service for the human other. This is because, if not acted upon, hope can evolve into hopelessness through “inaction and immobilism” (Freire, 1998:23). Simply put, any hope for improved wellbeing or a better tomorrow is worth nothing unless it compels us to act. We ought to be compelled to action in our own communities and, when and

where possible, in the larger international community. We need to feel compelled to break the cycle of every form of oppression and liberate the world from dehumanisation.

In a similar vein, Freire (1998:113) understands knowledge as historical and social. He finds that it is through dialogue, while human beings meet around the object of their curiosity, that the act of knowledge takes place. It is the “we think” that establishes the “I think”, and not the opposite (Freire, 1994:56). For Freire, dialogue is, thus, essential to the act of knowledge. Without the communication relationship between knowledgeable subjects around a knowable object, the act of knowing does not exist (Freire, 1994:59). This is why hope is a universal virtue. It is a yearning for some greatness. It is also an action, an impulse toward forming that greatness. Freire refers to hope as an ontological need, and therefore as one of the defining aspects of being. Thus, there is no purpose in being beyond existence itself.

To assert that a human person must serve a more specific purpose is to negate the inherent nature of his/her existence, which is the essence of his/her being (Freire, 1998:115). This is because a human person is arguably responsible to himself/herself and for his/her future. Purpose has only the quality of defining a human being as a being that serves some function, or more precisely an entity with some design. In this respect, hope is dangerous in the minds of people, distorted into the belief that beyond this life there is redemption for the meaningless existence they have led. Nevertheless, there is meaning in hope (Freire, 1998:113). The Freirean pedagogy is uniquely and predominantly a revolutionary practice through which the teacher learns as much as possible from the students. The process of dialogue is important and can be seen as enhancing community and building social capital while leading humanity to act in ways that aim for justice and human development. In view of this, Freire’s pedagogy is a message of critical consciousness, human solidarity and hope for holistic liberation.

In brief, what makes us ‘human beings’, for Freire, is that we communicate – we have a *word*. Dialogue imposes itself as the way by which people achieve significance as human beings. Dialogue is, therefore, an existential necessity. The deepest act of dehumanisation, of treating people as things, is to strip them of their word; to censor it; to refuse them to communicate; to avoid dialogue with them. Such an anti-dialogical action is the antithesis of liberating praxis, which needs to be replaced by a dialogical action because dialogue is a fundamental pre-condition for humanisation. In the same vein, Sen (1999:153) argues that freedom creates the space in which dialogue can occur so that people can be agents in shaping

not only the struggle for development, but the very vision of what that development might be. That is to say, dialogical action implies that the oppressed needs to find their own sense of freedom via their agency in the struggle for freedom. Because this is dialogical action, the agency is not expressed through action only but also through reflection. For Freire, therefore, it is crucial that the insights, perspectives, rituals and symbols of the marginalised and the less privileged in the society contribute to the very vision of the future that is being sought. Action and theory, thus, find expression in liberating praxis.

## 2.4. Apocalyptic hope: Jürgen Moltmann and *Theologie der Hoffnung*

Jürgen Moltmann is one of the renowned living German theologians.<sup>57</sup> He rose to prominence in 1964 with his outstanding *Theologie der Hoffnung* (in English: *Theology of Hope*).<sup>58</sup> The book captured the interest of the world at large as well as other theologians and, decades later, its impact is still being felt. In this section, I review Moltmann's reflections in an attempt to explore and expound on the apocalyptic perspectives of hope as revealed to him. *Theology of Hope* is, undeniably, one of the most significant books in modern theology as it highlights the crucial role and revolutionising effects of hope upon the circumstances of life. Like most theological studies on the theme of hope, it is written from a systematic perspective. Therefore, it is more conceptual than applied. However, this study has been conceived, conducted and written from a Practical Theology perspective. This is, again, another reason for looking at

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<sup>57</sup> Born in a non-Christian family, Moltmann converted to Christianity during the World War II while a prisoner of war. In 1944, his education was discontinued after being recruited for military services. He was sent to the front lines but laid down his arms in total surrender to the first British soldier he met. He was then detained as a hostage and incarcerated as a prisoner of war. His experiences of prison had a great impact on his life to the extent that he profoundly had to reflect on the merits and demerits of the World War II. In July of 1946, he was moved to a British prison run by the YMCA. YMCA is a Christian organisation and welfare movement that began in London 1844 and now has branches all over the world. It is acronym for Young Men's Christian Association. It was in that British prison that Moltmann met many students of theology whom he realised were coping fairly well with the situation in prison as they had hope. They gave him a copy of the New Testament and Psalms to read, which eventually led to his conversion of faith. After the war, upon his return to Germany in 1948, he took an active interest in theological training.

Much of this Moltmann's biography is gotten from the Boston Collaborative Encyclopaedia of Western Theology – available at <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/bce/moltmann.htm>

<sup>58</sup> The English translation was first published in 1967. The book is an academic *tour de force* that redefines the theological discourse of biblical eschatology. Undoubtedly *Theology of Hope* is his most influential work. Not only did *Theology of Hope* re-establish the doctrine of Christian hope in the academic discussions, it also positioned Moltmann universally as one of the greatest theologians of hope.

Moltmann's work from a revealed perspective of apocalypse so as to ably apply it contextually in today's society.

### 2.4.1. Realised hope vs. Fulfilled hope

Moltmann (1967) finds that hope is eschatological. Nevertheless, he argues that eschatology is not only concerned about the *eschaton* (i.e. the end of time). Rather, eschatology is a period of time within which we need to prepare for the *eschaton*. In other words, eschatological hope is hope in time. As it were, the rationale for Christian activities and of doing theology is the advancement of the kingdom of God. However, with the present situation where all seems to go wrong in every aspect of human life, this advancement can only be done in hope; that is, by putting hope into practice. For this reason, the reality of despair and the need to hope are well understood when someone translates this reality into practice. Such a practice ultimately creates the need for more hope. The role of any theological reflection would be to encourage, enlighten, and organise theological praxis and not to restrict the increase of theological thought. This would cultivate the need to act and advance the formation of hope in someone.

In this regard, Moltmann (1967:16–21) provides pointers to the dual nature of hope. On the one hand, hope is realised and, on the other hand, hope is fulfilled. Realised hope is present-focused; that is, it is experienced here and now. Fulfilled hope is future-oriented; that is, it will be achieved or consummated at the end of time. In its present focus or realised nature, hope is logical. In its future oriented-ness or fulfilled nature, hope is “*eschatological*”. As logical, hope involves the realities of the world and as eschatological, it stands in contradiction with such realities (Moltmann, 1967:16). Seeing that many people feel hopeless today, more profound considerations on the logical grounds of hope and its role in our lives are necessary (Moltmann, 1967:17).

There is, however, no global principle or criterion that could be used to assess the veracity or falsity of theories of hope for the reason that religious matters cannot be effectively tackled by rationality alone. Because hope is universal, the task of its theory and praxis is to serve the dignity of humanity. This is why Hryniewicz (2007:9) argues that “Christians are not the only people of hope” in view of the fact that “(h)ope lives in all and is for all”. As such, Hryniewicz (2007:10) indicates that hope can be more effective in the realities of the world in terms of transformation when used in its universal context. Thus, hope that is based on religious

grounds needs to be compared with secular conceptions of hope for the reason that the intrinsic nature of hope is universal and, therefore, not detached from earthly realities.

The realisation of “a future worthy of human beings” requires inclusiveness and active participation to the change of the world, which could pave ways for “a dialogue on the many ways in which hope can be experienced and its truth verified” (Hryniewicz 2007:10). Thus, as Fyodorov (in Zenkovskij, 2003:155) notes, it is neither ideal to live only “for oneself” because that would be “egotism”, nor “for others” as that would be “altruism”. Rather, one is to live “with others” since that implies *co-existence*; and “for all” as that is *pro-existence*. In both co-existence and pro-existence, hope is able to penetrate human expectations, attune the desires correspondingly and saturate the dreams of the self. In this regard, religious hope needs to be friendly to those of a different faith and even to those of no-faith so as to encourage human co-existence and pro-existence.

In the same vein, Christian theology is to be characteristically friendly for everyone, including those from other faiths or of no-faith. The problem raised by secularisation is not an abandonment of Christian traditions, but rather a realisation of Christian expectations in world history. According to Moltmann (1999:43), this new situation should allow Christians to ask again why they are there and what they want. How can the Christian community open the world to the horizon of the future of the resurrected Christ? Here, Moltmann (1969:45) contends that we live in an unfinished world and, thus, we are still in history. It is a world of the possible. The task of the Christian is, therefore, to be at the service of the promise of truth, justice and peace.

Moltmann (1967:124) further deals with the question of the last things, indicating how history and the last things could be harmonised, and how the contradictory notions of present and future could be expressed (see also Fromm, 1982:42; Cousins, 1974:34). He points out that Christianity has been robbed of its present hope because it is always associated with the future, which is often relegated to eternity (Moltmann, 1967:23). This relegation of hope to the beyond causes an erroneous understanding of hope solely in futuristic terms and with a specific reference to the *Parousia*. Nevertheless, relegating the future to a period beyond life suggests that there is no future in life, which leads to a peculiarly barren existence (Moltmann, 1971:48; 1967:24; see also Bielawski, 2007:14).

In addition, Moltmann (1996:34-36) contends that a human being does not passively wait for the final consummation of all things but, by participating actively in society and in the social orders, he can hurry the coming of the end. This goal or end is a utopian society. The purpose of the Christian message is not so much as to report on the past in an attempt to change the future but to preach and proclaim in such a way that the people will not only believe but act in history and change it. The present in itself is not important. What is important is that in the present, the future grasps the individual and thrusts him/her into definitive action to shape the future.

In this vein, Wolfhart Pannenberg (1972:60), concurring with Moltmann, indicates that there “exists no pre-established agreement” on the definition of the term ‘future’, which explains why eschatology is not separated from Christ’s resurrection and ascension since that is where the Christian hope is grounded. Moltmann (1967:16) notes that the “Christian faith lives from the raising of the crucified Christ”, which transforms lives in the present life, and not only in the future life. Thus, eschatology is not just futuristic or a “doctrine of the last things” because our present hope and our future hope are both grounded in the resurrection and the ascension of Christ, which are past events (Moltmann, 1967:18). In other words, our hope of resurrection (i.e. future event) is grounded in the resurrection of Christ, which is a past event. Also, our hope of going to heaven one day is grounded in the ascension of Christ, which is also a past event. It could be said, therefore, that the future is grounded in the past. This is because hope concerns all the phases of human life: it is grounded in the past, realised in the present and fulfilled in the future.

Here, the difference between traditional Christianity and Moltmann’s hope theology has to be made clear. In traditional Christianity, Christ stands outside of time, at least from the time when he ascended to heaven (cf. Moltmann, 1967:24). His incarnation was an act in time; a free act of God; an act of condescension whereby the eternal God, who is above the creaturely limitations of time and space, freely limits Himself. As such, eternity and time were merged into one category because Jesus was both human and divine at the same time (Moltmann, 1999:52). That is to say, he never stopped being God during his incarnated nature. His incarnation was limited in time. In this regard, Jesus Christ does have a future in the sense that He will appear in time to end all time but He is not subject to time now. Thus, the future does not hold surprises for Him.

Because Jesus will appear in time, the task of the church now is not only to preach for non-believers to believe but also for believers to put their hope into action (Moltmann, 1967:57). The former message (that is, preaching so that non-believing individuals could believe the gospel message) puts emphasis on an individual inner change or repentance while the latter (that is, preaching so that believers could actuate their hope) presents messianic possibilities of transformation to the society. To “only believe” is a passive response to the gospel message, argues Moltmann (1967:59), whereas to “also act” is an active response. Thus, there is a need for preachers to join the revolutionary ethic of putting more emphasis on putting hope into action.

Moltmann’s revolutionary stance on hope theology is explicit in his essay titled “*God in Revolution* (1969)” where he writes from the perspective of the oppressed and the marginalised.<sup>59</sup> Siding with them, he indicates that oppression renders both the oppressor and the oppressed less human and suggests the use of force in bringing about the desired future (Moltmann, 1969:35; see also Freire, 1994:9). In other words, in order to bring about the universal reign of God, Moltmann, like other revolutionary thinkers of old, finds that force or revolution is sometimes necessary and appropriate although not the only means to bring about hope to the oppressed and the marginalised.

Siding with the oppressed and marginalised is a sign that God also sides with the oppressed in their noble struggle for humanisation and dignity (Moltmann, 1969:36–38). It also means that He is in revolution with them. Here, Moltmann (1969:36) contends that God is not to be viewed as the God who is *in us* only because His being “in us” is akin to the message of sanctification. In other words, it would mean that He is a God who is only interested in someone’s inner condition. Also, God is not to be regarded either as a God who is *above us* only because His being “above us” is a message of His sovereignty. In other words, it would mean that He is a God who does not care much of what we go through because He is in charge of it all. Finally, He should not be portrayed as only a God who is *among us* because the message of Him being “among us” suggests that He is a God of the encounter – a God who only meets us at the point of our needs.

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<sup>59</sup> In his book titled, *Religion, Revolution and the Future*, 1969.

Moltmann further contends that God is to be viewed also as the One who is *in front of us* because His being “in front of us” brings more hope. When He is in front of us He stimulates courage, confidence and resilience to us, the followers, when we find ourselves oppressed by man-made systems. His being in front of us is, therefore, reminiscent of His leadership and guidance in time of revolution (Moltmann, 1969:37). In this regard, when God sides with the oppressed in revolution, He goes in front of them. His being in front empowers those in the struggle for humanisation with unshakable hope.

Furthermore, commenting on the God “who was, and is, and is to come” (cf. Revelation 1:8; 4:8), Moltmann (1996:29) argues that God also has a future. He finds that the “coming” of God in this passage gets pre-eminence over the “having been” of God and the “being” of God. The “having been” of God (that is, the God who was) brings faith because the Christian faith is grounded in the past events: the death and resurrection of Christ. The “being” of God (that is, the God who is) indicates *agapé*, the divine love because God’s love for humanity is a present occurrence. The “coming” of God (that is, the God who is to come) instils hope. Nevertheless, the hope instilled by the “God who is to come” is not only for tomorrow but also for today. In other words, hope is realised or experienced in the present and fulfilled or completed in the future. Thus, Moltmann (1996:52) finds that the being and the coming (i.e. the “Here” and the “Not-Yet”) of God provide pointers to an interesting experience as we are caught between and betwixt God’s presence and God’s absence. The present, however, cannot solve this ambiguously mysterious dichotomy. It is only the future of God that can, which we seek in the present.

Seeing that God’s future is restricted in the person of Jesus, therefore, Jesus is the means through which the future of God is defined in the present (Moltmann, 1967:132). In other words, it is through Jesus that our hope for today finds its real meaning. It is also through Jesus that our hope for the future finds its real meaning today. This is what Moltmann refers to as “messianic eschatology” or “eschatological Christology” (Moltmann, 1967:135). This kind of eschatology finds resonance when applied to the process of history. The messianic eschatology points to the forward action of God in time and history. God opens His kingdom that surpasses all human understanding through the resurrection of the Crucified. In this context, hope places itself in eschatology, which is not only a spiritual truth already fulfilled in the experience of the believing community but also the announcement of a radical change (Goodin, 1988:84).

Thus, as Alves (1969:75) puts it, hope highlights the socio-political dimension by developing a utopian vision of the future kingdom of God on earth.

In explaining the concept “future” so as to understand its relevance in *time* and in *eternity*, Moltmann (1967:23–26) argues that there is a need to distinguish between the two uses of the word. According to him, there is a future in this life in which we can, more or less, know what to expect based on past experiences (Moltmann, 1967:25). For instance, we know the sun would rise every morning and set every evening. Such a future is knowable or, at least, predictable. It is something we expect to happen on a daily basis. It is the *future in life*. In contrast, there is *life in future*, which is basically life beyond the grave and about which we know nothing from experience, and very little from the scriptures. In other words, we know what to expect concerning the *future in life* (that is, future in time or future in this temporal life) but we do not know what to expect in the *future life* (that is, life in the timeless future or future after this temporal life). The eschatological challenge here is that time is only in “time” because eternity is without time. Put differently, time is temporal and eternity is timeless. In time, time is measurable; in eternity, time is measureless.

It is in this same context that Moltmann (1967:42, 43) suggests a binary of meaning in the use of the word “hope”. He distinguishes “logical hope”, based on purely “doctrinal statements”, from “eternal hope”, based on what he calls, “statements of promise”. Logical hope, according to Moltmann (1967:44) is grounded on existing realities that we can all experience or, simply, on “realistic expectations in time”. Eternal hope, however, is hope in eternity. It stands in contradiction to the realities that can be experienced in time (see Moltmann, 1967:42, 43).

Here, Moltmann implies that hope is not only something to sit and wait for at the *eschaton*. He finds that eschatology needs to be reformulated and expressed in such a way that its statements of hope challenge the present experience of suffering. In other words, our hope for peace and justice in eternity must encourage us to work for peace and justice in time. Our hope for a better society in the future must be translated into concrete actions, which pave the way for the realisation of what we hope for. Our hope for improved wellbeing should stir in us the urge to be of service to those in need of help. Simply put, our attitude towards community empowerment and holistic development must make an impression on the world; and our

expectation for eternity must be reflected in the efforts to empower the powerless and restore their dignity in time. This cannot be left undone or “relegated to a beyond” until the last day, as Moltmann (1967:62) contends. Doing that would be denying humanity its critical significance for all the days that are spent here, this side of the end, in history.

Additionally, hope is temporal when it is logical. However, the Christian hope is not logical because it is not based on reason, on the one hand, and it is timeless, on the other. In other words, the Christian hope is not (or, at least, it does not have to be) logical because it is eternal. The reality of eternity is beyond logic. Logic works with reason and rationality, and eternity cannot be reasoned out or rationalised. Also, the fact that eternal hope is not logical does not mean it is then illogical. Moltmann’s argument could easily lead to such an erroneous conclusion. Eternal hope is not logical because it is simply beyond logic but, at the same time, it is not illogical.

Moltmann (1972:59) finds that “[a] future which does not begin in the transformation of the present is... no genuine future”. This suggests that the future in time or in this temporal life is certain (for we know what to expect) and logical (for it is verifiable from experience) but life in future or in eternity is uncertain (for we know nothing about it from experience) and beyond logic (for we cannot reason it out). In view of Moltmann’s contention, it could be deduced that there is hope both in time and in eternity. Our hope in time or the present reality is certain and logical. As such, it spurs us to improve the wellbeing of those for whom despair is their daily bread.

Furthermore, Moltmann (1967:23–48) uses two Latin terms, *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*, to expound on the notion of hope as an eschatological occurrence. The two terms mean “starting point” and “finishing point” respectively. Moltmann’s use of these two eschatological terms is of great importance not only for salvation, but also in terms of better understanding the concept of Christian hope. Moltmann (1967:24) believes “the place and situation in which the call to the hope of the gospel reaches men is, to be sure, the concrete *terminus a quo* of their calling, but not its *terminus ad quem*”. Through this statement, Moltmann points out that the call of a believer begins at the *terminus a quo*, which is the point of his/her calling, but it does not end there. Rather, the call of a believer ends at the *terminus ad quem*, which is its finishing point. This further emphasises Moltmann’s argument that there

is hope in time and in eternity. From this observation, therefore, hope is deepened with enduring suffering and brings the horizons of a brighter tomorrow closer by empowering the human self and/or the human other with an apocalyptic hope.

In this vein, being a Christian is like entails living concurrently in two worlds: *in time* and *in eternity*. This is observed by Moltmann (1967:33) as he points out that the present experience cannot be left pending – awaiting the period after the *terminus ad quem* because the *eschaton* is thus far a “Not-Yet-Become”, to use the terminology of Ernst Bloch (1986). In other words, for Moltmann, eschatology does not restrict or relegate hope to the *eschaton* because the *Parousia* is not the only eschatological event (Moltmann, 1967:35; 1969:152).

Eschatology concerns Christ’s resurrection and ascension (Moltmann, 1967). Because the Christian hope is found within the confines of these two past events, expecting hope at the *terminus ad quem* is to attach Christian dogmatics to obscure irrelevancies since the *eschaton* is timeless. The *terminus a quo* of the *eschaton* is at the *terminus ad quem* of time. Simply put, the *eschaton* does not contain time since time ends at the *terminus ad quem* (Moltmann, 1967:42). The Christian hope is, in this regard, *in time* but not only *of time*. It is both in this life and in the life to come. In this way, eschatology as an apocalyptic or revealed event is, on the one hand, a period of waiting in active hope but, on the other hand, a “doctrine of the Christian hope” (Moltmann, 1967:18). Thus, eschatology is both in time and in eternity. In view of that, Moltmann (1967:17) argues that there is no such a thing as referring to eschatology as the “doctrine of the last things”.

In addition, Christian eschatology does not speak about the future and it is not about the future as many tend to think (Moltmann, 1967:19). Rather, eschatology is about Jesus Christ, and it speaks about the future of Jesus Christ in relation to humanity. This is apocalyptic. As such, Christian eschatology “sets out from a definite reality in history and announces the future of that reality, its future possibilities and its power over the future” (Moltmann, 1967:17). Here, Moltmann’s line of reasoning is based on the fact that the term “future” is applicable in history, and history is found in time. The kingdom of God is described in terms of ‘here’ or ‘now’, and ‘not yet’ or ‘still to come’. It is the ‘now-ness’ and the ‘not yet-ness’ of God’s kingdom that place the Christian hope both in time and in eternity. The idea that Jesus Christ is the *Alpha* (beginning) and the *Omega* (end) suggests that he lives in time because

“beginning” (i.e. *alpha*) is a historical manifestation; and he lives in eternity, which is at the *omega* of time or *terminus ad quem* (Moltmann, 1967:22). From this notion derives the truth according to which the Christian hope is active in time, and human experience of it will extend to eternity on the basis of faith in Christ.

In the history of the Christian thought, Moltmann (1967:24) finds that hope presents a constant in spite of the contexts of emerging developments. However, Williams (1996:157-164) argues that, although Moltmann’s theology continues to impress lots of theologians and influence various church doctrines, the main theme of his theology, hope, presents serious problems. For Williams (1996:159), hope is not concerned with a perilous eschatological possibility, and it is not directly established in promise because God cannot give promises of hope for the eschatological future of this-worldly life, which will be subjected to destruction. Hope conflicts with justifiable certainty despite the fact that it is presented by Moltmann in a form of assured certitude (Williams, 1996:158). Understanding this difference is paramount to differentiating “other-worldly” hope from “this-worldly” hope. Williams (1996:21) further argues that love, rather than hope, ought to be the causal motive for concrete social activity in this world. He finds that having love as the reason for praxis can spare someone from the disappointments that come with the concept of hope.

Nevertheless, Moltmann (1967:16, 17) observes that the hope of this-worldly life lies, not on the *transformatio mundi* but on the *annihilatio mundi*. The former term refers to complete transformation of the world that humanity aspires while the latter refers to a complete destruction of the same. The paradoxical point is that both are eschatological expectations. Moltmann argues, however, that *transformatio mundi* is an alternative and should not be a dogmatic denial of the *annihilatio mundi*. Enthusiasts and proponents of the *transformatio mundi* eschatological position claim that this world will be transformed into a better one while those who hold on the latter position argue that it will be completely destroyed in readiness for a “*nova creatio*” (Moltmann, 1967:17); that is, a new creation (see Revelation 21; also Isaiah 65:17).

Moltmann (1967:20) uses another Greek expression, “*extensio animi ad magna*”, in reference to the hope that becomes a “passion for what is possible”. His use of this expression is to equate the concept of magnanimity with that of hope since the former (i.e. magnanimity),

like the latter (i.e. hope), is an action prompted by the craving of greater things. As it were, a magnanimous person focuses on prevailing over world's realities, however odd (Harvard, 2011:1). Thus, a burning magnanimous desire for better things or *extensio animi ad magna* takes place within the confines of hope and, as such, it is a "believing hope" (Moltmann, 1967:20). When kindled, it opens up and extends the horizons of a "closed existence" (Moltmann, 1967:19); hence, the following definition of magnanimity according to Harvard (2011:1):

Magnanimity is an ideal rooted in trust in man, and his inherent greatness. It is the virtue of action. It is the supreme hope of human hope... capable of setting the tone of one's entire life, transforming it [and] giving it new meaning.

In this regard, magnanimity is a longing for excellence; an aspiration or quest for better and greater things. This explains why Harvard (2011:4) concludes by saying that magnanimous people do not only aspire *having* greater things, they also consider themselves as worthy of *doing* greater things. This has implications on the volition part of the human self. Having greater things is not enough; doing greater things is even better. In view of this, hope, as a resource, increases the possibilities of attaining the hoped-for due to the burning desire of magnanimity, which prompts a human being to do greater things (cf. Harvard, 2011:6). In other words, hope could be said to be distinctly magnanimous considering its ability to cause the hoper to not only *have* but also *do* greater things. Thus, only hope can be realistic because it alone takes seriously possible realities. It is not a "transfiguring glow" shielded by obscured or closed existence but a realistic way of perceiving the scope of real possibility (Moltmann, 1967:22).

Hope does not consider things as they are but as they progress, that is, "moving things with possibilities of change" (Moltmann, 1967:29). The views of Moltmann on hope are in a sense verified by Ortega (2001:131) who finds that hopelessness remains hidden in the utopia of the *status quo* because the traditional interpretation of utopia suggests the annulment of all other utopias concerning the future for what we have now. As Moltmann (1969b:101) puts it, "hope is not only in the future"; it is also in the present – here and now. In the same way, Ortega (2001:129) finds that, it is good to depend on "what we possess" rather than dreaming of the "futures that appear to be dangerous". Thus, because what we possess is hope, it is the dependable resource one can use to make do.

## 2.4.2. Objective hope vs. Subjective hope

Past and future do not dissolve in an eternal present (Moltmann, 1969:75). In developing this futuristic theology, Moltmann has considerable weight of biblical history on his side. Luther read the Bible from the principle of justification by grace through faith, and he saw it shining out on every page. Moltmann has done something similar but with the principle of future hope.

Here, Moltmann (1967:17) explains the subjectivity and objectivity of hope in allegorical terms citing that, for Aristotle, hope is “a waking dream” whereas for the Greeks it is “an evil out of the Pandora’s Box”. The contrast between the Aristotelian thought and the mythology of Ancient Greece indicates that hope is not a sleeping dream but one that is awake or fully active and, at the same time, one of the many evils. One problem remains though: Pandora’s hope, as told in the legend, is still lying at the bottom of the box, of which Bruno Latour (1999:8) suggests complete release.<sup>60</sup>

The arguments above suggest that when it comes to the discussion of hope one cannot avoid elements of subjectivity and objectivity, which Bingham (1993:127-129) advocates strongly in his *The Biblical Doctrine of Hope*. For Bingham, there is an important dualism of the nature of hope: its objective nature and its subjective nature.<sup>61</sup> He, therefore, argues that the objectivity of hope results from “the hope that is laid up in heaven” (Bingham, 1993:127). In other words, the Christian hope is eternal and therefore objective. Bingham (1993:127, 128) finds that this objective hope as “an anchor of the soul, firm and secure” (cf. Hebrews 6:19) is cast into the eternal harbour to “increase the knowledge of the truth of the promise”. He also observes that hope is subjective when it is logical (Bingham, 1993:130), which is in agreement with Moltmann’s advocacy on the nature of hope. That is to say, “as deep is the understanding of, and faith in, the objective hope, as deep then will be the power of motivation within the

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<sup>60</sup> Latour (1999:13–14) takes further Moltmann’s reference to Pandora’s Box saying that hope is to be contextualised from the perspective of belief in reality. For Latour, therefore, to hope is to believe in reality. Latour’s argument is that, like Pandora, one also needs to metaphorically open the box in his/her possession to find hope in our individual’s worlds. In this way, the solution for the seemingly unfortunate situations of humankind, which could result in humans not believing in reality, is to free the hope that remains lying at the bottom of our Pandora’s Box. The freeing of hope from that box could result in people experiencing it fully in the face of many evils in the world.

<sup>61</sup> Geoffrey Cyril Bingham (1919-2009) was the Rector of the Garrison Church at Millers Point, and Honorary Vice-Principal of The Sydney Bible Training Institute.

believer” (Bingham, 1993:104). It is this power of motivation or hope within an individual person that achieves something deemed subjective.

It is in this context that Moltmann (1974:68), in his *The Crucified God*, writes of a God who gives rise to hope by identifying Himself with the suffering of those overwhelmed by poverty; those in need of freedom; those toiling out of slavery. Such a God identifies Himself with those who endure the pain of established systems and/or feel the shame of dehumanising policies. He is as victimised as those crucified by abject situations they find themselves in. In this way, God chooses to lose all material comforts and social prestige for the sake of the poor, the captives and the sick, among many others in the same conditions of vulnerability. This is suggestive of active commitment in lieu of passive piety if the Christian message is to be made holistically relevant to those for whom Jesus came. The future nature of objective hope is constantly actualised by Jesus Christ whose indwelling presence in the believer is the “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

The principle of this objective hope, which lies in Jesus Christ, shows a relationship with the principle of promise and, therefore, “motivates us both to do and to be” (Bingham, 1993:129). In the Pauline literature, hope is placed together with faith and love – and Paul emphasises that hope too remains (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:13). While faith seemingly relates to past realisations and love with present experiences, hope is often assumed as relating “primarily to things future” (Bingham 1993:128). This observation consolidates Moltmann’s (1967:15) contention that relegating hope to the *eschaton* is to rob Christianity of its actual, present hope. For Moltmann (1969:30) eschatology is therefore the foundation of the Christian faith because it comprises all that Christians believe, not only the traditional “last things” such as judgement, hell, heaven, etc.

Arguably, eschatological hope is the point of reference in the Christian faith and, therefore, a way of making sense of the world *vis-à-vis* the future. As such, eschatological signs communicate a vision for the entire society and provide a way of foreseeing through an eventual context that is able to prompt in us the resolve to make every effort concerning the *eschaton* (cf. Keshgegian, 2006:45). The magnetism of these influential signs encourages people to be in this world in line with the standards of God’s ethical demands (Harvard,

2011:23). It also necessitates a transformation of the current order, which would induce the self for social action.

Here, Moltmann's case, according to which, hope is not something to sit and wait for inactively, is solidified (Moltmann, 1967:45). We are to formulate statements of hope in contradiction to our present experience of suffering, evil and death. In other words, it does not suffice to say, "Christ will come to establish his kingdom on earth". Rather, it would be good to say, for instance, "when Christ comes, he will defeat HIV/AIDS; he will abolish pain; he will end suffering and poverty", etc. Such statements indicate what Moltmann (1967:92) calls, "the believing hope", which is contextual to the present realities. In the same vein, when the kingdom of God is consummated or fulfilled in eternity, the human hope for peace and justice must encourage humanity to work for peace and justice in time. Simply put, the human attitude towards social transformation must make an impression on the world and the human expectation for eternity must be reflected in the efforts to empower the powerless in time.

In the same context, Glenn Tinder (1999:23) takes Moltmann's concept a bit further indicating that hope is both subjective and objective for the reason that it is intermittent. This is because we are living in a time that gives us more reason to show fear than ever before. Prevailing circumstances increase human ability to lose hope. This is so true in that, for instance, what was meant to be a millennium of economic development and social progress became, and rightly so, more of a despairing one. Nevertheless, one can always enter a new day, week, month or year with new hope. This is why Moltmann (1967:61) suggests that the prophetic perspective of hope has to do with the manner in which those amid painful historical circumstances comport themselves. Here, "prophetic" does not suggest absolute knowledge of the future but unreserved readiness and unrestricted willingness to enter into the future notwithstanding the darkness concealing it. A propos, it could be argued that despair emerges from unfounded confidence *vis-à-vis* humans' own prospects. In contrast to despair and fragile positivity, Tinder (1999:203) agrees with Moltmann and bids for the "renewal of hope". He finds that only a hope that has come to terms with all the reasons for despair can sustain a human being in a future that one does not and cannot control.

Similarly, relegating hope to a time beyond time is to "deny humanity of its critical significance" for all the days spent here, this side of the end, in history (Moltmann, 1967:89).

Hope becomes presumption when there is a premature and voluntary anticipation of the fulfilment of what we should expect of God (Moltmann, 1996:67). It becomes despair when there is a premature and random eagerness of non-fulfilment of what is expected from God.

### 2.4.3. Hope: its *missio* and *promissio*

Moltmann (1967:112) suggests that Christian hope ought to be the principal inspiring element in the life and thought of both the church and that of each Christian. This is because the entire creation longs for restoration by the “God of Hope”. Empowered by this hope, the Christian response must consist, therefore, of active involvement in the mission of God or the *missio Dei*. Thus, the Christian community should be viewed as a community of hope that constantly experiences the promise of God or the *promissio Dei*. As it were, the entire story of Israel is a unique historical pilgrimage as Israel is confronted by the God of promise (Moltmann, 1967:112). Israel’s entire identity is in light of the promises of God.

From this context, Moltmann (1967:115–117) distinguishes the existence of the nature of the church from its essence in relation to the apocalyptic role of hope. For Moltmann, *existentially*, the nature of the church is *missio* and *essentially* it is hope. Thus, hope as the essential nature of the church is grounded in the *promissio Dei* because God is unchanging and, thus, reliable. The *missio Dei* is, therefore, shaped by and grounded in the *promissio Dei*. The *promissio Dei* is equally permanent and irreversible. In this regard, history is viewed as God’s active involvement in human affairs in the light of the *promissio Dei* since the actual *promissio Dei* is Jesus Christ himself. In brief, the existence of hope is in *time* – grounded in the *missio Dei*; the essence of hope lies in eternity – grounded in the *promissio Dei*. This explains why Moltmann speaks of both the resurrection and the future of the messiah in the light of promise and hope (Moltmann, 1967:220). That is, the *promissio* of God’s inclusive kingdom is the basis of His *missio* of hope to the world (Moltmann, 1967:124). Thus, Christian theology is nothing else but a theology of hope and, as such, it starts with eschatology – a moving activity within the memory of God’s past and present, climaxing in the life, death and resurrection of the messiah. This indicates that Moltmann (1971:43) understands YHWH as a God who promises.

At the heart of Moltmann’s *Theology of Hope* is, therefore, the truth about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Moltmann argues that this event, so unique in history, is the highest expression of the *agapé*, and the greatest evidence of God’s faithfulness in His *promissio*. The

resurrection of Jesus Christ is the divine manifestation of God's faithfulness, which presents pointers to humanity's patient waiting in active expectation of something that is beyond past and present experiences (Moltmann, 1967:126; see also Keshgegian, 2006:83). However, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not the end of the *promissio*; it simply declares that the meaning of Christ is to be found in the future. For that reason, when one looks to the resurrected Christ, one is inspired by hope and expects the realisation of the *promissio Dei* (Moltmann, 1967:128). Thus, what the humanity already knows about the resurrected Christ is an assurance of the wealth of what will be revealed, which draws believers towards active involvement in the *missio Dei* in order to bring the world within the same *promissio Dei*.

For Moltmann (1967:127), the *promissio Dei* is more significant than the fact that He had acted in the past. This does not, however, indicate withdrawal from the world but active participation to assist in the coming of the better world (Moltmann, 1996:119). In other words, humanity has a role to play in the emergence of the better world. That is to say, hope for improved wellbeing does not imply folding arms and waiting in passivity. In this respect, Moltmann (1967:122) finds that having faith in the resurrection of the crucified Jesus is essentially having hope for the future of humanity and the whole of creation in line with the *promissio Dei*. Thus, the *promissio Dei* is the driving force of history, which produces hope and makes the church to be "a constant disturbance in human society... in the light of the promised future that is to come".

Moltmann (1967:127) further argues that when hope is born out of the work of the cross and established on the accomplished event of the resurrection, it is equipped to transform the negative and tormenting aspects of the world into terms of the utopian 'Not-Yet' without resulting in nothingness. That is to say, the *promissio Dei* is characteristically universal and leads to yet another characteristically universal *missio Dei* (Moltmann, 1967:125). In the same line of thought, Kuruvilla Pandikattu (2005:v, vi) finds that "hope means to depart, to walk on insecure terrain, to dare for the unknown, guided by the still voice within urging us forward". In this regard, the consequential necessity of hope here is "the readiness to pass through the desert" as Pandikattu (2005:vi) observes. This is indicative of the fact that hope is the inner strength that takes humanity out of the known and makes it walk through the unknown towards the promised future like Abram of old "because the challenge is bound to a promise" (Pandikattu, 2005:vi).

Moltmann (1967:223) posits that if God's kingdom begins with a renovated creation, then it could be said that the Creator ex-nihilo has reconciled the prospects of eschatology to the entire creation. The horizon within which the resurrection becomes known as such is therefore that of *promissio* and *missio*. This provides pointers to the future of the Resurrected One and the future of his lordship – both within such horizon of the mission of the church (Moltmann 1967:126; also see Pandikattu, 2005:14). Christian faith that is not grounded on the resurrection event is neither Christian nor faith. It is the knowledge of the risen Lord and confession to the One who raised him from the dead, which is the basis of the message of the gospel. Such recognition of the risen Christ makes the church understand the *missio Dei* and its commission to the world in line with the inclusive hope of the universal *promissio Dei* (Moltmann, 1967:123; see also Moltmann, 1996:89). Thus, human hope is coexistent with God's promise.

Moreover, Moltmann (1967:35) observes that true present is nothing else but the eternity that is inherent in time. He finds that what matters the most is to observe the substance that is immanent in temporality, and the eternal that is present in the *kairos*. In this way, Christian eschatology could be a sterile form of theologising if all that is said about hope is not put into action. Both creative thinking and active involvement spring from the life of faith; they cannot take place without new planning that springs from hope. Hope put into action is necessary in our dealings with the things and conditions of this world. In the Christian life, faith has 'priority' but hope has 'primacy' (Moltmann 1967:33). In view of this, Moltmann (1967:36) asserts that without faith, hope becomes a "utopia zooming into the void" but, without hope, faith withers and becomes "a little bit of faith", and finally "a dead faith". Thus, entering the *promissio Dei* means accepting reality not only as divinely stabilised but also as a story in which progress is needed – a story that requires to leave the past behind and embrace new horizons (Moltmann, 1967:124, 125). If the God of the Exodus proved to be 'the same', it is because He was faithful to His *promissio*.

In this regard, the *promissio Dei* is an apocalyptic reality; that is, a reality of the future that has been revealed in the present, and in which we live. It indicates that the expected future will not necessarily develop in the framework of the possibilities inscribed in the present (Moltmann, 1967:127). It will spring from what is possible in the *promissio Dei*. This may even be something that seems impossible according to the standards of the present experience.

The *promissio* binds humanity to the future and its sensitivity to history. It does not devise sensitivity to world history in general, or the historicity of human existence in itself but, rather, it binds man to the very history of the *promissio*. The future of it is not void of a possible transformation result, and the hope it awakens is not open to the future in general (Moltmann, 1967:128; see also 1996:23). This is the promised fulfilment that makes possible and determines the future that it establishes. That is to say, the God whom the Bible reveals is the one who keeps calling humanity forward in active hope. He is the God who invites people to detach themselves from the memories that bind them to the past and pleads with us to refute a human condition established on the absence of hope.

As it were, faith, hope and love are known as the theological triad. Faith trusts in God and in what He has made known. Love is a reciprocal union with God, which begins here and now but culminates in the life to come. Hope is an expression of faith and love by which one longs for the kingdom of heaven and trusts in the *promissio Dei*. Despair is, therefore, the contrast of God's goodness and mercy. It should be noted that *missio Dei* is not fundamentally an activity organised by a local church but a specific attribute characterising the very nature of God. Here, the church is a divine movement toward the world and, therefore, an instrument of God's purpose. In this sense, the church exists because there is *missio Dei*. Thus, *missio Dei* is shaped by the *promissio Dei*; that is, the promise of God is the basis of the divine mission to the world. In this regard, it appears that our hope for improved wellbeing is essentially God's *promissio*.

Like the *missio Dei*, the *promissio Dei* entails God's current involvement in the affairs of humanity. It is God's sovereign irruption in the public sphere. Thus, the *promissio Dei* comes to us as the *missio Dei*, which suggests God's participatory involvement in our everyday life to make out of the hopeless humanity a *nova creatio*. This indicates that the eschatological form of the *promissio Dei* remains the basis for human hope, which is why one of the essential ends of the *missio Dei* is arguably to empower the human race with hope. Thus, it is because of the *promissio Dei* that hope for humanity is a divine promise.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, one would argue here that the *promissio Dei* calls for an empowerment by hope consciousness, which is nurtured by radical obedience as one seeks to cherish diversity within humanity. This is because the awareness of the promise

of God is the basis of any theological premise. Thus, it is through the *promissio Dei* that the *missio Dei* ably nurtures within the social order a better interpretation and sounder knowledge of what it means to be human. In other words, the *promissio Dei* is the eschatological basis of the *missio Dei*. Empowerment by hope is, therefore, a gospel of the *promissio Dei* and the lens through which the church is to interpret current eschatological events in our society. Through the *promissio Dei*, an empowerment by hope consciousness leads to an understanding that to be human is to be vulnerable and fragile; to be human is to be a relational being; to be human is to be horizontally and vertically dependent – that is, depending upon the God of the promise and upon the relational need for one another. In this way, an empowerment by hope consciousness frees both the self and the other from a deceptive anthropology of exclusivism, individualism and isolation, which presumes that to be completely human is to be in this world devoid of the need for the *promissio Dei* or the individual other. Nevertheless, it is due to the *promissio Dei* that the *missio Dei* makes empowerment by hope an eschatological tool for holistic development, which frees the social order from the explicit and implicit forms of dehumanisation and exclusion of or discrimination against those in situations of vulnerability.

#### 2.4.4. Hope: its essence and existence

By its association with love, hope is freed from selfishness, finds Moltmann (1967:132). This explains why “hope cannot exist apart from faith, and love cannot be exercised without hope” because the three abide (Moltmann, 1967:133; cf. 1 Corinthians, 13:13). In this same vein, Bultmann and Rengstorf (1963:34) observe that hope, like faith and love, is based on “the corresponding attitude towards God”. Several scriptural passages soften hope with a ‘profane sense’ of expecting or reckoning (Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:33; Tasker, 1962:536). Bultmann and Rengstorf (1963:34, 35) further observe that “[i]f hope is fixed on God, it comprises just three elements combined in one: expectation of what is to come, confidence [in God’s future] and patience in waiting”.

As it were, in Romans 8:24, 25 Paul defines hope in an inquisitive form arguing that it is “an attitude directed to the future”, and that it is spoken of if non-existent in the present (cf. Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:35). However, hope is confident trust in God because it “rests on God’s act of salvation effected in Christ” (Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:36). This hopeful confidence is a kind of trust that takes someone away from the world (Bultmann & Rengstorf,

1963:37). Thus, non-Christians can have a picture of life after death but not confidence in the future. In this regard, a Christian “can never be conceived as perfect apart from [hope]” (Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:38).

Realities such as suffering, poverty and illnesses are not taken away by faith alone (Moltmann 1967:19). The interrelation of hope and faith is a bit more complex. Kincaid and Pecorino (2005:126, 127) provide pointers to emerging arguments in this regard. They find that some would claim (i) they have faith because they have hope, others would say (ii) they have faith because they need hope, still others would argue that (iii) they have hope because they have faith, and others could even say (iv) they have hope because they need faith. All those assertions appear justifiable in various contexts, which is why Ortega (2001:161, 162) argues that hope is the nursery of faith and ought to be celebrated within the context of faith. Human beings are often tempted to “curse God, and die” when faced with circumstances such as poverty, injustice, wars and any other form of suffering (cf. Job 2:9). In this way, the revolutionary aspect of hope is a struggle for peace in the face of life’s challenges – a struggle that makes faith a realisable possibility. Here, the faith-hope coherence is not a diversion from reality but a confirmation that militant attitude is required in the face of life’s prevailing challenges. Thus, Ortega (2001:162) finds that such attitude albeit militant is to be in solidarity with the poor and the marginalised and all those who find themselves in situations of any form of injustice, marginalisation and/or vulnerability.

In agreement with Moltmann, Hryniewicz (2007:9) observes that both essential and existential natures of hope are universal because hope “lives in all and is for all”. Thus, the relevance of hope has to do with “the common human experience of suffering and the dangers [of despair] that it brings forth” (Hryniewicz, 2007:68). This consolidates Moltmann’s (1996:42) argument that the universality of hope makes it a quality of life that no social group can claim its rightful ownership. Similarly, Bielawski (2007:284) finds that hope is experienced from within and reaches the depths of human soul, which is best explained from the twin context of essence and existence.

In a similar vein, Heszler (2005:91) argues that hope has two features: a subject and a root, which represent its existential feature and its essential feature respectively. When someone hopes for something to happen in the near or far future, what he/she hopes for is the

*subject* of hope although its outcome remains uncertain. In spite of the uncertainty of the subject of hope, the hoper is always hopeful and expectant, which is a deep sentiment that stems from “our inner core” (Heszler 2005:91). This, Heszler calls the *root* of hope because it cannot be identified – it is hidden within. Heszler’s “subject of hope” is existential and subjective while his “root of hope” is essential and objective. Simply put, the essence of hope is objective and the existence of hope is subjective. These two (i.e. essence and existence) are the contexts in which lies the nature of hope. One could contend, however, that, in this case, hope presupposes desire. That is to say, for something to be hoped for, it ought to be both desired and desirable. This implies that, that which is not desirable cannot be desired; and that which is not desired cannot be hoped for but feared or hated. Thus, the hoped-for is within attainable possibility, which makes hope and desire a coherent pair. A human being may always desire even though he/she knows he/she cannot get what he/she desires. That hope is within impossibility. It is not true hope.

Daley (1991:48) takes Moltmann’s concept further and explains the essence and existence of hope thus: hope has a maximal “essential polarity” and a minimal “existential polarity”. For him, this means that hope more directly corresponds to the tension and effort of existence towards essence. Therefore, hopelessness is a feeling that most people experience even though for varied reasons (Moltmann, 1967:23; see also Hryniewicz, 2007:9). Such a feeling should prompt a deeper reflection on the foundations and role of hope in humanity, which solidifies the assertion by Moltmann (1971:64) according to which there is no universal criterion that can enable appraisals of the dynamics of hope. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to come up with a concrete theory of hope from human assessments but appropriate to deduce that “Christians are not the only people of hope” as Hryniewicz (2007:9) argues because “[h]ope lives in all and is for all” (Moltmann, 1967:67). As it were, hope is so essential that, with it, humanity is able to build friendship and communion and productively “contribute to the transformation of the world” (Hryniewicz 2007:15).

Moltmann (1969:78) suggests a dialogue between secularists and ecclesiastics in order to bring both secular and religious perspectives of hope into action for the sole purpose of promoting human dignity. The context of this dialogue is peace, which indicates that hope and peace are two sides of the same coin. In this regard, Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov (1986:6), in his *L’égrogore de la Colombe*, argues that peace, like hope, needs to be primarily “installed”

in the self, by oneself. This means, for hope to be established, peace needs to be rooted in one's actions (body), feelings (soul), and thoughts (mind). However, humanity cannot establish peace if we continue feeding ourselves "with all the germs" of political and socio-economic conflicts "which are the desires of possession and poorly controlled domination" (Aïvanhov, 1986:102). Inasmuch as a person does not decide to intervene in the battlefield of his/her disordered thoughts and feelings, he/she can never build around himself/herself lasting peace (Aïvanhov, 1986:103).

It is worth noting that hope, whether secular or religious, is linked to human survival, and its implementation is consistent with human co-existence. This further explains the need for, in this context, refugee migrants and the South African local citizenry to cohabit as one human community. This is why Eric Fromm (2005:1) maintains there are three dimensions of human hope: critical hope, creative hope and concrete hope. Fromm's dimensions of human hope are in concurrence with Moltmann's paradigms of hope in that they make the goal of development agents that of fostering and deepening true hope for improved wellbeing. Moltmann (1967:123) takes that further by establishing that human life is motivated and activated by the hope of God's promise – the *promissio Dei*. This means, what is already known of Christ assures humanity of the wealth of that which is yet to be known and draws us onward in confident search, and in active mission to bring the world within the same divine promise. In this context, Moltmann (1967:126) finds that eschatology is not to be seen as the last chapter in a theology textbook but the perspective from which all else is to be understood and given its proper meaning. This is because eschatology is the key or central concept from which everything else in Christian thought is set.

## 2.5. Conclusion

The African context requires an emphasis on hope than ever before. Hope is, in reality, the dream of Africa today. This means hope for economic growth and improved wellbeing. In this vein, the writer of Hebrews (cf. Hebrews 10:23) indicates the duty we have with regard to hope: holding fast onto it. In other words, humanity is to embrace the resilience of hope; to get fast hold of it, and keep that hold against all opposing odds. Here, it appears that there are forces that snatch hope out of the hoper but one is encouraged to hold onto hope unshakably and without reservations, without doubts, without being enticed to give up.

This is both a warning and reassurance – that those who begin to swerve in their practice of hope are in danger of succumbing to the challenges of this despondent society while those who hold fast onto hope will remain unshakable in the face of challenging odds. The survival of refugee migrants is assured by holding onto the practice of hope without being enticed to give up because, for them, putting hope into action is a practical approach to life for continued existence in a hosting country. In this way, refugee migrants who begin to swerve in their practice of hope get frustrated even more and things fall apart for them the worst way. The motive or reason enforcing the duty of holding onto hope unswervingly and the need to put it into practice in the everyday is the persuasion that “he who promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23b).

In this chapter, I delved into the theories of hope from a complete set of the social continuum in an attempt to understand its main premises. I evaluated selected works from three classic works of genius by scholars from different academic disciplines, namely philosophy, pedagogy and theology. Such review of literature presented a solid ground to the thematic consideration of hope as recapped below.

For Ernst Bloch, hope is idealistic. That is, it is utopian and principled. Bloch rejects the claims that utopia is a “non-existent island”. For him, utopia is rather the personal determination to achieve the imaginary, which is the goal of human hope. Bloch spoke for the masses, farm workers and middle class. His philosophy of hope is of utter relevance in this study since it is essentially geared toward the need for social transformation and improved wellbeing. His theory of utopia extends the possibility of hope since, for him, “imaginary” does not necessarily mean “impossible”. I divided the Blochian thought on hope in two main parts: the source of idealistic hope and the function of idealistic hope. The source is either *dystopia* or *eutopia*. The function is either reactionary or revolutionary. When sourced from dystopia, idealistic hope is either passive or abstract. When sourced from eutopia, idealistic hope is either active or concrete. Thus, the *source* of hope influences the *nature* of hope. When abstract (that is, when its source is dystopia), the nature of idealistic hope is *reactionary*. When concrete (that is, when its source is eutopia), idealistic hope is *revolutionary* by nature.

For Paulo Freire, hope is liberalistic. It is a necessary didactic tool for building critical consciousness, confronting dehumanisation tendencies, and engaging in dialogue. In this regard, a pedagogy that achieves critical consciousness gives hope to those for whom shame

and pain happen to be their daily experience. The underlying Freirean philosophy of education is, therefore, as follows: the purpose of education is to allow people to become subjects rather than objects, to control their own destiny rather than be the victims of the desires of social processes of others. Freire used literacy classes as a way to raise critical consciousness. For him, the poor and marginalised are the victims of social pressures and relationship, which explains why he was committed to bring hope for social change rather than individual progress. I divided the Freirean thought in three sections through which I discussed exhaustively the thrust of his discourse on hope: (i) humanisation, in which Freire highlights that hope has the power to break the cycle of oppression and to humanise both the oppressor and the oppressed; (ii) conscientização, which is about raising awareness or nurturing a critical consciousness that has the power to transform reality – and it is hope that serves as a powerful tool to achieve that critical consciousness; (iii) dialogue, which involves mutual respect, mutual understanding and mutual transformation. It is not one person acting *on* another; it is rather people working *with* each other – which is a good praxis informed by hope.

For Jürgen Moltmann, hope is eschatological. His eschatological concept of hope is here studied from an apocalyptic or revealed perspective. Hope, for him, is best understood within the bounds of the life of Christ, particularly with reference to his resurrection and his future. I divided Moltmann’s thought on hope into four dualisms. (i) The realised and the fulfilled where – realised hope is present-focused; that is, we experience it in time (here and now), and fulfilled hope is heaven-bound; that is, we will achieve it in eternity (when time ends). (ii) The objective and the subjective: here hope finds its objectivity in Christ who is “the hope of glory”, and it is subjective when it is grounded on the persuasions of a human being. (iii) The essential and the existential: here the essential nature of hope is objectively divine while its existential nature is subjectively human, as well as (iv) its *missio* and its *promissio* where it was emphasised that the *promissio Dei* is the basis for which the *missio Dei* is carried out as God’s participatory involvement in the public sphere. Thus, without the *promissio Dei*, there is no *missio Dei* and without both, there is no empowerment by hope. In brief, the church is to be seen as a gathering of people who experience hope in the God who is present in His promises.

This chapter pointed out that hope gives a new lease of life to fading ambitions and propels the hopeless self to find meaning in life. The various conceptions of hope reviewed in this chapter are indicative of the many dynamics of the subject under investigation. These

dynamics need to be contextualised to be actuated efficiently. The next chapter highlights some of the contexts in which hope is applied; that is, the *when* (temporal context) and the *where* (spatial context) of the practice of hope as per the existing literature.

## Chapter 3 – The Dynamic Contexts of Hope

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I had learned that every patient has the right to hope despite long odds;  
and it was my role to help nurture that hope.  
Omniscience about life and death is not within a physician purview.  
A doctor should never write off a person *a priori*.

~ Jerome Groopman

# Chapter 3 – The Dynamic Contexts of Hope

## A focus on Brueggemann, Botman, and Groopman

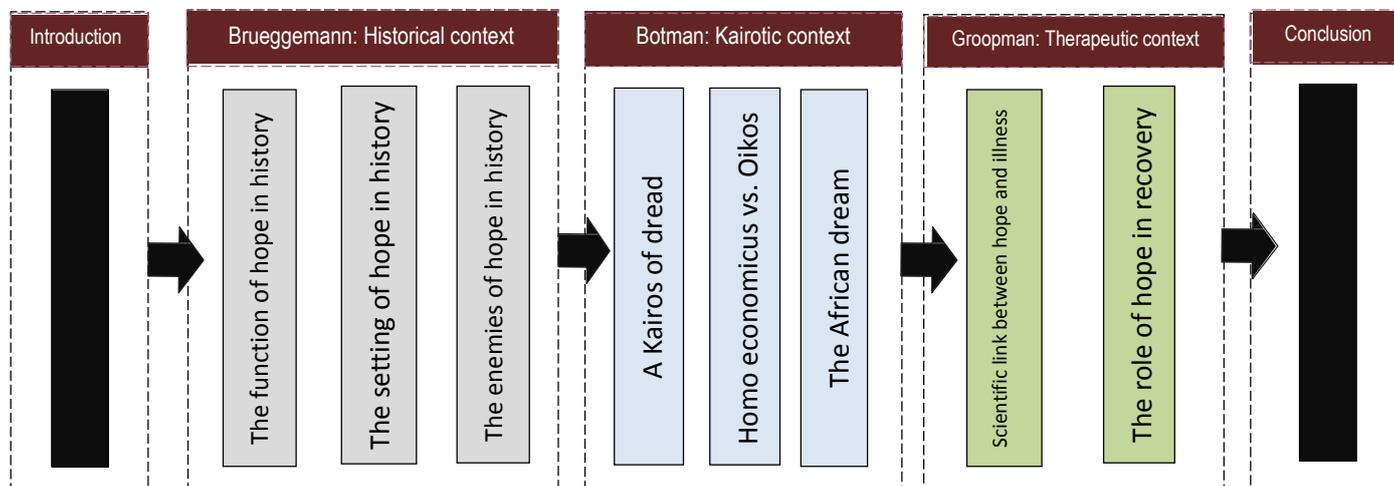


Figure 3: Chapter 3 Road map

### 3.1. Introduction

As briefly discussed in Section 2.4.4, hope is a basic part of the theological triad. Faith and love, the other constituents of the triad, form the theological context within which hope ought to be explored. This means, as a natural human need, the pre-eminence of hope is of universal relevance. This universality verifies Emil Brunner’s (in Livingston, 1986:464) remark that “what oxygen is for the lungs, such is hope for the meaning of human life”, to which James Livingston (1986:464) adds: “without hope there can be no openness to a future”. Simply put, when deprived of hope the future remains a closed possibility. Its horizon requires, therefore, opening up.

The previous chapter focused on the conceptual perspectives of hope as theorised in *The Principle of Hope* by Ernst Bloch, *Theology of Hope* by Jürgen Moltmann and *Pedagogy of Hope* by Paulo Freire. This chapter now shifts from the theory of conceptualisation to that of contextualisation. The purpose of the chapter is to review insightfully a number of contexts in which the perspectives of hope apply as maintained by some leading scholars. Here, I attempt to explore the contextuality of hope from the historical, kairotic and therapeutic perspectives

in line with the writings of Walter Brueggemann, Russel Botman and Jerome Groopman respectively. The aim of such an exploratory review is to establish practically a number of contexts within which hope is rightly applied.

## 3.2. Walter Brueggemann and the historical context of hope

The collocation of hope and history creates a major problem both in theology and in the Christian faith with reference to believing and not believing (Brueggemann, 1987:1). Brueggemann compares this collocation to the Christological ‘formula’ of Jesus as being truly God and truly human and points out that greater is the temptation to separate hope from history. Such temptation leads to a religious hope detached from the realities of time (i.e. history), which is compactly attached to despair “because the process itself delivers no lasting victories for the participants” (Brueggemann, 1987:3). For this reason, the historical interactive activities of God are evident in His “powerful hope-filled purposes” because God’s hope within history is proclaimed triumphantly (Brueggemann, 1987:1).<sup>62</sup>

Hence, the juxtaposition of hope and history is biblically sound because the context of “hope in history, hope through history, and hope beyond history (but not hope from history)” are pressing issues in the world today as Brueggemann (1987:5) observes. In this regard, the power of hope in the biblical texts lies in (i) its *function*, (ii) its *setting* and (iii) its *enemies* (Brueggemann, 1987:90). With regard to its function, hope keeps the present open, provisional and under scrutiny. With regard to its setting, the power of hope is manifest amid those living in situation of despair and grief to give them a desired future. With regard to its enemies, which are fear and inactivity, they signal “ways of trying to keep life on our own terms” (Brueggemann, 1987:19).

### 3.2.1. The function of hope in history

A human being lives in time although eternally purposed owing to the fact that hope is historical. As Tinder (1999:77) finds, hope is a way of thinking in time and living in time in

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<sup>62</sup> Within a culture presently shaped by values of hopelessness, Walter Brueggemann (2001) finds the resources for historical hope – a hope that challenges despondency and despair. He argues that individuals and churches can grow even when at odds with their social context, then he addresses the theological question of how we experience hope in our historical-biblical context (Brueggemann, 2001:6). He also provides a model for faith development based on human understanding of hope within history as set forth in the biblical narrative.

anticipation of things beyond time. Such are things we desire above all else but which we cannot fully comprehend. The time-based context of hope (or hope in history) becomes a mystery in view of the fact that its function bridges the gap between things known and those unknown. According to Brueggemann (1987:79), this explains why the church is not the only relevant context of historical hope, particularly, in view of the fact that hope is a symbol of humanity. In this regard, the mission of the 21<sup>st</sup> century church may to confess “hope in action” (cf. Botman, 2001). This is attributable to anxiety emanates from three sources: guilt (condemnation), fate (death) and meaninglessness (despair). Brueggemann (2001) observes that the time we are living in resonates particularly with the meaninglessness or despair. Only hope reassures humanity that life in time has eternal significance and that people have unending worth in history regardless of their sense of guilt/condemnation, fate/death or meaninglessness/despair.

### 3.2.1.1. The function of hope in guilt

Many people are burdened by guilt from their past and need hope to keep going (Brueggemann, 2001:5). Because of their guilt feeling, some people resort to using and/or abusing substances such as drugs and alcohol while others resolve to uncharacteristic habits like pornography and gambling to escape the guilt that afflicts them. Arguably, this situation is characteristic of many refugee migrants who left their respective countries of origin to settle in the country of their asylum and, because of the sufferings experienced, resort to various forms of abuses hoping to find comfort. They need hope to function amid their feeling of guilt and condemnation. They need hope to be free from guilt and shame because hope is expedient to this troubled world. Its function in guilt is a divine public statement and a deep assurance that both the past and the future are within the purposeful wisdom of God. Recognising such prevailing purpose of God in life entails understanding the reality of human lived experiences. As such, Brueggemann (2001:18) understands hope as an evangelical antidote to despair. It cannot be experienced or even put into practice delightedly without “an ecclesial sense of vulnerability” made by the truth of the cross.

It is possible to feel guilty when one is not actually guilty (Brueggemann, 2001:5). This is the case for many Christians. One may feel guilty for having sinned in the past (that is, before they got saved – no matter how recent or distant that may be) but in the eyes of God, one is not guilty since Christ took away the guilt in exchange with his righteousness. Nevertheless, the

feeling of guilt leads to change. Like physical pain, it is, however, not a goal. It is simply an avenue or passage, through which one passes to get to a level of change.

The situation of despair caused by guilt has its roots deeply grounded in the spiritual crisis, which manifests itself socially, economically and politically in this new global era (Brueggemann, 2001:7). Hope is, in this regard, a dimension of emergency and particular relevance. Christian believers have the vocation to act in resilient hope despite existing circumstances of guilt and shame. Thus, humanity has the threefold obligation to (i) name the source of its hope, (ii) renew hope to the hopeless, and (iii) act in its own way to restore or rebuild the perspectives of common life in the society (Brueggemann, 2001:43). There is hope in guilt despite the causation of the guilt. The function of hope in guilt is to bring peace and reconciliation with the self and the other for there is no condemnation for those who are Christ's.

### 3.2.1.2. The function of hope in fate

There is a need to enable both the poor and the development agents to affirm life with a different attitude. That is a utopian dimension. Hope could be celebrated because the daily suffering of the poor presents a new urgency of the Christian message. This urgency brings out the joy of a life devoted to the struggle against the causes of such suffering. The fact that death has encountered many because of poverty makes it possible to find deeper meaning in the resurrection of Christ. Thus, for the poor, joy springs up due to the hope that death is not the last word in history (Brueggemann, 2002:48). Such hopeful utopian conviction is a reason for celebration; it requires active involvement in the community.

As it were, the hope found in the resurrection of Christ does not mean a flight from actual history; rather, it functions within history and points to renewed determinations to fight against that which is unjust (Brueggemann, 2001:58; see also Moltmann, 1971:43). This observation agrees with that of Ortega (2001:55) that belief in the resurrection of Christ cannot coexist with the acceptance of a society that condemns the poor to death. The church, therefore, is a gathering of a hopeful people in solidarity.

### 3.2.1.3. The function of hope in meaninglessness

When Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, he had in abundance everything the heart could desire: money, power, wives, materials, etc. but he did not have inner peace and satisfaction. All for him was meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 1:2, 3). In Ecclesiastes, Solomon provides pointers to a few things that are meaningless when considered from the limited point of view of “under the sun”. He finds that under the sun or without God, human wisdom is meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 2:14-16), work is meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 2:18-23), life itself is meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 3:18-22), power and authority are both meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 4:16), wealth is meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 6:1, 2), and even religion is meaningless (cf. Ecclesiastes 8:10-14).

Considering that everything in this world is empty and vain – void of meaning or “a chasing after the wind” (cf. Ecclesiastes 1:14) how should humanity live in order to make sense of this meaninglessness? Solomon indicates that the only thing left to do in order to make sense of this meaninglessness while still “under the sun” is to “fear God and keep His commandments” (Ecclesiastes 12:13), which is made possible when one puts his/her complete hope in God. In this regard, the purpose of God for humanity is hope-filled, and it operates visibly and actively in the process of historical interaction (Brueggemann 1987:1, 2). As such, Brueggemann (2002:34) alludes that hope is a triumphant proclamation of God affirmed and discerned within history. However, history implies personal interactions that include hurting and healing.

Here hope is seen as a resilient conviction that the processes of historical interaction are to be understood in relation to some overriding purpose that prevails in odd but uncompromising ways (Brueggemann, 1987:2, 3). Attaining such a prevailing purpose of God for humanity in history requires seriousness of the reality of human experience and the resilience of these overriding claims that seem to pre-empt experience. The function of hope in an individual’s quest for meaning is, therefore, evidenced by the action of the hoper. There is renewed hope in the face of a collapsed system. In this regard, the solution to meaninglessness is hope.

Moreover, Brueggemann (1987) argues that the tendency to separate hope from history is to deny humanity of its existential prospects. As such, religious hope should not detach itself

from the historical realities because “history preludes enduring triumphs” as Brueggemann (1987:3) notes. In other words, a “historyless hope” is akin to a “hopeless history” (Brueggemann, 1987:3). Thus, both a hope that does not depend on any historical account and a history that does not offer hope are a perfect betrayal of the Christian faith and the biblical concept of hope.

### 3.2.2. The setting of hope in history

Brueggemann’s interpretation of historical hope indicates that hope is active in history. The setting of hope in our time indicates that the church encounters “a new context for ministry and an opportunity for mission” (Brueggemann, 2001:7). This is indicated by hopelessness, which is usually shared by both the poor and the rich, although the miscarriage of hope strikes different groups of people in different circumstances and very differently. This situation of hopelessness, extremely entrenched in spiritual crisis, unveils itself economically, politically, and even militarily in the globalisation of affluence that concedes substantial concentrations of power and resources as well as substantial deficiencies and deprivations (Brueggemann, 2001:7).

Such a setting of hope calls for the old notions of mission that are deeply soaked with philosophies of dominance to be defined anew to facilitate “congruity between older triumphalist notions of mission and newer modes of globalisation” (Brueggemann, 2001:7). It indicates that hope, as an evangelical therapy for despair, cannot be applied successfully unless it involves “an ecclesial sense of vulnerability, formed by the truth of the cross as an ecclesial marking” (Brueggemann, 2001:7). For this reason, hope is deeply entrenched in “old sources” (Brueggemann, 2001:13) even in this new century. The category of despair-hope is a kind of mutuality that is relevant to the new problems confronting the church now, which demands careful attention.

#### 3.2.2.1. The setting of hope in “old sources”: Jeremiah, a prophet of hope

There are dominant themes that contribute to Old Testament hope such as the Exodus and the conquest accounts (Brueggemann, 2002:43). As it were, it is migration or life on the move that influenced Israel’s march to a ‘better future’, which is the Promised Land. The Exodus account speaks of God’s power to rescue from exile, the renewal of the gracious relationship with Him, and the conquest of all enemies that would unsettle the land. The conquest accounts recall the

indissoluble tie between the people and the land, and the unbreakable terms on which the land could be retained along the lines of the unifying theme of divine kingship, which is the core of the context of hope in Old Testament sources.

There are numerous expressions of hope in the Old Testament either with regard to the covenant or with regard to judgement (Brueggemann, 1987:65). With regard to the covenant, barely anything more firmly underscores its historical nature. The covenant concept dominates Israel's hope by uniting its past and its future, and the climax of that future is expressed more than once in the simplest covenant formula: "I will be their God; they will be my people" (cf. Hosea 1:10; 2:23; etc.). Thus, a tendency to move "from nearer hope to farther hope" is discernible in the course of prophetic history – without a diminution of certainty (Brueggemann, 2001:43). As hope is deferred, the various themes that shaped that hope converge.

This is especially true in the latter part of Isaiah, where many of the earlier traditions of the Exodus, Moses, David, Zion and the new creation are combined. In Daniel, we see both the deferring of hope and the combining of its many themes – including the theme of wisdom. The combining of themes and deferring of hope while maintaining its intensity in history's bleak hours is part of the very genius of apocalypse (Brueggemann, 2001:43; see also Moltmann, 1996:56). There is considerable evidence that the return from exile had for a time, at least, a dampening effect on Israel's hope. The superlative descriptions of the return were not immediately fulfilled. The circumstances in Judah and Jerusalem stood in plain contrast to the pre-exilic period, let alone to the promised future glory.

With regard to the judgement, the prophets placed the whole concept of hope in a new light: the light of the judgement, the cleavage of the community, the sin of the people and the holiness of God (cf. Brueggemann, 2001:12). For the best of Israel, judgement and hope were inextricably tied together. Judgement was essential for renewal. The tie between judgement and hope was surely the holy love of God because judgement itself was an expression of divine compassion. The men and women of Israel could hold to hope beyond judgement. The judgement itself was part of hope since its purpose was grace. This is indicative of the fact that true hope can come only when false hope is crushed.

Most prophets expressed prophetic hope. As an authority in Old Testament studies, Brueggemann (1987:32–37) points out that hope features outstandingly throughout the Old Testament. The book of Jeremiah, for example, is a map of hope for those in despair; that is, the exiles in Babylon and even the refugee migrants today. He finds that the texts of Jeremiah speak of painful lived experiences of refugee migrants in Babylon. The explanatory community of Jeremiah organises systematically the ethical and emblematic chaos into forms that are orderly and reasonably controllable. Jeremiah shifts away from basic geopolitical powers to a God whose resolves are ultimately redemptive and salvific. These geopolitical powers are forces that connote bereavement. Jeremiah presents a pathway to hope that is completely at variance with the established situation.

In popular assessment, Jeremiah is often remembered as “the weeping prophet” but he is the prophet through whom the message of hope for the rebirth of Israel came to the fore (Brueggemann, 2001:8). His purchase of the field of Anathoth (cf. Jeremiah 32) after his letter to the exiles, which was calculated to give them “a future and a hope” (cf. Jeremiah 29:11), marks him as the symbol of all those who would return. Although it is true that from Jeremiah there is nothing like the sustained sequence of prophetic promises and assurances as those in Isaiah 40-55, there is, nevertheless, a remarkable message of hope founded on the nature and purpose of God declared to Judah in a time of nightmare, horror and desolation (Brueggemann, 1987:34). It is as if Jeremiah had looked into the abyss of Judah’s total ruin and destruction and had then, almost in contradiction of his own feelings of despair, heard God’s word of hope given to him in the very hour of deepest darkness.

With regard to the setting of hope from the old sources, the book of Jeremiah is one of the good examples because it is primarily a book of hope. Brueggemann (1987:21) further observes that, generally, the book of Jeremiah is often associated with doom rather than hope and, when one is asked to identify its main themes, hope is usually the last to be pointed out, if at all. Thus, many people see Jeremiah merely as a “weeping prophet”; a prophet of doom and gloom, shame and despair, and that his utterances or writings seldom imply “hope” to them. This is because Jeremiah’s utterances comprise a greater literary context of sin and judgment. Nevertheless, Brueggemann (1987:25) finds that there is little doubt that the setting of the book of Jeremiah expresses new life and hope beyond disaster. Thus, the central message of Jeremiah is hope rather than doom. Jeremiah moves beyond human displacement and catastrophe to

homecoming and restoration. Thus, there is the need to create a world in which survivors can find hope through the figure of Jeremiah who is “a survivor of disaster” (cf. Brueggemann, 1987).

Such a world calls for the need to exploit the sources of creativity, generosity and endurance to go further (cf. Brueggemann, 2001). That is to say, we need to go beyond pragmatic, political structures that are based on a lack of trust and common feeling, and seek to establish a truly peaceful society where there is not only an absence of violence and/or the threat of it but also a common sense of stability, welfare and opportunity. Brueggemann (2001:13) finds that this begins with a commitment to listen truly to one another, then resolving to work together so that generations to come would thrive in a new society that is truly at peace. The promise of the resurrection remains exceptional. It introduces a tension between what is already there, which is manifest in the resurrection of Christ, and not – even as the promise of the resurrection opens a future, which is yet to come. The revelation brought by the risen Lord is the basis for the setting of the Christian hope and cannot receive historical figure in the history that emerges.

In surveying the message of hope in Jeremiah, it is clear that the dramatic revelation, which came to the prophet with the purchase of the field of Hanamel (Jeremiah 32:1-15), marks the great turning point. In the hour of greatest crisis, when the human supports for hope appeared to have been swept away by the calamity that engulfed Judah in the years of 588-87 BC, Jeremiah became aware that the true ground for hope lies with God Himself. The city that human ambition had vainly brought to ruin could, nevertheless, be rebuilt and glorified through the grace of God.

When hope plays a role in the Old Testament, it usually emphasises not the unexpected blessing of God but the benefits of living within the divine order (Brueggemann, 2001:34). In Job, however, the nuances of the individual complaint are used, helping (as in Psalms and Lamentations) to account for intimations of hope in the midst of his poignant and voluminous complaining. Indeed, in the restoring of Job’s fortunes after his personal disaster, one might find parallel to a major theme in Old Testament eschatology – hope that follows suffering. The hope that Jeremiah embraces is not aimed at a return to one’s former “world” but it is meant for a new beginning, and new community defined by justice, obedience and inclusion (cf. Brueggemann, 1987).

### 3.2.2.2. The setting of hope in the church: a new context for ministry

Hope is a theological virtue that defines the context in which the church ministry is conducted (Brueggemann, 1987:34; see also Botman, 2001:42). Without hope ministry lacks its cutting edge because the very foundation of the gospel message is established on the truth of hope: Christ died and rose again. This truth is the defining mark of the Christian hope that those who die in Christ will rise again on the last day. This view of hope is critical for integral mission because it allows individual Christians to view the world and what is of the world with a new but hopeful eye.

As it were, evangelical churches have been only concerned, for so long, with the immaterial (or invisible) part of a human being at the expense of the material (or the visible), which contradicts the biblical command (Moltmann, 1967). This explains why the setting of hope as a new context for church ministry is an integral mission. Thus, empowerment by hope is a holistic perspective of the great commission – it is a holistic commission. In this way, hope is realistic in time. As such, hope constitutes a new context for church ministry because the church is a gathering of Christian believers united in hope for a better tomorrow. That is to say, the church is a community of the redeemed – an assembly of a people of hope.

### 3.2.2.3. The setting of hope in a believer: a new opportunity for mission

As it were, a Christian believer is essentially a hopeful being. This, in itself, sets a new context and opportunity for mission. The times we live in are so troubled; people losing their jobs, the stock market falling, natural catastrophes and uncertainty in what the future holds. In today's economy there is little to hope for with regard to the future (Brueggemann, 1987:32). Hope is the theological virtue by which one desires the kingdom of heaven and eternal life. This, one does by putting their trust in Christ's promises and relying not on human strengths but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Brueggemann (2001:24–29) develops the theme of hope with reference to the messianic hope of a Davidic king that was apparently dashed in the destruction of Jerusalem but then re-imagined with a grand expansion to include even the non-Israelite Cyrus. Jews and Christians may dispute about the identification of Jesus as Messiah but they both hope in the future coming of the Messiah and both should work together, and with God, for justice and peace in this world.

### 3.2.3. The enemies of hope in history

The capacity to hope is profoundly at issue in our society today in view of the fact that ours is a society in which hopelessness is prevalent and powerful. This is why Brueggemann (1987:90–94) points out that hope has enemies. The enemies of hope are forces that often delay hope and/or darken its prospects. Hopelessness as a social force is powerful because of such enemies of hope, which make despair a norm in our society today. Brueggemann (1987:90–94) finds that the power of hopelessness as a social force is exceptional because these enemies of hope are remarkably in alliance.

In addition, Brueggemann (1987:39) points out three categories of people who are overcome by fear and inactivity – the leading enemies of hope. These are (i) *the silent majority* (ii) *the vocal minority* and (iii) *the sponsored fellows*. Through these types of people, Brueggemann (1987:91) observes that fear works in alliance with inactivity to infuse despair in history. As a result, people tend to do “crazy, inhumane, and ruthless things in the world... publicly and domestically” (Brueggemann, 1987:91). Below, are details of these three types of persons (mostly human in the context presented below but they can also be moral) whom Brueggemann considers an embodiment of the enemies of historical hope.

#### 3.2.3.1. The silent majority

The first group of enemies of hope in history due to fear and inactivity are, according to Brueggemann (1987:91), the silent majority. These will never express their opinion publicly or take practical measures in dealing with the pressing issues. The silent majority are considered here as the enemy of hope because they always conform to the *status quo* and the normalcy of circumstances, however unethical. They are the enemies of hope because they tend to submit to an alternative voice than side with the others. Raymond Tallis (1997:63-65) refers to those belonging to this group as “the pathologisers of culture” and “the marginalisers of consciousness”. In other words, by not saying anything, the silent majority pathologises human culture and marginalises human consciousness. Their inactivity and fear renders the hope for progress in history, which is based upon the rational and conscious endeavours of a human being, dormant.

Brueggemann (1987:91) establishes that the historical context of hope is biblical and, thus, invitational. The historical context presents an alternative for putting into practice human

prospects and dreams through “a certain risky imagination” (Brueggemann, 1987:94), which requires the gathering around biblical texts of hope. It is in the same context of visualising some risky imaginations that we know the poor are not necessarily the enemies of hope. Most people regarded as poor in the community have different skills, which could be used for the benefit of all. It is in this regard that those we call “poor” often oppose, for instance, programmes that aim to control birth (i.e. family planning) not because it does not work for them but because they measure a successful life in terms of their progeny (cf. Brueggemann, 1987). Life is, therefore, their only mechanism for survival.

Here, family planning programmes are regarded unhelpful and understood in the negative because, for them, a sizeable family is akin to wealth and greater responsibility (cf. Brueggemann, 2001). The bigger the family is, the greater the responsibility would be. It is under the circumstances of a sizeable family, which, for them, is associated to wealth and greater responsibility, that the poor throw themselves in the revolution of hope as an essential act of praxis. It could be said, therefore, that, for the poor, familial joy is a praxis that births revolutionary hope. The challenge is that the silent majority is taciturn and chooses to maintain the *status quo*, however corrupt, which would cause familial joy and any revolutionary hope to recede.

### 3.2.3.2. The vocal minority

The vocal minority or affluent servants, as Brueggemann (1986:99) refers to them, is another group of people typifying the enemies of hope in history. These are satisfied with the standard of the *status quo* and fulfilled with the comfort of extravagance. The actions of a vocal minority are often against the historical reality that ensures a revolution of hope (cf. Brueggemann, 1987). Often the vocal minority does not work towards ensuring that social cohesion and shared aims are passed on to future generations.

This explains the need for revolutionary praxis so that humanity could “seek opportunities of ‘life’ for everybody” and attain equilibrium within the social fabric (Brueggemann, 1987:25). It would be a praxis done in the spirit of liberation and hope. This is because people do not only want “life”; they want improved wellbeing. And, for the poor, improved wellbeing involves real issues like salaried employment with better working conditions and wages, healthcare services, food, land, etc. as Ortega (2001:126) argues in

reference to the Latin American context. Nevertheless, such measurements of improved wellbeing, as per the oppressed, are not being obtained because the voice of the vocal minority is that of the wealthy servants. They do not speak on behalf of the oppressed. They do not struggle with the oppressed in support of transformation because the system in place favours them.

### 3.2.3.3. The sponsored fellows

The third group of enemies of hope in history is that of sponsored fellows. These are part of the majority but are supported by the affluent servants or the vocal minority (cf. Brueggemann, 1987:14). They do not speak for the rights of their fellow brothers and sisters who are marginalised, dehumanised and oppressed by the system in place because they are “sponsored” by the champions of the system. The sponsored fellows are often used by the vocal minority to show the world that the system in place provides room and opportunities for the silent majority. They are the face of the system to the world. They are there to ensure the “divide to rule” strategy applies because their status divides the community of the oppressed as some will despise them, of course, and others will admire them (cf. Brueggemann, 2001). The admirers can easily be brought into the camp of the sponsored fellows so they can also support the system. Those who despise them either remain a part of the silent majority or go into exile.

Brueggemann (1987:43) argues that refugeeness is also an enemy of hope because one considers becoming a refugee only when overwhelmed by the dark depths of despair in their own country. Although Brueggemann’s contention appears to be true, it is equally true that exile also embodies hope. That is to say, as much as exile is an enemy of hope, it is also a sign of it. When the exiled community accepts the realities of exile however painful, hope is within the range of the possible. This is because there can be no happiness without grief; there can be no homecoming without migration; there can be no songs of joy without the memories of loss. Any revelation of the future that circumvents the reality of human suffering creates a charade of history and could, by no means, contend with the emotional and figurative pain of exile.

In this regard, Brueggemann (1987:134) observes that the people of God are depicted as “survivors” because they go through conflicts that often result in them being exiled with disintegrated families. However, God empowers stranded people with hope so they can

visualise a future where all is well or possible. The paradox lies in the fact that some of those exiled become members of the silent majority and others turn out to be the “sponsored fellows”.

These three types of the enemies of hope show the contexts in which hope abounds. They indicate that the capacity to hope in the current dispensation is increasingly challenged by prevailing realities. Hopelessness is prevalent and powerful notwithstanding the will and determination to defeat the odds. Here, the reality about the enemies of hope also brings the conviction that most people live with a measure of hope, and yet often during some tests their hope falters. Thus, Brueggemann (1987:13) defines hope as an act of “looking forward with confidence and having your expectations fulfilled”. Hence, hope is “expecting God to act” (Brueggemann, 1987:20). This is within the historical context of hope, which the enemies of hope such as the silent majority and the vocal minority do not address.

It could be said that the enemies of hope in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are enemies of the distinctive feature of humanity. They try to marginalise or even abolish human consciousness. They deny the role of the rational self in public and private life since reason becomes entrenched in things that reason does not know (Brueggemann, 2002:43; see also Moltmann, 1967:42). In this case, one is driven by forces that lead to unreason. The enemies of hope, in other words, either deny the existence of rational consciousness or, if they accept that it exists, they deny its central role in human affairs.

### 3.3. Russel Botman and the *kairotic* context of hope

According to Gross (2014), action is the handmaiden of hope. That is, just as hope can lead to action, action can lead to hope (Gross, 2014). For that reason, the realisation of hope requires moving from mere thinking and observing to actually acting. Actuating hope is a way of reducing the risks involved in the actual envisaged pursuit (Botman, 2000:67). Thus, the desire to see the hoped-for realised requires activity – and this is the thrust of Botman’s *kairotic* perspective on hope. As a theologian of hope, Botman provides pointers to the contextual truth according to which the object of hope is not always in the future; it is rather realisable and within reach in the present if only one does not remain passive (Botman, 2001:75).

According to Botman (2000:34), it does not help to dream and remain asleep. One is expected to wake up because not waking up corresponds to unconsciousness and/or

lifelessness. Human consciousness goes along with waking up from one's dreams just as life goes along with waking up from one's sleep. It is the same with hope. When one hopes, the hoper is expected to get up and act towards attaining the hoped-for. Hope entails pursuing the hoped-for; it calls for active participation. Hope, therefore, is not a mere abstraction; it is made visible through action. It involves community participation for the wellbeing of others. In that regard, hope is a positive force with the potential to transform lives. However, people always have fear of putting their hope into action because, many a time, hope is mistakenly identified with the future as an impending possibility and/or yet-to-come reality (Botman, 2004:123). Nevertheless, the idea that hope is only a future reality is erroneous (Botman, 2001:124; cf. Bloch, 1986:1231; cf. Moltmann, 1967:12).

In Botman's thoughts on hope, the notion of time is of utmost significance. To the Greeks, time is conspicuously divided in a dichotomy of contexts. It is understood as *chronos* or as *kairos*. While *chronos* means measured or chronological time as in hours, calendars, etc., *kairos* signals the right time; a moment of new possibilities; a moment that brings fear and, thus, calls for decisive action. In the following sections, I will draw insights from Botman's wisdom to expound on the notion of active hope from a *kairotic* context, which, in this case, is the right moment to put hope into action.

### 3.3.1. From *status confessionis* to *processus confessionis*: A *kairos* of dread and the currency of contextual hope

In Africa and globally, we are faced with the problem of the future, which is something that has always been a challenge to the Christian thought, and it may even be regarded as the most fundamental confessional quest in Christianity (Botman, 2001:32). The question of the future demands of us to live in a certain way: to live ethically, to live in hope. Referring to the youth of 1976 in South Africa, Botman (2002:21) argues that albeit they stood up in the midst of an apparently hopeless future, they unquestionably acted on behalf of the despondent youth of a beleaguered country.<sup>63</sup> In other words, the 1976 youth of South Africa dreamed and hoped for

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<sup>63</sup> The Soweto Uprising of June 16, 1976 profoundly changed the socio-political landscape in South Africa. It started in Soweto but spread countrywide. Events that triggered the Uprising can be traced back to the Bantu Education Act introduced by the Apartheid government in 1953. The introduction of Afrikaans alongside English in the Act as a medium of instruction is considered the immediate cause of the Uprising but there are a various factors behind the 1976 student unrest. As it were, the Act introduced a new Department of Bantu Education which was integrated into the Department of Native Affairs under Dr Hendrik F. Verwoerd. The provisions of the Bantu Education Act and some policy statements made by the Bantu Education Department were directly

a better country than the one they lived in. They refused to let their fear discourage them or their peers tell them otherwise; they instead acted on their dream and hope despite their dread. Botman (2002:32) indicates that theirs was a *kairos* of dread and of contextual hope. He further argues that, today, the dread is not confined to the youth of Africa alone as the dread we face reaches all corners of the world. Conde-Frazier (2012:240) points out that in *kairos*, “God dwells in the midst of the people, even suffering with them”. That is, a *kairos* moment “can be a moment of crisis, suffering, and pain or a moment of hope and opportunity” (Conde-Frazier, 2012:240, 241). In other words, a *kairos* moment is pregnant with sustainable contextual hope but because it is also a moment of crisis, it is fuelled by the fear of the unknown. This explains Botman’s argument that a *kairos* of dread begets a *kairos* of hope.

To expound on the notion of contextual hope, Botman (2006:17) alludes to the Belhar Confession, which is a public outcry of faith that calls for faithfulness and repentance.<sup>64</sup> The Belhar Confession took the lead in proclaiming a *status confessionis* in relation to *apartheid*, stating that the heart of the gospel was being threatened by the system.<sup>65</sup> A *status confessionis* is a confessional status in relation to that which is foundational for Christian belief and behaviour. According to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, a *status confessionis* provides pointers to the fact that a particular doctrine is essential to the life of the church in the face of a specific situation at a particular moment in time. The *status confessionis* at Belhar was a stand against the illegitimate convictions of the irreconcilability of humanity, which became a *kairos* moment of witness on the unifying and reconciling power of the gospel (Botman, 2006:45). Reconciliation is indeed the heart of the gospel of Christ. However, through our faith in Christ, reconciliation is expressed as love; and a living reconciliation finds its lasting meaning in hope.

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responsible for the uprisings. Dr Verwoerd, who engineered the Bantu Education Act, announced that “Natives (blacks) must be taught from an early age that equality with Europeans (whites) is not for them”. (Source: South African History Online <http://www.sahistory.org.za/topic/june-16-soweto-youth-uprising?page=1>)

<sup>64</sup> The document was drafted in Belhar in 1982 and adopted by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church. The Belhar Confession has its origins in the struggle against the *apartheid* system in South Africa.

<sup>65</sup> A *status confessionis* points to a specific aspect of the gospel, and declares that, in this particular situation and for this particular time, that aspect of the gospel can under no circumstances be neglected or denied, without calling into question altogether the proclamation of the gospel. It also points to the fact that, on this particular issue, all churches - even those which are not directly affected by the challenge - must join in this act of confessing. (Source: World Alliance of Reformed Churches <http://warc.ch/history/history-of-the-world-communion-of-reformed-churches>)

The declaration of a *status confessionis* becomes necessary when the integrity of the function of the church and the proclamation of the gospel are under severe threat (Botman, 2006:54; Smit, 1984:34). Thus, the Belhar Confession was instrumental in making people see the sin of *apartheid* and helping them find ways to end it. The Confession shifted the attention to the theological stance of Karl Barth, who claims that God's position is not only identified as a supporter of the poor but also as a revelation in the situation of injustice and animosity. Botman (2001:39) further affirms that the Barthian perspective was a resourceful tool that was used by the church to develop an anti-*apartheid* mission in line with God's future for South Africa. In view of this, the *status confessionis* of the Belhar Confession is a declaration that has to do with God's future; that is, the future of South Africa through the eyes of God.

Christianity requires problematizing the future so that our descendants can come into or be bequeathed a world that better resembles the will of God. Thus, "we have the responsibility to leave a legacy of hope" asserts Botman (2014:53). In other words, the most fundamental confessional quest in Christianity demands of us to live in hope. By dreaming the future from the perspective of the will of God, which will definitely be done, a Christian believer sees the time ahead differently from the world. Thus, it is practical to take a hard look at the future so as to dream a new dream – a dream that is best for the planet and all its inhabitants (Botman, 2014:45). Thus, instead of pursuing industrialisation and concentrating on individualism, we must remember that we reside in a global community. It is time to act upon "[o]ur people's dreams and hopes of social equality, political freedom and economic justice" (The Accra Document, 2004:34).<sup>66</sup> This will help us see that all that is ecologically, economically and morally wrong with our world is having "disastrous repercussions on future generations" (The Kitwe Statement, 1995:53).<sup>67</sup> Thus, we do not hope or dream only for ourselves but also, and most importantly, for the future generations.

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<sup>66</sup> In response to the urgent call of the SA constituency which met in Kitwe in 1995, and in recognition of the increasing urgency of global economic injustice and ecological destruction, the General Council in Debrecen (1997) invited all members of churches to a *processus confessionis*, which is a process of recognition, education and confession, as they heard the cries of the brothers and sisters around the world and witnessed God's gift of creation under threat. Many churches and ecumenical bodies have already responded in diverse ways. Now in Accra, the new General Council is very much under impression of their visits to the slave dungeons of Elmina and Cape Coast, and of the cries of never again, and therefore today we make a new faith commitment.

<sup>67</sup> The Kitwe Statement is somehow the predecessor of the Accra Document. Its main focus is *status confessionis* while that of the Accra Statement is *processus confessionis*.

The shift from a *status confessionis* attitude to a *processus confessionis* consciousness provides pointers to the Greek concepts of time: *kairos* and *chronos*.<sup>68</sup> *Kairos* is a stream of moments, daily injustices that call us to act in God's name. Every time we read the signs of the world and see injustice, the very meaning of faith is at stake in our response. Recognising *kairos* means acknowledging that the time to act for justice is here and now (Botman, 2000:34). According to Conde-Frazier (2012:241), a *kairos* moment "can also refer to a time of decision or a moment of truth. As such, we may decide to turn from paths that have led us away from righteousness or right relationships and walk toward peace, justice, and the path of life". In the same vein, Botman (2007:15) finds that, generally, *kairos* appears as a moment of dread. In this regard, problematizing the future has much to do with *kairos* than *chronos*. Within the *kairos* moment, there is a time that God Himself has set for specific things; hence, *kairos* is God's given time – a moment of fulfilment, a moment of decision-making in the face of the circumstances dictating otherwise. The *kairos* moment brings both fear and hope. They are the two sides of a coin. Thus, since we are living in a "kairos of consciousness" as the refugee phenomenon establish itself as a global challenge, ours is a *kairos* of hope (Botman, 2004:32; Smit, 1984:53).

A human being always has the propensity to fear the trials and tribulations that are yet to happen (cf. Botman, 2001:114). When someone is in dark times, it is human nature to create for oneself images of a future full of even unbearable pain, terrible loss, and shattered hopes (Hubbard, 1983:86). In other words, a not-so-reassuring future is capable of eclipsing the present. However, regardless of all troubles, Christians should under no circumstances be terrified of the future (cf. Smit, 1984; Moltmann, 1967). This does not mean that Christians know all the details about the future but it is a reassurance that they know in whose hands their future is, and that their life will not end in emptiness (Botman, 2000:56). That is to say, when the future is assured, it befits living in the present justifiably well. It suffices to deduce that humanity needs hope, not only for the future, but also for the present. Thus, *kairos* involves both fear (i.e. *kairos* of dread) and hopefulness (i.e. *kairos* of hope). When explaining the dichotomy of fear and hope within the *kairos* context, Conde-Frazier (2012:241) asserts that

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<sup>68</sup> While *chronos* is *quantified* time as in hours, days, months, etc., *kairos* represents time qualitatively. With *kairos*, to know the time is not a matter of knowing the date or the hour; it is simply a matter of being aware of the timeframe or mood of that moment in time (e.g. time for peace, time to stop the war, etc.).

“God instills hope in tragedy and sustains the future as people seek better systems of life and life choices”.

According to Botman (2006:14), hope does not only concern the future inscribed in the destiny of the self but also in that of the other. Lefebvre (2004:99), one of the most celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> century French philosophers, seems to have an indication on the question of otherness when he says, “when relations of power overcome relations of alliance, when rhythms of ‘the other’ make rhythms of ‘the self’ impossible, then total crisis breaks out”. In the same vein, Hryniewicz (2007:10) understands the anthropological ideal of hope as both co-existence and pro-existence – that is, living with all and for all. Hryniewicz’s (2007) observation is indicative of the universal utility of hope. This is in agreement with Botman, (2000:14) who finds that a co-existent and pro-existent hope is inclusive; it does not segregate and it is not divorced from existing realities. Instead, it has the ability to permeate human expectations *hic et nunc* (Hryniewicz, 2007:10). This, however, constitutes one of the greatest paradoxes: the expectation of the hoped-for and the fulfilment of hope, and the simultaneous resolve to shape the present in a more humane and better order, as Hryniewicz (2007:13) asserts. Such a resolve to shape the present into a better order for healthier co-existence and improved pro-existence is indicative of both the existential and essential nature of human hope. Existentially, human hope is akin to the concept of *shalom* community in the Bible (Botman, 2001:64). This *shalom* community parallels the ontological fabric of the African way of life as perceived in Ubuntu. Essentially, the nature of human hope is concomitant to the theological concept of *missio Dei*, which is the core of the eschatological hope – active in the here and now even though its ultimate consummation awaits the *eschaton*.

Botman (2013:74) observes that Christians have always sought to name a *kairos* throughout the years. He illustrates this by citing the event from mid-1980s, when a group of Christians seized upon the image of *kairos* to express their sense that the struggle against apartheid had brought South Africa to a historic crossroad. They believed that they were confronted by a fundamental religious and political choice that genuine hope for the future required a commitment to struggle against apartheid, and that the church was called to condemn apartheid and witness to hope for justice. The South African sense of *kairos* also inspired people in other contexts to examine whether or not their societies too lived in a time of *kairos*,

at a historic crossroad, confronting them and their churches with radical choices (Botman, 2013:58).<sup>69</sup>

There is a need to define the problem of the future in a specific context. Albeit love took prominence in the context of the Corinthian *kairos*, the centrality of hope in the Christian gospel remains beyond question. The passage “these three remain, faith, hope and love” (1 Corinthians 13:13a) represents three ingredients of the Christian identity; thus, there can be no contention between and betwixt Christian believers from Europe, America, Africa, Asia, or Oceania. The triad, an integral mark of Christianity, is a precious blessing, and a special grace in the life of any Christian believer. It is doubt, indifference and despair that deprive humanity of the triad, which should guide men’s horizontal and vertical relationships (Daley, 1991:24). Faith, hope and love are the virtues that prepare a person to live in a harmonious relationship with the self, the others, and the Godhead.

Nevertheless, Botman (2006:24, 25) argues that Paul departs from the initial structure of equality in his validation of the triad when he suddenly declares, “the greatest of these is love” (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:13b). By re-examining the epistle to the Corinthians, one realises that the apostle was dealing with serious collective concerns. Botman (2006:34) further emphasises that it is important to understand that the apostle was speaking from a specific context, relevant for a specific *kairos* in history. The church in Corinth, to which the apostle wrote the epistle, required an emphasis on love due to the challenges that the new believers were facing at that time in history. It is in such a context that love could be said to be greater than faith and hope. The apostle is both unhappy and extremely disturbed by the divisions, discrimination and conflicts in the church. It is in this context of class separation and hostilities in the congregation that Paul encouragingly tells Corinthian believers to increase the intensity of love in their midst, hence the statement, “the greatest of these is love”.

At any given time in history, the world always needs somebody to call people’s attention to an element of the triad considering the societal circumstances facing humanity (Botman, 2014:37). A Martin Luther or a John Calvin was needed at a specific *kairos* in history

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<sup>69</sup> In 1988, a group of more than one hundred Central American pastors, theologians and lay leaders concluded that their region, torn by civil wars and U.S. intervention, was in such a time. In 1989, groups of Christians from Asia, Southern Africa, and Central America joined in affirming that their countries, different in so many ways, also lived in a time of *kairos*, suffering in similar ways in the current global system and confronting similar fundamental choices in their paths forward (Botman, 2014:13).

to proclaim the greatness of *faith* within the triad. At another time in history, the world needed the prophetic voice of Martin Luther King Junior that would call people to *love* above all. There is a need, therefore, to make a critical contextual decision about the primacy within the triad in Christian public life. It suffices therefore to construe that within a *kairos* of dread, which we live in, there is a definite need to restructure the triad anew, and put emphasis on the primacy of hope; hence, we can unashamedly and fearlessly proclaim the greatness of hope in the triad.

One learns to gain hope just as one learns to walk, that is, gradually (Botman, 2014). By living out the gospel, more ability to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit is gained. However, there may be times when one must take the courageous decision to hope when everything around is contrary to expectations (Botman, 2001:16). That is what Paul refers to as “hope against hope” (cf. Romans 4:18). Faith, hope and love synchronise; and when one increases, the other will also increase. Hope is born of faith because without faith there is no true hope. Similarly, faith is born also of hope because faith is “the substance of things hoped for” (Hebrews 11:1). In his epistle to the believers in Thessalonica, Paul emphasises the relationship between faith, hope and love, speaking of active faith, labour of love and steadfastness of hope (cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:3). In this regard, hope is essential to faith and love, and it is characterised by the resurrection of Christ.

The hope that stems from the resurrection of Christ can be best grasped from Moltmann’s perception if one considers Jesus as one unlawfully convicted, sentenced and crucified by the oppressors (cf. Moltmann, 1967:62). Because he died misunderstood, misrepresented and abandoned, his death, arguably, raises the question of the victory of his executioners over their victims. However, the resurrection of this particular victim announces that executioners will not always prevail over the victims, nor will victims gain an advantage over their executioners. Thus, the hope of the resurrection is a hope for both the oppressors and the oppressed (cf. Moltmann, 1967; Freire, 1998).

Hope is both specific and historical. It is specific because it is particularly aimed at the poor and the oppressed, and it is historical because it is primarily a hope for freedom and emancipation within history (Ortega, 2001:22). However, this specificity for the poor and the oppressed is attuned with the basic biblical principle of inclusion, and does not jettison the rich and the oppressor. In other words, albeit the kingdom of God is, on the surface, characterised by partiality, its fundamental characteristic is that of universality. Therefore, treating the

kingdom of God as partial due to the particularity it shows for the poor and the oppressed would be opposing or making secondary the principles of the kingdom. One should neither deny the unique and particular place that the poor and the oppressed have in God's kingdom, nor lessen or excuse the responsibility of the rich and the oppressors (cf. Moltmann, 1967). It is a Christian responsibility to defend and protect the unique and particular hope that the poor and the oppressed have.

When one's faith is in shreds, hope sustains the person. When love is exhausted, hope strengthens one's resolve and urges them to take care of the neighbour even without expectation of reward (Botman, 2014:15). That is to say, the more hope one has, the stronger their faith would be; the more hope one has; the purer their love would be. In other words, the things we hope for could lead to faith, and to love. The three, applied together and rooted in the truth, make a believer abound in hope. Hope sustains the self when in despair, and teaches that there is reason to rejoice even when everything seems obscured (Botman, 2001). It could be said that hope is the forgotten child of the triad: faith, hope, and love. It is the fundamental ability to see the best in a situation or in a person.

Every human being is capable of moving onward and upward regardless of the conditions they find themselves in. Thus, just like faith without deeds is dead, so is hope without action meaningless (Botman, 2014). It becomes optimism or positivity. However, not only does hope involve action but also action and hope need one another. If there is going to be hope of something for someone, then certainly the action needed is a form of love shown to them. Therefore, hope and action must co-exist. It is redundant, for instance, to trust that poverty would be eradicated or poor children in Khayelitsha, for example, would get help without taking some affirmative action in assisting them with some form of "help". Where there is trust there is hope; and hope is accompanied by a resolute and determined stance for social engagement (Botman, 2004:11).

Most researchers tend to focus on the human capacity to trust and disregard the capacity to hope (McGeer, 2008:237-244). However, there is a link between hope and trust. Hope is a volitional activity involving the setting of specific goals and finding ways to accomplish them. In this regard, trust and hope are coherently joined and both have unequivocal significance to humanity. Unlike trust, hope has the capacity to empower. Thus, it is an attitude that energises and, thereby, stimulates "agential capacities to think and act in responsive ways" (McGeer,

2008:244). Hope, therefore, is a progressive frame of mind that anticipates social transformation and plays a critical role in human activities.

Besides, hope enables features of substantial trust since it has both the cognitive and conative traits apart from its distinctive affective profile (McGeer, 2008:239). *Kairos* is not only a time of sadness, but also a time to take a stand as it is a time fraught with hope and joyful anticipation (Botman, 2001:12). Apostle Peter calls on us to “not fear what they fear [and to] not be frightened.” He instead encourages believers to “always be prepared to give account of the hope that [they] have” (cf. 1 Peter 3:14, 15). Here, Peter seems to say, when people fear, we are not to fear with them but engage them always in the discourse of hope. That is, we are to get them talking about hope instead. We are to engage them in actions of hope. It is a Christian responsibility to help others see the signs of hope.

Christianity has often been used to justify indifference, which often leads to quietism, passivity and paralysis (Botman, 2001:75). This, in turn, results in justified criticism from secular theorists who claim that Christian hope is ethereal, of no relevance to the present, and counterproductive. Botman (2000:34) indicates that such sarcastic criticism of religion is a travesty of reality. He argues that the theological depth of the sin of apartheid was the irreconcilability of people. It was difficult for people to reconcile while apartheid was still practiced. In other words, the point of departure in addressing the problem of apartheid and building hope was the question of reconciliation. However, the question that could be posed is, if the problem *in time* is the irreconcilability of people, then what could be the problem in *God's future* (Moltmann, 1967:42)? Botman observes that answering such a question requires a look at the *status confessionis* of hope in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this vein, he finds that hope is cessation of natural expectations. It signals the waves of the breaking of the ‘here and now’ of man’s despair.

Botman (2001:33) finds that the drive and vigour of South African Christianity in the struggle against apartheid developed from the understanding that the mission of the church is a confession. There is a need to begin an excursion in which we could carry on learning the impact of globalisation on both the human societies and natural surroundings to understand the core of the global challenge from a theological perspective. Such understanding could result in “faithful action for global transformation”, which, in turn, could lead to a better understanding of the “logical importance of the term *confess* for the mission of the church” (Botman,

2001:33). In this regard, it could be said that the uniqueness of the church in *missio Dei* is characterised by a conscious form of confession.

According to Botman (2006:23), the ‘conscious form of confession’ is not enough, which is why a call to a more progressive attitude towards injustice is of practical relevance. Thus, a *processus confessionis* requires not only the confessional denunciation of societal evil but also an active involvement in making sure that the state of affairs does not remain the same. In other words, *status confessionis* is merely a public denunciation of injustices while *processus confessionis* shows that such a public confession is actually a process culminating in action. In view of this, Botman (2003:34) argues that the church in Africa is to confess on the reality of global economic injustice through a *processus confessionis* of hope in action. This would help the church to translate the question of economic injustice into its confessional meaning and thereby act upon it.

The shift from merely stating the nature of evil to actually working towards ending that evil shows that hope is, to a greater extent, a symbol of liberation, and the symbolic congruence of hope is a matter of *processus confessionis*. The Belhar Confession (1986), which was a *status confessionis* in the struggle against *apartheid*, became a *processus confessionis* as most of those who confessed the evils of *apartheid* were actively involved in positive actions against *apartheid*. The Belhar Confession speaks of unity in community with one another, not under duress, and calls the church to act in reconciliation. For Botman, the Belhar Confession signals that hope is not a category of nature but of grace. It is the necessary condition if one is to yearn for a better future because the ‘undoing’ of hope results in despair, to which the world is accustomed. The extent of such despair is global. Botman (2001:70) observes that this “[g]lobal despair has already shaken the foundations of hope”. In this regard, the graph of human hope is plummeting in all sectors of human stratification, thus, presenting a missional challenge for the church today.

Botman (2004:14) further points out that the powers of globalisation have taken on the status of economic necessity due to their projection of an ideological imperative. Globalisation as an ideal tolerates no other measure of brainwave since it presents itself as the only prospect of the modern society. In other words, globalisation suggests that “the trickle-down” system of development will solve the problem of poverty. However, Botman (2002:21) is of the view that the primary concern of theology *vis-à-vis* globalisation is not its economical premise but the

kind of society that it produces, which is often perceived in the behaviour it promotes and the fragmentation it causes in the moral foundations of the communities. For instance, individualism increases and competitiveness is commended, while solidarity and mutual aid are sacrificed. These powers have a shared culpability for sacrificing their victims to a false hope, and filling them with fear (Bielawski, 2007:43). As it were, globalisation decorates humanity with a totally economic painting to become a *homo economicus* – the economic view that prompts aggressiveness for all competitions, in which only the richest survive.

### 3.3.2. From *homo economicus* to *oikos*: hope for justice in a neoliberal, exclusionary globalised economy

A Christian understanding of development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete or integral; that is, it has to promote the good of every human being and of the entire humanity. This is why the church today is faced with the grave problem of the relationship between theology and development in the temporal sphere. The definitional implication of the term “*homo economicus*”, according to Wilson (2014:13), is used in reference to a person deemed rational and who pursues wealth for self-interest. This explains why the economic injustices in our world and the careless destruction of creation require a concrete response through active involvement by Christian believers (Botman, 2004:23). In so doing, the church would be covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth. Botman (2004:25) argues that covenanting for economic justice on earth speaks loudly and clearly, especially in light of humanity’s rediscovery of the value of community and the theological themes of the *oikos* of God.<sup>70</sup> The term ‘economy’ derives from the Greek *oikos-nomos*, which could be translated to actually mean “the regulation or the guideline of the *oikos*”, of which the original Hebrew Bible underpins the notion (Botman, 2004:103).

*Oikos* give details of God’s house rules for humanity. As Steve de Gruchy (2007:333) argues, an attentiveness to current debates in the field of social development would suggest that any development programme - at local, national or global levels - is likely to collapse into the wide chasm that currently divides economy from ecology if we fail to find an integrating vision and agenda. At heart, economy and ecology should cohere since they are both about the earth, which is our *oikos*, or home. On the one hand, ecology (i.e. *oikos-logos*) concerns the

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<sup>70</sup> *Oikos* is a Greek word meaning “household” or “family”.

wisdom of how our home functions and, on the other hand, economy (i.e. *oikos-nomos*) is about the rules that should govern the way we run our homes. Thus, the *oikos-nomos* or household rules as intended by God are meant to protect the humanity and livelihoods of the weakest and poorest within the *oikos*. In view of this, the New Testament breathes the centrality of the *oikos*. It opens with the claim that, in Jesus Christ, God dwells among the people. This keyword also opens up a new status for the children of God: from being slaves to being free persons, sons and daughters. They eat a common meal in the *oikos*, and pray together for that common meal (Botman, 2004:24; Wilson, 2014:23). As it were, in our search for holistic development, the church is confronted with various socio-economic challenges such as including the refugee phenomenon within the *oikos* and its health and wellbeing consequences. This calls for a need to integrate economy as *oikos-nomos* and ecology as *oikos-logos* in the quest for sustainable development (cf. de Gruchy, 2007:337).

Globalisation has always affected Africa in many ways and in various areas. On the one hand it suggests an interruption of traditional societies and, on the other hand, it promotes a materialistic mono-culture which leads to an individualistic standard of living. Dreher *et al.* (2008) find that one of the consequences of globalisation is the exploitation of people by means of capitalism, which is a system of economy that values production than the working class. In this context, the goods produced by the working class are sold in order to make more money and, thus, produce more wealth. Those who oppose capitalism believe that its motive for production is to create wealth by exploiting workers. Capitalism is understood as the “incubator of contemporary globalisation” (Dreher *et al.* 2008:8).

In capitalism, goods or products are never sold to meet or satisfy people’s needs. Rather, they are sold to generate profit. Wealth is power in capitalism and, therefore, those without wealth live at the mercy of the powerful. Both capitalism and socialism could contribute towards upholding the freedoms that people enjoy and ameliorate their lives (see Sen, 1999). However, refugees are often vulnerable in this respect as they struggle to keep up with the demands of globalisation. Thus, globalisation increases pressure to the existing challenges that local governments (particularly African governments) strive to alleviate. The effects of globalisation have negative impacts on African countries. They contribute to serious socio-economic, ecological and/or biodiversity problems such as the refugee phenomenon, global

warming, environmental pollution, overpopulation and climate change. Such challenges often thwart developmental progress in African societies and amplify the degree of poverty.

Similarly, Jürgen Moltmann (1999:164) finds that a better alternative to poverty is community because community allows people to create “bearable living conditions” in their societies. In the same line of thought, Ulrich Duchrow (1995) considers globalisation as a system that creates new patterns of economy and culture. For him, capitalism is the driving force behind globalisation since its economic system focuses on money-accumulation rather than being a need-oriented one in order to alleviate poverty. The effects of globalisation are a “global value-chain” with a proliferation of names and concepts (Gereffi *et al.* 2001). Moltmann observes that “it is no longer human needs that regulate production; it is the requirements of the market”. If the market system was ‘need-oriented’ instead of ‘profit oriented’, it would have been advantageous to people at the bottom of the pyramid such as refugee migrants (Moltmann, 1999:162). To have the market as need-oriented is, in this regard, a massive contribution to the process of poverty alleviation. But, capitalism widens the gap between the rich and the poor and contributes less to the welfare and development of the populace. In addition, Duchrow (1995:21) considers that this money-accumulation system “leads to the destruction of society” because people wish “to live forever, with ever-increasing wealth in the form of money... and in the end [they] destroy themselves”.

According to Klaus Nurnberger (1999), there is a crisis approaching humanity due to rapidly increasing discrepancies in economic capacity between rich and poor sections of humanity, the emergence of large scale of unemployment and the growing impoverishment of hundreds of millions of people. In addition, alarming is the deterioration of the moral fibre of society, the breakup of social cohesion and the rapidly growing, immensely dangerous powers unleashed by globalisation – coupled with the development and proliferation of evermore devastating weaponry. Humanity has indeed reached a phase of remarkable acceleration in the growth of its capacity to populate, dominate, control, exploit, deplete, and destroy the foundations of its very existence (Nurnberger, 1999).

Intolerable suffering has already engulfed large sections of humanity that the planet is in serious danger. The assumption that the market or science and technology will solve the problems as they come is very reassuring among the liberal economists. Nevertheless, neither the market nor science and technology seem to have done a good job in solving the economic

problems of humankind so far (Nurnberger, 1999). On the contrary, they are largely responsible for the genesis of these problems. We still have time. We have the means to contain population growth. We can change from quantitative growth to the enhancement of quality. We can give non-human species a chance to survive and prosper. We can resolve conflicts through institutionalised justice rather than armed conflict. We can be released from the solitude and deceit of selfish cravings to a life in community and for community. These are potentials we have, and which we need to realise. In view of this, there is a need for a new economic paradigm.

That is to say, if we want to help secure a reasonable, equitable and sustainable degree of wellbeing for humankind we need a new economic approach, in which the goal of the human enterprise as a whole should be the comprehensive wellbeing of the whole humanity. Humanity needs a new *oikos-nomos* in which the vision of a wholesome economy presupposes recognition of the equal dignity of all human beings in the context of the dignity of the natural world. In other words, the point of departure for global economy should be human need and the capacity to fulfil that need rather than the concept of scarcity, supply and demand as used by conventional economics. Here, it should be recognised that the present economic system is fuelled by escalating discrepancies (imbalances) in economic power whereas our point of departure should be the contrast between centres and peripheries of economic power rather than the market mechanism. Thus, a new approach towards global economy is of greater significance so that surplus productive capacity should be directed towards the economic empowerment of the less privileged. However, the means to reach the above goal is responsible participation by all sections of the population in the economic process including refugee migrants.

Economic imbalances are caused by social structures and collective mind-sets; public policies and personal decisions; obsolete procedures and super-efficiency; factors inherent in economic centres and peripheries, and factors located in the interaction between the two. A systemic view should visualise these dimensions of the problem in their relationships with each other and in the weight of their respective impacts.

The Bible is specifically alert when vulnerable life is at stake (Botman, 2000:43). It is precisely from here that the idea of God as the God of the helpless evolves. Botman finds that it is for this reason that the marginalised come to know God as the God “who supports the

downtrodden, protects the stranger [and] helps [the] orphans”. This is connected with the relation of globalisation within the context of both the *kairos* of dread and the *kairos* of hope. Botman (2004:32) is convinced that the crucial theological discourse in the context of economic globalisation is the *oikos* discourse. The very essence of ethical community reflected in the holistic world of the biblical *oikos* is under attack in the context of economic globalisation (Botman, 2014:12). The Christian faith and the affirmation that God who created this world in covenantal relationships continues to sustain it and its living organisms are at stake today. Globalisation includes and excludes peoples and countries by its very nature; by its particular set of preferences, and penalties are applied variously to those who engage with or challenge its forces (Botman, 2013:102). In essence, globalisation fragments the *oikos* on the basis of a particular *nomos* (law) that takes precedence over the community. Botman observes that this is the dread humanity has to overcome.

The *kairos* moment of dread – that of the impact of exclusionary globalisation on our world and on our lives and faith as Christians – also was and remains a moment rich with potential and pregnant with possibilities. It gives details, therefore, on the need to meet the challenges of poverty and exclusion, as Swart (2008:104) explains, because globalisation transcends time and space. However, the global neoliberal order demands free flow of goods and service, and increases international restrictions on the migration of people (Botman, 2006:42; 2001:42). In South Africa, the immigration regulations are somewhat a legalised attempt to restrict likelihoods to legally enter or reside in the country. Thus, increasing inequalities and social exclusion at local, regional, national and international scales, is a hall mark of globalisation (Botman, 2001:43; see also Swart, 2008). Not surprisingly, there has been an increase in international human rights organisations to protect vulnerable migrants, the poor, the exploited, and the oppressed (Botman, 2006:24).

The powers of global exclusion are as threatening and serious as the oppression in the *kairos* of apartheid in South Africa. Globalisation could increasingly drive the youth worldwide into the arms of fanatical and extremist groups because of public and economic policy that continue to exclude the poor and other marginalised groups. Botman (2004:64) points to the “high levels of despair we are seeing on the streets all around the world as the on-going economic crisis takes its toll.” He further highlights the high level of youth unemployment in South Africa as a problem that is endangering the future of young people. The question is, what

do you do under such circumstances – give in to despair, or hope against all hope? Is there a future for the poor and marginalised? It is time to realise our people's dreams and hopes of social equality, political freedom and economic justice. It is time to see that all that is ecologically, economically and, in this sense, morally wrong with our world is having disastrous repercussions (Botman, 2004:63). If we do not carry out this task, the global youth may find their only hope in extreme right-wing or fanatical leftist groups. This is why Botman (2004:47) emphasises that the church is to teach and preach a Gospel of hope for all God's people, regardless of class or colour.

Globalisation (specifically the kind that excludes and marginalises) is endangering not only the sustainability of the planet but also the moral welfare of humanity (Sporre & Botman, 2003:106). Thus, public and economic policy that seems to redefine humanity in terms of *homo economicus* reinforces this exclusion (Botman, 2004:43; see also Sporre & Botman, 2003:132). It is influencing behaviour towards aggressive competitiveness in which only the richest survive, yet claiming that the trickle-down effect will solve the problem of poverty. Botman (2004:46) argues that we must dream a new dream. Instead of pursuing the kind of industrialisation that endangers the planet, we should think first of what is best for the planet. Instead of concentrating on selfish individualism, we should not forget that we reside in a global community of people who all deserve economic justice.

The possibility of false hope indicates that one of the tasks of the church is to help the society find real hope in the face of prevailing challenges (Botman, 2006:37). False hope is a threat to holistic development and the transformation or liberation of the society. In view of this, Botman (2006:39) argues that when hope is closely related with development or socio-economic progress only, it becomes the breeding ground for false hope and even hopelessness (see also Bultmann & Rengstorf, 1963:43). False hope can cause serious harm to a person; it can weaken faith or break the ties of love. True hope is universal and seeks the good of all. The individualisation of hope is, therefore, false hope because real hope is sustainable; it does not cause 'ruptures' to the other (Botman, 2004:65).

In this regard, the less privileged need to participate in the process of their own economic growth and struggle for justice in an attempt to actuate sustainable hope. Thus, Bowers-du Toit (2010:262) finds that "(t)he participation of the people themselves in their own development is both an essential part of human growth and a process whereby the people

themselves become aware of and understand their problems and the social reality within which they live”, so they can bring about sustainable hope by producing “lasting change”. Sustainable hope is, therefore, of great importance for improved wellbeing; it acts against the prospects of despair. In addition, Botman (2004:66) find that hope is “a redemptive healing metaphor” both in this 21<sup>st</sup> century and for generations to come due to its missionary originality and venture in a world that confesses, at best, otherworldly sentiments.

As it were, otherworldliness negates the biblical connection between the Creator and creation by divorcing the future of creation from the future of its Creator (Botman, 2001:70). Although hope in action happens to be the essential prerequisite to any longing for a better future, it is shattered in the here and now and, thereby, leading to global despair, to which the world is now habituated. The world knows an unparalleled crisis of despair at all levels of human demography: at personal, family, national and regional levels. Arguably, this crisis of despair shakes the foundations of hope in action (Botman, 2002:53).

The Christian does not view suffering as a sign that God has deserted them. Rather, he/she wholeheartedly thanks God for the suffering, accepting the trials as a test in faith which will lead to the blessing endurance and the grace of waiting patiently in hope. In other words, during hardships, a Christian maintains hope by rejoicing constantly, being patient all the way through and praying with perseverance (cf. Romans 12:12). This explains why abstract hopes need to be translated into active hopes through social involvements. For Botman (2004:43), one of the tasks of the church is to help the society find real hope because false hope is a threat to both the transformation and the liberation of the society.

### 3.3.3. The African dream: acting on the primacy of hope in a secular context

Botman tried to dream a new dream and hope anew. This arose partly out of his theological work as he continuously expressed the idea of confessing hope concretely. During his investiture as Rector and Vice Chancellor of the University of Stellenbosch, Botman (2007:3) drew attention to the work of Brazilian educationalist, Paulo Freire (cf. Section 2.3.), and argued that education should help change the world for the better by stimulating a critical consciousness in the face of oppression, poverty, injustice as well as the difficult task of living peacefully with former oppressors in a post-conflict situation. Botman (2007:3-5) refers to the

Freirean concept of hope as a “prerequisite for ensuring the future and sustainable success” of both South Africa and the rest of the African continent. For him, acting on the primacy of hope in a secular context requires acting on the African dream, according to which hope will change the world.<sup>71</sup>

Africa is increasingly being identified as a success story. Botman concurs that optimism devoid of true hope is flawed. In other words, economic growth and prosperity are not necessarily the answers to Africa’s most pressing challenges considering that they are built on a global model of exclusion instead of inclusion; competition instead of co-operation; fragmentation instead of cohesion; enrichment for a few and grinding poverty for the rest. This raises concerns of sustainability, which loom as large for Africa as they do for the rest of the world.

When hope is driven primarily by economic growth and structure, it has the potential to lead to false hope (Sporre & Botman, 2003:132). In this respect, places of worship have a responsibility to help people find real hope by constantly making those in power aware of the most pressing issues facing the country. This could provide the opportunity to discuss matters of spiritual relevance and support further the transformation and liberation of both the church and society. It could also help in dealing with the question of how various spiritualities can be transformed or liberated to avoid the dangers of “false hope”. Botman further points out that growth is not the same as development. Ackoff (in Sporre & Botman, 2003) had this to say when drawing differences between development and growth:

Rubbish heaps grow but do not develop [...]. Growth is an increase in size or number. Development is an increase in competence, the ability to satisfy one’s needs and desires and those of others.

Here, the observation is that life is meaningful when the values of a society, the worth of a person and the integrity of the planet define and find relevance in true hope. This stems from the insight that the future defines the present and its ethical responsibility. Globally, we are again facing a juncture of dread and hope. The problem with an African dream consisting solely

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<sup>71</sup> Botman dedicated his time in office by following a “pedagogy of hope” that entails research, teaching and community interaction, which are at the centre of the University’s activities. This meant (i) eradicating poverty and related conditions, (ii) contributing to human dignity and health, (iii) consolidating democracy and human rights, (iv) promoting peace and security, and (v) balancing a sustainable environment with a competitive industry in South Africa and the rest of the continent (cf. Botman, 2014:4).

of economic growth and material prosperity is that it provides false hope. Botman (2004:512) indicates that the message of the resurrection cannot stand alone. It embraces the eschatological reality, which is essential for a theology of transformation. It is in such a context that hope can cause serious ruptures in morality and break the ties of love that makes for the fabric of a society. In South Africa and in most parts of the world, growing social anger, service delivery protests and strikes are warning signs that a hopeful society can have ruptures (Botman, 2014). In this way, all the hope that humanity has is being turned into false hope. Here, Botman (2013:124) finds that:

[T]he time has come for serious introspection, visionary reorientation and decisive action to get South Africa heading in the right direction again. A good place to start is to look at the country's spiritual and moral foundation. For many people, this is the bedrock on which our society is built, yet it is fast being eroded.

The world is beginning to see the individualisation of hope and ruptures in social institutions. There is a need, therefore, for sustainable real hope to prevent despair. Churches and people in civil society should take the lead in this regard. This is because the existence of *missio Dei* is the core of church's existence in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. Botman (2001:74) understands the theological concept of *missio Dei* as 'hope in action', in contrast to David Bosch's idea of 'action in hope'. He highlights that hope in action is not justification by works but a category of sanctification. Thus, hope in action is an *imitatio Dei*. When the church opens its heart to welcome the strangers or the homeless, or when someone from the sub-Saharan region of Africa is trained to take care of an AIDS sufferer, it is empowerment by hope. It is hope in action. The zenith of Botman's concept of hope in action is evident in the emphasis that "hopelessness is faithlessness, and faithlessness leads to godlessness" (Botman, 2001:75). This is because the Christian hope is grounded in God's grace.

In this context, one can conclude that Christian life entails being discontented and impatient with the injustices that are happening around the world in all aspects of life. Such discontentment and impatience *vis-à-vis* evil moves hope towards action. Botman (2001:74) finds that Christians are to breed the eschatological hope by establishing it *de novo* in the *missio Dei* because it is basic to God's revelation. He observes that hope is a form of grace since it is existentially a "gift of grace"; it is apportioned as a "mystery of grace" and it appears in history

as a “manifestation of grace”. This indicates that hope is massed in the redemption of Christ and, as such, it interrupts the natural logic of cause and effect.

Botman (2014:32-34) observes that the question of the African dream and the primacy of hope are closely related to that of belonging. However, he notes that in today’s world people seem to “belong” to entities beyond themselves such as the global economic system. He suggests that, of course, we should belong and points out that God’s measure of belonging is illustrated in practice through the African concept of Ubuntu, which he calls, Africa’s “small gift to the world”. For Botman, Ubuntu means that “my humanity is caught up and inextricably bound up in yours [therefore] I am because I belong”. Nevertheless, in a much more profound way, “we belong not to ourselves, but to God in Jesus Christ” as John Calvin confesses. The idea of confessing hope concretely is not only a *status confessionis* – professing the confessions of faith verbally and remaining passive but also a *processus confessionis* – processing what is professed through progressive actions of hope. From this perspective, we, in the words of Desmond Tutu, may hear God say:

I have a dream [...] It is a dream of a world whose ugliness and squalor and poverty, its war and hostility, its greed and harsh competitiveness, its alienation and disharmony are changed into their glorious counterparts, when there will be more laughter, joy, and peace, where there will be justice and goodness and compassion and love and caring and sharing [...]. In God’s family, there are no outsiders. All are insiders [...] all belong (in Botman, 2013:21).

This is the African dream and hope. Putting our hopes into action is an expression of our common hope for a better future in the interest of the next generation. This is a generation that will hear our current pressing challenges such as the current global economic crisis only by hearsay (Botman, 2013:23). In a much more profound way, we belong in a *kairotic* relationship and in a covenantal time. In this way, we may dream a new dream for Africa and for the rest of the world.

The cultural situation today, global and dynamic as it is, calls for the incarnation of the Christian faith in many cultures, which represents an unprecedented challenge (Botman, 2014:31). However, it is a true *kairos* for the whole people of God. The world is faced with a cultural and religious pluralism perhaps never experienced so consciously before. Rapid progress is being made towards a worldwide openness, facilitated by technological means and the media, with the result that cultural and religious backgrounds, traditionally different and

foreign to one another, are being brought into contact and even mingled with one another. Fresh demands for a local identity emerge, which consider the cultural traits of each individual as the means for self-realisation. This fluidity of cultures makes “inculturation” even more indispensable, as it is not possible to evangelise without entering into serious dialogue with cultures (Botman, 2004:24). Together with peoples of different roots, other values and models of life are knocking at our doors. While each culture tends to interpret the gospel in terms of its own way of life, it is the task of the church to guide these attempts and assess their validity in order to make hope available to all.

The approach to social hope is characterised primarily by the resolve to find God’s plan for social transformation. It suggests that we ought to take up a Christian approach to development and transformation although it could be viewed as being at variance with the secular progress. Such approach uses the language of hope to indicate exclusively a type of the Christian hope, which is only available through the church and specifically for those who are saved (Botman, 2006:12). In this regard, the church is considered the only genuine response to the world’s social problems. Botman (2000:32) argues that old contexts of mission are extremely packed with the dogmas of authority, from which one requires liberation. It is evident to many in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that certain old missional suppositions and methods are no longer useful in today’s context of pluralism.

There is, therefore, a need to reformulate mission and to know that the *missio Dei* is broader than the horizon of the church’s prospects as newer missional paradigms are being established to meet the demands of the current globalised pluralistic world. It is time to act and discern the signs of the times. It is time to see, judge and act. It is time to realise people’s dreams and hopes of social equality, political freedom and economic justice. It is time to take a cold hard look at the future. Such is the task of Africa, and the entire world at large. In other words, “we must dream a new dream” because “we have the responsibility to leave the legacy of hope” as Botman (2012:24) deduces.

### 3.4. Jerome Groopman and the therapeutic context of hope

Jerome Groopman, a haematologist-oncologist and professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, argues that hope comprises two parts: the cognitive and the affective. This is because

when an individual hopes for something he/she uses his/her intellect (the cognitive) and imagination (the affective). When this happens, hope secretes an energising feeling that comforts the human being when planning for a positive future. Groopman (2004:6) argues that there is no uniform definition of hope and proposes a definition that summarises the experience of patients: “hope is a moving feeling that we experience when we see, in the eye of the mind, a path to a better future” (Groopman 2004:14). In this way, hope recognises the obstacles and pitfalls encountered on the path to achieve the hoped-for. Each patient has the right to hope, which is why the role of a physician is to nourish hope in a patient. If the doctor doubts his/her own ability to hope, he/she takes away any opportunity for the patient to hope.

### 3.4.1. The scientific connection of hope and illness

According to Kwan (2010:49) hope enables a patient to liberate himself/herself from whatever is diminishing the fullest use of his/her potentialities. In this regard, Kwan (2010:50) finds that counsellors and all medical practitioners are (or meant to be) “hope-awakeners” that fan the spark of hope into a flame of energy for change or recovery. The biblical rhetoric of hope moves renown theologians like Brueggemann (2001:13) and Botman (2001:132) into a discussion of the cosmic vision of apocalyptic literature and the manner in which a human being looks beyond all expectation to the restoration of all things as a means for God to fulfil His covenants and to establish universal rule on earth. The establishment of this universal rule on earth involves (but it is not solely limited to) hope for good health. Yet, it provides pointers to the fact that hope can put healing into effect. However, the idea that hope can effect healing on an ailing human body is often met with a lot of suspicion and cynicism (Groopman, 2004:34).

There are different approaches and innovative efforts to understand the complexities of the nature and role of hope in the lives of individuals (Groopman, 2004:152). The aim is to relate the highest standards of education with an uncompromising commitment to the theological triad of faith, hope and love – which would lead to research studies that examine basic points at issue and generate findings that are relevant to both the religious world and its secular counterpart (Callahan, 1998:23). As it were, human beings need hope more than anything else (Lynch, 1965:23). This is because hope is a demanding pursuit to get a desirable future that is generally possible, albeit still invisible. Lynch (1965:32), thus, defines hope as the sense of possibility in the following terms:

Hope is like a feeling or a fundamental knowledge; that there is a way out of a difficulty; that things can work; that humans can control the internal and external reality; there always solutions and most importantly, that there are ways to fight a disease.

Here, Lynch indicates that hope is present everywhere at every moment, and in every little action. It is close to being the heart and the centre of the human person. In the same way, Groopman (2004:151) argues that there are scientific evidences to prove that hope can exert some healing effects. However, many other claims negate Groopman's assertions and the possible 'power of hope', which he attempts to prove scientifically. Such differing versions, possibly, develop from the differences in receptivity between the contemporary and the medieval. Like the ancient Greek myth of Pandora's Box, which depicts hope as an 'evil', the negative concept of hope as only an ephemeral impression is as explicit in the ancient Persian quatrains, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (Khayyam, 1998:7).<sup>72</sup>

The worldly hope men set their hearts upon  
Turns ashes – or it prospers; and anon,  
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face;  
Lighting a little hour or two – is gone.

Here, in contrast to the celebration of individual strength, Khayyam's perspective of hope echoes the medieval insight of unavoidable shared suffering according to which a human person can never turn fate's tides or even accurately foretell the prospect of disease survival (Khayyam, 1998). Groopman's effort to fuse his proficiencies into a practical conclusion on humanity's strength is a smart reaction to pain and death, which lies close to a confident thrill. Groopman (2004:14) provides insight into the power of making choices for oneself and of choosing to avoid medical treatment within the context of potential despair and grim medical consequences. Here, hope suggests a greater emotional component than mere expectation (Lynch, 1965:33). It is seen as an active process of conscious and unconscious reasoning intrinsically linked with caring. The professional role of a caregiver, therefore, influences the generation of either hope or hopelessness in the care of patients (Groopman, 2004:31).

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<sup>72</sup> Omar Khayyam was a Persian astronomer, mathematician and free thinker (1040 – 1131). His beliefs are difficult to determine with accuracy but the overall impression gained from his *Rubaiyat* (that is, the quatrains) are, *inter alia*, nationalism combined with cynicism.

The work of natural scientists is definitely essential in giving further and needed details about the functioning of the human body (Groopman, 2004:43). Their work is also central in throwing light on the various germs, parasites, microbes or biochemical elements that are capable of entering and damaging or weakening its finely tuned interacting parts (Groopman, 2004:39). However, whether or not people turn out to be in poor health and then whether they get well, breathe their last breath or are left with lasting handicaps, does not depend solely on their genes or inherited make-up. It is neither dependent on their consequent exposure to various kinds of disease agents. This is because health and illness are also influenced by the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the society in which people live (Bhugra et al., 2011:45).

There is a scientific connection between hope and illness (Groopman, 2004:102). This is explained by the fact that the reverberations of a grave ailment are related to the hope factor. As such, therapeutic impasses find their outcome only from a point of patient privacy, not psychological protocols or even the expertise of an experienced doctor. In order to help someone find hope, Groopman (2004:11) argues that it is necessary to penetrate his/her objective privacy. This is because hope is, in many a case, anchored in a moment of absolute singularity, which could be vital for the scientific and therapeutic arsenal available to the medical doctor. Groopman (2004:24) further indicates that scientifically, hope is an adrenaline-charged feeling of improved wellbeing not to be confused with optimism because it takes into accounts both pitfalls and illusions.

It is also the case that hope is at the very heart of healing, whether it develops from faith in God and belief in the hereafter, or from a personal philosophy that gives meaning to life (Groopman, 2004:26). As such, hope does not only focus on how the mind connects to one's body but also on the body-to-mind connection, where the neural input about one's physical condition serves as a moderator of positive and negative emotions. In this regard, hope gives one the courage to face different circumstances and the ability to overcome them. For some patients, hope is more important than any prescription or procedure performed by the physician. Physicians can observe and analyse all examinations, including laboratory results, medical imaging and biopsies but all these elements, albeit essential to diagnosis and choice of treatment, remain incomplete (Groopman, 2004:10).

Additionally, Groopman (2004:11, 12) finds that a caregiver needs to go beyond the search and analysis of information and look for hope in the patients. In other words, hope improves coping skills and adaptive feelings (Scioli *et al.*, 1997:64). It promotes healthy behaviour and reduces feelings of depression and anxiety while encouraging a sense of relaxation. By alleviating stressful feelings and promoting feelings of healing, hope can positively influence immune, cardiovascular (heart and blood vessels), hormonal, and even nervous systems. Nevertheless, the health benefits of faith and spirituality do not stem solely from healthy lifestyles (Groopman, 2004:32). Ehrlich (2011:43) finds that many researchers believe that certain beliefs, attitudes, and practices associated with being a spiritual person influence health. In a recent study conducted by the Maryland Medical Centre of people living with AIDS, findings reveal that those who had faith in God, compassion toward others, a sense of inner peace, and were religious had a better chance of surviving for a longer time than those who did not live with such belief systems (cf. Ehrlich, 2011). Here, qualities like faith, hope, and forgiveness, and the use of social support and prayer seem to have a noticeable effect on health and healing (Ehrlich, 2011).<sup>73</sup>

Hope creates change in one's state of mind and acts on the chemistry of the nervous system (Groopman, 2004:3). The confidence and expectation birthed by hope can arrive at blocking pain by releasing neurochemicals which serve that purpose (Groopman, 2004:4). When this happens, the patient learns to play a more important role in his/her own life as hope overcomes his/her fear and gives him/her the strength to endure a required treatment. In this regard, Groopman (2004:178-180) further asserts that the mind is purely a manifestation of the brain. What we view as products of the mind (that is, thoughts, feelings, and emotions) are an influential mix of chemicals and electrical circuits (Cousins, 1974:69). The body includes brain and mind so that the concept body-mind connection only emphasises the artificiality of how we have traditionally divided them (Cousins, 1991:73).

Most researchers (see for example Ehrlich, 2011; Callahan, 1998; Daley, 1991) indicate that there is a thin line between hope and denial, and that line is an unwavering commitment to truth and reality. Thus, on the one hand, false hope does not recognise the risks and dangers that true hope does, and can lead to unreasonable choices and flawed decision making (Tiger, 1979:68). True hope, on the other hand, considers the real threats that exist and seeks to

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<sup>73</sup> Source: <http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/treatment/spirituality> University of Maryland Medical Centre

navigate the best path around them. Beyond any medical treatment, a patient should be given hope, without which a human person cannot endure prevailing health challenges (Groopman, 2004:41). From empirical evidences, Groopman (2004:36) finds that hope has the potential to affect a patient's physical and mental health, and thereby help them recover, because hope is both a cognitive and affective emotion that does not interfere with the perception of things. Instead, it tempers fear and, in so doing, allows the self to identify the hazard, which one can then choose to avoid or confront.

“True hope is clear eyed”, finds Groopman (2004:12; see also Moltmann, 1967:19), because it sees all the difficulties that exist and all the potential for failure, but through that, forms a realistic path to a better future. In this way, hope can change brain chemistry, “specifically by reducing the pain we feel, improving muscle, cardiac and respiratory function” (Groopman, 2004:103). This is because the emotion that we call ‘hope’ causes the brain to release chemicals in the brain (i.e. *endorphins* and *enkephalins*) that reduce the level of (or block) pain and make one feel better. Such neurochemicals can, in actual practice, bring about belief and expectation, which happen to be basic constituents of hope in a patient (Groopman, 2004:110 see also Cousins, 1991:75). Physical pain and weakening can feed human anxieties, doubts and confirm our worst fears (Groopman, 2004:64). It is a vicious cycle because, when a human being feels pain from physical weakness, that pain emphasises a sense of hopelessness. On the one hand, the less hopeful one feels; the fewer neurochemicals they release and, on the other hand, the more pain one experiences due to these few neurochemicals, the less able one is to feel hope (Groopman, 2004:109, 110).

This implies that the treatment of physical symptoms can help restore a patient's sense of hope and wellbeing presumably with a resulting chemical cascade in the brain. Hope is, in this regard, an emotion made up of two parts: a cognitive part and an affective part (Groopman, 2004:114; cf. Scioli *et al.*, 1997:137; Cousins, 1991:72; 1974:34; Fromm, 1968:81). When one hopes for something, they employ to some degree their cognition, organising information and data relevant to a future-desired event. It is also the case that with hope, a patient generates a different vision of his/her condition by assimilating information about the disease and its potential treatments (Cousins, 1974:38). In a similar line of thought, Moltmann (1967:89) also observes that medicine is an art for the humanity of life. As such, it provides the strength to live in health and sickness. However, those who are sick are often not part of the insurance

companies' equation because, for such companies, the illness matters more than the sick person.

In this prospect, Moltmann (1967:90) further argues that a sick person is reduced to a collection of typical symptoms and treated as a 'case'. Physical and emotional functions go together and come to be a unit of the whole person. In this way, "we exist physically with all our senses" (Moltmann 1967:90). Thus, Groopman (2004:101; see also Scioli *et al.*, 1997:15; Fromm, 1982) finds that, scientifically, hope is related to illness in that it questions both the subjectivity of the patient and the function of the doctor. As such, it takes the function of a prism through which various frameworks of the doctor-patient relationship are clearly defined.

### 3.4.2. The role of hope in recovery

Groopman (2004:25–29) denotes a certain mechanism in the patient, which indicates that the hope of the patient is this enigmatic factor, not scientifically proven, which supports the treatments and makes the effects of illness to be at least geared down and the announced death to be sometimes deprived of effect. In this regard, the implementation of medical knowledge finds a foothold in the subjectivity of the patient (Groopman, 2004:31). Groopman's reflection draws the outlines of medical ethics where the therapeutic decision refers to the subjective position of the patient as well as the sometime-absurd point of view called "objective" (2004:32). It is, therefore, all about birthing hope to the patient during such time of illness. Groopman (2004:42) conceptualises precisely the guidelines of this act to the doctor, which highlights how the prefabricated discourse treatment and chances of recovery are ineffective because they are less credible in the eyes of the patient.

As I explore more on the role of hope in the recovery of those with health challenges, I am reminded of William Ernest Henley. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone, which resulted in his leg being amputated below the knee. The amputation was very painful because anaesthesia was not used in the procedure. Upon hearing that he was to undergo another amputation operation for his other leg, Henley refused the performance of a second amputation and opted for a second opinion from another physician. This he did because he had hope that his remaining leg could still be saved in spite of his doctor's reference for amputation. Under the care of the second physician, Henley was able to keep his other leg and put the disease to

rest for 30 years.<sup>74</sup> The experience motivated Henley to write his famous Victorian piece of literature, which became known as *Invictus*.<sup>75</sup>

In this poem Henley points out his hope to survive despite being under severe health trials. Against all odds, he had put his volition to hope into practice. Although with unfortunate challenges in life, the poem is a reminder that it is always possible to hope and prevail against oddity. Dictionary definitions of hope generally point to an anticipation of success in the pursuit of desired ends (cf. Deist, 1984:123; Tasker, 1962:1012). In this way, to hope is to have the will, the patience and the ways to pursue such ends.

In the context of disease maintaining hope is important for both patients and physicians (Groopman, 2004:14). This is because, on the one hand, the physician does not want to give false hope to the patient and on the other hand, he/she does not want to do away with any source of hope that exists. Groopman (2004:16) finds that it is important for physicians to explore the hopes of patients in order to better understand the patient's attitude to face the disease. Hope can, therefore, play a positive role on the patient's diagnosis. According to Norman Cousins (1991:15), hope is not dependent on facts or logic. Instead, hope is generated by the desire to strive for something better. As such, hope motivates action and affects both thoughts and behaviour. In this way, it is difficult to have power over hope or be in command of it due to its cognitive and affective peculiarities, which make it universal in nature (Scioli *et al.*, 1997:1).

When the doctor uses a stringed knowledge to bring about hope to the patient, says Groopman (2004:19), he persuades him/her and the patient knows it. Also the hope that the doctor claims to have birthed in the patient is duty-bound to be genuine; that is, based on the nearest of the subjective position of the latter argument (Groopman, 2004:33). The uncertainty of science is itself a source of hope. This implies, on the one hand, that the doctor knows the patient well, and on the other hand, he knows the complete scientific or statistical knowledge when he is not able to accurately process the difficulty of the patient (Scioli *et al.*, 1997:12). This reflection marks the limit of any protocol and any knowledge that constitutes the doctor-

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<sup>74</sup> Source: Poetry Foundation <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/william-ernest-henley>

<sup>75</sup> Source: *Ibid.* <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/182194> *Invictus* is said to have been instrumental in developing patience and resilience in Mandela's "long walk to freedom" while a prisoner and, as a result, he remained "unafraid" even though his days were "charged with punishments" in that "place of wrath and tears" called Robben Island.

patient relationship. For Groopman (2004:128), promoting hope is renewing, with each patient, a therapeutic alliance.

This foregoing discussion indicates that hope is preeminent in the situation of recovery and that its role cannot be overemphasised. According to Fromm (1982:22), hoping is being “ready for every moment that is not yet born”. It means that one ought to wait patiently without despair if the advent does not intervene yet in our lives. Thus, for Fromm, hope is a state of being and an intense inner activity. It is “an intrinsic part of the life and vitality of the spirit” (Fromm, 1982:26), which is necessary and essential to all human beings. This is because he finds that hope is associated with feelings and consciousness and, in his own words, “it is synonymous with life, growth and transcendence in the constant process of change” (Fromm, 1982:25), suggesting that hoping is not a matter of passively waiting or about forcing an impossible event.

The paradox of hope and despair is such that, when hope disappears to give way to despair, life loses all its meaning (Callahan, 1998:57). Thus, the role of hope in recovery has a spiritual dimension. In this regard, Fromm (1982:25) argues that the source of hope lies in the faith of the human being. He observes that faith is not an inner belief or knowledge of something. Rather, to have faith is “to be convinced with what is not yet proven; it is to have knowledge of the reality untold; it is based on the ability to understand and know the essence beyond appearances” (Fromm, 1982:26, 27). Like hope, faith is not a vision of the future; rather, “the vision of the unborn present” (Fromm, 1982:27).

Numerous studies (see for example Scioli *et al.*, 1997:1, 2; Tiger, 1979:17; Cousins, 1974:25) point out an apparent connection between health outcomes and hope, which substantiates Groopman’s therapeutic stance vis-à-vis hope and recovery. In their report, Scioli *et al.*, 1997:2) find that a positive state of mind is associated with health and successful coping while depression, despair, and hopelessness are linked to admission of defeat, un-wellness, and even death. However, writers from a variety of disciplines (see for example Snyder, 1989:45; Tennen & Affleck, 1987:56) have suggested that while hope can facilitate coping, there may be costs associated with “positive illusions” (Snyder, 1989:45). In the same way, Groopman (2004:75) finds that a change in attitude and frame of mind can, in turn, influence the alteration of neurochemistry to even prevent pain.

In this respect, hope has important effects on major physiological developments such as respiration (Groopman, 2004:192). This is attributable to the fact that in illness, belief and expectation, two inner states allied to hope, have an impression on the nervous system that, in turn, starts a response that makes improvement and recovery more likely. This process is essential to the commonly established “effects of placebos” (Groopman, 2004:167), which is effected by a hopeful attitude of the self. Thus, the effects of placebo make possible the relationship between hope and human wellbeing – be it emotional, social or physical. In this regard, hope does not only entail a mind-to-body construction, but also a body-to-mind one, where neural feedback in relation to ones’ physical situation functions as a moderator of positive and negative emotions (Groopman, 2004:178, 179; see also Scioli *et al.*, 1997:112). In view of this, hope has the power to protect from suffering, anxiety and the unfavourable effects of life events. It may stimulate even healthy behaviours since it is clearly associated with quotidian practices that support health and avert diseases (Groopman, 2004:125).

Human beings have the conviction, since earliest antiquity, that hope is essential to life and can contribute to healing (Jevne, 1994:21). If the faculties of hope remain uncertain and mysterious, they are nonetheless powerful. Respecting the mystery and the divine, Groopman believes strongly in hope in the most extreme circumstances (i.e. even when the statistics are not in one’s favour), which is an act that gives the sufferer the opportunity to live their life on their own terms. However, the hope that helps to heal does not occur without appropriate medical treatment. Groopman’s (2004:22) exploration leads us to see that the mind-body relationship works both ways: if the lack of hope can impair healing, also, much suffering can prevent the spirit and power of hope. It is the responsibility of the doctor to ensure that this vicious circle is broken. It is for him/her to support the hope of the patient, without telling lies or entertaining illusions.

### 3.5. Conclusion

Suffering and pain are a part of what it means to be human because human nature entails being subjected to obstacles. Some people go through devastating ordeals in which all hope would seem shattered. It is the case with the refugee migrants who go through various forms of challenges and/or suffer various forms of abuse on a daily basis. However, humanity needs hope to survive. As it were, nothing is more painful than the disappointment of a raised

expectation. The delay of it increases the likelihood and/or fears for imminent and complete denial.

In this way, Proverbs 13:12a indicates that “hope deferred makes the heart sick”. It makes one’s heart weak; it causes the heart to waste away; it worries the heart. In brief, delayed hope causes the hoper to suffer vulnerably in silence. The higher the expectations are; the more the frustrations will be in case of deferral. If the object hoped for is not acquired or enjoyed as soon as expected, the mind becomes uneasy, the heart disheartened, and the body indisposed. Thus, the whole of a person is affected by the deferral of hope and, as a result, he/she develops a sense of despondency while getting ready to give up all hope of enjoying the desired blessing. However, nothing is more refreshing and satisfying than to enjoy, at last, that which one has long wished and waited for. It is in this context that the second part of the proverb (Proverbs 13:12b) says “when the desire does come, it is a tree of life”. When that which is hoped and wished for, and has been long expected and desired, comes; when there is an accomplishment of wishes or “when dreams come true” as the NLT puts it, it is as restoring and refreshing to the person as the tree of life was to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Thus, realised hope gives the hoper an unspeakable pleasure and delight. When “the desire”, “the longing” or “the dream” comes, it is exceedingly joyful and delightful.

This applies to refugee migrants who sometimes are without hope because “their desire”, “their longing” or “their dream” is seemingly deferred. The deferral often makes them very uneasy and even sick in the heart. But when what they so earnestly desire is granted them, they forget the duration of their wait. And what they earnestly desire to nurse the frustrations bred by the long deferral of their object of hope is putting hope into action. In this way, refugee migrants will be empowered and become exceedingly productive while rejoicing – as if they were in the Garden of Eden, plucking the fruit of the tree of life to hunger no more. As it were, the enemy uses despair to bind hearts and minds in darkness. Despair takes away all that is cheerful and joyful and leaves behind the ruins of what life should be. Despair kills ambition, causes disease, pollutes the soul and numbs the heart. Despair is, therefore, a staircase that leads forever down. Hope, on the contrary, is like the radius of the sun rising over the horizon of our present situation. It pierces the darkness with a brilliant dawn, and encourages the hoper to place his/her trust in the loving, eternal, heavenly Father, who has prepared the way for those who seek eternal truth in a world of relativism, confusion and fear.

This chapter focused on the historical context, the *kairotic* context, and the therapeutic context of hope when put into practice, as held by Brueggemann, Botman and Groopman respectively. Brueggemann's line of thought is here divided into three sections, namely, the function of hope in history, the setting of hope in history and the enemies of hope in history. I indicated that the function of hope in history is the purpose of God for humanity as He wants humanity to be hope-filled. In this way, hope functions within the contexts of historical events. I also explained that the setting of hope in history is the context within which the church operates, and encounters a new context for ministry. It is an opportunity for mission. In this respect, Brueggemann indicates that the tendency to separate hope from history is to deny humanity of its existential prospects.

Finally I expounded on the concept of the enemies of hope in history and divided it into three parts; namely (i) the *silent majority* who accept the *status quo* however unethical that may seem; (ii) the *vocal minority* whose voice is more audible but defend the dehumanising system in place which favours them, and (iii) the *sponsored fellows* who are members of the oppressed community but are blinded by the opulence of the vocal minority, of which they benefit through sponsorships or any other form of support they receive. As a result, they end up being in favour of the system in place.

I then summarised Botman's concept of hope *kairotically*. For him, hope is real and clear-eyed when acted upon. It is only when hope is put into action that it benefits the entire community and acts for the improved wellbeing of all. I indicated that Botman strongly advocates for a *kairos* of dread to bring about the currency of contextual hope. That is, hope must be contextual of the time we live it and confront the fears that thwart human participation in transformation process. This is a call for the church to move from the *status confessionis* approach and declare a *processus confessionis*, which allows dealing with current pressing issues than merely confessing them as evil. I also mentioned Botman's position on the economic status of today's world and its relation to human hope and explained that, for him, the answer to economic injustice and individualism in this global market economy is for the church to witness against the systemically uneven distribution of economic goods in the world. This would be possible when Christians act on the primacy of hope even within secular contexts. This is because hope is a positive force with the power to transform both human lives and prevailing challenging situations.

Finally, I explained Groopman's therapeutic account of hope as he tackles the matter with medical lenses. This was done by looking at the scientific connection between hope and illness, and the role of hope in the process of recovery from illness. It was established, therefore, that hope is a dynamic process that is both cognitive and affective considering its vitality during the process of recovery. It was also established that hope is an essential component of treatment because of the new energy that it brings. This new energy is a force that stimulates the morale of patients or the person whose wellbeing fades. Thus, it is medically proven that hope gives meaning and direction to life when in a situation of suffering. In this way, hope can help people live better and/or longer.

In the next chapter, I explore relevant literature that establish hope as a resource for development and, particularly, as a tool for empowerment. In other words, as the chapter closes the series of literature review, it reflects on *how* to put hope into practice. This it does by exploring the hope-empowerment binary and demonstrating its relevance in African spirituality.

## Chapter 4 – Concepts in Context

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Hope has two beautiful daughters.  
Their names are anger and courage;  
Anger at the way things are,  
and courage to see that  
they do not remain  
as they are!

~ Augustine of Hippo

## Chapter 4 – Concepts in Context

### A focus on the merging of theory and practice

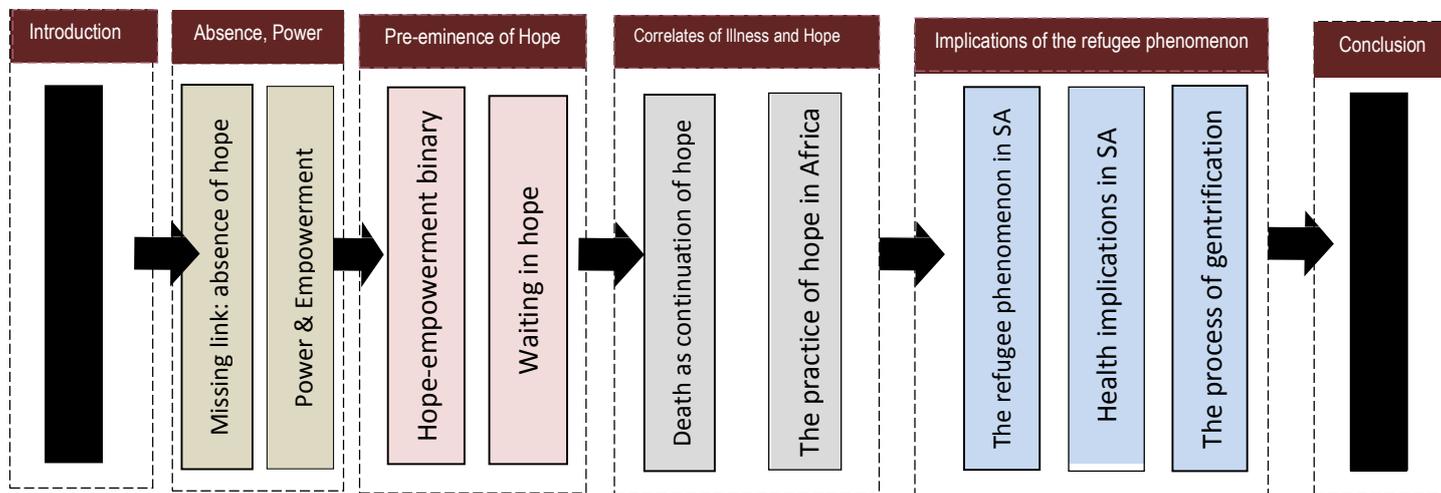


Figure 4: Chapter 4 Road map

#### 4.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, (Chapter 3) hope was presented in such a way that the reader would understand in detail, the dynamics in which it could be put into action. In so doing, it focused on the various views of hope as held by selected leading scholars. The current chapter seeks to present the research and bring the entire thesis into clear perspective through a comprehensive exploration of three key concepts from three specific contexts. The chapter discusses the three concepts of (i) Theology and Development, (academic context); (ii) hope and (iii) empowerment from (a) the lived contexts of refugee migrants (refugee context), and because this research focuses particularly on African refugees, it is fair to explore these concepts from the context of (b), African spirituality (cultural context). Nevertheless, one would not ignore the interdisciplinary nature of the research, which constitutes (c) the disciplinary context of the study.

Here, I explore a variety of literature to find out *how* hope can be put into practice, particularly how refugee migrants use hope as a resource for development in their perpetual quest for improved wellbeing. This, however, is discussed later in the chapter (cf. Section 4.6) when exploring various implications of the refugee phenomenon in development. The chapter

provides literature that establishes hope as a resource for holistic development and, particularly, a tool for community empowerment. This it does by drawing from a number of examples including but not limited to the perspectives of hope in an African setting, and how the phenomenon of gentrification in South Africa hinders refugee migrants from putting their glimmer of hope into better practice for their self-empowerment.

It should be noted that by ‘empowerment by hope’, I am talking about hope as a pre-condition for empowerment and not a by-product of it. A multifocal perspective on hope is presented in the two previous chapters (i.e. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3). Thus, it is not ‘hope through empowerment’ because hope is used here as a lens through which to achieve empowerment. This distinction will help the reader understand, at great length, the place of empowerment in Theology and Development within the contextual frames of the refugee phenomenon. The chapter will, hopefully, contribute to a critical awareness and appreciation of the significance and relevance of hope as a vital force in people’s lives – a kind that gives meaning to life and provides both the self and the other with a sense of identity and dignity when put into practice. Here, I present hope as a pragmatic source of inner strength for empowerment.

The chapter begins by looking at hope as a ‘missing link’ in Theology and Development discourse, which is a seeming insufficiency of existing literature on hope within the discourse, and the need for it. It then explores the concept of power and situates empowerment within the field of Theology and Development. It then proceeds with an exploration of the pre-eminence of hope in development discourse by explaining the hope-empowerment binary, which is the nexus between hope as a theological concept and empowerment as a development concept. This is followed by a discussion on the refugee phenomenon in relation to this binary before looking at the correlates of illness and hope in traditional Africa to see how this links up with the development equation in an African context. The reason for exploring the concept of hope from a traditional African perspective is because people certainly look towards a supreme being to solve their problems in life and Africans are not an exception. The hope of a traditional African person lies from the belief of a Supreme Being. Thus, African people are naturally spiritual people and are always in need of spiritual guidance from a higher spiritual order. As such, they have a history filled with various religious and cultural influences, which need to be explored if we are to be effective in our development practices.

Lastly, I provide details of the consequences of the refugee phenomenon in the practice of development and the impacts of such implications on the lives of individual refugee migrants. Concerning the latter, I discuss the process of gentrification and indicate how it affects the refugee community in South Africa. In brief, this chapter seeks to reawaken the vocation of social witness and create a lens through which the question of development could be approached in Theology and Development. This it does by looking at the impact of the refugee phenomenon on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants from a theological perspective, with a special focus on the way refugees themselves make do to reduce their migratory pressures. First, let us consider briefly what I term ‘the missing link’ in Theology and Development discourse.

## 4.2. The missing link: On the absence of hope in Theology and Development discourse

The subject at hand is the basis for Theology and Development in the context of health and wellbeing challenges due to poverty or, more particularly, the refugee phenomenon. Recognising the abundance of literature that tackles the question of development from a theological perspective over time (e.g. Bowers-du Toit, 2015; 2010; de Gruchy, 2015; Klaasen, 2013; Swart *et al.*, 2010; Swart, 2008; 2006; Ajulu, 2001; Tsele, 2001; Dickinson, 1983; Samuel & Sugden, 1987; 1999; Elliott, 1987; Parmar, 1975; Itty, 1967; etc.),<sup>76</sup> one cannot help but notice the remarkable lack of writings that focus on hope as a precondition for holistic development. As it were, theologising around the concept of development is prone to misconceptions due to the elusive and interdisciplinary nature of the concept itself. Perhaps Bowers-du Toit (2010:262) summarises this better when she observes that “development as a complex dynamic concept gives rise to many varying interpretations and schools of development thought”.

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<sup>76</sup> According to Swart (2006:1-2) the “theological and ecclesiastical concern with development originated within the very realm of what is popularly referred to in Christian theological and church circles as the ecumenical movement”. Prominent scholars from these circles included Rentdtorff, Parmar, Itty and Dickenson. In the 1980’s Ecumenicals also began to reflect on these issues and prominent scholars in this camp include Samuel & Sugden and Sider (Swart 2006:2). Among the topics South African scholars have recently dealt with include: *Religion and Social Development* (Swart *et al.*, 2010); *The Churches and the Development Debate* (Swart, 2006); *Moving from Development to Social Transformation* (Bowers-du Toit, 2010); *What has Theology Got to Do with Development?* (Bowers-du Toit, 2015).

Arguably, Theology and Development supports and encourages diversity. The need for the discipline to engage more robustly with a theological understanding of hope is of course rooted in the fact that as August (2010: xii) puts it, “the church takes development seriously because God takes pain, poverty, and the suffering in the world seriously” and, of course, grounds its action in hope.<sup>77</sup> Thus, one of the key terms in Theology and Development that requires academic attention is hope. I contend here that, as we attempt to develop communities, we aim at giving people hope so as to enable them empower themselves and eventually transform their lives. However, the lack of emphasis and focus on hope in Theology and Development literature is conspicuous.

Perhaps this lack of engagement lies within the social change – inner change dichotomy as hope appears to speak to an inner psycho-spiritual condition (in this case, hopelessness) rather than an outer material one such as poverty or marginalisation. One of the scholars who argue for holism is Deborah Ajulu. In her *Holism in Development*, she provides pointers to the “problems of development theory and practice” and suggests “proposals for solutions from a biblical perspective” (Ajulu, 2001:1). In other words, Ajulu (2001:1) advocates for holism in development by calling for what she terms “holistic empowerment” because those in need of empowerment are people that “must be treated as whole human beings”. This partly explains why the church has struggled to take part in social change and integrate or balance it with inner change as Bowers-du Toit (2015) observes. The debate on the primacy of evangelism over social action and vice versa constitutes a dichotomy that causes the church to overemphasise one aspect over the other in Christian mission. Bowers-du Toit (2015) further observes that when evangelism is overly emphasised, the focus is only inner change or one’s relationship with God. When social action is emphasised, outreach to fellow human beings becomes the thrust, hoping that it would result in social change.

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<sup>77</sup> The church is important not only because of its potential to create participatory communities at the grassroots. The church will have to assist the nation in dealing truthfully with its past. In this context, August (2010:54) argues that the church needs to set an example in accepting “our neighbour, the stranger, those who are suffering – which involves speaking against racism, sexism, xenophobia, etc.” In brief, it requires the congregation to be bold in its vision, and committed to its mission to develop an effective public (advocacy) ministry. Most of all, it requires faith and the knowledge that God’s righteousness and justice will prevail. In our incarnational, transformational, and missional approach to development, the church will always be, on the one hand, challenged and, on the other, directed by God’s measure for development

In other words, the church has tended to separate the physical from the spiritual; that is, social action from evangelism. Bowers-du Toit (2015) finds that such a dualistic attempt to detach the physical from the spiritual originates from modernism. The challenge here is that separating the physical from the spiritual is an attempt to separate social transformation from personal transformation. The latter is of course related to the centrality of eschatology within Theology and Development discourse (Samuel & Sugden, 1987:161-174; Samuel & Sugden, 1999:26-45 cf. Bowers-du Toit, 2010:433-435; Moltmann, 1970:93-100). It is, nevertheless, important to note that, for the most part, such scholars (who have largely been positioned within evangelical discourse) have been pre-occupied with ways in which dispensationalist eschatology has hindered the churches involvement in development, rather than focusing on how eschatology could engage it or be engaged by the marginalised themselves.

Nevertheless, there are scholars, for example, Bragg (1987) in his article, *Development as Transformation*, and Moltmann (1970) in his working paper, *The Christian Theology of Hope and Its Bearing on Development*, who have made a contribution to the subject of hope, recognising it as a distinctive marker of holistic development. This indicates the importance of hope in development. Indeed, as Moltmann (1970:97) argues, development is not only about “the calculable future”, but also about “the wished-for future” and “the hoped-for future”. Thus, the focus of God’s concern for the future, whether calculable, wished-for or hoped-for is holistic development. This entails holism in every aspect of the human self. These “futures”, which Moltmann argues for, are not only futuristic but also of present-time significance. This provides pointers to the fact that development theories that are based on mere economic growth have to be subjected to criticism by Christian theology, particularly by those in the field of Theology and Development (cf. Samuel & Sugden 1999:264-266; Bragg 1987:21; Elliott, 1987:11-13). More so, it may explain why a focus on “the hoped-for future”, to use Moltmann’s rhetoric, is of crucial necessity in the Theology and Development. This “missing link” is, therefore, considered necessary in this research in order to face the development challenge from a Christian perspective.

Elliott (1987:83) highlights the necessity of hope in Theology and Development through his discussion on injustice although he does not necessarily speak about hope. In his book *Comfortable Compassion?* he argues for “a passion for justice [that] comes from the experience of injustice”. Thus, Theology and Development theory and practice ought to

explore the question of hope for justice in a world of injustice. Elliot (1987:83) further points out that “(t)he essence of law, of justice, is that it protects the weak from the strong”. This entails a re-visitation of the way we do mission today and a critical look at the role of the church in society from the perspective of Theology and Development so as to see the need for exploring the perspectives of hope within the discourse. Christian theology demands that all people enjoy the God-given blessings of creation equally because all are created in the image of God and all are given the privilege of enjoying this creation equally. The hope to achieve this needs to be address from the perspective of Theology and Development.<sup>78</sup>

### 4.3. The concept of power and empowerment within both Development, and Theology and Development

In his explanation of the term ‘empowerment’, Weisberg (1999:15-17) uses the notion of power as illustration. Weisberg (1999:15) finds that the meaning of power is linked to the ability, capacity or authority to act. This could be concretised in various ways such as (i) “physical exertion (as in moving an object), [(ii)] by virtue of legal position (as a policeman has power) or [(iii)] as a result of one’s persuasive skills” (Weisberg, 1999:16, 17). When used in a technical context by social scientists, however, the concept of power is purely relational as seen in the power of one person (or group) over another. Thus, the power to lift heavy weights, for example, lies outside the discussions of empowerment. Empowerment implies, for instance, the power of *x* involves getting *y* to do something that *y* would not otherwise do, or securing something similarly desired by *y*.

To say that “local citizens have more power than refugee migrants” could mean, among other things, that local citizens can control refugee migrants or they can acquire more successfully what is collectively preferred such as wealth, employment, education, etc. than refugee migrants. In view of this, “[the] process of taking control of one’s destiny is essentially

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<sup>78</sup> As it were, theology has to do with the whole of creation because the God who created order out of disorder created the universe with a purpose, and this purpose has to do with the wellbeing of humanity. According to Lim (2008), the biblical accounts of creation and of God’s activities leave us in no doubt that God’s concern in creation is focused primarily on the human being (cf. Genesis 1:27, 28). That is to say, the God revealed in and through the Bible is a God who acts in history; and God’s acts in history have always been in relation to human beings. In this way, Theology and Development offers a greater awareness of the relationship between the church and the society, particularly the necessity of the church’s involvement and the role it plays in the development equation

a matter of taking power [...] to confront the people, the institutions and the relationships that seek to use one as an object to be disposed of, as a pawn in their own game” (Elliott, 1987:78). In other words, the poor and marginalised need power in order to be in control of their situation. That is to say, they need to be empowered but for that to be achieved, “a particular instance or institution [must] be confronted” (Elliott, 1987:102).<sup>79</sup>

Weisberg’s reflection on the intricate notion of power, as already alluded to above, is suggestive of the complexity of the concept of empowerment. Taking his theory of power into consideration, “to empower” and “to be empowered” befit the provision and the acquisition of power respectively. Hence, Weisberg (1999:16) argues that empowerment does not result in the unhappiness of the powerful because what power produces is entirely an empirical determination. Thus, on the one hand, “to empower” is bestowing authority and/or bequeathing power in an attempt to enable the other. On the other hand, “to be empowered” becomes the act, not only of getting the power but also of assuming it. Thus, empowerment involves activity when one considers its remarkable binary of being an act of bequeathing power and the ability to assume bequeathed power.

Elliott (1987:101) finds that for the powerless in the society to assume power, they need to be conscientised so they can “take as central the category of power”. The centrality of power is, thus, of great importance to the development discourse particularly to the concept of empowerment. It is in the same context of the centrality of power and the realisation thereof by those in a powerless position that Elliott (1987:102) draws parallelism between the power of whites to that of blacks, which is now being challenged by the latter, or the power of men over women, which is also being challenged by women, etc. Elliott’s point is that power needs to be challenged for the purposes of community empowerment and holistic development. Within the recent ecumenical discourse on *diakonia*, there is a recognition of the manner in which *diakonia* as a Christian response has in the past been “characterised by actions of

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<sup>79</sup> The church should serve as a ‘relatively’ successful catalyst for development. The degree of success is related to the availability of resources and the ability of the church to advance development. This is why Elliott (1987:57) argues that “(t)he church has to identify and ally itself with alternative structures that seem to have less evil consequences for the poor”. Such alliance with alternative structures indicates that, for the church, development has two dimensions: theological and contextual. Theologically, the church’s vision of its mission and motivation must emerge out of its fundamental understanding of the nature of God. Contextually, this development process must promote self-reliance in meeting basic human needs. Thus, the church is a valued catalyst for community empowerment within the holistic development paradigm. In this prospect, there is binding connection between social development and transformation from the ecclesial point of view, but which raises great challenges

reaching out to the marginalised (which would indeed include refugee migrants). Such response is from locations of power and privilege with resources and infrastructure” and, therefore, directly critiques the positionality of Western change agents in such contexts (Ham 2014:385). Here, Ham (2014:387) here also significantly notes that Jesus himself rejects abusive power (Luke 4:1-12) and “refuses to be co-opted by the prevailing logic of power”.

Empowerment as a process begins by identifying human needs. One can deduce, therefore, that empowerment is a strategically planned process of change grounded on the participation of people. Here, it should be noted that participation by the community is a prerequisite, and that the process is initiated by and driven from within the community itself so that development can be holistic. Empowerment is here considered as both a designed method and an active process. As a formal method, it mobilises resources and creates community organisations. As an active process, it is a learning practice made possible through participation, initiative and evaluation. Thus, empowerment starts with what is already happening in the community. Ultimately, the community will be exposed to new knowledge even as new actions are planned. Perhaps August’s (2010) definition captures the term ‘empowerment’ better when he defines it as a process of equipping the community to decide and take action within the context of their own development needs.

According to Ajulu (2001:10), empowerment is a more suitable alternative to development. Thus, empowerment is not only about providing people what they need to have but also (and most importantly) about providing them what is needed so that they can have what they need. It is about equipping people with the skills, the knowledge and/or the expertise that will enable them to provide for themselves what they need. However, this does not rule out the material. To equip people with the skill to plough, it suffices to offer adequate tools for agriculture to begin with. To equip them with the knowledge of animal husbandry, it would be prudent to provide what is necessary for shepherding. The ultimate goal of community empowerment should be self-sustenance or self-reliance

Development processes normally require an external catalyst to facilitate the start of the process and to support its growth especially in its early phases. Agents of change can contribute in different ways to the development of a community including raising awareness, capacity building, facilitation, organisational trainings, leadership development, etc. (cf. De

Beer & Swanepoel 2011:67-74). A change agent is a person (physical or moral) who plays a very special role in development by initiating a process of change; however, people must feel and believe that it is their own efforts that are driving the development process. Agency by the people in need of empowerment entails self-reliance. In view of this, no one can make people self-reliant, they become such. Self-reliance is to do things for oneself, making independent decisions either as an individual or within the context of a collective group, which is pivotal for community empowerment.

Considering these definitions, one realises that empowerment is an active process that makes power available to the community. Thus, development processes are sustainable only when people's participation and empowerment are central to the equation. Holistic development should, therefore, be characterised by participation, empowerment and sustainability. In other words, people themselves must participate in their own development and have sufficient power to influence sustainable change (cf. De Beer & Swanepoel 2011:50-53; Bragg 1987:37-95). Thus, empowerment is traditionally understood as a process whereby people are given power to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems.

Development must be people-centred. That is to say, people are both the object (i.e., the phenomenon to be developed), and the subject (i.e. they are the ones who determine developmental processes)<sup>80</sup> (cf. Klaasen 2013:189). The challenge, however, is for those in position of power to transfer some of the power the privileged often cling to without regard for the less privileged such as refugee migrants. In this regard, Ajulu (2001:14) notes that power is the resource, capacity and means for empowerment. The notion of power within the practice of empowerment, therefore, indicates that Theology and Development seeks to resist dehumanising structures that exist in the world today so that God's *shalom* community – a community of peace, love, and joy is realised on earth. This is why confronting social injustice is 'part and parcel' of any Christian engagement with empowerment.

Within *diakonia* discourses, there has been a distinct shift away from engaging "in various projects and activities on behalf of those who were suffering" – engagements which

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<sup>80</sup> Both descriptions imply a dynamic process with various stages, dimensions and resources rather than a closed system. Thirdly, development is broad and holistic and cannot be reduced to any one dimension (Klaasen, 2013:189).

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relied on significant financial and skills resources from the West – towards a more political understanding of *diakonia*, which recognises the need for empowerment and agency (Gill, Donseung and Phiri 2014:249-250). As such, “(r)ecent discussions on ecumenical diakonia have begun to recognise that the so-called margins that had been the recipients and beneficiaries of diakonia can actually be lifted up as rightful subjects and actors of diakonia in their communities”. Thus, if we are to address and/or deal with the health and wellbeing challenges facing the refugee community from a Theology and Development perspective that recognises the need for people to participate in their own development, then we need to explore what causes those challenges from their own knowledge and lived experiences. This is because refugee migrants are also agents in the process of their own empowerment.

Ham (2014:387) notes in a far more radical manner the need within the context of *diakonia* to not always see marginalised and poor people as those in need and despair. He in fact notes that the marginalised themselves “resist injustice in their own ways and through their struggles for life, justice, dignity and rights for themselves and for all, unveil the presence and power of God in their lives” (Ham 2014:387). He further notes that “the world may tend to see the margins as places of disgrace and powerlessness; however, the biblical witness points toward God who is always present in the struggles of those unjustly pushed to the margins of society” (Ham 2014:387).

The motivation to look at empowerment by hope from the perspective of integral mission is *shalom community*, in which harmony and justice reign forever under the lordship of Christ- the vision of a hoped for future. For people to experience holistic development there also has to be a spiritual transformation as mission is integral. Therefore, the spiritual aspect of development is to be considered at all times (cf. Myers, 1999:134, 135). In other words, the goal of empowerment could be said to be the holistic transformation of human conditions, human relationships, the entire society and the rest of the created world. Here, some evangelical scholars arguing from the integral mission standpoint highlight the need to see the church’s engagement with the “principalities and powers” with regard to poverty, not only in terms of the kind of prophetic or political *diakonia* implied by Phiri and Donseung (2014:255, 256), but also in terms of recognising the “inner spirituality” and fallenness of “earthly institutions of structures” (Maggay, 2009:26; see also Christian in Myers 1999:107). Here, the church as a community of faith rooted in these contexts must “proclaim the message of the cross, which

bears the power to disarm, subvert and even redeem the powers and principalities that seek to keep communities captive” and prevent *shalom* (restoration, wellbeing, reconciliation) in all its dimensions (Bowers-du Toit, 2014).

Empowerment is also about seeking the restoration and affirmation of those on the margin of dignity. The dignity and worth of the marginalised are not to be found in views of themselves or others but they are “imputed ... by the love of God” (Koopman 2007, 180)<sup>81</sup>. This faith conviction by the poor and marginalised, de Gruchy (2003:23) argues, “may provide a powerful bulwark” against the many dehumanizing experiences faced by those on the margins. De Gruchy (2003:34) also emphasises the agency of the poor against the background of an understanding of God-given vocation and argues that: “this is the message of the Gospel for the poor, that they are both made in the image of God and called to be actors in the drama of creation and salvation itself”. The poor, he further observes, “are not, and cannot be, simply passive objects of history, but are invited to be subjects of their own history” (de Gruchy, 2003:34).

Any approach to Theology and Development, therefore, must begin from where people are – no matter their social, economic, cultural, religious position (cf. Parpiala & Simango, 2014:331, 332). In other words, we can hardly achieve development without partnering with the less privileged, both men and women. As long as they are not empowered and considered equal to those in a privileged situation, there will be no change in development. Indeed, development starts from the power of the ‘powerless’, from the literacy of the ‘illiterate’, from the ability of the ‘disabled’, from the ‘have’ of the ‘have-nots’, etc. (cf. August, 2010).

There is another dimension, which hinders empowerment within the refugee community and this has to do with the power of those in a privileged position or the local elite. Because they are powerful, they tend to exploit the less privileged or powerless in the society (cf. Elliot, 1987:82). It is in this context that the less privileged such as refugee migrants, at times, consciously enter into dependency relationships with those who are well off. When this happens, they borrow money from their wealthy ‘friends’ to solve their own problems and enter

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<sup>81</sup> Men and women created in the image of God would feel restored to full humanity as the *imago Dei*, and since God’s concern is for the entire humanity (i.e. refugee migrants included), this is also the scope of the *Missio Dei*.

in a moral (or actual) obligation to reimburse the money. The vicious circles of refugees' challenges need to be broken for development's sake.<sup>82</sup>

By analysing refugees' vicious circles one comes to understand that some of the causes are economic, others are social, political, and others even physical and spiritual. The level of these causes may be local, regional, national, and even international. Also there might be some secondary causes which could be added to the primary ones. These primary and/or secondary causes would help us identify the root causes of refugees' challenges. Once the root causes are identified then strategies can be developed and priorities set for helping the people to break their vicious circles of poverty and begin their own process of development through self-empowerment.

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#### 4.4. The pre-eminence of hope in development discourse

In view of the fact that hope is not much explored as a resource or pre-condition for development within the field of Theology and Development, and considering the centrality of power within the concept of empowerment, it is necessary to refocus our attention on the nexus between hope and empowerment in development discourse. This is what I term here the 'hope-empowerment binary'. This binary highlights the role of and need for hope in daily life particularly the lives of refugee migrants. In addition, having drawn attention to the dualistic tendency in many social scientists, the binary will exemplify the need for holism in the development practice. In other words, it will show why holistic development is of great importance in the lives of refugee migrants who face challenges in relation to their health and wellbeing. The pre-eminence of hope in the development practice is indicative of the need to combine the secular and the religious for the purpose of human development. That is to say, hope and empowerment are vital for holistic human development. This is evidenced by the fact that hope and empowerment are an inseparable binary. Therefore, I am not going to redefine empowerment (a brief definitional context of empowerment in this research is given in Section 1.7 followed by a more expanded one in Section 4.3); rather, I will simply demonstrate from

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<sup>82</sup> What is meant by a vicious circle here is that – one problem causes another, which in turn, causes a third, and keep finding new linkages until we are right back where we started from; and the circle starts all over again.

existing literature how hope and empowerment work together as a binary in order to achieve holism in the development practice.

#### 4.4.1. Decoding the hope-empowerment binary in the theory and practice of development

Arguably, hope and hopelessness are two distinct but correlated constructs. Hope can act as a resilience factor that protects someone against the impact of hopelessness on various issues including health and wellbeing. This being the case, including hope in refugee migrants may be a promising avenue for challenging dehumanising tendencies and structures against them and, in so doing, give them power to empower themselves. This is why ‘cracking the code’ of this binary will help us understand the centrality and necessity of hope in Theology and Development. Here, one would argue that it is hope that provides avenues for development practices and, for that reason, its binary with empowerment is pre-eminent. Thus, hope and empowerment work in partnership, forming a coherent mutuality, which embodies a secular-religious nexus.

Nevertheless, hope has been overlooked as an element that could play a role in community engagement. Here I view hope as an ignored lens through which empowerment could be explored within the development equation. This may explain why such a binary often gives rise to reluctance among academics and development agencies, particularly with regards to the integration of religious matters into mainstream development approaches (see Carbonnier, 2012:1). The reasons cited include the premise according to which matters of faith are private and, therefore, do not necessitate a scientific uptake. Such perception is based on the argument that rationality alone can be considered a tool for gathering available evidence (empirical or conceptual) and assessing it deductively or inductively (see Clark, 2004:92).

However, reason alone often falls short of making sense of the realities of the world. Thus, there is no development without hope. This means that faith and reason are complementary and not contradictory. Reason properly used and faith properly understood can never beget competing claims (McGeer, 2008:239; Swindal, 2001:37). Researchers in the area of religion and development (see for example Carbonnier, 2012:1; Marshall, 2001:339; Beek, 2000:36) note that hope, like most subjects of faith, remains under-represented, marginal or

ignored in the development discourse although debates on its role in the practice of development are on-going worldwide.

Tamas (1999:7) describes development as “a process in which people become more active agents in improving their circumstances”, while the UNGA (1986) defines it as a “constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals”. This implies that a human person is at the centre of the development practice – hence, development which is not aimed at improving the wellbeing of a human person is no development (Weissberg, 1999:33; Tamas, 1999:8).<sup>83</sup> As it were, a human person is a trichotomic being consisting of body, soul and mind, which represent the physical, the spiritual and the cognitive/emotional aspects of a person respectively.

Development attempts for community empowerment need to target the whole of a person, the body (i.e. physical part of the self), the soul (his/her spiritual self), and the mind or the emotional self. This is what constitutes holistic development. The failure to include the emotional and the spiritual aspects of the self in the development equation, therefore, often reduces the effectiveness of development research or interventions, and deprives any development activity of its vitality or sustainability (see Carbonnier, 2012:1; Beek, 2000:31; Tamas, 1999:7, 8). Thus, refugee migrants put their hope into practice for the purpose of self-empowerment in order to achieve the hoped-for or desired goals. In this way, it suffices to say that refugees’ holistic development and particularly their empowerment rests on true hope, which is not “a kite at the mercy of the changing winds” (Tasker, 1962:535) but “an anchor for the soul, firm and secure” (Hebrews 6:19).

The contention here is that all fields of research are meant to address the issues affecting the whole person to ensure improved wellbeing. Thus, Practical Theology is not only concerned with ‘spiritual’ matters but also all the aspects of human experience including the material and the volitional (cf. Beek, 2000:31). Practical Theology, indeed, links the secular and the religious in order to bring the physical, the emotional, the volitional and the spiritual aspects of the self to a deeper reflection of the realities of the world – these include the widespread refugee phenomenon with its consequential challenges. Theology and Development, therefore, intersects religious and secular matters in an attempt to generate renewed hope for

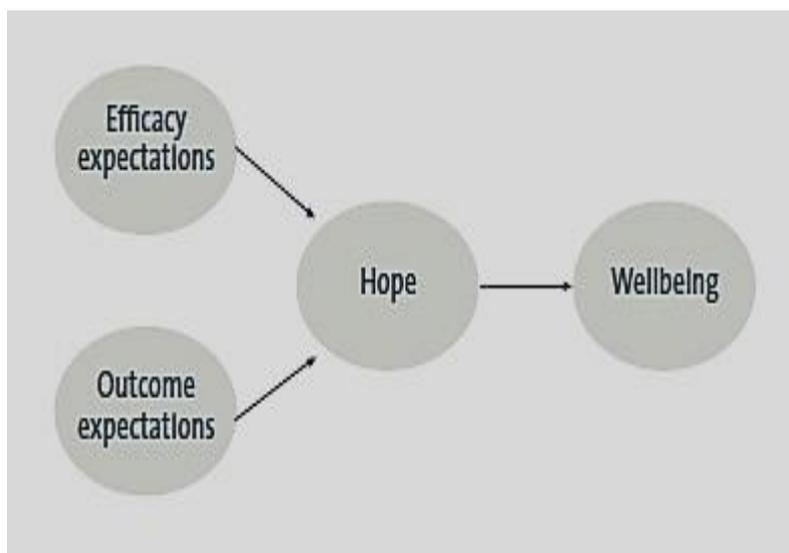
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<sup>83</sup> This is commonly referred to as ‘people-centred development’

empowerment. Here, it is safe to deduce that before there is development, there is hope for development.

The hope-empowerment binary is reminiscent of the un-breakability of the immaterial self from the material; much like the mutuality of Theology and Development in Practical Theology. This binary alleviates despondency and despair, achieves desires and dreams, justifies ambitions and aspirations, meets goals and objectives, and deepens confidence and trust. In the words of Marshall (2001:339), the hope-empowerment binary provides “a different lens” to the on-going debates concerning the role of religion and/or faith in a seemingly secular sphere of influence such as development. It is an excellent alternative for pursuing livelihoods and attaining holistic wellbeing.

Arguably, hope is an asset to be used for development purposes; a suitable and useful development resource to offer because, if properly utilised, it empowers. Sutton *et al.* (2011:34), for example, finds that beneath the surface of refugees’ challenges lies what he calls the “purgatory of asylum” particularly when it comes to applying for proper documents. Such is the description of refugees’ lived experiences in South Africa, which calls for the practice of the binary of hope and empowerment. However, even in such a purgatory-like situation that refugees find themselves in, their prospects of improved wellbeing are not overtly shattered. There is a life that actuates hope even amid difficult circumstances. Development theorists and practitioners offer little acknowledgement of the role of hope in the development discourse, particularly in community empowerment (Carbonnier, 2012:4; Beek, 2000:45), which creates a substantial gap in the theory and practice of development. To address this gap, the Clemente Australia model (cf. ACU, 2012), a programme that aims at overcoming disadvantages and promoting social inclusion, describes hope as a “positive view of the future”. Following the model, it is the growth in hope that increases human wellbeing in all its aspects as schematically expressed in Figure 6.

**Figure 5: The central role of hope in wellbeing as per the Clemente Australia model**

One of the major arguments in this research is the premise that in the theory and practice of development hope is concretised throughout or during the process of community empowerment. Thus, empowerment is a process through which a person builds the capacity and gains the opportunity to act unaided (Weisberg, 1999:18), which then allows the person to take charge of his/her own destiny. The hope-empowerment binary becomes the practice connecting the human self to the dimension of social action unaided, which explains why empowerment by hope as a theoretical framework for community empowerment has a critical role to play in the socio-economic life of the human self. This could be said of refugee migrants as they evidently use the prowess of the hope-empowerment binary to act unaided in many a context. It may also be the reason hope has taken on increasing significance within the refugee community, their seemingly hopeless situations notwithstanding. As it were, refugee migrants relentlessly maximise their efforts for improved wellbeing in an attempt to build renewed hope and create opportunities for holistic development. This they do in spite of the emotionally disturbing events they experience or the socially distressing circumstances they encounter on a daily basis. Theirs are actions anchored and empowered by hope.

When expressed in certain extremes including dreaming, naïveté, denial, etc. hope often turns out to be false, upsetting and hurtful. This explains why false hope a sheer disregard of reality. The importance of hope is that it is a key to personal transformation. One rarely seeks change without some expectation of a positive outcome. In this regard, Stanley Gross (2014:25) finds that hope is an opening to the future. As such, hope could be said to be the “oil that greases the skids of change by posing the possibility that we can improve on our lives” (Gross, 2014:21). However, as Swart (2010:249) argues, “the problem is ‘out there’ and change needs to take place ‘out there’” suggesting the need to develop an empowerment by hope consciousness in in order to effect change “out there”. This should be done in view of the fact that it is hope that enables the anticipation of progress in a positive direction and offers an insight of achievement. Hope tends to produce action in the direction of realising the hoped-for, thus, stimulating the human self to bring energy and commitment to situations. While our personal needs, values, and beliefs engender hope, it gains form and direction through our volitional selves.

Ferris (1993:66) points out that people leave their countries because they are either “unable to survive or afraid to live there”. Their flight is not only reminiscent of their fear but also of their hope to survive. Ferris’ sentiments imply that, for some people, home might be the most dangerous place ever to live and asylum could be the sole alternative. It is, nevertheless, the case that refugees strive for local integration in the mainstream South African society regardless of the discriminatory treatments they endure or the constant fear of looming xenophobic attacks (Amit *et al.*, 2009:46; Okoth-Obbo, 2001:19; Solomon, 2001:9). Here, the hope-empowerment binary is a resource for integral development, which refugee migrants in South Africa use commendably well.

According to Gutto (2001:54), refugee migrants together with those who protect and/or provide for them have always been leading the way for innovative ideas on how to deal with the complexities of their problems. However, the inadequacies and limitations of existing approaches in realising such ideas appear apparent in the challenges that refugees face on a daily basis (Matlou, 2001:11). Such challenges render refugee migrants unable to do what they would otherwise do. Nevertheless, as the world keeps changing, new contexts transpire. With regards to the emerging trend of looking at old problems in new ways, there is a higher possibility that new products can be developed, new ways of working can be devised and new modalities or paradigms can emerge in order to ameliorate the lives of refugee migrants and

make them less risky, and a bit more sustainable (Majodina, 2001:69; Joseph, 2001:23). As hope is rekindled, empowerment becomes more and more of a possibility for the refugee migrants. Thus, the hope-empowerment binary is resourceful for refugees' holistic development.

The love of or concern for the immaterial remains irrelevantly partial and abstract to those whose hope is in less supply; those in abject conditions of life. It is service to and/or care for the material that concretises love and generates germane hope to them – a hope they can, in turn, put into action for their improved wellbeing. This is the pragmatic role of hope in transformational human development (McGeer, 2008:242). Yet, the contemporary global society often substitutes such pragmatism of hope with scientific improvements and technological advancements (McGeer, 2008:243). As a result, hope in action is identified erroneously with religiosity and as merely a social matter with no Christian dimension. For this reason, Botman (2001:63; cf. Section 3.3.3) finds that the complexities of the hope concept are premised thus: to live a hopeless life is to live a miserable life – both in time and in eternity. Accordingly, to alleviate today's hopeless situation, hope needs an anchoring in action – hence, the necessity of horizontal acts of service to uphold human dignity and honour God as theorised here in the hope-empowerment binary.

#### 4.4.2. Waiting in hope: a development resource for self-empowerment

It is safe to state that Theology and Development covers a wide range of academic areas for the purpose of holistic wellbeing. In this regard, various actors put the hope-empowerment binary into practice in various ways. Some of the actors here are refugee migrants in Cape Town. Their case provides evidence to the fact that hope empowers despite the myriad challenges they often face. Their case is also the reason hope is viewed as a resource for development and a subject area that needs attention in Theology and Development circles. As it were, the refugee phenomenon is a complex challenge. It points out different problems of varied spectra from security and social fear to an increase in discrimination and xenophobia or even the criminalisation of refugee migrants (Chambers, 1986:31). Such social ills only aggravate the matter but do not provide answers to the real needs of humanity neither do they offer valid alternatives to the refugee problem in South Africa. However, refugee migrants find alternatives, which they employ as coping mechanisms for survival. One such alternative is the ability to wait patiently in hope.

Most of us find waiting in the most mundane circumstances almost unbearable. We associate it with helplessness and powerlessness because the length and outcome of the wait is not quite within our control. Often we feel that our time is ‘wasted’ when we are made to wait. Nevertheless, as other studies have pointed out (see for example Jacobsen, 2012:102; Buscher, 2011:95; Belvedere, 2007:89), it is the very act of waiting in hope that transforms the waiting experience of refugee migrants and gives them meaning and purpose. Their patient waiting is based on the longing for a new identity and a new life. Waiting therefore does not always signal powerlessness for the refugee migrants. It is rather a coping mechanism and an act of resilience in their efforts to rebuild their lives even when circumstances show that there are no reasonable grounds for doing so.

As it were, the life of a refugee is a life of constant waiting. Refugees live in limbo as they do not belong fully to their country of origin or their country of asylum. In South Africa, they are compelled to wait in long queues (e.g. at the DHA), even for days, before being attended to (Landau, 2011:41). Their waiting is hard physically considering the hours and days spent in the sun, the nights spent in the cold and unprotected from opportunistic criminals. Emotionally, there are moments of despair (like when the long wait does not get them to the front of the queue by the end of the day) and moments of fear that asylum might still be denied, even with such long wait.

In this regard, Sutton *et al.* (2011:31) notes that “the more power, the less waiting; the less power, the more waiting”. In other words, waiting is associated with the powerless and ‘not-waiting’ with the powerful. Refugees are often made to wait in long queues (which often take days) expecting something, anything or nothing to happen. Their waiting, however, is not a waste of time or ‘[b]eing without [t]ime’ as Günther Anders (1965:140) says of Samuel Beckett’s (2006) play, *Waiting for Godot*, in which the two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, wait for a certain Godot who never comes. The two have no idea who this Godot is and do not even know what he wants. At the end of the day, when Godot does not show up, they take care of their disappointments by waiting for him the following day.

Like the waiting of Vladimir and Estragon, the waiting of refugee migrants involves disappointments, frustrations and despair but, at the same time, it is fanned with a great sense of hope. It also involves, on the one hand, despair and frustrations because of the fear that the long wait might culminate in not getting on top of the queue at the end of the day and, on the

other hand, hope because the long wait is based on the longing for a new identity (see Sutton *et al.* 2011:32; Belvedere, 2007:43). Thus, refugees' waiting is not a hopeless situation but rather a resilient waiting. This waiting in hope is a virtue that gives meaning to their existence. For them, waiting is a state of being and, therefore, a quality of life. This is because refugees live in a constant state of waiting: they are made to wait when in need of services from public offices; they wait for the situation in their respective countries to stabilise so they could return home; they wait in long queues at the DHA for their documents to be processed; and they wait in hope for a better tomorrow. Accordingly, refugees' everyday life narrates a waiting story. It recounts a story of hope put into action and evidenced in waiting patiently and with confidence for the outcome of their situation.

Hope finds resonance with the act of waiting in patience. In Greek, the word 'patience' (i.e. *Hupomoné*, cf. Strong #5281) suggests bearing up a heavy load from the oppressor on the shoulder and abiding under such difficult circumstances when it is not possible to escape. Waiting in patience is therefore concomitant to long-suffering (Brown & Falkenroth, 1976:766). Nevertheless, to use Sutton *et al.*'s (2011:31) words, "it is hope that makes the powerless persevere and (...) ultimately makes waiting a phenomenon that is socially productive". That is to say, when one waits patiently in hope, the wait becomes socially productive considering that hope empowers the person waiting with the strength and a resilient courage to endure the duration of the wait. In agreement with Sutton *et al.* (2011:36), one is justified to claim that hope transforms refugees' waiting into a socially productive and resourceful weapon. It generates enough strength and breeds the ability to wait patiently in spite of the fact that prevailing circumstances do not give any reason to do so or even though there are no rational grounds for it. In this regard, Bultmann and Rengstorf (1963:37) describe hope as follows:

[Hope] is not directed towards realising a picture of the future as projected by man, but is the trust in God which turns away from itself and the world, which waits patiently for God's gift, and which, when He has given it, does not consider it to be a possession at one's own disposal, but is confidently assured that God also will maintain what He has bestowed.

This reflection by Bultmann and Rengstorf (1963:32–34) may explain why hope is realised in patience. Thus, waiting patiently in hope is a strategy to pursue improved livelihoods for survival. Hope is patient waiting with assurance. Such waiting is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and

it is based on the work of salvation. Hope is realised in the present in that holistic development rests on such hope. It is the hope which does not depend on human possessions, on what the self is able to do for him/herself or on what he/she is able to do for the other.

A refugee migrant does not hope for the wellbeing of the self; rather, for that of all the other refugees. He/she does not hope for the improved livelihoods which he/she does not wish to share with others. When he/she hopes for a better tomorrow, he/she hopes that his/her fellow refugees will too improve their livelihoods and overcome the challenges of 'refugeeness'. Such is African communalism as practically expressed in the *Ubuntu* way of life.<sup>84</sup> Johan Cilliers (2008) takes the concept of *Ubuntu* further when he says that *Ubuntu* is about trust, helpfulness, respect, sharing, caring, unselfishness, etc., and that it is rooted in interconnectedness and interdependence. What this means is that when the community of faith upholds *Ubuntu* for spirituality purposes, the unity of members would be affirmed and the diversity of cultures endorsed. Cilliers (2008:9) argues that xenophobia is *Ubuntu* reversed because 'in *Ubuntu* we face one another [but] in xenophobia we turn our faces from one another'. To an African, therefore, xenophobia is deemed inhuman as it goes against the ethos of *Ubuntu*. In fact, xenophobia dehumanises the other.

Considering that the majority of refugee participants in this research are from African countries, the interpretation of illness and the practice of hope as per African spirituality require a special mention within the broader context of development discourse. As it were, most refugees have set up profitable livelihoods in a place they still do not call home. This is not unique to immigrants around the world, where income is commonly linked to remittance.<sup>85</sup> According to the World Bank data, remittance inflow in South Africa amounts to USD 1.123 million (or 3% of the country's GDP). Migrant remittance outflow amounts to USD 1.32 million. Much of this money goes to education, investments, and domestic consumption. A recent research conducted in early 2013 highlights that remittances sent to Africa by Africans in the diaspora outweighs the ODA sent to Africa by Western donors (Doyle, 2013). The most

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<sup>84</sup> The term *Ubuntu* can be literally translated as 'humanness' in English. It is the lifestyle of living in togetherness as human beings; it can be likened to the socio-economic system of *Ujamaa* in Tanzania. Many scholars have come up with different and insightful definitions of *Ubuntu*, but all theories convergent to the idea that *Ubuntu* is rooted in collectiveness and solidarity. This collective lifestyle is the kind of lifestyle many people live in many African countries.

<sup>85</sup> The term remittance could colloquially be explained as the money earned by a foreign worker and sent to their home country. According to Belvedere (2007:23), when it comes to remittance, foreigners are celebrated on an international level but in South Africa refugees tend to be criminalised when sending remittances home.

recent year for which meaningful comparisons can be made is the year 2010 when the African diaspora remitted \$51.8 billion to the continent. In the same year, according to the World Bank figures, ODA to Africa was USD 43 billion (Doyle, 2013).

This is similar for all developing countries. Remittances from those coming from developing countries totalled \$350bn; far higher than official Western aid totalling USD 130 billion. Besides, about 75% of remittances to Africa by Africans are sent informally – and this cannot be tracked (Doyle, 2013). Clearly, it would be to the benefit of South Africa if the local community and government sees immigrants as valuable members of the mainstream South African community both economically and socially.

## 4.5. The correlates of illness and hope for healing in African spirituality

Due to the transdisciplinary nature of development, Theology and Development has also something to do with the quest for identity. As it were, ‘being’ and ‘belonging’ is an established challenge affecting the wellbeing of refugee migrants. Part of the church’s agency, therefore, is to accompany refugee migrants in their quest for sustainable livelihood and improved wellbeing. The mutual bond between the field of theology and that of development leads to the church’s engagement with social, economic and political realities on daily basis. Thus, it is an engagement between theology and daily happenings in the society, which involves (re)defining the agency of the church in a cultural or traditional African setting. Hope, therefore, must form the background for any meaningful discussion on development. Thus, development cannot be limited to economic growth in order to be authentic. That is to say, development is impossible if people are not given priority.

In the development discourse, culture is always a very controversial subject. Modernists assume that traditional societies are ‘underdeveloped’, and that their values and traditional practices cause underdevelopment. In this context, they claim that their idea of development is *par excellence* the best and would fit in any given culture. However, holistic development must always be appropriate to the culture, which is to be transformed because all cultures are part of God’s good creation. Too often modernists have ignored customs and social patterns in an

attempt to bring material benefits to the ‘backward’ communities. The result has been cultural imperialism and the destruction of indigenous values – even of whole cultures (cf. Bragg 1987:22-27). The relation between theology and culture will always exhibit a dialectical tension. Nevertheless, the task is to remain as aware and critically constructive as possible and respect indigenous knowledge (cf. Myers 1999:137-147). This indicates the need to consider two issues in relation to development and culture. Firstly, we are living in a context where there are different cultures, and a strategic question to ask would be – is there a dominant one? Secondly, all people and cultures are interdependent. But what about the cases in which some cultures/ethnic groups treat others as subordinate? Too many examples abound.

As Jesse Mugambi (1989) observes, culture has six main pillars; namely, politics, economics, ethics, aesthetics, kinship and religion.<sup>86</sup> Out of these, religion is “by far the richest part of the African heritage” because it is found in all areas of human life (Mugambi, 1989:52). That is, it shapes people’s social life including their cultures, their politics, their economics, etc. While religion is “closely bound up with the traditional way of African life”, it is, at the same time, shaped by this same way of life (cf. Miranda 2010:270). We must, therefore, acknowledge that any development discourse in Africa will have to be done within the context of socio-religious pluralism because, indeed, Africa is socially replete with plural faith traditions. This is why, according to Burkey (1993:41), development agency should certainly lead to change in social situations and/or cultural practices. Thus, the special contribution by traditional values to the pressing needs of the society should be recognised and appreciated. This is because the poor, less privileged and marginalised in our society will participate in the process of change when they see that such change is to their advantage.

Nicholas Mbogu (1991:217), another renowned African scholar, argues that the pluralism of the Christian religion is made manifest by God Himself who made it possible for every nation under heaven to “hear them preaching in his own native language” on that first day of the birth of the Church (cf. Acts 2:11). There is a theology for every situation. Mbogu further argues that the search for an African theology or the wave of cultural consciousness sweeping through the continent is inevitably both a natural outcome and an inescapable demand of the fact that the Christian faith has come to dwell on African soil. This also calls for a clearer

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<sup>86</sup> This does not however mean that there are no other pillars that manifest culture in Africa

applied Christology to counter the various images of Christ by most traditions in the African society.<sup>87</sup> Thus a relevant Theology and Development programme for Africa must take into consideration the many dimensions of cultural, socio-political and religious lives in which Africans find themselves in. In this way, a Christology borne out of cultural reflection will produce an ecclesial community where everyone is a “first born son [or daughter] and a citizen of heaven” (cf. Hebrews 12:23).

The practice of hope in a religiously pluriform traditional African society is concomitant to the structure of humanity, which has been exposed, *inter alia*, to political abuse of power with its negative corollaries. Any contextual theology of interest to African communities, therefore, ought to be sensitive to this reality. It also ought to address pressing issues facing the communities that require solution with imperative immediacy. In this way, questions could be asked: what role does hope play in a traditional African society considering Africa’s pluralistic context and the multi-varied interpretations of illness? How does African spirituality inform Theology and Development in its attempts to empower African communities? This section seeks to address this problem, which would be a resource for development agency when dealing with communities of African origin.

Because development considers “a holistic view of people” as Myers (1999:135) finds, the practice of spirituality in a traditional African society is linked to the quotidian practices of life which needs to benefit from this “whole gospel message” (Myers, 1999:134) that Theology and Development seeks to presents. In view of this, one could argue, when exploring, researching on or simply discussing Africa, it is very unrealistic to make general remarks about African community groups. It would be incorrect of anyone to suggest that individuals or community groups in Africa are all the same in every aspect of life. It would also be naïve, particularly, for a researcher to claim being an authority in the ways in which Africans, in general, think or act. The range of plurality in the African continent is indeed worth observing, appreciating, and recognising when researching on Africa and its people. This is because Africa is contextually pluriform. Africans are not the same in cultural terms, do not have the same

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<sup>87</sup> The various images of Christ in most African traditions are best described by Mongo Beti in his famous book *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba* in which he overtly presents narratively all that is known of Christ throughout the missionary-colonial era(s).

religious conviction, do not speak the same way, and do not have the same biological morphology, etc. (cf. Mugambi, 1989:43).

In view of this, it is difficult to ascribe a definition to the term “African” or analyse the people of Africa as a whole. This line of thought, however, contrasts John Mbiti’s (1969:79) scholarly stance as the celebrated African scholar maintains that there is but one homogeneous underlying philosophy in Africa although he acknowledges there are many religions; hence his classic *African Philosophy and Religions*. Mbiti’s perspective on homogeneity in Africa is suggestive of the contentious argument that all African people are the same in their way of thinking and their way of doing things. However, Mugambi (1989:105) contends that “(t)o ignore [the traditional African spirituality] can only lead to a lack of understanding of African behaviour and problems”. The lack of understanding of African problems would affect the way we do mission or carry out our development practices among the African people. As it were, among the problems facing African communities is the refugee phenomenon that often comes with a myriad of consequential challenges all of which affect the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants.

It should be noted that most knowledge and notions of human life across the world consist of views, beliefs and philosophies that pertain to the reasons for and the prospect of existence. These are primordial to the development practice, which the discipline of Theology and Development needs to address in order to orient culturally the field within specific contexts. Mugambi (1989:125) observes that, in Africa, traditional wisdom is the main source of all premises and all ultimate questions that have to do with destiny. He further argues that, in the African concept of cosmology, the universe functions within an established design, following regular patterns and rhythms (Mugambi, 1989:127). Ruining the design is calling for misfortune and disaster. Thus, humans are to live in such a way that they do not corrupt or interrupt this established order. As long as humans maintain their supposed relations with fellow humans and with nature, there is hope for the universe to remain uninterruptedly safe and sound.

In other words, in a traditional African society, hope for healing or for improved wellbeing is arguably upheld by appreciating God’s established order for humanity and complying with natural imperatives. Thus, we are to consider the whole of person when doing

theology in the community, with the community and/or for the community. This notion of holism calls for a deeper view of various aspects of the African culture particularly since the participants of this research projects were refugee migrants from various African countries. Their participation in the research requires that we understand them holistically and explore the essence of their beliefs and traditions so as to know how to frame our strategies for Theology and Development within their communities. Thus, hope is complemented by clarity to overcome the twists of fate. Keeping hope is, therefore, as effective as any treatment. In most healing traditions and through generations of healers in the early beginnings of Western medicine, concerns of the physical and the spiritual aspects of the human being were interwoven (Groopman, 2004:142). However, with the coming of the scientific revolution and the enlightenment, these considerations were removed from the medical system. Today, however, a growing number of studies reveal that spirituality may play a bigger role in the healing process than the medical community previously thought.<sup>88</sup>

#### 4.5.1. Death as the continuation of hope in African spirituality

We have seen in the previous introductory section that it is important to consider the whole of a human being when practicing development from a theological perspective including people's cultural practices. One of the cultural beliefs that needs attention in this regard is the concept of death in African spirituality. This needs to be explored so that we know how African refugees think of development and their own empowerment in relation to death and/or hope for healing when ill. Despite knowing that we cannot live forever, it is often hard to contemplate how our stream of consciousness could ever end (Schroeder, 2009:9). To an African, death means it is only the physical life that has ended but it is not the end of hope. It is in this regard, therefore, that the bereaved feels the urge to give the deceased a new place in his/her life, for example, by reminiscing the past or visualising the future. Commenting on the place of the deceased in a traditional African community, Quartier *et al.* (2004:252) observe that:

The status of the deceased changes from a member of a social and cultural network to someone who is no longer physically present yet who will continue to play a role in the narratives of those who knew or were related to him or her in some way.

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<sup>88</sup> Source: <http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/treatment/spirituality> University of Maryland Medical Centre

A human being is, thus, “a connective structure” (Quartier *et al.*, 2004:254) that temporally links the past to the future by means of the present, and socially binds individuals together with “a common frame of reference” (Quartier *et al.*, 2004:254), which is a shared past and a shared future. Those two kinds of memories about the past and the future of the deceased consist of remembrance and hope. Quartier *et al.* (2004:257) maintain that the memory that connects the past to the present is remembrance, and that which connects both the past and the present to the future is hope.

In line with Quartier *et al.*'s (2004:257) premise, Africans believe in and hope for another state of consciousness beyond the grave. This explains why most Africans find that life needs to be protected from harm and, to ensure that, practical measures are often taken in an attempt to restore health or preserve it. Such attempts to maintain or restore health by such measures are done in order to preserve life. Thus, hope for improved wellbeing is maintained by traditional practices, which are often instrumental in both palliative care and healing process. This is because in the traditional African mind, there is but one world in which the physical and the spiritual realms are contiguous (Mugambi, 1989:135-137).

The undeniable universal reality is evidenced in the premise that we are all born and we all die. However, there is an unlimited variability in the conditions and circumstances characterising these two events, just as there is also an infinite variety in what happens to the body and mind between birth and death. There are those who are born without problems and grow uninterruptedly in good health from babyhood to adulthood, suffering only minor infectious diseases such as flu, and slight headaches throughout. They advance in years progressively well even as they maintain their physical capacity and mental faculty until, in extreme old age, their bodies stop producing the cells needed to sustain life, and they depart this life quietly without pain or discomfort. This is undoubtedly an ideal picture of how every person would love their life to be in lieu of the reality that most of us experience on earth. Death comes to many of us, not when we are old, but during or even before birth; when we are children, in adolescence, in early adulthood or in middle age – and, often, life is endured rather than enjoyed in some, most or throughout all of these stages of life journey.

Although a natural phenomenon, generally and scientifically speaking, death is somehow a gradual biochemical degradation process (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:131). Determining

factors of most diseases are due to biochemical items for consumption, which turn out to be pathways to health complications and ultimately lead to, in most cases, death (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:128).<sup>89</sup> Arguably, the entire world is generally biochemical. The foods we eat, the methods used to process the foods, and the medicinal properties of most treatments are all biochemical.

Mugambi (1989:139) observes that the idea of “planetary plurality” is inexistent in the African cosmology, because the universe is but one and indivisible – it is a solitary whole. In view of this cosmological African wisdom, a human being exists in two selves. That is to say, a traditional African believes in only two forms of existence: the visible or physical existence, and the invisible or spiritual existence. A matter that exists in the visible continues to exist in the invisible after experiencing a rite of passage. Death is here seen as the rite of passage that marks the transition from the physical to the spiritual mode of existence. The hopes and dreams that one has in the visible existence are never vanished after such passage from the material world to the immaterial.

In a similar vein, the legendary Senegalese writer, Birago Diop, in his famous piece of poesy, *Le Souffle des Ancêtres*, maintains that ancestors are not dead (in Kane, 2014:3).<sup>90</sup> Diop argues that those who have departed still have influence over those alive who, therefore, continue living the legacy in the visible world. They are not considered dead because their voices resonate still through the gentle reverberations of water streams, their actions are echoed by the ardent uproars of rainstorms and their feelings are expressed through the silent echoes of the savannah. In other words, the dead are not dead; they are the living dead; they are the life-forces – and thus, their hopes and dreams stick around.

Albeit a highly contested theological subject, Diop’s line of reasoning accounts for the traditional African worldview on ancestors’ subsistence and the possible manifestation of their

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<sup>89</sup> One could understand that, such lifelong graduation of biochemical degradation can be hastened by what one may refer to as ‘the friends of death’ while the ‘enemies of death’ can slow it down and thereby allow longevity. Scientific advances are able to slow down and therefore delay human decease that could be hurried up by various diseases. That is to say, some health conditions are curable; others are incurable but controllable. The latter case means that some conditions can co-exist with longevity while having minimal impact on the affected person, and therefore making the disease itself one in name only. Treatment strategies are therefore aimed at prevention. However, when health is allowed to deteriorate to an adequately morose state, it often becomes almost impossible to reverse complications of some medical conditions.

<sup>90</sup> French for “The Breath of Ancestors”

authority. Thus, the “dead are not dead” could be deemed as a fallacy theologically and be biblically anathematised as a heresy but the phrase embodies the reality of the African worldview according to which the existence of a deceased individual continues in the memory of others. In other words, in a traditional African worldview, human beings surpass their specific location and have more to them than just their physical bodies. Only one side of a person, the physical, is present in the visible realm while the other, the spiritual, remains present in the invisible. A living human being, therefore, inhabits only the visible realm of the world and a “dead” human being inhabits the invisible. Unless through a medium, inhabitants of the visible realm cannot visit the spiritual realm but those of the spiritual can visit the physical world from time to time as spirits (Miranda, 2010).

Most traditional Africans would have a high regard for those who have passed away (Mbogu, 1991). This they do because of the belief that, although their physical side is absent in the visible realm and, therefore, away from us, their spiritual side is considered ever-present. The voices of the dead resonate in the ears of the living and their great deeds have some bearing on the lives of those still living in a bodily form. Their dreams and hopes are never shuttered. They are continued by those who are still alive. As per this worldview, our connection with the wisdom drawn from the depths of time and matured by centuries of history defines much of who we are, and illuminates our choices. The realisation of our dreams and hopes is, therefore, connected to the beyond. The dreams and hopes of the deceased that were never satisfied on earth will be fulfilled by those alive; and the dreams and hopes of those alive that cannot be fulfilled without the intervention of the invisible world are believed to be satisfied by the inhabitants of the invisible world. Hence, death is but a continuation of human hope.

One cannot look after, serve or care for the invisible (i.e. the immaterial) then neglect or care less for the visible (i.e. the material). The Johannine literature indicates that such doing embodies a maximal deviation of the gospel truth (cf. 1 John 4:20). Love and actions are two sides of the same coin. They are inseparably linked. Actions determine the extent of love one has for the other. The love of the other is proved by sacrificial acts of service to them. In this way, the Christian love of and concern for the immaterial other (i.e. the spiritual and emotional being of the other) is validated by service to and care for the material (i.e. the physical being of the same). This is because the immaterial and the material parts of a person are two sides of the self.

## 4.5.2. The practice of hope in traditional Africa and the multi-varied interpretations of wellbeing

When African refugees participate in matters of development, they do so with all that they are. That is to say, they do not detach themselves from the essence of their cultural context. Thus, as Myers (1999:139) puts it, in development practice it is important to listen to the whole story both “in terms of the seen and the unseen”. This provides pointers to an in-depth exploration of African spirituality so that we can be able to listen and understand the whole story. Indeed, part of the African story includes multi-varied interpretations of certain natural events and even health and wellbeing. It is my opinion that this must not be taken for granted in Theology and Development. Considering our definitional context of health and wellbeing (cf. Section 1.7.6), the health beliefs of cultures worldwide are informed by some combination of various theories, which underlie the use of many traditional medicines and therapeutic practices. All theories of health and illness help patients to make sense of their bodily experience and control what seems, otherwise, like a frightening situation. In ideal circumstances, western medical professionals and their patients from different cultures negotiate an understanding of what causes illness. Through open communication, they can agree on treatments that combine the advantages of several theories. While western medical professionals clearly need to be vested in the value of modern medicine and their training in it, an open and non-judgmental mind-set towards the ideas that other people, particularly Africans, have in explaining illness and methods of treatment will ultimately birth hope for better health outcomes for patients.

Culturally-based attitudes about seeking treatment and trusting traditional medicines and folk remedies are rooted in core belief systems about illness causation. The range of understandings people have around what causes illness is considerable – from witchcraft to germs and/or weak immune system. In the Western world, the body is often thought of as an intricate machine that must be kept “tuned-up,” and illness is viewed as a breakdown of the machine. This contrasts with African philosophies in which health is seen as a state of balance between the physical, social, and super-natural environment; thus, a balance of the material (or visible) and the immaterial (or invisible) world. Such a worldview strongly influences the behavioural attitudes of traditional Africans towards illness and hope for healing.

As it were, in a traditional African society, illness is believed to be caused, in most cases, by the intervention of a supernatural being or a human being with special powers (Kwan, 2010). A supernatural being might be a deity or an ancestor. A human being with special powers might be a witch/wizard or a sorcerer. Evil forces cause illness in retaliation for moral and spiritual failings. If someone has violated a social norm or breached a religious taboo, he or she may invoke the wrath of a deity and their sickness is explained as a form of divine punishment (Kwan, 2010). Jesse Mugambi (1989) indicates that illness is seen in many African cultures as punishment for failing to carry out the proper rituals of respect for an ancestor. Evil spirits possess the living to revenge the dead. Illness in many cultures is accepted as simply bad karma or bad luck. Hope for healing or recovery from illness usually involves the use of ritual and symbolism, most often by practitioners who are specially trained in these arts. Furthermore, a person's health is believed to be closely tied with the natural environment. In this way, a proper balance must be maintained and harmony protected. Illness results only when this balance is disturbed (cf. Mugambi, 1989:33).

The practice of hope for a world characterised by improved wellbeing would most likely lead an African in a traditional society to search within his/her own self in an attempt to bring back order or simply determine what is wrong. That is to say, it is the hope for a better world that prompts a person to find out what is it that he/she may have done wrong to the point of frustrating the other or nature, and thereby disrupt the established harmony. Hence, as much as illness disrupts the established natural order of the world, it is largely a deferral or frustration of Africans' hope for improved wellbeing. Arguing from a pastoral care and counselling perspective in *Cura Vitae*, Daniël Louw (2008) asserts that hope is awakened by the healing of life. He encapsulates his argument thus:

Cura vitae is about ... hope, care, and the endeavour to give meaning to life within the reality of suffering, our human vulnerability, and the ever-present predicament of trauma, illness, and sickness' (Louw, 2008:11).

Louw's insightful argument is indicative of the need for a paradigm shift *vis-à-vis* pain, suffering and illness with a specific focus on the binary of hope and empowerment. This shift requires a better insight on the question of health and the practice of hope amid the various interpretations of illness in the African context. Every society has its own established ways of thinking about the human body and of explaining the multitude of ills befalling it. In some

traditional societies, certain kinds of illnesses and even accidents are thought to have occurred because those involved have failed to live up to their compulsions to living kin or to ancestors (Mbiti, 1970:65). In some Christian communities, past and present, many kinds of illness are still attributed to sins committed against God and/or one's fellow(s) (Mbiti, 1970:67). In certain other societies, diseases are attributed to witchcraft or to evil spirits, which are believed to possess their victims (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:219, 220). This explains why human consciousness flows in a continuous stream, working to recognise patterns in the sounds, visions, and other sensations carried into the brain from the senses (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:218).

Arguably, putting hope into practice for improved wellbeing in a traditional African society is influenced by the multi-varied contexts of socio-cultural and religious beliefs. In African worldview, misfortunes such as illness do not befall someone without a reason; there must be an invisible force causing it (Mbiti, 1969:56). Such a worldview provides pointers to the prominence of healers and the role they play in a traditional African society. In most traditional societies, such healers are expected to establish the causes of the illness through recourse to the invisible realm and therefore determine the possible solution to the apparent misfortune. This they do whenever the disruption of wellbeing by illness becomes evident with the hope to restore health because, albeit considered as the pinnacle of existence since it is through it that life in the invisible is attained, death is regarded as a brusque interruption of earthly existence (Mbiti, 1970:43).

The world of health and illness is wide-ranging and its exploration often involves a variety of details ranging from scientific facts to mythical beliefs. However, by tradition, Africans do not only try to find physical causes of an illness; they seek more specifically for the causes lying beneath the physical. According to Mbiti (1969:215), in African wisdom evil happens because evil agents exist. Mbiti (1969:215) argues that such 'philosophy' explains why in most African cultures wellbeing is dealt with holistically. Laurenti Magesa (1997:17), another African scholar, finds that the socio-cultural perspectives of traditional Africa concerning the invisible realm serve a positive purpose. In spite of the controversies and odds against them, such perspectives are concretely expressed in a variety of practices in traditional African societies, some with therapeutic effects.

The incidence of disease changed over time as have the kinds of disease from which people have suffered (cf. Worsley *et al.*, 1987:198-200). When human beings were mainly nomadic hunters and food-gatherers, they were most likely to die from exposure, from accidents, from injuries inflicted in inter-tribal conflicts, or from starvation when there was drought or other natural disasters. Worsley *et al.*, (1987:199) find that infectious and parasitic diseases of various kinds emerged as the major causes of ill health and death when people began to live in settled communities, plough the land, grow crops and domesticate animals for food or transport purposes. They indicate that, on the world scale, the main epidemic scourges for many centuries were perhaps tuberculosis and malaria; but, once in a while, there were massive epidemics of diseases like the plague, which in turn, passed its microbes on to human beings (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:200). Furthermore, children, especially those who were chronically malnourished, were very likely to succumb to diseases like measles, smallpox and diphtheria, against which, there was then no artificial protection. Periodically, a poor harvest or a devastating war would put whole communities at risk and mortality could reach astronomical proportions. Such disease patterns persist in many parts of the world particularly in Africa (Worsley *et al.*, 1987:202).

## 4.6. Implications of the refugee phenomenon in the development equation

Participants of this research are in majority refugee migrants from various African countries as already alluded to. However, the geographical context in which they are being explored so as to frame their development needs is South Africa. Thus, it is important to understand the context of refugee migrants in South Africa and understand what the challenges are facing them and to which development agents need to pay attention. In this section, I will focus on a few of the salient challenges. Thus, the purpose of this section is to frame refugee migrants within the geographical context of South Africa and highlight some of their challenges affecting their health and wellbeing that need academic attention in Theology and Development.

As it were, contemporary migrations within the African continent follow old patterns of movement. The major interruption to these patterns has been the defining of political borders and their adoption by modern African states that follow the European model of citizenship

(Bates, 2013). The crossing of borders not only affects people's allegiances to culture and space, it also entails a process of identity formation. For the migrant, the crossing of a conventional boundary can be a matter of choice, opportunity and/or possibility. Whether framed as voluntary or involuntary displacement, however, migration epitomises hope. Ours is, therefore, an era of the greatest hope as the greatest migratory movements recorded in the history of humanity are happening nowadays and a large number of migrants are refugees (Buyer, 2009). Before, during and after the process of their flight, refugees meet challenges that affect their holistic wellbeing and particularly their health (Bates, 2013:28). To begin with, let us map South Africa geopolitically in an attempt to understand the context of the phenomenon in relation to refugee migrants.

## 4.6.1. The context of the refugee phenomenon in South Africa

### 4.6.1.1. Mapping South Africa

South Africa has a land area of 1,219,912 km<sup>2</sup> (South Africa Info, 2015) making it the 25th largest country in the world (Nations Online, 2015). The country occupies the southern tip of the African continent. It borders Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, and surrounds the landlocked Kingdom of Lesotho entirely. It is bordered to the west by the Atlantic Ocean and to the south and southeast by the Indian Ocean. The population of South Africa is arguably the most culturally diverse in the world. In the 2011 Census, South Africa had an official population of 51,770,560 and Statistics South Africa, a government agency, estimated the population to be 52,982,000 by May 2013 (Stats SA, 2011).

In terms of demographics, South Africa's population is one of the most unevenly distributed mainly as a result of its historical context (Nations Online, 2015). A recent research by Bowers-du Toit and Nkomo (2014:1) reveals that "South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world". This happens to be one of the reasons refugee migrants are not received with pleasure in the company of a great number of the previously disadvantaged layer of the South African citizenry. Since the end of the *apartheid* system in 1994, there has been a huge wave of migratory movements into the country from the rest of the continent (Amit *et al.*, 2009:104). There have been multiple waves of xenophobic attacks against foreign nationals in South Africa who are seen as competitors for scarce jobs. Among the immigrants, South Africa is host to a great number of refugee migrants from the conflict-torn GLR, the Horn of Africa

and particularly those from the neighbouring Zimbabwe to name but a few. Thus, the country is prone to influxes of long durations despite facing and dealing with its own socio-economic challenges.

#### 4.6.1.2. Refugee migrants in South Africa

A refugee migrant is different from an ordinary foreign national who chooses to live in a country other than his/hers. According to the 28 July 1951 Geneva Convention of the United Nations Relating to the Status of Refugees and its additional Protocol of 31 January 1967, a refugee migrant is any person with a “well-founded fear of persecution”, whose physical life would be in danger if they were to return to their country of origin (UNHCR, 1951).<sup>91</sup> In view of the fact that the 1951 UN Convention focused only on “fear of persecution” as the sole reason for a person to be granted asylum from forced migration, the applicability of the Convention was inadequate. This made the Organisation for the African Unity (OAU) to consider drafting another document contextual to the African state of affairs.

On 10 September 1969, the OAU adopted its Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (OAU, 1969). As it were, the OAU never wanted to textually reproduce the wording of a universal existing document to define an African refugee, rather, in addition to the 1951 UN Convention definition, the 1969 OAU Convention broadened the definition and included specific clauses dealing with the protection of refugee migrants. As per the 1969 OAU Convention, a refugee migrant is any person forced to leave his/her “habitual residence”, by reason of aggression, external occupation, foreign domination or any other event gravely disturbing the public order in a part or the entire territory of his/her country of origin or the country of his nationality, for the purpose of seeking asylum (OAU, 1969). The OAU definitional approach was justified by and based on the social, political and economic context of the continent at that time. Here, one argues for the relevance of the OAU approach even today considering the ambiguity of the “persecution clause” in the 1951 UN Convention.

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<sup>91</sup> The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees had time limits (it only focused on refugees displaced by 1951 in the early days of the Cold War after the WWII), and geographic restrictions (it was meant for only European refugees). These limitations were lifted in the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. State parties of the 1951 Convention became ipso facto signatories of its 1967 Protocol. This explains why these two documents are always listed together in most literature.

South Africa is party to these international/regional treaties that regulate the affairs of refugee migrants. The South African Constitution is exceptional in the extent to which it enshrines basic rights and freedoms and expands on them extensively in the Bill of Rights. It is one of the few constitutions in the world that extensively enshrines second-generation socio-economic rights, including the pledge to improve the quality of life of all citizens through access to housing, healthcare, food, water, social security, and education. The Constitution was the result of a difficult but inclusive negotiation process as it was drafted with an acute awareness of the injustices of the country's non-democratic past in order to never repeat the same mistakes (Majodina, 2001). It is widely regarded as one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, with its Bill of Rights second to none. This is why, both the Constitution and the Bill of Rights overtly indicate that every human person has the right to dignity, and that the latter, being one of the fundamental values of a human being, needs to be respected, defended and protected (DHA, 2013). However, South Africa's failure to implement most of the clauses in these documents, particularly on the protection of refugee migrants, leads to uncertainties concerning refugees' social futures in the country.

As it were, South Africa faces critical social and economic challenges especially related to unemployment and poverty, safety and security, education, and health. These challenges are exacerbated by the global economic crisis. The failure to recognise the severity of these challenges, and the failure to address them will cause us to experience rapid disintegration and decline within the South African social fabric. Frans Cronjé from the South African Institute of Race Relations, citing Kabous Le Roux (2014) on the political state of South Africa a decade from now, indicates that in a human society there exists no single future but "multiple futures". Thus, there is always a need for methodologies that would map major trends and find how such trends interact with each other in an attempt to identify possible futures. In this regard, Cronjé (*in* Le Roux, 2014) further observes thus:

The only antidote is to abandon the idea that there is a singular future and that a brilliant analyst with perfect information can show you that future. There are multiple futures all roughly as plausible as the others. The challenge is to limit the number of futures to those most plausible and then to map the events that will be a characteristic of specific futures.

Here, Cronjé provides pointers to the fact that one needs not be oblivious of time when preparing for the future, which calls for alertness given that the context of the world we

currently live in changes rapidly. This reflection proposes that the future is practically involved in the present and, in turn, the present is shaped perhaps as much by the future as by the past (cf. Moltmann, 1967). Yet, compared to the past, we do not have many good ways of thinking about the role of the future in the constitution of the contemporary world.

In the humanities, particularly in Practical Theology, there has been an explosion of interest in the emergent. Theorists (cf. Botman, 2014:21) have emphasised that all human action is open to the future so that possibilities of change are inherently part of the present. The future is, in this sense, immanent in the present (Moltmann, 1967). Nevertheless, the other way in which the future configures the present is through historical narratives. Whether one thinks of the life of an individual, a country, or a civilisation, historical narratives orient both the interpretation of the present and one's orientation to it (Kwan, 2010). Besides, the future of the self is always plotted in the biographical. That is to say, the future arc of one's life (and the anticipation of what will be) shapes the present in many important ways.

The implication of the refugee phenomenon is such that the future of South Africa is subject to phenomenological research. The country is reported to have more asylum seekers than any other country in the world but officially-recognised refugee migrants in the country are not as many as those in other African countries such as Kenya and Tanzania (Dorman, 2014:34). This is probably attributable to the fact that the South African government tends to deny asylum seekers the permit for refugee status, which would grant them equal rights with the local citizenry, with the exception of a few such as those related to the politics of the country (e.g. the right to vote or be elected/chosen for public office).

Twenty years into democracy our social fabric and social cohesion remains fragile, tormented mercilessly by the social ills of poverty and racial inequality, deteriorating educational and health conditions and a citizenry besieged by crime. In South Africa refugee migrants are considered the main contributors to the rising crime rates of the country and, therefore, deemed of little value to its economic growth (Buscher, 2011:18; Belvedere, 2007:58). The UNHCR's programme for livelihoods and self-reliance preaches the message of "helping refugees help themselves" to reduce their dependency on and the cost of humanitarian assistance (UNHCR, 2012:6).

This indicates that there is a growing interest on the wellbeing of refugee migrants and particularly on the strategies they utilise in their quest to improve their own livelihoods. The world is going through global practices of interdependence, which aim to improve the living conditions of the social fabric in all the dimensions of life. Critics contend that the global interest in human rights symbolise a new form of neo-colonial hegemony, and that it is a panacea for the ills of neoliberalism (Rosenkranz, 2013:32). However, the counter view is that human rights provide the only effective means to challenge inequality and to advance programmes that would promote greater social justice and more equitable human development (Joseph, 2001:74).

#### 4.6.2. The health implications of the refugee phenomenon in South Africa

There are many reasons that could lead to forced human migration including life-threatening diseases in a specific region of the world. As such, refugee migrants have unique health needs that reflect their lived experiences in both their home countries and their hosting countries (Bhugra *et al.*, 2011:19). Their health and wellbeing are therefore fundamental to successful resettlement and integration. Health is essential for the socio-economic development of a human person. Viewed this way, health becomes an asset for improved wellbeing and holistic development. Thus, healthcare providers are important role players as they contribute to the agency of communities as Schmid *et al.* (2010:146) observe. However, since refugee migrants are faced with a myriad of challenges, ill health and horrific living conditions appear to be the most remarkable of all. Attempts to improve refugees' livelihoods are often a major concern for many a stakeholder both locally and globally (Davies, 2010:67). The promotion of health and wellbeing has been a cause for concern for every human society in the last few centuries. The solutions, however, which have been presented thus far, are greatly at variance following the societal milieu and cultural setting. Most countries in the developing world encounter the critical challenge of securing adequate quality of life to their citizenry, let alone asylum seekers and refugees.

It needs not be overemphasised that the pursuit for dignified wellbeing is even more strenuous for refugee migrants due to their foreignness in the hosting country. As it were, the one aspect of the refugee phenomenon which attracts renewed attention in this globalised world

is its impact on the health of refugee migrants (Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012:4). It is essential that researchers studying the impact of the refugee phenomenon on displaced communities examine its effects at multiple levels. For instance, refugee migrants may have health problems that are not well known or understood in their new countries of residence. Making this problem even more complex is the fact that legal and socio-economic barriers block access to health services in many cases; and in cases where migrants do have access to such services, these may not be migrant-sensitive or culturally and linguistically appropriate (Matlou, 2001:13). It is also the case that communities receiving large numbers of migrants face new challenges, such as increased diversity of the population and the consequent change in the cultural profile and health perspectives of its patients. Current approaches for managing the health of migrants, therefore, need to keep pace with the growing challenges associated with the complexity, volume, speed, diversity and disparity of the refugee phenomenon to ensure that all refugee migrants are able to realise their fundamental right to health (Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:103).

The refugee phenomenon is a reality of life and most countries are drawn against the challenging task of incorporating the health needs of refugee migrants into their national policies and strategies. This they do taking into account that migrants have rights among which is the right to health. The effects of migration on the health of migrants in South Africa are ubiquitous (Amit, 2009:126). As such, the health of the refugee populations in South Africa is fragile as many refugees may have gone through physical or mental suffering prior to their emigration. In general, refugee migrants live in need and, therefore, dependence, which is embarrassing and likely to put their mental and physical health at risk (Feitsma, 2001:17; Jevne, 1994:84). Needless to state that social displacement in conjunction with poverty is particularly precarious for health because the health of a human being is very sensitive to, for instance, poor quality of housing or foods.

The refugee phenomenon often results in high rates of unemployment and horrific living conditions, which expose refugee migrants to social stress and increased risk of mental health problems due to the absence of supportive social networks (WHO, 2001:6). In this regard, conflicts and wars are closely linked to higher rates of mental and behavioural disorders. Mental health is as important as physical health to the overall wellbeing of individuals and population groups. However, according to the WHR 2001, of the 450 million people suffering from a mental or behavioural disorder, only a small minority is receiving

treatment (WHO, 2001:1, 3). In the context of this research, the right to health consists of access to healthcare services and to positive contributing factors of wellbeing, such as access to safe housing, adequate nutrition and food security. These rights are afforded to refugee migrants and relate to their psychosocial wellbeing; they also include the right to live free of violence and discrimination. I would argue that this is a holistic approach to health since it encompasses the whole dimension of human wellbeing.

The nature of modern urbanisation may have harmful consequences for mental health through the influence of increased stressors and adverse life events, such as overcrowded and polluted environments, poverty, high levels of violence, and reduced social support (WHO, 2001:5). Besides, economic crisis forces a myriad number of the population to migrate and seek asylum in a better off country with the hope for a viable livelihood and improved wellbeing. In other words, the condition of mental or behavioural health becomes serious in refugee migrants. In addition to being already discriminated against because of their refugee status, refugees with mental illnesses are often victimised and, therefore, stigmatised even more.

#### 4.6.3. Gentrification and its repercussions on the refugee community: *de facto* segregation?

The gap between the powerful and the powerless continues to widen in South Africa, while a growing caste in the interval emerges: the middle class. In South Africa, the metropolis of Cape Town and its urban environs are no different considering that the apartheid legislation already left a legacy of polarisation at various levels of the social order. The context of South African urban cities is therefore characterised by removals that had (and still have) varied impacts on the local population. Such spatial shifts entail the geopolitical process of gentrification, which is often fuelled by profitability and driven by urbanisation albeit to the detriment of a forcibly displaced populace.

The credit for coining the term “gentrification” is accredited to Ruth Glass, a German-born British sociologist, when, in 1964, she used the term to describe the changes she observed in the social structure and housing markets in some areas of London (Murdie & Teixeira, 2011; Bidou-Zachariasen & Poltorak, 2008; Atkinson & Bridge, 2005; Glass, 1964). This was a

growing trend affecting popular old neighbourhoods in the city by the arrival of new residents who were using their social class and economic status to progressively rehabilitate the now-degraded habitat (Glass, 1964). The term has since seen ample expansions in its usage, and now, while there are intense debates in academic circles on how to define gentrification as a process, to some extent, the term has come to refer to urban regeneration with its consequential changes in the housing market, economic status and the residential demography (Murdie & Teixeira, 2011; Bidou-Zachariassen & Poltorak, 2008; Atkinson & Bridge, 2005).

As it were, gentrification has affected and still affects Bellville in a particular way. Bellville is home to thousands of the refugee migrants. Like in many other places, refugee migrants living in Bellville are faced with the dilemma for space because they do not “belong” to the local community and are not allowed to own property (Borel-Saladin, 2013:37). Refugee migrants are considered outsiders because, in the South African worldview, only autochthony could grant someone the right for authentic belonging. The Bellville Central Business District (CBD) happens to be one of the places where the history of gentrification is a constant reminder of social exclusion for the majority of South African citizens. Yet, it is in Bellville that the previously excluded citizens together with a large number of refugee migrants currently find means to improve their livelihoods notwithstanding the many challenges facing them.<sup>92</sup>

#### 4.6.3.1. Space-making and place-sharing: defying the definitional implications of being and belonging

The city of Cape Town is perhaps the most gentrified cities in South Africa and its population is highly polarised. However, the city is also “home” to thousands of immigrants, most of whom are refugees and asylum seekers. In view of this, questions can then be asked: to what extent does immigration, particularly the refugee phenomenon, become linked to the process of gentrification in the contemporary South African urban context? How does socio-spatial polarisation in Cape Town shape the refugee experience? Do refugee migrants have any hope for improved wellbeing considering the current gap between the two divides in the city? What future does a gentrified Cape Town hold for refugee migrants? This section of the chapter

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<sup>92</sup> Bellville is one of the sites of this research project from where fieldwork was mainly conducted. The other site of research was Mowbray. The justifications for the choices of these research sites is provided in the next chapter on Research Methodology (cf. Section 5.3.1.1).

evaluates the impacts of gentrification on the wellbeing of refugee migrants living in the transformed urban contexts of Cape Town, the site of this research project, particularly on their being in and belonging to the city.

The context of a place is important to understand the meaning of space and the role people play in creating such a space (Lefebvre, 2004:37). According to Nyamnjoh and Brudvig (2014:224), space making is a shared task shaped by the interests of varied classes, different perspectives and other competing forces. Networks have driven transnational migrants to build a social community of their own in concert with their innovative dynamism. In this way, the space refugee migrants occupy in the mainstream South African society now has different standards and new meanings. According to Dorman (2014:161; see also Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014:134; Parry & Eeden, 2014:63), South Africans do not fully grasp the notion of public space for the reason that space in South Africa has always been racially segregated since 1652.<sup>93</sup> Since then, different races in South Africa have always been living justifiably in completely different worlds, making inequality and prejudiced spatiality a norm.

Both the meaning and experience of public space is a new idea that came with the democratic South Africa after the abolition of the *apartheid* system two decades ago (Parry & Eeden, 2014:16). That is to say, critical reflections on the right for space and on the way such right ought to be expressed by various people began to develop in the post 1994 South Africa. Since discourses on the right for public space are increasingly taking prominence, population groups of “lower class” such as refugee migrants are also starting to establish themselves in order to move from the periphery and find space in the mainstream zone; thereby facilitating their own integration (cf. Buyer, 2009:86). Nevertheless, discussions and analyses on the occupancy of space in Cape Town often result in ethical concerns about social polarisation in the city.

After 1994, the South African government made concessions to welcome refugee migrants in return for the support accorded to the African National Congress (ANC) liberation movement by most African countries during the *apartheid* period (cf. Nations Online, 2015; Borel-Saladin, 2013:18). That is, refugee migrants started coming to South Africa following the official abolition of the *apartheid* system and the consequential democratisation of the

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<sup>93</sup> The year 1652 refers to the supposed landing of Jan van Riebeeck in what became known later as Cape Town

country. In this regard, South Africa could be said to be one of the few countries in the world to have gone through a complete continuum of migratory movements, from being one of the most refugee producing countries in the world to becoming one of the leading hosting countries.

However, because the South African immigration regulations do not make it easy for the citizens of other African countries to settle and integrate in the country, a large number of African migrants opt to ‘become’ asylum seekers after having been in the country for a little while on visa so they could live in the country much longer and, if at all possible, *ad infinitum* (Buyer, 2009:32). As a result, applications for seeking asylum go beyond the government’s expectation, which eventually affects its functionality and leads to tremendous irregularities within the refugee system (Conway, 2014:27). The caring and protective nature of the refugee system as per the UN 1951 Convention has become one of control in South Africa, and this increases the intolerant desire to reduce the number of immigrants through strict measures and prevent their entry into the country through restrictive regulations (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014:102).

As it were, the *apartheid* administration ratified residential segregation of all ethnic groups across the South African space on the basis of their racial characteristics. Strict and restrictive pass laws regulated the movement of non-whites as racial groups were assigned residential neighbourhoods (Borel-Saladin, 2013:74; Robins, 2002:26; Watson, 1994:56). The Group Areas Act of 1950 apportioned the best and most developed neighbourhoods to white communities (Western, 1981:25). Such a socio-spatial geography of residential segregation was sadistically imposed on the populace by way of forced removals of existing residents from their original space, and the consequential demolition of racially mixed neighbourhoods. However, we can learn from such a rich history of social exclusion in South Africa and develop new ways of thinking about these historical removals. Although the discourse on gentrification comes to light through polarisation, it can steer us towards a shared understanding of South African social futures, which is beneficial for refugees’ improved wellbeing.

Understandably, the abolition of the *apartheid* system has since improved the status quo as ‘non-whites’ are now able to move at will and without obstruction into traditionally ‘whites-only’ areas. This, however, has come with a subsequent trend of whites slowly

withdrawing from such areas and moving out of city centres to be secure in the comfort of ‘safe’ suburbs (Western, 1981:45). Thus, the congregation of non-white immigrants has catalysed the flight of white residents from the previously gentrified areas, on the one hand, and their avoidance of such areas, on the other. The Bellville CBD is one of the many areas in Cape Town that has gone through such gentrification paradigms (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014:68; Western, 1981:25). It therefore suffices to infer that the interface between space and place (or even belonging) is a wide-ranging and attention-grabbing subject.

The policy of racial segregation in South Africa seems to have strengthened the solidarity of people of the same racial grouping (Crankshaw, 2012:54). As it were, most black Africans were *a priori* in solidarity with each other. Today, however, the pertinent point at issue is now the preservation of those solidarity networks and the extension of it to those ‘blacks’ of non-South African backgrounds. This is because the relationship between black South Africans and other Africans from far afield in the continent is open to doubt, to say the least. There is a need to build social relationships in spaces occupied by the refugee community albeit the refugee status does not allow a refugee migrant to occupy any form of space permanently in South Africa.

Nyamnjoh and Brudvig (2014:222) observe that Bellville is a “space of mobility” and therefore ‘a place shared’ by a large number of refugee migrants who have established their businesses there, South Africans who have migrated from various places of the country for work-related motives, including natives and a few passers-by. Refugee migrants live in temporary conditions and they often find themselves dislodged and evicted as they seek to find space for themselves, and have their place in the wider social order recognised. Bellville is a place where space-making is a constant battle particularly for the refugee community. Through the process of gentrification, the wealthy and upper class residents in Cape Town occupied the city and most of the surrounding areas – giving rise to the eviction of the poorest populations. Cape Town is now, like many other South African cities, in the process of (re)constructing the identity of its “rainbowness” in order to make sense of the regeneration of its urban spaces as places shared.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Although South Africa is by no means the most ethnically diverse country in the world, the country remains a complex mix of different races, cultural identities and languages. Thus, modern South Africa is a multiracial

However, to refugee migrants living in Cape Town, the process of gentrification is purely a deferral of their hope in many ways. Although both Mowbray and the Bellville CBD reveal the realities of interconnected local and global hierarchies of citizenship and belonging, and how they emerge in a world of accelerated mobility, the emergence of residential premises where people entrust their freedom and security to solidly walled fences with human sentinels and guarding dogs is remarkable in Bellville (cf. Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014:222; Atkinson & Bridge, 2005:34). They feel secure in the comfort of their “gated communities” and thus abstain from walking around the city centre. This underlines the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots.

#### 4.6.3.2. Plurality in urban demographics: gentrification or de-gentrification?

Ley (1994:34), in contrast to Smith (1981:21), finds that the process of gentrification begins with modifying people’s needs rather than the structural changes in housing market. Nevertheless, the process of gentrification has manifold implications. It could entail, on the one hand, hope for socio-economic development while, on the other hand, it could reinforce the likelihood for social exclusion as the ‘powerless’ immigrants struggle to find space and “most of the original working class occupiers are displaced” (Glass, 1964; see also Pattaroni *et al.*, 2012:12; Bidou-Zachariasen & Poltorak, 2008:9) after realising that they no longer fit in the now gentrified setting. When this happens, the less privileged immigrants may live a subhuman life while the less privileged residents would be forced to relocate from their original space. Such patterns are markedly observable in Mowbray and the Bellville CBD (the two sites of this research project) notwithstanding their plurality in terms of cultural diversity and acceptance of each-otherness.

Bellville and Mowbray, the sites of this research project, are among Cape Town’s metropolitan neighbourhoods whose plurality is portrayed through various aspects of diversity (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014). The areas present both opportunities and challenges to the residents. Their geographical situations make them the right *milieu* to explore the question of migration and integration due to the fact that the areas are just a few kilometres away from the Cape Town city centre, with Bellville being at an estimated 25 km and Mowbray roughly at a

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democratic society, which officially embraces its diversity. The ‘Rainbow Nation’ is an image often used to describe the post-apartheid South Africa to promote the idea of a free, multiracial and democratic society.

5 km distance. Thus, the areas are somehow at the intersection of the historically “whites only” suburbs and the non-whites locations. In both areas, structures suggestive of the apartheid administrative buildings are seen parallel to busy supermarkets, eventful taxi ranks and a train station, where a multi-varied range of people, most of whom are refugee migrants, are found hard at work or, at worst, doing seemingly nothing. The areas are complex neighbourhoods and, therefore, what happens there can only be described in terms of that complexity. For example, as one walks around Mowbray and the Bellville CBD, one notices the many cafés and restaurants or saloons and shops, which are found along its busy streets, have a completely diversified clientele. Plurality in these two areas demonstrates changes in both their demographics and the consumption patterns. Are such changes indicative of the process of gentrification? Or, are Mowbray and Bellville transitioning to de-gentrification?

John Western (1981:31) describes the situation in Cape Town as “de facto segregation” while Ivan Turok (2001:2349) attests that Cape Town is generally a “starkly polarised city” considering that “affluent suburbs and prosperous economic centres [offer] rich opportunities of all kinds” but these opportunities contrast with “overcrowded, impoverished dormitory settlements on the periphery”. Turok’s observation provides pointers to the actual situation in Mowbray and Bellville where social polarisation contrasts those living at the periphery in derelict blocks of flats to those whose lives are somehow secure in the comfort of world-class gated houses. In this view, gentrification in Cape Town accounts for its reality without overstating its complexity.

As it were, these two neighbourhoods house a great number of refugee migrants who are the main targets of this research. The slow processing of asylum applications means, in the absence of official permission to work, many asylum-seekers are forced to rely on generating income in the informal sector, which puts them in a conflicting situation with local authorities, many of whom are oblivious of refugees’ rights (Bickford-Smith, 1995:124). Ingrid Palmary’s (2002:10-14) research conducted for the CSVR reports that a senior member of the Metropolitan Police Department made it clear that any foreigner trading in the city of Cape Town is doing so illegally. According to the report, such views are also shared by other City’s authorities including those of the Vagrancy Unit, a specialised group of by-law enforcement agents dealing with evictions of people settling informally on council-owned property.

Palmary's research finds that members of this specialised unit were unaware that refugees are actually entitled to work in South Africa (Palmary, 2002: 10).

In the Bellville CBD, for example, the atmosphere is quite distinctive. The area is dynamically vibrant and brimming with restaurants, cafés, and clothing stores at more or less every building. The CBD is home to a large number of refugee migrants who arguably play an important role in Cape Town's informal business sector and therefore contribute to the growth of the local economy (Burger & McAravey, 2014:37). The reality of what is happening in Bellville is much more complex, and if it is not understood in its diversities, it can result in a load of contradictions. Complex as the dynamics at play are in the refugee communities in the area, the zeal of refugee migrants does fascinate. It is essential to provide a fresh look at the phenomenon through both the observation of its superficiality and the analysis of its complexity.

Refugee migrants receive little (or no) support with regard to securing space for housing, employment, or skills training (Belvedere, 2007:136). In the absence of local government welfare support, migrants depend on support from religious organisations, NGOs and informal networks. For example, during the May/June 2008 and the recent 2015 xenophobic attacks, faith based organisations, including churches became temporary shelters for hundreds of refugees. They housed large numbers of refugee victims of the attacks, and were most able to provide care and resources. In the Bellville CBD, on the one hand, it is the lack of investment in buildings and public spaces that makes tenancy by people with low income possible. In this regard, Swart (2010:249) argues that "low-income societies need to change if living standards are to rise". In the same vein, for refugees' living standards to rise, their low-income status needs to change. On the other hand, affordable accommodation is becoming scarce and in some other places, like the inner Bellville, it is just non-existent. This is, despite having been gentrified by forcibly removing original occupiers during the *apartheid* era.

The arrival of "lower class" tenants such as refugee migrants is often deemed one of the factors causing most gentrifiers to gradually leave urban areas like the Bellville CBD as Beauregard (2010:74) finds. In this case, their coming to Bellville is channelled by pursued profitability in the CBD, the exclusive opportunity for trading informally or vending small

items on the streets and the convenience of inexpensive property. This revolution of socio-cultural plurality in the Bellville CBD has given rise to a considerable amount of *out*-migration by most previous residents. This, in turn, results in the consequential poor maintenance as well as a neglect of property renovation by proprietors (Conway, 2014:12). When this happens, the decrepit property becomes undervalued, causing rental fee to be pointedly discounted than the possible rental charge that might have resulted from the best use of the property while taking advantage of its being in the CBD. In the Bellville case, most spaces have lost their original population, which was replaced by immigrants from elsewhere in the country or afar throughout the continent. The overriding impression, however, is that Bellville is a popular area where immigration in its full sense is a strong reality. The history of removals in Cape Town neighbourhoods left a legacy that the current government is still striving to change. Albeit deemed as a new form of colonialism by some, gentrification is a symbol of hope to those who consider it as a process of urban regeneration.

A number of other factors cause the exodus of gentrifiers, and this has been leading gradually to the process of de-gentrification in the Bellville area. For instance, if there was recession in the economy, combined with educational standards below average and the rise of crime, the less privileged in those areas of marginal gentrification would re-assess whether they ought to be there, and resort to come nearer or move in the gentrified area. The gentrified area would, accordingly, devalue following the presence of residents with low income in the neighbourhood (cf. Lees, 2010:89). The presence of refugee migrants is one of the reasons for such phenomenon. Gentrifiers opt out of the area and avoid visiting. In countries where race defines and characterises who the gentrifiers are, this phenomenon is often referred to as “white flight” and “white avoidance” (cf. Borel-Saladin, 2013:21). In the Bellville CBD case, the neighbourhood embodies the now-growing trends of “white flight” and “white avoidance” due to the emergence of black middle class citizens in the neighbourhood, and the influx of international migrants such as refugees who happen to live *en mass* in the area.

#### 4.6.3.3. The negative effects of gentrification on refugee migrants

Gentrification is a process through which the social and spatial profile of a neighbourhood is transformed for the benefit of a particular layer of the population deemed superior (Clerval, 2011:2; Bidou-Zachariasen & Poltorak, 2008:35). This is done through the renovation of

properties and the appreciation of material goods. The process exerts pressure on the less privileged who are forced to leave the area to areas that are a bit cheaper and less in demand. This constitutes a form of segregation (Clerval, 2011:34). Thus, the process of gentrification has an interesting dichotomy highlighting on the one hand, the dynamics of spatial exclusion and the complexity of its implications in terms of social transformation on the other. As it were, spatial shifts inherently affect social place (Ley, 2010). That is, when someone is forcibly removed from their original space, they soon realise that their place in society is of little value.

In Bellville, most of the ‘original residents’ (these are in majority whites because under the *apartheid* regime the Bellville CBD was a “whites only” residential area) claim that there has been a gradual loss of urban authenticity due to the new reality of plurality in every aspect of life in the area, and that most of their historic structures do not mean anything to most of the people anymore (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014:33).<sup>95</sup> The popular residential areas degenerate a little more each day and the number of people with low or insecure incomes is on the rise. This is reminiscent of social polarisation in the city of Cape Town. Concerned generally with such socio-spatial changes in urban contexts, gentrification is now a global phenomenon and a serious concern in modern cities (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005:32; Lees *et al.*, 2010:53) and Cape Town is not exempt.

According to a report by Causa Justa (2013:13) high levels of social capital are associated with enhanced health and wellbeing of societies, including improved performance on productivity and other economic indicators. In this regard, space has a major impact on people’s health. That is, where people live, work, play, etc. can affect their wellbeing. There is a number of dynamics that might create discrepancies in the health of a given community. These include socio-economic status and accommodation occupancy, among other things. Besides, human displacement breeds several health consequences that contribute to disparities among special populations, including the poor, women, children, the elderly, and members of minority groups such as, in this case, refugee migrants (Causa Justa, 2013:10). In this regard, refugee migrants in South Africa and particularly those in the Bellville and Mowbray areas are at increased risk for the negative consequences of the process of gentrification, which have an

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<sup>95</sup> The buildings depreciate and the neighbourhood devaluates in terms of its status in the market, which results in the affluent residents opting to leave the neighbourhood for other places, where the environment acclimatises with their standard.

impact on their hope for the future despite pulling their available resources and efforts towards improving their own wellbeing. Studies (see for example, Dorman, 2014; Amit *et al.*, 2009; Belvedere, 2007; Matlou, 2001) indicate that vulnerable populations, such as refugees, typically have shorter life expectancy, a higher rate of disease, an unequal share of residential exposure to hazardous substances, and limited access to affordable healthy housing, healthy food choices, transportation choices, quality schools, etc.

The development discourse has become extremely imperative in our contemporary world to improve the prospects of the future. In fact, it appears that the study of futures has always been central to the practice of development. The expansion and diversification of South Africa's urban spaces has produced new social relationships made out of migratory movements that are often confronted by forces of exclusion. Questions could be asked, therefore, as to what kind of future is embedded in the development practice of South Africa considering the current refugee experience? Do refugee migrants have a place in South Africa's space for community empowerment and holistic development? The refugee phenomenon is spatially determined through freedom to migrate and occupy established meanings or recognised connotations of place. Refugees' hope for a better future is, therefore, shaped within the contexts of spatial settings.

Nevertheless, there is a need to explore how best to empower people faced with limited resources and opportunities and/or those living with health challenges, like refugee migrants, so as to engender in them the capacity for choice. Considerable progress has been made in many aspects of human life, which provides pointers to improved wellbeing even for refugees. For example, today, many people are healthier, more educated and live longer. Some attempt to pursue improved livelihoods, while others have access to goods and services. Refugee migrants fall under the category of those attempting against all odds to pursue improved livelihoods.

## 4.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed what I could term “pragmatic perspectives of hope”. The chapter helps the reader understand how the various concepts can be contextualised in order to put hope into action within the traditional African society. I explained what I termed “the missing link”

and explained why an in-depth exploration of hope is necessary in Theology and Development before explaining the concept of power in relation to empowerment within the development discourse. Furthermore, I gave details on the hope-empowerment binary, which is needed for holistic development as both elements are inseparably connected. I explained how significant the binary is in ensuring improved wellbeing to the less privileged such as refugee migrants. I also indicated how refugee migrants use their ability to wait as a source of resilience and tool for empowerment.

The chapter further explained the correlates of illness and hope for healing in a traditional African society. Here, it was indicated that a traditional African worldview on health and illness can have a profound impact on clinical care. In some cases, it can be beneficial and in other cases, it can impede preventive efforts, delay or complicate medical care. To do this, I drew on literature ranging from hope as a rite of passage to death as a continuation of human hope rather than its end. Here I indicated that Africans consider the universe as being one whole and indivisibly so albeit with two forms of existence: the physical and the spiritual, whereas the physical form of existence represents the material (or visible) world and the spiritual form of existence represents the immaterial (or invisible) world. As such, the hope one has in the physical realm is never lost despite departure from the visible space.

I also pointed out that the refugee migrants patiently put maximum efforts for self-empowerment to build new hope and create new opportunities for a desirable tomorrow. I also indicated that they do so despite the emotionally disturbing events they experience and/or the socially distressing circumstances they encounter daily. I further pointed out that the integration of religion into the mainstream development approaches has been a cause for debates and reluctance in the development equation, citing that religion or faith is a private matter and, therefore, does not call for a scientific uptake. In this regard, I explained that such theories deprive development of its effectiveness and cutting edge considering that a human person is not only a material being but also immaterial. To this dichotomous view of the human person, I argued for another: the volitional, which is the faculty that incites the person to act, and without which, hope remains a mere abstraction.

I closed the chapter with a review of literature on the polarising process of gentrification and explained how the process, albeit a source of hope for some, has varied repercussions, most of which affect the health and wellbeing of those living at the periphery, particularly the refugee

migrants. Such negative repercussions intensify when those at the periphery are already a vulnerable community, as is the case for refugee migrants. I highlighted that the process of gentrification defers the glimmer of hope that refugee migrants already have although they attempt to defy the *status quo* with resilience and courage.

The next chapter is a bridge between the literature review part and data discussion. The chapter provides a detailed account of how the research was planned and conducted on the field by presenting the mechanics put to use in executing the research process including the justifications for the various methodological choices.

## Chapter 5 – Research Methodology

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Hope is the refusal to accept the reading of reality  
which is the majority opinion; and one does that only at great political and existential risk.  
Hope is subversive [that is, revolutionary], for it limits the grandiose pretension of the present,  
daring to announce that the present to which we have all made commitments  
is now called into question

~ Walter Brueggemann

## Chapter 5 – Research Methodology

A focus on the mechanics of the research process and design

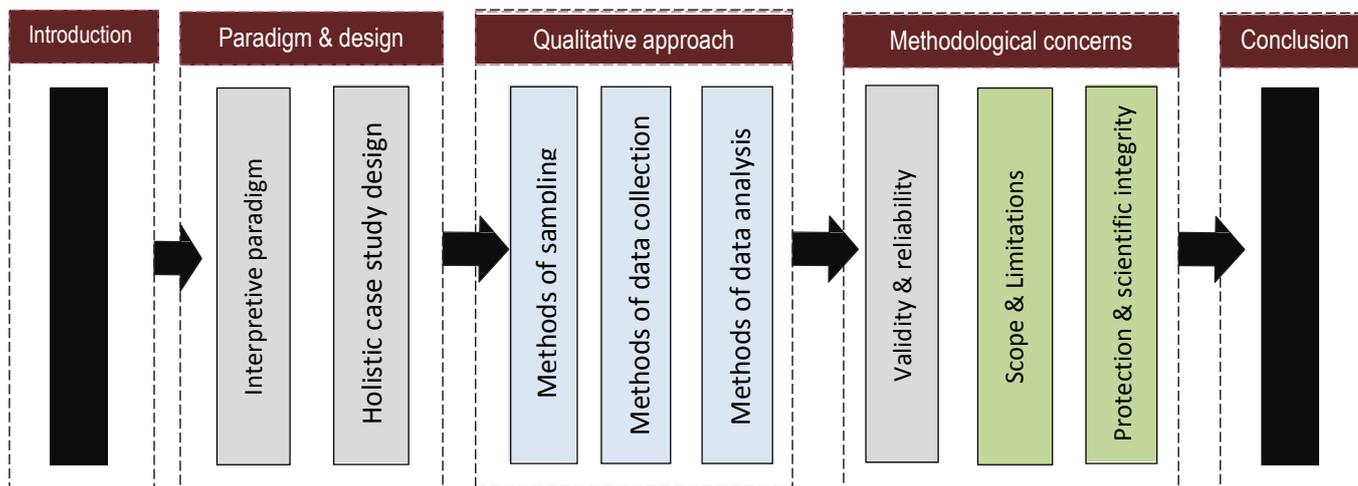


Figure 6: Chapter 5 Road map

### 5.1. Introduction

The preceding chapters dealt with the theories on the topic under investigation as per the existing literature or “ready-made data” to use the words of Worsley *et al.* (1987:110). Following the CCP procedural framework, chapters 2 to 4 provided a thorough theoretical grounding to the research. Chapter 2 focused on three leading scholars of hope, namely Bloch, Freire and Moltmann in order to address a few thoughts on the theoretical perspectives of hope and, thereby, understand how putting hope into action may contribute towards the practice of Theology and Development. Chapter 3 also focused on scholars who have written extensively on hope. It draws the reader’s attention to a number of contexts in which hope could be applied such as the temporal context (i.e. *when?*) and the spatial context (*where*). Chapter 4, the previous chapter, attempted to put all the concepts discussed in this thesis into context (thus the title, “Concepts in Context”) in order to orient the study and frame it within the discipline of Theology and Development.

The current chapter focuses on the mechanics of the research process particularly as it relates to the research design. As it were, the research is guided by the following research question:

*How do the health challenges that refugees in Cape Town face impede their wellbeing; and how can such challenges be turned into opportunities for hope in order to ensure improved wellbeing and human dignity?*

To facilitate in answering this twin research question, a number of formulated objectives (cf. Section 1.5.3) guides the research. As it were, the chapter is a comprehensive account of how the research was designed and executed so as to answer the guiding research question by meeting the specific research objectives. In this vein, discussed here are detailed explanations of and justifications for the various methodological choices made, and the ethical considerations associated with this research.

## 5.2. Research paradigm and design

### 5.2.1. Interpretive research paradigm

Details of the theories that guide this research are presented here in order to explain both the theoretical paradigm that the research is grounded on and its design. This is because it is always important to explain the various philosophies and the methodologies linked to the schools of thought in research (Mills, 2010:4). As it were, most research projects follow a hypothesis that guides the research process but this research does not have a hypothetic statement. The reason for not hypothesising the research is due to the fact that the theoretical paradigm chosen is *interpretive*. This is supported by most phenomenologists (for example Hodkinson, 2008:81; Gilbert, 2008:34; Babbie 2010:35) who agree that a phenomenological study does not necessarily need to be hypothesised.<sup>96</sup>

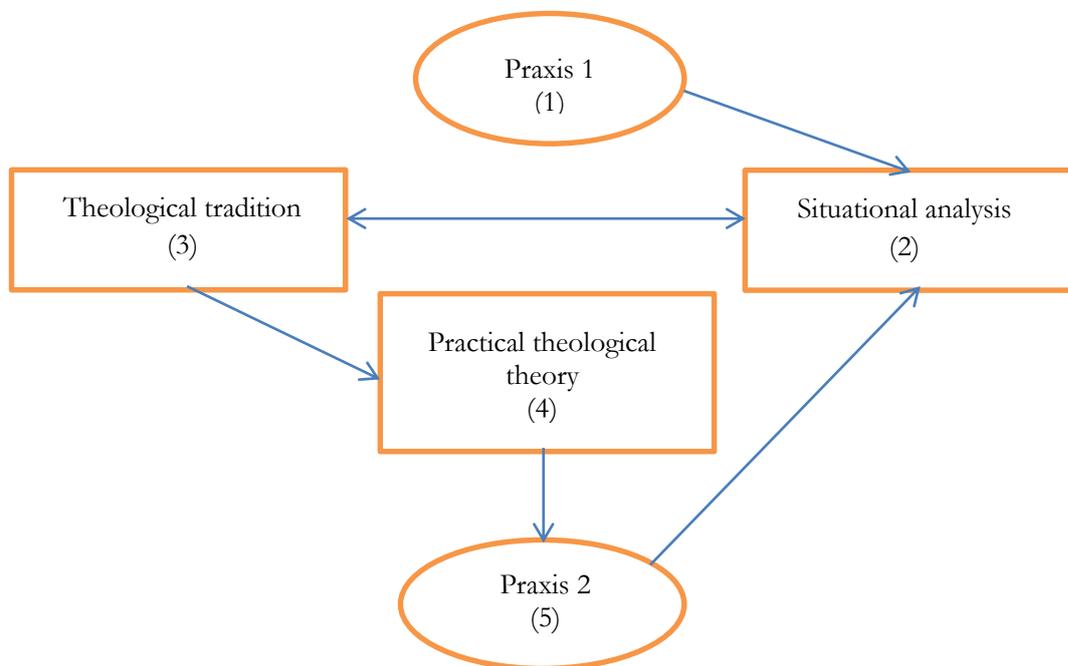
This research was designed in such a way that it is guided by the research question in line with its objectives due to its interpretive dimension and its emphasis on the lived experiences of the researched. As it were, getting newer scientific insights requires a good methodology which is shaped by a good research design (Creswell, 2009:3; Cohen *et al.*,

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<sup>96</sup> Rather, it requires that the researcher finds answers from the consciousness of the participants and interpret them without having a prior set of assumptions to guide the research process.

2011:115).<sup>97</sup> This research was designed as a case study and conducted following the process of the Practical Theology model presented in Figure 8 below.

**Figure 7: A diagrammatic representation of the research process**



An adaptation of the Zerfass' model for Practical Theology (cf. Zerfass, 1974:166)<sup>98</sup>

This model requires interaction between the praxis, theological tradition, situational analysis and practical theological theory to develop a new praxis. The reason to follow the Zerfass model is justified by the fact that it shows how theory is linked to praxis. The Zerfass model enabled for this research an intensive interaction between theory and praxis while showing that, in actual practice, praxis is also influenced by theory.

Having adapted the Zerfass model to this research, I started off by [1] a particular *existing form of praxis* on the basis of personal experience by virtue of being an insider on the subject under investigation; then [2] I made a *situational analysis* of the phenomenon to be investigated, which facilitated the actual collection of data on the sites of research from the eligible participants; thereafter, [3] using the *theological tradition* of socio-critical phenomenology hermeneutics, and [4] the *theory of Practical Theology*, data was

<sup>97</sup> A research design is the way in which the research is conceived, how it is executed and how the findings are going to be reported.

<sup>98</sup> Source: UNISA <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/1789/02thesis.pdf?sequence=3>

systematically analysed and interpreted. Finally, [5] recommendations that would inform the new *praxis* were made; thus, completing the Zerfass circle represented diagrammatically in Figure 8.

Considering that this study is conducted within the framework of Practical Theology, theological hermeneutic principles were followed in order to differentiate the research from other disciplines of the social science. The theological hermeneutic that was used to test the practice of theological theory in this study is that of *socio-critical phenomenology* as opposed to a strictly biblical hermeneutic (which would be an area of expertise for someone in the Old Testament or New Testament studies). A hermeneutic of socio-critical phenomenology accepts the authority of scripture in all matters pertaining to faith or belief (that is, *orthodoxia*) and conduct or practice (that is, *orthopraxia*).

### 5.2.2. Holistic case study research design

This research was designed and conducted within the frames and following the principles of a case study design. This was done because the nature of the research required that one explores the lived experiences of a group of people: refugee migrants. Various methodologists (see for example Baxter & Jack, 2008:547-551; Yin, 2009) provide pointers to various types of case study designs including (i) single case study, (ii) holistic case study (also known as single case with embedded units case study), and (iii) multiple or collective case study.

This research follows the design of a holistic case study in that it used a number of “embedded units” including a variety of data sources (i.e. KIIs, FGDs, and a survey) from a variety of cases (i.e. participants from six different African countries), and from various research sites (i.e. Mowbray and Bellville) to constitute a single case from which the refugee phenomenon in Cape Town would be studied. In other words, these embedded units were studied holistically as a single case with one unit of analysis.

The choice for a case study design in this research is justifiably significant because, generally, “a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations” (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:289).<sup>99</sup> The choice for a holistic case study was influenced by the fact that it is reputed

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<sup>99</sup> The validity of a case study design is often debated due to its perceived under-representativeness. Critics find that a study of a single case does not provide enough evidence to form a generalised conclusion or give

for its ability to use various methods of data collection and various cases to study concurrently for a thick description of the phenomenon under investigation (cf. Cassim, 2011; Yin, 2009:4). Thus, a case study design was deemed appropriate for this research as it offered a way to collect data that may not have been collected using any other design. Also, both the Zerfass model (cf. Section 1.6 & Figure 8 in Section 5.2) and the Practical Theology model adopted in this study give emphasis to the use of a case study design.

## 5.3. Qualitative methodological approach

In research practice, a methodological approach to research is its mode of investigation, which is shaped by the adopted research paradigm (Cassim, 2011).<sup>100</sup> In this research, the phenomenon under investigation required interpreting rather than measurement, which justifies the preference for the interpretive paradigm (cf. Section 5.2.1.) and the consequential choice of the qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was preferred for this research because it allows for an investigation of a phenomenon that requires explanations rather than demonstrations or proof (cf. Andrews, *et al.*, 2008:135; Cassim, 2011). In this way, Creswell (2009:4) identifies the qualitative approach to research as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem”. One would, therefore, contend that it is through the qualitative approach that the opinions and concerns of research participants are voiced out and heard. The sections below present a comprehensive account of the methods<sup>101</sup> used in executing the research process.

### 5.3.1. Process and methods of sampling

#### 5.3.1.1. Research sites

This study largely focuses on and unfolds the storyline of refugee migrants living in Mowbray and Bellville. The choice of these two research sites was determined by various factors

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recommendations on the issue under investigation. In other words, for critics, it is problematic to make universal claims based on just one person or one event, since one person or one event does not verify a pattern.

<sup>100</sup> In scientific research, there are three methodological approaches; namely the quantitative approach, the qualitative approach and the mixed approach (Cassim, 2011).

<sup>101</sup> Many people confuse the terms “method” and “methodology” and, thus, use them the wrong way. Generally, a “method” refers to the technique employed or the procedure by which the aim(s) and objectives of the research are going to be achieved. However, “methodology,” denotes the scientific study of methods or procedures undertaken during the course of the research.

including practical issues such as the costs involved and the accessibility of the sample. The choice of these two sites, Mowbray and Bellville, was strategic in that the two locations are among the urban areas around the Cape Town metropolis that are home to large numbers of refugee migrants. Finding participants in these two urban areas was, therefore, an effortless task particularly with the sampling methods adopted. The next section (Section 5.3.1.2) gives a detailed account of the chosen sampling methods.

### 5.3.1.2. Sampling

The data of this research was collected from adult participants. All participants were divided in various age categories (Section 6.2.3.1 gives a detailed account of all age categories in this research). These were mainly refugee migrants and a few “non-refugee” role players who had relevant information about refugee migrants such as social workers and healthcare providers. The sample size, as initially proposed, was 30; however, having reached saturation, data was finally collected from 20 participants.<sup>102</sup>

The sample was chosen through a triangulation<sup>103</sup> of two non-probabilistic sampling methods: *purposive sampling* and *snowball sampling*.<sup>104</sup> The choice of purposive sampling in this research was influenced by the fact that the method applies when the researcher knows the target population that would specifically serve the purpose of the study (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:116; Babbie, 2010:93). Having the knowledge of the population and the purpose of this research project, three cases were included in the sample at first for piloting the study. These pilot cases were used as initial informants to help identify other cases that could be eligible for subsequent interviews. This is where the choice of snowball sampling method is justified. Research theorists (see for example Kinash, 2012; Cohen *et al.*, 2011:118; Babbie, 2010:93; Andrews *et al.*, 2008) find that when a topic is sensitive, it is often difficult to identify eligible individuals who would make up the sample. Thus, snowballing was found to be useful in the identification of the participants.

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<sup>102</sup> According to Saumure and Given (2008:196), saturation is the point in data collection when no new or relevant information emerges. Hence, a researcher looks at this as the point at which no more data need to be collected. Furthermore, the research is a phenomenological study, which focuses on analysing meaning making; thus, it should be noted that it is not necessary to provide a large sample in such a group.

<sup>103</sup> In scientific research, triangulation is when a researcher applies different research methods for collecting data in an attempt to enhance the quality of the research (Mason, 2002:85).

<sup>104</sup> A non-probabilistic framework does not give the population an equal chance for selection. The most common non-probability sampling methods are *purposive sampling*, *snowball sampling* and *quota sampling*.

### 5.3.2. Process and methods of data collection

All methods of data collection<sup>105</sup> used in this research helped to meet the objectives of the research and provide answers to the question posed. In addition to the data collected from the textual materials, data was also collected from 20 participants in three different categories, namely through KII (i.e. one-on-one interviews with refugee migrants<sup>106</sup>), FGDs (i.e. discussions with the members of the refugee community<sup>107</sup>) and a survey (i.e. distribution of a semi-structured questionnaire to a few role players).<sup>108</sup> Below is a succinct account of the process and methods used in this research to collect the data.

#### 5.3.2.1. Document analysis

Existing textual materials were used not to only review literature but also as sources of information. As instruments for literature review, textual documents helped with the *a priori* familiarisation of the body of knowledge and with the theories or principles behind the phenomenon under study. As sources of information, textual documents were objects of investigation. In this way, the contents of relevant documents were critically analysed in an attempt to find and gather appropriate data for the research.

#### 5.3.2.2. Fieldwork

- Key informants' interviews (KIIs)

The KIIs provided a rich set of data since they were, to use the words of David Silverman (2006:113), “more personal and conversationally naturalistic”. Participants for KIIs were all refugee migrants living in any of the two sites of research, namely Bellville and Mowbray, and who have experienced either health challenges or whose wellbeing has been affected by their

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<sup>105</sup> A variety of methods can be used in a phenomenological research (Wilson & Sapsford, 2006:93, 95). These include key informants' interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), participant observation, action research and analysis of personal texts (Wilson & Sapsford, 2006:93; Creswell, 2009:57; Melville & Goddard, 1996:8).

<sup>106</sup> These are refugees who currently have or have experienced health problems while being refugees in South Africa or those whose wellbeing has been somehow affected by reason of being a refugee migrant in South Africa

<sup>107</sup> This group was composed of society leaders and faith leaders from the refugee community. Most refugee migrants form “societies”, which bring together refugees from one area. This could be ethno-tribal affinity, national or even regional depending on various factors. Here, a “society leader” is the person who has some authority or influence on the ethnic/tribal/national association of refugees from one place.

<sup>108</sup> Role players are those non-refugees who assist refugee migrants in various areas. In this research, role players were social workers and healthcare providers (cf. Section 5.3.1.2).

refugeeness. All the KIIs were in non-threatening environments at the place of each participant's choice. This is because, as Liamputtong (2011:3) indicates, interviewees must "feel comfortable to discuss their opinions and experiences without fear that they will be judged or ridiculed". All KIIs were semi-structured<sup>109</sup> in order to enable respondents express themselves freely, without fear and/or discomfort.

Ten KIIs were conducted to individual refugees who were willing to share their lived experiences on the question of health and/or wellbeing in general. Six of the KII respondents were Bellville residents and four resided in Mowbray. All the interviews were conducted at the place of participants' choice and convenience. Seven of the ten KII participants preferred to use the VIDEFI locale for the interviews and the rest preferred the convenience of their own homes.<sup>110</sup> The KII respondents were gendered as follows: four were women and six were men. However, a pilot study was first conducted to test the practicability of the methodological considerations associated to the research and the adopted design of case study (Figure 10 gives a template report of the pilot study). As observed, women were less represented in the KIIs. The reason for having a low female participation was due to the fact that most women were not willing to discuss health-related issues with a male researcher. Below Figure 9 illustrates how KIIs respondents were represented in this research practice.

**Figure 8: Number of KIIs respondents per gender and place of residence**

| Key Informants Interviews |        |      | Total |
|---------------------------|--------|------|-------|
|                           | Female | Male |       |
| From Bellville            | 2      | 4    | 6     |
| From Mowbray              | 2      | 2    | 4     |
| Total                     | 4      | 6    | 10    |

<sup>109</sup> A semi-structured interview is a method of research used in the social sciences. While a structured interview has a rigorous set of questions which does not allow one to divert, a semi-structured interview is open, and allows the interviewer to probe as new ideas are brought up during the interview following what the interviewee says (Cassim, 2011).

<sup>110</sup> VIDEFI (Vision for the Development of Fizi) is a refugee-run organisation operating in Bellville for the empowerment and socio-economic growth of women in the Bellville neighbourhood. Most of our interviews were held at the VIDEFI office.

The pilot interviews were conducted between 22 June 2013 and 6 July 2013. That is, the interviews were spread out to a period of two weeks. In total, three pilot interviews were conducted. Below is a table that provides details of this pilot research.

**Figure 9: Fieldwork report of the pilot interviews**

| Date         | Venue  | Session type | Participant code | Residence | Gender | Age-group | Country  |
|--------------|--------|--------------|------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|----------|
| 22 June 2013 | VIDEFI | KII          | BR_KII_F1_ZBW    | Bellville | F      | 30-39     | Zimbabwe |
| 22 June 2013 | VIDEFI | KII          | BR_KII_M1_BDI    | Bellville | M      | 22-29     | Burundi  |
| 29 June 2013 | VIDEFI | KII          | MR_KII_M1_COD    | Mowbray   | M      | 22-29     | DRC      |

- Focus groups discussions (FGDs)

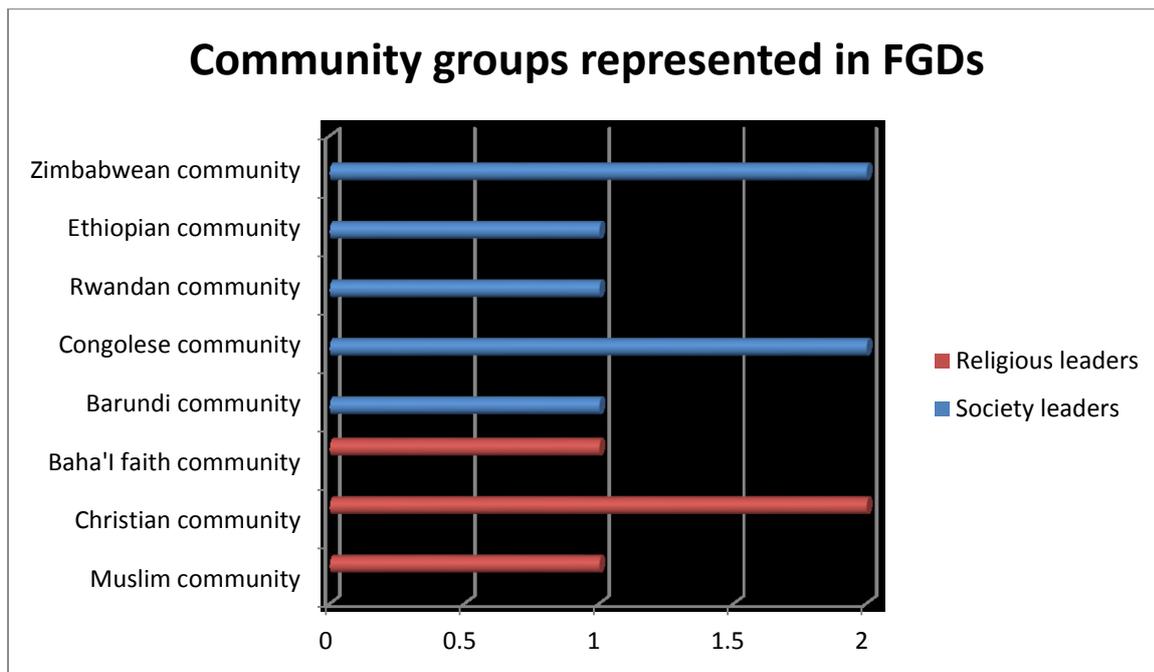
Two FGDs were conducted during the process of data gathering. One FGD lasted 56 minutes while the other took 1h 12 minutes. The choice for an FGD method of data collection was influenced by the common view and conviction that the practice is a good way of gathering together people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest (cf. Creswell, 2009:15; Gilbert, 2008:53; Mason, 2002). The purpose of these discussions was to explore practical perspectives of empowerment and hope as per the health and wellbeing of the refugee community in South Africa. The justification for splitting male from female participants was on the basis of women's request that they would feel uncomfortable to discuss private issues especially those related to their wellbeing and/or health in the presence of men. Discussions included, but were not limited, to themes such as the difficulties encountered by refugee migrants in South Africa and presumed reasons for such problems over and above their social integration within the mainstream South African society.

As the FGD facilitator, I guided participants by introducing topics for discussion throughout the sessions while helping them contribute naturally in the discussion. All participants in both focus groups were free to agree or disagree with each other during the discussions. The results of these FGDs provided an insight of how refugee migrants think about

the topic under investigation in line with their own experiences. The FGDs were held in two separate groups, each composed of a set of community leaders. These were people within the refugee community who hold some sort of positions in various spheres of influence. Each group comprised representatives of religious communities and cultural (ethnic, tribal or national) societies within the refugee community.

Of the religious leaders, one participant represented the Muslim community (he held some form of leadership at a Mosque in one of the sites of research); two participants represented the Christian community (these were all pastors living and leading small congregations in one of the sites of research); one participant identified himself as being a member of and leader in the Baha'i Faith community back in his home country, the DRC. Of the cultural society leaders were one representative of the *Amahoro Iwacu* group (i.e. a mutuality group of Burundian refugees living in Cape Town), two representatives of the Congolese mutuality, one representative of the Rwandan community, one representative of the Ethiopian community, and two representatives of the Zimbabwean community. In brief, there were four religious leaders and seven leaders of mutuality groups to make it a total number of eleven participants taking part in the FGDs. Figure 11 represents the categorisation of FGD participants following the society or mutuality groups they represent within the refugee community.

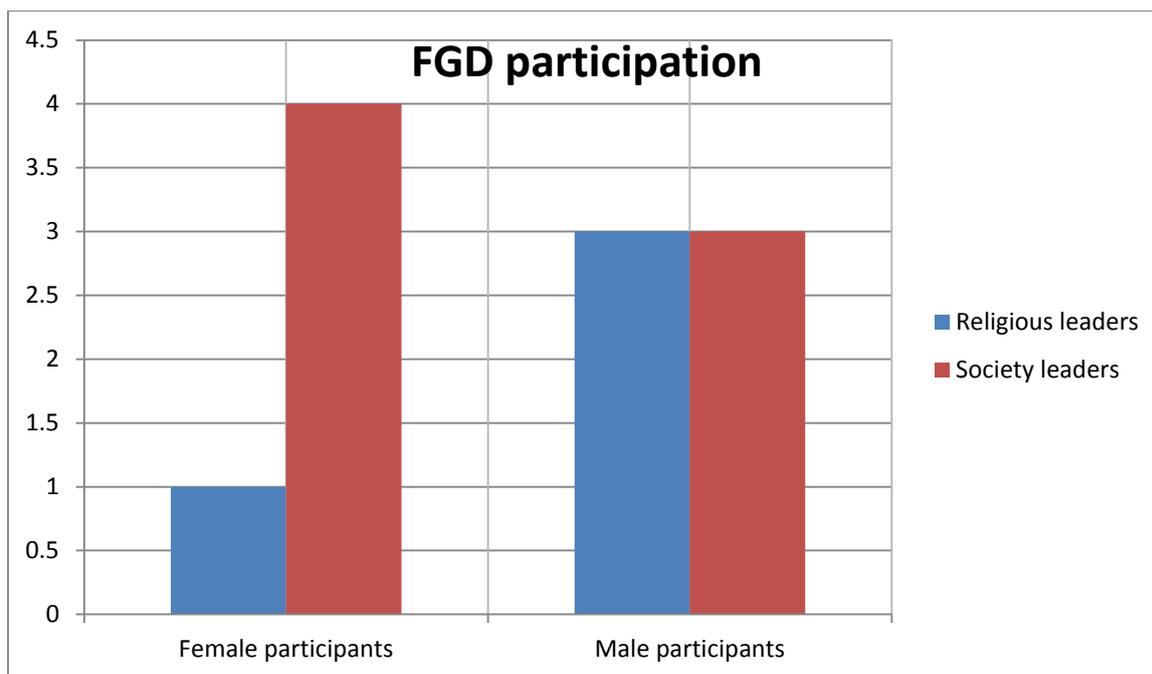
**Figure 10: Graphic of represented community groups in FGDs per social position**



One focus group was composed of female participants and another of male. The one with female participants had five people: one religious leader (representing the Christian community) and four society leaders (one from the Burundian community, one from the Rwandan community, one from the Congolese community, and one from the Zimbabwean community). The focus group composed of male participants had six people: three religious leaders (one representing the Baha'i Faith community, one representing the Christian community, and one representing the Muslim community), as well as three society leaders (one leader representing each of the following communities: the Zimbabwean, the Ethiopian, and the Congolese communities).<sup>111</sup> Thus, eleven participants were a part of this research through the FGDs. It is also important to indicate that some of those who participated in these FGDs accepted to be interviewed individually as KIIs participants. All the FGDs were held at the VIDEFI centre. Below, Figure 12 provides a diagrammatic representation of participants in the FGD category as explained.

**Figure 11: Representation of FGDs' participants per gender and social position**

<sup>111</sup> Most researchers agree that an acceptable number of participants in a focus group should not be less than five or go beyond ten (cf.; Beins, 2014:13; Cassim, 2011; Andrews *et al.*, 2008:32).



- *Survey*

A short survey to a limited number of people was also conducted. A questionnaire was drafted and sent to a few role players.<sup>112</sup> Here, a qualitatively enriched open-ended questionnaire was completed by a few role players among whom were health practitioners and social workers. They so did at the time of their convenience for the reason that the face-to-face approach could not be possible considering the inflexible nature of their profession and timetable. The views expressed by these professionals do not represent the views of the institutions they work for. They were personal opinions and were considered as such during data analysis.

Thus, in addition to the KIIs and FGDs, a questionnaire was sent to seven role players. Among the role players were two medical practitioners, two social workers, and three participants working with associations or NGOs that support refugee migrants. Four of the seven role players did not complete the questionnaire: one returned it empty and apologised for the inconvenience that his action might have caused to the research. He cited the lack of time as a reason for having not filled the questionnaire. The other three role players returned the questionnaire with only the biographical details filled. The questionnaires were, therefore, discarded since the main part of practical data was not completed – also citing time factor as a

<sup>112</sup> Albeit widely accepted that questionnaires are atypical for data collection in a qualitative research, most researcher agree that they add value to the research process in specific contexts.

reason for their deed. Thus, the survey questionnaire was completed by three out of seven role players. Figure 13 gives an illustrative picture of role player participants in the survey.

**Figure 12: Representation of role players in the survey per questionnaire**

|                            | Role players |        | Total |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------|-------|
|                            | Male         | Female |       |
| Distributed questionnaires | 3            | 4      | 7     |
| Completed questionnaires   | 1            | 2      | 3     |
| Incomplete questionnaires  | 2            | 2      | 4     |

### 5.3.3. Process and methods of data analysis

The qualitative approach to research has a choice of methods for data analysis. Whichever approach the researcher takes, one faces a choice of using either the manual (i.e. traditional) method or the electronic method (e.g. Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software – CAQDAS) when analysing the data (Friese, 2012:53). Mason (1996:123) points out that, in practice, many researchers would use a combination of the electronic and manual methods. In the case of a qualitative research, this would mean the use of both the manual method and a CAQDAS tool. As it were, there are various CAQDAS tools used by qualitative researchers for data analysis, the most common being NVivo and ATLAS.ti.

In an attempt to achieve the best results in this research, I attempted to combine the best features of both the manual and the electronic methods. It was vital for me to recognise the values of both the manual method and the CAQDAS tool, which I triangulated during the analysis and management of the data. Thus, my preferred manual method was *content analysis* while ATLAS.ti was the CAQDAS tool of choice. These two methods were triangulated in order to ensure a balanced process and the consequential authenticity of the results from the study.

Prior to data coding, the process of data analysis involved transcription, repeated reading and categorisation of data segments into themes. The data from fieldwork was also obtained by triangulating the methods of data collection<sup>113</sup>; thus, only the data from the survey

<sup>113</sup> I also triangulated the methods for data collection by using interviews and focus groups discussions (which are methods mainly used to collect data in a qualitative research) and a survey (which is a method used mainly to

was analysed using the manual method. Below is a table (i.e. Figure 14) illustrating how this was done in actual practice.

**Figure 13: Illustration of how the process of data analysis was carried out**

| ATLAS.ti |      |                |      | Manual method    |               |      |
|----------|------|----------------|------|------------------|---------------|------|
| Coding   |      | Categorisation |      | Content Analysis | Transcription |      |
| KIIs,    | FGDs | KIIs,          | FGDs | Survey           | KIIs          | FGDs |

As illustrated in the table above (Figure 14), the transcription of the recorded KIIs and FGDs was done manually. However, the transcribed data was entered into ATLAS.ti for coding, categorisation and analysis. The survey was not transcribed because the participants who took part in the survey made use of a questionnaire. That is, distributed forms were hard copies and, therefore, respondents had to fill in their answers. Thus, the analysis of the survey data was not done using ATLAS.ti but with the manual method.

### 5.3.3.1. Coding of participants

All the participants were coded using a systemic coding system that helped recognise the identity of the participants and the place where the intervention took place. This coding system was uncomplicated and easy to follow throughout the data analysis process. Figure 15 below gives a few examples of how participants in this research were coded and saved in the ATLAS.ti software using this coding system.

**Figure 14: An example of how participants were coded**

| Code | Interpretation |
|------|----------------|
|------|----------------|

collect data in a quantitative research). The triangulation of these three methods in this research does not make it a “mixed-methods” research because the survey conducted was minimal. In other words, the triangulation of methods of data collection does not necessarily make a research a “mixed-methods”. What qualifies a research as “mixed-methods” is the triangulation of approaches used to research (i.e. a comprehensive use of both the qualitative and the quantitative approaches).

|   |               |  |
|---|---------------|--|
| 1 | BR_KII_M1_COD | A Bellville resident, participant in the key informants interview, first male participant, from the DRC  |
| 2 | MR_KII_F2_BDI | A Mowbray resident, participant in the key informants interview, second female participant, from Burundi |
| 3 | FGf_P2_RL/SL  | Focus group discussion with female participants, participant #2, religious leader/society leader         |
| 4 | FGm_P1_SL/RL  | Focus group discussion with male participants, participant #1, society leader/religious leader           |
| 5 | RP_SQ_M2_SA   | Role player participant, survey questionnaire, second male participant, South African citizen            |
| 6 | RP_SQ_F1_FN   | Role player participant, survey questionnaire, first female participant, foreign national                |

### 5.3.3.2. Coding of participants' home countries

Participants in this research represented six different African countries. Each of their countries was assigned a specific code, unique to it, for easier classification. Below, in Figure 16, is the list of codes ascribed to the respective countries of each participant during the coding process with the ATLAS.ti software.

**Figure 15: Codes of participants' countries**

|   | <b>Code</b> | <b>Country</b>                 |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | COD         | Congo (Democratic Republic of) |
| 2 | BDI         | Burundi                        |
| 3 | RWD         | Rwanda                         |
| 4 | ZBW         | Zimbabwe                       |
| 5 | ETP         | Ethiopia                       |
| 6 | SML         | Somalia                        |

### 5.3.3.3. Data coding and categorisation

The data was classified into three main categories: Demographic Data (DD), Experiential Data (ED), and Practical Data (PD). Figure 17 illustrates all the codes generated, and how data was

grouped into various categories and domains during the process of analysis with the ATLAS.ti software.

**Figure 16: Codes for DD, ED, and PD**

| Category (class)  | Domain (theme)  | Code assigned   |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| Demographic Data  | a) Age category & country of origin   | a) DD_ACCO      |
|                   | b) Gender & marital status  | b) DD_GeMS      |
|                   | c) Level of education & occupation  | c) DD_LEO       |
|                   | d) Type of accommodation, family & living arrangements  | d) DD_TAFLA     |
| Experiential Data | a) History <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When, how, why did they come to South Africa</li> <li>○ What they have experienced on their way here and while living here, etc.</li> </ul>   | a) ED_Hist      |
|                   | b) Support mechanism & survival strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How do they survive</li> <li>○ How do they pay the rent, etc.</li> </ul>  | b) ED_SMe-SStra |
|                   | c) Quality of life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social conditions</li> <li>○ Health conditions</li> <li>○ Environmental conditions</li> <li>○ Security and safety</li> <li>○ Emotional wellbeing</li> <li>○ Financial security</li> <li>○ Job satisfaction</li> </ul> | c) ED_QoL       |

|                |   |               |
|----------------|---|---------------|
|                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Family life</li> <li>○ Health</li> </ul>   |               |
|                | d) Enablers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Freedom</li> <li>○ Comfortability</li> <li>○ Accessibility</li> <li>○ Capability</li> </ul>  | d) ED_Enab    |
|                | e) Hopefulness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Certainty, uncertainty</li> <li>○ Dreams, plans, desires, etc.</li> <li>○ Faith, trust, promise, etc.</li> <li>○ Confidence, positivity, etc.</li> <li>○ Courage, resilience, etc.</li> </ul> | e) ED_Hop     |
|                | f) Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Immigration issues</li> <li>○ Documentation</li> <li>○ Xenophobia</li> <li>○ Unemployment</li> </ul>   | f) ED_Chall   |
| Practical Data | a) Common conditions & major causes   | a) PD_CoCo-MC |
|                | b) Impediments to access  | b) PD_Imp2Ac  |
|                | c) Role of hope in recovery   | c) PD_RoHiR   |
|                | d) Practical suggestions  | d) PD_PraSugg |

The first two letters of the assigned code are the initials of the category or class, to which the segment of data belongs. For example, a code starting with the letter PD will mean the segment of data linked to that code is from the Practical Data category. The remaining part or the root of the code is composed of the first syllable(s) of the code's domain or theme.

Each category has various domains or themes that influenced the coding system and guided the coding process. The DD category has four domains: (i) age category and country of origin (#ACCO), (ii) gender and marital status (#GeMS), (iii) level of education and occupation (#LEO), and (iv) type of accommodation, family, and living arrangements (#TAFLA). This is indicative of the fact that each segment of data in relation to any of these themes will be coded accordingly following their respective domains.

The ED category has a number of domains because the research is phenomenological and therefore calls for deeper probing to understand participants' lived experiences. The category is divided into six domains, namely (i) history (#Hist), (ii) support mechanisms and survival strategy (#SMe-SStra), (iii) quality of life (#QoL), (iv) enablers (#Enab), (v) hopefulness (#Hop), and (vi) challenges (#Chall). These domains are, as seen in Figure 17, made of sub-domains that allow easier detection of needed segment of data during the coding process.

Like the DD category, the PD category is also divided into four domains. These are (i) common conditions and their major causes (#CoCo-MC), (ii) impediments to health services access (#Imp2Ac), (iii) the role of hope in recovery (#RoHiR), and (iv) practical suggestions (#PraSugg). The PD category results from a survey conducted; not from the interviews with key informants. In other words, the narratives of the PD category are not of refugee migrants who are the target population in this research, but of a few role players involved in the lives of refugee migrants in various spheres of influence.

## 5.4. Validity and reliability: dealing with subjectivity in research

The requirement of science in modern society is expressed through a requirement of objectivity (Andrews, *et al.*, 2008:23). In view of this, one must strive for objectivity to be credible in this globalised world since an objective attitude is always considered as a criterion for excellence to which many spheres of influence must comply in order to be called scientific. The preference for objectivity often leads to a *de facto* rejection of subjectivity – its absolute opposite. However, subjectivity is not necessarily unacceptable and wrong. For instance, it is suitable to

carry out a kind of subjectivity that encourages humanity rather than falsely ignoring it in the name of being objective.

Both the collection and the analysis of data in this research were carried out with a sense of subjectivity, yet in a thorough and transparent manner. According to Kirk and Miller (1986:21) validity and reliability in qualitative research is a question of accuracy and authenticity. The terms denote transparency, which is what counts in qualitative research. This is because the aim of a qualitative research is usually to look into the lived experiences of the people by gathering authentic information from the participants and thereafter assess the quality of the data collected (Mason, 2002:128; Kinash, 2012:103). In this way, academic transparency and honesty in research practice are of prime significance notwithstanding the level of subjectivity involved. However, considering that qualitative researchers are often accused of subjectivity, it is essential to explain the importance of an insider to conduct a phenomenological study on the wellbeing of people he/she identifies with. This should be seen as an attempt to explain how the question of subjectivity was taken care of during both the course of the research practice and the writing of this thesis.

In conducting research on migration, the position of a researcher whose background (ethnic, cultural or societal) is the same as that of the participants is always deemed subjective. In other words, as Kim (2012:6) points out, researchers who happen to be refugee migrants and opt to research about the issues facing the refugee population are always deemed too subjective. In other words, an insider researcher is often the subject of doubts particularly on the academic reliability of their findings; this, under the assumption that they may be too involved with their research subjects.

However, as a refugee migrant researching on refugee issues, my 'insiderness' had substantial benefits. For example, I could access Muslim refugee women in FGDs because they considered me as an insider in their refugee world<sup>114</sup>. Also, participants were more honest in their narratives because they knew I know, albeit generally, the problems that refugee migrants face in South Africa. In this way, sharing commonalities and having sympathy with them helped them narrate their lived experiences, on the one hand, and facilitated my understanding of their situation, on the other. Kim (2002:43) finds that an explicit advantage for being an

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<sup>114</sup> Under normal circumstances, women do not mix with men following the rules of Islam

insider as a phenomenological researcher is that “one remains tolerant and non-judgemental” whereas an outsider is likely to be critical and judgemental of participants’ lived experiences.

The notion of “insiderness” validates Swinton and Mowat’s (2006:227) observation that “the best people to research a given topic are those who have the most experience of it”. Besides, my “insiderness” triggered comfortability and influenced a relaxed relationship between me and the participants during the interview sessions and the focus groups discussions. It also granted the participants the ease of narrative-building.

In addition, academic writing was traditionally characterised by impersonality (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:42). That is to say, it completely discouraged the use of first person pronouns. One would not be allowed to use words like “I”, “my”, “mine”, “me”, etc. in academic writing. Because they were deemed “too subjective”, these pronouns (and the likes) were seen as exposing the notion of reliability in research to a prejudiced point of view (Alasuutari *et al.*, 2008:44). Nevertheless, over-avoidance of personal language or pronouns often leads to awkward constructions and, thus, vagueness while its use may improve clarity and add concreteness to one’s writing style. Objectivity in academia is not measured by the use of non-personal language in a final report. Rather, the concept of objectivity is about scientific integrity, which has more to do with accuracy and authenticity in research than the avoidance of certain pronouns (Cassim, 2011).

In this research, therefore, there are times personal language is considered more appropriate and unavoidable as, thus far, noticed. This is, particularly, when describing what I actually did during the research practice. The use of the third person (e.g. the author, the researcher, etc.) tends to create linguistic ambiguity in certain circumstances while the use of the first plural person (i.e. “we”, “us”, etc.) suggests an agglomeration of researchers – which is not the case for this research. When it comes to personal experience, merging the traditional academic style with a balanced reflective writing is more appropriate, which would mean using personal language moderately and when necessary (Alasuutari *et al.*, 2008:44). Thus, the use of “I” in this research should not be considered “too subjective” but as a way of bringing in personal experiences or explaining personal actions during the course of this research practice in a more specific way. Nevertheless, one remains cognisant of the fact that personal language

is often (but not always) inappropriate in academic writing and, therefore, an attempt to moderate its use is necessary.

## 5.5. Scope and limitations of the research

### 5.5.1. Scope of the research

The *spatial* scope or geographical space covered by this study in terms of data gathering is the Cape Town metropolis. I decided to focus my fieldwork particularly in the urban precincts of Mowbray and the Bellville CBD. The preferential choice for these two sites was influenced by the seemingly high density of the population of interest living in these areas. While Mowbray and Bellville were the main sites of focus for fieldwork, information gathering took place in a few more places of interest in and around Cape Town where specific non-governmental organisations that provide services to refugees are located.

The *temporal* scope in terms of (i) the duration of the study extended between January 2013 and December 2015. That is to say, it took three academic years to completely bring this study to closure. However, the fieldwork began in November 2013 shortly after the certificate of approval was granted as clearance to conduct the proposed research (cf. Addendum 1). The fieldwork took place at different times of the day and different days of the week. In terms of (ii) the timeframe to which the study relate, the scope is unlimited. As conceived, the objectives of the study do not require a specific period of time in history to gain access to relevant data. Nevertheless, the data collected from both the two sites of research and the existing materials resonate with the contemporariness of this era.

The *thematic* scope of this study is the binary of hope and empowerment with a special focus on their utility in refugees' lives. Considering the interdisciplinarity of the phenomenon under study, however, I observed a few other relevant spheres of influence to further expand and, thus, support the point discussed under the theme.

Finally, the *persona* scope of this study revolves around refugee migrants. I had, however, infrequent encounters with a number of role players who are not of the targeted population group, a few of whom filled the questionnaire for survey. Nevertheless, my intent

was to gather enough information in order to understand the dynamics of the refugee phenomenon better but when I reached saturation, I discontinued the process of data gathering.

### 5.5.2. Limitations of the research

Although the nature of this research is of great actuality, the currency of events relating to the issue under investigation (i.e. the refugee phenomenon) keeps unravelling. There is insufficient literature in the fields, which are timely and relevant to this field of study. Even some of the most recent existing journal articles do not reflect the complete reality of the issue under investigation in the country or the situation on the ground in particular; that is, the lived experiences of the refugee migrants living in Cape Town. Reliability of available documents is often susceptible to a certain level of subjectivity which, in this case, I attempted by all means to minimise. In view of such literary limitations, an exploratory phenomenological study such as this needed an alternative way of probing so as to explain the phenomenon under investigation better; and the alternative way was that of empirical research.

During the fieldwork, I tried as much as possible to remain cognisant of my gendered role in the wider refugee community characterised by a myriad of religious beliefs. My interactions had to be much nuanced and, in a sense, cultured considering that some participants were reticent to engage in research-related activities. They felt they needed to keep away from strangers like me who wanted to penetrate their privacy by wanting to know all about their lived experiences. Their reticence and sceptical stance towards me often resulted in me not probing any further. This too was, of course, a limitation to this research practice.

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that the nature of this research project limited its findings. This is because the sample size was very small and, thus, not representative. The design of the study restricted the research to participants living only in Mowbray and Bellville. Besides, working alone as the researcher, I facilitated the focus groups all by myself, which limited spontaneity and discussion of the focus groups members, particularly female members. Thus, the absence of a female assistant researcher was a limitation in the process of data gathering. The research is highly sensitive as it deals, *inter alia*, with private matters such as health and wellbeing. Some of the female participants were not willing to discuss in detail issues related to their health with a male researcher.

## 5.6. Ethical considerations

Having reviewed the University of Stellenbosch codes of ethics, I constantly reflected on potential ethical concerns that could arise during the course of the research. With this attitude towards the research, I could not undermine any of the established ethical regulations and principles as that would have led to prosecution and/or penalties.

### 5.6.1. Protection of the participants

Because research involves getting information from people and about people, it is possible to exploit those being researched (Silverman, 2012:64; Cohen *et al.* 2011:75; Flick, 2007:51). Thus, there is a need for ethical considerations to protect and respect the feelings and rights of those participating in research as subjects (Cohen *et al.* 2011:106; Holliday, 2007:18). For that reason, I began the fieldwork after obtaining an ethical clearance, which was applied beforehand from the Research Ethics Committee (REC). By giving the clearance, the REC allowed the fieldwork to take place since there was a guarantee to protect potential participants. The clearance protects both the researcher and the participants. A copy of the ethical clearance is herewith annexed as an addendum in the appendices section (see Appendix I).

The entire process of this research from planning to execution was conducted in an ethical manner. I provided participants with an informed consent form (see Appendix II), so that they can accept without being coerced to participate considering the sensitivity of the phenomenon under study. However, I was also conscious to remain alert for situations where a participant may decide to withdraw his/her consent to participate. Thus, this research follows internationally recognised ethical codes of confidentiality and respect for human dignity. As it were, I adapted the ethical principles of human research in line with human dignity to the local contexts so as to obviate related misunderstandings and avert any possible damages to the participant during the process of this research practice.

### 5.6.2. Protection of the rights of the institutions involved

All participants who took part in this research as role players agreed to do so, on their own behalf. That is, they did not represent the institutions they work for and, thus, their views are not the views of such institutions. In this way, the rights of the institutions indirectly involved

were accordingly protected. If their views were to represent the institutions they work for, permission was to be sought from relevant bodies before approaching potential individuals from those institutions for participation.

### 5.6.3. Scientific integrity

Accuracy and authenticity both in the presentation and the interpretation of data have been for me among the leading ethical principles during the course of this research. I refrained from forging the data or reporting the non-existent and, at the same time, avoided all the known forms of plagiarism in all possibilities by duly acknowledging all sources quoted or paraphrased. In this vein, the thesis was submitted to Turnitin, an electronic software, to check the level of originality for this thesis. The result found from Turnitin was dealt with instantly to the best of my consciousness, which reduced the level of similarity.

This scientific integrity indicates that no deceit or fraud with the collection or analysis of data occurred during the course of this research practice. I had put a high premium on the dignity of participants during data collection and maintained the highest level of academic honesty during analysis so that the research reflects authenticity. Lastly, as declared in the Declaration section of this thesis, it is vital to emphasise here that the entirety of this work is mine – save to the extent otherwise specified. Thus, proper acknowledgement has been duly credited to all the sources herein quoted or paraphrased. In addition, I have not previously submitted this dissertation in its entirety or in part, at any university or institution of higher education, for obtaining any academic qualification. I am the sole author thereof.

## 5.7. Conclusion

This research presents a critical perspective, a descriptive evaluation, and an empirical side to the subject under investigation. This is because theology is, by nature, a contextual practice and, thus, methodological. In view of this, this chapter reported on the mechanics employed to execute this research project. The chapter is a bridge, therefore, between the review of literature and the actual presentation of data. The next chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data from the fieldwork.

## Chapter 6 – Narratives of Hope and Hopelessness

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I know a few things to be true [...]  
I am unwelcome and my beauty is not beauty here.  
My body is burning with the shame of not belonging...  
But... all of this is better than the scent of a woman completely on fire;  
Or fourteen men between my legs, or a gun! [...]  
No one leaves home, unless home  
is the mouth of a shark

~ Warsan Shire

# Chapter 6 – Narratives of Hope and Hopelessness

## A focus on participants' lived experiences

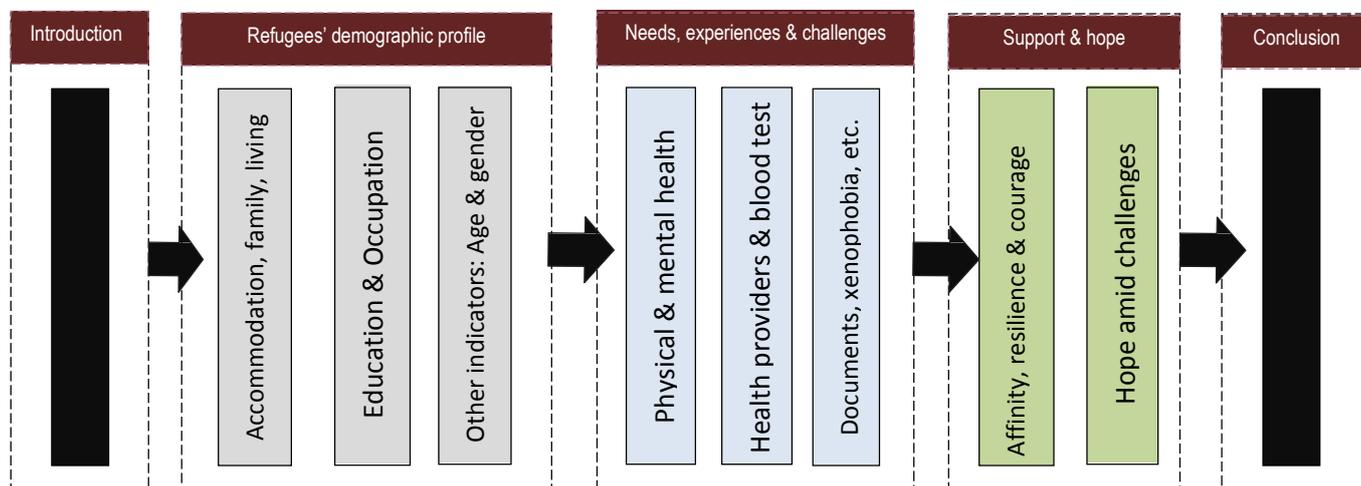


Figure 17: Chapter 6 Road map

### 6.1. Introduction

Having dealt with the mechanics of research methodology, the previous chapter provided details as to how the study was designed and executed including how data was collected and analysed. This chapter connects theoretical concepts as observed in the previous chapters to the lived experiences of refugee migrants. The chapter presents the data collected from the fieldwork and then analyses it using the descriptive method. A number of data are analysed using figures (i.e. tables or charts); however, most of the data are analysed in a purely narrative way. The chapter discusses refugees' narratives as empirical accounts of what I term "hope against hope" (cf. Romans 4:18). Nevertheless, other literature or sources are introduced in conversation with these voices to support the analysis process.

As it were, this chapter presents the narratives of refugee migrants from six African countries: Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe, all of whom residing in the city of Cape Town where the samples were recruited. As indicated in Section 5.3.1.2, the target population was made of refugee migrants who have directly or indirectly experienced health and wellbeing challenges as a result of their refugeness. Here, I report on the research

findings by analysing and interpreting the participants' narratives. Throughout, the findings are interpreted in the light of hope and its implications in refugees' experiences of life. However, I also engage with scholarly voices in various places while cross-referencing to previous chapters so as to show the link of participants' narratives and the data from the existing literature. In this way, the chapter answers the research question by meeting the following research objectives:

*Objective 2: To identify the challenges that refugee migrants face through their lived experiences*

*Objective 3: To determine the impact of the refugee phenomenon on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants*

Here, the open-ended narrative is used in line with Klaasen's (2012) approach. This is because, according to Klaasen (2012:114), "a narrative approach considers the specific context and treats each context in its particular time and space". In view of this, the narrative principles did not apply to every context relevant to the participants but "the principles applied in one context [could] be applied in others" provided they were based on "particular circumstances of the community" (Klaasen, 2012:114). In the same vein, Ruard Ganzevoort (2012:218) argues for narrative approaches in religious practices and particularly in Practical Theology. In other words, Ganzevoort (2012:221) finds that the use of narrative approaches in Practical theology is of great significance because "it creates the possibility of interaction with biblical theology". It is this significance of narrative approaches within the field of Practical Theology that prompted the use of it in this research project.

## 6.2. Refugees' demographic profile

In this research, the data on the demographic profile of participants result from personal questions concerning age, gender, education, residential area, employment history and nationality. Here, I will present, analyse and interpret some of the data in the DD category, particularly the two codes of DD\_TAFLA and DD\_LEO (Section 5.3.3.3. gives a detailed account and meaning of all the codes used in this research and data categorisation).

### 6.2.1. Type of accommodation, family & living arrangements (code: DD\_TAFLA)

According to the UNHCR (2011), a number of refugee migrants arrive in their new setting in the hosting country being traumatised, in shock, in need of medical treatment, and generally without livelihoods. In addition, they usually do not speak the local languages of the hosting country and, according to Greenburg & Polzer (2008:42), they often experience hostility from the local residents. This is indicative of the reality that refugee migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and violence both during their flight from their own country and during their stay in the hosting country. As for women, they may have either lost their main source of income or found themselves separated from their breadwinners, which, in itself, is a cause for concern and real challenge for survival (Palmary, 2002:25). All such challenges increase refugees' vulnerabilities in the hosting country and affect their wellbeing. As a result, refugees' living conditions become difficult.

In my interviews with refugee migrants, I found that refugee migrants live in large numbers so they can afford to pay the rental fee at the end of the month. The type of accommodation they live in are mostly blocks of flats, which they share with one, two or more other families. The reason for such sharing is, on the one hand, reminiscent of their communality and, on the other hand, reflective of the fact that one family cannot afford paying the rental fees for an entire house at the end of the month – so they share. .

As it were, whether they are Zimbabweans, Somali or Congolese, refugee migrants always occupy space in one way or another. However, they strive to make space and have their place in the mainstream society recognised. MR\_KII\_M2\_COD, a Congolese who works as a car-guard on the streets of Bellville, voiced out his resentment about finding space as a refugee. He angrily stated thus:

MR\_KII\_M2\_COD: If they don't want us here they can just say it. In this country a refugee is treated like a dog. We're living very, very bad life here. Like me, look, I sleep with my wife and all my children in one room; in the other rooms there are other people there with their children also. You see? What's that now? We can't do nothing... that's how we live... we must do car guard to pay rent! We don't have proper jobs, we don't have nothing because they treat

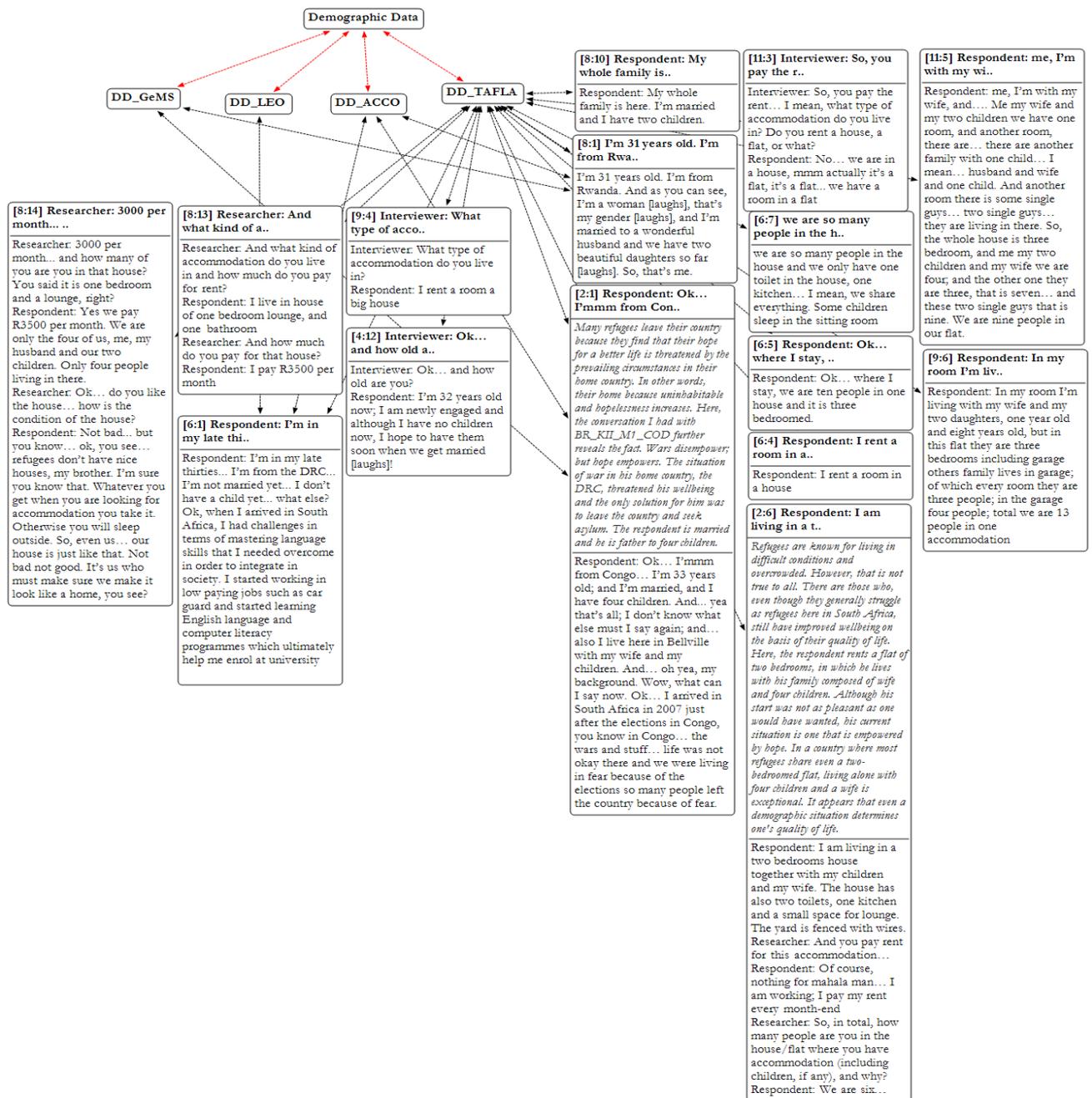
us like f\*\*\*ing s##t. Maybe they can just tell UN to take us overseas, yeah... that's the solution. It's very, very bad here. Us refugees we don't have a place here.

MR\_KII\_M2\_COD's storyline is reminiscent of the lived experiences of many a refugee living in Cape Town. His story indicates that to some refugees, South Africa is 'no place' for them, which makes them be certain of the fact that their only hope for survival is, to a certain extent, in getting protection elsewhere or a third country resettlement based on the 1959 UN Convention regulating the problems of refugee migrants to which South Africa is party (Section 4.4.1.2.). In addition, MR\_KII\_M2\_COD's experiences provide evidence of the fact that refugee migrants usually live in blocks of flats where they share rooms with various tenants so they can afford paying the rental fee to the property owner.

In MR\_KII\_M2\_COD's case, his flat has three bedrooms and he rents out the two rooms to two different families for a slightly higher price so that he could pay less. The payment for his three-roomed flat is R5500. He, whose name is known to the owner of the flat, is the "main tenant". He occupies one room and pays only R1200, while the other two families pay the rest equitably. The rental is exclusive of the electricity bill; thus, they contribute some money to buy electricity whenever the need arises. They share the kitchen space and other facilities for public convenience. Needless to say, most of the structures in which refugees live are usually decrepit, and some are even abandoned (cf. Bohmer & Shuman, 2008:75). Thus, the owners of the flats in the building spend little or nothing to take care of the properties.

In some cases, as in the case of MR\_KII\_M2\_COD, the owner takes in more tenants (usually refugee migrants) and subdivides the flats into even smaller units with 'triplex' card boards. As a result, the space becomes overcrowded causing health problems. Below (cf. Figure 19) is a graphic presenting the network of the code DD\_TAFLA, which is one of the categories of the demographic data in this research. The network shows the living conditions in a home of a refugee migrant and presents their narratives as they express themselves on their biographic details including their living arrangements. It also demonstrates how such narratives are connected to other codes, for instance, DD\_LEO. Such networking is vital for understanding their quality of life.

#### Figure 18 - Network View for the code: DD\_TAFLA



As observed in the above chart (Figure 19), most of the respondents live in blocks of flats and they have families. Like all individuals, refugees are entitled to an adequate standard of living, nutrition, accommodation, and healthcare. However, as one respondent indicated “Us refugees don’t have nice houses my brother, I’m sure you know that. Whatever you get when you are looking for a house; you take it. Otherwise, you will sleep outside and become homeless” (BR\_KII\_M2\_COD). This statement tells us that refugees have limited options even when it comes to finding accommodation, which is why they usually do not choose when they get

something. In other words, they often take whatever is available provided it is in an area they deem safe.

Literature reveals that, in a hosting country, the first thing that a refugee migrant would need is security and safety (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008:32). However, most countries deny or deprive them such basic services (Besseling, 2001:43). Thus, in order to improve their own wellbeing, refugee migrants “make plans” for survival. Nevertheless, they need to access basic services in the hosting country, and the hosting government needs to facilitate the process. Among the basic services needed, the most by refugee migrants is adequate accommodation. However, refugee migrants in South Africa often face major challenges as housing and/or adequate accommodation remains a problem that the ruling government still faces although it strives to eradicate it through varied programmes of social welfare (Buyer, 2009).

Because refugee matters overlap with many other social issues in South Africa, where refugee migrants live is often related to the legality of their stay. Most refugee migrants would avoid living in areas where police visibility is high if they know their being in the country is illegal. However, the illegality of refugee migrants results from the fact that some of them are tired with the irregularities of the DHA with regard to documenting those seeking asylum. It is also the case that most refugees get rejection letters and do not appeal the decision, then decide to just remain in the country as *sans papiers* to use the famous French description of undocumented migrants.

This is why the granting of a refugee status permit is an international substitute for the protection that a refugee migrant was to enjoy in his/her country of origin or that of his/her nationality<sup>115</sup> where his/her habitual residence is situated (World Migration Report, 2013). Yet, refugee migrants make plans particularly when it comes to living arrangements in order to survive in the country as supported by the many responses that the participants gave during the interviews.

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<sup>115</sup> In South Africa, however, this is met with great challenges because the country itself has a myriad of socio-economic challenges due to its political history (also cf. Section 4.4.1.).

## 6.2.2. Level of Education and Occupation (code: DD\_LEO)

### 6.2.2.1. Education profile

For the purpose of this study, the demographic data on education was classified into six categories: primary, secondary, graduate, postgraduate, doctoral and other. The primary level is for those who did not finish or only did primary education. The same applies for all other levels of education. The level labelled “other” was reserved for those who did not do any formal schooling at all – and no participant was in this category, which is an indication that refugee migrants come down here with at least a certain level of qualification to begin life with. Also, for the purpose of this research, “graduate” means “first degree”, and “postgraduate” means “second degree”. Those who were doing “honour’s degree” were classified as “postgraduate” in this research. Figure 20 below illustrates this in relation with participants’ countries of origin.

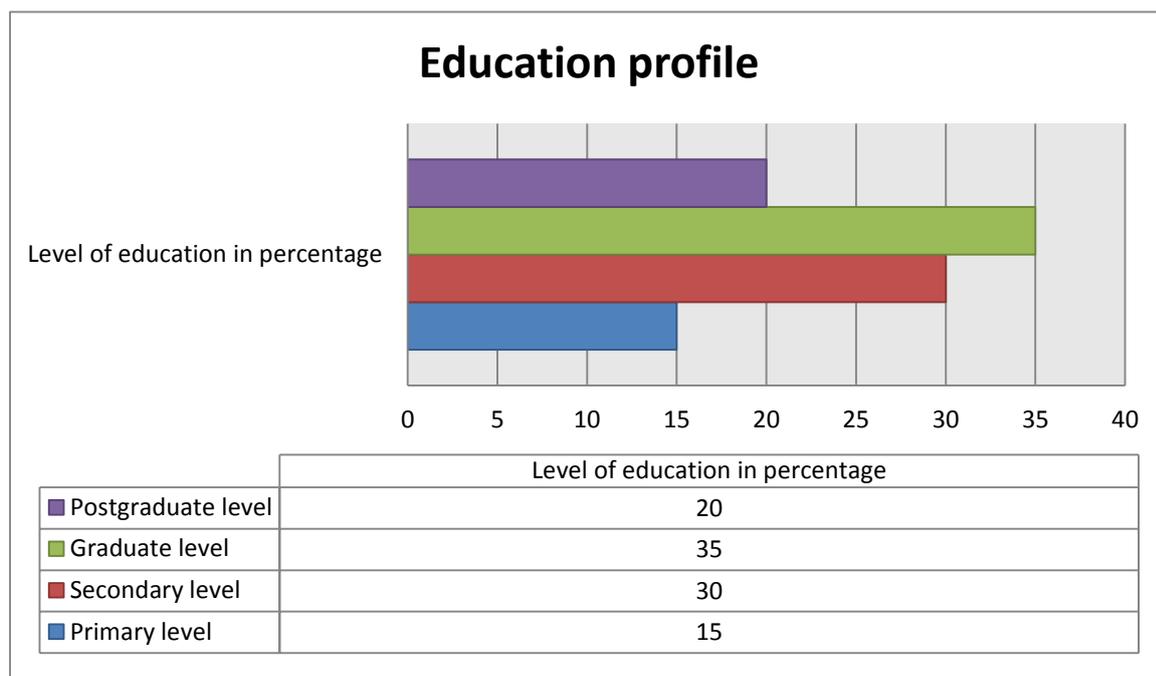
**Figure 19: Indicator of participants’ current level of education per country**

|   | Country  | Level of education |           |          |              |          |       | Total |
|---|----------|--------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------|-------|-------|
|   |          | Primary            | Secondary | Graduate | Postgraduate | Doctoral | Other |       |
| 1 | Burundi  |                    | 2         | 1        | -            | -        | -     | 3     |
| 2 | DRC      | 1                  | 2         | 2        | -            | -        | -     | 5     |
| 3 | Ethiopia | 1                  | 1         | 1        | -            | -        | -     | 3     |
| 4 | Rwanda   | -                  | -         | 1        | 2            | -        | -     | 3     |
| 5 | Somalia  | 1                  | 1         | -        | -            | -        | -     | 2     |
| 6 | Zimbabwe | -                  | -         | 2        | 2            | -        | -     | 4     |
|   | Total    | 3                  | 6         | 7        | 4            | -        | -     | 20    |

A number of respondents reported having some sort of qualifications even before they came to South Africa. However, there are those who acquired education while in South Africa, particularly those from the GLR countries.<sup>116</sup> Men, however, were slightly more educated than

<sup>116</sup> Africa has lots of lakes and some of them are regarded as great due to their size and/or their river basins. The Great Lakes of Africa include Lake Victoria, the second largest freshwater lake in the world in terms of surface area, and Lake Tanganyika, the world’s second largest in volume as well as the second deepest. The following (in order of size from the largest to the smallest) are included in most lists of great lakes in Africa: Victoria, Tanganyika, Malawi, Turkana, Albert, Kivu, Edward. Lake Victoria, Tanganyika and Malawi hold a quarter of the planet’s freshwater supply. Despite their beauty, the Great Lakes also rank as one of the world’s most

women although the findings revealed that the qualification gained by most was a first degree or a higher education certificate as illustrated in the figure above. Refugees from Rwanda and Zimbabwe were the most educated among the respondents as all respondents representing these two countries had university degrees. Those from the Horn of Africa (i.e. Ethiopians and Somalis) were the least qualified in terms of education. The chart below (Figure 21) presents a chart showing the percentage of respondents in this research to see how educated they were.



**Figure 20: Participants’ education profile**

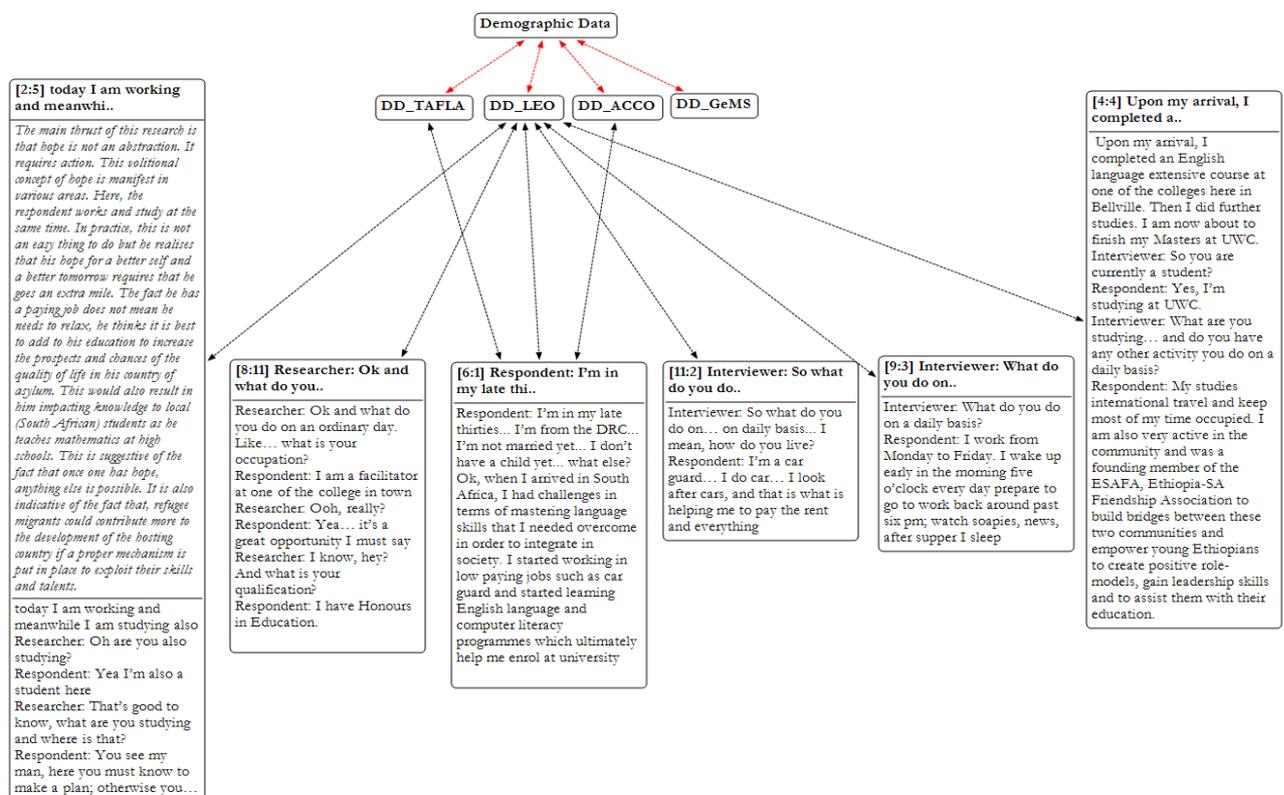
The chart above (Figure 21) is evidence of the fact that refugee migrants are not “nobodies”. They have skills and are qualified to do different things. The chart demonstrates that, despite the conditions they live in and the quality of life they lead, refugee migrants still empower themselves with education in the process of increasing their hope for improved wellbeing in South Africa.

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endangered water systems. It is often ambiguous, therefore, as to which countries exactly make up the African Great Lakes region though the cited lakes cover the area between Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi. The term Great Lakes region (GLR) is used in a narrow sense for the area lying between northern Lake Tanganyika, western Lake Victoria, and lakes Kivu, Edward and Albert. This comprises Burundi, Rwanda, north-eastern DRC, Uganda and north-western Kenya and Tanzania. However, the context and nature of this study required narrowing the description of Great Lakes Region (GLR) countries to only include: DRC, Rwanda & Burundi. Source: [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/African\\_Great\\_Lakes](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/African_Great_Lakes)

The diagram below (Figure 22) presents a network view of the respondents' levels of education and their occupation as per the code DD\_LEO (i.e. Level of Education and Occupation) during the interviews. The code interacts with DD\_ACCO (Age Category and Country of Origin) and DD\_TAFLA (Type of Accommodation, Family and Living Arrangements). That is to say, the level of education of refugee migrants and their respective occupations are linked to their age groups and countries of origin as well as to the type of accommodation they live in and their living arrangements.

**Figure 21 - Network View for the code: DD\_LEO**



As it were, a refugee migrant should not legally remain a refugee *ad vitam aeternam*. One should have access to a more “normal” status either by settling permanently in the hosting country as a resident or by having access to the citizenship of the hosting country through naturalisation (World Migration Report, 2013). Alternatively, a refugee should be returned, out of his/her own volition, to his/her country of origin or that of his/her nationality (Joseph, 2001:24). This would be one of the ways of empowering them. It would allow them increase their hope for improved wellbeing in the hosting country. In South Africa, however, this is not the case. In practice, the system does not make it easy (although it remains possible in theory)

for refugee migrants to be thus empowered. Nevertheless, refugee migrants in South Africa make do in one way or another, and they even enrol to academic institutions for either short courses or a degree programme at universities as also indicated by the findings of the data.

The network view above also provides empirical evidence on the fact that there are refugee migrants who are “working” and “studying” at the same time. The type of work they do is generally menial by South African standards but it helps them cover their living expenses while they are studying. It also shows that there are refugees with university qualifications who nevertheless remain unemployed. For survival, they do menial jobs such as car guarding.

The challenges that refugees face relating to education and occupation are numerous. These include not knowing the local language or even the English language since a large number of refugee migrants do not come from Anglophone countries. One respondent, BR\_KII\_M4\_ETP, indicated that he had major challenges with English when he arrived but that he took English classes to improve his speaking and comprehension skills. This is indicative of the fact that refugee migrants find hope in the hosting countries by confronting whatever challenging situation facing them. In this regard, language is linked to their hope for a better tomorrow in South Africa because understanding and speaking the local language is one of the ways towards social integration. Thus, refugee migrants attempt to overcome by all means whatever impedes them from finding or increasing their hope.

When refugees face a particular obstacle hindering them from reaching a certain goal, they actuate their hope so as to attain their objective. In the case of BR\_KII\_M4\_ETP, English was the obstacle but did not remain a permanent hindrance for him. He knew the only way to overcome that challenge is by taking some classes in English. Today, BR\_KII\_M4\_ETP is doing well in English, and it helps him manage his businesses well. In other words, it is hope that empowers refugees to sustain and work hard. As such, most refugees do something for survival, which see them even engage in micro entrepreneurship businesses such as selling on the streets, owning beauty salons and even, for some others, car-guarding in an attempt to pay for their own fees since the educational system in South Africa does not allow foreign nationals including refugee migrants to have access to loans and some other scholarships that are exclusively for the local citizenry.

It is hope for the future that led most of the respondents in this research to enrolling their children in formal schools despite the financial challenges they encounter. This is because most refugees have academic qualifications and know the value of education. However, many are not eligible for the social grants given to refugees because they do not have the refugee status permit (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008:23). Only those with the refugee status permit can access social grants from the government or get scholarships at universities (cf. Section 4.2.2.). Considering that the DHA does not issue the refugee status permit easily<sup>117</sup>, a great number struggle with fee payment. However, it was found that refugees are able to arrange to pay the school fees although they have great difficulty in making money. Most respondents felt that they lack educational resources for themselves and their children. Many cite lack of legal papers particularly the refugee status or permanent residence, financial resources, and a sense of instability as their reason for not pursuing education.

A considerable number of interviewed participants indicated that their situation as temporary refugees (i.e. asylum seekers<sup>118</sup>) who do not have rights to permanent (or third country) resettlement, citizenship and employment discourages them from pursuing long-term educational opportunities. It also hinders them from self-empowerment or from pursuing improved wellbeing. In other words, it is a deferral of their hope for a better future. One respondent, FGm\_P6\_FL conveyed this attitude through these words: “There is no education available for us. Anyway, why should one bother? We have to leave this country someday. We can never have rights. We cannot make it home”.

In addition, a number of respondents who have children in schools have pointed out the difficulties that their children face. Their children do not always attend school albeit entitled to free education by law. Their non-attendance is mainly due to the fact that they are often excluded from classes for having not paid the school fees although schools are officially not allowed to exclude anyone from attending classes by reason of not paying school fees. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999) states that: “Education of refugee children within the African context is fundamental in promoting and developing the child’s personality, talents, mental and physical abilities so as to foster African unity and solidarity”.<sup>119</sup> In other words, depriving a refugee child education is to threaten the child’s

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<sup>117</sup> Most “refugees” here are still asylum seekers and, thus, do not have enough rights in the country

<sup>118</sup> Asylum seekers in are issued with temporary permits in South Africa

<sup>119</sup> <http://pages.au.int/acerwc/documents/african-charter-rights-and-welfare-child-acrwc>

mental and/or physical capacities. Certain schools refuse to admit children with the A4 asylum-seeker permits. Considering the long delays by the DHA in issuing refugee status permits, many refugee children do not have official documents that are acceptable to certain schools. These problems frustrate and disturb refugee parents, and they aggravate their already vulnerable psychosocial health and wellbeing.

#### 6.2.2.2. Employment profile

All the KII<sup>120</sup> respondents were classified under three categories in terms of their work situation or employment profile. These are (i) employed, (ii) self-employed and (iii) unemployed. Below, Figure 23 illustrates this per country of origin.

**Figure 22: Indicator of participants' current employment profile per country**

|   | Country  | Work Situation |               |            | Total |
|---|----------|----------------|---------------|------------|-------|
|   |          | Employed       | Self-employed | Unemployed |       |
| 1 | Burundi  | 1              | 1             | 1          | 3     |
| 2 | DRC      | 1              | 2             | 2          | 5     |
| 3 | Ethiopia | -              | 3             | -          | 3     |
| 4 | Rwanda   | 1              | 1             | 1          | 3     |
| 5 | Somalia  | -              | 2             | -          | 2     |
| 6 | Zimbabwe | 2              | 2             |            | 4     |
|   | Total    | 5              | 11            | 4          | 20    |

As observed in the table above (Figure 23), the majority of respondents in this research were self-employed. In fact, most of them indicated that even before they came to South Africa, they had been either employed or self-employed in their countries of origin. Those who were unemployed were still high school students. Those who were unemployed and were not students were looking for work and, at the same time, involved in some other activities that could earn them money. It is then to be expected that, more men than women were employed or self-employed. Zimbabwean refugees topped the employed list, while those from Somalia were the most likely to have been self-employed.

<sup>120</sup> KII stands for Key Informants Interviews (cf. Section 5.3.2.2)

Despite relatively high levels of pre-migration employment, refugee women cope much worse than refugee men in all types of employment in South Africa. However, the interviews I had with all the participants in this research provide pointers to the reality that the level of permanent unemployment is similar for both refugee men and refugee women. This is partly explained in the fact that many refugee migrants who were employed in various sectors before coming to South Africa, and who are qualified for such jobs, are currently struggling to access jobs in the sectors of their expertise after arrival in South Africa.

As it were, access to permanent employment and jobs consistent with refugees' qualifications or skills is an important consideration in fully achieving structural integration in the country. A great number of respondents indicated that their jobs – or what they do for a living – were much lower than their skills and/or qualification. Most of those employed were in the security industry while others were self-employed, which suggests that many refugee migrants continue to be disqualified from various jobs despite their apparent qualifications. However, despite their apparent education and the lack of employment that is commensurate to their qualifications, refugee migrants refuse to idly sit and wait for humanitarian assistance. There is a life of resilience and courage such that they engage in various activities that earn them a living. Thus, most of refugees' money-making activities are in the informal sector. Here, Bellville and Mowbray, the two sites of this research project, were considered by most respondents as places where hope is renewed in spite of the many challenges they encounter.

I had an opportunity to interact with FGM\_P5\_SL during one of the FGDs we held. He is an informal trader in Bellville. FGM\_P5\_SL is persuaded that the beauty of Bellville is the variety of its demographics. Having graduated with his first degree at the University of the Western Cape a while back, FGM\_P5\_SL reminded me that South Africa as a whole has experienced major waves of immigration throughout its history. This is why the city of Cape Town and most of its environs “are full of immigrants”, as FGM\_P5\_SL puts it, starting from the early Dutch settlers then the subsequent French Huguenots and the British colonialists to the imported slaves from India and Malaysia, without counting those from other African countries who still come down for various reasons, including the quest for greener pastures. In his own words,

FGM\_P5\_SL: People here don't know that even the French Huguenots, who are the ancestors of some Afrikaans families, also came here as refugees. They were also running away from

persecution, just like all of us, because of the war of religion in Europe; and they came to live here. You see? Here in Cape Town everyone is a refugee, my friend... black or white.

This understanding of demographic composition by FGm\_P5\_SL provides evidence to the finding of this study that most refugee migrants in Cape Town are here to stay. The mere fact of comparing their being in South Africa to that of “French Huguenots” or claiming that “in Cape Town everyone is a refugee” (cf. FGm\_P5\_SL) ascertains their desire, willingness and hope to settle in South Africa. It is this hope and willing desire to settle and integrate in the country that fuels their resilience and courage. Their being in South Africa claims their belonging in South Africa. Like FGm\_P5\_SL, most refugee traders in Bellville and Mowbray do so informally. Their small trades prove to be effective and, thus, a valuable means to improve their wellbeing in the face of challenges bred by their ‘refugeeness’.

However, although it would be a fallacy to assume that all those trading on the streets of Bellville and/or Mowbray engage in illegal activities, FGf\_P3\_RL, a refugee from Ethiopia believes that not everyone doing business there is doing so justifiably. He goes as far as questioning the validity of the presence of some refugees in South Africa as she alleges that

FGf\_P3\_RL: Many people here they lie... they are not political refugees because of what is happening in their country... they are not; they are just busy with other stuff; who knows what? You never know... and they are very dangerous because they don't want you to know what they are busy doing.

FGf\_P3\_RL's allegations provide insights to the level of suspicion among refugee themselves, which often results in rivalry that could turn violent at times between the different refugee communities and/or individuals. FGf\_P2\_SL, a refugee from Zimbabwe, confirms that “there is no unity among us as refugees here, instead of loving one another and supporting each other we kill each other. That's bad! Some refugees they have connections with people up there; that is why they can get away with whatever they do”. FGf\_P2\_SL seems to indicate that the network of illegal activity in Bellville is very complex and goes as far as the upper echelons at government level. FGf\_P2\_SL has lived in South Africa for many years. He has a local wife with whom they have four children.

## 6.2.3. Other demographic indicators

### 6.2.3.1. Age

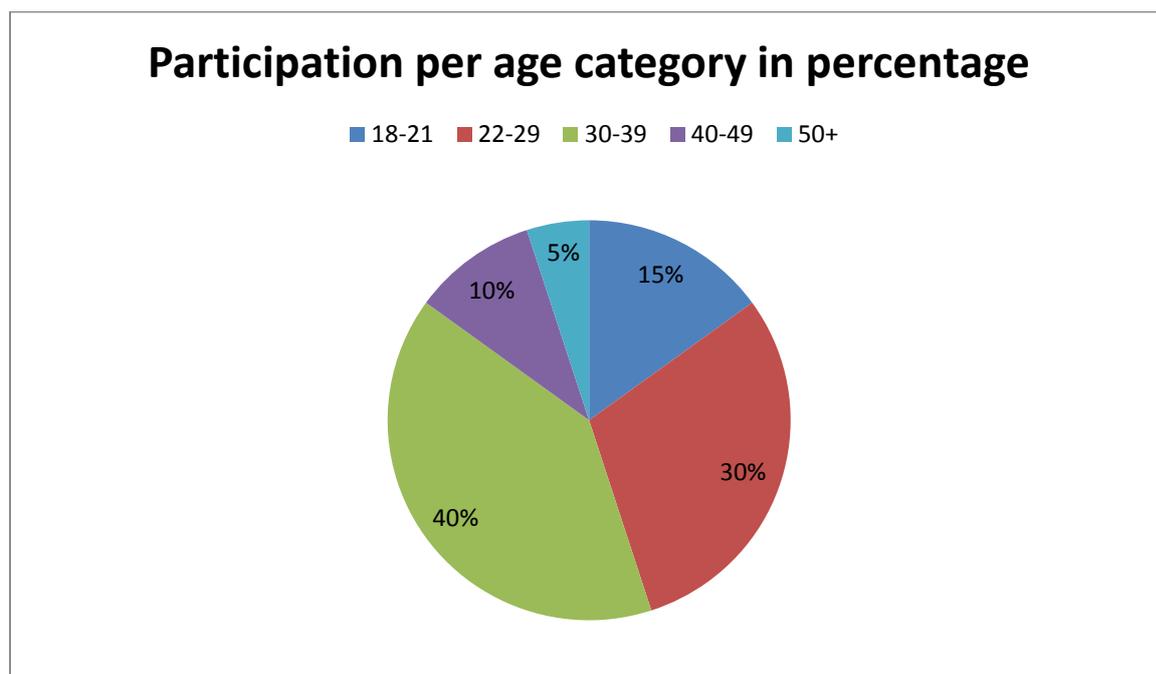
For the purpose of this study and convenience of data collection and analysis, age was classified into five categories, as presented in the figure below.

**Figure 23: Indicator of participants' age categories per country**

|   | Country  | Age category |       |       |       |     | Total |
|---|----------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
|   |          | 18-21        | 22-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50+ |       |
| 1 | Burundi  | 1            | 1     | 1     | -     | -   | 3     |
| 2 | DRC      | 1            | 1     | 2     | 1     | -   | 5     |
| 3 | Ethiopia | -            | -     | 2     | 1     | -   | 3     |
| 4 | Rwanda   | -            | 1     | 1     | -     | 1   | 3     |
| 5 | Somalia  | -            | 2     | -     | -     | -   | 2     |
| 6 | Zimbabwe | 1            | 2     | 1     | -     | -   | 4     |
|   | Total    | 3            | 6     | 8     | 2     | 1   | 20    |

The table above (Figure 24) indicates that the research did not include respondents who are under the age of 18 (cf. Section 5.3.2.2.). Their exclusion is due to the fact that special ethical clearance would have been required to interview children or adolescents under the age of 18. Therefore, only five categories are represented in this table with regards to the age of participants. It is observed that only Rwanda had a participant whose age category fell in the rubric for those who are at least 50 years old. The chart below (Figure 25) shows the percentage of respondents' age categories.

**Figure 24: Participation per age category in percentage**



### 6.2.3.2. Gender

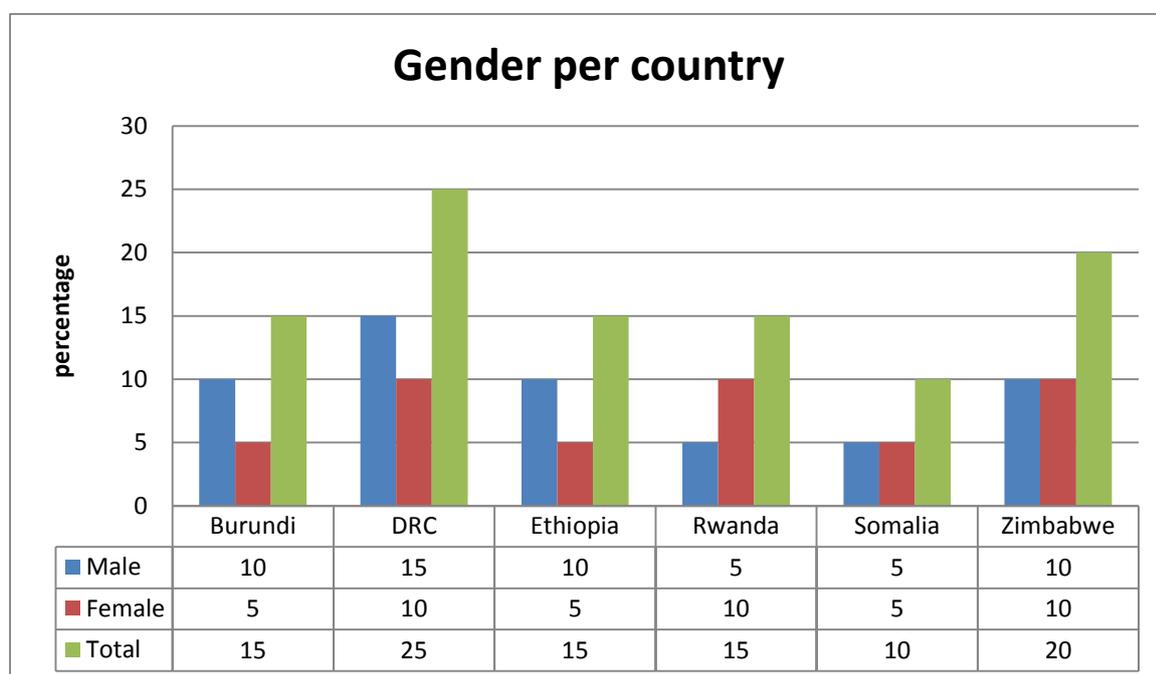
For the purpose and convenience of this research, participants’ sexual categories were classified into two types of gender: male and female. Figure 26, below, gives a picture of how these two categories were represented in the research.

**Figure 25: Indicator of participants’ sexual categories per country in number**

|   | Country  | Sexual category (gender) |        | Total |
|---|----------|--------------------------|--------|-------|
|   |          | Male                     | Female |       |
| 1 | Burundi  | 2                        | 1      | 3     |
| 2 | DRC      | 3                        | 2      | 5     |
| 3 | Ethiopia | 2                        | 1      | 3     |
| 4 | Rwanda   | 1                        | 2      | 3     |
| 5 | Somalia  | 1                        | 1      | 2     |
| 6 | Zimbabwe | 2                        | 2      | 4     |
|   | Total    | 11                       | 9      | 20    |

As observed in the table above (Figure 26), participation was unevenly gendered as male participants were more represented (55%) in the research than the female participants (45%). Figure 27 below partitions this graphically in percentage. As it were, participants from the DRC outnumbered the rest in that they were 25% represented of which 10% was female representation, while the least represented were Somali participants with only 10% of representation evenly distributed between male and female participants. The high representation of Congolese participants is attributable the fact that the informants used to refer eligible participants through snowball sampling methods were Congolese migrants.

**Figure 26: Representation of gender per country in percentage**



### 6.3. “If you don’t feel sick, you’re healthy”: Refugees’ understanding of health and their health needs

#### 6.3.1. Physical health

The socio-economic challenges that South Africa faces are such that refugees feel unwelcome in the country. As it were, refugee migrants are entitled to clinical services and medical treatment although in many instances access is not always guaranteed. The Refugees Act of 1998 gives refugee migrants (not asylum seekers) the same rights as the local citizens with the

exception of the right to vote. Section 27 (g) of the Act stipulates that a recognised refugee in South Africa is entitled to the same basic healthcare services and basic primary education, which inhabitants of the Republic receive (DHA, 2013a; DHA, 2013b; Amit *et al.*, 2009). However, among the mounting challenges that come with this entitlement are the differences in attitudes of healthcare workers towards different ethnic groups and foreign nationals particularly the refugee migrants.

As I interviewed participants on health issues in this research, it was generally found that many consider health as the absence of disease. However, a few went a bit further to say that health was more than just the absence of disease in the body. To them, being healthy also meant being in a good financial situation, and being comfortable with one's social condition. In other words, health is also a state of happiness, comfort and contentment. In this vein, BR\_KII\_F4\_COD claimed that "if you don't feel sick you're healthy". This respondent is among the many others who thought health was the lack of physical illness. She sought medical help or visited a doctor only when she felt sick. In the same vein, FGf\_P3\_SL, a member of the female FGD, corroborated the idea when she states "when you are sick, you are sick. That's why you go to the hospital to see the doctor. When you are not sick, you are fine and you are happy, and you don't have to go to the hospital".

Despite such views on health, key components of health maintenance and disease prevention were thought to be adequate nutrition and access to medical services when symptoms arose. Some respondents, however, attributed changes to nutrition during migration to ill health on their arrival in South Africa. Others acknowledged that good health was maintained by vitamins, immunisation and regular check-ups although they admitted that they rarely visit healthcare facilities for such purposes – citing that it was unnecessary if one was not feeling ill and/or it would be costly since they do not have health insurances to cover such expenses.

"The food I cook keeps me healthy" was the answer given by MR\_KII\_F3\_SML. She appeared to have little understanding of preventative health considering the comment she made when I asked her a probing question in order to ascertain whether she was aware of the fact that one may fall sick unexpectedly for not seeking medical help or visiting health centres or hospitals regularly. Her reaction was, "I just live. I do not look into health by eating well or

sleeping. I just worry about sickness if it comes”. Her responses are indicative of the finding that refugee migrants need proper programmes to educate them on health issues and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle – and this can only be achieved if the local government puts in place structures and measures aimed at integrating refugee migrants in the mainstream society.

For MR\_KII\_M2\_ETP, “to be a healthy person I would live among my family”<sup>121</sup>. In this way, the respondent provides pointers to the fact that being with family or in a community has positive effects on the wellbeing of a refugee migrant and increases the glimmer of hope one has. One would argue that this is, to some extent, verified considering that refugee migrants are people who need familial comfort more than anyone else. They leave all that is dear to them including all that is necessary for their improved wellbeing.

In the new setting of asylum, refugees often face challenges that threaten the very existence of their social fabric. Being with family is therefore one of the few things that bring them comfort and increase their hope for survival. Here, communal life rather than individualism is vital for improving refugees’ holistic wellbeing. That is to say, African *Ubuntu* empowers the self with the hope for improved wellbeing and a better tomorrow, which is why refugee migrants live *en masse* even as they reside in derelict structures (cf. Section 6.2.1.).

The question of health is significant in the mind of Africans such that some respondents indicated the presence of certain diseases, which they do not know whether they exist. During the interviews some would make mention of asymptomatic diseases, which they would refer to as, “disease that is hiding”. As one refugee woman, BR\_KII\_F2\_RWD, puts it, “There are diseases that do not have symptoms, like... you don’t know that you are sick but it’s there.” This partly explains why refugee migrants visit health centres often when their situations have deteriorated, which is consequential of the fact that they do not regularly do medical check-ups so as to monitor what is wrong with them. However, it could also be a result of the fact that there is a lack of health awareness within the refugee community.

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<sup>121</sup> This is indicative of the African view according to which “I am because we are” (cf. Mbiti, 1989 – also, cf. Chapter 4 of this research).

### 6.3.2. Mental health

Refugee migrants are significantly more likely to suffer from emotional problems as a result of feeling worried, depressed or stressed among the various other health issues. Interestingly, living with family was considered among the participants as having health benefits. FGf\_P4\_SL puts it this way in one of our FGDs: “you see... you must be with family; to be there for you. Many people are losing... have poor health and they are alone. That’s not okay; when you have family your health will not be too bad; family helps you”.

According to the UNHCR (2002:13), millions of refugee migrants develop psychological disturbances by reason of their experience of difficult situations such as wars, and the mere fact of becoming refugees. The occurrence of hostility and the constant threats to human life have serious impacts on refugees’ health and wellbeing. Trauma-related problems like depression occur among refugee migrants, and they often result in a sense of hopelessness. Thus, refugee migrants need special support to help deal with the conditions that easily affect their psychosocial equilibrium such as trauma. It appears that psychosocial problems are worse unlike physical ones, which are visible and, thus, easy to treat with utmost immediacy as soon as they are noticed. Nevertheless, mental disturbances and/or emotional hurts are not always so easily noticed yet they eat a person up from within. This is why they happen to have long term consequences. Refugee migrants in Cape Town may very likely be a part of these millions considering that they have been exposed to situations of violence and wars in their countries of origin.

Throughout this research process, particularly during the fieldwork, there was a consistent association between mental and physical health considering the responses of participants. For example, some respondents pointed out that they always feel anxious or stressed. When I asked them what they thought was causing their anxiety and/or stress, most of them would simply say they are not sure of the causes but that it always results in them feeling headaches and muscle aches. Some indicated that anxiety and stress increase their blood pressure.

Among the participants of this research were some role players who work with refugees in various capacities such as social workers and health practitioners (cf. Section 5.3.2.2). These role players were respondents in the survey. They did not take part in the KII because, firstly,

the nature of the questions prepared for them in the questionnaire was not based on their own lived experiences but on their experiences with refugee migrants. Secondly, the timetable of these role players with regard to their profession could not allow for face-to-face interviews. One of the questions that role players were asked was whether they knew the exact common illnesses and their causal agents among refugee migrants. One role player, RP\_SQ\_M3\_SA, who works with a local health centre, indicated that stress is one main thing that causes health issues in the refugee community. He summarised that “stress has many effects; it can bring on all sorts of illnesses”. This response is suggestive of the fact that refugee migrants end up with “all sorts of illnesses” as a result of their stressful situation. This was also hinted in the response of yet another key informant, BR\_KII\_F5\_BDI, who thought the connection between mental and physical health resulted from the fact that most refugee migrants think a lot of what would become of them in the future among many other thoughts that disturb their inner being on a daily basis. In her own words, she explains that “I experience too much headache but it’s because of thinking too much, and a lot of stress about many things. People just think there is an illness and that’s why their head hurts.”

Another woman, MR\_KII\_F2\_ZBW, reported that “when you are okay you are not thinking about anything you don’t have any worries, you’re alright.” In other words, for her, the management of stress maintains mental health. She further explains her experiences thus: “I am going through so much; I try to keep everything simple so I don’t get stressed”. Nevertheless, she highlighted that she often managed anxiety and stress by discussing with her close family members and friends – those who are here in the country and those who were left back home in Zimbabwe. In her words, “if you tell someone you trust your worries and stuff it lightens you up... you feel a bit relieved”. For BR\_KII\_M5\_COD, a refugee from the DRC, the lack of contact with his family leads to poor health.

BR\_KII\_M5\_COD: “You know... I am healthy here but I cannot sleep well because I’m always thinking of my people who are in refugee camps there in Tanzania and so on. Those are remote areas and I’m living very far. So I’m happy here physically but psychologically I’m not; I’m sick in my mind”.

In other words, BR\_KII\_M5\_COD is indicating that being healthy is not only about the absence of physical sickness but it also concerns other aspects of the human self, such as the emotional self. Nevertheless, there are those who thought certain health issues should just be ignored as

one is often unsure of how to manage them. This particularly was in relation to stress. BR\_KII\_M4\_ZBW had this to say in relation to stress: “It’s something that cannot be treated by medication you know, yeah... you just have to... like... try and grow out of it or do something, man”.

Of course, the growing number of refugee migrants and asylum seekers in South Africa presents enormous challenges to the country’s health services. RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN indicates that refugee patients have difficulties in developing trust and respect for health practitioners in South Africa due to many reasons including the attitudes and behaviours of the practitioners, but also due to their own previous experiences. Here is what he had to say:

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: Most of the refugee patients have difficulties in developing trust in, and respect for, medical staff in South Africa. This sometime leads to some practitioners not engaging in real communication with them during diagnosis. Without some means of communicating medical history, current needs, and personal health practices and beliefs, the doctor is disposed to medical mistakes. Possible errors include patient-provider miscommunication, resulting in possible misdiagnosis; patients’ noncompliance due to incomprehension of instructions; and patients’ inappropriate usage of medical services, such as dependence on emergency room treatment. So because of that most refugee patients leave the visit confused, possibly misdiagnosed, and with little confidence in the care provided and the medical system in general. From this initial negative experience, feelings of alienation and mistrust continue to grow and may prevent the patient from seeking out future medical care.

In addition, it is generally observed that the mentally ill are marginalised or forgotten by the society as a whole, and the treatment and/or care of patients are almost non-existent (Cochrane, 2003:166; Carballo, 2001:133; Besseling, 2001:153). Donors and governments are more concerned with the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and have very little interest in mental health (Carballo, 2001:211). This becomes worse when it comes to refugees living with mental illness. For this reason, newer and informed approaches in dealing with the challenges related to refugees’ health and the promotion of their wellbeing are needed in order to effectively respond to their social needs.

Many refugee migrants suffer from mental health and psychosocial problems (Keshebo, 2011:38; McClelland, 1989:15). These problems often involve feelings of sadness, anxiety or stress. Many of these problems may be due to personal problems or they could be a reaction to

the lived experiences in the country of origin. They could also be caused by psychosocial difficulties, which may be associated with hopelessness, but linked to financial, domestic or interpersonal pressures in the hosting country.

## 6.4. “I feel sick, but they say there’s nothing”: healthcare experiences within the refugee community

### 6.4.1. Experiences with healthcare providers

Almost all refugees are often subjected to long waits in addition to inadequate treatment by some healthcare providers. In this research, most women respondents claimed that they have been told, at some point, to leave the hospital too early; that is, even before their condition had improved. This resulted in them not wanting to visit healthcare centres anymore because they thought there was no need to. One could contend that the many detrimental and unpleasant experiences that refugee migrants go through at various healthcare centres are suggestive of a departure from medical ethics. In this regard, I asked probing questions to some respondents to know what they thought was the role of health providers. In response, varied reactions were expressed including “to treat people when they are sick” (cf. MR\_KII\_M2\_COD) or “to give people medication” (cf. FGf\_P2\_FL). MR\_KII\_M2\_COD signalled that “they just give you medicine or things to do”. This response is either indicative of the respondent’s ignorance or oblivion of the role of a health practitioner or of his lived experiences at most of the health centres he had so far visited.

When asked about his overall health, MR\_KII\_M2\_COD, said, “I don’t know what is happening in my body. That is why I go to the hospital, right? So the doctor can help me! You know... if somebody is sick he always go the hospital to see the doctor”. This further indicates that most refugees do not just visit healthcare centres for routine check-ups until the condition gets worse. However, when the healthcare services result in medication provision, they tend to cooperate and take the medication. This was even confirmed by FGf\_P2\_FL when she said: “I was given some medication for my blood system and it helped. They treated me and I’m fine now”. In other words, refugee migrants take medication when in situation of health crisis; the only problem tends to be the experiences they go through with health practitioners.

Nevertheless, when refugee migrants visit healthcare centres and they are not given or prescribed any medication for their ill health, they easily get frustrated. In this regard, FGm\_P4\_SL complained:

FGm\_P4\_SL: As an adult, if I complain about my health and something is wrong and the blood test is made and nothing is found and still I'm suffering why does the doctor take the situation of what I'm saying and help me with what I have told him to prescribe the medicine for me... I'm still suffering. Why does the doctor should not analyse the situation and recognise my suffering?

Here, FGm\_P4\_SL believes that once tests are done or when visiting a healthcare centre, a patient should be told what is wrong with his/her health. He further claimed that he was never told his results and they never bothered to explain the reason for not telling him the results because he was a foreigner. Although his claims may not be proven, the level of xenophobic treatments by healthcare practitioners has been reported by many researchers in the field of migration and health (cf. Nazroo & Iley, 2011:32). It appears that once health practitioners realise a patient is not South African, they start acting weirdly towards them as if they are not in a hurry, or as though refugee patients are not a priority at a South African healthcare centre.

The experiences of refugee migrants with health practitioners are such that the ambiguity of advice on family planning options causes concern and even aggravates anxiety for many refugees. MR\_KII\_F2\_COD indicated that, at one of the healthcare centres she visited, the health practitioner who attended to her never gave her proper medical advice to the questions she had on family planning. She claimed the health practitioner "didn't have a clear answer to tell me as in which one is the best method, like which one she should go for or which one she trusts; that's my worry". One cannot tell what the reason for her inaccurate response was; whether it was merely an attitudinal behaviour because the patient was a refugee migrant, or whether it was purely ignorance on the part of this particular health practitioner. Nevertheless, considering the other narratives in this research, one would argue that the response of this health practitioner was influenced by intolerant feelings, which have become common when refugee migrants visit healthcare centres.

## 6.4.2. Refugees' experiences of blood tests

Blood tests were unfamiliar and often negative experiences, particularly if they were multiple. "Too much blood" was a persistent theme. One respondent BR\_KII\_M6\_RWD said, "you always go there suffering and they just draw a large blood." Another respondent, a woman, commented, "I come for a blood test, I expect to come for one not so many you know" (MR\_KII\_F3\_BDI). This indicates that there is a serious need for more and sufficient information pertaining to health education through awareness campaigns and/or various other programmes targeting refugee migrants. MR\_KII\_F3\_BDI continues to say that "they took my blood for five tubes and I was told that they were going to check for different diseases but they didn't specify which", she complains.

MR\_KII\_F3\_BDI explained that in her country the role of the doctor and blood testing is different: "The level of checking is not something we do. Back where I come from, when you go for a check-up, you just go once and that's it; unless you are ill". Again, this shows that refugee migrants do not make use of available health services in place to do check-ups because it is something they did not grow up doing. MR\_KII\_F3\_BDI explains that "in my country they only take a small amount of blood, blood tests are not well known. There they use the blood for other things. They give the blood away or sell it without permission". Considering these narratives, it is evident that extensive blood testing provokes anxiety and suspicion for refugee migrants. One respondent, BR\_KII\_F5\_SML, had this to say:

BR\_KII\_F5\_SML: There is a problem with having so many check-ups you know. It causes stress because if the doctor sends you to check up more than three times and they keep saying we don't know what the problem is that will make you suspicious. Maybe they're hiding something or they find something in your body but they don't want to tell you and they want to know more so that's a bit of stress and anxiety.

She further states:

BR\_KII\_F5\_SML: I feel sick and they said there's nothing that they've found in my body. There is a reason why my head hurts, there's a reason why my back hurts but if they don't detect anything there has to be a solution.

In brief, for refugee migrants (at least from what the respondents in this research have indicated), when blood tests reveal no disease but there are symptoms, many are frustrated.

## 6.5. Challenges affecting refugees' health and wellbeing

The refugee phenomenon is one of the most complex issues on the planet considering the large masses of people displaced around the world (World Migration Report, 2013). Factors that result in such human displacements vary. They can be produced by ill human relationships – taking the form of racial discords or religious feuds, *inter alia*. They can be engendered by political instability, social injustice or economic inequality and be manifest in human rights violations, violent conflicts or civil wars. They can be within the framework of natural calamities and be evident in disasters such as desertification and inundation (Jacobsen, 2012:23).

Most of these circumstances that lead to the massive displacements of the populations in Africa, among many others, are beyond the control and will of those displaced. The arrival of refugees in the new country creates a number of challenges to various parties: the hosting country, the producing country and the international community among whom are the organisations that regulate the rights and obligations of refugees. Of all the challenges that refugees face in the hosting country, the very first are access to accommodation, food and healthcare services (Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:63). These they face from the very first hours of their arrival in the hosting country. Their situation becomes even more complex because refugees are exposed to various diseases during their flight and in the hosting country. Below are some of the obstacles or challenges that were highlighted by the respondents as affecting their health and wellbeing.

### 6.5.1. Health unawareness

On the perspectives of health, there was a consistent need for more information about health issues including blood tests and test results from the respondents. Some of them asked for improved interpreter services at hospitals but also hinted at the reality that repeated check-ups are cumbersome to them albeit necessary: “I didn’t understand what it was for. I wasn’t told specifically what it was for”, was BR\_KII\_F5\_SML’s experience. For her, refugee patients need to be told in advance whether blood would be taken from them for tests: “If I come for a

check-up I would rather they tell me first that I am going to be checked for these diseases so that when I come back for the results I'll know what questions to ask”.

Some members of the male FGD had similar experiences and opinions: “And they took a blood test but until now no result and no medication that I received. I have not been told about the treatment of this disease,” FGm\_P4\_FL recounted. “After the blood tests they don't tell back what has happened or what is the problem” he said. In addition, when asked about health awareness in the refugee community, one respondent advised that men should be the first point of contact when it comes to health education. In her own words:

FGf\_P3\_SL: Get the men before the women because they are the head of the house and in control of everything. The women cannot say anything so it's really necessary for the men to be taught because without teaching them you cannot accomplish anything.

Some respondents gave a few suggestions. When asked the question, “what do you think should be done” in order to make sure that the health and wellbeing challenges that refugee migrants face are dealt with, this is what respondent RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN had to say.

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: There is a need to train local service providers, including public health workers, teachers and community leaders – including faith-based leaders on refugee rights, gender issues, reproductive health, HIV and many other health related issues. The government must also help build a network of peer educators and community action teams within refugee communities to widen the reach of the programme and create sustainability. There should be also educational materials in different African languages in support of the programme.

### 6.5.2. Inaccessibility of healthcare services

As reported so far in the analysis of the previous cases throughout this chapter, the life of refugee migrants is characterised by challenging lived experiences. Almost everything about refugee migrants involves a certain level of difficulty. In reality, the mere fact of being a refugee is in itself a challenging experience. However, it is in the midst of such challenges that refugee migrants find hope and strive for good health and improved wellbeing. Generally, all respondents in this research adhere to the assertion that challenges make refugees strong and increase their hopefulness. Most of the challenges that the respondents in this research faced affect their wellbeing in general and their health in particular. Such challenging experiences

weigh even more heavily on refugee women considering that women require more healthcare services than men.

In this research, most women were mothers and some among them were expectant. They had all, at some point in their lives (while refugees in South Africa), encountered difficulties with accessing antenatal care. Besides, most of them indicated that they do not understand English well, and it is even worse when nurses talk to them in their local languages, which they also do not understand. This makes them feel discriminated against on the basis of language. In this regard, they mentioned that when they go to the hospital they get for themselves someone who speaks some English.

The lack of interpreters at most health centres and hospitals was such that most respondents indicated their absence. Of course, interpreters reduce the communication barrier between the refugee health seeker and the health provider but the practice involves practical concerns due to some of its inadequacies. Most female respondents indicated that the practice of having interpreters for them intrudes on their privacy. This could be due to the fact that the person sitting there for the purpose of interpreting is not professionally trained for the job and, therefore, a confidentiality threat. In view of this, refugee migrants always live with the anxiety of having their privacy invaded and their dignity violated due to the language barrier facing them, which remains a constant frustration for most refugee migrants. Besides, the use of interpreters is always not the best because there is the possibility for the interpreter to withhold vital information or the patient not be willing to say certain information in front of a third person. In addition, inaccurate interpretation/translation is also another risk.

It can be seen that communication between refugee patients and health care providers is often problematic. Most respondents mentioned that when they experience challenges, which they deem discriminatory, they just decide to stay at home rather than going back to the healthcare facilities. Thus, within the South African health system, language is a barrier to accessing health services for most refugee migrants. Language can be used as an instrument for discrimination and tool for exclusion. However, to cross that barrier, most refugees attempt to learn the local language so as to identify with the local community.

The most common health concerns among the respondents are chronic headaches, insomnia and stomach problems. Respondents associated recurring ailments that they suffer

from with their lack of stability and their struggle for integration in the South African community. While I was interviewing MR\_KII\_F3\_SML, she talked at length about her hardships, her sense of instability, and her inability to obtain refugee status in South Africa through the DHA. She had friends who went to Libya in an attempt to get to Italy, in Europe, but she chose to come down South instead. She narrates an atmosphere of regret as she says, “When I think of my life here and our problems, when I think of the status and how I can’t get it, my head hurts so much. Now my head hurts all the time. I can’t sleep. My body aches. It feels like there are worms crawling all over my body”.

Apart from such headaches and other ailments, most refugees have scars that remind them of their painful past; particularly those who came from war-torn countries such as Somali, Congolese, Burundians, Rwandans, etc. Some other refugees suffer from diabetes and even respiratory problems. Some of the interviewees talked about relatives and friends in Cape Town who suffer from mental problems. Interestingly, many of those with mental problems are not taken to hospitals but to either houses of prayer or traditional healers. This is reminiscent of their strong beliefs (Christian or otherwise), which provides pointers to the fact that to Africans not every disease is treatable with Western medicines or scientific intervention.

Nevertheless, it remains evident that the growing number of refugee migrants and asylum seekers in South Africa presents enormous challenges to the country’s welfare services. While there are multiple challenges for every potential patient, foreign-born nationals encounter unique barriers when attempting to benefit from public services. Impediments to accessing public services include difficulties in cross-cultural communication and limited cultural awareness on the part of the public officials. While there is an effort to acknowledge and address linguistic and cultural barriers, learning by trial-and-error remains the most common form of education on the current South African administrative system. RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN has this to say with regards to refugees’ access to health care services.

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: But from my observation refugees are often overlooked in local HIV and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention efforts. Apart from being faced with frequent human rights violations, refugees and migrants sometimes experience amplified GBV and power struggles in their communities due to a breakdown in traditional community support structures, including families and a friendly familiar neighbourhood. Many have also been victims of violence and abuse in situations of civil unrest and war in their home countries, and face possible loss of income and an uncertain future. Refugees have experienced discrimination in

South Africa for many, many years and in all different areas of their lives, be it in clinics, schools, workplaces, when using public transport or by the police.

In the same vein, another respondent, RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN, adds the following when asked whether he finds that refugee migrants have difficulties in accessing healthcare services.

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: yes, it is for sure. And although refugees have had the same rights to access health services as South African citizens since 1998, many are not able to exercise these rights. They are regularly discriminated against or refused treatment in clinics by nurses and doctors who are not aware of the law. Many when attempting to access services at a local clinic they are humiliated. Yet refugees often need especially good access to health care as many are forced to endure inadequate living conditions, greatly compromising the possibility of their leading a healthy lifestyle. Refusal to provide health services to refugees not only places their health but also their lives at risk, particularly with regard to HIV treatment and care.

Researcher: That is very true. There is a lot to be done... even the whole xenophobia thing needs to be dealt with because to some extent it contributes to the ill health of refugee migrants since refugees decide not to visit health centres because of the ill-treatment they receive there.

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: Exactly so. I also think there is a need to bring together refugees migrants and members of local communities to talk about root causes of xenophobia, cultural differences and challenges of living together. Through talking to each other, refugees, migrants and South Africans will create their own solutions for integration, rather than having external institutions enforce strategies based on theoretical models.

Researcher: So, what are the challenges or limitations do you encounter as a social worker dealing with refugee migrants?

RP\_SQ\_F1\_FN: One of the challenges or limitations is that it remains difficult to convince refugee migrants of the benefits of sharing their lived experiences with a social worker like myself due to some established falsehoods concerning social workers in the refugee community.

Different forms of discrimination create obstacles for the realisation of the right to health and other rights of refugee migrants. Most often, countries use nationality or legal status as a basis to draw a distinction between persons and who may or may not enjoy access to healthcare facilities, goods and services, which happens to be the case in the South African context judging from these findings. However, one can deduce that the more refugees get frustrated with the

system, the more they multiply their efforts to improve their wellbeing. It appears that the challenges they go through increase their hope for a better future in the country. RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA has this to say on the health of refugee migrants particularly when they get sick in the hosting country:

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA: Some get sick before they migrate; others get sick during the migration process; while others get sick after arriving here in South Africa. So, each phase of the migration is associated with specific risks and exposures. In other words, the prevalence of specific types of health problems is influenced by the nature of the migration experience, in terms of adversity experienced before, during and after resettlement in the country. South Africa also has a lot of problems that require the government's attention.

The statement by RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA suggest that it is not the fault of the hosting country that refugee migrants are not getting healthcare access because they most of them arrive in the country already sick while the local citizenry is the government's priority. Although participants' observation was not one of the methods of data collection in this research, when one goes around Bellville and Mowbray, the sites of this research's fieldwork, one hear a combination of different languages, various accents, and many notice different cultural attires, etc. that bring life to the streets. Kiswahili, Lingala, French, Amharic, Somali, Arabic, etc. are heard among the isiXhosa and Afrikaans languages. It is also easy to see the Zulu beadwork sold alongside Senegalese artwork, Nigerian fabrics, Congolese hair extensions, etc. The atmosphere in both Bellville and Mowbray is congruent, harmonious and rich – reminiscent of the kind of diversity and multiculturalism South Africa boasts. Yet, once again, stories of simmering xenophobia and discontent are not hard to find or hear from participants.

In the VIDEFI office, where most of the interviews were held, I had an opportunity to interview BR\_KII\_M3\_ZBW on the matter, “You know, South Africans easily forget. They forget that during apartheid, the whole of Africa was fighting their struggle alongside them”. As I sat opposite him, BR\_KII\_M3\_ZBW, who is actually a UCT student dressed in a pair of jeans and a collared T-shirt, projected confidence:

BR\_KII\_M3\_ZBW: When we paid our school fees in my country, we also set aside a sum of money to be sent to South Africa to fight the apartheid system. The apartheid struggle was an African struggle. But South Africans seem very quick to remind us of the man-made borders that divide our beautiful continent.

Improving access to healthcare services was, therefore, identified as a great need in the refugee community. A number of respondents described difficulty with appointments, waiting times and emergency care. This is what FGm\_P4\_FL, a member of the FGD had to say: “In the South Africa do no people die of accidents on the weekend?” while others laugh. There was even more laughter even more as FGm\_P3\_SL continued:

FGm\_P3\_SL: An appointment was made for me to go to the hospital. When I came there, they told me you’re not supposed to come again. I showed them the booking and everything. Why should I be asked not to come? I haven’t done anything why am I not supposed to come? Is my treatment coming up or going or coming?

Another respondent, FGm\_P2\_FL, explained the matter in the following statement:

FGm\_P2\_FL: We the *kwerekwere*, we have problem with time. When you come very late you are just sitting there and those people will just tell you, you have come late so you just have to stay there by the people who are very concerned by the time.

This is suggestive that refugee migrants struggle to keep time in many instances, which possibly affects the services rendered to them by South African officials. Upon arrival in a hosting country, refugees deal with the reality of parting with their social structures or support networks, and that of leaving their home for an undefined period of time. Concomitant to this challenge is that of trying to settle in the new environment notwithstanding the consequential psycho-social problems related to it. Most existing studies on the refugee phenomenon in South Africa (e.g. Bhugra & Gupta, 2011:3; Carballo, 2001:274) lay emphasis on the processing of asylum applications by the DHA possibly because without the “right papers” finding work in South Africa as a refugee is a seemingly insurmountable challenge (Crankshaw, 2012:28).

Throughout the process of migration, refugee women may encounter enormous stressors including gaining access to available skills training, finding employment opportunities, and getting transport, accommodation, and their kids’ schooling (Buscher, 2011:92). Other stressors comprise the woman’s varying responsibility in the established family context and the loss of traditional social support networks (Rosenkranz, 2013:34). For that reason, women’s unmet needs for reproductive health care may well remain unaddressed. Gaining access to habitual care and livelihood is vital in the spectrum of a woman’s life (Taylor, 1990:71). Women’s habitual needs that require prompt care are often sensitive. This comprises

care for the duration of pregnancy, delivery and motherhood as well as family planning counselling, inter-conception care<sup>122</sup>, screening for gender-based violence and sexually transmitted infections, and monitoring for emerging chronic disease. Health providers should be accustomed to any traditional cultural practices that may influence reproductive health outcomes in order to provide services that meet the unique health care needs of refugee women.

### 6.5.3. Documentation

Documentation is yet another barrier to accessing health services. South Africans' identity books are bar-coded but refugee migrants are given A4 papers<sup>123</sup>. Before refugee migrants get the refugee status permit or the maroon identity book given to them, they face immense challenges at health facilities. This means, the question of documentation is also another barrier that refugees encounter in accessing health services in South Africa. The lack of proper documentation makes the life of refugee migrants more difficult. It affects the whole of their beings. Without relevant papers required by the hospital, it is impossible to access health services. Refugees leave their homes for a variety of reasons including but not limited to wars, social discrimination and the quest for new opportunities. Proper documentation is essential for refugees to settle and pursue improved wellbeing within the requirements of the law in the hosting country. A respondent, BR\_KII\_M5\_SML, had this to say regarding the question of documentation particularly the A4-sized permit given to refugees, which is often refused by most employers who require a green I.D.:<sup>124</sup>

BR\_KII\_M5\_SML: [The question of documentation] affects me negatively. Because with the A4 size temporary permit no job; even with the Status and I.D.; no professional job. That is why I do not do my professional job.

In the same vein, FGm\_P3\_RL had this to say on the issue of documentation and its consequential likelihood for corruption: "it takes very long to get it and there are people there they take the short cut to get it. I think that is wrong; it makes it bad for the others". As indicated

<sup>122</sup> Inter-conception care is also known as pre-conception care particularly during the period between pregnancies. One of the best protections available against low birth weight and other poor pregnancy outcomes is to have a woman effectively plan for pregnancy, enter pregnancy in good health with as few risk factors as possible, and be fully informed about her reproductive and general health. More information at [http://www.marchofdimes.org/pdf/missouri/Sue\\_Kendig\\_Preconception\\_Health.pdf](http://www.marchofdimes.org/pdf/missouri/Sue_Kendig_Preconception_Health.pdf)

<sup>123</sup> Both the temporary asylum seekers' permit and the permit determining the refugee status of a migrant in South Africa are A4 papers. Refugees' identity books are maroon in colour and have just two pages inside (i.e. excluding the front page and the back page).

<sup>124</sup> This refers to the South African identity book for local citizens, which is green in colour.

by this respondent, FGm\_P3\_RL, some refugees decide to use a ‘short cut’ to acquire their documents in order to make a living and improve their livelihoods through legal means. The ‘short cut’ he is referring to is bribery in monetary terms.

The problem of proper documentation extends to other institutions such as banks. This makes most refugee migrants keep their money in their bags, which often makes them victims of several crimes such as robbery. Thus, their lives become endangered in every area due to the documents they are given. In brief, the documents refugees are given contribute to the challenges they face in the hosting country, including health challenges. These sentiments become more and more sensitive as another respondent, FGm\_P6\_SL who has been living in South Africa for more than 10 years says: “I have been trying to get an I.D. book since 2005 but they never responded without any reason”. Due to increased dissatisfaction on the question of documentation and service delivery by the DHA, he had this to add:

FGm\_P6\_SL: The Home Affairs is the most horror place I never see; to go to Home Affairs and to stay illegal is just the same; we need international community to take care of us; not Home Affairs.

These sentiments echo the voices of many respondents. They explain refugees’ feeling of vulnerability and the undignified treatment attributable to the disservices of the DHA. It demands remarkable courage, which involves, for example, travelling from Cape Town to Durban or back to Musina (port of entry) to extend one’s permit in order to remain legally documented in South Africa.

Studies carried out by various researchers (cf. Potts 2011:44; Belvedere 2007:73; Jacobsen 2002:36; Harrell-Bond 2002:28) confirm that the contexts in which most refugees pursue improved wellbeing are unsupportive and uncared for. This could be due to restrictive policies in most hosting countries against refugee migrants. In South Africa, for example, until recently, it was illegal for asylum seekers to study, work or own businesses, and it is still illegal for both asylum seekers and refugees to own property or to access financial services such as loans. In this vein, a university student from the DRC, BR\_KII\_M4\_COD had this to say:

BR\_KII\_M4\_COD: As a refugee I don’t exercise all my rights; there are rights that a refugee cannot claim because he is not a citizen of the country; but a refugee student for instance should be allowed to apply for a loan to finance his studies.

Although refugees are now entitled to study and work, finding employment remains a great challenge because they compete for the jobs with the majority of the local population, who are in most cases prioritised for job openings (cf. Amit, 2013; Belvedere, 2007). This makes refugees' resilience fragile and their pursuit for improved livelihoods challenging. BR\_KII\_M2\_BDI, a Burundian respondent who believes he has "unused talent" said the following:

BR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: I have been in South Africa for 12 years and in exile for 18 years. Have managed to get BSc, PGCE but have no teaching position because of the document I am using. Yes the country needs science teachers but fail to give a teaching post no matter how I managed to work on short contract for some months. I hold unused talent that the countries, the world need to profit from.

Such "unused talent" could be an asset to the growth of the economy and development of the country. Yet, a common misconception is that, refugees are a dependent people surviving at the mercy of either the humanitarian organisations or the generosity of the local community. Refugees were also found to demonstrate enviable solidarity with the newcomers in their midst whom they accommodate from the time they arrive until they find something to earn them a living. Those who own businesses, such as Somalis, introduce the newcomers in the world of business without delay. BR\_KII\_M5\_SML further indicates that:

BR\_KII\_M5\_SML: If South Africa was good country it is supposed to assist refugees fully because we are paying tax and create job; imagine if you come to Bellville many shops of foreigner they employ many South African. And imagine apartheid time South African was refugee in all over Africa but they treat them nice until 1994.

The words of this respondent indicate that refugees are economically productive and have skills that could make them a useful asset to the hosting community if allowed to fully explore their potentials. When refugees are allowed to explore their full potential, they are able to empower themselves and, therefore, improve the prospects of their holistic wellbeing.

#### 6.5.4. Xenophobia and hopelessness

Arguably, the hopelessness of refugee migrants results from systemic socio-economic structures that inflict neediness and, thereby, disempowering them. In this regard, refugee migrants need to be imbued with some sorts of power so they can improve their wellbeing.

This is because power gives a voice to the voiceless and enables them to articulate their immediate interests. The democratisation of South Africa in 1994 brought major transformation to one of the most racially divided and discriminatory countries in the world. The government, in its attempts to overcome the divides of the past and build new forms of social cohesion at the local and national level, embarked on an inclusive nation-building project. However, one unanticipated by-product of this national project has been a growth in intolerance towards outsiders, particularly refugee migrants. Thus, xenophobia and hopelessness are negative forces that impede refugees' attempts to improved wellbeing in the country. According to the narratives of participants, these two negative forces are, to a certain extent, institutionalised albeit unofficially.

For example, according to a report by *Radio France Internationale* (RFI, 2015), the South African Constitutional Court obliged the DHA to reopen a reception centre for asylum seekers that had been shut. Three of the six centres that ensured the reception of refugee migrants across the country were closed including the Johannesburg reception centre, the Cape Town reception centre, and the Port Elizabeth reception centre. The situation had consequences for refugee migrants who had to travel as far as Durban or Pretoria from Cape Town or Port Elizabeth to renew their papers. Those who could not afford the bus fare remained with expired asylum papers accepting the worst if caught by the police. As it were, these refugees were being arrested as “illegal” or “undocumented” migrants. Several NGOs supporting refugee migrants in this matter took the case up to the Constitutional Court, which forced the State to reopen, at least, a centre in the city of Port Elizabeth.

This is indicative of the fact that refugees in South Africa face a plethora of challenges in every aspect of their life, and most of them are rooted in xenophobic attitudes towards them. This, in turn, triggers a sense of hopelessness in the refugee community. During our interviews, MR\_KII\_F3\_COD alleged that even the rejections that refugees get at the DHA have an element of xenophobia in it. “I have appealed the judgement twice now,” said MR\_KII\_F3\_COD, who came with the rejection letter of her application for the refugee status permit to show me during the interviews. Her face dropped as she spoke about the confusion surrounding the rejection she received from the DHA.

MR\_KII\_F3\_COD: They told me there were contradictions in my statements; that I could not even name the street where I lived in Baraka. But in the DRC, the names of streets work different to South Africa. Not every single street has a name there.

Xenophobia is a proverbial “monster” in South Africa even though many still deny its existence. In theory, the process of determining the refugee status in South Africa is supposed to be quick. In practice, asylum seekers can wait for months and even years before they can even start with the process of filling in an application form for asylum with a refugee reception officer. Years may pass before the application is scrutinised by a refugee status determination officer. MR\_KII\_F3\_COD is one of the many refugees who wait long hours in queues at the DHA. They all face the dismissive and offensive attitude of government officials to foreigners seeking refuge. They all live in limbo, between two countries, cultures and identities. Refugee migrants often spend a brief 15 minute interview, on average, with Refugee Status Determination Officers. MR\_KII\_F3\_COD claims that the statements written on her status determination decision paper are not the accurate reflection of the information she provided during the interview – which resulted in her subsequent rejection. “No country is politically stable forever,” says MR\_KII\_F3\_COD before I leave the VIDEFI office, and continues thus:

MR\_KII\_F3\_COD: We only had to leave our countries because, at times, it was too unsafe to be there. I sometimes wish to see South Africans flee their country too, they will remember how that feels, and how they expect to be treated by their African brothers and sisters.

As it were, one would contend that refugee migrants have excellent business interests and money-making investments. For instance, a food-stand at the train station in Mowbray or Bellville run by a local woman is most likely going to be soon run by either Somali or Ethiopian owners (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014; Jacobsen, 2012:17). Such is the reality, and the reason is simple and obvious: they have money; and because they do, they most likely offer to pay higher rental fees for that plot provided they get the place for their business. Situations like these are among those that inflict conflicts between the two communities of the local citizenry and that of refugee migrants, particularly those from the horn of Africa such as Somalis, Eritreans and Ethiopians. South African *spaza* shop owners get offended by that and as a result they express their anger, bitterness and dislike while at the same time develop antipathy and hatred, which end up in xenophobic violence towards refugee micro-entrepreneurs (Giorgi, 2012:32). However, this also extends to any refugee migrant since it would be hard to distinguish who is

an entrepreneur and who is not. In brief, refugee migrants demonstrate resolve to survive in South Africa against all odds because their dignity is for them their treasured possession. Below is a short excerpt with BR\_KII\_M1\_COD, which is reminiscent of refugees' survival mechanism.

Researcher: What support mechanism do you have to ensure your livelihoods and survival?

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: Not quite since my wife and I are working.

Researcher: Oh, is your wife also working?

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: Yea... she has to, to support the children too. You see... We don't like to depend on other people for support or even to go and look for support to some offices and so. Us, we like to work hard with our hands... to work for what we need. Not begging, no! Not us... even if we are refugees, we have some dignity too. You see my man; here in South Africa if you don't work hard you will be a thief. And you will be in trouble with the community and the police also, especially if you are a *kwerekwere*.

In this excerpt, BR\_KII\_M1\_COD does all that is possible to support his family, and his wife tries to multiply her effort in support of her husband's efforts to provide for the family. Nevertheless, there are those who have various support mechanisms such as friends, church organisations and even NGOs to ensure livelihoods and survival. However, this respondent does not have any of such support. The only support system he has is his family since he is working and his wife is also working. Despite such efforts and the support mechanisms that BR\_KII\_M1\_COD attempts to conjugate, like many other refugees, he faces a great deal of challenges mainly due to the question of documentation. Here is what he had to say in response to the question on the challenges he faces here as a refugee:

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: My man... it is only issues of papers and the attitude of some South African people are sometimes challenging. Some works oblige the green ID. So, when I feel hopeless with those situations only I pray to God to help me. But at the same time I don't just pray and sit down. I am also try to get to the process of getting a proper green ID, even if is not an easy process.

Another major challenge that respondents pointed out as being the cause of hopelessness is that of corruption at the DHA. The apparent level of corruption at the DHA is an impediment to refugees' hope for improved wellbeing. Respondent BR\_KII\_M1\_COD went as far as saying

that the “right documents”, referring to the refugee status and ID, are issued without any problem only when a bribe is offered to the official in charge. Otherwise, one would go through stressful times to get one. BR\_KII\_M1\_COD says that payment is often demanded in a form of bribery for such services to be offered. Due to the documentation problems encountered, the respondent hinted at acquiring a “green ID”, which is often issued to national citizens. When I pointed out to him that a green ID is for national citizens only (unless of course a refugee has become a resident in the country on a permanent basis), the respondent had a good laugh at me:

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: [Laughs] It doesn't matter my man, people get it. There are many people who have green ID and they have been in SA less than five years. People pay money to get any paper you want. This Home Affairs is too corrupt. Just come with some money. Like the refugee status at the moment is going for R5000.

When I expressed my disbelief on his claims, BR\_KII\_M1\_COD laughed at my ignorance.

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: Aaaah you don't know about that? You must be the only refugee who don't know it then. Things are happening at the home affairs my man. Anything is possible if you have money [laughs]. There are people who are there who work for those who are inside to collect money if you want quick service or you want status. Status is very expensive my man. Everyone wants it that's why.

When I further demonstrated my astonishment with regard to the allegation that a bribe is often required by insisting that refugee documents “are supposed to be free of charge”, BR\_KII\_M1\_COD was once again amused as though I did not know what I was talking about.

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: “supposed to” you said it yourself... “supposed to” [laughs] but they are not. On paper, yes, refugee papers are supposed to be free of charge as you say, that's true... but in reality? [laughs] nothing for mahala! Strange things happen at the home affairs here in South Africa.

Despite these “strange things” happening at the DHA, BR\_KII\_M1\_COD does not lose hope. He is confident that all that he goes through are preparing him for better things ahead. He is studying and assures me that his education will pay off some day. I asked him what is it that gives him hope considering the challenges he faces in the country related to and the hopelessness bred by his refugee situation.

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: I'm telling you; ever since I am studying my hope is increasing. Now I am

expecting to have a qualified work. You know in this country if you are not educated you won't get a better job. Despite everything I'm going through every day, despite everything my wife is going through every day, I know because I'm studying I won't be struggling forever my man. One day things will be alright.

Respondent BR\_KII\_M1\_COD also believes that his faith plays a big role in his current situation, and it is what increases his hope for survival.

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: Of course my faith plays a big role in this situation. It gives me hope that things will change for good one day. It doesn't matter what I go through but my faith is important.

When asked what can be done to manage the current immigration problem that South Africa faces, particularly that of the refugee phenomenon, BR\_KII\_M1\_COD replied:

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: The government must help with proper regulations of laws that can help refugees to be easily integrated and be treated with equality and dignity in South Africa. On my side, I have to improve my skills and try to integrate in the South African society too.

At times one's home country can be the most dangerous place to live and, therefore, the only place which you cannot be safe if you continue staying there (Amit, 2013:12; Kiama & Likule, 2013). I had another conversational interview with a respondent from Ethiopia, BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP. She has never returned to her country from the time when she arrived in South Africa almost a decade ago. This is because she thinks the hope of surviving and making it in life is in less supply in her country in many areas of life. However, the hope of her survival in South Africa is very high. Respondent BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP puts her "hopes and dreams for the future" in the academia as she believes that hope alone could empower her and make her life successful in South Africa. Here is BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP's response when I asked her about what is it that gives her hope as a refugee migrant.

BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP: My hopes and dreams for the future are to continue my academic life. I want to be a community researcher. I would like my academic inquiry to directly contribute to the South African community because this is where I live now. I would also like to have a family soon and keep contributing to South Africa, which is now my chosen homeland. I also hope South Africa will start treating refugees as human beings; not to kill us like dogs just like that.

Upon asking her whether she thinks there is hope for refugee migrants in the South Africa

considering the many challenges they seem to encounter in the country, BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP responded further thus:

BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP: Not sure what to say because I can't speak for all the other refugees. But anyway, I can say that there is hope because for me I think hope plays a major role in the life of the refugees because for example if you don't have any hope for that your life will be better one day or your situation will change one day, it means you don't believe that your life will be better one day or your situation will change one day, you see? So, yea... hope is about what you believe in; it's about faith.

The refugees I spoke with had various issues and challenges altogether. However, there is one common thing: the presence of hope through it all. BR\_KII\_M2\_COD is a refugee from the DRC. He has health issues and has visited a couple of health centres in the country in the quest for medical assistance. Despite the oft-given negative perspective that most refugees portray when it comes to describing the assistance by South African officials, BR\_KII\_M2\_COD has hope in the South African medical system. His health problems were dealt with and his situation had improved. I asked him during our interview about what gives him hope and this is what he had to say.

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: What keeps me motivated is the hope that I have. I know hope plays a major role in our lives especially if you are Christian. So, what keep motivated and hopeful at the same time is that one day I will be fully integrated in South African community. In that way, there will be no difference between myself and a South African in quest of socio-economic opportunities because we will be all one community. Also... you asked whether I have hope. Of course, I do. There is hope that the government will one day initiate policies that could change the socio-economic circumstance of refugees for the better.

When I asked him about what is it that he thinks should be done in order to give refugees hope and, therefore, improve their wellbeing, BR\_KII\_M2\_COD said that there should be an official policy that helps refugees integrate in the mainstream South African society. Here is what he said:

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: Many refugees are found in informal sector for self-employment and low paying jobs not by choice. Many initiatives in facilitating them to enter mainstream economy is necessary. In other words, a strategic policy of integration would be one major element. Once refugees enter the mainstream economy they will exploit everything that is available for the benefit of their country of asylum.

Because there is no specific policy that enables refugee migrants to integrate easily in the country, respondent BR\_KII\_M2\_COD considers that refugee migrants in South Africa are regarded as people of low status or second class human beings.

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: Consideration given to refugees in South Africa is that of a low status meaning that are not positively viewed in South African society as people who would contribute for the development of this country. Hence, their plights are not seriously considered by policy makers in developing the nation. As a result, refugees are left alone and found to operate outside the main stream economy. One example is the identification paper they are carrying. In reality this does not give them proper integration in South Africa in terms of having the same rights as citizens. My view is that if the South African government believes it has enough refugees to take care of, then the policy of resettlement could be appropriate long term solution for South African refugees.

Because refugees do not lead a life of dignity and self-worth as they should in their home countries, they emigrate in quest of that which they need most: freedom and dignity (Nyamnjoh & Brudvig, 2014). Freedom and dignity are essential for survival; and without them, the human self is reduced to nothingness. The challenges that refugee migrants experience in South Africa are several such that they are often considered as sub-humans by a certain portion of the local population. As noticed in the response that BR\_KII\_M2\_COD gave, in the above citation, he partly attributes the fault to the government as he indicates that even the type of documentation that refugee migrants are given could be a vehicle for discrimination. If the government was so keen to have refugee migrants integrate in South Africa, they would not be issuing them the A4 paper they carry; but rather an identity document similar to that carried by local citizens.

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD is from Rwanda. She had a painful past considering the traumatic history of crimes against humanity during the 1994 genocide in her country. She has, however, healed from such a painful past after going through various counselling sessions and support groups in various African countries. Her experiences extended further even in South Africa.

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD: When I arrived here in SA I went to the home affairs they gave me an asylum seeker permit it was not easy to start the life as refugee because no one provides a house or food at least for the first few days. It was not easy for me, I slept to somebody's house for a week from there I found out about the MCC, we went there they gave us lent for three months after that we looked for a job which was not easy to find started working in the shop where I was paid R300 a week and my husband was a bar guard the house we were renting was R2500

the amount that was not easy to find. I fought and sacrificed for going back to study with no help from anyone by chance I managed to complete one year postgraduate in education.

With all that MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD had gone through, she often feels hopeless in the hosting country. Her main source of hopelessness is unemployment in the country, which is, of course, the challenge that the country is facing and trying hard to eradicate. This is because the problem of unemployment hits hard even the local citizenry. Here is a short excerpt of our conversational interview:

Researcher: So, what is it that makes you feel hopeless here in South Africa?

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD: Finding a job that is related to your qualification is not easy because they privilege the citizen as a refugee you end up doing any job despite your high qualification

Researcher: Finding a job... and what do you do when you feel hopeless?

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD: I talk to my friends to get help... moral... moral help. Friends can be helpful, you know?

In view of what MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD has gone through and what she continues going through, she does not think there is any remedy to the problem. She is completely hopeless as she thinks hope plays an insignificant role in her life, and even in the lives of refugee migrants living in South Africa.

Researcher: what do you think can be done to make sure that this challenge is dealt with?

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD: Nothing; no matter what effort I make to be at the standard they need I end up being discriminated and disqualified. There is nothing I can do.

Researcher: So, you think it is a hopeless situation and there is nothing you can do about that?

MR\_KII\_F1\_RWD: Yes, because when I think about how much of time I spent at work and get pay less money I wonder what will happen tomorrow to me and the future of my two boys that I can give the best education that they deserve and I end up being stressed and hopeless.

Most refugee migrants share accommodation in blocks of flats where they often live in large numbers. I had an interview with MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI and it appears that his experiences are no different. MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI acknowledges that the fact that they live many people in such a small accommodation, their health is being compromised. When I asked him whether he thinks

there could be some health concerns related to their living arrangements, this is what he had to say.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: Due to the fact that we are living many people in the flat all four family using one toilet, one kitchen in that condition it's difficult to respect the hygienic precautions which caused myself to get rash (skin diseases) at my back private party of my body and the doctor said maybe I got it from the toilet.

In view of this, MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI believes that to manage such a situation and avoid similar problems in the future, the South African government should let the UNHCR take charge of refugees completely through the resettlement programme. In his own words:

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: UNHCR have to take refugees in charge, there are living in difficult life in South Africa, no assistance refugees are getting from UNHCR or south African government; is it UNHCR exist in south Africa or not, if the answer is not, we need the United Nations to repatriate all refugees to other country were UNHCR has power since South Africa is not able to assist refugees.

Despite his strong feelings and opinions about the way South Africa treats refugees, which makes them feel at times hopeless, and despite the life that refugees themselves lead in the country, MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI is motivated by the fact that he can do all he can to put bread on the table – something he cannot easily do in his own country.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: The only motivation is that in South Africa I have a chance to put something on the table every day, clothes is not a problem and free medication at public clinic of which if I compare with my country better South Africa.

The situation that MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI faces in the country is such that he is completely hopeless. He thinks life for him is meant to be a continuous struggle and does not see any prospect of a better future.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: I have no hope that one day I will have a better life in South Africa because there is nothing showing that South Africa government will think about refugees since the country is facing a lot of problems due to unemployment which cause a high level of crime, corruption the government is not able to resolve their own problems, I don't think they can resolve refugees' problems.

Similar concerns are shared by his fellow countryman, BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI, who thinks that the

South African government can do better in its attempts to manage the refugee situation in the country and integrate refugee migrants. This is what BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI said when asked about what can be done to manage the refugee situation in the country and whether there is any hope for such:

BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI: it's the government... you see... South African government they don't mind about the refugees. That's what they think... I mean, they don't care about us. They call us *Makwerekwere*; there is no policy to protect us; it is the government that must do something to help the refugees; they must put in place policies that will help refugees... that will support for integration and stuff, you know?

Also, BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI claim the mere fact of being a refugee is a hopeless situation. In other words, "there is no hope when you are a refugee". This feeling is evidently influenced by the experiences he has gone through in South Africa and those he has witnessed first-hand. This is indicative of the fact that refugee challenges have the potential to defer or even thwart the prospects of hope in the life of a refugee migrant. BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI had this to say:

BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI: this whole thing of being a refugee man is a hopeless... there is no hope when you are refugee. You just in a situation where... there is no hope, you know? So, what can you do when you feel hopeless... you just keep hoping, you know? If you don't... if you lose hope then there will be nothing you must keep hoping.

It remains observable that refugee migrants often "hope against hope" to use the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 6:18. This they do despite the fact that prevailing circumstances of their 'refugeeness' do not give any reason to do so or though there are no rational grounds for it. In the face of challenges and difficulties, for refugees to hope is to hope against hope. Empowering refugees with hope, therefore, is pivotal to building their capacity and ensuring their improved livelihoods. For respondent BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI, to hope against hope is to do something in order to survive. This is what he said when asked why he thinks the situation is hopeless:

BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI: ... it's my case, especially when you don't have a job you know? You have to pay the rent, you have children, you have a big family and you are just car guard... You feel hopeless. One day... you know like me I went to school, I went to school until university... university in my country. But what can you do? You feel hopeless every time, everyday just no hope... you just do something to survive... to keep going, you know?

And he continued thus:

BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI: sometimes nothing gives me hope. I just keep going. Sometime I think of the future, I think of my family, I think that I'm a human being nothing can stop me, you know, so I keep moving... or I keep going, because I know there is hope because as long as you are human being you know... if you are still breathing you are not dead there is hope, you can't lose hope. There is no doubt about that.

As observed in the above cases, the refugee phenomenon is a very complex development in Africa due to the challenges it involves. It poses serious problems to both the national and the international communities. Nevertheless, a refugee migrant has rights that should be respected and defended. The church should promote genuine integration because it is integration that builds a society where every individual is an active member of the community. Integration has to do with universal solidarity, which is a fact and a benefit, but also which imposes a duty.

In this research, it was found that despite the challenges refugees go through, most of them, however, experience new and hospitable relationships that would encourage them to contribute to the wellbeing of their hosting country through their skills. This research further reveals that while some refugees integrate easily in South Africa, mostly in urban cities, there are many others that live in conditions of marginality and, sometimes, exploited or deprived of their basic human rights particularly those who live in the locations that predominantly occupied by black South Africans. As a result of such conditions and situations they are forced to live in, they, in turn, at times engage in behaviours that are detrimental to the local society. Therefore, local integration includes rights, duties and care for refugees to have a decent and dignified life.

It appears that refugee migrants are subjected to a high level of exploitation and suffer xenophobia while leading precarious life (Bohmer & Shuman, 2008:9). Local authorities have not been involved constructively to resolve refugees' problems, and the political response often goes from benign negligence to active hostility (Dorman, 2014). The quasi-totality of main political texts from the local administration do not make reference to refugees, who, in general, live thanks to religious organisations, NGOs and informal networks. The lived experiences of refugee migrants in Cape Town creates the impression that the question of human rights is envisaged only from a purely rhetoric point of view, which reveals a lack of political will to make the system functional.

Studies indicate that grievances are rooted in a “price-discounting war”, in which the success of foreign-run shops has significantly curtailed the profitability of locally run shops due to the use of price discounting and strategic positioning of the shops (Palmary, 2002). The tension exists because of fundamentally different business practices. On the one hand, South African *spaza* shops maintain prices at levels which permit all shopkeepers equal opportunity; whereas foreign owned *spaza* shops substantially discount prices to attract customers. Palmary (2002:4) refers to these two strategies as “survivalist” versus “opportunity driven”.

Contrary to xenophobic trends in the general public that stigmatise refugee migrants, many South Africans and migrants of Bellville believe that migrant-owned businesses contribute significantly to the development of local economies. Most refugee migrants in Mowbray and Bellville, for example, understand and speak more than one South African language, which has perhaps helped to foster a dynamic of and desire for integration. Integration in urban spaces is, thus, enhanced by the strategic maintenance of networks; the resilience of migrants to adapt to new settings by learning local languages and by building a market within the informal economy. Integration is also enhanced by the appeal of both Mowbray and Bellville local consumers, who are drawn to low comparative prices and the job opportunities that arise for low skilled local workers.

FGf\_P3\_SL is a Zimbabwean refugee. She sells various small articles at various spots on road junctions in Bellville. She notes in the focus group discussion we had, “there is too much xenophobia here, but we are changing things; we are developing this country and creating our own futures”. In addition to FGf\_P3\_SL’s claims, another refugee from Rwanda, FGm\_P1\_SL, had this to say: “You see this here?” his thick finger goes around a small scar on his arm. “This is where that guy, the security, hit me. He almost broke my hand. I ran away and he shot me behind but he missed twice”. The only crime of FGm\_P1\_SL was based on an assumption by a neighbour that he was selling drugs.

FGm\_P1\_SL fled the 1994 genocide and has never been back to his country ever since. He tells his story as we sit in the tiny VIDEFI room discussing with other focus group members about what it means to be a refugee in South Africa. His hope for improved wellbeing began as he went around door-to-door knocking on people’s gates trying to find small jobs to do in people’s homes sixteen years ago when he first arrived in South Africa. This led him to a guy

from France who picked up his French accent. The French man took FGm\_P1\_SL in and taught him what he does for a living as a successful handyman.

The attack on FGm\_P1\_SL happened in 2004 during the African Cup of Nations after FGm\_P1\_SL had answered back when his neighbours came to complain about the noise that was coming from his flat in Mowbray. “You see... we were celebrating! It was the African Cup of Nations and Rwanda was playing DRC, and we won the game. Rwanda beat DRC. So, the people next door thought that we are a drug gang since they heard us cheering and talking loud in the language they didn’t understand... they assumed it must be some bunch of criminals selling drugs or something”.

FGm\_P1\_SL is among the thousands of documented refugee migrants living in South Africa. The actual number of migrants living in South Africa is hard to monitor, largely because the very nature of migration, often as a means of clandestine movement from a volatile country, makes it difficult to accurately verify. Any individual who has left his/her country seeking refuge and safety elsewhere is automatically considered an asylum seeker. They usually fear persecution on the grounds of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion but only those asylum seekers seen to be genuinely at risk of persecution are granted refugee status by the hosting country.

FGm\_P1\_SL’s story of xenophobia is not an exception. In May 2008, attacks swept through South Africa, leaving many foreign migrants violently murdered, injured and displaced. Since then, the odd story of targeted violence against foreigners rears its ugly head every now and then, although not in the same magnitude. In March-April 2015 another wave of xenophobic violence occurred mainly in the Kwa Zulu Natal province, which also left thousands of refugee migrants homeless and/or displaced. The brutal 2008 xenophobic violence that left people innocently killed some of whom by being necklaced<sup>125</sup>, macheted or stoned, has caused academics, researchers and policymakers to converge and converse about researching on how to manage migration and integration as well as the persistent discrimination and stigmatisation by most local citizens towards them (Slobodin & Jong, 2014:42).

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<sup>125</sup> In South Africa, to be necklaced is to be put a car tire around the neck as though a necklace. The wearer of this “necklace” is then poured on petrol and burnt. It is assumed that the practice of necklacing was developed by black South Africans during the apartheid regime and intended for those suspected of working as spies for the apartheid masters against their fellow blacks.

Another challenge which happens to be a barrier that refugee migrants face is the xenophobic attitude of healthcare practitioners. Xenophobia is on the rise in South Africa despite the official position of denialism. An increasing number of refugee migrants are denied their basic right to accessing health services by healthcare practitioners who create barriers out of prejudice and ignorance. In this vein, MR\_KII\_F3\_COD, said “I was not given medication; they told me to come back next year”. When I asked which month it was when he went to the clinic, the respondent said it was in February. In other words, one can deduce that this healthcare practitioner was just telling this refugee patient that there are no medication for refugee migrants.

The narratives of refugee migrants here indicate that refugee migrants suffer xenophobia even as they lead precarious lives. This is because local authorities have not been involved constructively to resolve refugees’ problems, and the political response often goes from benign negligence to active hostility (Burger & McAravey, 2014:9). The quasi-totality of main political texts from the local administration do not make reference to refugees, who, in general, live thanks to religious organisations, NGOs and informal networks (Matlou, 2001:6). The lived experiences of refugee migrants in Bellville and Mowbray create the impression that the question of human rights is envisaged only from a purely rhetoric point of view, which again reveals a lack of political will to make the system functional. I had an interview with BR\_KII\_M1\_COD, and this is what he had to say:

BR\_KII\_M1\_COD: Life as a refugee in South Africa is not easy; for me it’s been so, so tough and very challenging at the same time, I mean... for moment to moment. And the biggest challenge was my integration in the South African society with regard to the language English and Xhosa, you see? But now I can speak English very well... and my wife can try to speak Xhosa, she understands very well. She has Xhosa friends and stuff... but also job opportunity too... very difficult. But as days are going on, I am adjusting slowly and positively. Despite some xenophobia problem, today I am working and meanwhile I am studying also.

One of the things that happen to be emphatic in the study of international migration is integration. It is unfortunate that in South Africa there is no official programme or structure in place to facilitate refugees’ integration (Amit, 2013:24). Refugees are only verbally encouraged to integrate within the local community, which they try by all means to do. The respondent recognises that xenophobia is a setback in the lives of many refugees here in South Africa. Among the things that most refugees do on their own to show their effort to integrate is to learn

the language spoken locally. BR\_KII\_M1\_COD indicates that, at first, among the challenges he experienced was English. However, now he speaks it well and his wife speaks isiXhosa reasonably. Xenophobic incidences are reported in connection with job opportunities, citing that refugee migrants take the jobs of local citizens (RFI, 2015).

The presence of refugees should be seen as socio-economically valuable in order to avoid waves of the xenophobic attacks resurfacing again. Indeed, in March-April 2015, another wave of xenophobic violence took place in South Africa, particularly in Durban in the Kwa Zulu Natal province following the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini's supposed remark that all foreigners should be deported because they are taking the jobs that South Africans should be having.

This interview with MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI was conducted before King Zwelithini's comments but here one can see that MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI pinpoints some of the important matters that require special attention and which need to be addressed "before another xenophobia starts". The recurrence of xenophobic attacks is proof that most of the issues raised by refugee migrants are not taken into consideration by officials in their attempts to resolve the matter. It has been widely acknowledged that the South African government lives in denial over the issue of xenophobia, claiming that South Africans are not xenophobic and that the xenophobic incidences are just isolated cases of crime by certain criminals. Denialism is an impediment to the prospects of empowerment and a barrier to the spirit of hope. The challenges that South Africa faces, which involve the presence of refugee migrants in the country, can be faced and tackled through mutual cooperation by both locals and refugee migrants.

## 6.6. Support mechanisms and survival strategy: sources of hope?

### 6.6.1. Ethno-tribal affinity and geographical association

For refugee migrants in Cape Town, the daily process of survival and maximising livelihood resources involves making claims to old and new collective characteristics that are sometimes congruent or conflicting. Networking is used as a support system but it is by no means the only

one nor is it the primary mode of survival strategy. In addition, new attachments are formed by various groups of refugee migrants on the basis of their shared experiences in South Africa to form of new identities. In the following paragraphs, I will present and interpret how each of these relational discourses plays a role in daily acts of securing livelihood within the refugee community. As it were, refugees' countries of origin or, to a greater extent, their attachment or affiliation to a specific ethnic group or tribal group play an important role as informal support systems. Such support mechanisms are frequently used as a supplement to the support of nuclear and extended family relations. This they do for the purpose of survival in South Africa.

As I interacted with refugee migrants during interview sessions and focus groups discussions in this research, it became evident that refugee migrants seek the assistance of their fellow countrymen and/or family members in times of need and distress. Most respondents indicated that their family members are always expected to contribute money towards the costs of the medical treatment of another family member or for bailing out a detained countryman or family member. In the refugees' daily networking, getting by, and planning ahead, ethno-tribal attachment is by no means the primary basis of collective identity claims. Refugee migrants in Cape Town choose housemates on the basis of other newly acquired collective identities such as identification with refugees with whom one lived and got to know in previous cities – or even those they met just here.

BR\_KII\_F5\_ETP, an Ethiopian refugee and mother of two, previously lived in Johannesburg for four years after arriving in South Africa. She moved to Cape Town in 2009 and settled in Bellville. She says that she settled in Bellville because there were two other families she had known and befriended while in Johannesburg. Though these families were of different tribes and countries (one family was Eritrean, another Sudanese) to hers, the three families were good friends and helped one another with settling into the new setting in Bellville. BR\_KII\_F5\_ETP adds that since her arrival in Bellville many more friends followed from Johannesburg and settled in Bellville. In fact, the women in Bellville who previously lived in Johannesburg talk about a strong bond that they share. BR\_KII\_F5\_ETP explains it as a bond that emerged out of the hardships they faced together for many years in Johannesburg.

In their new setting, they borrow money from one another, exchange useful information, and provide emotional support. For them, the collective identity that has been

constructed from the experiences of flight and displacement that they had shared is just as important and meaningful in their lives as their ethno-tribal attachments or even their countries of origin. Moreover, just as being countrymen is sometimes invoked as a language of differentiation, so are collective identity constructs based on shared refugee experiences in South Africa. One good illustration of refugees' national identity is the practice of sending money home to help relatives (remittances). A number of respondents mentioned that they sent money three to four times a year to help some relatives back home or contribute to some on-going projects there.

In brief, refugee migrants have transformed particular practices and made them part of an inclusive refugee identity to maximise the livelihood opportunities for improved wellbeing. The support mechanism and survival strategies among refugee migrants in Cape Town are a multi-layered and complex endeavour involved in daily strategies of securing livelihood so as to improve their health and wellbeing. Nevertheless, refugees' ethno-tribal attachments are not the only support mechanism and survival strategy they use in order to make do in South Africa. They also make use of their resilience ability and courage as engines of hope for improved wellbeing.

### 6.6.2. Resilience and courage

Resilience and hope have been identified as refugees' main ways of coping in South Africa. During the course of this research, it was evident that most respondents have hope for a better future despite the circumstances they face on daily basis. Their narratives are of hope although they create an impression of despair and desperation, and even though they exemplify a life of challenges. These narratives can inform us on how to act in the future with resilience and courage in hope for improved wellbeing. The life of FGm\_P1\_SL is a typical case study in this regard.

FGm\_P1\_SL is a refugee from Burundi running a shop in downtown Bellville along the busy road leading to the train station. We met when I went to his store one day – looking to buy a tape recorder for my fieldwork. We became friends. But when he heard that I'm a doctoral student at the University of Stellenbosch, his face dropped. That is when he told me his story.

It all started in 1993 when FGm\_P1\_SL was just 11 years old. An outbreak of ethnic violence had just started in Burundi. His entire family was killed. The boy fled with their neighbours to Rwanda. It was not long before they were once again forced to flee from Rwanda in 1994 following the genocide that had started. The young FGm\_P1\_SL who had already experienced the horror of the Burundian bloodbath, which had taken both his parents' lives, now witnesses the worst. They fled again, this time, to the DRC where they lived in a refugee camp.

Two years later, in 1996, they were forced to run away due to yet another civil war that had started in the DRC. The family that was taking care of FGm\_P1\_SL was also killed when the camp they lived in was attacked. By now, FGm\_P1\_SL was 14 years old. He had seen enough. In his confused young mind, he followed the crowd and went to Tanzania. Life was not easy for the young boy. In 2000, he decided to go “in the world”, as he puts it, in the quest for survival. FGm\_P1\_SL walked long distances, for days, begging on the streets, sleeping in abandoned structures, and hiking trucks until he made it to Kenya.

In Mombasa, the coastal city of Kenya, FGm\_P1\_SL heard about the possibility of going overseas by hiding in a cargo ship at the harbour. When the opportunity came, he hid in the basement of the ship, ready to escape. After some days of travel, FGm\_P1\_SL was discovered and left at the nearest port: the Durban harbour. It was the end of his journey to the Netherlands, where the ship was heading, and the beginning of his life journey in South Africa.

Right at the harbour, he met other immigrants who offered help. They were crooks. They robbed him of everything he had. FGm\_P1\_SL who knew no one and nowhere to go became homeless. In the street, he did all sorts of things and ended up in prison. For him, the possibility of getting out of jail was unlikely. One day, FGm\_P1\_SL decided to take what seemed an easy way out: committing suicide. He made plans for a couple of drugs, and took them. “I thought I was going to find myself dead right there but I got very very angry when I woke up in the hospital”, he jokingly says as we both burst out laughing. FGm\_P1\_SL had been rescued.

He decided to leave Durban for Cape Town after his release in 2008 and got a job in Brackenfell. The work required that he uses some heavy machinery, which unfortunately injured one of his legs. He walks with difficulty to this day. His hope to re-create a life far from

Burundi began even with his physical challenge, and despite the dark depths of his despairing past. He earned R1200 a month and saved enough to start his own business: selling sweets at the Bellville train station. Today, FGm\_P1\_SL owns two businesses: the “dealership” we first met in, where he sells various items, including some small electronic goods, and a barber shop. He is now married and has two daughters with his local wife.

Like FGm\_P1\_SL, most refugees trade informally. Their small businesses, however, prove to be effective and a valuable means to improve their wellbeing in the face of challenges. Whether pushed from their countries by the “persecution” clause of the United Nations or pulled to South Africa by the “better opportunities” factor, refugees multiply their efforts to the maximum in order to survive. Regardless of their attachment to their place of origin, for most refugees, “home” is the most dangerous place to live. In this way, their very home becomes a major impediment to improved wellbeing and asylum seeking the only basis for renewed hope. This explains why refugees often rely only on hope to make do in the face of their challenges in a hosting country.

The story of FGm\_P1\_SL is only one of the many stories I heard from refugees during my fieldwork. From the lived experiences of FGm\_P1\_SL, we can learn that there is always hope in the face of life’s many challenges. FGm\_P1\_SL was being empowered by hope when even courage and resilience were sometimes in short supply. Despite the dark depths of despair and anxiety he experienced, he is riding on the wings of hope – determined to fly high enough so as to re-create his own future and shape it aright.

The story provides pointers to the fact that so many refugees and migrants risk their lives in search of a life of dignity. It also focuses on an instance which, in essence, tells the painful story of the discrimination and other forms of dehumanisation that refugee migrants go through. Such tragic stories can become tools that increase our hope as individuals and institutions so that we can reach empowerment and, thus, conform to the values of dignity for all, healing for all, justice for all, and freedom for all. Through the narrative, one realises that refugee migrants not only contribute to the economic growth, but also enrich the hosting society through cultural diversity and other critical skills. They happen to be victims of circumstances that have inflicted upon them neediness and hopelessness but most of them are capable of accomplishing great things when given opportunity. Although they are faced with challenges,

most refugee migrants put their hope into action to enhance their chances of improved wellbeing. Their resolve to succeed against the odds propels them to engage in various kinds of trades to earn a living.

Among the odds that refugees encounter is the “monster” of xenophobia. As I had interviews and focus groups discussions, most respondents indicated that xenophobia in South Africa makes them feel they do not belong here and that their being here is a liability to the hosting community. Yet, the resilience and courage that refugees have is unparalleled. However, the majority of respondents argued that their being here adds value to the diversity of South African demographics. Indeed, refugee migrants experience difficult times on a daily basis, which reduces their capacity to hope that they can build the sorts of lives they would otherwise choose for themselves in South Africa. Xenophobic attitudes are reported even in Bellville and Mowbray although they are urban centres. Both are places where space making is a constant battle. However, they are areas that embody the dream of the post-apartheid South Africa as FGf\_P2\_SL who happens to be a vendor on the streets of Bellville affirms: “This is the new South Africa, in Bellville. I think Nelson Mandela would love this place”. From FGD and KII contents, it was possible to capture the development of gentrification in these two sites of research. This explains the fact that, despite all the challenges that refugees in South Africa face, they work towards improving their wellbeing. Their resilience and courage work as a strong support mechanism and survival strategy. MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI is a refugee from Burundi. He lives in Mowbray. He gives a short history of his lived experiences in South Africa and tells of his support mechanism and survival strategy. Here is what he had to say:

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: I’m in South Africa since 2002, from 2002 to 2007 I was staying in Durban some small jobs like car guard and after I started doing small business to survive, each month I used to go one day at home affairs to extend my asylum in 2006 I got my refugees status after being helped by human rights of which it is difficult to get it if you don’t bribe those immigration officers, in 2007 I left Durban to Cape Town where I am until today due to business collapse and I try to look for job but I couldn’t get, I was attacked twice, police officers coming such time to time I refugees house looking for stolen property without such warrant and with too much intimidations at night when I’m sleeping then I decided to come Cape Town, arrived in Cape Town my room was broken in by criminal stole money I concluded that south Africa is a country full of crime especially in black and coloured area.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI, like other migrants facing various challenges in the country, has experienced the challenge of unemployment despite his resolve and hope to survive.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: South Africa is a country with big problem of unemployment in that case refugees are victims there is a need of financial support like money, food, studies, and so on from UNHCR to survive since there is no refugees camps in South Africa how can UN and South Africa government just leave refugees without any assistance? Please assist refugees in South Africa.

This shows that, although refugees' resilient courage prompts them to hope for improved wellbeing, the mere fact of being in South Africa is a challenge that creates a number of wellbeing problems to themselves, and various socio-economic problems to the hosting country. Besides, refugee migrants use waiting as a strategy to deal with despair particularly when they long for a new identity unlike the waiting of Vladimir and Estragon as they waited for Godot (cf. Section 4.2.2). Their waiting in patience does not signal ineffectiveness or vulnerability since they use the waiting period as a coping mechanism. For them, it is an act of resilience as they long to rebuild their lives.

## 6.7. The role and meaning of hope to the refugee community

### 6.7.1. Hope amid health challenges

The South African constitution guarantees access to health care and other essential services to all who live in the country including refugee migrants (DHA, 2013), but the reality is quite different. Most of the respondents in this research alleged that, at some healthcare centres, refugees are denied access to healthcare services or charged an excessive amount of money to cover their medical bills because they are “foreigners”. This could be due to the ignorance of some health practitioners who cannot differentiate a refugee migrant from an ordinary immigrant (cf. Section 4.4.2.).

In the interview I had with BR\_KII\_F1\_COD, she indicated a few challenges she experiences related to her being a refugee migrant, which affect her quality of life in South Africa. However, the presence of hope in her life was manifest as she believed that hope was the only source of strength remaining for her. As we discussed various issues concerning her life in South Africa as a refugee, BR\_KII\_F1\_COD was concerned that “until today there's no

one helping us refugees” after she had asked for assistance at a local healthcare centre with her sick daughter. Despite her many unanswered questions, BR\_KII\_F1\_COD was adamant that the one thing remaining that could help her was hope. In her own words: “I only remain with hope”, she said sighing with a sad face, while holding her sick child in her arms. This suggests that, improved quality of life in the life of BR\_KII\_F1\_COD is influenced by the very presence of hope in her life despite her health and wellbeing challenges.

It is the feeling of hopefulness that drives BR\_KII\_F1\_COD. Despite the condition of her daughter and despite the attitudinal treatment of the health practitioners, she is certain of the fact that all shall be well. Her positive state of mind, which is resultant of hope, is important in a patient or anyone going through tough times in life – and this is maintained by Jerome Groopman (2004:23) when he explains the scientific connection between hope and human suffering or illness (cf. Section 3.4.1.). Despite the problem that BR\_KII\_F1\_COD is facing, and despite the attitudes she accuses the health practitioners of, there is no room for discouragement in her life. She admits that she has lost a lot of energy in the process of seeking medical attention for her sick child, but she believes that hope is for her the source of renewed strength (cf. Section 2.3.2.). Thus, her positive attitude towards the challenge she was facing was both helpful and healthful because she believed that hope was needed for the sake of the baby. For BR\_KII\_F1\_COD, hope gave her the energy she needed and empowered her to sustain as Groopman (2004:28; cf. Section 3.4.2.) contends. Below is an excerpt of our conversational interview:

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: The \*\*\*<sup>126</sup> told them to do ENT scan for ear, cough, and nose, so we can take her there. But the doctor here said we should wait to see if things are worse.

Researcher: Why do they have to wait until the condition gets worse? I don’t understand! What if it is too late? Take her to \*\*\*<sup>127</sup>

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Yea... that’s my worry also... Eish, I’m worried... I’m very worried! No way to go there till you get a letter from \*\*\* only. The \*\*\*<sup>128</sup> is for emergency patients only who send by a small hospital.

Researcher: I agree; but let’s hope and pray that they will do something today.

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<sup>126</sup> Name of the healthcare centre withheld for confidentiality purposes

<sup>127</sup> Name of the healthcare centre withheld for confidentiality purposes

<sup>128</sup> Name of the healthcare centre withheld for confidentiality purposes

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Yea, I have hope. I only have hope. Otherwise I will take my child to private hospital for the scan that's what I'm preparing, but I have to know how much it costs first. You know... we come to this hospital it's because it's cheap here; but we can't come here. I'm serious, I can't accept to see my baby 5 days in hunger.

Researcher: Ok... I'm very sorry once again. The problems of refugeeness are many, but don't lose hope; nothing is impossible with God... things will eventually be fine.

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Thank you; yes, I still have hope for my baby... yea, I must have hope for her. I appreciate you. Thanks very much. Please pray for us.

The conversation with BR\_KII\_F1\_COD substantiates the claim according to which the challenges of verbal abuse, the lack of care, the ill-treatment by some health practitioners and the financial limitations of refugee migrants make them lose hope in healthcare services, and not visiting healthcare centres willingly or regularly. This could explain why many refugee migrants live with illnesses for extended periods of time unknowingly and undiagnosed, which affects their health and wellbeing.

The experience of BR\_KII\_F1\_COD at that healthcare centre provides evidence to the fact that most refugees are denied emergency healthcare, which puts their emotional stability and improved social wellbeing in jeopardy. As for BR\_KII\_F1\_COD's child, her condition was critical but she was made to wait for an extended period of time before she was attended to, which made the mother think that she was treated unfairly because she was not a local citizen. BR\_KII\_F1\_COD indicated that the child had lost a lot of blood, having fallen down from the second floor of their building and that "the blood was out about 3 days, but they did nothing". Below is an excerpt of our conversation as BR\_KII\_F1\_COD holds the child with sadness in her eyes in one of the pilot investigation at a healthcare facility.

Researcher: How is she?

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: She is admitted, she fell from the high floor.

Researcher: Oh my God! I'm very sorry about that... Is she okay?

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Thanks; look well at her eyes, she is hurt. It has been 5 day now she is still admitted.

Researcher: I'm so sorry my sister; it must be hard for you, hey?

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Very hard my brother, very hard... and she don't eat; only drink. I'm just forcing her hard to eat; for her stomach. Yea... it give me a break heart.

Researcher: I'm very sorry; I wish her speedy recovery

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: Thanks man... I'm sick and tired with these doctors here; they hasn't yet done a scan head; she fell into her head, but they say, we must wait till we see things are worse. It has been 5 days my baby isn't eating.

The conversation with BR\_KII\_F1\_COD is such that many South African services, including and particularly the healthcare services, are considered not refugee-friendly by refugee migrants. This is in spite of the fact that, officially, all services are supposed to be available for refugees' use in any refugee-hosting country. This happens to be hypothetical since, in reality, most refugee migrants struggle to access the services as BR\_KII\_F1\_COD claims, accusing healthcare practitioners of carelessness and selfishness when I asked her why does she think her child was not attended to with utmost immediacy despite the critical condition she was in.

BR\_KII\_F1\_COD: They are very careless and selfish... but me I'm just patient for my baby. I will take her to private hospital, if they don't do any scan. I just need a head scan only.

As explained in Section 4.2.2., refugee migrants wait patiently in various cases. For them, waiting is a survival strategy. However, most people do not like waiting. We often consider waiting as the waste of time; therefore, when we are told to wait, we find it almost unbearable. This is natural because we cannot control how long the waiting would take. Despite the experiences that respondent BR\_KII\_F1\_COD went through at this healthcare centre, she discovered the importance of patience in the midst of anger and frustration. Waiting patiently in hope was very important for her if she was to obtain what she had hoped for, which is the treatment and consequential recovery of her child.

The case of BR\_KII\_F1\_COD provides empirical evidence to the fact that the wellbeing of refugee migrants is affected by various factors. These include socio-economic inequalities and the lack of access to healthcare services; yet their resilience and courage bred by hopefulness remains unequalled. The factors contributing to the deterioration of refugees' health and wellbeing are somewhat explained by the fact that most refugee migrants come from countries that have limited resources and inadequate facilities for healthcare services as Watters (2003:225) observes. It is convenient to indicate that health is as essential and complex as life

itself, and it cannot be detached from all the contexts of life since it is a normal and natural state – essential for the existence of a human person (Bhugra & Gupta, 2011: 97).

### 6.7.2. Hope amid other challenges impeding refugees' improved wellbeing

Refugee migrants are known for their business mindedness even though most of them trade informally (cf. Section 4.4.1.2). Their small trades prove to be effective and, thus, a valuable means for improved wellbeing in the face of challenges bred by their 'refugeeness'. They play a major role in giving their lives a meaning amid challenges. Refugees' know-how in terms of businesses, however, leads to accusations by certain layers of the local citizenry of them doing illegal businesses considering how their micro-enterprises thrive. However, it would be a fallacy and an immense stereotyping to assume that all refugee migrants engage in illegal businesses. BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP finds that stereotyping refugees is a major problem in South Africa. Such stereotyping assumptions lead to various attitudinal problems, which often erupt into xenophobic violence.

BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP: The culture I found here in South Africa is very different to my culture in Ethiopia. But my belief is that all human beings we all have potential to integrate and adapt to any environment went a long way. The biggest challenge at the start was to learn English for me and also to get a job. It is very difficult for people from Ethiopia to find a job here; and it is even more worse if you are a woman from Ethiopia. They think if you are an Ethiopian it means you must have a shop or you must only work in a shop. That's a problem here in South Africa... stereotype. They like stereotyping too much. There is another challenge which I found here in South Africa about life. But for me, every challenge is an opportunity to learn and grow, you see? Upon my arrival, I completed an English language extensive course at [...] College here in Bellville<sup>129</sup>. Then I did further studies. I am now about to finish my honours at UWC.

BR\_KII\_F2\_ETP is educated and completing her honours' degree. She finds that in the country there is a great deal of stereotyping particularly if you are a woman and a refugee at the same time. She argues that "people from Ethiopia" are the most discriminated against when it comes to finding jobs as the local community always assumes that, somewhere somehow, they own businesses. Nevertheless, she is empowered by the hope of knowing that challenges faced are

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<sup>129</sup> name of the college withheld to protect the participant's identity

worth it because they open doors for growth and better opportunity to learn (cf. Section 2.3.3).

The challenges facing the refugee migrants are various but they do not thwart their sense of hopefulness. Such challenges often include English language barrier because a large number of refugee migrants come from non-English speaking countries such as those from the African GLR and those from the Horn of Africa (cf. Section 6.5.2; Section 5.3.3.1; Section 5.3.3.2). BR\_KII\_M2\_COD is not a different case considering that he faced the language barrier challenge when he first arrived in South Africa. His language barrier challenges were, however, not a barrier for his resolve to strive for improved wellbeing. This is indicative of the fact that refugee migrants are empowered by the resilience and courage of their hope, which is one of the aspects of empowerment by hope. He had this to say:

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: ... when I arrived in South Africa, I had challenges in terms of mastering language skills that I needed overcome in order to integrate in society. I started working in low paying jobs such as car guard and started learning English language and computer literacy programmes which ultimately help me enrol at university.

Nevertheless, his tertiary education does not translate into employment. BR\_KII\_M2\_COD faces the same challenge that many other refugees and local citizens face.

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: I am currently unemployed after graduating. I consider myself a fulltime job seeker at the moment but I'm not worried because I know I'll find something one day.

For this respondent unemployment is the main cause of stress and hopelessness but he still believes there is hope. Nevertheless, the solidarity of refugee migrants is such that even though BR\_KII\_M2\_COD is not working, his fellow refugee migrants give him hope as they all look for jobs for him while they allow him to live with them *gratis*. They have hope that he will get something useful to do since he is educated. This is what BR\_KII\_M2\_COD had to say upon me asking him how he pays the rent seeing that he does not work:

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: I don't have any parent who can pay for me rent; so I stay with a relative as I keep looking for jobs.

And despite the fact that BR\_KII\_M2\_COD is not working, the main challenge he is facing – which of course could be the reason why he does not work, is his ill health. This compromises the quality of his life in a major way. BR\_KII\_M2\_COD indicates that there are health challenges that he has experienced while in South Africa but he is not sure whether they are

related to his living conditions. He is diabetic and has been diagnosed with the problem of thyroid, which he is still battling with at the moment. This is what he had to say in this regard:

BR\_KII\_M2\_COD: The conditions we live in to be honest they are not good because we are so many people in the house and we only have one toilet in the house, one kitchen... I mean, we share everything. Some children sleep in the sitting room. I think all those conditions can create difficult health conditions in one way or another especially when it comes to hygiene. But also personally, I have been diagnosed with thyroid and diabetes but I am not exactly sure how my living conditions impacted on my health challenges.

Health could be considered as the order of life and its poorness a disorder (cf. Section 3.4.2; see also Louw, 2008:34). Nevertheless, there is more to health than the mere absence of ailments. This explains why health cannot be observed or measured in terms of illnesses only as it is a necessity in all aspects of human life. Disease could be seen as a disruption of an established order in the life of a person since it affects one's holistic wellbeing (Hill, 1997:35). Here, we can see that BR\_KII\_M2\_COD had experienced major health challenges but remains hopeful of his fate. Although he is not sure whether his health problems are caused by his living conditions, his case provides empirical evidence to the fact that his living conditions affect his quality of life in a very striking way; and this is an impediment to improved wellbeing. In Africa, the prevalence of mental health and psychosocial problems in refugees' primary care is high (cf. Besseling, 2001:111; Carballo, 2001:163).

Having spoken to refugee migrants in such extensive interviews and focus group discussions, it is evident that of all the challenges that they face in the hosting country, which affect their health and wellbeing, the most striking ones are access to accommodation, food and healthcare services. This is even confirmed in a 2013 report by the world migration report (cf. World Migration Report, 2013). According to the report, refugee migrants face these challenges from the very first hours of their arrival in the hosting country, and their situation becomes even more complex because they are exposed to various diseases during their flight and in the hosting country. In this regard, refugees' unemployment becomes a serious matter that thwarts their hopefulness and resilience to survive in the country.

The refugee phenomenon is indeed one of the most complex issues on the planet considering the large masses of people displaced around the world (Belvedere, 2007:34). As already discussed, the factors that result in such human displacement vary. They can be

produced by ill human relationships - taking the form of racial discords or religious feuds, *inter alia*. They can be engendered by political instability, social injustice or economic inequality and be manifest in human rights violations, violent conflicts or civil wars. They can be within the framework of natural calamities and be evident in disasters such as desertification and inundation (Doyle, 2013:3). Most of these circumstances are beyond the control and will of those displaced. The lived experiences discussed are expressive of the fact that living as a refugee in South Africa is not easy. All these factual evidences provide pointers to Brueggemann's position establishing that the role of hope is functional in human destiny and even in meaninglessness; that is, it shapes human fate even though life embodies vanity (cf. Section 3.2.1.2; Section 3.2.1.3). I asked MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI to say anything else in his heart that he thinks could add value to this research project, and this is what he had to say.

MR\_KII\_M2\_BDI: I would like you to know that at home affairs refugee reception centre in order to get a refugee status you must pay money officially to the immigration officer, where is that money going or in which reason? To renew our refugees documents you have to travel to ex refugee reception centre where you first declare yourself as refugees in south Africa while South Africa has one computer system for home affairs, when you pass one day without going to renew your document you must pay a fine of 2500 at the immigration officer or at the court in order to renew even if is their own fault not assisting you on due date; with that big amount of money were they expect refugee to get it, most of the company can be private or public don't allow refugees to sign contract which is permanent or not employed while on our refugees document we are allowed to study and to work how refugees going to survive? Because refugees are not assisted and don't have access to nice jobs big number staying in locations where is very dangerous every day refugees are victims of crime in those area but nowhere else to go since house are very expensive in town can't afford; another fact that locations in South Africa occupied by black community which don't like people from other country saying we came to take their jobs in south Africa now there is suffering because of refugees; that issues need to be resolved before another xenophobia starts.

As indicated in Section 6.5.4, in 2008, a series of xenophobic attacks stampeded through South Africa, leaving foreigners brutally murdered, injured and displaced all over the country. Such incidences easily break refugees' spiritedness and trivialise their efforts for improved wellbeing. It affects their quality of life particularly their psychosocial wellness. The same sentiments are shared with, BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI, a refugee from Burundi. This is what BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI had to say:

BR\_KII\_M3\_BDI: Thank you very much. Life in South Africa is not good; it's something that no one can deny. You know here in South Africa to... we suffer a lot; since I came here it hasn't been good. We suffer a lot... the home affairs... everything, everything... life is not good here, we came here we thought... we were thinking... we were thinking life is gonna be easy, you know? But life it can't be easy, you know? Yea... so here we... me I'm struggling, I have many children but I'm struggling... in general, life is not easy in South Africa but we are surviving... surviving, yeah!

Despite the violent xenophobia that has swept South Africa on a few occasions in the past few years, refugee migrants experience attitudinal xenophobia, which manifests itself in various forms and in various places. However, it was interesting to find refugees still regard South Africa as a safer place than in most of their home countries. This indicates that peace and security are not only the absence of hostility but also, and most particularly for refugee migrants, the presence of serenity. Botman (cf. Section 3.3.2) attests to this when he argues that the aim of hope in action is never an exclusionary society but social cohesion and peaceful cohabitation. This testifies to the findings that there is hope amid challenges impeding improved wellbeing. Current consensus holds that migration is intrinsically 'good' for migrants particularly in terms of their material wellbeing (Belvedere, 2007:75). Hosting countries also benefit from migration as highly skilled migrants bring new ideas and technologies, and contribute more than they consume in taxes as well as low skilled migrants take jobs that local workers despise, keeping wages low and combating inflation at the same time as raising overall production. However, this always end them in trouble, hence, life in South Africa is not as rosy as many refugees thought it was prior to their coming to the country.

While there is an effort to acknowledge and address linguistic and cultural barriers, learning by trial-and-error remains the most common form of education on the current South African health system (Dorman, 2014:35). It is true that there are multiple challenges for every potential patient, but foreign nationals encounter unique barriers when attempting to benefit from health care – these include difficulties in cross-cultural communication, disparate health practice beliefs, and limited cultural awareness on the part of the provider. RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA says the following in connection with the common medical conditions among refugee migrants and their main causes. Here is an excerpt of what he had to say:

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA: Refugees have lots of health issues especially bacteria. That's why refugees require screening upon arrival because many of them come from disease prone countries where

health services are not the best. Healthcare for refugee migrants may include screening for various illnesses; knowing or identifying a standard medical history with questions about disabilities, substance abuse and mental health issues, as well as physical examination. Also testing for tuberculosis, syphilis and HIV is also recommended in my opinion from a professional point of view. Most active cases of tuberculosis occur within the first five years after a refugee migrant enters South Africa. But, recognising and appropriately treating health problems among refugees in primary care poses a challenge because of differences in language and culture and because of specific stressors associated with migration.

He continued thus:

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA: Common illness in refugees include trauma which most of the signs of trauma are as a result of torture. Specific and careful documentation of physical findings is essential, as the documentation may be needed for asylum or legal proceedings, and may represent an important supportive role for the family physician. Some common problems in children include anaemia, asthma, hypertension and orthopaedic problems. When it comes to mental health, refugees and asylum seekers who flee conflict areas may develop mental health disorder and maybe traumatised by the consequences of war either on transit or in country of asylum. Specific challenges in refugee migrants would include communication difficulties because of language and cultural differences; illness behaviour on diagnosis, coping and treatment; acculturation and intergenerational conflict; and aspects of acceptance by the receiving society that affect employment, social status and integration.

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA indicates that most refugee migrants have parasites and common illnesses in addition to mental health issues. He notes that most refugee migrants experience cases of trauma due to what they had gone through in the past. On the question of food and the nutritional values of refugee migrants, this is his response:

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA: When your diet is very poor you are likely to encounter health problems. It is common knowledge. The nutritional status of refugees may suffer in transit and may already be compromised as a result of parasites and other conditions in the country of origin or transit. During their flight the growth and development of children may be affected.

RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA is one of the few role players who answered a questionnaire during the survey. Here, he provides pointers to the fact that refugee migrants find themselves in very poor health and in need of medical assistance from the very first days of their arrival in their new setting. This means, the very fact of being a refugee migrant in South Africa renders someone

vulnerable to various illnesses and victim of varied practices, some of which were acquired prior to arriving here. RP\_SQ\_M2\_SA further indicates that the excessive stress of adapting to the new conditions in South Africa affects refugees' psychosocial equilibrium. As a result, their situations become more complicated, their need to survive deepens, and ill health intensifies while mortality increases among the refugee community. In addition, numerous disorders related to refugees' health lead to conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, various infections, organ failures, and other socially conditioned diseases like tuberculosis and hepatitis. However, according to the World Migration Report (2013), many of what refugees go through health-wise are preventable. Thus, the provision of adequate sustenance, safe water, and vaccination against varied infections and/or illnesses could improve or protect refugees' wellness besides educating them on health consciousness.

These narratives are expressive of the fact that refugee migrants face greater challenges in every area of their lives, and that the impact of their refugee status on their health and wellbeing is a great concern. In my interviews with refugee migrants, it emerged that taking and maintaining a positive attitude amid such events and/or circumstances requires added practice of hope characteristically marked by activity, courage and resilience. One would say that refugee migrants are not a threat but agents of socio-economic transformation of the hosting country. Refugees should therefore be seen not as beneficiaries of humanitarian aids only but also as potential contributors to sustainable development. Such virtuous qualities are mostly a result of the misperceptions of refugees' presence in the hosting country.

It could be said that economic status in the society presents itself as an obstacle in accessing health services within the context of the South African health system. This is in relation with the standard of living and the quality of life that refugee migrants have. Most of the respondents in this research do not have high income. The little they get on their daily toiling, they spend it for rental payment and the payment of bills in relation to their living expenses. The majority of the respondents were unemployed, which has a negative impact on their health status. Those who were self-employed like vendors, car guards, security watchmen, etc. could not afford private hospitals where treatment is assumed to be of good quality. Besides, private hospitals tend to prefer only patients with insurance, which refugee migrants do not usually possess. All these socio-economic factors had great influence on the health and wellbeing of the refugee migrants that took part in this research project as participants. One would infer that the excessive stress of adapting to the new conditions affects refugees'

psychosocial equilibrium and, as a result, their situations become even more complicated and their need to survive deeply increases.

Respondents in this research also claimed that cultural and linguistic differences are always used, albeit unofficially, to isolate and separate refugee migrants from the mainstream South African society. In contrast, it was interesting to discover that refugee migrants live in community (with one's own family or with people from same country/region) as a survival strategy. It could be argued, however, that while this strategy is helping many refugee migrants secure their livelihood and improve their wellbeing within the comfort of their ethno-tribal affinity (cf. Section 6.6.1), it is certainly separating the refugee community further from the South African community. In other words, there is a conflicting role and meaning of hope here. In the first incidence, it acts as a reactionary force and as a revolutionary force in the second (cf. Sections 2.2.2.1 & 2.2.2.2).

## 6.8. Conclusion

As deduced, South African citizens prefer the government to get tough with refugee migrants due to the widespread suspicion that most of them are not genuinely what they claim to be, and the irrational fear that they are an economic threat to the nation. Perhaps the most significant and consistent perception about refugee migrants that cause ill-feelings among the local population is the claim that they steal rather than create jobs. Here, one could argue that when the refugee phenomenon is only viewed as a “threat”, it is not unusual for the local citizenry to prefer harsh policy measures against refugee migrants. Indeed, the refugee phenomenon is a global trend, which has major social and economic impacts on both the hosting and the producing countries. Nevertheless, even though it appears to be a tragic reality, the refugee phenomenon can be managed.

Put differently, the refugee phenomenon can present opportunities that may benefit the hosting country if managed properly. Such opportunities could be capitalised upon to bring about the desired change leading to a more productive economy in the country. In view of this, our attitude towards development should be reflected in the hope and action to empower others. This explains why empowerment by hope is an invitation to imagine a different future for humanity and strive for its realisation by putting hope into action. As expounded throughout,

refugee migrants use hope as a resource for self-empowerment but a lot still needs to be done to ensure their improved wellbeing.

The conditions associated with the refugee phenomenon and the poor wellbeing of refugee migrants make them vulnerable to various viral and/or bacterial infections. In general, it was found that refugee migrants in Cape Town have poor financial wellbeing and a low standard of living, which affects their overall quality of life. This varies according to employment sector and is partially due to refugees' high concentration in the lowest-paid jobs. It should be reiterated here that, while some refugee migrants integrate easily in the hosting country, many others live in conditions of marginality and, sometimes, exploited or deprived of their basic human rights. As a result, they engage in behaviours detrimental to the society in which they live. Thus, local integration includes rights, duties and care for refugee migrants to have a decent and dignified life. In the same vein, refugee migrants need to attend to the values offered by the society in which they live for the purpose of social cohesion.

Giving refugees various alternatives to pursue livelihoods and, thereby, improve their wellbeing provides pointers to sense-making in this ever-changing global world. In general, the narratives that refugee migrants give in this chapter are reminiscent of the hope they have in spite of the challenges they encounter on a daily basis. Indeed, their challenges seem to overshadow their sense of hopefulness but this is because hope finds its meaning in despair. Their many challenges and sufferings provide them with an opportunity to hope anew.

The next chapter will end this research report. In the chapter, I will summarise the findings of the research then present the applicability and convenience of empowerment by hope in the development practice within the context of Theology and Development. I will conclude by presenting a summative assessment of the entire thesis before closing with recommendations to those assisting refugee migrants in various spheres of influence including policymakers.

## **Chapter 7 – Applicability and Final Conclusion**

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We have the responsibility to leave a legacy of hope!

~ H Russel Botman

## Chapter 7 – Applicability and Final Conclusion

### A focus on the *résumé* of research findings and the relevance of Empowerment by Hope

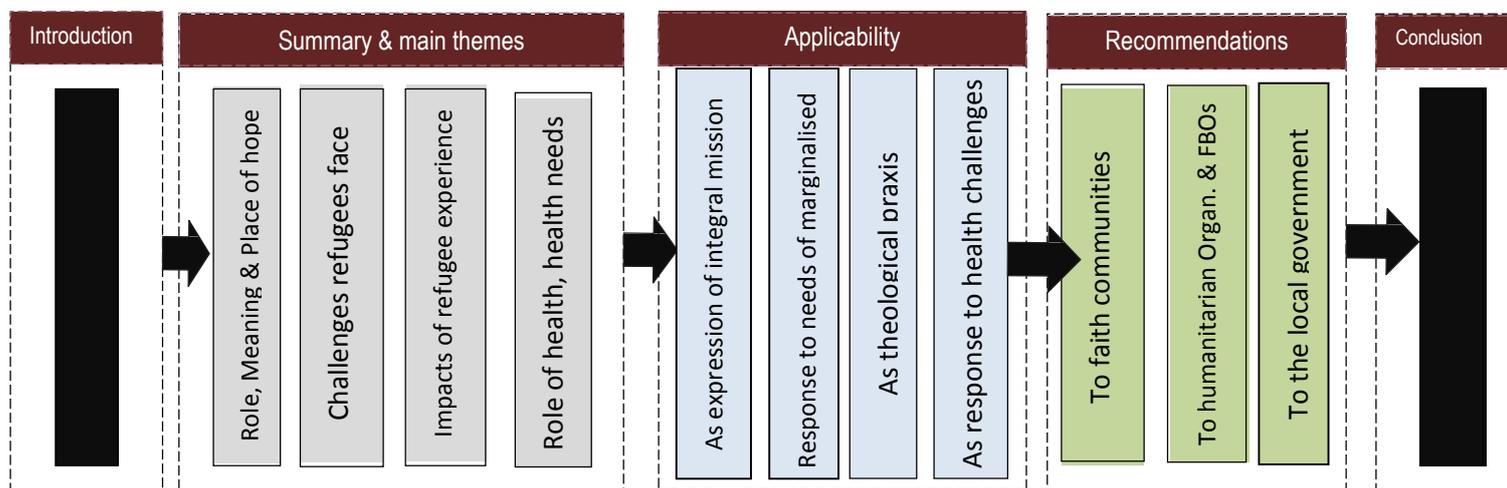


Figure 27: Chapter 7 Road map

### 7.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the findings from carrying out this study and presented examples from raw data to support the discussion. In this chapter, I will summarise the findings of the research then present the applicability and convenience of empowerment by hope in the development practice within the context of Theology and Development. I also present a summative assessment of the entire thesis and conclude the study after giving a few recommendations from carrying out this investigation. As indicated in Section 1.5.1., the study is guided by the following twin research question:

*How do the health challenges that refugees in Cape Town face impede their wellbeing; and how can such challenges be turned into opportunities for hope in order to ensure holistic development and human dignity?*

The objectives of this research, as outlined in Section 1.5.3, are stated as follows:

- (i) To investigate the various perspectives of hope in order to understand its role and meaning in human suffering,

- (ii) To identify the challenges that refugee migrants face through their lived experiences,
- (iii) To situate the hope-empowerment binary within Theology and Development,
- (iv) To determine the impact of the refugee phenomenon on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants, and
- (v) To make recommendations as to how hope could be put into action both within the context of the Christian faith community and broader society's engagement with the refugee phenomenon.

The first part of the research question (i.e. *how do the health challenges that refugees in Cape Town face impede their wellbeing?*) is answered by meeting Objective 2 and Objective 4 in Chapter 6 through the field research process outlined in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3). As such, Chapter 6 presented and discussed the depths of the participants' experiences by exploring their lived experiences from the perspective of hope as an area of interest for special attention and discussion. However, the chapter did not sum up the findings of the research or integrate underlying theories of Theology and Development to support the concept of empowerment by hope. Nevertheless, the chapter provided pointers that refugee migrants are, in many ways, agents of their own transformation through self-empowerment activities.

The second part of the research question (i.e. *how can such challenges be turned into an opportunity for hope in order to ensure improved wellbeing and human dignity?*) is answered by meeting the other objectives (i.e. Objectives 1, 3 & 5) through bringing all the perspectives from all the chapters together in this final and concluding chapter of this research report. Each chapter met either an objective or a part of it. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 met Objective 1. Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 provide the summary of how these two chapters met the first objective. Chapter 4 met Objective 3. Section 7.2.3 sums up how this chapter met this third objective. Chapter 6 met Objective 2 and Objective 4. Detailed information on how this chapter met those two objectives is summarised in Sections 7.2.4; 7.2.5; 7.2.6 and 7.2.7. Objective 5 (i.e. the last objective) is met in Section 7.4 of this report.

This chapter, therefore, reviews the main themes emerging from the research findings and seeks to build a connection between the use of empowerment by hope as a theological approach to community engagement and the lived experiences of refugee migrants seeking improved wellbeing in seemingly hopeless circumstances. This provides deeper insight into the role and meaning of hope in the lives of refugee migrants. Furthermore, the chapter provides

insight into the role of the church as a faith community in addressing the causes and consequences of the refugee phenomenon so as to be well equipped in managing it. The chapter, finally, builds on the preceding arguments to draw some concluding remarks concerning the topic under investigation and closes with recommendations that could guide role players such as faith communities, policymakers, researchers, etc. involved or interested in matters of relevance to the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants.

## 7.2. Summary and main themes of the research findings

In this research, the second chapter considered the role of hope; the third chapter highlighted the meaning of hope; the fourth chapter looked at the place of hope within the theory of practice of Theology and Development. The research was guided by its objectives in order to answer the research question. This section provides a summary of the common themes, ideas or premises that emerged or were identified during both the literature review and the fieldwork (i.e. the discussion with focus groups, the interviews with key informants, and the short survey conducted to the role players). The themes were identified in Chapter 6, and they were developed in a narrative way in the same chapter following the adopted holistic case study design.

The approach used for this research's literature review is quite integrative. It highlights three main aspects of hope: its conceptual perspectives (Chapter 2), its contextual perspectives (Chapter 3), and its practical perspectives (Chapter 4). The first aspect presents, in detail, the theme of hope as a *concept* so as to point out how it was interpreted in various spheres of influence particularly, in this case, philosophy (Ernst Bloch), pedagogy (Paulo Freire) and theology (Jürgen Moltmann). The second aspect presents some examples of the *contexts* in which the concept of hope finds relevance. These contexts are dynamic and are explored through the works and viewpoints of three scholars, namely Walter Brueggemann, Russel Botman and Jerome Groopman. The third aspect of hope as detailed in the literature review looks at the theory of the *practice* of hope by presenting it as a paradigm for community empowerment and improved wellbeing. In this regard, the findings generated by the review of literature can be summarised as follows:

### 7.2.1. The role of hope (cf. Chapter 2)

According to Ernst Bloch, hope is idealistic and its role or function is either revolutionary or reactionary. It is revolutionary when it plays a proactive role; it is reactionary when it plays a reactive role. As it were, proactivity is a better approach to development practice than reactivity. Thus, Bloch encourages the revolutionary function of hope because it empowers. In other words, the Blochian perspective provides pointers to the source of hope (either *dystopia* or *eutopia*) and the function of hope (either reactionary or revolutionary). When sourced from dystopia, Bloch argues that hope is either passive or abstract. When sourced from eutopia, idealistic hope is either active or concrete.

According to Paulo Freire, hope is liberating and, therefore, its role is to humanise both the oppressor and the oppressed. The best way of bringing hope to a person is through education. Thus, the education system must liberate. Freire indicates that hope is a necessary educational tool for building critical consciousness, confronting dehumanisation tendencies and engaging in dialogue. As such, education brings hope to those for whom shame and pain are their lived experiences. The Freirean thought was sectioned in three subdivisions: first, humanisation, which is the act through which Freire argues that hope is built by breaking the cycle of oppression thereby humanising both the oppressor and the oppressed; (ii) *conscientização*, which is an attempt to develop hope through a kind of critical consciousness that has the power to transform reality; (iii) dialogue, which involves mutual respect, mutual understanding and mutual transformation.

Moltmann does not see hope as a quiet, internal expectation of an unseen future good associated with a God who stands outside of history and this world; a God who brings a kind of inner peace to the saved but which makes no difference to the real world. Instead, he sees hope as a life-giving, liberating and world-transforming force born from “the eschatological perspective of the divine promise in Christ for the Kingdom of God” (Moltmann, 2009:86). Here, Moltmann’s view entails a future-oriented life informed by the promise of the Kingdom of God. As Moltmann sees it, faith transforms a person spiritually in such a way that a new identity is formed. For him, hope fills the person with “a spirit for life” and “a passion for what is possible” (Moltmann, 2009:87-98).

According to Jürgen Moltmann, hope is eschatological and therefore its role is to open the horizons of the future and make “a closed existence” possible on the basis of the future of Christ. For Moltmann, the church is a gathering of people who experience hope in the God who is present in His unfailing promises. That is, hope is not only a form of comfort when in suffering because God is the power of the future. Rather, hope is best understood within the bounds of the life of Christ, particularly with reference to his resurrection and his future. Moltmann’s thought was divided in four dualisms: (i) realised hope and the fulfilled hope – where realised hope is present-focused; that is, we experience it in time (here and now). Fulfilled hope is heaven-bound; that is, we will achieve it in eternity (when time ends). The second dualism is (ii) Objective hope and subjective hope – where hope finds its objectivity in Christ who is “the hope of glory”, and it is subjective when it lies in the persuasions of a human being. The third dualism of hope is (iii) essential hope and existential hope – where hope is essential when it is established on the resurrection of Christ while it is existential when it is established on humanity. The last dualism of hope is (iv) its *missio* and its *promissio* – where the role of hope is missional, and founded on the unfailing promises of God.

### 7.2.2. The meaning of hope (cf. Chapter 3)

According to Brueggemann, hope is meaningful in historical context. The function of its meaning is seen in guilt, in fate, and in meaninglessness. The setting of its meaning is evident throughout the Old Testament, within the church as a new context for ministry, and in a Christian believer as a new opportunity for mission. The enemies of its meaning are characterised by fear, which is apparent in the silent majority, the vocal minority, and the sponsored fellows. The function of hope in history is the purpose of God for humanity, as He wants humanity to be hope-filled. Hope functions within the contexts of historical events, and its setting in history is the context within which the church operates and encounters a new context for ministry. The enemies of hope in history are subdivided into three main parts: the *silent majority* who accept the *status quo* however unethical due to experienced subjugation; the *vocal minority* who have a more dominant voice but defend the dehumanising system in place since it favours them, and the *sponsored fellows* who are members of the oppressed community but are blinded by the opulence of the vocal minority, of which they benefit through sponsorships or any other form of support.

According to Botman, hope is meaningful in a “kairotic” context. Its primacy is contextual at the right time, and for the right reason. Botman strongly advocates for a *kairos* of dread to bring about the currency of contextual hope. That is, hope ought to be contextual within the time we live in so as to ably confront the fears that thwart human participation in the transformation process. Botman finds that this is a call for the church to move from the *status confessionis* approach and declare a *processus confessionis*, which allows for actual engagement as one acts towards dealing with pressing issues than merely confessing them as evil. Botman’s position on the economic status of today’s world and its relation to human hope is such that the answer to economic injustice in this global market economy is for the church to witness against the systemically uneven distribution of economic goods in the world.

As for Groopman, hope is meaningful in medical context. Here, hope “gives back life” by exerting positive neurological effects into the patients. It was also established that hope is an essential component of treatment because of the new energy that it brings. This new energy is a force that stimulates the morale of patients or the person whose wellbeing is fading. Thus, it is medically proven that hope gives meaning and direction to life when in a situation of suffering. In this way, hope can help people live better and/or longer.

### 7.2.3. The place of hope in the development discourse (cf. Chapter 4)

The place of hope in development is evidenced in the premise that before there is development, there is hope for development. It is this hope for development that propels a person to act in an attempt to attain what he/she hopes for. The same applies in a traditional setting. In traditional Africa, for example, hope for healing is experienced and practiced within the multi-varied interpretations of health. A traditional African would put his/her beliefs into practice in an attempt to attain the hoped-for.

The practice of hope is even more evident in the experiences of refugee migrants. Despite the fact that the refugee phenomenon has dire implications on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants, refugees conjugate their efforts with the aim of improving their wellbeing. Their hope for the future propels them to be active in the midst of the challenges they face on a daily basis. The correlates of illness and hope for healing in a traditional African society are highlighted in this research amongst other things.

The following is a summary of the findings from Chapter 6, which presented a detailed account of the participants' lived experiences as narrated during the fieldwork.

#### 7.2.4. The challenges refugee migrants face

Refugee migrants emigrate in quest of that which they need most, particularly freedom and dignity. These two are essential for survival, and without them, the human self is reduced to 'nobodiness'. The challenges that refugee migrants experience in South Africa are manifold such that they are often considered as sub-humans by a certain portion of the local population.

The findings of the research further reveal that refugee migrants struggle to integrate in the country because the South African government does not make space for their integration. That is, there is no official structure or programme that addresses or provides means for refugees' integration. The difficulties associated with the integration of refugee migrants in the South African society illustrate the contradictions inherent in the country's official position towards refugee migrants. Within the framework of the policies of the government and its actual practices, refugee migrants in Cape Town as well as many other cities, can be seen as the 'others' that cannot and should not be part of what is perceived as the 'nationals'. Yet, the presence of refugee migrants is not entirely unwanted by South Africa because they make money and spend it in the country and thus contribute to its economic activities.

While it could be argued that the amount of money spent by refugee migrants is not significant to the overall South African economy, it is of assistance to a substantial number of South Africans. In a country where unemployment and inflation are major problems, money spent by refugee migrants on rental fees is a source of income to a sizeable number of South African property-owners in various neighbourhoods. In many cases, this monthly income is a needed supplement to the salaries of these property-owners. Moreover, owners of small businesses such as cheap internet cafés are able to profit from the refugees' use of the internet for affordable and regular contact with their family members back home.

Refugee migrants often "hope against hope" despite the fact that prevailing circumstances of their 'refugeeness' do not give any reason to do so, or though there are no rational grounds for it. Empowering refugees with hope, therefore, is pivotal to building their capacity and ensuring their improved wellbeing. Refugee migrants are subjected to high level of exploitation and suffer xenophobia while they lead precarious lives. Local authorities have

not been involved constructively to resolve refugees' problems, and the political response often goes from benign negligence to active hostility.

### 7.2.5. The impacts of the refugee experience on health and wellbeing

The arrival of refugees in the new country creates a number of challenges to various parties: the hosting country, the producing country and the international community among whom are the organisations that regulate the rights and obligations of refugees. Of all the challenges that refugee migrants face in South Africa, the very first are access to accommodation, food and healthcare services. These they face from the very first hours of their arrival in the hosting country. Their situation becomes even more complex because refugees are exposed to various diseases during their flight and upon arrival in the hosting country. To afford the monthly rental payment, most refugee migrants share their living space in a block of flats so they can evenly share the cost. Often, they live in numbers and share "public" toilets. This has negative impacts on their health. Most refugee migrants keep a positive state of mind, which is resultant of hope, despite the condition of their physical health.

The majority of the current refugee population in Cape Town has similar educational and occupational background albeit in the informal sector. Their current life in South Africa is greatly limited in legal, social, economic and educational rights and resources. As coping mechanisms, they make use of complex structures involving relational (e.g. familial, community-based, etc.) networking and strategies. They are an integral part of transnational families and sub-communities that have very strong economic and social ties to one another. For them, mobility and establishing families is, to some extent, part of a process of integrating in the mainstream South African society. In other words, improving health and wellbeing is an on-going strategy of life by refugee migrants for seeking integration in the South African society.

In addition, this research explored the link between refugees' wellbeing and the socio-economic development of South Africa. It was found that refugee migrants send high volumes of remittances back to their countries, which has the potential to contribute to the development of their countries of origin. Secondly, refugees' labour and self-employment is instrumental to the economic development of South Africa. Finally, the city of Cape Town, which is one of the economic engines of South Africa, has a high concentration of refugee migrants. They

contribute exceptionally to the development of the city and even of the entire country. However, xenophobia and its consequential violent attacks produce instability, which is detrimental to the image of the country and, ultimately, affect the trust of investors and the economic development of the nation. In other words, the ill-treatment of refugee migrants and the discriminatory attitudes against them has the propensity to cost the country socially and economically. Thus, not only can such events have potentially negative impacts on South Africa's development, they also jeopardise the security and wellbeing of both refugee migrants and the hosting community.

### 7.2.6. The role and meaning of health/wellbeing

Considering that refugees build strong social networks as coping mechanism, they do not often need help for their emotional problems. This suggests that those with any kind of social network are already getting emotional support from friends or elsewhere, and that social networks bring hope for healing. These findings provide pointers to the fact that refugees' social networks are therapeutic as they are positively associated with their emotional health.

Victims of xenophobic violence or any physical or verbal attack indicated that they were less healthy. This is unsurprising given that most refugees do not seek medical attention after such attacks not even professional counselling. When xenophobic violence erupts, refugee migrants either run to a police station or relocate to a new setting. The government often asks them to return to their homes without any form of professional counselling provided. Such an approach by the government is a hindrance to refugees' perpetual quest for integration in the mainstream South African society.

Those with financial problems said that they were not in good health. This means, the greater their financial problems, the more likely they were to have health problems because they would not afford the medical expenses. Here, good health is associated with satisfaction with life and the quality of life one leads in South Africa. It could be argued, therefore, that migrating forcibly every so often (i.e. refugees are forced to migrate from their countries of origin, and they are forced to "migrate" or relocate whenever there is xenophobic violence, or whenever life appears difficult in one hosting country or city of residence) has a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the migrant. The number of times that individuals had moved is, in other words, significantly associated with their state of health. Those who have

moved the least can be said to be healthier than those who have moved the most. This tells us that stability and security have affective dimensions on wellbeing. They appear to be critical for good health.

### 7.2.7. Healthcare services and identified health needs/challenges

Active treatment such as medication provision was well received. Blood tests and body check-ups were mostly uncommon and often viewed as stressful and expensive. Patients were often frustrated by the care they received from the health officials. Nevertheless, refugees' practice of hope is characteristically marked by activity, courage and resilience. Thus, refugee migrants should not be considered as a threat but as agents of holistic development in the hosting country. As such, most refugee migrants trade informally, and their small businesses seem to prove effective and a valuable means to improve their wellbeing in the face of challenges.

It was found that the use of empowerment by hope as a theological framework within the discipline of Theology and Development makes it an appropriate tool for Practical Theology in that it actuates and therefore applies the ethos of Christology. In this way, the church is to use an empowerment by hope programme as an expression of integral mission, which is also a response to the needs of the marginalised as well as the reason for practicing Theology and Development.

These results provide valuable insights into how refugee migrants in Cape Town experience healthcare services in South Africa. In addition, lessons were learnt about the process of research with refugee communities and the use of KII and FGDs. This use of multiple methods produced a diversity of data. The larger FGD in which the participants were more familiar with each other brought out more lively discussions and negative comments about care received. The interviews revealed private insights into health issues. Society leaders within the focus groups added further cultural perspectives.

Many participants had questions about problems with their healthcare. These were answered although this limited time for the scheduled questions. Flexibility about the topics enabled issues of greatest concern to participants to be brought up spontaneously. Participants would not have brought up the difficulties with accessing health services without this flexibility. Some participants greatly valued the openness of the discussion to give their concerns a more powerful voice. Access to health services is indispensable to the survival of

all including refugee migrants. However, the difficulties in coping with the new environment and the inconvenience of getting the asylum and refugee permits from the DHA may worsen the situation leading to emotional disturbances, illness or deterioration in health.

## 7.3. Applicability of Empowerment by Hope in Theology and Development

We live in a world with extreme and urgent needs (cf. Ajulu, 2001:99; Myers, 1999:57-90). The pressing issues we are facing include food shortages, diseases, poverty, unemployment, ecological destruction and climate change, and transnational migration, particularly the refugee phenomenon. In this globalised world, those needs are always with us, and we have a responsibility to respond to them, which requires that we refocus our attention to the centrality of hope in Theology and Development. As it were, hope is a central theological tenet, which has been shown to provoke acts of liberation, of lifting up the suffering, including the downtrodden and marginalised, of healing and reconciliation. There is, therefore, the need for Theology and Development to focus on the binary of hope and empowerment, considering that divine activities aim to uphold the wellbeing and defend the dignity of humanity. This is because Theology and Development revolves around the empowerment of a human person to ensure improved wellbeing. This further explains the pre-eminence of empowerment by hope in Practical Theology and its place within Theology and Development.<sup>130</sup>

### 7.3.1. Empowerment by Hope as an expression of integral mission

God's mission (*missio Dei*) is about the realisation of God's vision (*visio Dei*) through the proclamation of God's word (*verbum Dei*) to the world (WCC, 2012). In the words of Prophet Isaiah (cf. Isaiah 65:17–25), God's vision of the world is that of a world in which "God rejoices because there shall no more be the sound of weeping or the cry of distress". It is a world in

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<sup>130</sup> In this way, human dignity is affirmed and defended in empowerment by hope (cf. Moltmann, 1971:34). Thus empowerment by hope witnesses prophetically to the values of God's Kingdom (Moltmann, 1996:53; see also Section 2.4.2). All this reveals another dimension to Jesus' ministry on earth: his power to include people, even sinners, in the messianic fellowship that he established, and to empower them to participate in his mission (cf. Section 3.3.2). This would ensure refugee migrants actuate their hope through participatory and responsive community action in the face of their seemingly deplorable conditions of refugeeness.

which “people shall not die young” and where “people build houses and live in them, and enjoy the fruits of their labour”. In such a world, “people will not die of calamities” and “the aggressors are transformed so that all shall live in peace”. The hope for such a world is active and missional as Botman (2001:42; see also Section 3.3.1) suggests. It actively and constantly breaks into our present, inviting us to become co-workers with God. Thus, empowerment by hope as *missio Dei* is integral and inclusive. It upholds the sanctity and integrity of the entire creation of God.

The church partakes in the *missio Dei* by proclaiming the gospel in words and deeds (cf. René Padilla, 2002:31). According to Morisy (1997:125), globalisation leaves people “powerless to resist its momentum”. This explains why it is the prerogative of the church to respond to the needs of “those whom the global economy leaves behind” (Morisy, 1997:125; see also Section 3.3.1). Most refugees live in situations of poverty and powerlessness and, therefore, their lives express a constant struggle (See Section 4.6.3.3). The church has to ensure that integral mission is carried out. It is vital, in this regard, to understand that “evangelism and social action are inseparable”, which explains why the church is required to do theology socially by caring for those in need (Chester, 2009:65). Generally, the gist of refugees’ narratives in this research provides pointers to the evidence that hope plays a major role in refugees’ empowerment, which further indicates the need for the church to make empowerment by hope a part of its integral mission. As it were, the research has further revealed that refugee migrants find themselves in very poor health and in need of medical assistance from the very first days of their arrival in their new setting. Here, the church is to reflect on how the binary of hope and empowerment is detailed in their lived experiences based on the narratives about their health and wellbeing (cf. Sections 6.4 & 6.5).

Hope is presented as a theological lens through which to engage the empowerment of the most marginalised in the society. This is reminiscent of the fact that, “a human life that begins to flow from the heart of God will not be content with the injustice in the world which keeps people in poverty”, as Hughes (1998:154) indicates. In other words, a faith community particularly the church should not only tell refugees that Jesus came to set the oppressed free, or that he came to open the eyes of the blind, or even that he came to declare the year of God’s favour, etc. (cf. Luke 4:18, 19). Rather, it needs to be contextual and practical at the same time, which is the essence of empowerment by hope or “hope in action” as theorised by Botman

(2001:43; cf. Section 3.3; Section 4.5). Without such practical measures, our acts of empowerment by hope will amount to naught and those living in dire situations of poverty such as refugee migrants will not understand the love of God.

Here, the church witnesses to God's plan and purpose by participating in the *missio Dei* of empowerment by hope. This is applied Christology – following the ministry of Christ who came to empower people with hope by serving rather than being served (cf. Mark 10:45). The power of such missional hope supersedes that of principalities (cf. Section 4.3). It makes human life possible and all its challenges bearable (McGeer, 2008:237). Thus, empowerment by hope is a fundamental part of the *missio Dei* and, as such, it should be reflected in all the different expressions of what it means to be church. This is because a Christian perspective of empowerment is the actuation of hope through the *missio Dei* (cf. Section 3.3.2 & Section 2.4.2).

Brueggemann (2001:105) indicates that “despair is the defining mark of the context for church mission in the twenty-first century”, thus, the end of a missional church in this age is to bring hope to the despairing world. Taking Brueggemann's reflection further, Botman (2001:70) finds that translating hope into action is an act of mission and, thus, “a theological grounding to become meaningful” in this globalised century. This indicates the need for the church in South Africa to practically make space for marginalised refugees because putting hope into action is a strong basis in the quest for meaning (cf. Section 1.7.2.1). In this research, refugees proved that putting hope into action remains connected to the nature and function of the church as they constantly manifest the virtue of patience in their waiting in hope amid the seemingly deplorable conditions they find themselves in.

Considering that empowerment by hope is a necessary perspective within Theology and Development for holistic development, the indication constitutes a central premise of this study. This is because, as indicated in the previous paragraph, empowerment by hope is a lens through which holistic development can be viewed and achieved. This lens awakes the church to a renewed response to the needs of the marginalised and specifically to the refugee migrants. For the church, Swart (2010:249; see also Section 2.3.2; Section 4.3) argues that holistic development starts with empowerment and critical consciousness of the less privileged, which is of essence for Theology and Development.

It is God's desire that "social structures reflect and promote justice, peace, sharing, and free participation for the well-being of all" (Bragg 1987:39). This 'free participation' that benefits all entails partaking in God's activity and allowing the individual other to partake in the activities of the self. The mission of the church is integral because such is the mission of God or *missio Dei*. Integral mission is, therefore, active involvement or participation in the mission of God, at the heart of which resides God's eternal plan of reconciling humanity to Himself. The church is sent out to carry out this task and, thus, partake in the *missio Dei* through integral mission. This partaking in God's mission integrally is the central focus of empowerment by hope. As it were, one would contend that empowerment by hope is the very nature of God and it is Trinitarian. God sent Jesus to reconcile humanity to Himself; and Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as a helper to believers upon his ascension. The first act of God to reconcile humanity to Himself is seen in Genesis when He sought for Adam after the Fall. It was the first initiative of God to empower humanity with hope in an attempt to restore His own image. In this regard, there is coherence between empowerment by hope, *missio Dei* and *imago Dei*.

The church with an empowerment by hope consciousness is a church that partakes in the *missio Dei*. As such, it is an agent through which the *imago Dei* could be restored in Christ. That is to say, the church's mandate is to restore the originality of God's image that had been marred by sin, which signals its agency. In the context of this research, the agency role of the church in empowerment by hope is to conscientise, mobilise, strategise, and implement change in the lives of refugee migrants while the agency role of the refugees themselves is to establish an adequate, appropriate and emphatic response that leads to their own empowerment.

Every Christian community is called to witness to God's transforming grace through acts that hold forth the promise of God's reign by putting hope into action (Botman, 2001:103; cf. Section 2.3.3). When put into action, hope heals relationships and nurtures partnerships for the sake of *missio Dei* to the world. The purpose of God for the world is integral. In other words, *missio Dei* is integral (WCC, 2012). Thus, in bringing refugee migrants and the hosting community together around issues pertaining to the health and wellbeing of refugees, a focus on empowerment by hope would make the church practically stand out as an instrument of hope in terms of refugees' health and wellbeing. Thus, empowerment by hope is applied Christology, and it is affirmed for its role in meeting human needs in situations of crisis (cf.

Moltmann, 1967:25; cf. Section 2.4.3) and advancing the kingdom of God. In this regard, empowerment by hope is a missional expression of faith, which is contextual and adaptable.

### 7.3.2. Empowerment by Hope as a response to the needs of the marginalised

The church is called to respond to the needs of those in need; those endangered by poverty; those dehumanised by the structures; those at the margin of the society; and not being like the silent majority (Section 3.2.3.1; see also Section 1.7.2.2). According to Bowers-du Toit (2015:523, 524) responding to their needs is not an act of goodwill; it rather “remains a justice issue not a charity issue”. This can also be said of the refugee phenomenon in South Africa, which is characterised by poverty and marginalisation. Thus, as the church acts in response to the socio-economic needs of refugee migrants, it should do so with the aim of correcting the prevailing unjust structures.

Bowers-du Toit (2015:524) further notes that it is important that the church assist in bridging the socio-economic divide in South Africa today just as it did in opposing the socio-economic ills of the *apartheid* system. In other words, the church has a responsibility in resisting the structures and systems that make any layer of the social fabric feel dehumanised. This is one of the ways refugee migrants can “rise and walk on two legs” (cf. Bowers-du Toit, 2015:521). As it were, enabling the disadvantaged to rise up on their own feet so they can walk by themselves is the essence of empowerment by hope. In this study, the disadvantaged layer of the social fabric is the refugee community but the concept of empowerment by hope is devised in such a way that it can be a theological paradigm for putting hope into action in response to the pressing issues facing humanity (cf. Section 4.3).

Additionally, empowerment by hope is a response to the needs of the less privileged in the society, including those in situations of crisis (cf. Section 2.3.1). It is a praxical perspective of doing Practical Theology so as to reach the disadvantaged, the marginalised and those pushed to the periphery of life by the prevailing system, with the message of hope. Here, the idea is, when a church uses an empowerment by hope approach in its ministry to the marginalised in society, it reaches out to who they are as a people created in the *imago Dei* and, in so doing, restores their dignity. Often, some church initiatives that begin with the intention

of serving those in need become instruments of benefitting the privileged and affluent layer of the society (WCC, 2012). As Anna Nieman (2010:39) puts it, “development programmes can help people regain their dignity”. As such, responding to the needs of refugee migrants can be done in various ways including anonymously by way of donations or otherwise. This is *sine qua non* for the church since it is an expression of integral mission. In the South African context, the church has a mandate “to the important task of repairing the injustices of the past” and “restoring” hope through healing [by redefining] itself as a priestly community, reaching out to strangers such as refugee migrants, and bringing sacrifices of restorative justice (Thesnaar, 2010:103).

In the same vein, service to refugee migrants is hardly the objective of most Christian institutions today because the overpowering culture of globalisation with its emphasis on profit-making and consumerism has introduced new meanings to participatory servanthood and integral mission (Keshebo, 2011:35). This results in the co-option of the traditional biblical servanthood with the structures of global activities so as to meet the socio-economic demands and interests of globalisation (Botman, 2007:43; McGeer, 2008:254; cf. Section 3.3.3). Owing to this trend, reaching out to those disempowered by social, political and economic structures such as refugee migrants does not seem a priority for some churches anymore (WCC, 2012). Empowerment by hope is, however, integral since the *missio Dei*, the *visio Dei* and the *verbum Dei* all remain integral. This provides pointers to the fact that faith communities, particularly the church, need to advocate for refugees’ rights especially their rights to healthcare services within both the global and local context.

Refugee migrants, through their lived experiences and everyday resilience, put hope into practice in their small and diverse ways (cf. Section 6.3.3). In so doing, one can say that they hold the church accountable for its silence and/or passivity. God opts for the lowly and marginalised (that is, those living at the margins of society, such as refugee migrants) not because they are weak by choice, nor because of His caring and protective consideration, but because their lives signal the social need for empowerment and transformation (cf. Section 2.2.2.2.). The world tends to see the margins as places of disgrace and powerlessness (Evans, 2008:2). This is why empowerment by hope suggests that God is always present in the struggles of those unjustly pushed to the margins of society. As such, it is a biblical witness that gives account of God’s caring love to people in situations of marginalisation and its consequential

deprivation of resources (WCC, 2012). One can assert, therefore, that God hears the outcry of refugee migrants and responds through the ministry of the church. He upholds and accompanies them as they journey towards dignity, humanisation and improved wellbeing in hope (cf. Botman, 2014:35; Freire, 1998:46; Moltmann, 1971:53). This is empowerment by hope – a *diakonia* of liberation and restoration; a *missio Dei* of hope and human dignity.

The findings of this research indicate that the life of an ordinary refugee migrant in Cape Town is characteristically that of a disempowered person due to the various challenges refugees encounter on a daily basis. However, the seeming disempowerment does not deter them from accomplishing what they hope to be or what they hope to achieve. Their resolve to survive against all odds is the result of the resilience of hope (Section 2.2.2; Section 4.4.2). The earthly ministry of Jesus exemplified empowerment by hope in that Jesus came to set free the oppressed, open the eyes of the blind and heal the sick. In other words, he came to empower the disempowered with sustainable hope. He spent time seeking the lost and making friends with the least. He constantly located himself among the marginalised of his time. Thus, doing theology “the Jesus way” entails rejecting the prevailing logic of power, defying oppressive religious traditions and even restoring those who are denied life in every aspect of the word (cf. Moltmann, 1969:24). Jesus, thus, exposed and confronted the forces of marginalisation at social, economic and even political levels. This partly explains why the margins are the privileged spaces for God’s compassion and justice, and a chosen place of God’s presence in vulnerability and struggle (René Padilla, 2002:64). At the margins, the sick are healed; the domination of evil spirits is broken; the dignity of the marginalised is defended and restored (WCC, 2012). In brief, those living at the margins of society are empowered with hope even as the church is vested with life-affirming values for ministry.

Refugee migrants are not to be seen always and only as a desperate people in need of humanitarian assistance. They resist injustice and oppression in their own ways as proven in the findings (cf. Section 6.6.2.) and, in many ways, their struggle for improved wellbeing testifies to the presence and power of God in their lives (cf. Botman, 2004:24) which is an agency role within their own refugee community. This is why the church needs to side with them in such a struggle in order to challenge systems that deny them the basics of life in the name of national interests. The church has new possibilities of doing theology the Jesus way.

An empowerment by hope perspective is, therefore, crucial for church's engagement in realising *visio Dei* – God's vision for the world (cf. Section 3.3.2).

From a theological perspective, the language of marginalised people may be conceived as a way of labelling or of reducing people to victims of systems and structures (cf. Brueggemann, 1987:42; WCC, 2012; Evans, 2008:43). The many cases of refugee migrants have proven such victimisation by the systems and structures albeit unofficially (cf. Section 6.5.2). This is why the church needs to acknowledge the destructive and dehumanising power of such structures and translate them into an opportunity for hope through empowerment by hope (cf. Section 3.3.3.). In a world where people are treated as objects or commodities and mistreated on account of their identity such as sexuality, background, race, etc. (cf. Ajulu, 2001:64; Myers, 1999:131; Samuel & Sugden, 1987:177), the church would use empowerment by hope to build up the whole of a person, affirm the dignity of all people and transform practices of the self that discriminate and abuse the other.

The convenience of empowerment by hope in Theology and Development could be affirmed even in the way it has the ability to offer alternatives to a system of forces that deny improved wellbeing and human dignity to the marginalised refugees (Groopman, 2004:45; see also Section 3.4.2). For many churches this is a demanding challenge but even more a liberating promise for renewing traditional ways of doing theology in practice as Jesus did. It is a promise of living out the religion after which Christ followers are named. Jesus found himself among the marginalised of his time and he started his ministry on earth so as to empower them with hope. A majority of Christian congregations around the world are made up of people who are mostly poor and marginalised on account of several factors, and this reality needs to be seen as an opportunity and a resource for a more authentic engagement with the society (McDonald & Stephenson, 2010:32). This will verify the credibility of the claim of the church's participation in the *missio Dei*.

Additionally, to participate in empowerment by hope is to be actively involved in God's initiative of restoring his image, which is inherently "the ecclesial duty of being a witness" to borrow the words of Ajulu (2001:45) when referring to stewardship. This may involve going all over the world to proclaim, with perfect relevance, the redemptive work of Christ and God's justice to all the nations. It may also involve *diakonia*; that is, serving God through acts of

service to the other, which is one of the ways to instil hope to them (cf. Chung, 2014:306; see also Section 1.7.2.1). The famous Great Commission (cf. Matthew 28:19) is, in this regard, a holistic commission. The “go ye therefore” of the Great Commission is here seen as a movement of the self to go ‘out there’ and be a part of the *missio Dei* in restoring the *imago Dei*.

Empowerment by hope in the context of the Great Commission is what I would call the “holistic commission”. This is because it explains the migration of the self out of their comfort zone into the world to faithfully meet the holistic needs of the other, which is of essence to Theology and Development. In this regard, the ecclesial perspective of Theology and Development challenges human structures and tendencies that dehumanise the other. When God moves into the world, He uses the community of faith as an agent to carry out His divine plan. The church therefore exists because of this divine plan. Thus, integral mission can be viewed as our active involvement in God’s plan to bring about sustainable hope where the church is an agent of hope empowering the world in despair with sustainable hope.

### 7.3.3. Empowerment by Hope as a theological praxis

In the theory and practice of Theology and Development, one would say that empowerment by hope is an additional lens through which to view development practices (cf. Section 4.2.1). It is, therefore, not a replacement of existing approaches to development. As an integral part of the church, one finds that the concept of empowerment by hope resonates with human action. While the commitment to justice becomes even more necessary, it rests on the confidence in God’s saving power and in the gift of reconciliation in Christ, both in its vertical and horizontal dimensions (WCC, 2012). Jesus’ ministry was inclusive and holistic. It broke down boundaries to include everyone – even those who were regarded as enemies like the Samaritans. Through Theology and Development, the church reaches out to those whose dignity is at stake and brings them into the community of faith for a protection in the sanctuary. This restores their dignity and makes them realise they are also a part of the *imago Dei*.

Empowerment by hope, then, is service that makes the celebration of life possible for all (cf. Freire, 1998:24; 1994:42). It is faith-producing change, transforming people and situations so that God’s reign may be real in the lives of all people, in the here and now. The God of the Bible seeks and effects change in concrete situations of life, especially of those who

are denied the same. Therefore, empowerment by hope as an action in God's love endeavours to transform people, systems and cultures just as Jesus did in challenging unjust systems and practices, and calling the powerful and privileged who benefit from such to repent and be transformed (cf. Section 4.4.2; WCC, 2012).

In addition to the agency role played by the people themselves, empowerment by hope is about equipping people with the skills, the knowledge and/or the expertise that will enable them to provide for themselves whatever they are in need of (cf. Section 4.3; 4.4.1). However, this does not rule out the material. For instance, empowering refugee migrants with the skill to plough, it is appropriate to give them adequate tools for cultivation. Also, empowering them with the knowledge or skill of animal husbandry, it is fittingly practical to make available all that is necessary for shepherding. It is all about creating conducive environment for sustainable self-empowerment, in view of the fact that the ultimate goal of sustainable development by hope is self-sustenance.

In this regard, when using an empowerment by hope approach in ministry one would not be limited to 'binding the wounds' of the marginalised refugees only or doing acts of compassion toward them alone. This is why Swart (2013:3) observes that the church is purposed to "participate in the struggle for liberation and for a just society". In other words, the church needs to support and even encourage "[t]he campaigns of the people" when they fight for liberation (Swart, 2013:5). Swart's statements here allude to the fact that the church is a praxical body. While such expressions of love are necessary, they should not rule out the resolve and determinations to confront and transform the forces and factors that cause suffering and deprivation in the refugee community (cf. Section 2.3.3). Here, empowerment by hope involves both comforting the victim and confronting "the powers and principalities" (cf. Ephesians 6:12). It is aimed to heal both the victim and the victimiser. Thus, it is a revolutionary spirituality and a commitment for the transformation of corrupt social structures (cf. Freire 1998:36).

In this regard, refugee migrants need not sit down and wait for development agents do the work for them or empower them with hope. Throughout this thesis, it has been demonstrated that refugee migrants use hope as a resource to empower themselves. That is an agency role played by refugee migrants to improve their own health and wellbeing. In other

words, refugee migrants play an agency role in the quest for improved wellbeing even with minimal resources and support. In doing so, they support each other in various way according to their ability. Theirs is a life of hope; a life of complete agency. Thus, empowerment by hope is not only about development agents doing things for refugees in order to give them hope but also about refugee migrants doing things for themselves with the aim of empowering themselves. Here, Thesnaar (2010:101) speaking from the perspective of restorative justice, points out that “(c)hurches require a ‘doing theology’ based on the love and grace of Christ in order to be able to participate in the challenges of society”. It is this ‘doing theology’ that allows the church to empower and assist the less privileged in empowering themselves.

In today’s world, an empowerment by hope approach may also imply confronting unjust systems. This could mean, questioning policies that do not protect people; challenging immigration regulations that deny migrants certain rights to improve their health and wellbeing; and even opposing development policies that destroy the earth and its people (Botman, 2006:53; cf. Section 6.5.2; cf. Tamas, 1999:43). It may also imply social action aimed at dismantling oppressive cultures such as patriarchy, racism, classism, xenophobia and other discriminatory and exclusionary practices (cf. Botman, 2004:24; Freire, 1998:75; 1997:43). The church needs to repent for the presence and practice of these practices and for their ironic attitudes and/or theological constructions that stigmatise certain sections of the social fabric such as the refugee migrants (Moltmann, 1967:55; WCC, 2012). This is why using an empowerment by hope approach allows the development agent to not merely resist evil but to also confront it by getting involved actively. To that extent, empowerment by hope is transformational and, therefore, a pillar within the discipline of Theology and Development.

In this regard, the community of faith ought to make known and defend the universal relevance of hope due to “the common human experience of suffering and the dangers [of hopelessness] that it brings forth” (Hryniewicz, 2007:68). It is this universality that makes hope a quality of life that no social group can claim its rightful ownership. Refugee migrants in this research have provided pointers that hope is experienced from within and reaches the depths of human soul, which is in line with the claim of Bielawski (2007:24) that hope resides in the inward self but changes even the outward self. Similarly, Tinder (1999:13) finds that hope is a “necessity” and, therefore, as necessary as light and air to human life. The lived experiences of

refugee migrants in this research have demonstrated this claim. In this respect, “no single tradition is the designated custodian of hope” as Brueggemann (2002:102) conclusively asserts.

With regard to the refugee phenomenon, one could argue that it is the presence of hope rather than the absence of it that keeps refugees going despite their increased vulnerability and undignified treatments they often receive in the hosting country (cf. Section 6.7.2). It is hope that exerts patience as they expectantly wait for a better tomorrow on a daily basis (cf. Section 3.4.1). It is from this practical point of view that Brueggemann (2002:102) describes hope as “a distinctive mark of faith with dangerous and revolutionary social potential”. Here, Brueggemann implies that hope and faith are closely related. Refugee migrants could be seen to practice hope as an alternative coping mechanism within the bounds of faith. In this regard, Hryniewicz (2007:9) observes that the existential nature of hope is universal since it “lives in all and is for all”.

The understanding of empowerment by hope from the context of the refugee phenomenon has to be based on the premise that, the church ceases to be church once it ceases to be a church after the *missio Dei* (cf. Bosch 1991). Like the *imago Dei*, the *missio Dei* involves both vertical and horizontal relationships between the self and God or between the self and the other. In this regard, empowerment by hope translates the attitude of God towards humanity into service towards the other. Such is the agency role of the self towards refugee migrants, but also of refugee migrants towards their fellow migrants. In this prospect, empowerment by hope is, to use the words of Bevans and Schroeder (2004), a “constant in context”.

Moreover, empowerment by hope is participatory because it has a holistic approach. August (2010) affirms this when he observes that the followers of Jesus Christ who engage in social action should never choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger, or between healing bodies and saving souls; the love of God (*agapé*) should lead the Christian to serve holistically. In the same vein, Bosch (1991) points out that a paradigm shift is always part of a series of previous shifts that lead to new opportunities. Here, integral mission becomes the transformational practice of God through the church. In respect of this paradigm shift, I would argue that empowerment by hope gives Theology and Development a cutting-edge by placing the biblical reality with perfect relevance in our everyday context. This biblical reality

makes church ministry to find resonance in the refugee phenomenon, and provides refugee migrants practical tools to be agents of hope within their own community.

### 7.3.4. Empowerment by Hope as a transforming practice in response to the health and wellbeing challenges

Despite the struggles, dangers and health problems refugee migrants encounter, a great number of them are encouraged by resilience and empowered by hope as they long for a better future. Although in most cases the refugee phenomenon exposes failures and shortcomings of national policies (cf. Section 6.3.2), it also provides pointers to the hope of the human self to experience a unity marked by acceptance of and respect for differences in addition to the protection of human dignity (cf. Section 4.4.1). We entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century aware of the challenges facing the African continent. Among these challenges are deadly diseases and various other life-threatening ordeals (cf. Section 4.4.2). They affect our unswerving hope and lead to feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness in the world (cf. Botman, 2001:43; see also Section 6.4.3). However, hope is a distinctive mark of human life through which refugee migrants are energised as revealed by respondents in this research in the face of health and wellbeing challenges (cf. Groopman, 2004:21; see also Section 3.2.1 & Section 6.6.2). In this way, empowerment by hope is a key approach for addressing the question of ill health in the refugee community as previously mentioned in Section 3.2.

Because hope recognises the obstacles and pitfalls encountered on the path to achieve the hoped-for, refugee migrants have the right to hope. Empowerment by hope is here a framework to nourish hope in those with health and wellbeing challenges (cf. Section 3.4). In this regard, Jerome Groopman (2004:14), notes that if the doctor doubts his/her own ability to hope, he/she takes away any opportunity for the patient to hope. In the same way, if the church does not use empowerment by hope as a framework for engagement with refugee migrants, they may be denied the opportunity to re-frame their narratives and hope anew.

As found in the literature (cf. Section 4.5.1; Mugambi, 1989:23), Africans believe in and hope for another state of consciousness beyond the grave. This explains why most Africans find that life needs to be protected from harm and, to ensure that, practical measures are often taken in an attempt to restore health and preserve life. Here, hope for good health and improved

wellbeing is maintained by traditional practices, which are often instrumental in both palliative care and healing process (cf. Section 3.4.2). Also, it was found in the literature that Africans do not only try to find physical causes of an illness; they seek more specifically for the causes lying beneath the physical (cf. Section 4.4.2). This is why Mbiti (1969:215; see also Section 4.3.2) contends that as per African wisdom evil happens because evil agents exist.

Considering that most refugee migrants believe in traditional practices for healing, an empowerment by hope paradigm is central to the mission of the church because the refugee phenomenon is one of the inevitable consequences of globalisation, having a massive impact on the church (cf. Section 6.7.1). In this regard, the church can use empowerment by hope as a transforming practice to help refugee migrants keep the faith during their health and wellbeing trials. This could be done through solidarity with them since solidarity is the first step towards shared values (cf. Botman, 2001:42). For instance, some refugees migrate without their partners. This increases the possibilities of having their sexual desires satisfied outside established relationships and, at times, promiscuously with multiple partners. In the process, their health could be affected in various ways. Empowerment by hope can create an environment of solidarity with them as praxis to help minimise their suffering and pain of ill health.

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul indicates that suffering and pain are not an excuse for despair (cf. Romans 5:3-5). That is, they are not to thwart our rejoicing in hope. Those who hope have enough to be pleased about despite the circumstantial challenges they encounter in the everyday. In other words, hope makes rejoicing in suffering a real possibility. Those who hope for a better tomorrow rejoice unashamedly in the suffering of a 'worse' today. Thus, despair causes shame. From the narratives of refugee migrants, it was established that, even though considered by many as nobodies and trodden under foot as the mire in the streets, refugee migrants have resilient hope and are not ashamed of their painful suffering. Theirs is a suffering of hope. Amidst all the conflicts and bloodshed in the African continent, and behind the living conditions of those affected by such violence are narratives of hope, resilience and courage.

## 7.4. Recommendations

The idea of hope and the refugee phenomenon entails a dual imperative: the imperative to conduct more research on the politics of transnational migration and the epistemologies of human hope, and the imperative to find ways of influencing policies that translate this human hope into action. Empowerment by hope is a new opportunity for attempting to put hope into action in order to inform praxis and reposition oneself anew as an instrument of hope for improved wellbeing. The following insightful recommendations require both reflection and action by various players involved in the lives of refugee migrants:

### 7.4.1. To faith communities

Because the context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century presents challenges for sustainable human hope, I propose that the Christian faith community use empowerment by hope as a theological framework for community empowerment and capacity building so that the whole gospel will be proclaimed to the whole person and be a force for positive change and holistic development in society.

- This thesis has shown that faith communities need to do more than charity and welfare work in order to engage the powers on the issues facing the refugee community. Faith communities will need to engage both with and on behalf of refugees in advocating for refugee rights. It is, therefore, recommended that faith communities undertake a more progressive approach and active advocacy for refugees' rights, particularly their right to work and access to healthcare services.
- It has been shown that the discourse on the refugee phenomenon is often done without the participation of refugee migrants who are removed from the centre of power discourse. It is, therefore, recommended that faith communities become aware of the realities of life within which refugee migrants live in order to ensure that the hope of impoverished communities are the central theme of the conferences and symposia of both social scientists and theologians. It is in such consortia that utopia could be defined as an essential element of praxis. Faith communities must, therefore, ensure that refugees themselves are invited into the centre of discourses that directly affect them (academic and ecclesia).

- Paulo Freire argued that the marginalised be brought to the centre from the periphery by an education system that would awaken their consciousness. It is, therefore, recommended that faith communities cultivate an empowerment by hope consciousness in order to build a sense of social responsibility as a response to refugees' holistic needs. It must be noted that part of this consciousness is the recognition of the significance and relevance of empowerment by hope through theological reflection. Here, Bible study materials for pastors and lay people could be developed.
- The study has shown that refugee migrants suffer countless indignities within the South African society – not least the scourge of Xenophobia. It is, therefore recommended that faith communities strive to be welcoming and inclusive in order to become sanctuaries of hope for all, including refugee migrants
- The centrality of the Christian doctrine of hope as well as its currency for Theology and Development discourse has been demonstrated. It is, therefore, recommended that Theology and Development scholars initiate advanced studies or research on empowerment by hope as a transforming practice and a theological praxis

#### 7.4.2. To humanitarian organisations and FBOs

- The research has indicated that a great number of refugee migrants who are employed have little opportunity to claim their work-related benefits / rights since there is no policy protecting them against exploitation at workplace – and this is generally detrimental to their health and wellbeing. I, therefore, propose that humanitarian organisations and faith-based organisations (FBOs) working in the refugee sector establish programmes on the question of refugees' health and wellbeing.
- The research has further found that there is a need for a binary of the secular (empowerment) and the religious (hope) within the development equation in response to the holistic needs of refugee migrants. In view of this, I recommend that humanitarian organisations and FBOs journey with refugee migrants in their struggles for human dignity and perpetual quest for improved wellbeing from this holistic perspective.
- It was also found that refugee migrants act unaided using the prowess of the hope-empowerment binary in many a context, which is why hope is increasingly significant in the refugee community. This is despite the seemingly hopeless situations of refugee migrants who, nevertheless, relentlessly conjugate maximum efforts for improved

wellbeing in an attempt to build new hope and create opportunities for holistic development. Thus, it is recommended that humanitarian organisations and FBOs provide modest financial and logistical support for income-generating activities that refugee migrants undertake.

- It is worth noting that refugee migrants put their hope into action in spite of the emotionally disturbing events they experience and/or the socially distressing circumstances they encounter on a daily basis. Their exertion is anchored in hope. It is, therefore, recommended that humanitarian organisations and FBOs look more closely at the issue of psychosocial support (such as counselling and support groups) in dealing with refugees that are often experiencing continuous trauma.
- FBOs themselves should learn from the agency of refugee migrants since they already have support and survival mechanisms, and build upon these in any programmes addressing these issues.

#### 7.4.3. To the local government

- This research has revealed that there are several challenges affecting the management of the refugee phenomenon in South Africa, including the fact that the government reinforces hostile sentiments against refugee migrants who are seen as competing with nationals for scarce resources. In this regard, I recommend that the government invest financial and logistical assistance in the livelihood activities initiated by refugee migrants so as to increase their hope for the future and improve their wellbeing.
- It was found that a better management of the refugee phenomenon could enhance improved wellbeing for refugee migrants but if unmanaged, it could become a destructive force in societies. I would, therefore, recommend that both the maximisation of the benefits and the minimisation of the costs of the refugee phenomenon address underlying social determinants of health, including access to healthcare services by refugee migrants and respect for their basic human rights.
- The research revealed that refugee migrants are considered a threat to the welfare of the local population and/or a burden to the country's economy, which results in the government tightening up measures for immigration. It is, therefore, recommended that the government (i) implement programmes to train refugee migrants as stewards for advancing national transformation and as contributors to the national economy and (ii)

expand educational opportunities to all regardless of one's background. These include access to loans and available scholarships.

- It was found that refugee migrants face great challenges in accessing documentation at the DHA. In this regard, I recommend that government make the process of documentation, which includes application for and issuance of the refugee Status, I.D., travel document and permanent residence, a trouble-free possibility for all refugee migrants. In this same vein, the DHA needs to communicate with financial institutions and other service providers on the legality and validity of refugees' documents to facilitate an easy access of the services they are entitled to.

#### 7.4.4. Suggestion for further research

Refugees are known to be a vulnerable population despite their resilience and courage to survive, which are empirical markers of their hope for improved wellbeing. In view of that, this research has tried to demonstrate from empirical evidence how refugee migrants use hope to empower themselves in the face of seemingly difficult situations affecting their health and wellbeing. However, the research did not focus much on the ways in which refugee migrants reduce their vulnerability. Further empirical research is, therefore, required in order to enhance the interpretation of the dynamics of the refugee phenomenon *vis-à-vis* the vulnerability of refugee migrants.

### 7.5. Final Conclusion

This research examined the relevance of hope in refugees' lives and evaluated the extent to which this hope features in their lived experiences. In view of this, the advantage of this research is that it explored the components of wellbeing including resources and abilities, which refugee migrants can develop to improve their quality of life and achieve a certain level of developmental growth. Therefore, in view of the fact that both empowerment and hope are strongly focused on (but not limited to) ideals of the future; particularly, a future that is better than the present (cf. Section 2.2.1.2), they are strongly associated with the critical theory of subjectivity. The empirical evidence from the interactions I had with the participants was assessed in an attempt to identify the role hope plays in their lived experiences.

The findings of this research provide pointers to the fact that hope has been a forgotten or ignored lens through which empowerment can be explored within the development equation (cf. Section 1.9; Sections 4.1 & 4.4.1). Yet, by using a few case studies of individual refugees, this research has shown that hope can be used practically to ensure that people who are faced with various challenges find meaning in life in spite of their seemingly deplorable conditions (cf. Section 6.7). In other words, hope is an asset for development and a resource for empowerment, which is why hope and empowerment are inseparable and form a coherent binary worth exploring in the theory and practice of development.

As it were, the refugee phenomenon is a very complex development in Africa due to the challenges it involves and the problems it poses to both the national and the international communities. However, a refugee migrant is a human being and, as such, possesses rights that must be respected by everyone and in every circumstance. Thus, the church must be actively involved in providing not only social support to refugee migrants but also in promoting their genuine integration. Integration builds a society where every individual is an active member of the community and responsible of the wellbeing of the other. It ensures generous and original contributions, with a right to full citizenship and participation to the same rights and duties.

In this research, most respondents saw health not only as the lack of physical or mental illness but also as the state of being happy and comfortable. In contrast, good health was considered as being maintained by proper nutrition and medications when the latter is needed. In addition, family and community were regarded as vital for those with ill health. Refugee migrants are least likely to be employed and those employed are in jobs that are not proportionate with their qualifications or experience. It was found that refugee migrants associate good health with living with family since family would offer emotional stability and comfort. It was also found that informal social networks are very important for refugees' emotional health.

The narratives revealed that refugee migrants play a positive role in improving their quality of life through their various informal trades. Such resolve to improved wellbeing is a commitment to work successfully and reach a certain level of self-sufficiency, which would see them integrate in the society and become open to social change. As they negotiate space for their improved wellbeing, and a place in the mainstream South African society, the whims and impulses of resilience become increasingly transparent. That is to say, despite the fact that

their lived experiences generally exemplify suffering and pain, theirs are extraordinary stories that unfold the depth, width, and breadth of hope in the face of life's challenging odds. Although the progress is seen in various areas such as education, much still needs to be done in expanding alternatives that result in improved health and wellbeing. Here, refugee migrants are no exception.

The main themes of health concepts (i.e. role and meaning), health care experiences and identified needs reflected the interaction between past and present healthcare services in South Africa. Health was seen as the absence of sickness and was maintained by nutrition. This may reflect the limited access to medical and preventative care in most African countries particularly those represented by the respondents of this research. Visiting a doctor was reserved for sickness after which medications were prescribed. This past health experience evoked confusion and frustration when confronted by South African healthcare officials who did not always give medications for illness. This was particularly evident in participants who had indefinable symptoms. The community's past experiences of blood tests was limited and, at times, evoked suspicion and fear as this study reveals. This was one of the many examples in which greater information was repeatedly requested.

The findings of this research also provide evidence of the fact that the types of jobs refugee migrants have and their working conditions affect their level of wellbeing in a major way and define their quality of health. In addition, xenophobia in all its forms and the government's failure to protect them are an impediment to their hope for improved wellbeing. In addition, the lack of official policies and strategies to support and integrate refugee migrants into the mainstream South African society pushes many of them to situations of illegality and/or criminality, which is also an obstacle to the development potential of most refugee migrants living in Cape Town. However, refugee migrants use hope as a resource and/or tool to empower themselves against all odds so as to ameliorate their quality of life and improve their wellbeing. Owing to their resilience and courage amid such challenges, refugee migrants contribute to the socio-economic growth of South Africa in spite of the lack of support from various institutions including the government.

Although refugee migrants are often portrayed as helpless people whose source of income depends on the generosity of others, this research found that refugees are agents of change since they contribute to the socio-economic development of South Africa through their

micro-entrepreneurship. The research has pointed out that they employ a whole range of support mechanisms to ensure their improved wellbeing. This they do not only for survival but also for giving their life a meaning through dignified and sustainable means of support. In spite of the challenges they have to surmount on a daily basis, refugees' narratives express hope for a better tomorrow. Thus, refugees empower themselves using hope, and they empower the local citizenry (i.e. by contributing to the growth of the local economy) using the same. Hope is, therefore, the resource they use to empower themselves and rise above their daily challenges. Refugees' coping mechanisms constitute an opportunity for new hope as they strive to rise beyond the satisfaction of basic needs for survival to the meeting of specific goals.

A growing number of people today succumb to despair because the current social system is dysfunctional. The community of faith can neither conform to the system nor withdraw from it. It has to rise to the occasion and provide it with a transforming framework that changes the *status quo* for the better, and invite the social fabric to live in a new way – the way of hope. That is to say, the church is to help the inclinations, the desires and the dreams of those in despair to be rooted anew in hope. Thus, the findings of this study are of interest to those involved in Christian mission, community development and social work, to name but a few. These findings also provide information to researchers and those who are involved in making social policies that regulate the status of refugees and asylum seekers. As explained throughout the pages of this thesis and epitomised, particularly, in the narratives of the participants, I here summarise the practice of empowerment by hope in the following five points:

- Empowerment by hope is theological
- Empowerment by hope is relational
- Empowerment by hope is missional
- Empowerment by hope is developmental
- Empowerment by hope is biblical

Thus, empowerment by hope is a new perspective of doing theology within the context of Theology and Development. It is appropriate for community engagement and participatory action. As a theoretical paradigm for praxis, empowerment by hope is contextual theology and, therefore, applied Christology. It may be equated to what sociologists of religion and practical theologians are increasingly referring to as “lived religion”. As such, it entails being unhappy

with the situations of life that are increasingly pushing people to the corner of despair. It is this unhappiness that propels courage and resilience, and which moves hope towards action.

If managed properly, the refugee phenomenon presents an opportunity that could be capitalised upon to bring about the desired transformation leading to a more productive economy in South Africa. Our attitude towards development should be reflected in the efforts of the self to empower the other so that he/she can learn to empower himself/herself and restore his/her dignity. This explains why development without hope epitomises fiasco. In this regard, empowerment by hope is an invitation to imagine a different future for the holistic development of humanity as a whole by putting hope into action. As expounded throughout, refugee migrants use hope as a resource for self-empowerment and holistic development but a lot still needs to be done to ensure their improved wellbeing as a marginalised community. Prophet Isaiah provides us with the fundamental nature and biblical basis of empowerment by hope, which could be contextualised to the situation of refugee migrants, when he says:

Even youths grow tired and weary; and young men stumble and fall. But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint (cf. Isaiah 40:30, 31).

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[ethnicity-and-language-in-south-africa/](#)

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Ethical clearance



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#### Approval Notice Response to Modifications- (New Application)

25-Oct-2013  
MSABAH, Anzurani Barnabe

**Proposal #: HS964/2013**

**Title:** Empowerment by Hope: A phenomenological study on the wellbeing of African refugees.

Dear Mr Anzurani MSABAH,

Your **Response to Modifications - (New Application)** received on 23-Oct-2013, was reviewed by members of the **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on 24-Oct-2013 and was approved.  
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

**Proposal Approval Period: 24-Oct-2013 - 23-Oct-2014**

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number (HS964/2013)** on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 0218839027.

**Included Documents:**

REC Application  
Research proposal  
Informed consent  
Letter of response  
Revised REC application  
Revised informed consent form  
Questionnaire  
Revised research proposal

Sincerely,

Susara Oberholzer  
REC Coordinator  
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

## Appendix II: Informed consent form



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### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

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#### **EMPOWERMENT BY HOPE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF AFRICAN REFUGEE MIGRANTS**

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by BARNABÉ ANZURUNI MSABAH (here and thereafter: the researcher) from the department of Practical Theology and Missiology: Theology Development at Stellenbosch University. Because the researcher is a doctoral student at Stellenbosch University, the results of this study will influence the writing of his thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your status as a refugee/asylum seeker in South Africa or as someone who works with/for refugees. Your eligibility is highly valued as your participation will assist in addressing refugees' health problems, restoring their dignity and/or help various institutions to review their policies on refugees. Please understand that participation in this study is on the basis of one's personal capacity and, therefore, your views will not represent those of any individual or organisation. Also be informed that this research study has been approved by the RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: HUMAN RESEARCH (HUMANIORA) at the University of Stellenbosch and will be conducted according to internationally accepted ethical standards and guidelines.

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to provide practical information to various fields of expertise, including church theology, on the question of refugees and asylum seekers' health. The study will express the narratives of refugees' hope notwithstanding their health challenges or the pains of their refugeeness, and attempt to establish the presence of refugees as active partners of development and to ensure that they are not ignored when issues concerning them are being discussed. This will promote critical reflection on the realities of refugees and health from the perspective of hope.

#### **2. PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this research, we would ask you to do the following few things:

- a) Answer the questionnaire herewith

- b) Ask questions whenever possible if something is not clear to you
- c) Talk about anything that has to do with refugees and asylum seekers' health in South Africa – be it personal or general as confidentiality is assured

### **3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

There are no potential risks associated with this research. If you experience discomfort or any strong emotions during the research, please notify the researcher immediately in order to terminate the session without delay and/or make arrangements for counselling or other support that you may require. Herewith attached is a list of counsellors in your area that you may contact any time of the day during or after the research if you are in need of any support. Their services will be free of charge. Besides, we assure you that no information gathered in this study will, in any way, be conveyed to any authority.

### **4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO THE PARTICIPANTS AND/OR THE SOCIETY**

The findings of this study will be of interest to those involved in community development and social work. Such findings will also provide information to researchers and those who are involved in making social policies that regulate the status of refugees and asylum seekers. Also, this research will help to improve the living conditions of refugees by addressing their health problems, finding possible solutions thereof and promoting human dignity for all.

### **5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

No payment will be made for participating in this research. Therefore, all the participants (i.e. informants and respondents) will take part and/or assist on their own free will.

### **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Data will be collected in such a way as to protect the participant's confidentiality. In this way, any information obtained in this research which can be identified with the participant will be disclosed only with the participant's permission. Otherwise, information gathered in this study will not be revealed to anybody; and no authority will have access to it in any way. Confidentiality will be maintained by keeping the name of the participant anonymous. All data will remain private and confidential; kept in a password-protected database for safeguarding purposes to avoid any possible leak. On completion of the research, all data will be destroyed.

Because the findings of the research will feature in the researcher's thesis, access to this information will be restricted only to the researcher's study leader and/or to the senior members of the research team whose details appear in paragraph 8 of this Consent Form. In case the results of the research are published on the web (or even when they appear in the researcher's thesis); no names or identities of participants will be revealed.

### **7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

The participant can choose to be involved in this research or not. If he/she volunteers to participate, he/she may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. He/she may also refuse to answer any questions that he/she does not want to answer. The researcher may withdraw the participant from this research if circumstances arise which warrant to do so. Actions that could lead this research study in disrepute or not cooperating with the researcher, etc. are some of the reasons which may cause the researcher to withdraw the participant without notice.

## 8. IDENTIFICATION OF THE INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact one of the following:

- 1) Dr N Bowers-du Toit, researcher's supervisor: +27 21 808 3856 or [nbowers@sun.ac.za](mailto:nbowers@sun.ac.za)
- 2) A B Msabah, principal investigator: +27 72 627 5932 or [16404971@sun.ac.za](mailto:16404971@sun.ac.za) alternatively, use [m.barnabe@yahoo.ca](mailto:m.barnabe@yahoo.ca)

## 9. RIGHTS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time or discontinue your participation without any penalty whatsoever. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant, contact Ms Malène Fouché [[mfouche@sun.ac.za](mailto:mfouche@sun.ac.za); 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

### SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to \_\_\_\_\_,<sup>131</sup>  
 by \_\_\_\_\_<sup>132</sup> in \_\_\_\_\_<sup>133</sup> and I am in  
 command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity  
 to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this research. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>131</sup> Name of the participant

<sup>132</sup> Name of the investigator

<sup>133</sup> The language in which the information was presented

Signature of the participant

Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

I declare that I explained the information in this document to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>134</sup> clearly. He/she was encouraged and given a chance to ask me any questions. The conversation was conducted in \_\_\_\_\_<sup>135</sup> and no translator was used / was translated into \_\_\_\_\_<sup>136</sup> by \_\_\_\_\_<sup>137</sup>.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the investigator

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

<sup>134</sup> Name of the person to whom information was presented (i.e. participant)

<sup>135</sup> The language in which the conversation was conducted

<sup>136</sup> The language into which the conversation was translated (if applicable)

<sup>137</sup> Name of the person who helped with the translation

## Appendix III: Question guide



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### **Question-guide<sup>138</sup> on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants in South Africa<sup>139</sup>**

Refugee populations flee their countries of origin for various reasons including natural disasters and conflict situations.<sup>140</sup> Often their journey involves deprivation and physical hardship including torture and/or rape. In most cases, such circumstances affect their overall health and wellbeing. Research proves that those forced to move from their countries are increasingly at risk of contracting diseases as a result of poor access to food, shelter, water, sanitation and medical facilities prior to their migration, during their flight and even after settling in their new environment. In South Africa, however, there is an anecdotal contention that most of the services intended for refugees do not meet their felt needs, which is something that perturbs their health and wellbeing. This questionnaire will assist the researcher to find relevant information on the health and wellbeing of African refugees in South Africa from the experiences of refugees themselves and the informed insights of selected role players such as health practitioners. The findings of this research will help the researcher to make relevant recommendations to those involved in the health care of the refugee population, their advocacy and/or policy-making. We kindly ask you to assist us by completing the following few questions.

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<sup>138</sup> Section C of this Guide will be filled by role players such as medical practitioners, social workers, etc.

<sup>139</sup> Research conducted by Barnabé Anzuruni Msabah, doctoral student at Stellenbosch University. Research title: *Empowerment by Hope: A phenomenological study on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants.*

<sup>140</sup> Here the term 'refugee' is inclusive of asylum seekers.

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**1. **Country of origin:** \_\_\_\_\_2. **Age category:**

| 18 – 21 | 22 – 29 | 30 – 39 | 40 – 49 | 50+ |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----|
|         |         |         |         |     |

3. **Gender:**

|          |  |          |  |
|----------|--|----------|--|
| <b>M</b> |  | <b>F</b> |  |
|----------|--|----------|--|

4. **Marital status:**

| Single | Married | Other (specify) |
|--------|---------|-----------------|
|        |         |                 |

5. **Level of education**

| Primary | Secondary | Graduate | Postgraduate | Doctoral | Other (specify) |
|---------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------|-----------------|
|         |           |          |              |          |                 |



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**11. What support mechanism do you have to ensure your livelihoods and survival?**

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**12. What are the health challenges that you have (or have experienced) as a result of your being a refugee?**

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**13. What makes you feel hopeless as a refugee?**

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**14. What do you do when you feel hopeless?**

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**15. Considering your life as a refugee in South Africa, what is it that gives you hope?**

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**16. Do you think your faith (or “no faith”) conviction has an impact on your having or not having hope? Please explain.**

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**17. What do you think can be done to give refugees more hope for improved wellbeing in South Africa?**

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**18. Please tell us anything else that you would like us to know**

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**SECTION C: PRACTICAL DATA**

**19. What are some of the common conditions/health problems that refugees are diagnosed with?**

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**20. What are the major causes of such medical conditions in the refugee population?**

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**21. What are some of the known challenges that impede refugees from accessing health services?**

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**22. From a practical point of view, do you think faith plays a role in the recovery of refugee patients? Please elaborate a bit.**

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**23. What can be done in order to give refugee migrants more hope even with their health and wellbeing challenges?**

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**24. Any other practical comment, remark or intervention that can assist us?**

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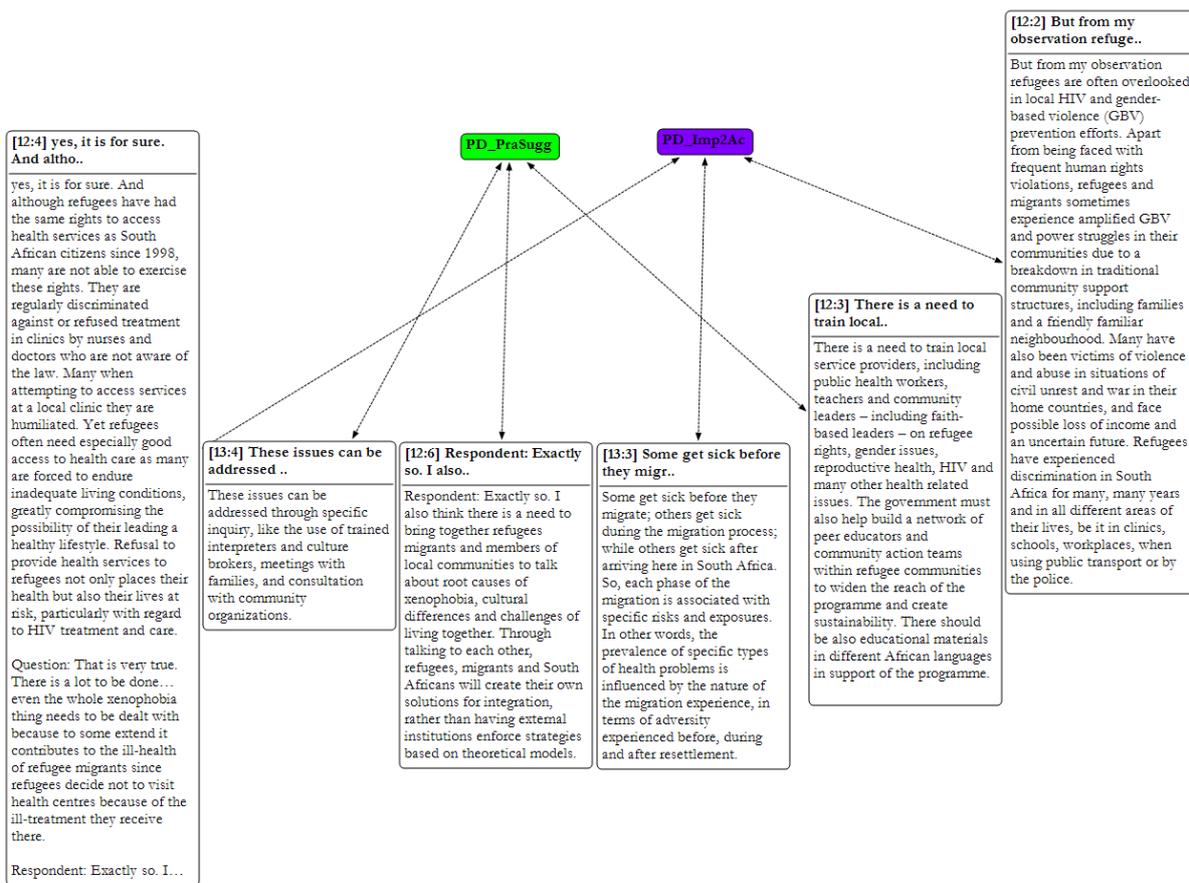
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**Signature of the investigator**

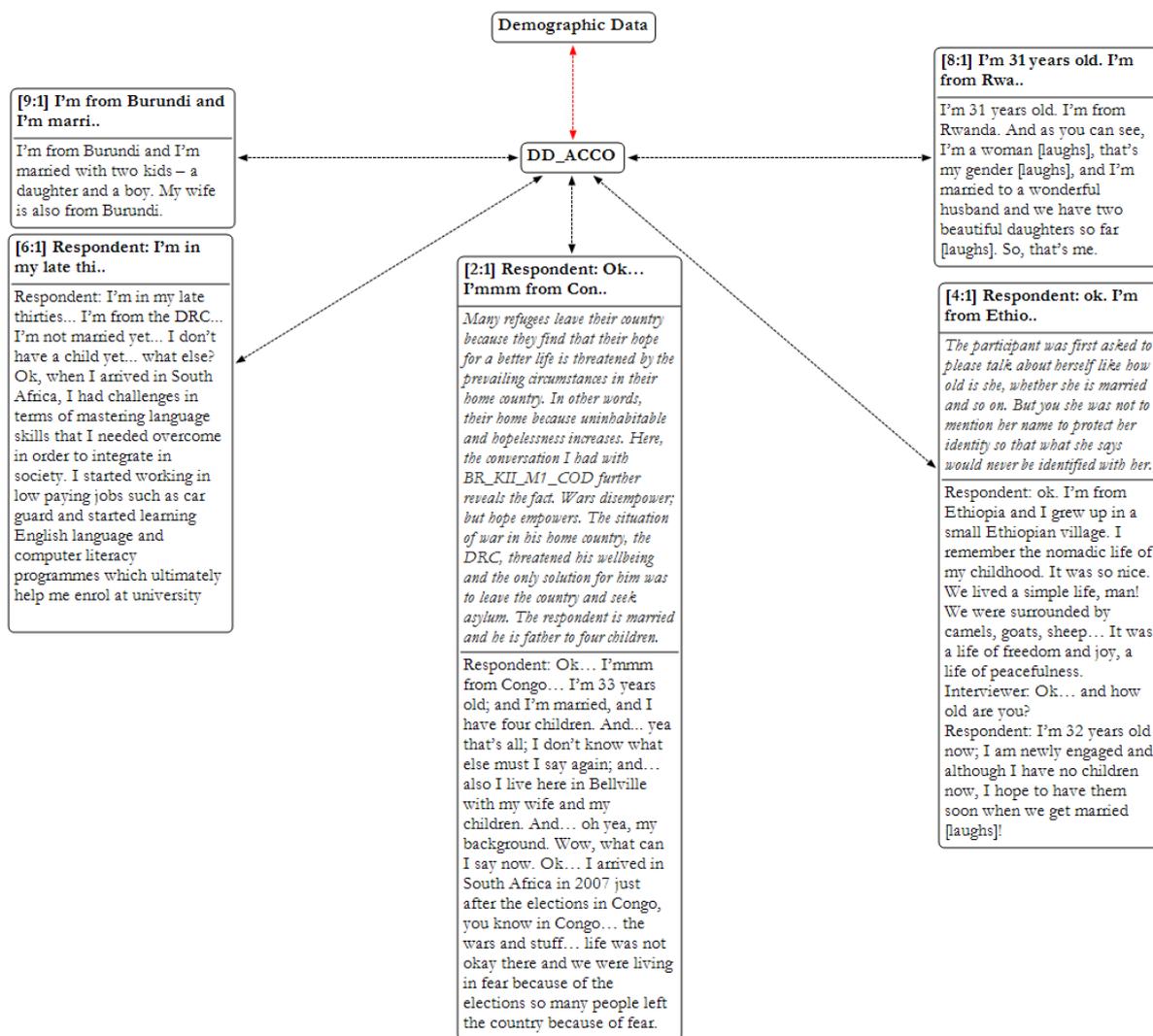
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**Date**

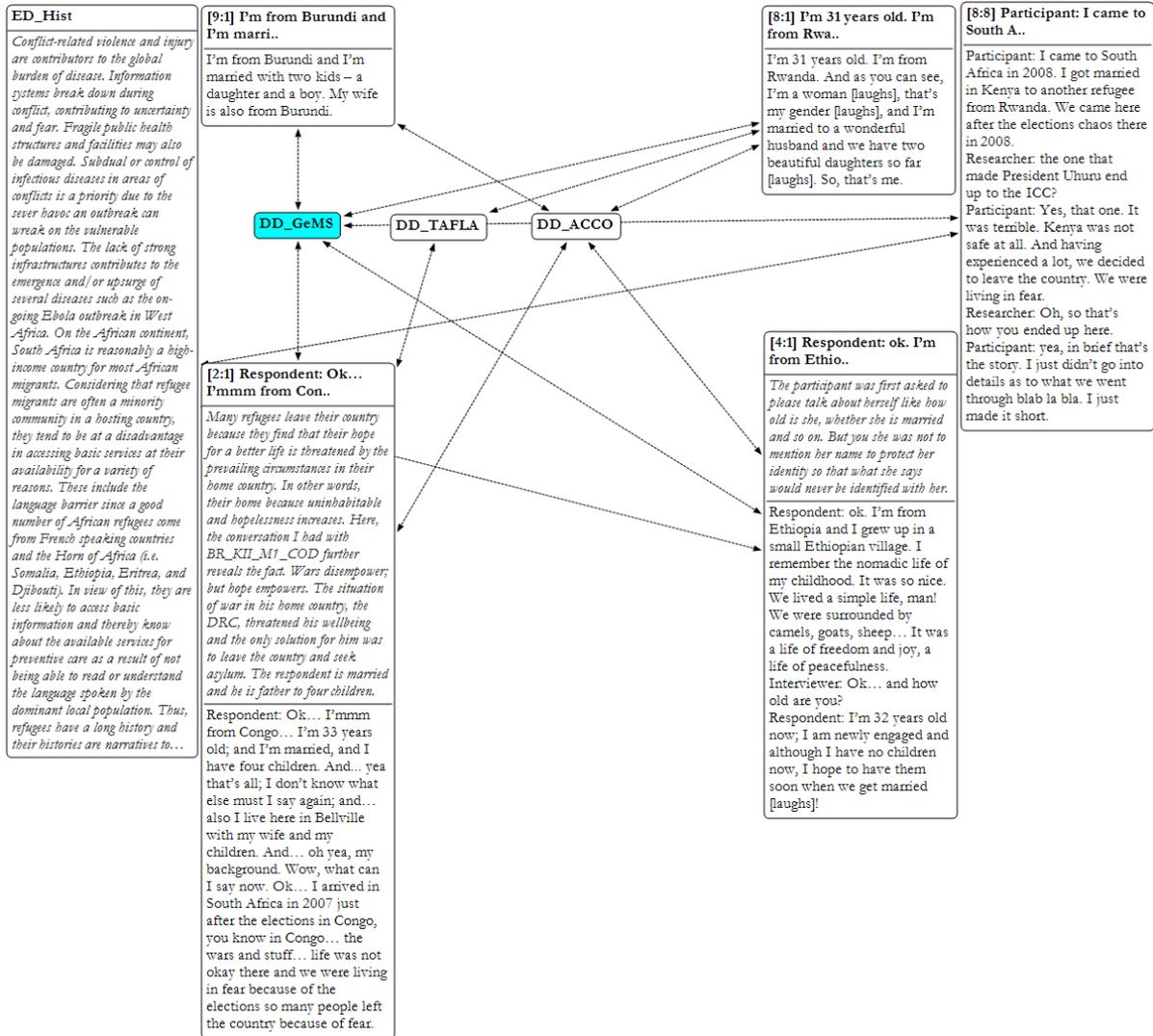
## Appendix IV – Codes: PD\_PraSugg & PD\_Imp2Ac



## Appendix V Code: DD\_ACCO Network View



## Appendix VI – Code: DD\_GeMS Network View



**Appendix VII: Codes for PD**

|                            | DD_ACCO  | DD_GeMS  | DD_LEO   | DD_TAFLA  | Demographic Data | ED_Chall  | ED_Enab   | ED_Hist   | ED_Hop    | ED_QoL    | ED_SMeSStra | Experiential Data | PD_CoCo-MC | PD_Imp2Ac | PD_PraSugg | PD_RoHiR | Practical Data | TOTAL S-  |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|----------------|-----------|
| P 1:<br>BR_KII_F1_COD.docx | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0         | 0                | 6         | 1         | 0         | 5         | 3         | 0           | 9                 | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 2         |
| P 2:<br>BR_KII_M1_COD.docx | 1        | 1        | 1        | 2         | 3                | 5         | 3         | 1         | 6         | 2         | 2           | 14                | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 4         |
| P 4:<br>BR_KII_F2_ETP.docx | 1        | 1        | 1        | 1         | 3                | 1         | 4         | 3         | 6         | 1         | 0           | 11                | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 3         |
| P 6:<br>BR_KII_M2_COD.docx | 1        | 0        | 1        | 4         | 4                | 5         | 1         | 0         | 4         | 1         | 1           | 9                 | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 3         |
| P 8:<br>MR_KII_F1_RWD.docx | 1        | 2        | 1        | 4         | 6                | 0         | 2         | 6         | 4         | 4         | 3           | 15                | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 4         |
| P 9:<br>MR_KII_M2_BDI.docx | 1        | 1        | 1        | 2         | 4                | 3         | 2         | 1         | 4         | 0         | 3           | 9                 | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 3         |
| P11:<br>BR_KII_M3_BDI.docx | 0        | 0        | 1        | 2         | 3                | 2         | 0         | 1         | 4         | 1         | 2           | 9                 | 0          | 0         | 0          | 0        | 0              | 2         |
| P12:<br>RP_SQ_F1_FN.docx   | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0           | 0                 | 1          | 2         | 2          | 1        | 5              | 1         |
| P13:<br>RP_SQ_M2_SA.docx   | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0         | 0                | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0           | 0                 | 2          | 1         | 1          | 0        | 4              | 2         |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>             | <b>5</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>23</b>        | <b>22</b> | <b>13</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>33</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>11</b>   | <b>76</b>         | <b>3</b>   | <b>3</b>  | <b>3</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>9</b>       | <b>25</b> |

## Appendix VIII: List of contact details

### **A compendium of contact details for some of the service providers and counselling services in the Cape Town area**

#### **Research topic**

**Empowerment by Hope:  
A phenomenological study on the health and wellbeing of refugee migrants in  
Cape Town, South Africa**

#### **Statutory Bodies**

- **South African Human Rights Commission- Western Cape Office**

Tel: 021 426 2277

Fax: 021 426 2875

- **Independent Complaints Directorate**

Tel: 021 480 2000

Fax: 021 426 0705

#### **Legal Services**

- **University of Cape Town (UCT) Law Clinic**

Tel: 021 650 3551

Email: [uctlawclinic@law.uct.ac.za](mailto:uctlawclinic@law.uct.ac.za)

Services: Legal advice to refugees and asylum seekers. Assistance with appeal hearings, family reunification, voluntary repatriation and resettlement. Conducts interviews on behalf of UNHCR in Cape Town.

- **People Against Suffering, Suppression, Oppression and Poverty (PASSOP)**

Tel: 021 762 4638

Cell: 083 256 1140

Services: Paralegal assistance with education, employment and health care rights. Networking assistance.

- **Cape Town Justice Centre (LAB)**

Tel: 021 426 4074

Services: Free legal assistance for people who cannot afford private legal assistance.