

**TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS THEOLOGICAL
CHALLENGE: AN EVALUATION OF THE ECWA PEOPLE
ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This study explores various community development theories and practices and, using the holistic criteria proposed by Myers, the study evaluates the impact of ECWA's People Oriented Development (POD) programmes in selected beneficiating communities in Northern Nigeria.

The study revealed that the earlier conceptualisation of 'development' was perceived strictly in socio-economic terms. Thereafter, the approaches shifted in focus towards human development and environmental sustainability. Transformational Development (TD) is posed as a holistic Christian framework for addressing human and social change. This approach holds that transformation is premised on change for a better future, which is underpinned by the principles of *shalom*: just, peaceful and, harmonious relationships with God, oneself, individuals within a given community and the environment.

The empirical study discovered that the socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities were food shortages, bad roads, educational needs, and economic and health challenges. Unemployment, mismanagement, illiteracy, disunity and religious issues were viewed as causes of poverty in the selected communities. The various remedial measures taken by ECWA's POD to address some of these challenges include: water supply, food security, health services, economic empowerment, infrastructural projects, environmental sustainability and spiritual development activities.

The evaluative framework proposed by TD, sought to assess positive changes in the cultural and religious aspects of people's lives, and a positive change in attitude toward God, the Christian Gospel and spirituality. This aspect of the evaluation identified the significant impact of ECWA's POD programmes on the lives of the beneficiaries, such as in self-help activities, communal work, prayer and Bible study. However, due to poverty, underdevelopment and a lack of understanding of the God of the Bible still prevalent in the targeted communities, it is difficult to conclude that ECWA's POD interventions have sufficiently led to TD. This lack of a suitable approach to development, such as the separation of POD as an agency to meet physical needs while the local church focuses on spiritual needs, is inconsistent with the holistic approach. Therefore, the research concludes that evangelism and social change in the process of community transformation must work simultaneously.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie studie verken verskeie gemeenskapsontwikkelingsteorieë en -praktyke en, deur gebruik te maak van Myers se holistiese kriteria, evalueer dit die impak van die ECWA se *People Oriented Development* (POD) programme in uitgesoekte begunstigde gemeenskappe in Noord-Nigerië.

Die studie het getoon dat die vroeër konseptualisering van 'ontwikkeling' streng in sosio-ekonomiese terme beskou is. Daarna het die fokus van die benaderings geskuif na menslike ontwikkeling en omgewingsvolhoubaarheid. Transformasionele Ontwikkeling is as 'n holistiese Christelike raamwerk vir menslike en maatskaplike ontwikkeling voorgelê. Hierdie benadering hou voor dat ontwikkeling van die veronderstelling uitgaan van verandering vir 'n beter toekoms, wat ondersteun word deur die volgende beginsels van *shalom*: regverdige, vreedsame en harmonieuse verhoudings met God, jouself, tussen individue binne 'n gegewe gemeenskap en die omgewing.

Die empiriese studie het ontdek dat die sosio-ekonomiese uitdagings van die geselekteerde gemeenskappe voedseltekorte, swak paaie, opvoedkundige behoeftes en ekonomiese en gesondheidsuitdagings was. Werkloosheid, wanbestuur, ongeletterdheid, onenigheid en godsdienstige kwessies is as die oorsake van armoede in die hierdie gemeenskappe beskou. Die verskeie remediërende stappe wat deur die ECWA se POD geneem is, sluit in watervoorsiening, voedselsekureit, gesondheidsdienste, ekonomiese bemagtiging, infrastrukturele projekte, omgewingsvolhoubaarheid en geestelike ontwikkelingsaktiwiteite. Die evaluerende raamwerk is gebruik om positiewe veranderinge in die kulturele en godsdienstige aspekte van mense se lewens en in hulle houdings jeens God, die Christelike Evangelie en spiritualiteit te assesser. Die aspek van die evaluasie het die opvallende impak van ECWA se POD op die lewens van die begunstigdes, soos in self-help aktiwiteite, gemeenskapswerk, gebed en Bybelstudie. As gevolg van die armoede, onderontwikkeling en geestelike agterlikheid wat nog algemeen in die geteikende gemeenskappe voorgekom het, was dit egter moeilik om tot die gevolgtrekking te kom dat die ECWA se POD-ingrypings doeltreffend tot Transformasionele Ontwikkeling gelei het. Die gebrek aan 'n gepaste benadering tot ontwikkeling, soos die skeiding van POD as 'n agentskap om aan fisiese behoeftes te voldoen terwyl die plaaslike kerk op geestelike behoeftes fokus, is teenstrydig met 'n holistiese benadering. Die navorsing kom dus tot die slotsom dat evangelisasie en maatskaplike verandering in die proses van transformasie moet saamwerk.

DEDICATION

This study is first of all dedicated to God Almighty, who in His unfathomable wisdom made me in His image and likeness, and who, out of love, unconditionally saved me and called me into pastoral ministry and gave me the strength to write this dissertation. Second, it is dedicated to my wife Halita, and our children Victor Shuni, Enoch Wyosho and Shalom-el Yama, for their prayers and support throughout my academic pursuit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

| | |
|-------|---|
| AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| ATR | African Traditional Religion |
| CDF | Community Development Facilitator |
| DCC | District Church Council |
| ECWA | Evangelical Church Winning All |
| EP | ECWA Pastors |
| GAD | Gender and Development |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HIV | Human immunodeficiency virus |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| PLA | Participatory Learning and Action |
| POD | People Oriented Development |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Process |
| SC | Selected Communities |
| TD | Transformational Development |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| USAID | United States Aid for International Development |
| WAD | Women and Development |
| WID | Women in Development |
| WFDD | World Faiths Development Dialogue |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The essence of development is change for a better future,¹ which is encapsulated in the idea of *shalom*: just, peaceful and harmonious relationships with God and between individuals within a given community (Myers, 2011: 175). Concern about “changes from a level of human existence that is less than that envisioned by God to one in which a person is fully human and free to move [towards] a state of wholeness in harmony with God, one another and the environment,” is the fundamental focus of Transformational Development (TD) (Myers, 2011: 3). This approach insists that equity, justice, human dignity and participation are the bedrock of sustainable development. Focusing on socio-economic empowerment alone (although this is essential) may not be sufficient to meet the range of human needs, which include abstract human needs such as dignity and spiritual growth.

The focus of this dissertation, therefore, is to argue for an understanding and to encourage the use of TD principles and practice in the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) People Oriented Development (POD) programmes. As a faith-based development agency, ECWA’s POD can be more effective vehicle for community development. It has the capacity to address the physical, political, economic and spiritual issues affecting humanity. In view of that, this study evaluates the impact of the ECWA’s POD programmes in the lives of the beneficiaries using Myers’ TD standards and indicators (Myers, 2011: 359).

In this introductory chapter I provide a general background to the research question. This is followed immediately by the research motivation, which explains why churches, especially the ECWA’s POD, need to apply the principles and practice of TD as a theological framework for community development. The research question serves as a guide to the entire thesis. The aim and study objectives are then clearly enumerated to keep the study focused. The practical and theological nature of the study, its limitations and ethical considerations, the potential impact of the study and an overview of the chapters are also included in this chapter.

¹The primary pathway to a better future has to depend on the initiative of God in human work and success. All wisdom comes from God, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and instruction in the way of wisdom is ignored at one’s peril (Osmer, 2008: 93). Therefore, human needs, aspirations, dreams and desires are not to be confined to the pursuit of material self-interest. Neither is a person’s sense of meaning, identity and worth determined by his or her ability to succeed or compete from an economic perspective (Sine, 1987: 9).

1.2 Background to the Research Question

Over the last six decades, various theories and practices of community development have emerged. These development theories have been adopted in the quest for community change and have been recognised as making an important contribution towards enhancing human well-being. The first theory that dominated the post-war development debate was the Modernisation Theory of development in the 1950s and 1960s. This was followed in the late 1960s to 1970s by the Dependency Theory and, towards the end of the 1980s and 1990s, by a pragmatic approach that moved the focus from the macro- to a micro-level² (Davids, 2009: 4; Korten, 1990: 67). In the 2000s, development focused increasingly on sustainable livelihoods and poverty eradication through capacity building (Ellis & Biggs, 2001: 444). To be specific the earlier conceptualisations of the term ‘development’ perceived it in strictly socio-economic terms,³ and thereafter the approaches shifted in focus towards human development and environmental sustainability (cf. Rodney, 2009: 2-3).

Bragg (1987: 38) points out that, due to the numerous flaws of the aforementioned development models, the need arose for a Christian theological approach to human needs and community development. Phrases such as ‘holistic ministry⁴’, ‘transformational development’, ‘integral mission’ and ‘holistic community-based sustainable development’ have emerged and are used to describe how Christian change agents work towards changing people’s attitudes, fundamental values, beliefs and behaviour (Voorhies, 1998: 124). Transformational Development (TD) is the term adopted in this study.⁵ This is not to say that the idea of transformation is posed as an alternative strategy, but it rather is proposed as a holistic Christian framework for addressing human and social change (Bragg, 1987: 40).

² Macro-theory sees development in terms of a rapid increase in production through investment in modern industrial technology. The micro-theory of development, on the other hand, proposes that development practitioners consider the perspective of the poor.

³ The focus then was on improving the capacity of a national economy, so that the economic condition of a nation would remain more or less static for a long time. This, in turn, would generate and sustain an annual increase in gross national product (GNP) (Rodney, 2009: 2-3).

⁴Holistic ministry is the church’s bold calling to share the Good News of God’s salvation through word and deed. Holistic ministry can be summarized as: Reaching your community with the whole gospel for the whole person through whole churches.

⁵ The approach is contextual and is a uniquely Christian theological concept of development. A Christian’s goal is not strictly on the project, but rather on seeing broken relationships being restored (cf. Myers, 2011: 185).

Although there are several scholars who have contributed to this proposal, Bryant L. Myers⁶ is the most recent scholar who will be considered. He proposes a unique Christian framework for addressing human and social needs, based on a theology of development perspective. Myers (2011: 6, 7) draws out indispensable criteria for holistic development that merge the spiritual and physical aspects of development, rather than treat these as a dichotomy. These criteria may be used to evaluate the nature of poverty, its causes and the reasons for its persistence in society (Myers, 2011: 108, 143, 145). His holistic approach focuses on a spectrum of socio-cultural, economic, political and spiritual issues in project areas. Myers not only puts forward a proposal for understanding the principles and practice of transformational development that involves positive material, social and spiritual change (Myers, 2011: 1), but also outlines ‘standards and indicators’ of transformation whereby physical change could be viewed in the economic, political and cultural aspects of people’s lives. The non-physical aspect focuses on people’s positive changes in attitude toward God, one another and society, the Christian Gospel and their spiritual lives (Myers, 2011: 359-360).

Davis (2009: 92-93) notes that a transformational approach seeks to address the issue of sin, which leads to corruption, greed, conflicts, inequality and exploitation, all of which are contrary to God’s plan for people. Bowers du Toit (2010b: 266) argues, furthermore, that evil is not only in the human heart, but also in social structures. The church therefore should endeavour to evangelise and at the same time respond to immediate human needs. Salvation should be viewed within a cosmic perspective that aims to restore relationships.⁷ In addition to the relationships with God, relationships with others, the community and environment play key roles in shaping and enhancing sustainable development. Within a transformational approach, unjust economic relations, political imbalances, social misappropriation and religious or cultural domination are addressed. In this case, ‘changed’ people will be able to “discover their true identity as children of God and recover their true vocation as faithful and productive stewards of God’s gifts for the well-being of all” (Myers, 2011: 3, 17).

Wrigley (2011: 5) rightly argues that ignoring the spiritual dimension of life overlooks the main driving force of many of the materially poorest people in the world. In an overview of

⁶ Myers, a professor of TD, is an ordained elder in the Presbyterian Church of Canada. He served with the International Program Strategy at World Vision International for thirty years. He has authored books and many articles (<http://www.fuller.edu/academics/faculty/bryant-myers.aspx>).

⁷ Peace and harmonious coexistence remain fundamental necessities in any effort for enduring development and progress. Without peace and mutual understanding, no meaningful growth can take place. God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, created us as one people with a common destiny. Loving God and one another is the key to sustainable development.

the role of religion or faith-based organisations in social transformation, Erasmus (2005: 142) points out that social transformation cannot be separated from spiritual transformation. This is because “when change in one area [spiritual] supports change in another [physical], there is more [...] chance that the outcome will be sustainable” (Edwards & Sen, 2000: 608). This indicates that religion plays significant role in promoting this change through its teaching of love and just relations Robinson (2009: 7), for example, emphasises that:

In the work and life of a Christian organization, the physical and spiritual cannot be separated. These two aspects are integral and thus the mission of the organization is one where evangelism and social action go together: integral mission. A church or Christian organization that is engaging in just one aspect or other will always be incomplete—they will ultimately fail the people they serve.

This suggests that a person who is transformed holistically (physically and spiritually) could discontinue wrongdoings and adopt an attitude of love, care, forgiveness and sharing. According to Brueggemann (1984: 26), such a transformation is healing and joyous and church educators should endeavour to facilitate the healing process in communities living in desperation by speaking and acting prophetically. One could also argue that failure to combine physical and spiritual development would be contextually and theologically problematic, as this indicates that a dichotomy exists between the two. This is because corporeal and spiritual poverty are equal threats to the well-being of humanity and must be addressed as a unified whole.

I have observed that the challenges of broken relationships in my Nigerian context, such as the manner in which division or conflicts in communities, increase the level of poverty. Authors such as Maduagwu (2000: 2-3), Agbi (2009: 1-3) and Gberebie *et al.*, (2009: 2) have acknowledged that, although the government of Nigeria has demonstrated a sense of concern and responsibility by formulating peace initiatives and various poverty-alleviation policies since 1972,⁸ poverty has not been removed.⁹ This suggests that poverty continues to be a problematic social issue within the Nigerian development sphere and poses a great challenge

⁸There have been programmes formulated by different Nigerians leaders to improve the living conditions of the poor, such as the Green Revolution, Operation Feed the Nation, the Directorate for Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure, Better Life for Rural Women, the National Rural Poverty Eradication Program, Agricultural Development Programs, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, the 7 Point Agenda and, most recently, the social-economic transformation development programmes of President Jonathan.

⁹ These authors concluded that poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria have failed to alleviate poverty due to corruption and neglect of the target group. Government needs to intensify its war against corruption and involve the target group in the formulation of its development programmes (Gberebie *et al.*, 2009: 2).

to the church.¹⁰ Therefore, it can be argued that, if the funding of development projects is only focused on human, economic, social and political development while ignoring the spiritual aspect, these projects are not likely to result in sustainable development. This calls for a holistic¹¹ understanding of development from a theological perspective.

In order to complement the government's efforts, ECWA is one of the key stakeholders in Nigeria at the forefront of applying various means to enhance the well-being of people. As a denomination, ECWA appears to have been active in its contribution to community development in terms of praxis, strategy and engagement. Studies reported in various ECWA documents reveal that ECWA involvement in community development in Nigeria has a long history. Turaki (1993: 3) argues, for example, that the ECWA's missionaries, in addition to their emphasis of the preaching of the gospel, were involved in works of charity and the social improvement of people through medical, educational and agricultural or industrial services.

The denomination's ultimate goal is to "glorify God and [to] communicate the gospel to the lost, disciplining and equipping believers, organising them into local churches and caring for the needy in the world through advocacy and social services" (ECWA, 2007: 3). The church pursues this goal through the establishment of various ministries, departments and agencies, one of which is the POD.¹² The goal of the ECWA's POD is to work with poor and underprivileged communities in Nigeria to facilitate a range of social interventions,¹³ including programmes in health, peace-building, adult education, sustainable water supply, economic empowerment and food security/sustainable agriculture, particularly in Northern Nigeria (Kasai, 2008: 3). There is no doubt that these are elements of development, but may not be sustainable if the root cause of poverty is not adequately tackled.

In 2004, Conrad and Zurich conducted a social impact assessment of the effects of POD on poverty alleviation. This assessment reveals that the ECWA's POD has generally contributed towards improving the living conditions of people. The report indicated that workers in the

¹⁰ This is especially relevant to this context, as the ECWA claims to be evangelical. Furthermore, the ECWA provides a biblical perspective of holistic development that advocates for individual, social, spiritual and structural transformation that will lead to a better life and living conditions for all people (cf. Bragg, 1987: 47).

¹¹ This approach seems not be emphasised sufficiently in the POD programmes (see Chapter 6).

¹² Individuals and organisations in Nigeria have recognised that they have a major role to play in transforming their communities and that the government alone cannot adequately meet the basic needs of all communities (cf. Aroh, 2002: 1). ECWA is one of many churches in Nigeria undertaking efforts to offer some hope of improved living conditions to its members and communities.

¹³ A social intervention is a programme, project and policy designed with the aim of changing the lives of beneficiaries. Normally, most development organisations are prompted by a sense of concern and responsibility to provide social services to poor communities in dire need of employment, quality schooling, health care and housing (cf. Mouton, 2001: 574).

POD programmes placed strong emphasis on self-help or self-reliance and that the focus was mostly on the community rather than the individual (Conrad & Zurich, 2004: 7). One could thus argue that an essential effort has been made, but Conrad and Zurich unfortunately did not discuss the evidence of spiritual transformation. The focus of the present study, however, seeks to assess both the spiritual and physical impact of the POD programmes.

1.3 Research Motivation

The motivation to embark on this study arose from my experience as a pastor of the ECWA Lafia District Church Council (ELDCC)¹⁴ in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. There is a high rate of poverty in both the rural and urban areas of this state. Furthermore, factors such as corruption, greed, selfishness, exploitation, sickness, unemployment, inadequate income and constant communal crises¹⁵ have all exacerbated the level of poverty in this region (cf. Ucha, 2010: 54). The majority of rural areas are characterised by poor health service delivery, bad roads, poor quality of schooling, the absence of or little electricity, inadequate housing, the absence of clean drinking water, and also the absence of big or small industries that could create job opportunities for the populace (Yongu, 2005: 2).

The constant challenge and concern in these complex socio-economic circumstances is how to address the problems referred to above. My sense of responsibility arose from the conviction that the church needed to make an impact in all that it does. This motivated me to pursue a Master's degree in Theology and Development Studies at Stellenbosch University. During my Master's research,¹⁶ I discovered that a Christian development perspective understands and promotes holistic transformation as the central component of human development. This approach highlights the notion that focusing on economic, social and political development alone is not sufficient to address the numerous pressing human needs. Spiritual development is crucial to sustainable development, and this is the point of departure between church and

¹⁴ I have been employed as a pastor in the ECWA since 21 June 1999. My pastoral experience started in the ECWA Lafia DCC in the capital city of Nasarawa State. After my undergraduate studies in 2006 I was posted to the Doma Local Church Council (DLCC), where I served in two congregations before moving to undertake further studies.

¹⁵ On 7 April 2012, Al-Makura, the Governor of Nasarawa State, condemned the unfortunate communal crisis between herdsmen and farmers in the Jankwe Development Area (see Yoms, 2013: 16-17). In January 2013, the Doma and Nasarawa Eggon areas experienced similar conflicts.

¹⁶ My research shows that, despite efforts towards development in Nasarawa State, poverty and under-development remain rampant. The research emanates from the assumption that a people-centred approach to development, particularly from a theological perspective, can contribute towards a solution to these problems. This approach is considered as holistic because it focuses on both the physical and spiritual aspects of human life (Yoms, 2013: 107).

non-faith-based perspectives of development. Transformational Development addresses the community as a whole; it considers the physical and spiritual, rich and poor, institutions and structures, and is concerned with positive change in all areas of human needs, be these social, economic, political or spiritual (Myers, 2011: 3).

Furthermore, from the perspective of TD as a holistic development, it is argued that programme planning alone cannot meet the needs of the people. Holistic development in a Christian perspective is thus a fundamental theological issue that needs to be well understood and applied (Bediako, 1998: 187). This theological concept motivated me to rethink the ways in which churches in Nigeria and the ECWA in particular, may approach development.¹⁷ If poverty is to be addressed effectively, what may compound the issue of poverty in the lives of the poor must be addressed. The congregational leaders need practical knowledge on how to liberate individuals from such bondage so that they can be transformed to embrace love, justice, equality, hope in God and peace with one another.

The above motivations concur with the opinion of Christian leaders and scholars, who acknowledge the fact that the church has a significant role to play in public life. Gern (1999: 441), for example, points out that the church can facilitate effective measures to reduce human suffering and advocate for justice, peace and development. Similarly, Koopman (2007: 299) stresses that the church has a unique contribution to make in public life, since it is a unique servant of the Lord of the universe. Additionally, Nyerere (1987: 117) reaffirms this reality when he notes that the church is obliged to fight for a just society in which every human being lives with dignity and contributes towards eradicating exploitation.

Alston (2004: 133) further explains that, as a Christian community, the church is equipped with knowledge to make the correct decisions and has the potential and discernment to advocate for God's will in the world. This is possible because Christians are not only witnesses of God and his workings in human life, but they also participate in the movement of God's love towards people (Bosch, 1991: 400). Therefore, the church as a change agent has a sense of responsibility that is geared towards addressing the realities of everyday life, because the church is a place where both poor and rich people meet. So it should be able to participate

¹⁷ My previous study was a literature study of the state of development in Nasarawa State, based on a people-centred approach. This study lacked, primarily, an assessment of TD in terms of the holistic criteria of social, political, economic and spiritual development, which is the concern of the present research. The current study is also narrowed to an impact assessment of the ECWA's POD programme through primary data collection from four communities in four states in Northern Nigeria.

with dignity, pride and freedom (Wells, 2006: 5). This means that the church can serve as an empowering medium in the struggle for social and spiritual change.

Although development is an important component of the struggle against unemployment, inequality and poverty reduction, it remains relatively new within the discipline of theology, particularly within most African countries (Bowers, 2005: 3). This also is true of Nigeria. As an ECWA pastor, my experience is that most of our ministers are not aware of or have not been taking part in this holistic ministry of TD. The ECWA's main strategy, as mentioned in 1.2, illustrates the typical dichotomy seen in most evangelical churches, whose priority is 'winning souls' ministering to the needy is regarded as being separate. It is of concern that, although the ECWA is blessed with scholars in the areas of Biblical studies, Systematic theology, Missiology, Ecclesiology, Pastoral care and Youth Ministry, amongst others, to the best of my knowledge, and as far as the available records indicate, the field of theology and development studies as an academic sub-discipline has not been explored by any ECWA minister. Therefore, my research question below is posed with the conviction that the ECWA understands sociality and that the holistic nature of activities can be a catalyst for the social transformation of poor and underprivileged Nigerian communities.

1.4 Research Question

In view of the above research background and motivation, the following evaluative research question guides the current study:

Have the ECWA's People Oriented Development programmes lead to Transformational Development of the poor communities in Northern Nigeria?

This research question is not basically concerned about quantity but rather about the qualitative impact of the service. That is, whether the programmes have helped beneficiaries move away from their state of misery and pain to well-being.

1.5 Research Aim and Objectives

1.5.1 Research aim

The aim of this study is to provide evidence that transformation can be viewed from a holistic perspective in the lives of beneficiaries. The findings will determine how to increase

awareness and understanding of the ECWA's POD in the theory and practice of TD. This will enhance the use of a framework for a holistic strategy in the ECWA's POD towards a critical engagement with the challenge of poverty in Nigeria.

1.5.2 Research objectives

In order to achieve the above research aim, the following objectives had to be met:

- i. An exploration of the various existing theories in community development;
- ii. A discussion of the concept of TD as a holistic framework and as key to the Church's engagement with poverty and injustice;
- iii. A description of the socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities;
- iv. The identification of remedial measures taken by the ECWA's POD;
- v. An evaluation, using Myers's TD standards and indicators, of the extent to which the POD programmes have or have not acted on or impacted the lives of beneficiaries holistically; and
- vi. The making of recommendations as to how the ECWA's POD could be more holistic in its approach.

The abovementioned objectives were not just an attempt to gather knowledge about POD programmes. Instead, by meeting these objectives, I hope that the end results of the study would contribute meaningfully towards the on-going efforts of enhancing people's physical and spiritual well-being.

1.6 Practical and Theological Nature of the Study

This is a Practical Theological study. This section, therefore, seeks to describe the practical and theological nature of the study, as well as the place of community development within the field of Practical Theology.

1.6.1 Practical theological nature of the study

According to Osmer (2008: 4), the core tasks of Practical Theology are descriptive, interpretive, normative and pragmatic. The descriptive task is intended to collect information concerning the situation of the community. The interpretive task seeks to understand and explain the causes of the situation, while the normative task provides an explanation of the situation from a theological perspective. Finally, the pragmatic task identifies potential

strategies that could be used to solve the problem (Osmer, 2008: 4). Ultimately, the descriptive, interpretive and normative analyses are all geared towards action, or what solution or process of change to adopt. Hendriks (2004: 33) proposes that listening to the community's story is a stepping stone towards understanding what God has to say about its situation and how the church can obediently participate in the mission of God.

The data presentation in the current study is in accordance with the holistic criteria within a Practical Theological approach. Osmer (2008: 32) asserts that Practical Theology begins with a critical understanding of an episode, situation or context. Consequently, the Practical Theology student interprets the texts of contemporary lives and practices in the "living human documents". Osmer (2008: 34) views this approach as a "spirituality of presence", which is a matter of attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families and communities. Such attending is referred to as "priestly listening", which can be informal, semiformal or formal. Formal attending is preferred, because it involves investigating particular episodes, situations and contexts through empirical research (Osmer, 2008: 38).

In this current study, qualitative research methods were used in which people were not treated as objects to produce data for the research, but rather were attended to in their particularity (Osmer, 2008: 39). Qualitative methods thus are often used to describe social reality from the participants' points of view. The actors in a social situation can better explain what they are doing and why (Epstein, 1988: 188). This is because, for community development practice to achieve the desired goal it should obtain practical knowledge grounded in everyday experience in the search for a just and peaceful society. The fundamental purpose of seeking to understand the community is to use that understanding so as to bring about positive changes in the community (Ledwith, 2008: 28).

This qualitative research in the field of Practical Theology adopted research methodology from the social sciences, such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Open-ended questions were used to enable the respondents to use their own words to describe their situations and thoughts concerning the remedial measures of the ECWA's POD programmes. According to Ganzevoort (2012: 221), these methods help the practical theologian to make use of the stories narrated by the respondents to interpret with biblical and theological understanding the on-going situation in a particular community. The interpretation of the community situation connects theology and social science. Theologically the voices of

the poor and voiceless are heard, and socially the practical theologian describes and provides strategies for practical ministry (Ganzevoort, 2012: 222).

The use of these methods, especially for the summative evaluation, helps in capturing and understanding the effectiveness of ECWA's POD programmes from the point of view of the beneficiaries. Myers (2011: 239) notes that the essence of conducting an impact evaluation is to help the development agency learn from its experience and reflect through dialogical activities to discover what works best. This is in line with the pragmatic task of practical theology, which seeks to formulate strategies of action that could influence events in ways that are desirable (Osmer, 2008: 176). To achieve this task requires transforming agents to apply the quality of servant leadership to lead their organisation through a process of change in its identity, mission, culture and operation procedures (Osmer, 2008: 177); that is, formulating practical ways that can lead towards achieving the desirable goal.

1.6.2 Theology and community development study

The need to engage theology in the process of community development cannot be overemphasised. In the first place a Christian's understanding of development is not limited to practical activity in the material world; it must consider physical and spiritual aspects of development. Myers (2011: 47) notes that God has two agendas: redeeming and restoring the world to himself. Therefore:

Development from a Christian perspective is a theological act in every bit as much as it is a technical or problem-solving act. The vision of a better future and how one works toward that future are grounded in one's theology and understanding of the biblical narrative (Myers, 2011: 47).

According to August (2010: 93), theology and development as an academic field:

- i. Is an interdisciplinary subject; it partners with economics, management, sociology and political science.
- ii. Is missional in its focus; it crosses the boundaries from the explored to the unexplored field.
- iii. Is systematic, in that it deals with traditional teachings of God's covenantal relationship with the people called.
- iv. Is practical, because it study the activities, organisation and structure of the church in response to basic human needs.

- v. Is ethical in nature, hence it asks for values in development – Kingdom values and way of life in human society.
- vi. Is people-centred in its approach and insists that responding to human realities and human dignity in development is a matter of priority.

August (1999: 10) further explains that the theological approach in community development is crucial for the fact that current scientific discoveries and revolutionary movements open new potentials and perils for human beings that need a theological response in the process of community development. As noted in the motivation for this study in 1.3 above, the level of poverty in both rural and urban areas in Nigeria, and contributing factors such as corruption, greed, selfishness, exploitation, sickness, unemployment, inadequate income and constant communal crises, are key issues that need a Practical Theological response.

In the light of August descriptions above, this study position community development within the Practical Theology as inter/intra discipline which is about transformative action. It does not only focus on a systematic comprehension and interpretation of scripture and tradition, but also considers concrete issues affecting the faith community (Hendriks, 2004: 33). Osmer (2008: 4) reminds us that Practical Theology begins with the concrete lives and practices of human beings. This means that theological engagement in the process of community development seeks to address the community as a whole; it considers the physical and spiritual, rich and poor, institutions and structures (Myers, 2011: 3).

The role of the holistic practitioner in community development is to mobilise, organise, plan and implement the changes in the economic, social, political and spiritual lives of the beneficiaries. This is because basic human needs have to be met in order for an individual to survive (August, 1999: 21-22). Therefore, the holistic practitioner is provoked into formulating an adequate, appropriate and emphatic response that could lead to the healing and liberation of the poor and underprivileged. The theological responses and focus are geared towards restoring hope, offering redemption, and spreading good news of love and justice (Cooper-White, 2012: 29). In addition, the Practical Theologian through divine support– helps to move people from their moments of crisis, suffering and pain to moments of hope and opportunity. Those who have gone out of the right relation with God, others and the community turn toward peace, justice and the path of life (Conde-Frazier, 2012: 241).

Furthermore, responses from a theological perspective insist that the way of life in the changed communities should be characterised by relationships of mutual care and service (Osmer, 2008: 189). These relationships bring together people of diverse social, economic, political and religious backgrounds who become knitted together in a new family in which they relate to each other with mutuality and equality (Osmer, 2008: 190). At this level, the community now can reject power in the form of violence and retribution and practise non-violence, to love, respect and meet the needs of their neighbours. Ultimately, community well-being is self-given and suffering love, and not domination, violence or seeking advantage over others (Osmer, 2008: 191). That is to say, the hope for the poor in the present lies in the fellowship of a community in which justice, equity and compassion are living realities that demand a practical response by church leaders and members.

1.7 Research Design and Methodology¹⁸

A literature study was first undertaken to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of community development and the principles and practices of TD. The literature review also helped me to discover strategies that tackle poverty from a holistic approach in this practical theological study. In this process, secondary data such as books, journal articles, public documents and internet materials were consulted. Church documents, such as POD programme documentation were also consulted.

This study provides an evaluation of the ECWA's POD programmes. According to De Vos (2005: 369), programme evaluation is a method that assists researchers to obtain information about the activities, nature and impact of an organisation's programme(s). Rubin and Babbie (2007: 198) add that there are three types of programme evaluation, namely: summative, process and formative evaluation. It is summative if the evaluator's aim is to assess the success of the programme in order to determine its survival. A process evaluation aims to describe the course of a programme as it is being developed, while a formative evaluation involves the investigator seeking information that will aid in the planning, improvement and implementation of the programme.

Although these three types of evaluation play vital roles in evaluating an organisation's development projects for a target group, this thesis focuses on summative evaluation. The

¹⁸In Chapter Four, the methodological considerations and choices will be discussed and justified in greater detail.

rationale was to obtain information about EWCA's POD that could contribute towards strategising, where necessary, for a more effective and holistic development approach.

The empirical data collection tools were a combination of focus group discussions with the target communities and semi-structured interviews with POD programmes' Community Development Facilitators (CDF) and ECWA Pastors (EP). The focus was on people's qualitative changes in terms of dignity, social status, just and peaceful relationships and the general well-being of the programme's beneficiaries, as described by Myers (2011: 294). Cluster sampling was chosen as the sampling technique for both the focus group discussions and the interviews.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by a number of factors. First, the size of the study or target population was one of the main limitations. However, according to Monette *et al* (2002: 132), it is not only difficult, but could even be impossible, to arrive at a logical conclusion when the scope of study is too large. In that case, one would have to select a smaller sample group from a larger target population to estimate or predict the popularity of unknown information, situations or outcomes regarding the larger group in finding an answer to a research question (Kumar, 2005: 164). Therefore, the size of the study or target population informed my choice of sampling technique, namely cluster sampling, which was chosen because the researcher had to select only a limited number of communities to visit and number of people for the group discussion and interviews (see 4.3.1 & 5.3.1).

Secondly, there also only was limited secondary data on the ECWA's POD office and the localities under study. For this reason – in addition to the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions I visited some of the development projects to confirm the testimonies of the staff and beneficiaries in spite of time and financial limitations.

This study was limited mainly to an evaluation of the ECWA's POD programmes based on the principles and practice of TD. This is because there are many other churches and Christian groups in Nigeria that are making important efforts in terms of community development. The fact that I am an ECWA pastor motivated my choice of ECWA's POD, as I had observed that a holistic approach was not being practised sufficiently.

Finally, the current study did not look at the challenge of poverty in Nigeria as a country, but was limited to selected communities, such as the Lawishi Daji in Gombe State, the Chinjiri in Nasarawa State, the Bayan Dutse in Kano State and the Gidan Sumalar in Kwara State in Northern Nigeria (see 5.3.1). I chose these communities from POD four operational zones, which comprise 144 communities in 38 local government areas in 10 states in Northern Nigeria (POD of ECWA, 2013: 9).

1.9 Ethical Considerations

My research was social and scientific in nature, and demanded taking ethical responsibility. Sherlock (2009: 631-649) notes that ethics is an “alignment with people’s beliefs, values and worldview.” In other words, it is a standard of life amongst a group of people in a given community. Rubin and Babbie (2007: 37-38) and Dawson (2009: 153) add that the social research process often intrudes on people’s lives and privacy. The research methods used in the current study included both a literature study and field work (see 1.7). The latter included the focus group discussions with the POD beneficiaries and interviews with church leaders and community development facilitators.

Dawson (2009: 153) suggests that it is good to be both open and honest in the process of data collection. In other words, the intention of data collection should be clearly stated to the participants before starting the empirical component of the research. The researcher should assure respondents that the information gathered from them will be treated with respect and honesty. Rubin and Babbie (2007: 38) also advise that the research ethics and moral code should be made known to the respondents before data collection and that no participant should be forced to answer questions.

This research project was designed and conducted in accordance with Stellenbosch University’s Policy on Research Ethics. For instance, an ethical consent clearance form was completed and submitted to the Stellenbosch University Ethics Committee which was approved (see appendix G). I also received a letter of permission to conduct the study from the ECWA headquarters (see Appendix D). To ensure that participant privacy was protected and to comply with the University’s Policy on Research Ethics, I drafted a consent letter and stated all ethical issues relevant to this research; this was sent to each participant (see appendix E). In this consent letter I also guaranteed the anonymity of the respondents as individuals and communities, as suggested by Henning (2009:73).

The nature of the programme evaluation adopted for this study (see 1.6 and 4.2.1.3) focused on an assessment of the impact of the organisation's programme, both positive and negative. This has implications for both the service provider and the beneficiaries who provided the needed information. Therefore, the integrity of the respondents was protected and the data gathered from them was managed carefully.

In view of this, I attempted to be transparent in order to assure the validity of the research. Data was collected with the help of POD programme CDFs working in the selected communities of each ECWA District Church Council (DCC). I assured the CDFs that the information gathered from the respondents would not be used for any purposes other than the impact evaluation of the POD programmes. All the above measures were carried out to protect the participants. Confidentiality and anonymity also applied to those who were interviewed in the focus group discussion.

1.10 Potential Impact of the Study

The potential impact of this evaluative research is both academic and practical. Osmer (2008: 48) states that basic and applied research projects are suitable for academic purposes because these seek to contribute to knowledge and theory, while evaluation and action research are crucial in addressing real-life problems in which the goal is to improve a programme or address a practical need on the ground. Fouché (2011: 449) reminds us that, in an age of accountability, managers, funders and even clients demand that some evidence is provided in terms of "what works, how it works or how it can be made to work better".

The findings of the present study have the potential to contribute towards the POD programmes by re-formulating what works, how it works or how it can be made to work better, as suggested by Fouché (2011: 449). This knowledge will also help in developing a proposal for a coherent and holistic approach to poverty alleviation and new ideas on how the POD programmes can improve their developmental activities.

This research ultimately will provide some possibility of fostering an awareness of social and theological concerns across a wide range of professions amongst fellow pastors. Our pastors and church leaders need to adequately understand and be encouraged to reinforce their strategies on holistic ministry. I am convinced that their understanding of and engagement in TD could advance the effort of the church towards enabling the people in the communities in

which they serve to enjoy the fullness of life with justice, dignity, peace and hope for the coming kingdom of God. This would, at the same time, contribute to the current development efforts of the ECWA through its POD programmes.

The theological and contextual framework for a holistic approach that is proposed in this study is not only intended to assist ECWA's POD but also to serve as an academic manual. As stated in 1.3, the field of community development is relatively new within the discipline of theology, few theses have been written¹⁹ and is lacking in most African seminaries and Bible colleges. Therefore, this study will provide both theological and technical knowledge for pastors and church leaders who are making efforts towards alleviating poverty and human suffering.

1.11 Chapter Outline

1.11.1 Chapter one

Chapter One provides a general background to the research project, followed by the motivation for the study, the research question and objectives, and an overview of the practical and theological nature of the study. The chapter also reflects on the research design and methodology chosen for this study. This chapter further includes the limitations of the study, ethical considerations and the potential impact of the research, and the organisation of the research report into various chapters.

1.11.2 Chapter two

Chapter Two explores the traditional, recent perspectives on and pragmatic approaches to development. The traditional development theories are presented as the modernisation and dependency theories. The former view of development comes from economic growth based on models of Western countries and later argues that modernisation creates a gap between the rich and the poor, and developed and less-developed nations. Recent perspectives on development that were explored are those of post-modernity, gender and development, and the participatory development paradigm. Dialogical strategy, gender equality, participation,

¹⁹ Two Nigerian contributions, should, nevertheless be noted. Agbiji, O. M. 2012 conducted research on development-oriented church leadership. He describes how the church in Nigeria may respond to the socio-political and economic transformation of Nigerian society. While Onwunta, I.E. 2009 wrote on Gender Sterotyping in Church and Community: A Nigerian Feminine Perspective.

self-reliance and people-centred approaches were the focus. Pragmatic approaches, which include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the African view of development and faith-based organisations, are illustrated as moving away from theories and models towards being instrumentalist. These theories shape our understanding of Christian views on holistic ministry, as discussed in Chapter Three.

1.11.3 Chapter three

Chapter Three focuses on the concept of TD, which is viewed as the missiological key to the church's engagement with poverty and injustice. The theoretical basis of TD, with specific reference to theological challenges and distinctions between Christian and secular notions of transformation, is explored. The chapter also critiques the popular concept of poverty and offers a theological reflection on poverty and social injustice. The chapter concludes with some characteristics of transformation.

1.11.4 Chapter four

Chapter Four presents the overall guide and rationale for the choice of research design. For example, it first undertakes a literature study to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of community development and the principles and practices of TD. Secondary data, such as books, journal articles, internet materials and the ECWA's POD documentation, were consulted. The empirical data collection tools are a combination of focus group discussions with the target communities and semi-structured interviews with POD Community Development Facilitators (CDF) and ECWA Pastors (EP). Apart from the information obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions, some of the projects were observed, and photos and field notes were taken. Due to the size of the study population, cluster sampling was used to select a few communities to visit and smaller numbers of people for the group discussions and interviews.

1.11.5 Chapter five

Chapter Five presents and discusses the findings of the empirical work undertaken in this study. It explores the socio-economic context of the selected communities, which comprises three elements – problems, causes and effects. The problems are conditions in the selected communities. Causes are reasons responsible for the communities' conditions. Effects are

referred to as the consequences of the condition, especially on the social, economic and religious lives of the people.

1.11.6 Chapter six

Chapter Six explores the EWCA's self-understanding as a church and its relationship to development. It highlights remedial measures taken by the ECWA's POD programmes and evaluates these POD programmes in the light of the principles and practices of TD. The development activities involve the efforts of the church towards improving the well-being of poor and underprivileged communities in Nigeria. This includes cultural and religious changes and attitudes towards Christians and the gospel as a result of the church's interventions.

1.11.7 Chapter seven

Chapter Seven summarises and concludes the study and offers recommendations of some principles and practices of TD that could be used by the ECWA POD in particular. The recommendations address the question of how the practical activities of Christians should relate their faith to their response to human needs. The potential role of the church as an agent of transformation is recommended.

1.12 Conclusion

The overall aim of this dissertation is to discover whether the ECWA's POD programmes have led to TD in the lives of poor communities in Northern Nigeria. The result is hoped to encourage active participation in the formation of community development that is based on a holistic approach as the central component of human development and as a theological framework for the church's pursuance of community development and poverty alleviation. The study emanated from the fact that a transformational approach focuses on both the physical and spiritual aspects of human life, and it could be a theological approach that ECWA's POD can apply to enhance their efforts in community development.

The argument is that, as a faith-based organisation, the ECWA's POD should be able to ensure that poor communities move towards a better future in which *shalom*, a just, peaceful and harmonious relationship with God and between individuals in a given community, is practised. In this effort there should be evidence of change from a level of human existence

that is less than that envisioned by God to one in which a person is fully human and free to move to a state of wholeness in harmony with God, others and the environment.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPLORING EMERGING DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

2.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this chapter is to explore various emerging development theories (see 1.5.2). The quest for the exploration of the emerging development theories is borne out of the realisation that there are various theories, approaches, paradigms and programmes in the field of development (Burkey, 1993: 27). Hence, it is worth posing the following question in carrying out this research: what theoretical foundations and practices underpin the notion of development? Secondly, how can our understanding of these theories help us appreciate the Transformational Development (TD) approach as proposed in this study?²⁰

To go about answering this question I incorporate various scholarly views on traditional development theories, recent perspectives on development as well as paradigms of development within the discourse on faith and development. This chapter makes a case for development programmes to be centred on broad-based participation and capacity building of the individual within the community. Local ownership of development projects is only possible if the principles and environment allow for a wide and diverse range of stakeholders.

The chapter is divided into four sections: section one explores two of the traditional development theories, namely Modernisation and Dependency Theories. Section two brings into focus the recent perspectives on development, which includes Postmodernity, Gender and Development and the Participatory Development paradigm. Section three discusses various pragmatic approaches, which include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the African view of development, as well as the role of Faith-based organisations in development. Section four explores some basic principles and environments for community development.

2.2 Traditional Development Theories

In my review of the literature, as pointed out in section 1.2, several development theories that emerged after the Second World War were identified. These began with Modernisation Theory in the 1950s and 1960s. This was the first theory that dominated the post-war development debate, and was followed in the late 1960s to 1970s by Dependency Theory, and

²⁰The validity of this research work would not be possible without the existing works that precede it.

then by a pragmatic approach that moved the focus from the macro- to micro-level of development during the late 1980s and the 1990s (Davids, 2009: 4).²¹ A brief history and critique of the above theoretical approaches follow below in order to demonstrate the shifts in the various development theories.

2.2.1 Modernisation Theory

Various scholars have written about the history, strategies, successes and failures of modernisation theory. Bragg (1987: 22) defines modernisation as the “combination of mutual and social changes of a people which enable them to increase, cumulatively and permanently, their total real production”. For Coetzee (2001: 27), modernisation is understood as “the transformation which takes place when a traditional or pre-modern society changes to such an extent that the new forms of technological, organizational, or social characteristics of advanced society appears”. In this sense, development is viewed as a “progressive movement towards technologically more complex and integrated forms of modern society” (Gardner & Lewis, 1996:12). According to Roodt (2001:471), this was an attempt of Western governments and their development agencies to set less-developed countries on the path to capitalist industrialisation.

Burkey (1993: 27), Gardner and Lewis (1996: 12), Coetzee (2001: 27) and Davids (2009: 9) observe that modernisation theory emerged and became the most popular and influential development practice soon after the Second World War. The theory held that only by imitating developed countries would the less-developed countries be developed. Serote, Mager and Budlender (2001: 158-159) also observe that Modernisation Theory hinged on the model of the economic growth of Western countries. The latter form of this model of development claims that development is to be measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while the benefits will trickle from the top down to the majority of people in an impoverished society.

The main goal of modernisation theorists is to ensure that there is an increase in production and macro-economic growth, which in turn should raise the standard of living for all (Bragg,

²¹ On a macro-level, development entails principally investment in modern industrial technology. The micro-level, however, sees development as coming down to level of the poor. Thus, the poor would need to be trained to develop themselves in their own way. The focus moves from what could be done for the poor to what they could do for themselves.

1987: 22). Proponents of modernisation theory claim that less-developed countries are underdeveloped because their populace remains largely illiterate and lacks resources and skilled manpower. Modernisation Theorists also claim that less developed countries are characterised by high levels of corruption, poverty, various cases of disease and inadequate institutional frameworks (Okoye, 2003: 222). Therefore, the less-developed societies must first undergo various stages of development in order to overcome their limitations. W.W. Rostow spearheaded the Modernisation Theory movement, in which he proposed the five stages that nation-states must undergo before reaching an advanced level of development akin to that in the First World, as illustrated in the following figure.

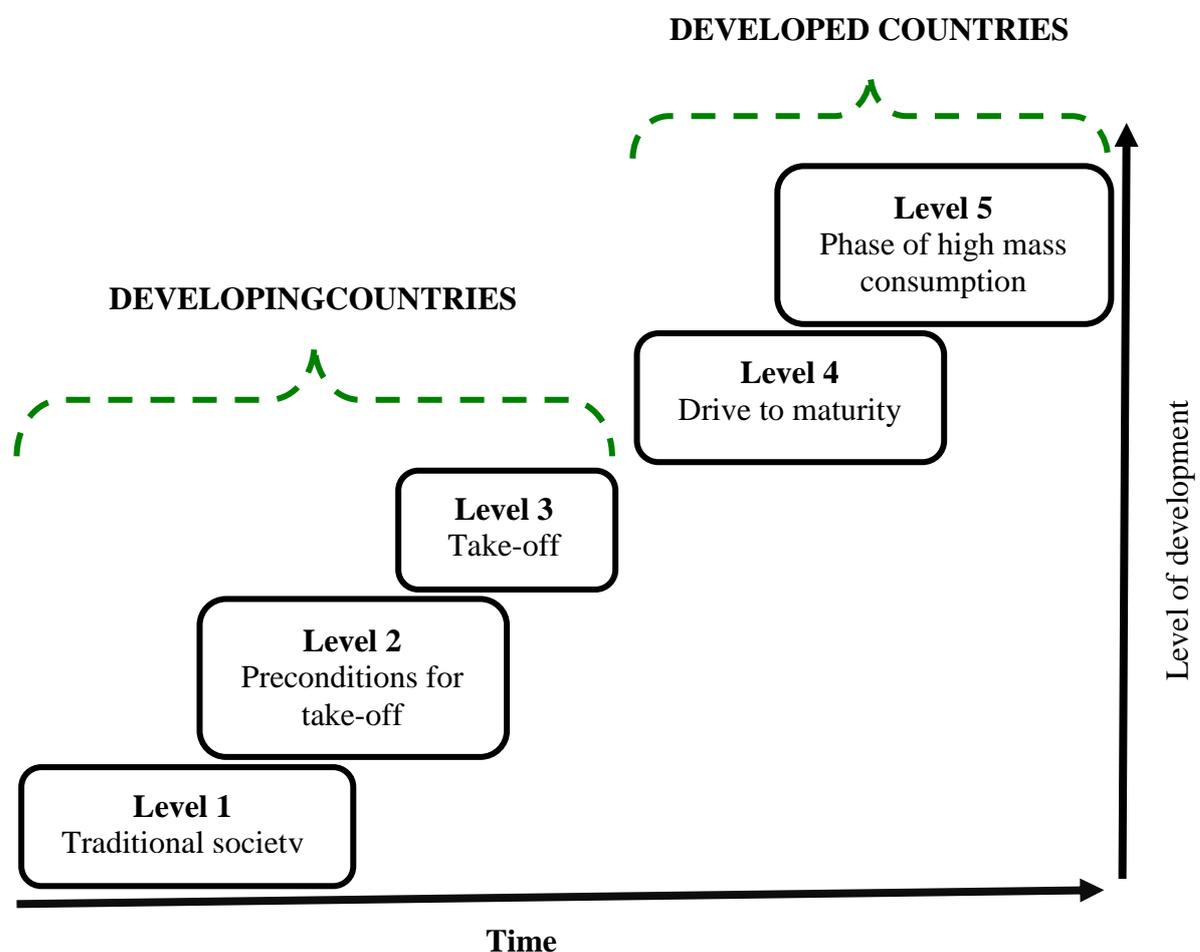


Figure 2.1: The five stages of Rostow's development process (Davids, 2009: 10).

These five stages of Rostow's development process are explained by Davids (2009: 10) as follows: In stage one the less-developed countries begin their development process by engaging a high proportion of their labour force in agriculture. Yet there is low agricultural productivity, no savings, low capitalism, kin-oriented, hierarchical social systems, and high illiteracy. The second stage illustrates the preconditions for the take-off of development. In

this stage the proponents of modernisation theory claim that rapid economic growth is possible only when indigenous knowledge and culture are invaded and replaced by that of the West. The third stage (being the take-off stage) is characterised by rapid economic growth and the spread of Western technology in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy.

In stage four, the 'drive to maturity' is reached when less-developed nations are able to acquire Western technological knowledge and entrepreneurial skills to produce what they (the less-developed countries) choose. Stage five is the age of high mass consumption and, at this point, less-developed nations will have adopted the lifestyle and consumption patterns of industrialised nations (Davids, 2009: 10). Burkey (1993: 27-28) points out that, at this point, modernisation theory looks at population control, improving health facilities and agricultural production systems.

Apparently, modernisation has indeed influenced the lives of people in less-developed countries in a number of ways. It has facilitated a mixing and interaction of people from virtually all parts of the world. Modern technology has made it possible to access or view what is happening in other societies (Speckman, 2007: 6). No doubt, modern technology is helping to facilitate the movement and mass production of goods and services. More people have access to formal education, health care, easy means of networking, transportation and communication systems. However, modernisation also has had negative effects on the populace. It has resulted in migration from rural areas to urban centres and from 'less-developed' to developed countries. Rural people moved and still move to such places in search of a better life and better standards of living, which are relatively non-existent in predominantly rural societies.

The modern lifestyle or standard of life also has a negative impact on African societal values and ways of life (Speckman, 2007: 7). The key critique of Modernisation Theory is that it indoctrinates people into the Western way of life as a supposed sign of development. It has failed to acknowledge the fact that God created various ethnic groups of people with variously fashioned standards of behaviour and patterns of life. O'Donovan (2000: 13) notes that one of the damaging effects of embracing Western values is the loss of a collective sense of responsibility to what happens to other people in the society. That is not to say that Western development is totally bad, but by emphasising the worldview and cultures of the Third World as being responsible for their poverty and that this can be overcome only by replacing it with a Western worldview and culture is very flawed.

For example, it is wrong to assume that, if the population living in the horror of hunger and want should experience an era of happiness, peace and prosperity they must be mobilised to produce more, to invest, to get down to work and to expand trade. Poor people themselves must be willing to seize opportunities and agree to the efforts required to become developed according to Western culture (Rist, 2010: 77). This too is not necessary, because development strategy in this sense may result in the marginalisation, domination and disempowerment of the poor and less-privileged and a high cost of living. In addition, the personal and social life would become more difficult for the common people and this could lead to the marginalisation of some people in society and the loss of a sense of human dignity. This is because peoples' dignity will be measured in terms of their material possessions. It also means that if they are not able to contribute to the production process by input of either capital or labour, they will be pushed aside. This type of development also leads to unemployment, under-employment and foreign debt (Robinson, 1994: 317-318).

One of the glaring failures of Modernisation Theory is that poverty remains prevalent. The causes of underdevelopment and poverty in traditional societies were not taken into consideration (Bowers, 2005: 35). Rather, Modernisation Theory overlooked the local context and promoted Western culture as the ultimate goal of development (Davids, 2009: 11). Instead of reducing poverty, it rather created a widening gap between the rich and poor, and no final solution was found to the challenge of poverty in less-developed countries. Burkey (1993: 28) points out that, despite Modernisation Theorists' efforts there have been an increasing number of people who continue to experience extreme poverty, marginalisation and unemployment; in fact, more people are facing the crisis of starvation.

In addition, this model of development left many developing countries in debt, dependency, communal disarray, with natural resources diminished and artificial socio-economic relations (Speckman, 2007: 31-33). In view of this, Burkey (1993: 48) concludes that:

Development is more than the provision of social services and introduction of new technologies. Development involves changes in the awareness, motivation and behaviour of individuals and in the relations between individuals as well as between groups within a society. These changes must come from within the individuals and groups, and cannot be imposed from the outside.

Burkey's position in the above quotation represents a strong theoretical point that can be used to argue against the concept of economic growth propounded by the proponents of modernisation. For instance, the discussion so far has revealed that modernisation theories

suggest that the less-developed countries gradually have to increase their level of education, savings and investments until they are economically strong enough for “take-off” and eventually reach self-sustained growth. However, this theory failed to acknowledge that development consists of more than mere economic growth.

From Burkey’s quote above one could argue that motivation, behaviour and relations are keys to studying the dynamics of poverty. People need to know who they are and the purpose of their lives and that no condition in which they find themselves is permanent. In terms of motivation, people need to be helped and encouraged to take responsibility for their development. In terms of behaviour, people need changes in their worldview in order to think and act positively towards themselves, their neighbours and their communities. Relationships, interpersonal relationships and relationships with other creatures are significant indications of development. The fact is that development concerns people, societies and life, and is about restoring the humanity of those who have been robbed of it by wars, natural disasters or oppressive systems.

The above argument is premised on the realisation that money does not provide a complete solution. Moreover, development cannot be transferred to or forced on people. Changes must come from within an individual or group of people with a common goal. What they need is awareness and motivation to start with what they have and what they know, rather than to copy a particular lifestyle (Burkey, 1993: 48). This paradigm, however, has also been met with opposition. The counter-theories are discussed in the next section, including the subsequent strategies that evolved in the history of development over time.

One would like to conclude here by saying that the development techniques of the kind propounded by modernisation are good, but the costs that people have to pay for such development are high. In the personal and social realms, life becomes fragmented and dehumanised. The marginalisation of some people in society could become normal. The intrinsic value of the human person may be lost and people could be regarded only in relation to their cash value. This is because, if they are not able to contribute to the production process through the input of either capital or labour, they are pushed aside. In the economic realm, this type of development leads to unemployment, under-employment and foreign debt. The point of departure with the Christian theology of development is that we are concerned for the holistic development of the whole human community. The focus is on the material, physical,

psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of every person in the community. The benefits are not only for the present generation, but also for future generations.

2.2.2 Dependency Theory

The failure of the Modernisation Theory model motivated the rise of the Dependency paradigm. Bragg (1987: 28) explains that “dependence is a conditioning situation whereby the economies of the underdeveloped countries are conditioned by the development expansion of the developed countries”. The concepts of Dependency Theory emanated from Latin America in the 1960s through the work of economists and social scientists who questioned the growing gap between rich and poor nations (Bragg, 1987: 28). Garner and Lewis (1996: 16) note that the persistence of poverty and inequality continues to be one of the most problematic issues that led to the reactions of the Dependency Theorists.

Graaff (1996: 83), in a review of Andre Gunder Frank a key proponent of Dependency Theory, argues that “capitalism had a destructive influence on Third World countries”. “Unequal condition of trade” was, for instance, seen as a means of exploiting Third World countries by making their products cheaper for foreign buyers, while imports of foreign goods were more expensive for Third World buyers. The most challenging issues are the fact that the:

- i. Developed nations were developing at the expense of the less-developed and the urban areas at the expense of rural areas. Resources were taken from rural areas to develop the urban areas and from less-developed countries to developed countries (Davids, 2009: 13-14).
- ii. Exploitation of natural resources, the collapse of local industries, cheap exportation and expensive importation, as well as the political independence of the less-developed countries, were important issues that led to the reaction by the dependency activists (Wood, 2001: 70).
- iii. Contrast between the wealth of a few privileged individuals and the dire poverty of the masses became unpalatable. The reality and depth of the problem arises because those who are rich have power over the lives of those who are poor, (Davids, 2009: 14-15).

The figure below clearly explains that the migration of resources from rural to urban areas has only contributed to the fast development of the former (developed/urban) and the underdevelopment of the latter (less-developed/rural) (Burkey 1993: 28).

The hierarchical order in which the developed nations were viewed as superior to the less-developed nations was another reason for the dependency theorists' reactions against the modernisation proponents' approach to development. Thus, the developed nations demanded the less-developed nations to copy them in order to become like them and to be seen as 'developed'. These were the major factors that prompted Dependency Theorists to insist that the way out was through radical structural change (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 16). Therefore, they advocated social revolution as a weapon to remove any structure that created an obstacle to that which underpinned their lack of freedom and development (Davids, 2009: 14-15).

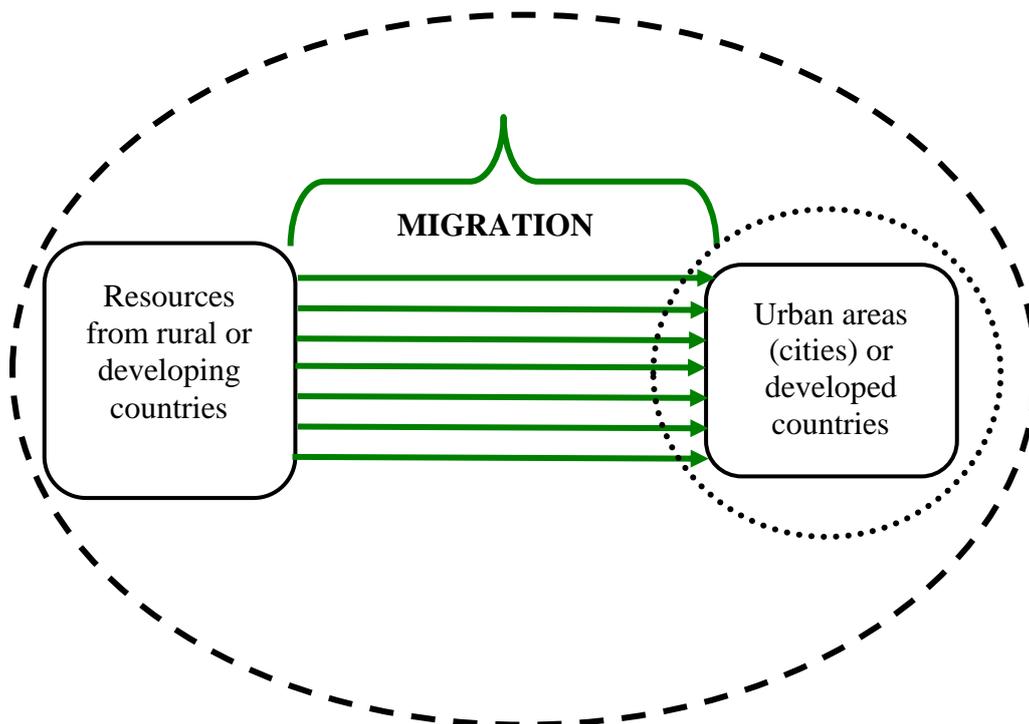


Figure 2.2: Migration of resources from rural to urban areas (Davis, 2009: 13).

As with Modernisation Theory, much has been written on the contributions and failures of the Dependency approach. Burkey (1993: 29), for example, acknowledges that Dependency activists had a substantial impact by reforming the failure of the Modernisation approach. However, they failed to initiate an appropriate development process to replace the key flaw of Modernisation, namely the idea of progress as a more or less automatic and linear process and the idealised mechanical vision of development. According to Davids (2009: 16), the advocates of the Dependency school concentrated so much on the external causes of underdevelopment that they ignored internal factors that may also be responsible for underdevelopment. The good aspect of Dependency Theory, in spite of the criticism, is that it

has stimulated development practitioners to evaluate their development goals so as to ascertain their impact on the lives of the beneficiaries (Burkey, 1993: 29).

The quest for grassroots development, among others, speaks to the heart of Dependency Theory. That is, people should be empowered to take an active part in their development process, and not to be mere passive spectators of what concerns their well-being. According to Chambers (2003: 2), it requires those who are in positions of power from the top to step down to the level of the powerless, to sit, listen and learn from and empower the powerless and weak. It means that there is no development effort that can lead to positive and lasting change unless it is anchored well in the cultural norms and values of the affected society. Therefore, the weak, poor and powerless cannot win their war if they are disempowered; rather, they need to be strengthened by the rich, strong and powerful.

Empowering people to be responsible for their development is a key element that can lead to sustainable development (see 2.5.1.3). With regard to human dignity, Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: xviii) explain that it (human dignity) is enhanced when the poor are encouraged and empowered to take responsibility for their development. Thus, a spirit of domination and exploitation is completely discouraged. It means that, if levels of dependency are to be reduced, people must be strengthened and allowed to participate in their own affairs, identifying their felt needs, creating mutual relationships and providing a caring community. It also requires that, in the process of development, outside development agencies must work together with the members of the community to mobilise physical, financial and human resources to meet the basic human needs, instead of cash flow from the top down.

In other words, development should be seen as enhancing human freedom. According to Sen (1999: 3), development is a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Improving the individual level of income is an important means to expanding freedoms in society. Factors that could contribute to people's freedom include access to facilities for basic education and health care, and the right to participate in public discussion. Technological progress can contribute to human freedom, but the objective of the development is more important. That is, development projects should concentrate on ends without considering the means. Therefore, development requires the removal of what prevents human freedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over-activity of repressive states.

2.3 Recent Trends in Development Theories

In this section the recent development debates are explored, specifically with reference to the so-called postmodern, gender and development, and participatory paradigms. It will be argued that development is viewed in terms of human empowerment, which does not exclusively mean material or economic empowerment alone. It looks at development as the process of releasing people from conditions and structures that hinder their active participation in the process of development and decision-making.

2.3.1 Postmodernity and development

Postmodernity is understood to be “an umbrella term that is used in different ways by different speakers” and also across disciplines (Taylor, 2004: 113). According to Gardner and Lewis (1996: 21) the term refers to “a cultural and intellectual rejection of modernity”, that is, rejecting the character of being modern. It resisted the modernisation concept of the “dominance of unitary theories²² of progress and belief in scientific rationality” (Gardner & Lewis 1996: 21). Furthermore, the advocates of this concept argue that there is no single, objective account of reality, for everyone experiences things differently. The proponents of postmodernity criticise the possibility of a ‘common problem and common solution’ as proposed by the proponents of modernisation. Instead, they insist on a multiplicity of voices, diversity and cultural relativity (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 21). That is, the voices of the marginalised people must be heard and their potential and ability must be recognised and respected. Gardner and Lewis (1996: 22) acknowledge that this approach has helped development workers avoid the tendency of only focusing upon specific groups and issues, such as “women” or “the landless”, and turn towards self-reliance and participation.

Ziai (2007: 3) points out that the notion of postmodernity originates from the early 1980s. The movement was motivated by scholars’ and activists’ dissatisfaction with the concept and practice of modernisation theory, which evidently did not offer a better alternative for the Third World. Speckman (2007: 34) writes of how the postmodernity approached developed over the years. He explains that the history of postmodernity originated in Latin America in the 1950s after the Second World War. Community development activities during this era were in phases. Phase one consisted of relief work or charity demonstrated to the affected

²² Unitary theory is a scientific term used in chemistry to indicate that the molecules of all complete compounds are units whose parts are bound together in a definite structure, with mutual and reciprocal influence on each other, and are not mere aggregations of more or less complex groups (The Free Dictionary, 2014).

people, although it was conditional. Phase two, in the 1970s, focused on self-help schemes to enable people to develop in areas of agriculture, beadwork, fine arts etc. Loans were provided and agreements were entered into, yet funds were not enough. In the 1980s macro-economic policies came to the local level. The People-centred Development Model arose in the 1990s (Speckman, 2007: 35).

In the aforementioned discussion, Dependency Theory attacks the unequal relationship between poor and rich countries and highlights the failure of modernisation theory. However, the aim of postmodernity extends beyond this. According to Leroke (1996: 223), the postmodernists also were in search of an alternative through which the relationship between the poor and the rich could be addressed. Unlike the advocates of the Dependency school of thought, the proponents of postmodernity seek to bring new insights into our thinking about development and to advance the notion that these insights become incomprehensible outside of the binary logic²³ that characterised modern thought (Leroke, 1996: 223). Although the debate of postmodern theory centres on key issues like “discourse, text, author and representation”, Leroke (1996: 238) is of the view that development should be approached by way of discourse or dialogue.

The reason behind Leroke’s choice of the discourse approach is that viewing development in terms of dialogue can help to redefine the power relations between poor and rich countries. In this sense, the participants will be actively involved in the development process, rather than merely featuring in development projects being imposed from the outside. Therefore, the process of development should not be monolithic, but should be shaped by a complexity of social and power relation at the national and international level (Leroke, 1996: 240-241). In this scenario the beneficiaries of development project will be able to have something to say in the process of planning and implementing development.

The above position seems to be well balanced, because it claims to seek new insights into how development is conceptualised outside of binary relations. In this sense, no one would feel or think to be greater or lesser than the other. However, there also are weaknesses in this approach, namely: the postmodernity paradigm neglects the positive contribution of the

²³ Binary logic is a term used by mathematicians in order to have an abstract representation of logic. A digital logic circuit has a number of input lines, A, B, C, and a number of output lines (IM System Architecture Notes, n.d.).

modern concept of development by means of science and technology, rather preferring the grassroots movements' and local communities' critical engagement in the development process as the ultimate (Ziai, 2007: 7). Postmodernity has been accused of methodological inconsistencies. It proposes a discourse approach on the one hand, while giving in to social movements on the other. It proposes an inconsistent anti-essentialism, i.e. a rejection of Western cultures and worldviews, while there is little regard for the development projects at the grassroots level. Post-development proponents advocate for openness in politics, but wash their hands of politics (Ziai, 2007: 7).

From the above it can be argued that the position of postmodern development theory is important. The positive aspect of the modern concept of development should not be neglected completely. Adopting a dialogical approach to development is good. Development should be a collective process – a project must be planned with a general opinion it must consider the social and power relations that have national and international value. That development effort would be better achieved if national and international communities and individual relationships were built on mutual respect.

The postmodernist approach enables the poor to know who they are and what contribution they can make to the community and to national development. This is against the binary relations that lead to revolutions and often perpetuate poverty. No amount of revolution can bring lasting solutions to people's problems. This means a non-violent approach in terms of dialogue is a crucial element for social transformation. In fact, it would be difficult for a nation, group or individual to obtain positive and lasting change through revolution. The majority of communities and countries that have undergone this route end up with the destruction of lives and property. Examples include various communities in Northern Nigeria, Libya, Mali and Syria, to mention but a few.

2.3.2 Gender and development

Much like postmodern theory, feminist theory is also found in scholarship across contemporary disciplines. It also plays an important role in the development debate. Scholars such as Gardner and Lewis (1996), Serote *et al.* (2001), Young (2002) and Johnson (2007) note that the debate on gender and development was motivated by concern over the

marginalisation and domination of women on the social, economic and political levels.²⁴ Inequality between men and women as human beings prompted the discourse with regard to women's participation in society's development, as well as the struggle for women's political, social and economic freedom.

There are three branches of feminist theories of development, namely: women in development (WID), women and development (WAD) and gender and development (GAD). According to Serote *et al.* (2001: 158), WID followed in the footsteps of modernisation theory²⁵ in addressing women's needs.²⁶ By implication, women's development will be measured in terms of income and not an improvement in their quality of life and well-being. The authors are of the view that, "for development to benefit women, power relations in the development process need to be critically examined".

This means that development strategies that will make a difference in the lives of individuals, particularly women's lives, must take into account power relations between men and women in the family, in various institutions and government organisations, and in society at large (Serote *et al.*, 2001: 157). The WAD strategy, on the other hand, follows the way of dependency theory, which criticises the colonial and capitalist structures of development, but could not formulate any legal means of protection for women (Serote *et al.*, 2001: 160). By the end of the 1980s, the flaws of WID and WAD led to the emergence of GAD, which brings together the perspective of WID and WAD to formulate a better feminist approach to development.

However, the problem with WID is that it narrows its approach to women in isolation rather than the social, cultural and political relations between men and women. This approach has challenged conventions by not viewing gender as biological only (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 122). Rather, gender is supposed to be viewed from a relational perspective. For instance, Johnson (2007: 112) asserts that the gender debate should include class analysis. In arguing

²⁴ The theory of equality between sexes is a fundamental toward realising a better future for human well-being. Societies that deny human equality in the family, community, workplace, political affairs and economic activities could affect fast and effective development. Therefore, issues that women are facing should be addressed with keen interest. Poverty reduction activities should be planned with poor women in mind.

²⁵ In following in the footsteps of Modernisation, WID views traditional societies as authoritarian and male dominated; it sees modern societies as democratic and egalitarian. This is reflected in the operation of women in the third world compared with the emancipation of women in modern societies (Serote *et al.*, 2001: 158-159).

²⁶ The "WID programmes stress on western values and target individual women, rather than social groups, as the catalysts for social change" (Serote *et al.*, 2001: 158). The WID activists insist that women's empowerment should combine legal reform and grassroots organisation around women's rights, but they failed to include the transformation of gender relations as a basic component of women's empowerment (Serote *et al.*, 2001: 159).

from a social science perspective, he claims that gender relationships are reflected in the allocation and distribution of power and other resources among men-women and boys-girls (Johnson, 2007: 112). Gardner and Lewis (1996: 121-122) argue in the same manner, explaining that, between the 1970s and 1980s, the issue of gender relations was highly recognised as a central determinant of people's access to resources and the ways in which they experienced development.

In view of this, Gardner and Lewis (1996: 122) point out that the United Nations' (UN) commitment to addressing women's issues inspired world leaders to formulate special programmes, such as women in development (WID), which aim at addressing the needs of women, basically through empowerment initiatives. Thus, in the mid-1980s, gender empowerment became a key element in this debate, during which women's access to employment and income generation was encouraged instead of them being rejected as being mere subordinates (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 122). This means that, in order to achieve equitable growth and sustainable development, gender inequality in access to and control of a diverse range of assets must be reduced (Muntemba & Blackden 2001: 91).

Gender bias therefore can be an obstacle to effective family or community development. Cultural, social, political and economic constraints can hinder the achievement of a gender balance in development programmes. Responding from the Nigerian context, Onwunta (2009: iii), notes that the negative gender stereotypes which breed gender insensitivity and injustice such as cultural, political and economic structures that hinders women from attaining their full potential have to give way to a new mind-set in order to bring the much needed transformation and gender partnership in Nigeria. She insisted that women voices, experiences and potentials have to play a major role in community and national development (Onwunta, (2009: iii).

According to Serote *et al.* (2001: 161), GAD proponents formulated and designed initiatives to overcome household conflicts arising from gender and generational differences, as well as the need for economic independence. In the light of this, Young (2002: 51) argues that "the main focus in GAD is not on women per se but on gender relations". By virtue of this argument, women are to be viewed as "active agents and not passive recipients of development" (Young, 2002: 51). The strategy of GAD is seen as being more holistic by its proponents, as it places emphasis on the role of the State in promoting women's empowerment and self-reliance. It also considers the role of local communities in providing

support and encouragement in order to strengthen and uphold the efforts of women to offer their contribution for the development of themselves, their communities and society at large (Young, 2002: 53).

The strategy of GAD has not been spared its share of criticism. The debate on gender and development has strengthened feminist struggles for political, economic, social and religious freedom. Johnson (2007: 121) is of the opinion that, for any freedom to take place, whether economic, social, political or religious, one must struggle together with people sharing a common ideology. Gardner and Lewis (1996: 123-124) also outline some criticisms of GAD approaches, which include the following: GAD proponents, like modernisation theorists, assume that change is initiated first and foremost from the outside through donor-led policies and planning; they are fundamentally top-down; and they are ethnocentric regarding the content of the relationship between men and women.

I therefore, argue that women empowerment is an essential aspect that faith-based or non-faith-based development organisations should take seriously in the process of community development considering the role they play in family and community development. This is because, in some societies, gender relations are often viewed as one of the most intimate aspects of cultural traditions and challenging them could be difficult (Bert, 2012: 26). In such societies, models of development that work in the interests of women are being attacked. On the other hand, refusal to respect women can hamper family relationships, which is a key to a happy and healthy community (Mukhopadhyay, 1996: 93-94).

As an effective tool for women's empowerment, development organisations should be able to create development programmes that not only help women economically, but that also rescue them from domestic violence, harassment and torture in their marital homes. Intervening on women's behalf aids a holistic development agenda. It is not just an aspect that deals with gender inequality, but is a strong step toward overcoming poverty. It is significant for the fact that both men and women experience poverty, yet women continue to have limited opportunities in most societies, which restricts their economic improvement or access to services to enhance their well-being.

Bert (2012: 26) suggests that encouraging women's participation in economic and political activities can increase their financial independence. This is critical to enhancing their families and pulling the whole society out of poverty. It could be achieved by way of increasing

educational quality and opportunities, as well as furthering entrepreneurship for women or creating decent employment opportunities that will move women from the informal work sector to the formal labour market. Furthermore, sustainable economic transformation requires poor people to have influence in the decisions that affect their lives. As such, women's voices in the political process must be encouraged and sought after. It is essential that every society creates or increases women's opportunities in public office and promotes gender-balanced political representation (Bert, 2012: 26-27).

As a practical theologian one would insist that the church needs to strengthen and encourage women to become active role players in planning their family and community development, which remain crucial elements of development. Side-lining or putting women out of the development agenda can lead to setbacks in family, community or national development, considering their socio-economic contribution to society's well-being. In this sense, the role of women in social and economic development should be promoted and enforced. Their contributions should be valued and encouraged, while priority must be given to educating them. Therefore, it would be good if the church in general (the ECWA in particular) intensified its efforts in organising various training workshops to develop women's capacity and encourage equal and equitable participation in community activities. Integration should be facilitated, or women should be encouraged to undertake specific projects and initiatives that can help them meet national and international challenges that are crucial to community and family development.

2.3.3 Participatory development paradigm

The recent trends of development discussed in sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 emphasise a micro/grassroots paradigm, rather than a macro-approach as with Modernisation Theory in section 2.2.1. This section follows on sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 that argued peoples' active participation as individuals or communities in development projects plays a vital role in successful and lasting development. Roodt (2001: 470) asserts that the emphasis on the need for individual or community participation is not new in development principles and practice. As it has been used by various world leaders, participatory development is a strategy that enables people to take part in their individual or community development (Roodt, 2001: 470). In other words, Participatory Development promotes equity and encourages decision making at the local level. It meets human needs and also helps to create an environment in which people can effectively identify and address their needs. Self-reliance is the key instrument that

promotes the participation of all members of society, from the lowest to the top level. It equalises and enables the redistribution of power and resources among nations and among people within the nation (Bragg, 1987: 35).

The key aspect that has been emphasised in the participatory paradigm is that of people-centred development. David Korten (1984) is a key proponent of this point of view. He notes that the need for people-centred development was initiated by concerned development practitioners as a means of enhancing growth and well-being, equity and sustainability (Korten, 1984: 299). Korten explains that the concept of people-centred development originated from a critical study of the strategies of development adopted by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the late 1980s. This is focused particularly on the issue of relief work or charity in instances of aiding affected people and self-help schemes for development in areas of agriculture, beadwork, carpentry, fine arts and others.²⁷

The aim was to redirect development efforts from production-centred (the modernisation concept) to people-centred (participatory paradigm) in the belief that strengthening human capacity was the best way to achieve any sustainable development (Kotze & Kellerman, 1997: 36). The advocates of this approach are of the opinion that:

[d]evelopment is a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspiration (Korten, 1990: 67).

By implication, if development is to be successful and sustainable, people should be empowered to participate in their own development projects (Theron & Ceasar, 2008: 104). In line with this opinion, Speckman (2007: 270) maintains that no economic development can take place unless people are capacitated at the local level. This means development should be viewed as participatory, self-reliant and people-centered (Bowers, 2005: 36).

The vision of people-centred development can be summarised as follows: to return the control of resources to the people and their communities; to provide opportunities for people to obtain a secure livelihood through the value and culture of the people; to reconnect people to one

²⁷ The NGOs were actively involved in alleviating human suffering in various phases. Phase one was relief work or charity demonstrated to poor people affected by the Second World War. Phase two focuses on self-help schemes through capacity building to enable people to develop in areas of agriculture, beadwork, fine arts, etc. This phase is usually referred to as community development (Korten, 1990: 116, 118).

another and to God and the natural resources that God has blessed them with; and to ensure self-respect and dignity among individuals and self-reliance among the community (cf. Korten, 1990: 218). The people-centred vision outlined by Korten reflects a theological voice, which makes it more contextual and relevant to this study. The basic principle of people-centred development is to ensure the freedom and democracy that will enable people to set and pursue their agenda, and to allow people to have access to relevant information that fundamentally makes them responsible in their community. The value of the outsiders in this process is measured in terms of the capacity of the people to define their future and development (Korten, 1990: 218-219).

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the people-centred development approach has made a significant contribution to sustainable development efforts. Swart and Venter (2001: 493) explain that its major actors, the NGOs and churches, have been proactive in pursuing this goal around the world. Swart and Venter (2001: 493) acknowledge that the people-centred proponent's primary task is:

[c]hanging the consciousness and behaviour of persons and state [so that] they would not be restricted and marginalized by the institutional processes of policy making, [but be able to] participate in a larger transnational civil society space in a 'movement politics', a 'politics of connections' unconfined by set places, spaces, and institutions.

Despite its success, advocates of people-centred development have encountered several challenges. Swart and Venter (2001: 494) state that a significant challenge faced is inadequate networking, coalition and relationship-building. Most of the development programmes carried out by the development agencies still creates room for dependence on the development agency. Furthermore, the majority of the "actors faced extreme poverty and isolation, and lack of resources, orientation, skills, infrastructure, and access to modern communication system and technology" (Swart & Venter, 2001: 494).

In their final remarks, Swart and Venter (2001: 494) suggest that a mode of engagement for civil society development can only take place meaningfully on the basis of an extended dialectical, reflexive, co-operative, collective and political framework. This means it makes meaning when a person contributes to sustainable human development.²⁸ In line with this

²⁸This is because the local communities needed to be strengthened and encouraged to take an active role in planning, executing and maintaining their development projects (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 121). Thus community

reality, Swart (2012: 68) explains that development means the empowerment of the oppressed and the marginalised. It is the removal of any trap that prevents improvement in human well-being. It is the creation of economic and social opportunities for poor communities and individuals to take control of their own destiny and improve the quality of their lives through personal effort. It is to build human capacities to enable people to increase their sense of respect, self-confidence, dignity, self-awareness and self-expression.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) has been recognised as a good strategy within the participatory development paradigm. According to August (2010: 3), PLA is a combination of various methods of research: it allows local people to analyse, share and enhance their knowledge of life and situations, and to plan, prioritise, act, monitor and evaluate their activities without being dominated by outsiders. August further explains that PLA is an ideology that contends that a self-conscious people who are poor and oppressed can be able to progressively transform their environment by their own praxis. They could receive help and support from others, but without being dominated (August, 2010: 3). This is because development is all about people, not projects. To quote Nabie (2005: 116),

People develop by what they do, the decisions they make and their understanding of who they are and why they do what they do. They increase their own knowledge and ability through participation in their own development initiative.

This means that, in PLA, people are not viewed in abstract terms but rather are placed in their relevant social and historical contexts or reality. Furthermore, proponents of PLA hold the view that human intelligence is active, selective and creative and consciously creating its own social reality (August, 2010: 4). The most important contribution of PLA, which was realised by the Wageningen UR Centre for Development Innovation (2004-2010),²⁹ is the formulation of the following principles, namely that:

- i. Outsiders do not have all the answers.
- ii. Local people have a rich knowledge base and experience of making a living in a complex environment.

development came to mean “a process in which local [...] groups take the initiative to formulate objectives involving changes in their living conditions” (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011: 36).

²⁹This information is adopted from the Centre for Development Innovation (CDI). CDI is an interdisciplinary and internationally focused unit of Wageningen University & Research Centre. The Centre works on processes of innovation and change in the areas of secure and healthy food, adaptive agriculture, sustainable markets and ecosystem governance.

- iii. People realise that local communities are much more likely to come up with appropriate solutions to problems than outsiders.
- iv. Within PLA the role of outsiders is more that of facilitators of a process in which local people identify, prioritise and analyse their own problems, and develop their own solutions.
- v. Outsiders can play a useful role in facilitating links between communities and other organisations with technical expertise or funding. Outsiders can also offer their own skills and expertise, but should not impose these on local people.

Certainly, scholars generally agree that the basic tool for achieving PLA is *dialogue*. Treurnicht (1997: 99), for example, maintains that, through dialogue, the people and the change agent interact and exchange knowledge. By so doing, the change agent will be able to learn from the people and be sensitive to their suggestions. In the same vein, August (2010: 4) suggests that “if research is based on dialogue, it can lead to a true development process, where research no longer serves to substantiate but to sensitize, no longer to explain but to conscientize”. One therefore can conclude that, through dialogue, those who were formally considered as illiterate, poor, isolated and underdeveloped will prove to be capable. This is because the effort of PLA is to ensure that people are participating voluntarily and that everyone is given the opportunity to act freely. Every individual therefore is endowed with certain skills and abilities that can be discovered in the process of dialogue and be turned into action.

While the participation of the beneficiaries is highly commended for effective development, the role of the community development worker is equally important. According to Monaheng (2008: 131), the latter are to serve as expects, guides, enablers, advocates, mediators and organisers. They are expected to motivate the people and help them take responsibility for their own lives. However, Korten (1990: 118) states that strategy of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in terms of charity work was considered ineffective, because charity tends to create dependence. The community development strategies also end up creating long-term dependence on the assisting NGO (Korten, 1990: 119). That is, in this strategy the benefiting communities depend on the presence of the NGO and the availability of donor subsidy. Self-reliant development initiatives are likely to be sustained only so long as the beneficiaries are linked to a supportive national development system (Korten, 1990: 120).

2.4 Pragmatic Approaches to Development

In the preceding sections 2.2 and 2.3, various theoretical expositions and alternatives that have been adopted to eradicate poverty were discussed, yet the challenges with regard to poverty and inequality have still not been overcome adequately. The present section reviews what the researcher has termed the pragmatic approach, namely the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the African view of development and the faith-based and development approach. These are referred to as pragmatic approaches to indicate a move away from the theoretical to practical and concrete ways of meeting human needs. It looks into new perspectives on addressing solving human problems, such as human well-being, freedom and social justice, sustainable economies, accountable and inclusive systems of government and sustainable livelihoods.

2.4.1 The Millennium Development Goals

Despite all previous efforts to spur on development, there still is a long way to go. In the year 2000, world leaders from 189 countries proposed eight development goals to address the crippling poverty and multiple miseries that engulf humanity. De Gruchy (2005: 27) highlights the MDGs' specific targets and objectives as follows:

- i. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger - income generation and access to quality food.
- ii. Achieve universal primary education - ensuring pupils complete school.
- iii. Promote gender equity and empower women – eliminating gender disparity.
- iv. Reduce child mortality – reducing the mortality rate among children below five.
- v. Improve maternal health – reducing the maternal mortality ratio.
- vi. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases - reducing the spread of deadly diseases.
- vii. Ensure environmental sustainability – improving people's quality of life.
- viii. Develop a global partnership for development - improving the quality of international relationships and partnerships.

With a deep sense of compassion in the Millennium Declaration, the UN gave full support to MDG programmes with the aim that, by the end of 2015, at least half of these goals and objectives should be achieved (De Gruchy, 2005: 27). Although there is evidence that achieving each goal is critical to development, the reality remains uncertain. For example, Rist (2010: 233) explains that various development agencies already had various methods to

address the issue of poverty, which are now brought together under the MDGs. In reviewing the MDGs' framework of development, Rist (2010: 33) admits that "no one could oppose reducing poverty, spreading primary education, promoting women's autonomy, preserving the environment or strengthening international co-operation". However, Rist (2010: 235) raises the question whether the dream of the MDGs programmes will be realised by the end of 2015. He explains that, in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) progress report there is an improvement in life expectancy and literacy levels, yet argues that "it is too early to say whether the Millennium Goals will be achieved or not but the forecast is pessimistic" (Rist, 2010: 235).

Nevertheless, from the 2014 report it cannot be denied that the MDG agenda has been substantially successful around the world. The 2014 report indicates that several MDG targets have been met compared to fourteen years ago, when the Millennial Declaration took place. The report states that extreme poverty has been reduced by half, the fight against malaria and tuberculosis have yielded positive results, more people now have access to improved sources of drinking water, the disparities in primary school enrolment between boys and girls are being eliminated, there is a substantial increase in the level of women's participation in politics, national development and development assistance, and the trading system has been convenient for developing countries (Hongbo, 2014: 4).³⁰

In spite of this substantial progress, the report admitted that more effort still is needed to reach the MDGs' set targets. For example, the report states that environmental sustainability is still under threat in some developing countries. The effort to salvage people suffering from hunger and starvation in some countries has been slowed down. Some children are still affected by under-nutrition, child mortality still is experienced, women still die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, and more knowledge concerning HIV/AIDS among the youth is needed. A huge number of communities are still at risk to poor environmental sanitation, and there is a high level of dropout in universal primary education (Hongbo, 2014: 5).

On the basis of this report one would agree that national and international governments, civil society and the private sector have made pragmatic effort to ensure sustainable community development and poverty eradication in the poor and underprivileged communities of developing countries. Even if the targeted goals are met, it might not mean that the people are

³⁰ Wu Hongbo is a Chinese diplomat and the Under-Secretary-General in the United Nations' department of economic and social affairs.

transformed, as it also indicates that more efforts are needed in order to meet the set goals, which also shows that more strategies are needed. Ultimately, development in terms of the availability of or access to social services and modern technologies requires concrete changes in people's awareness, motivation and behaviour as they relate to one another and society and are crucial to human well-being.

The point is that such development may not be sustainable if it lacks certain features that are crucial to development, namely those in the framework of TD, which is more concerned with addressing human needs from a theological perspective. This concept seeks to address the nature and cause of poverty from a relational perspective and insists that, unless structures that hinder human development are removed and peaceful and harmonious relationships are enabled that are both vertical and horizontal, human suffering will continue.

2.4.2 The African concept of development

The African concept of development is reviewed to ascertain how the values and morals in African society could have enhanced development if it were not distorted. African countries experienced colonial domination by Western powers, but after their liberation they were unable to shed their dependency on these Western powers (Davids, 2009: 7). In other words, colonialism had a negative impact on Africa's political, economic and social development (Rodney, 2009: 271-272). The worst testimonies on the continent are the cases of ethnic and religious conflicts, debt burdens, the collapse of infrastructure, academic institutions and health-care services, unemployment, the HIV/AIDS epidemic – to mention just a few (Tsele, 2001: 204). Hence, the challenges of socio-economic imbalance and the international strategies in Africa in search of alternatives that would truly develop Africa are creating further dependency. African leaders are continually looking up to 'developed' countries for loans and other means of development.³¹ The challenges facing Africa need a look into the African view of development. It may help to ascertain the missing link and find a solution to achieve a positive economic change and restore dignity.

Rasheed and Chole (1994: 2) note that an African concept of development has been underpinned by various factors and the underlying basic structural problems inherent in the state of underdevelopment. These factors includes: misguided policies, rapid population growth, environmental degradation, civil strife, and an unfavourable international economic

³¹ This shows that the African leaders have been captivated by the Modernization Theory pattern of development

environment. Speckman (2007: xvii) adds that the majority of Africans have “constantly and wilfully undermined their potential” and tended to believe that “without the others they see little value in themselves”. Andrews (2009: 3) affirms this reality, namely that “[i]t appears as though most African countries are so dependent on aid that without it almost half of their yearly budgetary commitments cannot be fulfilled”. He laments that “it seems aid is not meant to ensure recipients become self-reliant”.

Against the background of this negative enactment of African development, the African leaders formulated the New Partnership for Africa’s Development [NEPAD] in 2001. NEPAD is conceptualised in such a way that every individual in all African countries would fully participate and take control of their individual or national development agenda. The focus is geared towards the promotion of peace, security, democracy, economic growth and corporate governance, while the strategy is based on a sub-regional and regional approach. NEPAD aims at achieving its goals in a number of programmes and projects in six theme areas, namely: agriculture and food security; climate change and national resource management; regional and international infrastructure; human development; economic and corporate governance; cross-cutting issues, including gender; and capacity development (NEPAD, 2010-2012).

Tsele (2001: 205) rightly asserts that “we need to embrace a new path of development, one that is driven by the need to achieve significant impact on the overall quality of life of the poor”. In this connection, Okwakpam (2010: 2) submits that a typical African child, as in some Nigerian communities, is taught from a tender age to cultivate the spirit of mutual work through practical work experience, communal projects and tales that uphold the virtues of self-help. Furthermore, the elders in the communities are responsible for teaching the young ones through systematised apprenticeship and through the guilds and skills in agriculture, art and craft so that the community members are appropriately equipped to change and control their own environments for the better.

With regard to an African view of development, it is evident that the practice of community development has a long history in Africa. It was there even before the advent of colonial leaders. Research has revealed that Africans employed communal efforts as a mechanism for providing physical improvement and functional facilities in their given localities. In an attempt to bring this to light, Aroh (2002) explains in the light of the Nigerian development trajectory that, in the past, various communities had different ways of solving their social,

economic and cultural problems. For instance, the relationships that existed among the people served as a channel through which they were helped to develop themselves and the community. Such relationships were fostered by the village heads and vigilante groups, who helped in settling disputes and securing people's lives and properties. The entire community would work together in clearing roads, keeping streams and rivers clean, building local bridges and so on (Aroh, 2002: 28). This shows that the people used the premise of collective responsibility, care and concern for one another and their communities. They were not individualistic, but esteemed each other and the spirit of stewardship.

The term 'African view of development' is fairly new. Speckman, an African New Testament scholar, uses two Xhosa³² words to express the concept of development in Africa (Speckman, 2007: 40-41), which may assist in understanding/explaining the African view of development. The first is *impucuko*, translated as "civilization", and the second word is *inkqubela*, which means progress. In the context of development, these terms refer to material growth, whereas the original meaning refers to the 'heart' of the matter or getting to the real thing or drawing out the real person. *Ukuphuhla*, on the other hand, reflects the philosophy of *Ubuntu*, which alludes to ideal personhood. The concept of *Ubuntu* reminds individuals that they belong to one another in coexistence. The African person values humaneness towards others. We are all responsible to each other, and these values foster social cohesion within the community to undergo progression across generations. Progress lies in the ability of the local community to bring out the potential of its members, which in turn moves the community towards the realisation of the destiny of all.

Using these concepts, Speckman (2007: 42-43) draws some vital points that distinguish the Western from the African view of development. In the first place, according to Speckman, Africans' view of development is based on human value, not on material development. It is the ability of the people within a community to work together as one family, respecting, loving and caring for each other. Africans view development in terms of teamwork, while an individualistic outlook is often frowned upon. The community has more chance of succeeding when it comes together and, sharing ideas, can display potential to realise the destiny of all members of the community. In the words of Speckman (2007: 45), the community that takes this path embodies the values of "communal living in a localized context; voluntary action out

³²Xhosa is an indigenous South African language.

of moral persuasion and a sense of responsibility; and self-sufficiency as a sign of independence and maturity.”

In line with this reality, Rist (2010: 230) states that “in Africa it is not those who are lacking in material goods who are seen as poor, but those who have nobody to turn to”. According to Menkiti (1984: 171) this is because an African view of a person is underpinned by the principle of Ubuntu “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.” By implication, the African understanding of human society is a thoroughly fused or collective sense and not individualistic. That is, in African society an individual gives priority to the duties owe to society as a collective entity while personal interest is secondary (Menkiti, 1984: 180).

Unfortunately, in most African communities today, this practice is gradually dying out. People now hold onto the concept of the global community/village, which is characterised by a struggle for science and technology as well as the quest for economic surplus. The idea of a global village could be misleading if the philosophy of *Ubuntu*, which describes village life in terms of community, is not applied. Speckman (2007: 5) argues that, in the African context, “the concept of global community/village implies one social entity governed by the same set of laws and striving toward the same goal”. Therefore, the best way for an African is human development that is based on communal togetherness, not individualism. The communal, as in family support and community service, is needed in all African communities. Economic growth should not be exchanged for mutuality, love and respect for one another. This is because those who depend so much on material wealth tend to react with contempt if their needs are not met.

The question now is where does the change begin, who motivates the change, and who will serve as the channel? In view of the fact that African people are religious, the next section provides a review of the role of faith-based organisations in the development debate. As Belshaw *et al.* (2001: 3) assert that those who would work with people to improve their material conditions must remember that they have spiritual resources to draw on in overcoming their poverty. The next section explores the contribution of faith-based organisations to show how the church is an effective tool in the process of community development.

2.4.3 Faith-based concept of development

The role of faith within the development discourse remains relatively unexplored, yet it may potentially play a key part in spurring sustainable development. Marshall (2005: 1) points out that faith-based organisations and development agencies across the globe have been identified as sharing a concern for dealing with the issue of poverty and social justice. Faith-based or religious groups have been identified as being proactive in the struggle for social, political and economic change around the globe. In Africa, religion has been an active role player in promoting and encouraging positive change in human society. According to Erasmus (2005: 142), African leaders³³ understand and promote the role of religion in social transformation. In other words, social transformation cannot be separated from spiritual transformation. Religious organisations are a strong force for social change, as they unify peoples' beliefs with their actions, their ideas and their social lives. That is, a religious idea forms the content and shapes the perception of what people do. Furthermore, religious leaders have also been a major source of motivating and directing their followers to action, while religious groups also serve as forces of change (Erasmus, 2005: 143).

Unfortunately, not all development agencies agree that there is a relationship between religion and development. Marshall (2005: 1) further explains that the reason behind this disagreement is that, for some, religious organisations and development agencies have been considered to be aiming in different directions in terms of their goals, strategies, policies and practice. For instance, it is noted that some of the religious institutions who own land, run schools, help the poor and care for orphans and disabled people have refused to partner with secular development agencies (Marshall, 2005: 2). One reason for this is that secular development is understood as being too materialistic by these religious organisations. Such faith-based organisations have rejected and distanced themselves from secular development agencies based on the concept that the development agencies focus too acutely on the material and ignore the spiritual (Marshall, 2005: 2).

In an effort to bridge the gap between the secular and religious perceptions of development, religious and development leaders were brought together to build a global alliance of senior and respected leaders (Marshall, 2005: 4). As a result, the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) was created to address issues of common concern, which include poverty,

³³Nelson Mandela, the former President of South Africa, maintained that “in striving for political and economic development, social transformation cannot be separated from spiritual transformation” (Erasmus, 2005: 142).

culture and diversity, services to the poor, and equity (Marshall, 2005: 4). The WFDD led a review that focused on the poverty reduction strategy process (PRSP), which is a central instrument for linking debt relief to strategies for poverty alleviation to find out how faith institutions are involved and how they see the process (Marshall, 2005: 4). The faith dialogue initiative started smoothly and the supporters saw it as a potential strategy for enhancing development work in a wide arena. However, it encountered serious opposition and objections, in that religion was seen as contributing to conflicts and civic tensions. Many religions were seen to be opposed to modernisation and social change. Thus, to engage faith institutions was considered unnecessary and it was felt by many partners and actors working in development agencies that it deserved a low priority (Marshall, 2005: 4-5).

As a strategy for effective development, science and technology have ultimately failed to put an end to human suffering. However, a review of the literature shows that, for many scholars, a spiritual approach is a necessary pre-requisite for sustainable development. According to Wallace, Myers and Holley (2004: 8-9), empowerment is one of the most important roles of faith-based organisations in the communities where they offer services. The faith-based development agencies focus on empowering and developing the assets of individuals, faith-based organisations and neighbourhoods to solve their various problems and to achieve the desired outcomes, rather than emphasising people's needs and deficiencies. For example, Wallace *et al.* (2004: 8-9) outline that:

- i. Individual level: faith-based initiation connects people with God and with others, provides them opportunities to grow intellectually and spiritually, and helps them identify and use their gifts and skills.
- ii. Faith-based organisational level: faith-based organisations help members to identify and nurture their skills and talents, and provide opportunities to use them to strengthen and influence the organisation.
- iii. Neighbourhood level: faith-based organisations make sure that empowered individuals and organisations work together to influence their social environment and improve the quality of their collective lives. They build relationships between religious organisations and other sectors of the community (e.g. law enforcement, schools and business), developing formal linkages across sectors and collaborating to address issues of common concern.

In relationship to the points above, Erasmus (2005: 143) outlines some vital contributions of religion to social transformation. That is, religion is embedded in change processes and, in these processes; religion is active, not passive. Religion encourages, promotes and inhabits change. Religion is also one of the strongest forces that promote change. Religion has been one of the most important motivations for change because of its particular effectiveness in uniting people's beliefs with their actions, their ideas with their social lives. Erasmus (2005: 143) further explains various ways in which religious organisations contribute to social change, namely through religious ideas, religious leadership and religious groups.

Religious ideas form the content of what people do and shape perception of their interest in what they do. Christianity, for example, maintains that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom". Similarly, religious symbols play an important role in presenting the image of future change. Religious leaders have the skill and ability to initiate the desired change, motivate followers to action, and direct their actions to larger movements for change. In the same way, religious groups big and small are potential forces for social change (Erasmus, 2005: 143).

This goes a long way to show that religious institutions are in a better position and are relevant role players in social policy debate, as well in advancing people-centred ideas and values (Swart, 2012:71). In fact, the religious sector has the following qualities that enhance development: they have proven to be closest to the people in need; they have the best developed networks, especially in areas where the infrastructure is weak; and they provide the most effective network at the most affordable cost (Swart, 2012: 72). For instance:

Religious communities and their networks play an essential role in the formation of social values such as honesty, compassion and solidarity with the weak and the poor. [They are also] effective in dealing with symptoms of moral crisis such as family violence, drug rehabilitation and so on (Swart, 2012: 72).

In line with this claim, Erasmus (2012: 59) points out that religion's role in general have unique values when it comes to the issue of caring for and sharing with vulnerable people. That is, religious organisations have been functioning well, particularly in terms of social cohesion and in influencing the well-being of communities. Erasmus (2012: 60) adds that religious organisations have been identified as proactive in mobilising resources for poverty alleviation. That is to say, religious institutions are not only actively involved in the spiritual, but also in the social, dimension of human needs. Swart (2012: 74) states that religious sector

partnership with other sectors in the field of social welfare and development is a key tool in promoting development. Swart (2012: 75) also claims that, “in development terms, networks and partnerships of collective effort and mutual responsibility are means through which the problems of poverty and other social ills will be solved”. Therefore, the religious sector must be acknowledged by other sectors as an indispensable partner in meeting the challenges of social development (Swart, 2012: 76).

In the same vein, Tsele (2001: 210) reveals that it has been argued among economists, cultural anthropologists and sociologists that any measurement and definition of poverty that does not include the religious dimension is inadequate. This is because, no matter how materially wealthy a country may be, without the dimension of religious experience and values, that progress cannot pass the test of development (Tsele, 2001: 211). Furthermore, religion helps people to be aware that they should be accountable in their dealings with one another, as well as to the one they believe in. In religious teaching and principles, people are reminded of good deeds and their benefits, as well as evil deeds and their rewards. Furthermore, and linked to the above, Marshall (2005: 8-9) points out that faith leaders and institutions have unique gifts and tools that are useful for effective development. These are the following:

- i. Presence and trust: Faith-based institutions have done well in providing social services and creating job opportunities. Their leaders and institutions are trusted by poor communities more than most other types of institutions across the world.
- ii. Active engagement in development: Faith communities are active in providing spiritual as well as social services and development, such as health care, education, water supply, environment protection and economic empowerment. They also are deeply involved in providing counselling, caring for the sick and orphans, burying the dead and advising survivors.
- iii. Conflict resolution, prevention, and humanitarian support: Faith-based institutions are proactive and strong, surviving institutions that can support and help people affected by human or natural disasters. They run schools, hospitals and help to rebuild damage in the affected area. Their voice, consolation and moral leadership are important tools in healing wounds.
- iv. Ethics and value role: Faith-based institutions and leaders often stand as courageous leaders who “speak truth to power”, help fight against corruption, and confront social injustice, the oppression of women and other excluded groups. The support, voice and

leadership of faith leaders are vital instrument for effective and sustainable development.

- v. Global support for development agendas: Faith-based institutions have unique leadership qualities and communication skills and are committed to fighting poverty. Engaging faith institutions in the planning and implementation of the MDGs will go a long way.

The above descriptions show that faith institutions, apart from providing spiritual empowerment, are committed to helping people formulate and utilise processes directed towards achieving objectives that they regard as beneficial to them. To this end, Erasmus (2005: 144) questions whether Christianity has the potential to influence social transformation. Research and personal experience reveal that the Christian religion plays an important role in terms of influencing social change. The Christian concept of holistic ministry is a clear example. Tsele (2001: 208) points out that the majority of Christians in Africa are products of missionary activities. They incorporated a variety of development activities, such as education, health care and various agricultural activities that contributed to the well-being of various communities.

In view of this, Tsele (2001: 209) challenges the church to be aware that they are not the only, nor are they the best, social service providers. The church must bring something substantive to prove that their commitment is driven by a different motive. His challenge went further by stating, “it is only by reintroducing faith-inspired motives in development, which seek to restore the dignity of our work and which in turn make people subjects in their own human restoration project, that the church’s development enterprise can be authentic” (Tsele, 2001: 209). This is strengthened by the fact that religious institutions are not seen as merely survival-oriented institutions, but rather as transforming institutions (Narayan, 2001: 45). It means that the Christian approach to development entails a passionate involvement in the objects of development, turning them into subjects of their own lives (Tsele, 2001: 209).

2.5 The Principles and Environments of Community Development

A critical analysis of the above literature on macro and micro development theory and approaches to development shows that efforts have been made with a keen desire to enhance the living conditions of the poor. In the following section, some key principles and environments for community development are discussed. This shows that, when the right

principles are not applied and the environment is not considered, tangible and sustainable change should not be expected.

2.5.1 The principles of community development

The need to focus development programmes on the grassroots level cannot be overemphasised. The need to apply various principles thus becomes apparent. These principles are drawn from and interact with several of the aforementioned approaches, such as people-centred development.

2.5.1.1 Human orientation

The fact that people are caught in a deprivation trap of physical and abstract needs means that, for holistic development to be affected, every project must play a dual purpose. “[T]he projects should be planned and formulated in such a way that the process of abstract objective attainment flows naturally from the process so as to address physical and concrete needs” (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 49). That is to say, since the physical and abstract needs cannot be separated from each other, efforts to address the physical needs must also ensure that the abstract needs are addressed equally.

In reality, human needs – both the physical and the abstract – go hand in hand. The poor get to realise their abstract need for dignity while pursuing physical needs. This dignity is promoted and enhanced when poor people are able to come to attain self-reliance and organise themselves towards fulfilling their potential (Swanepoel, 1997: 3). Human beings are dignified when they are able to identify their potential and practically put to use this potential. So, it is the responsibility of the change agent to ensure that the project goal also aims at meeting both needs (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 49).

2.5.1.2 Participation

Participation is a process in which an “individual or a community is able to initiate and take an action that is stimulated by their own thinking” (August, 2010: 9). As an important element of development, participation can also be viewed as a continuing process that involves making decisions about alternative ways of using the available resources with the aim of achieving a particular goal (August, 2010: 10). According to Burkey (1993: 57), genuine participation is that which entails that “the rural poor themselves become more aware of their own situation, of the socio-economic reality around them, of their real problems, the cause of

these problems, and what measures they themselves can take to begin changing their situation". This means that participation is essential for a development project to succeed. The efforts of government and development agencies cannot yield meaningful results without the efforts of the local people working for their individual or community benefit (Burkey, 1993: 207).

This shows that the ultimate role of a development organisation should be geared toward assisting people to learn to take charge of their activities and be able to solve their individual or community problems (Burkey, 1993: 56). It means that, for sustainable development to take place, the community has to own and contribute to the process. The community members have to understand that they are change agents and that they have the capacity and resources to change their community. The people must have the desire to achieve a common goal without contention, but only in the interest of the community. Everyone in the community must be willing to join hands in the project. The few people who may not want to support the effort would be overshadowed by the effort of the many who aim to work together for the interest of the community.

Therefore, organising and implementing a development project without active participation by the beneficiaries would likely produce a meagre result and/or may not stand the test of time. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 50) note that local people have more knowledge about their political, social, economic, cultural and natural environment than outsiders. Ignoring them will create a huge setback in achieving a desirable goal of community development. Burkey (1993: 56) points out that participation gives the participant a sense of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility and co-operation. When this essential part of human development is lacking in an individual or community development process, it will be difficult if not impossible to achieve the desired goal of the project, namely to alleviate poverty.

2.5.1.3 Empowerment

The argument here is that the issue of the active participation of the community in a particular development project is essential. Focusing on the manipulation of resources while ignoring the intellectual and psychological dimensions of human development cannot be called empowerment. August (2010: 11) points out two views on the concept of empowerment: in the first place, empowerment is the development of skills and abilities that enable people to

manage and/or negotiate better with the development delivery system. Secondly, empowerment is also a process that is concerned with equipping people to decide on and take action within the context of their developmental needs. August (2010: 11) goes on to explain that empowerment is making power available to the communities so as to make use of the available material within their reach to achieve their development goals. In other words, empowerment can be said to have taken place when the people are able to “articulate and assert, by words and deeds, their urges and thinking” (August, 2010: 11).

Alongside the above argument, Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 52) insist that, in addition to skills and abilities, the people still need the correct information and knowledge to make wise decisions on how to make use of their skills and abilities. To be self-reliant, people must be empowered to function well in their economic, social and political development. The empowerment process may be slow, but once the people know how to do it themselves, assisted by those willing to help them achieve their desired goals, development has taken place (Burkey, 1993: xii). The principle of providing or doing things for the people creates dependency syndromes instead of empowering people to be independent.³⁴ This means an authentic process of community development should focus on ensuring that the people have confidence and are able to influence their own future development.

2.5.1.4 Sustainability

The essence of empowering a community is to make sure that they are fully and actively participating in the process of their own development, as this should result in its sustainability. The basic principle of community development is that the benefit of development has to flow continuously. In other words, any development that is not sustainable is not development at all. According to August (2010: 12), the ability to manage all assets, natural and human resources, as well as financial and physical assets, for increasing long-term wealth and well-being is what we can call sustainable development. That is, in our attempt to meet present needs, the ability of future generations to meet their needs should not be overlooked (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 54).

The question of who should manage community problems, or who should decide how to address these problems, is the first step towards achieving sustainable development. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 54) explain that the ultimate answer lies in the willingness and

³⁴ The impediments associated with empowerment that must be dealt with in order for this to be successful are discussed fully in 7.4.3.2.

ability of the local people to protect that which is for the individual or community good and interest. This is because the local context, with its own unique needs and dynamics, is a determining variable in development. The indigenous people, as well as the external change agents, must be open to learn from each other and to make use of wisdom gathered from experience to be able to approach development with confidence.³⁵

2.5.1.5 Compassion

Community development is not only a demanding task, but its conditions are also difficult, irregular and uncomfortable, which requires a special dedication and commitment (Burkey, 1993: 81). The main objective of community development is not just to help poor people achieve the desired objectives they have identified. Rather, it is about making sure that the poor people regain their human dignity and are happy in everything they do (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 57). This requires a community worker with a compassionate heart who can listen patiently to the people's cry and work with them, no matter their ignorance and dirty environment. According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 57), the principle of compassion is crucial in community development and should not be taken lightly by the community development worker. Compassion wins friends and draws out responses that make co-operation within a project area possible.

Therefore, "change agents have to integrate with the people. They have to become one of them by living with them; long-distance operation of organizing people does not work" (Burkey, 1993: 81). This implies that a considerable degree of openness and mutual trust can keep the worker and the beneficiary community together. According to Burkey (1993: 129), genuine trust cannot be imposed or bought; it must be built up gradually by sympathetic project staff working closely with the people and sharing their problems and hardships. As will be discussed in 3.2.4.1, the main motive for active Christian engagement and service to the poor is compassion for their sufferings and for the glory of God (Mangalwadi, 1987: 193). In other words, the Christian community development worker should be able to feel what the poor people are feeling in order to know how best to help them (see Phil. 2: 20). Christ's compassion and service led to his death because He touched on real issues in society. Christ even broke the rule of the Sabbath to give sight to the blind and heal the sick, who were made in the image of God and worthy of love and care. This indicates that "true compassion calls

³⁵As discussed in 7.5.3.2, empowering people locally is a key strategy that would help to sustain a project. That means that the local people need to be trained with the skills needed to carry on personal or community development even if the community development worker is not there.

for dealings with social context that makes human being miserable” (Mangalwadi, 1987: 196). This leads logically to the discussion on the community development environment.

2.5.2 Community development environments

The effectiveness and/or sustainability of development will be determined by the environment in which the development takes place. Planning and executing development based on the context of the beneficiaries is of strategic importance. By beginning with what the people have, what they know and where they are will have a great impact at the end of a development project. Key areas that are covered in this study are the political, social, economic and religious environments.

2.5.2.1 Political environment

Understanding the political environment for community development should be a starting point because, as human beings, we live within a formal or informal political structure (traditionally or democratically). Hughes and Bennett (1998: 182) note that there is no society in the world that does not have a regulatory structure to govern its communal life. This means that the benefit of development cannot be enjoyed without a responsible political structure that meets human needs and aspirations, and also protects their rights and property (Burkey, 1993: 37). The element of a political environment is that which enables members of a given community to participate freely in decision-making at the local and national level; to plan and share power democratically; and to ensure the fair and efficient creation and allocation of communal resources among individuals and groups of people within the community (Burkey, 1993: 37). Ultimately, in a stable and peaceful political environment, corruption and exploitation will be minimised and social and economic development will be maximised. People’s awareness of their capabilities, rights and responsibilities enables them to take part and have a say in what is happening around them (Burkey, 1993: 37).

This means that the dynamics of the political environment cannot be ignored in the process of community development. For instance, Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 16) note that political forces are at work in rural, urban and peri-urban communities. The leaders of these communities sit and decide what ought to be done and how it should be done. Often, the success of a community project will depend on the worker’s ability to align with these leaders. If the worker wants to be effective and successful, the role of the traditional or

democratic leaders should not be overlooked. They have the power to influence people for or against the project (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 16).

In short, the community development worker should be keen to know and understand how the political environment, in which the project will be situated, operates. Burkey (1993: 41) advises that community development workers need to wisely analyse the structure in the area in which they will be working before proceeding with development activities. In particular, they have to consider the role of those who are the guardians of communities' traditions. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 196) note that a Christian community worker can propose a model that promotes a political structure that would restrain the elites, while at the same time providing a context in which everyone in the community can pursue the good for such a community.

2.5.2.2 Social environment

Influence, livelihood, social network, information for self-development, surplus time, social organisation, knowledge and skill, defensible life space and financial resources are key dimensions of social development (Myers, 2011: 118). By definition, social development is the “investment and services carried out or provided by a community for the mutual benefit of the people of that community whether as a village, a district or a nation” (Burkey, 1993: 37). The social environment for community development is the presence of the family(s), schools, churches, clubs and interest groups (August, 2013: 75). According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 17):

All communities are organized: they have for instance, power structures, schools, interest groups, and civic organizations. How the organizations are structured, and how they relate to one another (interact), form the social environment within which community development takes place.

This means that, in an organised society, people can participate in social development activities such as health services and facilities, education, water supply, transport and communication systems for their own benefit. Unless members of a given community agree to work together in an unregulated private involvement in the social sector, social development cannot be established and sustained (Burkey, 1993: 37). More so, social development activities are expensive, and without an economic base to cover the cost, social investment will not be attended to adequately. This requires that resources have to be mobilised by the people themselves to cover the initial investment cost (Burkey, 1993: 37).

The concept of the social environment described by the abovementioned authors seem to be more Westernised and not African. The meaning of social environment based on the African perspective and how it can help in community development is crucial. O'Donovan (2000: 11) notes that, in most of African communities, life is characterised by strong cultural values of community and sharing. This is in contrast to the concepts of independence, freedom and individuality, which are important values in the Western world-view. In such an environment there is no guarantee for peaceful human relationships and healthy co-operative community. This shows that the importance of human relationships in Africa is greater than that of education, wealth, projects, programmes and material things, which are more valuable to Westerners (O'Donovan, 2000: 11).

2.5.2.3 Economic environment

Participating in economic activities is not a matter of choice in human society. These activities require the availability of certain factors of production. According to Burkey (1993: 36), these factors of production include land, raw materials, labour (skilled and unskilled), capital, energy, tools, machinery, plant, management and entrepreneurship. This shows that the economic environment for community development is the ability of the community to have some of the abovementioned factors of production. It gives the community development worker hope that development is possible in the environment. The availability of such an environment will make it easy for the worker to organise, co-ordinate and mobilise the people to plan, implement and manage their own economic activities.

However, in most rural areas, such as in Nigeria, the abovementioned factors often are not available.³⁶ In this case, locally made equipment should be used, engaging entrepreneurs in simple lifestyles and producing low-cost or affordable material for the poor, rather than luxurious goods for wealthy people (Adeney, 1987: 100). For instance, in rural settlements, the land, the raw materials and the labour force are available, but there is inadequate transport, water supply and energy, and few or no shops, workshops and factories. Notwithstanding, the earth can yield its fruits by human effort, not necessarily by technical machinery. Where the major factors of production mentioned above are not available, the community worker should make use of what is within the reach in such an environment.

³⁶This contributes to the high rate of unemployment, indicating that having a suitable economic environment is crucial for community development and the management of scarce resources (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 17).

2.5.2.4 Religious environment

Swanepoel and De Beer are scholars in the field of development studies who describe the various community development environments discussed above. Although their development environment did not include the spiritual environment, it is included in this dissertation because the study has a Christian theological approach as methodological framework. As a matter of fact, spirituality plays a crucial role and makes an important contribution to community development. The challenge of Boko Haram in Nigeria is a typical example of this, where spirituality plays a negative role in development. That is why Bragg (1987: 46) points out that “the core of human and social transformation is spiritual”. Human attitudes and behaviour have to be changed in order to enable a flow of development activities. Therefore, holistic development must include spiritual transformation, because God cannot be side-lined in the process of human or community development.

More so, human beings are not only physical, economic, political and social organisms, but religious beings as well (August, 2010: 21). This means that the religious aspect of human activities has to be acknowledged as a strategic dimension in development thinking and practice (August, 2013:76). Individual and institutional change is crucial to effective and sustainable development. Change must start from within an individual to the external. Development cannot survive in a society in which greediness; selfishness, corruption and domination are the order of the day. A spiritual environment therefore is one in which its people are willing to turn to God and be transformed by the spirit. In such a community, both individuals’ lives and the structure will be affected positively. That is to say, people’s belief is important in community development; the effect of this meeting point can affect how people perceive development, especially when science meets religion.

This means that development should not only be about teaching people new techniques for how to enhance the quality of their social, political and economic life, but entails religious or spiritual transformation. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 133) note that “initiatives to help the poor cannot be introduced without taking religion into consideration”. The religious perspective of community development workers affects the way in which they help the poor. Indeed, religion has a profound impact on people’s world-views and culture, so without spiritual transformation it is difficult to achieve a significance social transformation (Hughes & Bennett, 1998: 154).

Therefore, any development initiative whether political, economic, social or spiritual must take into accounts the worldview of the recipients of the initiative on supernatural forces (see 3.4.5). Evangelical pastors could also argue that Western minds perhaps are so trained to the secular communities in which they live that they pay less attention to or neglect to acknowledge the spiritual climate of many communities in which they work and how meeting the spiritual needs of individuals may play an intrinsic role in aiding development. The church, especially in Africa, should be the key to reaching some of the world's most impenetrable regions and the hearts of those who live there.

2.6 Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter reveals that there have been traditional and recent development efforts towards enhancing the human condition. The strategies applied cover the economic growth-orientation, social revolution and participatory community development paradigm without consideration of any spiritual aspect in social development. The chapter points out that the faith-based approach to development has some unique qualities for effective and sustainable development. The influence of spiritual aspects on human development should not be overlooked. The absent of the spiritual aspect could be responsible for the inadequate results experienced by development professionals.³⁷

For example, it was discovered in this chapter that modernisation theory focuses on economic growth based on the model of Western countries their view of what poor countries needed for their development. Dependency theorists reacted against modernisation theory because modernisation creates a wider gap between developed and less developed nations. In recent development debates, more focus has shifted to what people will do for and by themselves. Yet they need to be empowered, motivated and supported. They have the potential and ability; they only need support from outsiders, not in the form of imposing means, but through inclusive development. The pragmatic approach looks for a more practical way forward in which religion is seen as having the best strategy because of its values. The effort is towards transforming and/or liberating people from conditions unfavourable to them to those favourable to them.

³⁷This realisation prompted the evangelical Christian theologians and social workers to propose the transformational development paradigm as the Christian development perspective (Sugden, 2003: 70).

In view of this I propose that the TD paradigm as a Christian theological and contextual framework for effective and sustainable development. As stated in 1.1 TD approach is crucial because it seeks for a positive change in the whole of human life, from a condition for human existence contrary to God's purpose to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God. The potential of TD that is distinctively Christian which address development in a holistic manner. Proponents of TD insist that, once people are transformed, they can in turn transform their communities. Integrating deep spiritual transformation with socio-economic transformation is a key to the sustainable living conditions and well-being of mankind.

CHAPTER THREE

TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: TOWARDS A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The exploration of the various development theories in Chapter Two leads us to the second research objective of this study, which is to discuss the concept of transformational development (TD) as a holistic framework and as key to the church's engagement with poverty and injustice. This chapter argues that TD is a Christian framework for development and poverty alleviation. The chapter also argues that an understanding of development from a theological perspective could assist church development agencies, such as ECWA's People Oriented Development (POD), to act holistically in terms of poverty alleviation.

Thus, the chapter promotes and integrates physical and spiritual elements in its conceptualisation of transformational development. This entails sustainable socio-economic development that incorporates self-worth, peace and justice. The chapter illustrates how ECWA's POD, as faith-based agency, could strengthen its notion of holistic ministry by exploring a suitable theological framework. Perhaps the approach may help ECWA's POD with holistic theological principles that could ensure that the people in the communities they serve enjoy fullness of life, with justice, dignity, peace and hope.³⁸

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, the theoretical framework and specific theological challenge are presented. It argues that spiritual, physical and mental well-being is crucial in any society and should not be overlooked or separated in the process of community development. This is followed by a critical analysis of the nature of poverty from both a secular and theological perspective. The theoretical framework is then argued as offering a strategy for the church as a faith-based organisation to act holistically in terms of poverty alleviation. The third section explores the characteristics and practitioners of TD. The section maintains that physical or spiritual transformation cannot be achieved without healthy relationships. Quality relationships between people and God and one another are prerequisites for the sustainability of human well-being.

³⁸As an evangelical church, ECWA is encourage to be eager to teach about the saving work of Christ as well as be alert to current reality in human society. If we expect a qualitative church growth then we need to be zealous about the whole gospel.

3.2 Toward Understanding Transformational Development

This section provides a clarification of the concept of transformational development and the separation of spiritual and physical development as a central theological challenge. This is followed by discussing social transformation as Kingdom responses to powerlessness and the distinctions between Christian and secular notions of transformation. The section also offers a theological reflection on the basis of Christian engagement in poverty alleviation.

3.2.1 Understanding the concept of transformational development

The term ‘transformation’ is widely understood to refer to substantial or complete change in the life of an individual or community (Hornby, 2010: 400). Development, however, is often understood as social transformation, which involves the motivation of and awareness and behavioural change in individuals and groups within the society without external influences or manipulation (Burkey, 1993: 48). It is important to note that social transformation differs from development. According to Erasmus (2005: 140), “development is based on the principles of quantitative growth measured in GDP per capita, while transformation is concerned with qualitative growth, [...] measured with [the] Human Development Index”. Social transformation³⁹ is the “global processes of change in local and national communities” (Erasmus, 2005: 140). In other words, ‘to transform’ means to change in appearance, condition, nature and character, while ‘social’ has to do with humans’ relations with each other in their communities. Burkey (1993: 48) and Erasmus (2005: 142) share the view that change must come from within the individuals and groups, but should not be imposed from the outside. In this sense, social transformation affects interpersonal relationships. Erasmus (2005: 142) explains further that:

for societies to be sustainable there is need for deeper changes, which encourage people to conserve resources, share their wealth and opportunities, protect each other’s rights, and co-operate to advance the common good, namely the long-term health and welfare of the planet and its social fabric on which all our futures depend.

Korten (1990: 4-5) affirms that a people-centred vision embraces a transformation agenda with emphasis on the return of control over resources to the people and their communities. These resources will be used to address three basic imperatives namely: justice, sustainability

³⁹ Myers (2011: 118) lists the following dimensions of social transformation: influence, livelihood, social network, and information for self-development, surplus time, social organisation, knowledge, skill, defensible life space, and financial resources. Economic activities require the availability of some factors of production.

and inclusiveness. Social transformation, therefore, means returning power to the people and their communities, which will enable them to meet their basic needs. The above definitions show the general view of infrastructural and human development in non-faith-based development circles, which they assume to be holistic development.

In the light of this assumption, Bowers du Toit (2010b: 263) notes that the term “development” had begun to be problematised within the Christian context due to its negative association with development theories such as Modernisation Theory, and the failure to address poverty (see 2.2.1). This has prompted a growing need for Christian theologians to refine and reaffirm what they conceive to be a desirable and realistic term for a Christian response to human need. The attempt to refine the concept of development led to the growing interest in the term “transformation”. In this regard, it is understood that the personal change promoted by most faiths could be the starting point for introducing sustainable social development. The reason for this is that faiths tend to encourage moral behavioural change and work against injustice.

Certainly, any serious and deeply rooted personal transformation can enhance human, social and economic development. Nonetheless, Bowers du Toit (2010b: 265) stresses that, within the missiological debate, there also are different understandings, particularly between ecumenical theologians.⁴⁰ This thesis focuses, however, largely on the evangelical perspective. The reason for this is firstly that the programmes being studied are situated within evangelicalism and, secondly, because evangelical theologians place much emphasis on the fact that the cause of poverty is both personal and social and the mission of the church both proclamation and demonstration (Bowers du Toit, 2010b:265). As a result, Samuel and Sugden (1999: 265) have defined the Christian notion of transformation as “the change from a condition of human existence contrary to God’s purpose to one in which people are able to enjoy fullness of life in harmony with God.”

As a matter of fact, the term TD was coined in the early 1980s by Christian theologians and development professionals and practitioners such as Bragg,⁴¹ Samuel and Sugden, among others. It was particularly the evangelical debate on the issue of “The Church in Response to

⁴⁰This ecumenical debate began at the World Council of Churches (WCC) conferences in Geneva in 1966 and Uppsala in 1998, among others, and particularly from the late 1970s to early 1980s. The evangelical debate was reinforced in the Wheaton Consultation of 1983 forum (Bowers du Toit, 2010b: 265).

⁴¹Bragg was a professor of social sciences and served as a director of the Human Needs and Global Resources (HNGR) programme at Wheaton College, USA (Samuel & Sugden, 1987: 268).

Human Need” at the Wheaton Consultation of 1983 that played a vital role in the history of this concept. At this consultation, a draft proposal on the nature of development from a biblical perspective was made (Samuel & Sugden, 1999: 261-262). The current study explores how the theory of TD can assist the church’s holistic involvement in socio-economic community development.

The vision of the 1983 proposal was to promote theological reflection on how Christian organisations can meet human needs in concrete local development situations. It was also intended to clarify theological issues related to development. During this consultation, local churches and mission agencies were seen to be in a better position to carry out endeavours of poverty alleviation and the reduction of human suffering (Samuel & Sugden, 1999: 262). At the Wheaton Consultation, “transformation became a significant Christian way of talking about development, promoted by Christian development organizations working with the poor” (Sugden, 2003: 70).

In support, Bowers (2005: 45) notes that the term TD was coined by evangelical theologians⁴² to denote development work from a theological perspective. Theologians felt that the term “development” was loaded with secular connotations (Bragg, 1987: 38). Subsequently, TD came into the evangelical Christian development paradigm. The paradigm focused particularly on explaining the relationship between evangelism and development or social action.⁴³

According to Myers (2011: 3), the term TD is used to “reflect a concern for seeking positive change in the whole of human life materially, socially, psychologically and spiritually”. Byworth (2003: 100) writes from the perspective of World Vision’s⁴⁴ framework and policy that development as transformation is a “process through which children, families and communities move towards wholeness of life with dignity, justice, peace and hope”. That is,

⁴²At the ecumenical level, the desire for the formulation of a theology of development began at the World Council of Churches (WCC) conferences in Geneva in 1966 and Uppsala in 1968, among others. The conferences focused on “the church and society” and the challenges of justice, peace and development. It is widely believed that, during these conferences, the global church became more aware that it could not continue to give priority to preaching the gospel alone without being concerned with the development of the world around it (Gern, 1999: 441).

⁴³As this research is limited to an evaluation of ECWA People Oriented Development (POD), which is a Christian development organisation belonging to an evangelical church; it is this view in particular that is important for the purposes of this study.

⁴⁴World Vision International is a Christian relief development and advocacy organisation working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. They work with people of various cultures, faiths and genders in 96 countries (<http://www.worldvision.com.au/AboutUs/WhoWeAre.aspx>).

transformation is not a mere change in economic, social and political conditions. It is about “changes from a level of human existence that is less than that envisioned by God to one in which a person is fully human and free to move to a state of wholeness in harmony with God and the environment” (Myers, 2011: 3).

The reason behind this proposal was that the understanding of development was problematic for Christian theologians and development workers, as well as for secular development practitioners (Bragg, 1987: 38). This realisation prompted the proposal of transformation as an alternative framework for understanding human and social change from a Christian perspective, which includes human, social and spiritual change. Therefore, a transformational agenda includes changes in the “human condition, human relationships and whole societies” in both developed and underdeveloped people (Bragg, 1987: 39-40). In the secular approach, the focus is geared toward the economic, political and social development of the materially poor while the spiritual poverty which could also be found among the non-materially poor people is overlooked.

However, Myers (2011: 178) adds that the evangelical agenda for the poor and the non-poor is the same, but the challenges of each are different. The materially poor suffer from a marred identity and a degraded vocation, while the non-materially poor suffer from god-complexes and inflated vocation.⁴⁵ All are made in the image of God with different talents and gifts, so there should be no superior and inferior relationships. Therefore the notion of transformation, according to Bragg (1987: 39), is holistic as it involves both material and spiritual changes and recognises that transformation is a part of God’s continuing action in history to restore all creation to Himself and to its rightful purposes and relationships.

Therefore, transformation is a process toward a world that is more in line with God’s original purposes and that moves actively and creatively toward the future through the mission of the church. In other words, TD addresses human needs in a holistic way in which the aim is to restore God’s original plan in creation, which has become distorted.

In addition, Bragg (1987: 39) states that the ultimate goal of transformation is that God’s will be realised, as is revealed in the OT concept of *shalom* harmony, peace, health, well-being, prosperity and justice, and in the NT image of the Kingdom, which is both present and coming. Bragg (1989: 67) further point out that *shalom* is not only about the absence of strife,

⁴⁵ TD addresses materially and non-materially poor alike, because the ministry of Jesus as foretold in Isaiah 61:1-2 and announced in Luke 4:16-21 includes real social and deep spiritual human needs (Pilgrim, 1981: 83).

but is also an emphasis on health, wholeness, justice and other related aspects. Any genuine involvement of Christians in development must seek to promote “justice, peace, sharing and free participation for the well-being of all” (Bragg, 1987: 39). This will also only be possible if the church is able to address the issues of corruption, operation, exploitation, racism and discrimination, thereby providing an environment in which love, peace and justice will reign.

3.2.2 Separation of the spiritual and physical as a central theological challenge

The specific theological challenge that TD seeks to address with regard to the issue of human development is the separation between the spiritual and the physical. In the discourse on the principles and practice of TD, Myers (2011: 47) draws attention to the misconception of the modern world view regarding the relationship between evangelism and social action. The modern worldview assumes that theology is spiritual while development is secular. As a result, some churches have subscribed to this worldview by separating the sacred and secular, and religion and development⁴⁶ (Myers, 2011: 6). Myers (2011: 7) explains:

We express our captivity to a modern worldview when we say that holistic ministry means combining evangelism (meeting spiritual need) with relief and development (meeting physical need) as if these were divisible realms and activities. Then we even make it worse by insisting that the church or evangelism part of our organization do the former, while the development agency does the latter.

Myers argues that development should be holistic, because the God who creates also cares for that which He has created in a holistic way. Similarly, the Christian purpose for the total development of human beings has a biblical foundation. Moffitt (1987: 234) notes that the biblical basis of human development has to do with the growth of individuals in their mental, physical, spiritual and social areas of life. Moffitt (1987: 234) further explains that, at best, humans should have the mental ability to observe, remember, integrate, analyse and make wise decisions in their daily activities. Physically they should be able to meet their daily needs, such as the provision of food, shelter, a clean environment and a generally healthy life. Alongside the mental and physical needs lies the spiritual need of nurturing and maintaining a good relationship with God. The social aspect of life also is important, as it helps to ensure peaceful and harmonious relationships.

⁴⁶Thus, the philosophy of Christian mission is a holistic ministry, which refuses to divorce evangelism and social action (Bosch, 1991: 428).

Bragg (1987: 40) notes that it is not God's intention for a society to have only a minimal provision of good and service. The book of Isaiah (58: 6-7) for example, reveals God's desire to meet basic needs such as setting free those who have been crushed, sharing food with the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless and clothing for the naked. Similarly, in Matthew (25: 31-46), Jesus teaches that the struggle to meet the needs of the poor, such as the provision of food, water, shelter, clothing, health care and spiritual nurturance, would be seen as an indication of salvation on judgement day.

Moffitt (1987: 236) and Myers (2011: 6, 7, 47), nevertheless, argue that focusing on physical aspects of human life without considering the spiritual aspects is not theologically sound. These authors insist that, in response to human needs, the church should integrate the physical and the spiritual, as not doing so diminishes and discredits God's purpose for humanity. Moffitt (1987: 236) concludes that there should be a unified definition of development, which has to do with bringing human beings toward a place of complete reconciliation with God and complete reconciliation with their fellow human beings and their environment. Moffett (2012: 599) explains that the Christian gospel does not exalt the proclamation of the word at the expense of Christian social action; rather, they belong together. For Bragg (1989: 69) taking care of people's physical and emotional needs as Christians is a sign of the manifestation of the Kingdom.

Furthermore, God's concern for the entire world is the scope of *Missio Dei*, meaning the mission of God, which affects people in all areas of existence, such as creation, care, redemption and consummation (Bosch, 1991: 400-401). This, in turn, shows that a dichotomous understanding of God's mission is a serious missiological challenge that churches need to address. God's mission is holistic, and love for humankind is the heartbeat of God. Placing a dichotomy between the sacred and secular in responding to human need is a false and unhealthy theology for church and community development. According to August (2010: 46) the separation of the physical and social from spiritual development is Christian heresy, because it creates and supports an unbiblical dichotomy.⁴⁷

In this sense, what the church preaches and does must direct people's hope towards a life hereafter. At the same time, it should emphasise and encourage its members to work hard, spend wisely and give generously to the needy. By so doing the church will improve their

⁴⁷This requires a theological skill just as well as technical skills in order to properly address human needs holistically, as integrating evangelism and social service form part and parcel of the gospel (Myers, 2011: 47).

lives and relieve their frustrations and hardships. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 15) disclose that evangelical activism has historically not been limited to evangelism to converts, because as missionaries went out they preached the gospel and lived it by doing their best to improve the lives of their converts.⁴⁸ They did so by establishing schools, medical centres and small-scale business enterprises. The TD practice follows this principle and seeks to ensure the holistic development of the human community so that people could benefit from all the blessings of creation. Formulating a theological understanding of poverty should be taken seriously, because the God of the Bible cares very much about the poor (Mouw, 1988: 228).

By implication, the TD approach directs hope towards life hereafter and, at the same time, advocates for the relief of current pains and grief. Both evangelism and social action focus on God's concern for the salvation, justification and redemption of the human being. God is also concerned about human relationships, justice (in and among nations) and the improvement of society (Stott, 1992: 337). Bowers du Toit (2010a: 433) argues that holistic development is about the transformation of individuals and institutions that brings about *shalom*, which is peace with God, our fellow human beings, ourselves and all of creation. Therefore, Christian commitment to the oppressed and the poor is crucial. She further stresses that it is God's desire that systemic economic justice and personal compassion, respect and generosity towards the poor and needy become the central agenda of the church. Strengthened by the power of the Spirit, the church can work toward restoring a sense of identity and instil real hope in the hopeless.

3.2.3 Social transformation as a Kingdom response to powerlessness

The powerlessness of the poor is a result of systematic socio-economic, political, bureaucratic and religious processes that dis-empower the poor (Myers, 2011: 168, 169). This implies that empowerment is an essential theme in the field of development and mission among the poor (Christian, 1999: 165). Empowering the poor and powerless is a key task of the church. When the poor are empowered, it enhances their resources to avoid total dependence on the rich and powerful. Power gives a voice to the voiceless and enables them to articulate their immediate interests. It creates conditions for a more adequate and meaningful livelihood. Authentic development must reverse the process of disempowerment with a kingdom-of-God response that includes three commitments: first, it must deal with the relational dimension of poverty;

⁴⁸ The focus of this thesis is not to highlight the harm that colonial missions also did to the indigenous people, but rather the positive impact they had.

second, it must combat forces that create and/or sustain powerlessness at all levels, and; third, it must challenge the time element in the process of disempowerment by rereading the history of the poor from God's perspective.

In that sense, Myers (2011: 69) notes that the narratives in the book of Exodus highlight the holistic and relational nature of God's redemptive work. Spiritually, the story shows how God demonstrated his power over the Israelites' enemies so that they would believe and be faithful. Politically, the story describes how the Israelites moved from slavery to freedom, from injustice toward a just society and from dependence to independence. Economically, the story reveals how the Israelites moved from oppression in a foreign land to freedom and productive life in their homeland. Psychologically, the story describes the Israelites imagining how they are now freed people, bringing a new understanding that, with God on their side, they could re-discover their identity (Myers, 2011: 70).

Moltmann (1999: 5) believes that every healthy and fruitful liberation theology⁴⁹ must be embedded in a theology of the kingdom of God. The same holds for political theology in all its different guises. As theology of God's kingdom, theology has to be public, critical and prophetic. August (2005: 35) states that the church knows about God's intention for the world, which was set forth in creation, to reach its ultimate consummated kingdom of God, and this is a good premise for the church to be a source of value formation to the communities by working for the restoration of peace, reconciliation and liberation. Indeed, hope in the coming kingdom is a powerful force for social transformation. God's Kingdom is not territorial rule, but is the reign of the King of kings and Lord of lords and the blessing of the Kingdom is evident here and now (cf. Luke 4: 18-19). God's people, therefore, should be committed to the promotion of justice and peace (cf. Amos 5: 25).

However, the current suffering and poverty in the world are consequences of people seeking meaning and purpose in wealth, power or pleasure, which is reflected in the hopelessness of the present. Instead, finding hope in Christ and the future establishment of his kingdom

⁴⁹Unlike the traditional concept of development, TD could be regarded as an offshoot of liberation theology as it seeks to ensure that the poor are empowered to take care of their own lives (Brown, 1980:31). As noted above it also draws on biblical themes often associated with Liberation Theology such as the Exodus, the notion that God is on the side of the poor and oppressed and emphasises both the socio-political and spiritual dimensions of Liberation.

transforms everything.⁵⁰ According to Bowers du Toit (2010: 432) the dualistic worldview which failed to see evangelism and social action “as an indivisible whole” has a negative impact on a theological understanding of eschatology. This is because an authentic eschatological approach has to place emphasis on the future as well as the present. A balance view of the Kingdom focuses on both the future coming of Christ and also takes the presence reality into account (Bowers du Toit, 2010a: 432).

The kingdom of Satan stands for what oppresses, dehumanises and enslaves, while the Kingdom of God stands for what humanises and liberates (Wagner, 1989: 119). Similarly, *shalom* is viewed as an essential principle of the Kingdom. According to Bragg (1987: 67), the meaning of *shalom* is not just the absence of strife, but the positive sense of health, wholeness, prosperity, justice, harmony and general well-being. To live in *shalom* is to enjoy living before God, living in one’s physical surroundings, with one’s fellow human beings and with oneself. God’s intention is for God’s people to enjoy peace and prosperity, with justice and not exploitation (Bragg, 1987: 67). That is to say that Christians’ hope for the future kingdom transforms the present reality (Hughes & Bennett, 1998: 44).

This makes the Kingdom of God a central theological theme in Christian engagement with poverty; as it is an integral part of the coming of God’s kingdom on earth. The fight for social justice could be viewed as part of the coming of the Kingdom of God, because key Kingdom values include the protection and strengthening of the poor and the vulnerable (Hughes & Bennett, 1998: 25). Christian “transformation looks toward the hope that Christ’s likeness is not only the gospel, but that the living Christ will bring about substantial changes for good through the practice of the Kingdom values” (Voorhies, 2012: 603). Myers (2011: 90, 174) understands the central concern of TD to be focused on the Kingdom of God because the “impact of the fall is on both the individual and the social system [...Therefore] the impact of the gospel must be on both”. Therefore, TD takes place within the larger story of creation, fall, redemption and restoration.

Middleton and Gorman (2009: 45) also point out that the most fundamental meaning of salvation in the scripture is God’s deliverance of those in situations that have hampered their well-being. The deliverance of the needy and their restoration reassures them *shalom* with God, others, and the world. This restoration is motivated by compassion and love for justice.

⁵⁰ For instance, people who once made wealth, power or pleasure can now seek justice and use their resources to bless their neighbours (cf. Luke 19: 8). The poor, who are in situations of hopelessness and haplessness, can now rejoice, for being strengthened, and that their material circumstances change for the better (cf. Acts, 3: 8).

Christians should remain committed to their call by demonstrating God's love most explicitly in terms of caring for those who are deprived of justice, dignity, food and shelter (Christian, 1999: 69).

Over four decades ago, Jürgen Moltmann (1969: 93-94) argued that the Christian hope in the Kingdom of God is not a hindrance to the advancement and development of an individual or a nation. Transformed individuals who hopes for the coming Kingdom in their lives must be characterised by identifying, loving and caring for the less privileged, the hungry, the naked, the oppressed, the homeless and prisoners, as mentioned in the section on the basis for Christian involvement in social transformation, namely that the idea of *Shalom* presents the ideal goal for TD. Myers (2011: 175) explains that:

The Kingdom vision for a better human future is summarized by the idea of *shalom*: just, peaceful, harmonious and enjoyable relationships with each other, ourselves, environment, and God. This Kingdom frame [is] inclusive of physical, social, mental, and spiritual manifestations of poverty and so all are legitimate areas of focus for transformational development that is truly Christian.

In this context, Myers believes that both the poor and non-poor are powerless from God's point of view and have a common agenda, which has to do with recovering identity and discovering vocation.⁵¹ For this reason both the materially and non-materially poor need to be transformed so as to re-discover their human dignity and identity. In essence, human identity and vocation are revealed in terms of human relationships with God and human beings and all other creatures. The vision of TD is to ensure the restoration of these relationships.

Therefore, TD holds that the lack of justice and peace is rooted in broken relationships, which need to be restored. Sin broke the relationships that existed at creation. This requires an integration of physical and spiritual transformation. Transformation in this sense is not only about enabling individuals and groups of people to learn how to resolve their conflict or fix their personal or community problems. It also is aimed at dealing with human selfishness, greed and corruption, as well as building human character that fosters lasting relationships among people. This implies that transformed individuals or communities should be able to live collegially, characterised by neighbourly love, stewardship and justice.

⁵¹ According to Myers (2011: 178), "the poor suffer from a marred or diminished identity and a degraded understanding of their vocation. The non-poor on the other hand suffer from an inflated sense of identity and of vocation".

Figure 3.1 further explains holistic social transformation. It explains that living in peaceful and healthy relationships is the heart of the message of the gospel. Christ came to heal broken relationships among people and systems in a redemptive way in order to engage them in harmonious fellowship with himself and fellow human beings within their respective communities. The goal of TD is to ensure that human beings are able to recover their identity, as *Imago Dei*, redeemed by Christ's death and resurrection and able to discover their vocation as stewards in *Missio Dei*. The redeemed and justified form the community of faith (the church) and through active participation in holistic mission, fulfil the *Missio Dei*. They engage in social service and evangelism and are able to meet their physical and abstract needs. There is a strong element of faith in TD that holds that, with God, all things are possible; God changes human situations from worse to better. However, God has given every individual the capacity and mandate to contribute to and determine his or her future. Therefore, transformation enables people to be active in their development process and makes it more meaningful, effective and sustainable.

3.2.4 Distinctions between the Christian and secular views of transformation

The Christian motivation for development, its goals and process of implementation are key theological questions that need to be understood. This section analyses the distinctions between the Christian and secular concept of social transformation in terms of its motivation, goal and process. This study does not intend to perpetuating a dualism between the secular and the sacred; is rather done as key to understanding Christian motivation as unique.

3.2.4.1 Motivation

Motivation is one of the key elements that determine the impact of a development project.⁵² The most essential element of secular development is its emphasis on progress, evolution and economic growth. It proposes a process of structural change in such a way that underdeveloped countries could be developed to the level of developed countries (Bowers du Toit, 2010b: 262). The Christian's idea of development, however, is based on the OT concept of *shalom* or the NT concept of the kingdom of God, which are characterised by material well-being, harmony, peace and justice (Bowers du Toit, 2010b: 266).

⁵² The motivation for an action may be judged by the level of commitment, support and encouragement toward achieving a set goal. That is, the motivation of an organisation could be seen in the way the human, physical, technical and financial resources are put together and used in supporting and implementing a particular project.

The foundation of Christian involvement in community development arises from concern for one's neighbour and the sustenance of the love of God (Dudley, 1991: 1). Thus Moffett (2012: 599) makes it right that a commendable and sincere attempt of the secular effort toward improving human conditions cannot be measured with that of Christianity on the basis that the Christian emphasis is on a vertical relationship (with God) and a horizontal one (with neighbours).⁵³

Christian development agencies may be involved in social transformation for various reasons; however, their respective ministries are virtually always a natural expression of their faith. Their ministries are in response to the great commandment: total love for God and neighbour. It can also be argued that, while secular donors may provide economic incentives as well as strategies to achieve the donor's or development agency's purpose, the Christian' side of social transformation is born out of personal obedience to Jesus Christ and the desire to have others know and follow Christ (Dudley, 1991: xi-xii).

Secular agencies indeed have sound motives in terms of improving the conditions of the poor; however, the Christian motive goes beyond this. The mission and vision statements of Christian development organisations such as Tearfund and World Vision International may serve as examples of this unique motivation. The latter's mission statement (World Vision International, 2014) is summarised as follows:

To follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the good news of the kingdom of God.

That of Tearfund (n.d.) is:

To serve Jesus Christ by enabling those who share evangelical Christian beliefs to bring good news to the poor. Proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel for the whole person through support of Christian relief and development [...] Seeking at all times to be obedient to biblical teaching.

The above quotes indicate a theological and contextual foundation for Christian motivation. Theologically, Christian motivation emerges from an understanding of the nature of God, humans, the fall, redemption and the kingdom of God. Contextually, it promotes self-reliance

⁵³This relationship was corrupted by sin, which led to oppression, poverty, injustice and the alienations of individuals, communities and nations (Bowers du Toit, 2010b: 266).

in meeting the basic needs of individuals and the community, as well as equity, justice and peace (cf. August, 2010: 48).

Furthermore, people's motivation could also be influenced by the person they pledge allegiance to. In that sense, the secular development workers could be working for the donors' benefit or for the benefit of the poor from a humanist perspective. It should be noted that this could also be true of Christian development workers (Elliston, 1989: 170). However, Christian workers ultimately pay allegiance to Christ, with whom they have had a personal encounter. The workers are accountable to the people they serve, to donors, and to God. They regard the poor as individuals with the same rights to dignity and respect regardless of ethnicity, political, or religious value (Myers, Whaites & Wilkinson 2000: 36).

Unfortunately in the past, the role of religion and faith has traditionally been neglected in secular development studies (Clark 2007: 77). This could be due to the fact that the dominant perspective in the secular development agency is often centred on material, technological and economic progress cf. (2.2.1). According to this, the future is bright only when there is an increase in the level of employment, a surplus in the budget, and science and technological equipment have been transferred to poor countries for the efficient production of goods and services (Sine, 1987: 3). The Christian perspective, however, is centred on both the immediate future and an eternity in terms of the Kingdom of God (cf. Bowers du Toit, 2010a: 433).

Many secular development agencies may choose to intervene on behalf of others for their benefit, but Christian involvement in social transformation is more than a choice; it is a command. For instance, Dayton (1987: 59) asserts that the world is the object of redemption and the church is the vehicle of that redemption. Therefore, Christian engagement in social transformation is to model the good news so as to provide everyone with the opportunity to respond to the commands of the gospel and to live in obedience to it. More importantly, Christian development workers know that their aim is to ensure just relationships and the recovery of identity and vocation that leads to a better human future. They work from a vision-and-values approach instead of a planning-and-management approach. They also work with people, not with projects as will be seen in 3.4.1.3.

3.2.4.2 Goal

The aims and objectives for engaging in individual or community development (for present or for future consumption) have to be considered before embarking on a development project.

Bowers du Toit (2010b: 267) observes that there are structures that hinder progress and rob people of the enjoyment of peace, harmony and justice as intended by God in creation. Therefore, she argues, in agreement with Bragg, that the goal of Christian social transformation is:

To repel the evil structures that exists in the present cosmos and institutes through the mission of the church the value of the kingdom over against the values of principalities and powers.

This indicates that peaceful and just relations were God's original plan for humanity. However, the entry of sin brought about social disorder. Therefore, Christians see intermediate goals such as improved economics, roads, water systems, social structures and justice as deserving of their very best efforts and support. The issue of reconciliation with God, fellow human beings and creation is, however, seen as having eternal significance. Even though we live in an age of progress and in a scientific and technological world, Christians do not accomplish social transformation through advances in technological and economic progress alone, but, should recognise the omniscience of the Holy Spirit. By implication a Christian development worker believes that as human beings we cannot overcome our obstacles or achieve success by ourselves. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit who guides and directs our affairs.

3.2.4.3 Process

Christian and non-Christian development agencies share some practices and systems in the process of development activities. However, Christians have other unique characteristics that may not be found in the secular field. Some of the things Christians and non-Christian development agencies share in common include: "needs assessment, planning, funding, staffing, training, managing, evaluating, making reports, relating to other agencies, social groups, and political structures, coping with cultural and communicational differences and many others similar complex issues" (Elliston, 1989: 173, also see Myers, 2011: 181). Christian involvement in socio-economic development plays a dual role. In the process of improving the material condition of the people, Christian beliefs are introduced to the beneficiary.

For instance, a holistic Christian approach posits that it is God who provided the soil for development and God is going to help us prosper through development activities (Bornstein, 2002: 9). Moreover Christian engagement in holistic development is fuelled by a sense of

concern, responsibility and privilege (Bosch, 1991: 140). Therefore, Christian involvement in social action is not only unique in terms of evangelism and the Kingdom concept, but even in the way it views and values the people and community it serves. A holistic worker understands that Christ died for the people who will benefit from their development programmes. Their relationships and lives should therefore be characterised by the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, kindness, faith, gentleness, goodness and self-control (cf. Galatians, 5: 22-23).

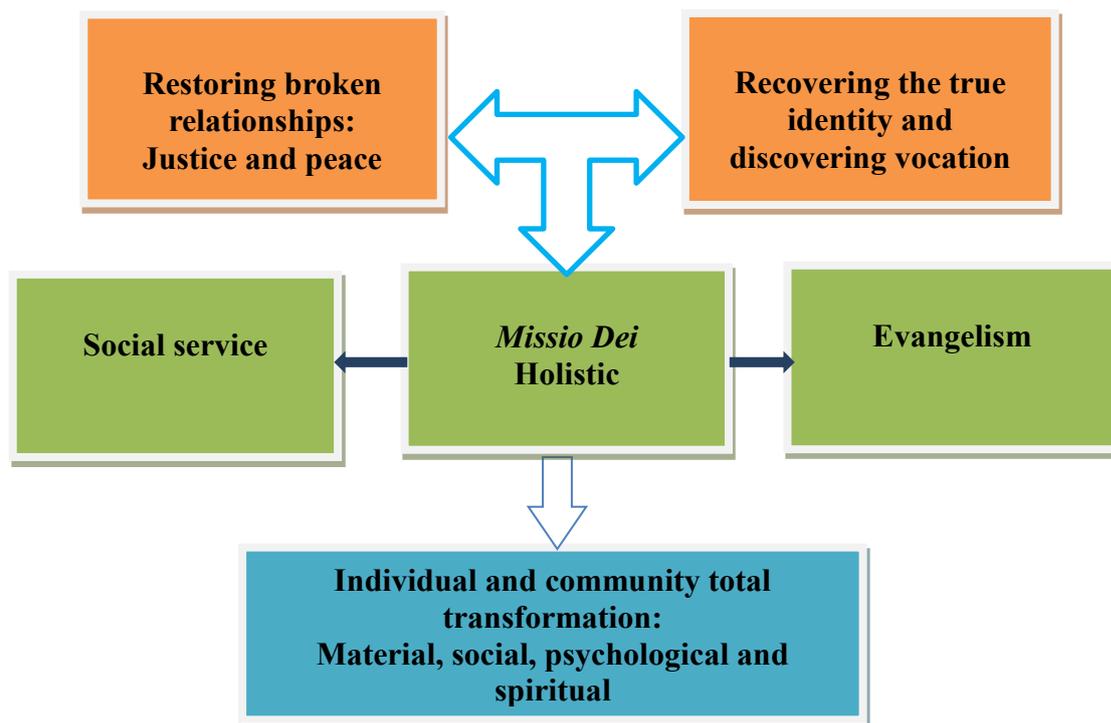


Figure 3.1: An overview of the goal, motivation and process of holistic development.

The above figure indicates that, in any effort, whether economic, political, social or religious, the fundamental issue is geared towards realising a fuller and richer human life. It represents a unique approach to human need by being conscious of God-human relations, justice, equity and dignity (Bragg, 1987: 42). It understands and promotes the spiritual side of human development to balance the socio-economic side. This integrated approach is observable in Bragg's argument (1987: 39), which says that "transformation is a part of God's continuing action in history to restore all creation to its rightful purposes and relations. Myers (2011: 259) affirms that God's project in the biblical story is to restore the lives of individuals and communities marred by sin so that they can be good, just and peaceful once again.

3.2.5 The local church⁵⁴ and social transformation

The local church is a community of people who share a common faith, tradition and commitment; a community of ordinary people characterised by mutual love, service and solidarity; and a community of people who consist of individual members and different levels of organisation – local, regional, national and international (August, 2010: 43). Ultimately, the local church is God's people, who are special people who produce the fruit of love, peace and joy. The members are people who identify with each other, both with the weaker members of the community of faith as well as with the marginalised of society, and each member of Christ's body has unique gift in terms of meeting the practical needs of the other. None of the members of this body will function properly without a gift that serves both physical and spiritual needs (Hughes & Bennett, 1998: 75, 78, 81).

Hendriks, Erasmus and Mans (2004: 380-381) note that, as a Christian community, the local church can only be true to its identity as the body of Christ by focusing faithfully on the triune missional God, who is merciful and is concerned with pain, suffering, injustice and the brokenness of the world. The authors also point out that the solution to the problem related to poverty can only be addressed if the local congregations are networked, empowered and motivated to deal with the problem. As such, the presence of the church in society is the beginning of poverty alleviation. This includes the fact that the community of faith is a sign of the righteous kingdom of God in this world (Myers, 2011: 317).

The above definitions of the concept of the local church show that there are numbers of reasons why Christians should take part in social transformation. Stott (1984: 17) notes that a God-centred religious service cannot be divorced from real life and the moral obedience of the heart. What is professed in the church should be reflected in the everyday life at home and at work. This means the church is of value to the poor if it helps them to improve their level of poverty to become less poor. God loves and promotes justice, and He has made it part of His divine plan for our community life to be characterised by justice.⁵⁵

⁵⁴It must be noted that the concept of 'local church' here refers to congregations in a particular geographical locality and not a local congregation.

⁵⁵ The worth of human life is also a driving force for social transformation. Whatever we do must be motivated by love for human beings who are in dire need. Authentic development should enable people to take control of their environment and destiny; thus giving people a sense of dignity and self-worth (Bragg, 1987: 42).

Certainly, Christian theology understands that God is generous and compassionate. God does not take pride in those who enrich themselves at the expense of others (cf. 1Timothy, 6: 17-19). The author of the gospel of Luke and Acts wrote to propagate an inclusive social agenda. This is proven by the frequent use of words such as ‘poverty’ and ‘wealth’, in contrast to the case in other gospels. Wealth can breed evil, particularly if it is not used for the good of others. Early Christians therefore set a model of compassion by encouraging charity, sharing and helping the needy (Marshall, 2009: 114-115). Hood (2009: 129) argues that the Apostle Paul

did not present an abstract theology of social concern; rather he dramatizes his message through his life, challenging those who lead and teach that generosity, sacrifice and sharing of *koinonia* with others in God’s family is not optional but integral to the call to Christian life in a community.

To this end, Bowers (2005: 100) argues that the church is capable of facing the reality on the ground due to the fact that it reaches every household in the communities where the churches exist. The church can go into the most remote or neglected areas. Morisy (2008: iv) also explains that churches are not only closer to the people, but stand in the forefront of contact with those who need compassion and care.

In the light of this, Agbiji (2012: 279) argues that the most important contributions of the church in society include an active participation in social ministry such as service and charity, as well as the sponsoring of projects that will encourage or increase productivity. In addition, it is the responsibility of the church to “create an alternative consciousness among both the poor and the rich. This is the most unique role in development whereby people are the priority and not development projects” (Agbiji, 2012: 279).

The church also plays an essential role in value formation. As the most trusted sector in the society, according to Bowers (2005: 101), it stands a better chance to influence positive change in society. What is needed of the church is to translate these values and ideas into concrete action in partnership with the state. The church thus is not only one of the effective vehicles for human and societal development, but also has the needed resources, such as human, physical, technical and financial resources, to support or carryout small- and large-scale initiatives. This means the local church has a double identity: it is holy people called out of the world to belong to God, and at the same time it is worldly people in the sense of being sent back to the world to witness and to serve (Stott, 1984: 25).

3.3 Critique of the Popular Concept of Poverty in Relation to TD

This section critiques the popular concept of poverty as not being holistic in the light of the TD debate, which instead argues that poverty is relational. This inadequate understanding of poverty calls, within the context of this study, for a biblical reflection of the nature of poverty.

3.3.1 Popular understandings of poverty

Most researchers have described poverty mainly as a shortage or lack of social and political power, as well as of material goods and services. For instance, Bert (2012: 20) defines poverty as the state of human beings who are poor. They have little or no material means of survival, little or no food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, education or other physical means of living and improving their life. According to Spitzeck (2005: 305-306), economists view the poor as those lacking access to material goods, while socialists view the poor as those who lack rightful chances compared to the rest of the people in the community.

To this effect, standards and indicators for understanding the poverty line have been proposed. The international standard of measuring the poverty line is based on the total value of a nation's annual output of goods and services (Burkey, 1993:4). That is, a society's wealth or poverty is measured by the Gross National Product (GNP).⁵⁶ Another means of measuring poverty is the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI), which is used to measure a society's quality of life and for which the standard factors usually are life expectancy, child mortality, adult literacy and so on⁵⁷ (Burkey, 1993: 4). This shows that development goes beyond just the expansion of income. It is also about enlarging people's choices, allowing them to live a long and healthy life, acquiring knowledge or being educated and having access to basic resources for a decent standard of living (Neumayer, 2001: 201).

Myers (2011: 132) agrees that poverty is a "complex social phenomenon that affects all areas of life, namely, the physical, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual". According to Myers (2011: 113), poverty is deficit hence the poor lack necessities for survival. Poverty is seen as entanglement. The elements are material poverty, physical weakness, vulnerability, powerlessness and spiritual poverty (Myers, 2011: 115). Poverty is disempowerment. The

⁵⁶The result of this measurement is based on an average, which one could view as a weakness because an average could mislead. A small number of wealthy people may be used for the whole.

⁵⁷ This too is based on an average, which may not reflect the whole story of a society. Moreover, the measurement is based on the national standard. It may not represent the voices of people at the grassroots who are the direct victims of poverty.

household lacks access to social power. Since the household is excluded from social powers, the government role, political powers, civil society and the economy should integrate the household into the global economy (Myers, 2011: 118). Poverty is the lack of freedom to grow. In other words, it would be impossible for an individual or group of people to improve their lifestyle under series of restrictions and limitations relating to physical, mental, social and spiritual conditions (Myers, 2011: 123). Similarly, Donnison (1982: 1, 7) argues that the word poverty is used to describe those under hardship, misery and destitution. The poor are those who have a low income, low wealth, or are struggling to achieve real living standards of all kinds, and this poses questions about inequality, exclusion, discrimination and injustice.

Poverty occurs in both developing countries and developed countries, although it is much more widespread in developing countries (Bert, 2012: 20). Spitzack (2005: 306) notes that poverty is concentrated in developing countries, with some of the most severe poverty concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. This area is described as being confronted with a shortage of trained personnel, finances and technology to pursue sustainable economic and social development goals. The rural populations of these countries continue to flock to cities, which lack sufficient job opportunities.

Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 15) further explain that, in a specific region, country or city, poverty can be measured based on social and economic elements. Such elements include food consumption and the minimum income needed to meet expenditure on the basic requirements of food, shelter, transport, clothing, medicine and education. The poverty line does not only describe a situation in which the absence of the next meal means the difference between life and death, but it also has to do with low income levels. This can apply to people who earn less than US\$1.25 per day, which does not afford them proper food, shelter and personal necessities of life. Their socio-economic situations are evident in various deprivation traps. As such they are rendered vulnerable to isolation as a result of economic incapability, economic and political powerlessness, and physical weakness due to disease (Swanepoel & De Beer 2011: 3-5).

In an attempt to address the challenge of poverty, the world leaders formulated eight development goals in the year 2000. Their aims were to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equity, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other disease, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development (see 2.4.1).

Although the above facts and efforts reflect a genuine attempt to eradicate poverty, they do not reflect the whole picture of the nature and cause of poverty. This is because poverty should be understood as a global problem with devastating effects. It affects individuals, households and entire communities (Pieterse, 2001: 30). Moreover, poverty is not a state of deprivation that has come about by chance; it also is as a result of the wealth of others. That is, the poverty of the poor is a direct result of the indifference, negligence, or oppressive and exploitive activities of the rich, whether at a personal, national, international, institutional or structural level (Ajulu, 2001: 72).

This calls for a clearer understanding of poverty and a better approach to poverty reduction. Otherwise, the change agent may focus on development rather than on the problem. That could end up creating a culture of dependency on developed nations, which further compounds the situation of developing nations (Nabie, 2005: 116). This is because being poor does not only mean lacking access to clean water or clean environment, electricity and health services or clothing, it also means not having opportunities and choices that lead to a healthy life and a decent standard of living with dignity and self-respect (Niemandt, 2010: 38). The latter demands a holistic approach to poverty, which this thesis argues is best presented through an understanding of the nature of poverty from a biblical point of view.

3.3.2 An overview of terms for the poor/poverty in the Bible

If one is to be committed to the biblical mandate of delivering good news to the poor, a clear understanding of the concept of poverty is necessary. Mouw (1988: 224) notes that there are two key reasons for a Christian understanding of the theology of poverty. First, it provides a biblical understanding of the concern for the poor and the oppressed, whose needs might have been overlooked or neglected. Second, it provides a biblical understanding of poverty for those who are willing to or are already active in responding to human needs.

Pleins (1992: 403-411) points out that, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew terms that are frequently used for the poor include *ani*, *ebyon* and *dal*. Other terms are also used in a few instances, such as *anawin*, *ras*, *mashor* and *misken*. These terms are sometimes used synonymously or interchangeably to describe the poor or the nature of poverty, particularly as a lack of economic resources and material goods; physical weakness and political and legal

powerlessness.⁵⁸ There also are various terms that describe the concept of poverty in the New Testament. Hanks (1992: 415) explain that *ptochos* is the most common word used to refer to the poor, even though *penes*, *penechros* and *endees* are also used, but not as frequently. These terms are generally used to describe the poor as people who lack the necessities of life, namely food, drink, clothing, shelter, health, land, employment, freedom, dignity and honour.⁵⁹

John Stott (1984: 216) similarly refers to the variety of words used for poverty in the Scripture, which can be divided into the following three forms: the indigent poor, the oppressed poor and the humble poor. Stott (1984: 217-218) explains that the *indigent poor* are those who are deprived of the basic necessities of life. That is, they do not have food to eat, a place to sleep, land, or money. The *powerless poor* are those who are socially or politically oppressed, who suffer from constant social injustice and lack rightful living. The *humble poor* are those who are socially, economically and politically oppressed; they acknowledge that they are hopeless and helpless, and they put their trust in God for their salvation.

Pleins (1992: 402) notes that, in ancient Israel, the poor included the small farmers, day labourers, construction workers, beggars, debt slaves and village dwellers. They are considered as vulnerable groups because of their low economic, social and political status. Of course there were numbers of poor people in Israel at every stage of the nation's history. In most cases their poverty was caused by natural disasters leading to bad harvests. Poverty was sometimes the result of the actions of enemies, through oppression by powerful neighbours or through extortionate usury. For example, heavy taxes of various kinds were imposed on the Jews (cf. Nehemiah 5:1-5).

⁵⁸ Moyer (2009:927) states that 1. *Ani* is often used as the "humble or afflicted." For example, the term is used for pious individuals who are afflicted by the wicked (Ps. 10:2, 12:5). It is also used for those poor and needy people who have the right to glean (Lev 19:10, 23:22). 2. *Ebyon* is used for those who have little or no material possessions. Such people are subject to oppression and abuse (Amos 2:6, 5:15) and they are to be special objects of concern (Exod. 23:11). 3. *Dal* is from a root meaning "to be low or to languish". It is often used of the poor whose situation was worsened by oppression (Job 20:19; Prov. 22:16; Amos 4:1). Its cognate, *dalla*, is used to refer to the poorest class, such as vine dressers and plowmen (2 Kings 24:14, Jer. 40:7). *Mashor* is used in Proverbs for poverty that results from laziness (6:11; 14:23; 21:5; 24:34) or excessive living (21:17).

⁵⁹ Moyer (2009:928) notes that *ptochos* is used to refer to the baggers (Lk. 16:20), and those who are poor in a material sense (Matt. 19:21, Lk. 19:8, Jn. 13:29). The term can also be used figuratively for the "poor in spirit" who are especially blessed (Matt. 5:3, Lk. 6:20). Most often, the poor are singled out as having the good news preached to them (Matt. 11:5; Lk. 4:18; 7:22). *Penes* refer to the poor who need help (2 Cor. 9:9). *Penichros* is the adjective of *penes* and is used for the poor widow in Luke (21:2). The term *Endeesis* is used of the poor or impoverished in the community of faith, whose needs were supplied as others sold their goods and distributed the proceeds (Acts 4:34).

In early Christian history it was the persecution of believers that forced people out of their homes and comfort zones. Hood (2009: 130) explains that they lost their material possessions due to natural and political disaster. Others had to endure the loss of inheritance and family structures as punishment for believing that Jesus was the Messiah. As a result, some became beggars in order to survive and others depended on other people for their survival. No wonder that poor believers such as widows, the disabled and marginalised became the target of alms collection (cf. Romans 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:8, etc.). This takes us to an overview of the theological understanding of the nature of poverty, which needs to be emphasised in response to the issue of poverty in the ECWA's POD as a faith-based development agency.

3.3.3 Theological viewpoint on the nature and causes of poverty

The overview of biblical descriptions of poverty above indicates that there are both physical and spiritual causes of poverty. On the other hand, the theological nature of poverty is viewed essentially from the perspective of broken “relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. [...] poverty is the absent of *shalom* in all its meanings” (Myers, 2011: 143). Poverty may also reflect the absence of good relationships. The absence of personal and relational well-being is an essential dimension of poverty whereby people are disempowered socially, politically and economically (Myers, 2011: 120). From a theological position, Myers (2011: 96) outlines two goals of transformation. One of them is to live “as persons in communion, in right relationship, [which] is the meaning of salvation and the ideal of the Christian faith”. The emphasis here is on restoring the relationship with God through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. These working relationships are the heartbeat of TD advocates. As Myers (2011: 183) explains:

...if we are to move toward a better human future then we must encourage and develop relationships that work for the well-being of all, relationships that are just, peaceful, and harmonious. This is the heart and spirit of *shalom* and the only way leading toward abundant life for all.

Peaceful and harmonious co-existence remains a fundamental component of any healthy community. In any society where a sense of peace and mutual understanding is absent, less meaningful development takes place. Agbiji (2012: 276) notes that the church can be in mission authentically only in obedience to God. More so, the ecclesiological dependence on God's mission (*Missio Dei*) makes mission the purpose, life and basic structure of the church. Therefore, change agents must see it as a point of concern and responsibility to be part of the

Missio Dei. According to Myers (2011:3), transformation reflects a concern for seeking a positive change in the whole of human life and is part of God’s continuing action in history to restore all creation to its rightful purposes and relationships. In this regard, corruption, greed, selfishness and exploitation need to be avoided, while peace, love and care are to be promoted by all and for all.

Christian (1999:68) notes that poverty is a result of “social, economic, political and religious systems marked by injustice and exploitation”. Nabie (2005: 115) explains that the challenge of poverty has led to an insecure, hostile and almost ungovernable society. The constant conflicts between communities, tribes, religions, races, families and individuals are a few examples of the theological view of the nature of poverty. The majority of the victims have been rendered homeless, without food, clothes, health care, security; self-respect, a sense of worth and dignity. This means human beings have distorted the original plan of God for creation (Nabie, 2005: 115). We read in Genesis that the world God created was good, but because of human selfishness, greed and disobedience, people continue to experience pain and suffering. The table below illustrates some examples of the causes of poverty as described in various congresses, consultations and conferences of evangelical leaders since the 1960s.

Table 3.1: The congresses, consultations and conferences on poverty (constructed by the researcher from Christian, 1999: 62-67).

| Trends | Issues and concerns |
|--------|---|
| 1960s | Racial tension, inequality, injustice, war, population explosion, poverty, family disorder and disintegration, job insecurity and joblessness. |
| 1970s | Social and political injustice, i.e. poverty is as a result of injustice, oppression, the marring of human dignity, exploitation and evil practices. |
| 1980s | Environmental destruction, wastefulness and hoarding. That is, poverty is caused by the destruction of the environment, poor stewardship of God’s resources, and the wealth and consumption patterns of the rich. |
| 1990s | Understanding the realm of political economics, which causes poverty. Examples are cultural attitudes, micro-and macro-level causes, natural disasters, the creation and distribution of wealth. |
| 2000s | Focus on reconciling broken relationships, lack of shalom. |

Thus, poverty is a complicated social issue involving all areas of life: physical, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual. The challenge is that poverty is created by people. This is because it is true that, if people are lazy, and not diligent and hardworking, they may miss opportunities; but the misuse of political, social and economic power often leads to other people suffering. In addition, the lack of generosity, deprivation of rightful ownership, exploitation, domination, corruption and injustice are critical issues that affect human well-being and *shalom*. This means that physical poverty can also be caused by spiritual poverty.

This means that sin is also a serious cause of poverty. Sin in this sense is not limited to personal sin⁶⁰ or national disobedience to God, but extends to the sin of others. In this regard, transformation is corrective of both individual and institutional sin. It does not extract people from their earthly contexts for other worldly piety, but changes contexts as well as people (Bragg, 1987: 39). Davis (2009: 92) explains that “sin leads people to abuse, engage in corrupt acts, and misuse resources in a way that is hurtful to themselves, their families and their communities.” Similarly, on most occasions, people are the causes of poverty and must change first for their circumstances to change. Myers insists that the nature of poverty is fundamentally relational and the causes are spiritual. That is, the nature of poverty is as a result of relationships [with God, self, others, environment] that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable (Myers, 2011: 144).

⁶⁰ The person who is living under the power of sin is in bondage and needs freedom. This is because anger, gossip, unforgiving attitudes, jealousy, pride, lust and the like are developmentally constraining and retrogressive. It means that any effort of development must ensure that an individual lives and works with confidence in Christ’s victory over sin.

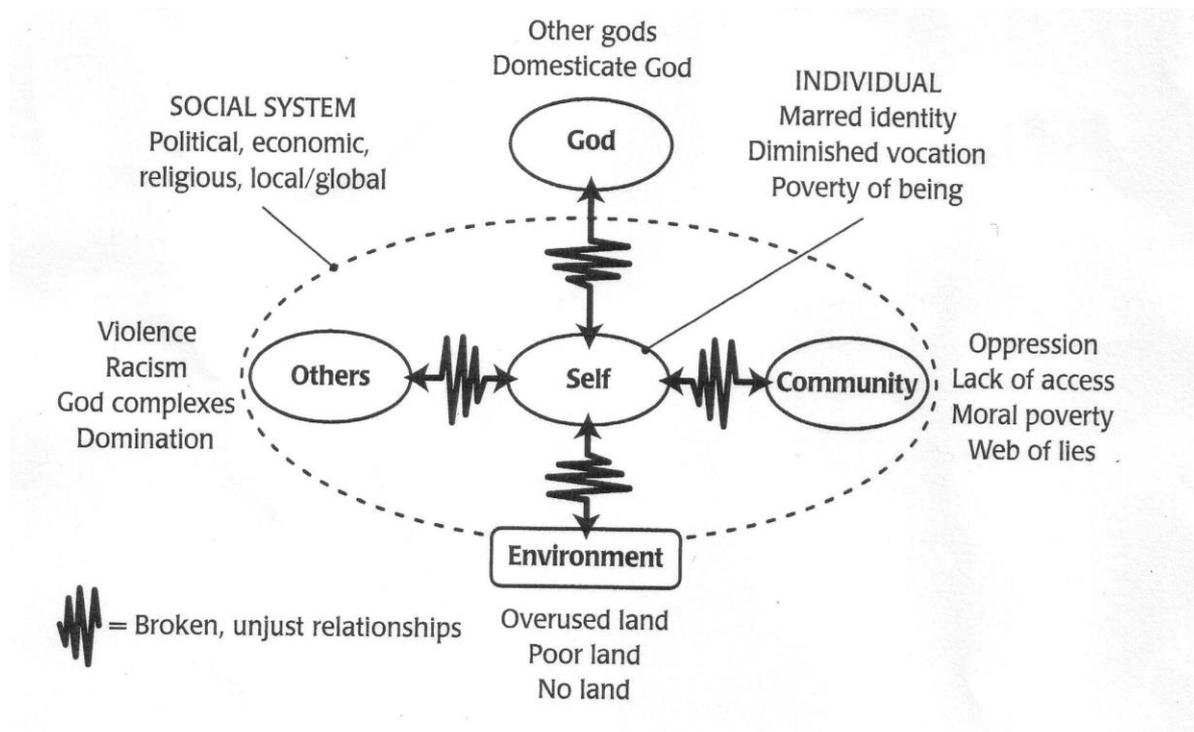


Figure 3.2: A relational understanding of poverty (Myers 2011: 144).

Therefore, the way people understand the nature and causes of poverty will determine how they respond to poverty. Byworth (2003: 100) points out that the current global perspectives of poverty and the poor have gone beyond mere material deficit. They are viewed as multi-dimensional (relational, spiritual and power dimensional) and ranges from global systems to individual identity, self-belief and hope. Mouw (1988: 225-227) explains that political injustice and economic oppression are patterns of human rebellion against God. Doing justice and exercising faithful love toward others may be a result of having knowledge of God.

The table below explains that the way various development organisations and professionals view the poor will also determine how they will respond to their circumstances. For instance, Linnenbrink (2005: 307) explains that systematic theologians could approach the challenge of poverty from a social ethics perspective; contextual theologians from the perspective of God's solidarity with the poor; liberation theologians from the perspective of God as deliverer and life giver; and practical theologians from the perspective of social action for human welfare, overcoming hunger and poverty. In this sense, responding to poverty is not to be limited to the increase in the income levels of the individual, family and community, but is also about people's ability to act and make choices on what concerns their lives.

Table 3.2: Various views on and responses to the issue of poverty (Myers, 2011: 109).

| View of the Poor | Theological Frame | Key texts | Expression | Why the poor are poor | Christian response |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|--|--|--|
| The poor are made in the image of God | Creation | Genesis 1-2 | The poor as creative. As a work of art. They see God's hidden glory | The poor lack skills, knowledge and responsibility | Enable the poor to be fruitful and productive. |
| The poor as people in rebellion | Fall | Genesis 3, Proverbs | The poor as lazy. The poor make bad choices. God helps those who help themselves | The poor are in rebellion and their culture keeps them poor | Challenge the poor with the gospel and encourage them to make better choices |
| The poor as Christ incarnate | Incarnation | Gospels | Christ in the distress guise of the poor. What you did for the least of these | The poor lack love | Accompany the poor and relieve suffering as far as is possible |
| The poor as God's favourites | Prophetic, Eschatological | Exodus, Prophets | Blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom. Liberation theology | The poor are oppressed by the noon-poor. Poverty is structural | Work for justice. Help the poor find their voice and place in the socio-political system |
| The poor as lost souls | Salvation, Soteriological | Matthew 28, Acts | The better future lies in eternity. Save as many as we can. The poor will always be with you | The poor are lost from God and the kingdom is coming soon | Proclaim the gospel and encourage the poor to respond |

Table 3.2 above shows that Christians view the poor as people made by God, loved by God, lost and in need of salvation. To better understand their situation will help people to identify with the economically marginalised and gain willingness to lessen their suffering. Nabie (2005: 115) states that anything that prevents people from living in dignity and decency

should be addressed by development agencies, church and governments. Christian workers must make a difference in the lives of people through their development projects.⁶¹

3.4 The Characteristics and Practitioners of Transformational Development

The third section of this chapter explores some characteristics of TD,⁶² as well as of the holistic practitioner. The section argues that TD affirms cultures, contexts and indigenous knowledge, evangelism in context, just and peaceful relationships, human dignity and self-worth, empowerment, self-reliance and sustainable development, total freedom and spiritual development as key characteristics of transformation. The section also explores the attitudes and characteristics of a holistic practitioner.

3.4.1 Characteristics of transformational development

The concept of transformation is not a mere alternative or strategy for community development; rather, it is posed as a Christian framework for looking at human social change. It incorporates unique principles that could be used to measure any development theory (Bragg, 1987: 40). Understanding the characteristics of TD could help determine the scope of development efforts by churches in general, and ECWA's POD in particular. The knowledge also would help both the church and non-church development agencies with their development programmes and projects.

3.4.1.1 Affirming culture, context and indigenous knowledge

Culture is the way of life and thought of people in a given environment. It can be elaborated on as an integrated system of beliefs, values, customs and institutions that express these beliefs, values and customs (Paredes, 1987: 63). In every community or society, the people's beliefs, values and customs bind them together and give them a sense of identity, security and continuity. These include beliefs about God, reality and the ultimate meaning of the values relating to what is true, good, beautiful and normative, and norms on how to behave, relate to others, talk, pray, dress, work, play, trade, farm and many others. This culture relates to institutions that express beliefs, values and customs that relate to governance, law courts,

⁶¹ As discussed in 3.2.1 the design of development plans and programmes must address the total need of the whole person. Unlike the modern world view, which separates the gospel into two forms, word and deed, in TD the proclamation of the gospel and social action are viewed as holistic. The very heart of the Christian effort for social transformation is the proclamation of a gospel that is rooted in love (Tienou, 1987: 175-179).

⁶² Although some of these characteristics overlap with those in the final sections of chapter two, but the point of departure are seen in places with regards to the added perspective brought by theology.

temples/churches, families, schools, hospitals, factories, shops, unions, clubs, etc. (Paredes, 1987: 63). In this regard, it will be difficult or catastrophic to force cultural change on people. Rather, cultural change should be negotiated carefully. The scriptures should be interpreted and applied in relation to the context of listeners.

Transformation is not about changing the way people think and behave in a community. It is about being aware that community customs are linked together, to the extent that, if there is going to be change in one area of life; many other areas will change as well (Hiebert, 1989: 86-87). Therefore, if new ideas are to be introduced, it needs to be done in such a way that it easily can be adopted by the beneficiaries. For example, sewerage could be used as a way of promoting community health, but it will require water each time it is used, which may not be within easy reach in rural areas. Water pumps and taps make it possible, but they must be maintained, and this requires money. This is basically true of Nigerian rural communities, which have to get their water from local streams and wells.

Another example could be new hybrid seeds and fertilisers, which could increase food production, but are more expensive for poor farmers. That is why the holistic practitioner needs to plan and use things that people are familiar with, along with the beneficiaries. For people to participate in decisions that affect their lives, they must start with what they know and what most people regard as their own culture and values (Anacleiti, 2002: 71). This is because they are guided by their cultural principles and values. As such, the need to study local culture in an effort to realise community development is not optional. Anacleiti (2002: 170) adds that:

[p]eople are not developed, they develop themselves and for people to develop themselves they have to be convinced that the changes envisaged will not be a mere experiment with their lives, but will actually mean a change for better.

The community as well as the change agent should be able to acknowledge and welcome the activity of God in the community. This is because God's creative and redemptive work in the life of the community is evident, whether Christian or otherwise. Helping the community to identify and outline God's part in its story is an act of discernment. It is also an act of healing, through which the community dweller understands that he/she is not God-forsaken. More so, the local people, no matter the level of their poverty, are experts in their particular area. Their knowledge should not be underestimated. Respecting and valuing the community in its context of indigenous knowledge is crucial for any development effort (Myers, 2011: 206).

This is in contrast to the modernisation way of thinking, in which indigenous culture is seen as a hindrance to development (see 2.2.1). On this note, Bragg (1987: 45) reminds us that transformation affirms indigenous culture because all cultures are part of God's gift to humanity. For Christ to enter into Jewish social and religious life shows that he (Christ) honours human culture. Christ's attitude is hereby an eye opener to the fact that all cultures have intrinsic values that can be redeemed and used as basis for social transformation.

It also is true some cultures have certain elements that should not be ignored. Korten (1990: 67) asserts that cultures that are oppressive and detrimental to transformation and justice should be taken seriously. People can be developed within their own cultures because that is where they live and function freely. They learn what is acceptable and unacceptable in their culture. Bragg (1987:45) insists that, while no culture is pure and holy, they all have intrinsic values that can be redeemed and used as the basis for social transformation. Burkey (1993: 34) correctly argues that "development concerns people; it affects their way of life and is influence by their conceptions of good life, as determined by their cultures."

This suggests that valuing people's culture in development efforts is essential to the planning and implementation of all development. These cultures will serve as instrument for promoting social justice, equality, sustainability, identity and dignity for the poor. Hiebert (1989: 86) asserts that transformation involves changes in social relationships and the way people think and behave in a given community. Hiebert (1989: 91) further explains that more often than not, the community and its leaders know their problems and possible solutions. They may only lack awareness of how to utilise their resources in order to overcome their challenges. Myers (2011: 205) explains that it is important for a practitioner to respect the community story, because the history of the community could unveil the community's real problems and present a possible way forward. As for the community dwellers, they feel their story is valuable since someone is able to listen to it (Myers, 2011: 206).

To value and respect people's cultures and indigenous knowledge is both theological and contextual in Christian community development. Hiebert (1989: 75) reveals that being both theological and contextual are two dimensions of Christian development. It is theological because Christians' vision, mission and motivation of development emerge out of their fundamental understanding of the nature of God, humans, the fall, redemption and the kingdom of God. By being contextual the Christian finds it easier to build and encourage those they have developed, regardless of their cultural, social, religious, and racial differences.

That is, development must be done with the context of the people in mind. This section intends to unpack theories behind TD. Voorhies (2012: 606) acknowledges that all interventions in a group of people (social, technical economic or educational) must carry a message that is understood and interpreted from the recipient's world view. This means that transforming both the individual and the community depends on the way the worker values and respects the culture and indigenous knowledge of the people.

Valuing people's potential, power, resources, knowledge and skills therefore is essential in achieving community development. Creativity is a God-given aspect of our humanity, so it must become our priority to provide structures of participation and commitment that will enable people to discover and express their creativity (Morisy, 2008: 127). When people's capacity is built, it enables them to discover their potential and to improve their quality of life in ways that simultaneously protect and enhance the earth's life support system (Moseley, 2003: 21). This is because every individual or community has something to contribute to the process of their development. Starting with local resources could give the people a sense of ownership and self-dignity. When local people are involved in making decisions, they ultimately take responsibility for determining their future.

3.4.1.2 Evangelism in context

Evangelism is the public sharing of the good news of Jesus Christ. This sharing of the gospel is not a mere intellectual argument; rather, it is an invitation to a relationship with God and one another (Myers, 2011: 310). In the past, Western missionaries assumed that Western culture was superior to all other cultures and were convinced that God in his providence chose Western nations. Because of their unique qualities, they were supposedly the standard-bearers of his cause to the uttermost ends of the world. As a result, they imposed their views on others, assuming that, since it was the gospel that made the West strong and great it would do the same to other nations. Their major concern was to uplift peoples who were deprived of the privileges they themselves were enjoying (Bosch, 1991: 299, 305).

These missionaries failed to understand that an authentic evangelism must always be contextual. It does not view the world as a hindrance, devalue history or promote the spiritual over the non-spiritual life. It does not phrase conversion only in micro-ethical terms such as regular church attendance, abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, and daily Bible study and prayer. It does not limit the evangelistic message to an offer of release from loneliness and

bring peace of mind, and success in what we undertake. Any evangelism that insists on these elements as the ultimate aims at satisfying people rather than transforming people (Bosch, 1991: 427).

A gospel that is not contextual but assumes religious superiority over the other could be a hindrance. It is likely to be rejected. Voorhies (2012: 606) acknowledges that the holistic transformation of a person comes through a relationship with Christ and that there is no substitute for a living, growing faith. The transformational approach seeks to communicate Christ through the word, yet recognises that God is already at work in the community. Part of the external facilitator's task is to discover what God is doing and support what may already be happening as a bridge to how God wants to use the external resources and revelation (Voorhies, 2012: 606). This indicates that, although social transformation is loaded with the Kingdom concept, it has to be transmitted based on the culture of a given society for better understanding and assimilation. Wagner (1989: 119) also argues that "[in] any significant Kingdom concept, the cultural mandate has its origin in God". Therefore, contextual evangelism could motivate a strong desire to learn from God's Word. It will inspire others to attend Bible study, Sunday worship and other weekly church services.

Therefore, being contextual in evangelism is a stepping stone to positive and lasting change. Reading the biblical text in the context of the hearers can provide a better understanding of the situation of the gospel hearers. It will also help the people to know what is happening in their historical experience. From a practical theological perspective, Pieterse (2001: 116) explains that the gospel message can only be relevant to the listeners when biblical texts are interpreted in their context. That is, the preacher must speak to the needs of the listeners. Their dignity must be respected and opportunities must be given to them to speak their mind. In the same vein, Awojobi (2010: 10) opines that culture complements what the evangelist teaches or preaches. The unique features of culture in evangelism are: first, culture can be a strong instrument that helps to broaden the knowledge of the gospel beneficiaries about the reality of the God they believe in. The second feature is that culture can educate the evangelist on how to readily influence the people in their preaching stations.

In this sense, the individual or community can be reached easily with the gospel if relevant tools and instruments are adopted to convey the word of God (Awojobi, 2010: 11). Therefore, the authentic evangelistic mandate is not all about repentance and the assurance of salvation, but fosters a self-serving mind-set in the life of the gospel beneficiary. That is, to experience

the grace and redemptive work of Christ is important, but the new converts must know that they are called to become servants. Bosch (1987: 186, 187) adds that authentic evangelism is disciple making, whereby the new convert is led and taught to be committed to Christ and to live a life worthy of his or her calling. In reference to this, Bosch (1991: 428) explains that:

Evangelistic invitation oriented toward discipleship will include a call to join the living lord in the work of his kingdom. It will direct attention to the aspirations of ordinary men and women in society, their dreams of justice, security, full stomachs, human dignity, and opportunities for their children. It will forthrightly name the principalities and powers opposed to the kingdom.

The Christian faith contextualises its approach to social transformation in that the change agent has to live with the people (August, 2010: 50). The focus is on the good of the people, and the people are addressed within their frame of reference. The change agent is integrated into the community and participates in their life processes so that s/he could experience the needs of the community and have a fuller grasp of the extent of that suffering.

3.4.1.3 Just and peaceful relationships

Christian development practitioners understand and promote just and peaceful relationships as one of the means of achieving holistic development of the human community. Bragg (1987: 43), for instance, points out that transformation provides a ground where human beings, no matter their race, religion or nationality, may live a fully human life, freed from domination and oppression by other people. In addition, equity is a sign post of transformation because it provides equal access to material goods and services, as well as equal opportunities for all people. Robinson (1994: 318) says that development is a matter of human relations and justice (right relationship with God and God's people) in which domination, oppression and exploitation are abnormal.

This means that unjust relationships are the root causes of disparities and inequalities in society. Robinson (1994: 318-319) notes that development is liberation in an economic, social and spiritual sense. True development is the development of people, the release of people from their enslaved conditions so that they can have the rightful dignity of participation in the process of making decisions that affect their lives and labour. In the account of the fall in Genesis, the right relationship with God, fellow human beings and nature was distorted. A healthy relationship with God is the basis of all other relationships (human and nature) and these relationships are an integral part of holistic development (Bragg, 1987: 44).

Hughes and Bennett (1998: 39) are right to say that to do God’s will now is to practise righteousness or justice in all human relations. Migliore (2004: 267-268) adds that the missional activity of the church is to foster a just and inclusive community in which members use their ministerial gifts for the well-being of the whole. Myers (2011: 181) also explains the levels of these relationships as relationship with the triune God, relationship with oneself and relationship with the community.

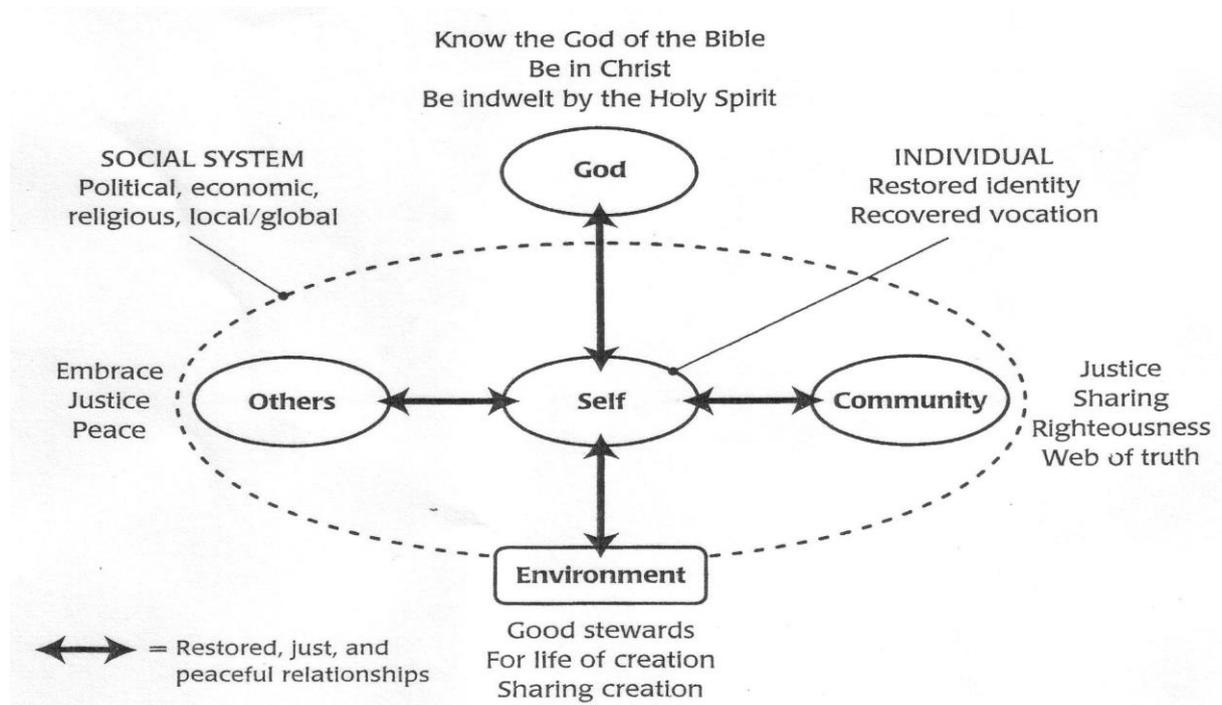


Figure 3.3: Christians’ understanding of transformed relationships (Myers, 2011).

Figure 3.2 illustrates our understanding of the connectivity of all relationships. The top reflects God as the central part of the relationship in need of restoration through the finished work of Christ. It says that we need to know God, be in Christ and be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The middle part is the need for having a healthy relationship with oneself. It says once our identity is restored and our vocation is recovered, the conflicting voices inside us that are the root of mental causes of poverty will be overcome. We can now experience peace within ourselves and develop characters that are of Kingdom values (Myers, 2011: 182). The left side indicates that the path to justice and peace is to embrace and/or be reconciled with those who have done harm to us.

On the right it shows that the practice of justice, sharing, righteousness and truth in the community cannot be achieved by an individual. The transformational practitioner aims to

ensure that a quality relationship is built within a given community whereby the poor are helped to recover their true identity and true vocation, while the non-poor are helped to be responsible stewards of God's resources. The bottom indicates that we need a healthy relationship with the environment from which our food, water and air comes. Being good stewards for the well-being of creation is a matter of necessity (Myers, 2011: 182-183).

This means that social life will be good if all relationships are restored. Moltmann (1993: 134) comments that "every relationship to another life involves the future of that life, and the future of the reciprocal relationship into which one life enters with another". For instance, Christian hope is a living hope and is connected in relationships with God, oneself and others in the community. When this framework of relationships ceases to exist, "hope" will be invalid, which may result in conflicts. Once just and peaceful relationships exist, the end result will be mutual friendship. In a friendly relationship, pretence or violence is not expected; a friendly relationship unites affection with respect. Moltmann (1993: 115) argues that, in a sincere friendship, both parties experience respect, acceptance, trust, freedom and happiness. True friendship exists without compulsion or force, and it ought to endure the test of time. Friendship conquers enmity, for permanence counts more than the moment and cannot be an enemy forever. Force and violence spoil relationships, but friendliness keeps them alive.

Therefore, when human relationships are cordial, oppressive and suppressive attitudes could be abolished, and when what makes a person truly humane emerges it can be affirmed that transformation is taking place in both the individual and the community. Moltmann (1993: 116) maintains that, until then, "the new man, the true man, the free man [the transformed man] is the friend". In the same way, transformation that is founded on a just and peaceful relationship allows people to trust and live with one another as friends while sharing privileges and opportunities.

3.4.1.4 Dignity and self-worth

Promoting human dignity and self-worth is another important goal of TD (Bragg, 1987: 42). In other words, affirmation of people's dignity and self-worth is one of the significant tasks of the transformational agenda, because people need to have self-esteem to be fully human. This is because the experiences most poor people go through tend to make them feel as if they are valueless, unproductive, hopeless and helpless. When they are transformed it will give them a

sense of belonging in society. Myers (2011: 178) states that both the poor and non-poor need to know who they are and the purpose for which they were created. In that case, restoring the identity and vocation of the poor and non-poor becomes a vital indication of human transformation.

The fact that men and women, poor and non-poor, are made in God's image says something about their identity. For God to have loved them and sent the Son to come and die for them signifies their human dignity. To give them gifts that contribute to their human well-being shows the importance of their vocation (Myers, 2011: 178). Along these lines, Myers (2011: 179) emphasises that:

- i. A transformed, dignified person transforms [his or her] environment.
- ii. People, not money, or programmes, transform the world.
- iii. Genuine steps to transforming people are not all about transferring resources, but include recovering lost dignity and identity.
- iv. People must be shown that their human dignity and identity are intrinsically related to God in Christ.
- v. God's purpose in human history is redemptive.

The point is that, on the one hand, social, political and economic transformation of the poor is essential for human well-being. On the other hand, a transformational agenda declares to people that they are made in the image of God with potential and abilities. Through the salvific work of Christ they can regain and fulfil the purpose of their creation (Myers, 2011:180). This means that Christians who engage in the development agenda should be aware that their ultimate goal is restoring identity, dignity and vocation. This coincides with Burkey's (1993: 56) perception that the essence of development is to ensure that people are able to increase their level of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and co-operation. In the absence of these elements, all efforts towards poverty alleviation will be difficult or impossible.

Similarly, theological and non-theological scholars within the discipline of development have argued that, beside the material human needs there also are abstract needs. These are not visible, yet they are very crucial for human survival. Burkey (1993: 3), for instance, refers to such human needs as emotional security and mental rest. This study holds that these factors have to do with a sense of who people are, what they are worth and the purpose for which they are created (Samuel & Sugden 1999: 238). This is because it is possible for people to

have the material things they need for sustenance but still lack self-respect, peace, love, protection, free choice and someone to listen to their story. They can be emotionally depressed because of isolation. People who have a sense of identity and dignity know that they are not expected to treat others or be treated as less important human beings (Samuel & Sugden 1999: 238). For this reason, Bragg (1987: 42) sees development as people gaining control over their environment and destiny, with dignity and self-worth.

It therefore is reasonable to argue that those individuals, families and communities with a good sense of identity and dignity experience freedom, justice, love and peace. In such an environment, care is given to the poor and weak, women and children; people respect and are respected, and people love and are loved. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 79) argue that this kind of life was practised and taught by Jesus and serves as a model for his followers worldwide to break down every social barrier that robs people of a sense of identity and dignity. Christians have their identity in God through the finished work of Christ on the cross and are equipped with spiritual gifts to serve in the household of faith. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and Romans 12, reminds Christians to be aware that every believer has a special gift that is for both self and one another's benefit. Therefore, being a Christian without knowing your gift can be dangerous and can lead to fruitless and hopeless service. All members of the church therefore should be helped to identify their individual gifts so that they may be effective and fruitful in their service to the Lord and to one another.

It goes a long way to show that once material needs are satisfied, people may discover some intangible needs such as being valued or respected by others (see 2.5.1.1). Political, social and cultural differences could become obstacles towards obtaining personal or societal identity and dignity. This point is strengthened by Coetzee (2001: 119), who states that development is not all about satisfaction of basic needs; rather, it includes the right to live a productive life. Individuals and communities need an environment in which they can live, work, play, socialise, worship and learn together (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011: 119). If this is realised, it is indeed a sign of a healthy community and a pathway to steady development.

Based on the forgoing, one of the central goals of TD is to create an accepting and supportive community that could provide people (both poor and non-poor) with a sense of belonging. By means of the Gospel, this environment can be created in which people can experience dignity, freedom, forgiveness and renewal of life. The mission of the church as the change agent is to

“be a community of faith in which the life of Christ is embodied as light in the world, a place of new possibilities” (Ballard & Pritchard, 1996: 53).

3.4.1.5 Empowerment

This study argued in 3.3.3 that the nature of poverty is relational and the cause is spiritual, which means the power is also relational. In this sense, one of the significant characteristics of transformation is to see that communities are empowered with an attitude that surpasses the idea of superiority and inferiority. The worldly concept of power does not create such a community; rather, “it has always been in tension with the power of the servant, the power of love and of the finer aspect of justice” (Christian, 1999: 185). In such communities the desire to become “bigger, better, faster, prettier, stronger, and smarter” has always been a driving force (Oladosu, 2010: 56). This is probably because powerlessness is viewed as incapability, which hinders development, especially when people lack access to economic and social status, and political and religious power (Speckman, 2007: 249-251). In this sense, empowerment is a people-enablement process for tackling poverty at grassroots level. The element of empowerment therefore is the control over economic resources and the ability of the poor to articulate and assert themselves. They need to do that without external forces determining their fate (Rahman, 1993: 205).

Of course, it is not part of God’s plan that power only resides with a few individual while the majority suffer as subjects under the powerful (Speckman, 2007: 253). So, empowerment is an important characteristic of transformation. There is a sense of dignity when an individual or community actively participates in the process of its transformation. The beneficiaries of any development project could feel responsible if they personally initiate and control their development project. Bragg (1987: 44) notes that God gives a high value to human participation in his plans for the world, especially as stewards of the earth’s resources. In other words, human transformation would be possible and lasting when people are able to act upon their needs as they perceive them and progress towards a state of wholeness in harmony with their context (Bragg, 1987: 44). This shows that, without empowerment, people cannot have the confidence and vision to work for positive changes in their lives in terms of economic, social, political and spiritual needs.

Ajulu (2001: 142) perceives empowerment as a three-tiered integral process focusing on the individual, community and structure. The integral empowerment process addresses all human

needs, be they social, material or spiritual. It also addresses the community as a complete entity for the rich, poor and those in between. Lastly, it addresses a range of structures that affect individual and community development, such as culture, tradition, politics or governance, institutions, and organisations. Thus, collective abilities are needed of individuals in a given community to take charge of identifying and meeting their own needs as households, communities, organisations, institutions, societies and nations (Rowlands, 1996: 90). It is not part of God's plan that power only resides with the upper class while the lower class suffers. God is not in favour of dependency, but human development frees a person from depending on others (Speckman, 2007: 253).

Snyder (1995: 6) explains that empowerment is the state of persons (women and men) being enabled to take their destiny into their own hands. Snyder (1995: 6) outlines three elements of empowerment in development, as follows: the first is economic empowerment, which has to do with access to productive assets such as land, credit and technologies that can produce income. The second has to do with basic human necessities, such as education and health services, pure water, fuel and shelter. Participation in decision-making is the third element. The above list indicates that participants must be empowered for the sustainability and effectiveness of any development programme or project.

Nevertheless, empowerment would require the development of skills and abilities to make decisions regarding community development programmes. Individuals and communities need to own the vision and value their work. As Gilchrist and Taylor (2011: 22) stress, “[e]very person has capabilities, abilities and gifts. Living a good life depends on whether those capabilities can be used, abilities expressed and gifts given. If they are, such people will feel valued, feel powerful and be well-connected to the people around them”. This belief is also held by Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 52), who argue that people must be empowered with the necessary information and freedom to decide on what they want.

3.4.1.6 Self-reliant and sustainable development

Self-reliance is another important aspect in the process of transformation. An understanding of self-reliance from a biblical perspective can strengthen transformational development efforts. For instance, Robinson (1994: 319) reveals that dependency is alien to the biblical understanding of human development. That is because dependence implies inequality, which is against the will of God. Inter-dependence is an essential aspect of human life. God intends

humans to live in community, not in isolation. In this way, development is essentially the removal of the conditions of dependency. Self-reliance and welfare for all are basic and authentic principles of development. Self-reliance means self-confidence, reliance primarily on one's own resources, human and natural, and the capacity for autonomous goal-setting and decision making (Robinson, 1994: 320). Nevertheless, self-reliance must lead people to acknowledge God as the source of their lives. It must lead them to put their confidence in Him whose goodness and mercy are reliable and whose promises cannot fail. He alone gives perfect peace to the weary, healing to the sick, provision to the poor, hope to the hopeless, strength to the weak, faith to the fearful, and rescue to the oppressed. You only need to put your trust upon the Lord and he will be there for you (cf. Jeremiah, 39: 18).

Physical, economic, social and political incapacity makes a person dependent on others. The above analysis of empowerment shows that people's power comes ultimately from self-reliance, especially when they are able to meet their material and emotional needs themselves. Equal access to material goods and opportunities to fulfil basic needs are essential characteristics of transformation. That is, the benefits of development should be extended to all people in society because they all have the same needs and potential. Bragg (1987: 41) notes that, according to the jubilee laws and prophetic teaching, God has a special concern for the poor, the defenceless, the weak, the marginalised, the sick and the hungry. Similarly, in the early church, the spirit of sharing and concern for one another was practised as in Acts (2: 42-47), and equity was the central focus in 2 Corinthians (8: 14-15).

The participatory development paradigm discussed in 2.3.3 shows that the system does not depend on external help without building capacity and mentality to self-govern. This is the developmental strategy that manages all natural, human, financial and physical resources towards producing long-term wealth and well-being (August, 1999: 27). In essence, sustainable development has to do with a continued flow of development benefits, which means self-reliance. Bragg (1987) reveals that it is God's intention for us to have adequate life-sustaining goods and services, and that development must enhance sustainability of the community's economic, social and environmental resources. Development projects must continue even when the change agent is no longer in the project area. Thus,

Self-reliance is doing things for oneself, maintaining one's own self-confidence, making independent decisions either as an individual or within the context of a collective group to which each member has voluntarily allied himself or herself (Burkey, 1993: 50).

However, self-reliance is not individualistic, but is enhanced when people in the community are able to support each other, reason together and work together, as this can go a long way to enhance their success of meeting their physical and emotional needs. They may need someone to guide and facilitate the process, but not dictate to them what to do and what not to do. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 13) insist that power must be given to people to do what they want, rather than to do what is perceived to be their needs. It means that self-reliance is the ability to decide and act independently as individuals or as a group of people on relevant issues that are of common interest and for the good of all members of the group.

The idea of self-reliance is not new to Christian theologians. They historically have promoted the involvement of the church where the church members understand that it is God who is at work in their work or business. As Byworth (2003: 103) argues, “transformational development is the responsibility of the people themselves”. The part of the church and other development organisations is to “empower the community and all of its members to envision, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate” their development programmes. Consequently, any form of development that does not lead to self-reliance must be discouraged and avoided. Churches involved in development work should endeavour to make their policies and practices flexible enough to allow people to act on their own. The people should own the project, rather than feel that it was imposed on them by some authority.

3.4.1.7 Total freedom

The ultimate goal of development is human well-being; well-being as having enough food, assets, a job, being in good physical condition, having self-respect and dignity, living in peace and harmony with family and community, as well as having access to justice and security. By implication, one of the goals and means of human development is freedom. Ignorance, exploitation, socio-cultural constraints and institutional structures are major factors that rob people of freedom by holding back access to social, economic and political power and rendering them voiceless (Bragg, 1987: 43). Poor people are mostly not free in the physical, material, spiritual and social areas of their lives. Transformation therefore must involve the whole person mind, body and spirit in any development effort.

Human freedom is a vital component of transformation that requires that people be released from their enslaved conditions so that they can have the dignity of participation in the policy-making affecting their lives (Bragg, 1987: 43). Dependency is alien to the biblical

understanding of human development, because dependence implies inequality, which is against the will of God. Inter-dependence is an essential aspect of human life. This is because God has intended for humans to live in community, not in isolation (Bragg, 1987: 43).

The fact that poverty robs one of total freedom in all areas of life is indisputable. Amartya Sen (1999: 4) explains: the first lack of freedom is related to economic poverty, which robs people of the freedom to satisfy hunger, achieve sufficient nutrition, obtain remedies for treatable illnesses and to acquire clothes, shelter and clean water and to access sanitary facilities. The second lack of freedom is related to absence of public facilities and social care, like organised health care and educational facilities, as well as effective institutions for the maintenance of local peace and order (Sen, 1999: 4). The third lack of freedom is denial of political, civil and other liberties by corrupt, authoritarian or incompetent government (Sen, 1999: 4).

Similar to this perspective, Swanepoel and De Beer (2004: 28) explain that “transforming efforts do not aim to bring relief to people in the trap [economic, political and social traps] but to free them from the trap [...]. Development first frees and then improves”. Anything that stands as an obstacle to freedom, such as poverty, tyranny and a lack of economic opportunities, social deprivation, neglect of public services and the machinery of repression, should be removed (Sen 1999: 3). This freedom links political, social and economic freedoms interdependently. Sen (1999: 11) further explains that freedom of speech, a free and fair electoral system, economic security, basic education and health care can help facilitate economic participation. It can produce opportunities for participation in trade and production that will help to generate personal and public wealth. People’s spiritual transformation is also crucial. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 133) elaborate:

Even if a community develops economically, politically and socially, unless it encounters God in Jesus, it will still be afflicted by the poverty of not knowing God, [...] this spiritual poverty will sooner or later lead to other forms of poverty as form of sin such as greed begin to dominate.

This quote shows that the freedom to grow in relationship with God and live out values appropriate to the Kingdom of God is crucial for sustainable development (Byworth, 2003: 109); that, knows God through faith in Jesus Christ and the freedom to grow in this relationship with God within one’s own ecclesiastical identity. However, this study argues that to have our sins forgiven in Christ paves the way to material, political and economic

freedom. Bragg (1987: 43) explains that transformation frees people from slavery to other people, institutions, beliefs, oppressive systems, ignorance and so on.

3.4.1.8 Spiritual development

Whilst empowerment and self-reliance are important for human well-being, they are not complete without considering the spiritual aspect of life. The element of spirituality, which I argue for in 3.2.2, completes the idea of holistic human development. This chapter has argued that spiritual transformation must also be included as the core of development. Of course, it could be expected that government and non-governmental organisations that are involved in community development would focus on people's intellectual, physical and social welfare to the neglect of their spiritual condition. Still, the disappointment has been the neglect of spirituality even by faith-based development practitioners and institutions.

The emphasis on spiritual development as a characteristic of development cannot be overemphasised. Korten (1990: 168), although not a theologian, reminds us that people's spiritual growth and nourishment are among the important responsibilities of the church, in that its role is to teach people in society the use of power, values, brotherhood, peace and the ability to live in harmony with one another. By implication, this approach can lead to eliminating unjust structures, the tendency for corrupt practices, exploitation and misuse of power, and for people to use their gift to serve as stewards.⁶³

Therefore, it can be argued theologically that human beings have always been in search for meaning and purpose in their lives. This search can bring them a sacred connection. This sacred connection gives people insight into the meaning and significance of their lives and the integration of all aspects of their being (Nash & Stewart, 2002: 17). Christians believe that the true meaning and purpose of life is found in God (Hughes & Bennett, 1998:44). This makes spirituality an important aspect of human need for sustainable well-being. Nash and Stewart (2002: 15-16) state that:

⁶³Such an environment is needed for sustainable development. Therefore, the quest for spiritual development is critical for the spiritual nourishment of life and the creation of healthy communities in which God can find a dwelling in human hearts. Once this need is not taken into proper consideration in development projects, the effort may be judged as incomplete or inadequate. It means that the absence of the knowledge and fear of God may trigger social imbalances that cause poverty. This study holds that material and non-material human needs are fundamental factors to effective human development, but the spiritual dimension is crucial because it has the ability to stimulate people to think positively about God and fellow human beings. It is the foundation of all things. The God/human relationships should be the first priority before all other aspects of human development.

It is in terms of the spiritual dimension that a person strives for transcendental values, meanings, experience and development; for knowledge of an ultimate reality; for belonging and relatedness with the moral universe and community and for union with the imminent, supernatural powers that guide people and the universe for good and evil.

Sometimes people reject development efforts because of their cultural and religious orientation. As an illustration of the importance of spirituality, at other times it could be discovered that they prefer magic charms rather than development efforts (Myers, 2011: 142). What people believe about the world and its relationship to their spiritual dimension shapes the way they respond to everything, including poverty (Hughes & Bennett 1998: 133-134). This strengthens the role that spiritual sensitivity plays in the initiation and management of development programmes and projects (Nash & Stewart, 2002: 19).

Therefore, when a person is transformed, spiritual growth begins, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer (John, 14: 16-17), and the old nature is replaced with the new (2 Corinthians, 5: 17). Moreover, it is by God's power and grace that believers can have everything they need to live godly and prosperous lives. Spiritual growth requires that the believer be connected to Jesus the vine by studying scripture and attending believers' gatherings. Thus I argue that, as faith-based development organisation, ECWA's POD can do better if the TD approach is applied in the process of community development. The TD approach has a good framework that can be used towards accomplishing social, economic and political transformation.

3.4.2 The transformation practitioners

The holistic practitioner's attitudes and character play an important role in achieving holistic development. These unique qualities of Christian development workers may not be found in non-Christian development workers and are crucial to achieving the characteristic of transformation.

3.4.2.1 The attitudes of a holistic practitioner

The role of a holistic practitioner is to help in fostering good relationships in the community. Therefore, the fruits of the spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, are key attitudes of a holistic practitioner (Myers, 2011: 227). In addition, a holistic transformational practitioner must learn to be a good neighbour: this requires the practitioner to willingly love and be kind to neighbours. He/she

has to learn to be patient: a successful worker does not rush or try to work so as to gain human praise; it is about the Kingdom purpose. So he or she must take time and do the best to the glory and praise of God. He/she must have willingness to be a learner: no or little transformation will take place if the worker and beneficiaries (poor and non-poor) are not ready to learn (see Myers, 2011: 219).

Obedience to simple instructions helps workers to maintain their integrity and ensures a true sense of stewardship. Samaan (1989: 131) argues that a sanctified Christian, who consecrates sets apart and cleanses him/herself for God's service, must maintain the evidence of inner transformation that is characterised by a life of purity, moral integrity and holy living. His or her thoughts and actions must be expressed in an outward life of goodness and godliness. This means that holistic practitioner's spiritual and moral life must go hand in hand with professionalism.

3.4.2.2 The characteristics of a holistic practitioner

Understanding the characteristics of a holistic practitioner is crucial, since the focus of TD is on the physical and spiritual transformation of the people. Development workers may have well-designed plans and strategies on how to carry out successful projects, but may not be adequate if they do not clearly understand what is desired of a holistic practitioner. The first important characteristic of a holistic practitioner is to become be a born-again Christian. That is, he or she needs to know and experience God in an intimate relationship, growing towards Christ-likeness while doing the work of God's kingdom (Samaan, 1989: 131).

Besides being born again, knowledge of the Bible is crucial for effective service. The Word of God is a perfect manual for a holistic practitioner; it teaches how to live for God and to serve him. It is only by careful, devotional Bible study that a worker will not fall into public disgrace (cf. 2 Timothy, 2: 15). Theological and biblical knowledge are key tools the disciple can use to handle the physical and spiritual challenges that may be encountered in the project area. The holistic practitioner's ability to act theologically by joining the word and deed can also help the community act on their own theology (Myers, 2011: 230).

However, being a Christian and being a professional cannot be separated in the development approach. Professionalism can fuel a holistic practitioner to success. A Christian worker who wants to make an impact in the project area must have the technical knowhow, skills, strategies and knowledge of the dynamics of needs in the project area. In other words, since

the Christian approach is holistic, the Christian worker's knowledge must be holistic too. The knowledge of social science and of scripture is a prerequisite for engaging in transformational development (Myers, 2011: 225).

It takes a humble and companionate practitioner to relocate to the project area so as to carefully study and become intimately familiar with the social and cultural system of the communities there. Burkey (1993: 5) echoes Chambers's analysis of the flaws of most people who are keenly concerned with rural development but who are neither rural nor poor. Often the strategies for project conception and implementation they use do not represent the aspirations and interests of the targeted. A careful reading of the stories of Ezra and Nehemiah shows how they return to Jerusalem in order to carry out their social and religious reforms. Jesus says, "[t]he word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten from the father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter explored the concept of transformational development as it relates to people of all socio-economic walks of life. It considers transformation as a change that empowers individuals to recover their true identity and their vocations, as well as allowing for the building and maintenance of peaceful relationships. Transformation in its most authentic sense occurs by building a relationship with God and between people of all walks of life. This kind of transformation flows from a holistic perspective and all credit is given to God. Thus, every effort by the transformational practitioner should flow from the Kingdom point of view in order to ensure that it can be sustained. The process of transformational development thus works best through teamwork and the encouragement of participation by the individual, the family and, ultimately, members of the community.

The argument in this chapter is thus based on the fact that the welfare of human beings is the purpose of God's creation. His concern in creation is focused primarily on the holistic development of human beings. Justice is the means by which holistic development can be achieved. This implies that development is a matter of human relations and justice. Right relationships with God and God's people will, therefore, result in more comprehensive development. A domineering process, operations and exploitation, however, stand against the process of holistic development.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The tasks of practical theology, namely descriptive, interpretive, normative and pragmatic (Osmer, 2008: 4), are of strategic importance in conducting this study. As proposed in 1.6.1, the descriptive and interpretive tasks help in understanding the situation or context of the target communities, as will be seen in Chapter Five. The interpretive task uses theoretical or social science concepts to explain why things are happening in these communities, as in Chapter Two. The normative task uses theological concepts to explain the situation or context, and then proposes the rationale for the response, as in Chapters Three and Six. The pragmatic task seeks to determine practical strategies in which the situation will be controlled in order to reach a desirable goal, as will be seen in Chapter Seven. These approaches are in alignment with the aim of this study as in 1.5.1, which is to develop strategies that could aid the efforts of the ECWA's POD in addressing poverty from a holistic perspective.⁶⁴

This chapter presents the research design and methodology chosen for this study in detail, and justifies it. The concept of programme evaluation is highlighted first, as the main focus of the study is to evaluate the ECWA's POD programmes. The following section describes the study sample, data collection procedures and the data collection tools, such as literature review, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The chapter also describes the design of questions and topics that were covered to answer the research question and to recommend a pragmatic approach to community development. This is followed by the nature and principles of the qualitative data analyses used. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the validity, reliability and flexibility of the research project.

4.2 Choice of Research Design

A qualitative research design was employed in this study. The literature reviewed in Chapters Two and Three laid the foundation for the empirical study. These theoretical frameworks are

⁶⁴ This research is an evaluation of the impact of the ECWA's POD programmes. The assessment is based on the assumption that the ECWA and its leaders are playing a vital role in ensuring a holistic approach to poverty alleviation and community development.

used to analyse the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions⁶⁵ in Chapters Five and Six. The choice of these methods was based on an understanding that, although the research design needed to be complex to serve its purpose, the simplest route to achieve the research objectives is the best. In other words, the most important aspect in choosing a research design is to be able to acquire the needed knowledge using simple tool(s) (Grinnell & Stothers, 1988: 225).

The qualitative research methods used in this study may look complex, but they were used in the current study⁶⁶ to describe social reality from the participants' points of view, since the actors in a social situation can better explain what they are doing and why (Epstein, 1988: 188). Babbie and Mouton (2001: 270) note that the uniqueness of qualitative research compared to quantitative research can be viewed in terms of its focus on the insider's perspective of social action.

That is, the main concern in qualitative research is to understand and describe the situation, action and/or event from a specific context, rather than attempting to make assumptions about some theoretical population. This was deemed more suitable than being based at a mission station or denominational office and inviting informants for interviews there. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 54-55) note that such practices may reduce respondents to mere objects of curiosity. The process of the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews is discussed in more detail in 4.3, but we first need to explore the concept of programme evaluation below.

4.3 Programme Evaluation

The main focus of this study was to evaluate ECWA's POD programmes; hence it is of great importance to describe the evaluation procedures. According to Mouton (2001: 569), programme evaluation is used as a specialised method of research that "assesses the conceptualisation, implementation and impact of a development project." It is an organised method that helps researchers to obtain information about the activities, nature and impact of an organisation's programme(s) (De Vos, 2005: 369). In this study, the researcher did not seek to discover new knowledge, but to show how existing knowledge could be useful by

⁶⁵In addition to the individual interviews and focus group discussions, personal observation of various development projects administered by the POD programmes also was conducted.

⁶⁶ In the current study, a qualitative paradigm was used as a social research approach that attempted to obtain reliable and valid information from the grassroots level.

informing and guiding the church's practical actions to improve people's social conditions (Gray, 2010: 278).

Programme evaluation has a long history. It emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s and has been widely used as a research method in the social sciences since then. It has also been used in the fields of education and public health (De Vos, 2005: 368; Rubin & Babbie, 2007: 198). By the 1980s there was an increased need for programme evaluation. Factors that led to this high demand included the effectiveness and efficiency of social work agencies. Donors were concerned about how funds were utilised, while consumers focused on the quality of services provided (Hornick & Burrows, 1988: 401).

4.3.1 Types of programme evaluation

As highlighted in 1.7, there are three types of programme evaluation, namely summative, process and formative evaluations. Each of these types of programme evaluation will be discussed in more detail below.

4.3.1.1 Formative programme evaluation

Needs and evaluability assessments are categorised under formative evaluation. Needs assessments investigate the number of people in need of a particular service and assist a service provider in determining the extent of the service that is needed, as well as the cost or resources required to meet this need (Fouché, 2011: 455). This will make it easier for the service provider to plan or design the process through which the programme will be implemented.

Needs assessments also are applicable to existing programmes. For instance, Fouché (2011: 456) explains that assessing an existing programme is essential in order to determine whether changes from the original plan have occurred and whether these changes still allow the identified needs to be met. This provides insights that service providers can use to re-enforce their strategies for the improved implementation of programmes.

An evaluability assessment, according to Fouché (2011: 456), is a set of procedures that have to be followed in order to determine readiness for the evaluation of a programme, with the aim of knowing whether evaluation is possible and likely to offer helpful information. A programme thus should meet certain preconditions before an evaluation can be conducted. Fouché (2011: 456) adds that an evaluability assessment attempts to determine whether a

programme has met such preconditions. In this process, the evaluator, the evaluator's sponsors and other key stakeholders enter into negotiation in order to ascertain how to conduct the evaluation.

Fouché (2011: 456) outlines some questions that evaluators could ask as part of the evaluability assessment:

- i. Are the programme's goals and objectives well-defined?
- ii. Are the programme's goals and objectives feasible?
- iii. Is the change process presumed in the design of the programme possible?
- iv. Are the procedures for identifying members of the target population, delivering services to them, and sustaining those services through completion well-defined and sufficient?
- v. Are the constituents, activities and functions of the programme well-defined and sufficient?
- vi. Are the resources allocated to the programme and its various activities adequate?

In effect, evaluability assessments aid the researcher in establishing whether or not the programme addresses the real needs of the targeted beneficiaries. It assists the researcher in determining whether the targets set by the organisation are achieved as intended and, if this is not the case, how performance could be improved (Mouton, 2001: 573).

4.3.1.2 Process evaluation

Monitoring programme implementation is closely aligned with process evaluation. As with formative evaluation, this also focuses on identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the programme approach and recommending strategies for improvement (Rubin & Babbie, 2007: 208). This implies that monitoring and implementation evaluations are included in process evaluation. According to Fouché (2011: 457), monitoring evaluation investigates how the programme is being administered and managed. It seeks to discover how a development programme operates and the extent to which the intended objectives have been achieved. This feedback allows the service provider to identify problems that can be addressed.

Mouton (2001: 571) simplifies the purpose of monitoring evaluation as follows: it serves as management tool; it provides evidence for accountability; and establishes the necessary conditions to enable the assessment of programme outcomes. The aim of implementation

evaluation, on the other hand, is to identify how the programme should be in actual practice, its activities in the population it serves and how it functions (Mouton, 2001: 573). To this end, Rubin and Babbie (2007: 208) argue that, without proper implementation, programmes could result in poor or unsuccessful outcomes. Programmes may fail to yield a positive result, not because of a bad idea, but simply due to poor implementation. Monitoring thus ensures that what is needed is given to the right people to use in the right way at the right time.

4.3.1.3 Summative evaluation

Impact or outcome evaluation, efficiency and utilisation are classified under summative evaluation. ‘Impact’ or ‘outcome’ refers to a situation in which a particular development project or programme is investigated in order to determine to what extent the project has led to changes based on the desired goal and objectives of the organisation (Mouton, 2001: 573). The logic of impact evaluation demands that the researcher should be able to establish the fact that the changes that are observed are as a result of a particular development programme under investigation and not any other factor (Mouton, 2001: 579).

Efficiency evaluations, meanwhile, involve analysing both the cost-benefit (which estimates the benefit of a programme) and cost-effectiveness (outcomes in substantive terms) during the planning stage of a programme. It assists decision-makers in choosing how to allocate resources for effective use and encourages the consideration of the costs and benefits of any development programme to be embarked upon (Fouché, 2011: 460).

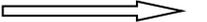
Utilisation evaluations are equally important, as they arguably will be meaningless if the research results are not put to use. Fouché (2011: 461) identifies three ways in which programme evaluation results are used: (i) direct utilisation, in which the document outlining the specific evaluation findings is used by decision-makers and other stakeholders; (ii) conceptual utilisation, in which the document is used to influence thinking about issues in a general way; and (iii) persuasive utilisation, which involves the document being used to defend or attack a political position (Fouché, 2011: 461).

The table on the next page suggests that the three types of evaluation, namely formative, process and summative, play vital roles in assessing an organisation’s contribution towards re-strategising development projects and the benefits for the target group. For instance, Mouton (2001: 573) explains that:

Without measuring need, programs cannot be planned rationally; without effective implementation, successful outcomes cannot result from the program; and without valued outcomes, there is no reason to worry about cost-effectiveness.

The above quotation indicates that it may not be possible to conduct an evaluation on one aspect without reflecting on another.

Table 4:1: Different approaches to and purposes of programme evaluation (Fouché, 2011: 469)

| Evaluation approach | Philosophical and value orientation | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Purpose of evaluation | Formative Information for forming or improving | Process Information for describing and delivery | Summative Information for measuring outcomes |
| Types of evaluation | Needs assessments | Monitoring assessments | Impact/outcome assessments |
| | Evaluability assessments | Implementation assessments | Efficiency assessments |
| | | | Utilisation assessments |
| Evaluation design | Ways in which ingredients are put together in an attempt to answer the evaluation questions | | |
| Evaluation methods | Techniques used in practice to conduct an evaluation | | |
| Life cycle | Beginning  Middle  End | | |

In the current study, my concern is not to quantify the services provided, but rather to focus on the positive impacts of these services in the lives of beneficiaries. The rationale is to obtain information about ECWA’s POD programmes that could contribute to strategising, where necessary, in order to make recommendations for a more effective and holistic development approach. Mouton (2001: 570) explains that programme evolution is significant to the programme manager, because it provides the needed information to strengthen strategies and

implementation processes, as well as to improve the effectiveness of the management and administration of the programme. The evaluator does the evaluation with the view that the result could open up an opportunity to undertake 'real-life' studies that may make a difference in the social world and at the pragmatic level of the benefiting communities (Mouton, 2001: 570).

Elliston (1989: 310-312) highlights that evaluating the impact of a project aids in the setting of goals and objectives, and in structuring and organising community development projects. At the same time, evaluation provides needed information about the context of the community, without which it could be difficult for the change agent to effectively achieve the purpose, goals and objectives of the project. In this sense, evaluation could help the change agent put together the needed and available resources for any project. Evaluating the results of a project may also lead the change agent to modify, stop or continue with the project (Elliston, 1989: 310-312). The present study critically investigates and assesses whether and how EWCA's POD programmes have contributed towards enhancing the well-being of the people who are disadvantaged and disempowered in Northern Nigeria.

This research has applied summative evaluation, and more specifically impact evaluation, to assess the ECWA's POD programmes. The evaluation was based on the information gathered from focus group discussions with beneficiaries of POD programmes and semi-structured interviews with POD staff and ECWA church leaders. I used a method of programme impact assessment because the focus of this study is the people who experience development programmes and qualitative changes in terms of individual dignity, social status, just and peaceful relationships and the general well-being, as suggested by Myers (2011: 294). In Chapter Six the focus will be on the visible outcome of the project, that is, visible increase in the beneficiaries' sense of well-being and dignity as a result of accomplished or in-process projects.

4.3.2 Unit of evaluation

The unit of evaluation is essential for evaluation research. The unit of evaluation takes a comprehensive approach rather than focusing on a specific element of an intervention. As such, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 365) advise that the evaluator should ensure that he or she gets absolute clarity on what exactly needs to be evaluated, and what the scope, the level of intervention and the object of evaluation is. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 365) conclude that the

evaluator should be able to answer the question of what time frame of intervention should be included in the evaluation; which actors should be defined as relevant to the evaluation; which programme and services are to be evaluated; whether the programme component system also is the object of evaluation; whether the programme administrators are to be evaluated; and whether specific outcomes have been defined that need to be evaluated.

In response to these questions, and for the purpose of this research, the time frame of the evaluation was on projects undertaken from 2009 to 2013. The main actors in this study included the ECWA pastors, who are proprietors, POD CDFs, who are the service providers, and the selected communities that are the direct beneficiaries of POD interventions. The key programme component service to be evaluated was ECWA's POD as a faith-based development agency. The specific outcome that had to be evaluated included POD projects on water supply, community health, agricultural and food security, infrastructural projects, environmental sustainability and religious programmes.

4.4 Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

Deciding on who or what to study in conducting social research is not a matter of choice. In other words, it is difficult to study entire populations of particular interest or make every possible observation of the entire population. In this case, one is expected to select a sample to study in order to produce biased observation. In this section I present the sample or targeted population and the tools for data collection.

4.4.1 Sampling/targeted population

Sampling can be defined as “the process of selecting [a] few [people] from a larger group as a basis of estimating or predicting the prevalence of unknown [...] information, situation[s] or outcome[s] regarding the larger group” to find an answer to a research question (Kumar, 2005: 164). In other words, a sample is used instead of utilising the whole group. According to Monette *et al.* (2002: 132) studying an entire population could be too large, which may make it difficult to conduct the research and arrive at a logical conclusion.

Cluster sampling, therefore, was chosen as the sampling technique for both the focus group discussions and the interviews. According to Steinberg (2004: 99), this method of sampling can be used to study large items by breaking them down into more manageable elements. Cluster sampling allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific section of the greater

geographical area and to save both costs and time. However, a researcher needs to ensure that a balanced sample size is maintained and that each cluster represents the whole population (Strydom, 2005: 201).

In this study, cluster sampling was used because Nigeria is large.⁶⁷ It has six geopolitical zones with 36 states. Similarly, the central office of the ECWA's POD programme is located in Jos Plateau State, but there are branches in ten states in Northern Nigeria. These states have been divided into four zones, as illustrated in the map that describes the POD operational zones (see Figure 4.1) below. Moreover, due to time and resource constraints, it was not feasible for the research to be undertaken in every community. Strydom (2005: 201) advises that it would be better if a researcher chooses a few places to study instead of studying a single locality to generate in-depth knowledge that could be relevant to other parts of the country.

Therefore, the sample used for both methods of data collection, namely the interviews and focus group discussions, was a total of 34 respondents. These were the proprietors, planners and beneficiaries of the POD programmes. There were six people per focus group discussion, giving a total of 24 people, and one focus group was held per selected community. Greeff (2005: 305) advises that the size of a focus group should be limited to six people in order to enable everyone to participate in the discussion. Four community development facilitators (CDFs), four ECWA pastors and two ECWA leaders were chosen for individual interviews, providing a total sample size of ten for the interviews. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with four selected communities in four states, namely Kwara zone 1, Nasarawa zone 2, Kano zone 3 and Gombe zone 4 respectively. A brief description of the States that were visited and whose communities were direct beneficiaries of the social programmes is provided below.

4.4.1.1 Kwara State, in Zone 1

This was among the first 12 states of Nigeria created on 27 May 1967. It was initially named the West Central State (Kwara State, 2003). It shares its boundaries with the Republic of

⁶⁷Nigeria has 36 States. Leadership is provided at the federal, state and local governments levels. Indigenous traditional institutions of authority exist alongside the state and local government councils. These traditional institutions also provide leadership and facilitate community administration, especially at the grassroots level. The emirates are headed by emirs; chiefdoms are headed by other traditional rulers; districts are headed by district heads; villages by a village head and clans by the head of clans.

Benin and the Niger River. The state is divided into 16 local government councils and the people are mainly Yoruba, Nupe, Bariba and Fulani.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. Unlike other states in Northern Nigeria, the principal cash crops of Kwara State are cotton, cocoa, coffee, kola nut, tobacco, and palm products. Mineral resources are also found in the state and include limestone, marble, feldspar, clay, kaolin, quartz and granite rocks (Kwara State, 2003).

4.4.1.2 Nasarawa State, in Zone 2

This state was carved out of Plateau State on 1 October 1996 as a result of many years of agitation arising from strong political feelings of marginalisation and neglect. The state is located in the North-Central region, bordered by the Federal Capital Territory, Kaduna, Benue, Kogi, Plateau and Taraba States (Nasarawa State, 2014). There are 13 local government areas, with approximately three million people from a diverse range of ethnic groups.

Farming is the major source of economic income among the people of the state. Due to the agrarian economy of the state and its proximity to Abuja, the federal capital, there is a ready and fast-moving market for the state's various agricultural crops and products. These include yam, maize, rice, guinea corn, beans, tomatoes, millet, cassava and wheat (Nasarawa State, 2003).

4.4.1.3 Kano State, in Zone 3

Kano State was created on 27 May 1967 and is located in north-western Nigeria. It is bordered by Katsina, Jigawa, Bauchi and Kaduna States. Kano is one of the oldest and most populous States in Nigeria, with 44 local government areas. The Hausa and Fulani are the dominant ethnic groups in the State (Kano State).

Kano State is renowned for its agricultural self-reliance and admirable resource management. There are various dams in the State, which are intended for irrigation projects to ensure year-round farming. Kano is known today as the most irrigated state in the country, with more than three million hectares of cultivable land. Recently, particularly in Northern Nigeria, the state is leading in terms of educational projects (Kano State).

4.4.1.4 Gombe State, in Zone 4

Popularly known as the ‘Jewel in the Savannah’, Gombe State is in north-eastern Nigeria and was created out of Bauchi State on 1 October 1996, with a population of approximately 2.4 million people. It is situated in the middle of Yobe, Adamawa, Taraba, Borno and Bauchi States (Gombe State, 2012). Although there are many tribal groups in the state, Hausa is the most commonly used language. The state has eleven local government councils.

Over 70% of the population are farmers and they produce various food and cash crops, such as maize, sorghum, rice, cowpeas, groundnuts, soya beans, bambara nuts, oranges, lemons, mangoes, guavas, paw-paws and grapes. Vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers, onions, okra, pumpkins, melon, gum Arabic, kenaf, sugar cane, sunflower and ginger, are also grown.

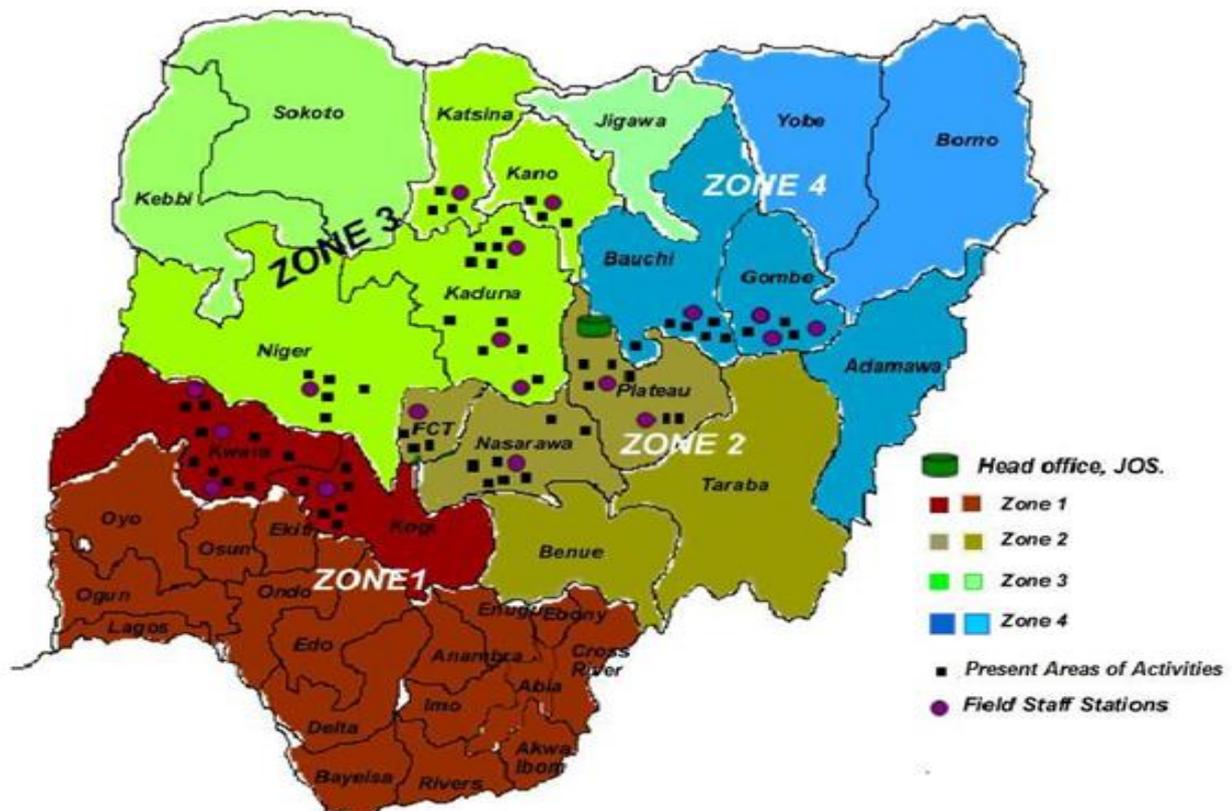


Figure 4.1: A map illustrating the operational zones of the POD programmes (People Oriented Development of ECWA, 2013)

I contacted the ECWA’s POD co-ordinators at the zone level through the ECWA headquarters in Jos Plateau State for potential participants. In this process, one community was selected from each of the four District Church Councils (DCCs), and six people were chosen from

each community to give a total number of 24 individuals. These 24 people were divided into four focus group discussions. A further ten respondents were sampled for interviews; these included two people from ECWA headquarters, four POD Community Development Facilitators (CDFs) and four ECWA pastors from the four ECWA District Church Councils. In short, 24 people were sampled for focus group discussions, while the sample size for the interviews was 10 people, which made up a total sample size of 34.

Focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were used in the current study because these data collection methods allow respondents to use their own words to describe their situations, feelings and thoughts (Alston & Bowles, 2003: 118). This was to ascertain whether or not the service provided by POD has led to a meaningful change in accordance with TD standards and indicators, as outlined by Myers (2011: 469). Ten semi-structured one-on-one interviews were held with ECWA pastors and POD CDFs in four DCCs in order to determine their perceptions of whether they understood and applied the principles and practices of TD in the project areas. Each of these two research methods is discussed in more detail in 4.3.2 below. I also visited the existing project to ensure the reality of the information gathered from the interviews and focus group discussions.

The biographies of ECWA pastors (EP) and community development facilitators (CDFs) are generally characterised by a moderate level of educational attainment and work experience. The selected communities (SC), on the other hand, had low or no educational attainment and low socio-economic status. The CDFs testified that the SCs that were chosen to participate were those considered to be the most deserving communities. In 5.3.1, a brief description is provided of the selected communities that were visited and that were direct beneficiaries of the social programmes.

4.4.2 Data gathering tools

Alongside the literature study, the two principal sources of data for my empirical study were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Each of these is discussed in more detail below.

4.4.2.1 Literature review

Chapters Two and Three present a detailed literature review of existing materials relevant to the study. According to Machi and McEvoy (2009: 2), a literature review is the process of

summarising and evaluating the existing knowledge related to a specific research topic. In other words, a literature review builds on the idea that knowledge accumulates and that researchers can learn from and build on what others have done (Machi & McEvoy 2009: 3). Therefore, the literature review assists in assembling, synthesising and analysing data in order to form an argument about the current knowledge on the topic of the research. This is based on the conviction that scientific research is a collective effort, in which many researchers contribute and share results.

Fouché and Delport 2005: 123-124) point out that a literature review is necessary for the following reasons: firstly, it contributes greatly towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the research problem that has been identified. Secondly, it gives thorough background knowledge on the phenomenon under review in order for the researcher to conduct a meaningful piece of research. Thirdly, it builds a logical framework for the research and sets it within a tradition of inquiry and a context of related studies (Fouché & Delport 2005: 123-124). Similarly, Rubin and Babbie (2007: 73) explain that:

Until we review the literature, we have no way of knowing whether the research question has already been adequately answered, of identifying the conceptual and practical obstacles that others have already encountered in this line of research, of learning how those obstacles have been overcome, and of deciding what lines of research can best build on the work that has already been done in a particular problem area.

Fouché and Delport 2005: 124-125) further explain that a literature review's functions include selecting and focusing on a particular research topic, saving time and avoiding duplication and unnecessary repetition. The literature review enables the researcher to discover what has already been written on the same or similar topic so as to identify some deficiencies or gaps in previous research, so that the researcher could argue that the proposed study will fill a proven need.

The review of the literature also helps to refine and redefine the research questions and related tentative hypotheses and, finally, a good literature review places a research project in context. It shows the path of prior research and how current knowledge is linked to this. I applied a literature review to explore and scrutinise all relevant sources of information that could address the main research question, and asked whether ECWA's POD had led to TD in the underprivileged communities of Northern Nigeria. Relevant literature such as books, journal articles, public documents and Internet sources were consulted.

4.4.2.2 Focus group discussions

The term ‘focus group’ is a research technique used to collect data through a group discussion on a defined area of interest (Greeff (2011: 360). Focus group discussions can be used in qualitative research as a self-contained method in studies in which they serve as the principal source of data; as a supplementary source of data in studies that rely on some other primary method, such as a survey; and in multi-method studies that combine two or more means of gathering data in which no one primary method determines the use of the others (Greeff, 2011: 360). Furthermore, focus group discussions assist the researcher in investigating a multitude of perceptions in a defined area of interest. A focus group discussion promotes self-disclosure among participants, saves time and is less expensive compared to a study of the general public. Above all, it creates a line of communication in which the researcher listens to and learns from participants (Greeff, 2011: 361).

Dawson (2009: 29-30), however, warns that, in a focus group discussion, the researcher needs to ensure that an individual participant does not dominate the interaction. Due to the likelihood that many people may not want to disclose sensitive information in front of others in a group discussion, I did not allow the CDFs to attend the discussion. This gave all participants the chance to freely express their ideas and feelings about their socio-economic challenges, how they had been supported to solve their problems, and/or the way forward regarding their pending situation, and also how they felt about the POD programmes. Focus group discussions were used in this study not as a supplementary source of data, but as one of the principal sources of data collection. The focus group discussions in the current research were also intended to clarify the research problem statement.

As mentioned in 4.3.1, the sample of 24 people for the focus group discussions was divided into four focus groups, each consisting of six people. In order to ensure age and gender balances, men and women, as well as younger and older adults, were included in the focus group discussions, as suggested by Strydom (2005: 201). The sample consisted of individuals who were connected to or who were beneficiaries of POD programme activities. This sample composition created an avenue that was conducive to easy, free-flowing and productive discussion, as highlighted by Greeff (2005: 304), in which useful data was obtained for this study. The focus group discussions were approximately one hour or half an hour in duration, depending on the respondents’ length of responses to the questions.

4.4.2.3 Individual interviews

An interview is a “flexible qualitative research instrument used to gather facts or gain insights from respondents’ opinions about a research topic” (Alston & Bowles, 2003: 117-118). In other words, an interview is meant to help the researcher gain first-hand information from the perspectives of the respondents and to explore their thoughts and feelings about their situation. In this process, the researcher ensures that the respondents feel free to openly express their inner thoughts and feelings. Similarly, Boeije (2010: 63) emphasises that interviews provide room for the researcher to learn about the social life of the respondents through the latter’s perspectives, experiences and language. Steinberg (2004: 107) adds that during the interview, the researcher controls the process to get the needed information and can also clarify questions if necessary.

There are three key types of interviews according to Rowley (2012: 262), namely structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Structured interviews contain few and relatively short questions posed in the same order for every respondent. The responses are short and easy to analyse. Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, are based on a limited number of topics and the respondents are expected to talk around the theme. This may generate a series of transcripts that could be difficult to compare or integrate. Semi-structured interviews adopt a specific number of well-chosen and carefully phrased questions in a set order. Semi-structured interviews are flexible, however, and follow-up ‘probing’ questions can be asked, depending on the participant’s responses. In semi-structured interviews, the same questions are posed to every respondent, but follow-up questions could be utilised when necessary.

The current study utilised semi-structured interviews, which are the most commonly used type of interview as it allows room for follow-up questions when necessary (Rowley, 2012: 262). Although the semi-structured interview design is flexible and interactive, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 290) suggest that one ask simple questions, rather than putting the respondents under pressure or in a particular context that would lead to the latter omitting relevant answers.

Greeff (2005: 299) adds that, sometimes, if a question did not evoke the desired response by the interviewer, participants may be unwilling to share their personal experience, or the responses could be untruthful. Therefore, to avoid or minimise the potential for this, I tried to be transparent in the interviewing process. This was to avoid the possibility of being biased.

As in the case of group discussion, the individual interviews lasted approximately one hour or half an hour.

4.4.3 Design of questions and topics covered

The aim of the focus group discussions and interviews was to determine whether ECWA's POD programmes have led to TD as stipulated in the third objective of this study (1.5.2). The design of questions and topics that were covered to achieve this objective are discussed below.

4.4.3.1 Design of questions for interview and group discussion

In qualitative research, Grinnell and Williams (1990: 214) and Dawson (2009: 70) suggest that questions about what the researcher needs to know should be prepared to ask the participant, but that follow-up questions may arise in the context of semi-structured interviews. To meet this requirement, questions related to the church's awareness of and participation in community development was designed to ensure that focus on the subject matter was maintained. The questions were formulated to describe the situations facing the targeted communities and also to understand the remedial measures taken by ECWA's POD in addressing the socio-economic needs of poor and underprivileged communities in Northern Nigeria.

The questions were designed based on the standards and indicators⁶⁸ described by Myers (2011: 359). I used Myers's standards and indicators because these focused on religious and cultural changes, attitudes toward Christians and the gospel, spiritual life and the quality of services provided. This is an evaluative framework, which provided guidance in addressing the overall research question, which was stated in 1.4.1.

4.4.3.2 Topics covered

The following topics were covered in the interviews and focus group discussions. They are summarised in Table 4.2 and are aligned to Myers's standard and indicators.

⁶⁸ A chart describing TD standards and indicators, as well as the interview questions, is provided in Appendix A & B.

4.4.3.2.1 Cultural and religious change

To identify the cultural and religious changes in the communities under study, questions were designed in accordance with the standard of TD that requires that churches in the project area are active in the political, social and cultural life of the communities served. On the other hand, questions were constructed to understand the indicators of real changes from some examples of visible activities and services provided to the communities.

4.4.3.2.2 Attitudes towards Christians and the gospel

Questions were also formulated to measure the standard of a project from the beneficiaries' attitudes toward Christians, their understanding of the nature of the God of the Bible, and their openness to listening to the gospel. The questions for identifying indicators, on the other hand, were structured to understand the words used by community members to describe Christians, the character of the God of the Bible and the number of people seeking or participating in discussions of spiritual matters, attending Bible studies or attending church services.

4.4.3.2.3 Spiritual development

There also were questions on the spiritual development standards and indicators of TD. These involved descriptions of what controls individual lives, what people do or to whom they turn when they are afraid of something and who or what they believe controls the lives of the staff in the project area.

4.4.3.2.4 Quality of service

Questions were designed to identify the standards of TD in terms of quality of service. This was determined by the staff members' ability and interest in understanding local customs, caring for people, and love for God and neighbour. The indicators were observed by the language used as the staff conversed with community members, whether the development workers lived in the typical rural community, and the words used by community members to describe the staff. These topics were covered in the wording of the interview questions. However, there were minor differences between the interview questions for ECWA pastors, the POD community development facilitators and the selected communities to differentiate their roles and responsibilities.

Table 4.2: Standards and indicators of TD probed in the interviews and focus group discussions (adapted from Myers, 2011:359).

| STANDARDS | INDICATORS |
|--|---|
| Cultural and religious change | |
| Churches in the project area are active in the political, social and cultural life of the area's communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of activities based on interviews with pastors and other church leaders. • Descriptions of church activities by community members, examples of services provided to the communities. |
| Development technology is accompanied by explanation, which points to the activity of God. | Examples of explanations based on interviews with staff and project committee members. |
| The Bible is used in appropriate ways with people in communities as they plan activities, make decisions and solve problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions of applications discussed during Bible studies in the community. • Examples based on interviews with staff and project committee members. |
| Attitudes towards Christians and the gospel | |
| Attitudes toward Christians become more positive over the life of the project. | Words used by community members to describe Christians. |
| People deepen their understanding of the nature of the God of the Bible. | Words used by community members to describe the character of the God of the Bible. |
| People become more open to listening to the gospel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people seeking or participating in discussions of spiritual things, attending Bible studies or attending church services. • Number of conversations about some aspect of the gospel between staff and community members. |
| | |

| Spiritual power | |
|---|---|
| | Descriptions of what controls individual lives, based on interviews with community members. |
| | Descriptions of what people do or to whom they turn when they are afraid of something, based on interviews with community members, pastors and those who are sought for help. |
| | Descriptions by community people of whom or what they believe controls the lives of the development worker. |
| Quality of witness | |
| How the staff learn the local language, are culturally sensitive and show interest in learning and understanding local customs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations of language used as staff converse with community members. • Comparison of appearance of staff dwelling with typical dwellings in the community. |
| Staff members are perceived as caring people who love God and their neighbours. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff knowledge of the local religious beliefs and practices. • Words used by community members to describe the staff. |
| Staff are perceived as dependable people who pray and act as spiritual people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions by community members of prayer experiences with staff. • Observations of staff as they interact with the community members as they are being encouraged to pray and the inclusion of prayer in conversations or meetings. |

4.4.4 The structure of questions

It is obvious that, in an empirical research project, open-ended and closed-ended questions are two options used by researchers (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 233). The advantage of using an open-ended question is that the respondents are given the chance to provide their own answers. In the closed-ended questions the respondents can only select and answer from the list provided by the researcher. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 233) explain that closed-ended questions can be responded to quickly and processed easily; open-ended questions could be difficult and the responses have to go through a long process of coding before they can be processed. This often requires interpretations of the meaning of the responses; in this process the researcher is open to misunderstanding or being biased.

Open-ended questions were used for the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. This was to allow respondents to freely express their answers in detail and to ensure that the respondents were not constrained to choose among alternatives, as may be the case with closed-ended questions (Mindel & McDonald, 1988: 315). In addition, an open-ended question permits respondents to go into detail and express greater depth in their answers. Respondents may also feel that they have been able to speak their mind instead of giving answers in a way that may not match their actual opinion.

The questions for the interviews and group discussions were designed in relation to religious and cultural changes, and attitudes towards Christians and the gospel, spiritual life and the quality of services provided, as discussed above and described in Table 4.2. These questions were used for addressing three categories of people, namely EPs, CDFs and the SCs.

4.5 Data Analysis and Procedures

In this section the nature and principles of qualitative data analyses are discussed. I first show how the data was organised; this is followed by the ways in which the data was coded, after which the manner in which the data was analysed will be discussed.

4.5.1 Organisation of data

As stated in 4.2 above, the data collection tools used were semi-structured interviews with EPs and POD CDFs, focus group discussions with SCs and personal observation of existing projects by the ECWA's POD. Each of the interviews was held on the first day of arrival. The focus group discussion was conducted the following day in each of the communities visited. I

spent a period of approximately two days on each visit for data gathering, due to time and financial constraints.

The data from the interviews and group discussions is organised and presented in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Five describes the socio-economic context of the selected communities and the ECWA's POD interventions. The socio-economic context comprises three elements: problems, causes and effects. Chapter Five explores the problems in the selected communities. The causes are the reasons for the communities' conditions. Effects are referred to as consequences of the condition, especially on the social, economic and religious lives of the people. In Chapter Six, two themes are addressed, namely the ECWA's self-understanding and its involvement in community development. Self-understanding relates to what the denomination stands for and its mission. Development activities involve the efforts of the church towards improving the well-being of the poor and underprivileged communities in Nigeria. This includes cultural and religious changes, and attitudes towards Christians and the gospel as a result of the church's interventions.

All information that was obtained in connection with this study remained confidential. This was maintained by means of anonymity, since the research report focuses on the results of the interviews and group discussions. Letters were used to distinguish the different variables. For instance, ECWA pastors are referred to as EPs, community development facilitators as CDFs and selected communities are referred to as SCs.

4.5.2 Coding

This was a qualitative study and, in a qualitative inquiry, a code is a word or short phrase pulled out from the data. It is often used as a symbol that summarises or condenses the data, as well as captures the main idea of the portion of the data that has been coded. Coding data is seen as the formal representation of analytical thinking (De Vos, 2005: 338). Codes may take various forms, and the researcher decides which to apply. Regardless of the forms of these codes, new insights emerge during the initial coding process that may necessitate changing themes in the original plan (De Vos, 2005: 338).

It therefore was essential to capture the entire data that was collected for a logical flow of thought and in an effort to answer the research question, as suggested by Henning (2009: 101). This helped me to understand how to analyse and code the transcripts from the

individual interviews and focus group discussions, which were conducted from October to December 2013.

The coding process was easier with the help of ATLAS.ti. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 503) note that ATLAS.ti is computer software that helps qualitative researchers to analyse data collected through qualitative tools, such as focus group discussions and interviews. Open coding, axial coding and selective coding are used in qualitative research (Rambaree, 2007: 4). Open coding examines each data line and names important actions or events in the data. Axial coding comes after open coding is completed. In an axial coding the researcher group related ideas in the data into major codes. This process enables the researcher to answer the questions about the phenomena, such as when, where, why, who and how. During the selecting of coding the researcher would be concerned about the core code that emerges from the axial coding (Rambaree, 2007: 4).

4.5.3 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is the process of reducing and sieving important information from the data collected for a research project. This assisted me in bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of data collected, as suggested by De Vos (2005b: 333). In this study, non-numerical examination and interpretation of data was applied. This is because the research focused on the extent to which the ECWA's POD programmes have affected the physical and spiritual lives of beneficiaries positively. The emphasis was not on how many services had been provided, but on how many positive effects these services have had on beneficiaries. Although the number of POD services is important, the positive effects on the quality of life of the beneficiaries are crucial. This is the most significant reason why a qualitative method of data analysis was used in this study.

Due to the focus of this study, special attention was first given to the socio-economic context of the selected communities (Chapter Five), before attempting to analyse the ECWA's self-understanding as a church and its involvement in development activities (Chapter Six). The data gathered from the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were typed and transcribed for analyses. The data was analysed based on the church's theological and missiological response to human need. From that viewpoint, the data in Chapter Six is arranged and analysed according to the standards and indicators for TD, as in Table 4.2 above.

Based on the nature of qualitative empirical research and the coding process, content analysis was used. According to Thomas (2006: 237), content analysis is an essential qualitative data analysis method that helps the researcher to condense raw data into a brief, summary format. It establishes clear links between the evaluation of research objectives and the summary of findings derived from the raw data, and allows the development of a framework of the underlying structure of experiences or processes that are evident in the raw data.

Qualitative content analysis was employed as the method of analysis because it enabled me to easily capture the meaning of the data texts through the eyes of the research participants, as noted by Henning (2009: 102). This is because “the better a researcher knows the data, the more competent [he or she] will be in labelling the units of meaning” (Henning, 2009: 105). In this process, I personally transcribed and translated the interviews, and grouped and coded the data.

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 273) assert that an inductive approach is normally applied by qualitative researchers to reach the study objective. This approach seeks to build a theory that will make sense from the data collected. In the light of analytic induction, each interview initially was coded according to its developmental context. In order to achieve this, statements or words were labelled during the initial coding of the transcripts according to both socio-economic elements and the ECWA POD intervention or development activities, as explain in 4.4.2 above.

I examined the codes for similarities and collapsed some codes into larger, more unified groups. After this, the codes were selected for continued analysis. These selected codes were compiled so that all statements or words coded as “personal practice” were gathered in a new document. The same was done for each code used in this analysis. Following this compilation, grounded theory was used to allow themes to emerge from the data. Themes and core ideas were allocated in relation to each initial code. After the second round of coding, the data was grouped further, with all new codes being listed in a single document to reveal the relationships between the new codes or overarching themes. When the relationships between codes were identified, I also compared the findings to determine whether or not the principles and practices underlying the ECWA’s POD activities had achieved the desired goals of the organisation. The following diagram illustrates the various steps I used for this qualitative content analysis.

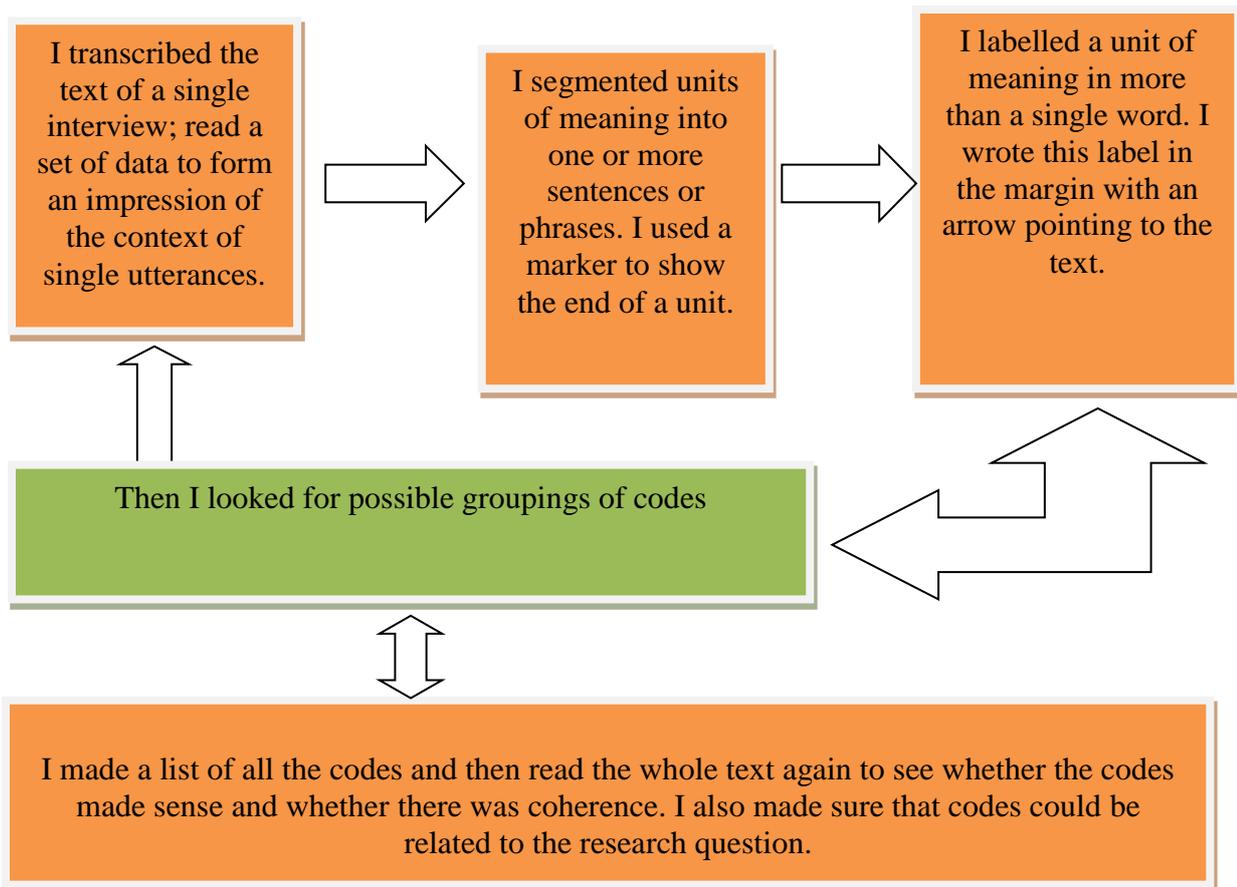


Figure 4.2: The process of coding from texts that was used to analyse qualitative data from the interviews and focus group (Henning, 2009: 104)

4.5.4 Qualitative methodological considerations and ethics

The validity, reliability and flexibility of a research project are key qualitative methodological considerations. Each of these is discussed next.

4.5.4.1 Validity and reliability

Rubin and Babbie (2007: 103) propose that the term ‘validity’ can be viewed as the “extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration”. Reliability, on the other hand, is not limited to accuracy, but rather indicates that, if a particular technique is applied repeatedly to the same objective, it would produce the same result each time. Henning (2009: 148) asserts that the researcher must be able to carefully and constantly check and ensure that the research process and findings are both valid and reliable.

Therefore, to ensure that the data was valid and reliable and due to my resource constraints in the current study, a sample size of 34 respondents was deemed large enough to provide the needed information. I transcribed and interpreted the transcripts from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The interviews were conducted in the houses of EPs and CDFs, while the focus group discussions with SCs were held in the places of their choice within the villages. This was to enable the respondents to feel free during the interviews and discussions.

I also met the participants in person, and personally observed and took photos of the existing projects. Appendix C contains some photographs of physical projects, while the records of the interviews can be accessed from me or my supervisor. The interviews and focus group discussions were audio-recorded by me and notes were also written. In compliance with Stellenbosch University's Policy on Research Ethics, I informed the participants about this before the interviews or group discussions were conducted. As in 4.3.2.1 and 4.3.2.1 above, the individual interviews and focus group discussions were each approximately one hour or half an hour in duration. In most cases I used this lengthy time for group discussion, while a shorter time was used for individual interviews, because I conducted only one interview per individual and had one group discussion per community. The data captured people's convictions or what they wanted me to hear about their conditions and causes, as well as the problems and how these have affected them in their lives. The coding, interpretation and analysis of the data also were carried out by me.

4.5.4.2 Reflexivity and limitations

I conducted this research with an understanding that community development is strategic and demands time and various strategies to make a reasonable impact. However, based on the nature of qualitative analysis, one is subject to preconceptions or bias. For instance, I could have been biased because of my experience as an ECWA pastor who has served in the denomination for over ten years and has served in a rural congregation. Furthermore, before the interview and focus group discussions, I already decided upon aspects of the respondents' experiences that would be explored and set my hypotheses about these experiences (see 1.4 and 1.5). Although my respondents were informed about the general purpose of the study in which they were going to be participating, I did not reveal my hypothesis to them in order to avoid bias in their responses.

As mentioned in 1.2, this study was motivated by the need for the church to re-consider and re-strategise its concepts of holistic ministry. Data thus was collected from POD programme proprietors, service providers and beneficiaries. As I mentioned in 4.3.1, the interviewees were recommended by the POD programme office and each CDF from the four DCCs chose the community for the focus group discussion. Symbols were used to maintain the anonymity of the different participants.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has described and justified the overall plan and procedure chosen for this study in detail. A qualitative research method was used, and the qualitative tools were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Five EPs and five CDFs were involved in the semi-structured interviews, with six people in each of the SCs, which gave a total of 24 participants in the focus group discussions. The interviews and focus group discussions occurred at a time and place convenient to the respondents. Time was spent gaining first-hand information from the respondents about the impact of the ECWA's POD programmes. The questions that the participants were asked were in accordance with the standards and indicators of TD proposed by Myers. This was to determine views on whether or not the ECWA's POD programmes had led to TD of the poor and underprivileged communities in the target areas of Northern Nigeria.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSES OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACING THE SELECTED COMMUNITIES

5.1 Introduction

An optimal process of community development begins with a sufficient understanding of the social, economic, cultural and political environments of the community (see 2.5.2). In this process, the change agent takes time to study the community's constraints to development and identifies possible actions that could lead to the removal or attenuation of these constraints (Swanepoel & De Beer, 2011: 15). In other words, before making an attempt to assist poor and underprivileged communities, the change agent must first analyse the causes of poverty affecting the people in these communities. At the same time, if one is to evaluate the impact of a development project, the people's basic needs must be known in order to assess whether or not the project's targets have been achieved (Burkey, 1993: 12). This suggests that any approach to community development should not only focus on identifying the problems and needs of the community, but also on the underlying causes of these needs. The focus, however, cannot solely be on the causes of these problems, as one may then become discouraged because of the magnitude or the overwhelming nature of these; it therefore is important also to consider possible solutions.

This chapter addresses the third objective of this study, which is to describe the socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities (see 1.5.2). The data presentation and analysis in this chapter is in accordance with the descriptive and interpretive task of practical theology. According to Osmer (2008: 4, 32), practical theological research should begin with a critical understanding of the communities' situations or contexts, followed by an interpretation of the contemporary situation within the context of the lives of individuals, families and communities. The rationale for taking this approach in the community development process is that it promotes the adoption of a holistic approach towards organising, planning and implementing the change (see 3.2.2). The key contextual findings presented in this chapter ultimately will inform a theological and contextual strategy that will encourage active participation in holistic community development, as discussed in Chapter Seven.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first provides a brief description of the selected communities in this study. The second section will present and discuss the results, namely the key problems faced by communities, the causes of poverty in these communities and the effects of these problems. The third section provides a summary of the key findings and concludes the chapter.

5.2 Brief Description of the Selected Communities

Since the main focus of this chapter is an analysis of the communities' situations, the profiles of the respondents that were interviewed and a brief description of these communities is of key importance.

5.2.1 Respondents' profiles

The sample population of this study consisted of 34 respondents, namely 21 men and 13 women. They included both youth and adults in four selected communities from the four zones within which the ECWA's POD operates (see 4.3.1). The total population in each of the selected communities, as highlighted in the profile questions stated in Appendix A, can be estimated at 200 to 300 people. All the participants in these communities use Hausa language as the general means of communication. Although Islam is the dominant religion in Northern Nigeria, in the selected communities I found that Christianity was the main religion, followed by Islam and African Traditional Religion (ATR), as in 4.3.1.

According to Khalid (2007: 39), even though the majority of the Hausas in Northern Nigeria are Muslim, Christianity is practised mostly among the smaller ethnic groups. Indigenous Hausa Christians are thus fewer in number than the Muslim population. In all the communities that were visited, I noticed a total of six churches, of which four were ECWA churches; one was a Deeper Life Bible Church and the other a Roman Catholic Church. There were two mosques and no traditional religious worship centres⁶⁹ were found.

Farming appeared to be the major source of income among the northerners in the visited areas. Due to the agrarian economy of these areas, the majority of the communities that were visited are involved in the production of various agricultural crops, including yam, cassava, maize, rice, guinea corn, beans, tomatoes, millet, wheat and cotton. Only a few individuals in

⁶⁹ I found that, although a few people were said to be traditional religious practitioners, no specific worship centre was found. Most of the people in this category were said to be older people.

these communities engaged in small businesses, such as the rearing of livestock, frying bean cakes, making soap, petty trading and tailoring.

5.2.2 Brief description of each community

The evaluation task took me to four villages in the North-West, North-East and North-Central regions of Nigeria. In the sub-sections below, I present a brief description of each community that was visited.

5.2.2.1 LawishDaji

This is a small community with approximately 300 to 400 people, situated in Bilere Local Government Area (LGA) in Gombe State in the north-eastern part of Nigeria. The people are from the Tangale tribe and depend on agriculture as their main source of livelihood. In this community a small number of individuals also engage in small businesses, such as frying bean cakes, making soap, petty trading and tailoring. Members of the community are predominantly Christian, and there are few ATR practitioners and Muslims among them.

5.2.2.2 Chinjiri

Chinjiri is a small community located in the Panda Development Area, Karu LGA in Nasarawa State in the North-Central part of Nigeria. The members of this community belong to the Gwandara tribe. The estimated population of Chinjiri is 200 to 300 and the people are mainly peasant farmers who produce crops such as yams, guinea corn, maize and groundnuts. In terms of religious affiliation, they practise Christianity and a few are ATR practitioners.

5.2.2.3 Bayan Dutse

This is a small community in the Sumaila Local Government Area in Kano State, in the North-West of Nigeria. The Hausa tribe is dominant and there is an estimated population of 300 people. Members of the community depend on crop farming as a means of livelihood; however, there also are a few cattle and bird farmers. Christians are the majority, but there are a few Muslims and indigenous (ATR) believers.

5.2.2.4 Gidan Sumalar

Gidan Sumalar is in Kwara State in the North-Central part of Nigeria. Members of the community are from the Zuru tribe. There is an estimated population of 250 people and

farming is the main source of income and livelihood. The community produces maize, rice, guinea corn, beans, tomatoes, millet and cassava. There are two main religious faiths in this area, namely Christianity and Islam.

5.2.3 Concluding remarks

It was crucial to understand the population growth of the selected communities, which would help in the evaluation of their development and challenges. For example, the community profiles show that there are several socio-economic development opportunities in these communities. The selected communities seem to be naturally endowed in terms of economically and commercially viable natural resources. The most noticeable feature of the communities is the predominance of the agricultural sector, which provides the people with employment and economic activities. This agrees with Eade and Williams's (1995: 515) observation that rural communities rely on agricultural production as the main source of survival and income.

5.3 Analyses of Findings and Discussion of Results

This section analyses the socio-economic context of the selected communities, based on the respondents' own experiences. The communities' socio-economic challenges, and the causes and effects of these, are analysed.

5.3.1 Key problems faced by the selected communities

Nigeria is currently identified as the leading African economic power, but yet it is still classified among the poorest countries in the world (Oladimeji & Opeyemi 2013: 53). Scholars have revealed that poverty in Nigeria is not merely the result of a lack of income, but also is due to inadequate social services. Ucha (2010: 47-48) gives an overview of literature drawn from Garcia *et al.* (2006), Ford (2007) and Nnadi (2008), who all address the issue of poverty in Nigeria. These scholars agree that the chief challenges facing Nigeria are the reduction of poverty, the diversification of the economy and improving health and education services. The abovementioned authors argue that the abundance of land and natural resources, which could have led to high revenues from agriculture and oil, have done little to contribute to poverty reduction (Ucha, 2010: 47-48).

Scholars such as Burkey (1993: 4), Swanepoel (1997: 2) and August (2010: 2) point out that human beings live in a world that is full of needs and wants. Individuals, families and communities all have various needs and wants that must be met in order for individuals and members to survive as human beings. These needs could be judged as material and non-material. The most essential material needs include access to clean water, food, shelter, sanitation systems, health care, education, individual or public mobility, good air quality and modern communications systems. Non-material human needs include the need for love, respect, freedom, dignity, choice, self-reliance, the right to vote and the right to express opinions (Swanepoel, 1997: 3). This means that when an individual, family or community is unable to adequately meet these basic needs, they could be termed poor.

Although it is difficult to identify and quantify the key problems in the selected communities in this study, it is important to reflect on the social, economic, cultural, political and spiritual challenges facing these communities. This assists in assessing whether or not the POD programmes have a positive impact in these communities. Furthermore, the factors that undermine this positive impact can also be identified and possible solutions generated. Therefore, in an effort to understand the abovementioned socio-economic context, respondents from the selected communities were asked to describe some of the key problems facing individuals in their communities.

The participants indicated that they were facing many issues. These issues are described in terms of both basic needs and poverty. The following themes emerged from the data obtained from the respondents: food shortages, limited schools, limited capital, and non-availability of health-care services and religious activities. These are analysed and expanded upon in the sub-sections below.

5.3.1.1 Food shortages

One of the key goals of world leaders, as enumerated in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. This was due to the fact that approximately one billion people live on less than \$1 per day and about 800 million people go hungry every day. In some poor countries, especially in Africa, the inhabitants are still behind the MDG targets (Oxfam Australia, 2012). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2014:1) reports that “poverty is still pervasive in Nigeria, where recent figures indicate that 68% of the population lives on less than US\$ 1.25 a day”.

According to Mishra (2005:3), the challenge of hunger could be viewed as a threat to human survival in many communities within sub-Saharan Africa, as in other regions of the world. This was also found to be the case in the study area. The findings of this research reveal that food shortages, as in insufficient food for the population's consumption, are one of the key problems cited by respondents. Participants SC1, SC2, SC3 and SC4 emphasised this problem. Hunger was cited as the most common challenge by the participants. The views of SC1, SC2 and SC4 below capture their experiences in an attempt to explain the key problems in their communities:

SC1: Poverty is eating up the environment to the extent that most people cannot afford to take three square meals in a day. Some have to send their children from house to house to beg for what to eat.

SC2: We experience a small harvest because of the poor soil. So what we realise from the harvest in a year can hardly take care of all our needs, by the middle of the year we face hunger, to the extent that we go borrowing.

SC4: Most of the people in these areas are really passing through difficult times due to the high level of poverty [...] some of the people do not usually have food all year round....

This finding concurs with that of Chambers (1983) and Swanepoel and De Beer (2011), who all investigated community poverty. According to Chambers (1983: 108-109), communities or individuals who have few assets, low flows of food and cash and employment that is unreliable, seasonal and/or inadequate can be described as poor. As such, they have to borrow from neighbours, which could constrain them through short-term or long-term debt. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 15) note that, in a specific region, country or city, poverty can be measured based on social and economic elements, such as food consumption and the minimum income needed to meet expenditures on the basic requirements of food, shelter, transport, clothing, medicine and education.

5.3.1.2 Education needs

The term 'education' refers to the process of teaching, training and learning in schools or colleges for the purpose of increasing knowledge or skills development. Educational facilities or resources include classrooms, chalk and chalkboards, books and computers (Hornby, 2010: 468). These are a matter of necessity and, as a result, world leaders have cited universal

education as a central component in any effort for community development (Mishra, 2005: 2). Oxfam Australia (2012), for example, notes that the need for universal primary education was included in the MDGs because it was discovered that almost 133 million young people globally cannot read or write. Only 37 of 155 developing countries have achieved the MDGs' targets.

By implication, quality education (both formal and non-formal) is essential for sustainable community development. For instance, the Nigeria Education Fact Sheet (United States Embassy in Nigeria, 2012: 1) reveals that, although there are a large number of out-of-school children in the country in general, non-school attendance in the North is significantly higher, at approximately 72%, compared to less than 23% in most southern zones. According to this report, the most affected set of people are young adults with limited literacy and numeracy skills, who have little hope of ever joining the formal workforce.

This shows that, although education indicators are poor nationwide, the greatest need for assistance is the northern part of the country, which is the area selected for this study. This is confirmed by the respondents from the focus group, who lamented the level of their educational attainment. The main educational needs cited by the participants included school buildings and facilities for learning. Some of the communities did not have nursery, primary or secondary schools. From the quotations below it is evident that children have to walk long distances to a nearby community in order to learn. Churches or house walls are sometimes used as alternative places for teaching and learning processes.⁷⁰ The respondents' responses below explain their situations:

SC1: Our most serious problems include lack of schools for our children [...]; we have to use our church from Monday to Friday especially in the morning to teach them a b c d and 1 2 3.

SC3: We are lacking school for our children [...]; it pains us when we see them at home without attending school like their mates in the cities or other villages that have a school, that is why you see this writing on the wall, just to keep them busy.

SC4: [...] because of distance some of our children have to go and pay rent in the town or lives with our relatives. Sometimes, especially during the rainy season, those who go to school from home would not be able to go to school because of rain.

⁷⁰ See Appendix C

Another educational challenge cited by the respondents is how to finance their children at a tertiary level. Respondents would like their children to obtain a higher level of education and become productive, but poverty undermines the achievement of this desire. The following remark reveals their situation:

SC2: Few children in our village who manage to complete primary and secondary school proceed to tertiary institution(s) because their parents cannot afford to pay their school fees in the higher institutions.

The above findings support the assertions of the United States Agency for International Development that, although education is a cornerstone of development, Nigeria's educational system needs improvement (USAID, 2006: 28). The country's educational system is characterised by limited pupil-teacher contact, inadequate teaching materials and equipment, teacher absenteeism and the use of unqualified teachers (USAID, 2006: 28). According to Amaghionyeodiwe and Osinubi (2006: 31) state that the Nigerian Education Policy stresses the fact that quality education is a crucial vehicle that can bring about self-realisation, individual and national efficiency as well as national unity. One therefore can argue that, if this well-formulated education policy is implemented, it would go a long way to developing citizens to become instruments of change and transformation. Moreover, insufficient attention is being paid to education of the poor and underprivileged. I, therefore, argue that our educational system, in all its various forms, should seek to improve indigenous knowledge and values, making use of local environments in terms of teaching materials and the skills of local people. This will indeed go a long way in enhancing community's transformation.

5.3.1.3 Economic challenges

Poor individuals, families or communities are characterised by the absence of or inadequate sources of income or resources to obtain the types of diets needed, participate in the activities of the community and have the living conditions and amenities expected in the society in which they live (Wedderburn, 1994: 4). The non-availability of material resources, such as efficient ways of earning, spending and saving money towards family welfare or well-being, is a key economic problem that was identified in this study. The main economic challenge cited by the respondents is the absence of other sources of income, such as trade and industry, as well as the lack of capital to start small business. Kore (1995: 81) asserts that poor areas do not always have access to big industries, as they usually depend on minor entrepreneurial activities such as hairdressing, motor mechanics, the running of small shops and food selling.

The participants in this study specifically indicated that small-scale business projects or economic development at the local level could contribute greatly towards solving their problems of unemployment and poverty. The participants explain below that their low income is due to the fact that they do not have money to start small businesses and the poor quality of roads.

SC1: Our biggest challenge is that we do not have money, if we do then we can buy grain during harvest when it is still cheap and store it and sell it later. Some of us, if we have money we can start a small shop in front of our house but...

SC2: Many of our children who have gone to school and graduated have no jobs. Many of them have acquired skills but lack take-off capital. They are just idling away.

SC4: There are young men in this community who have acquired various skills that we thought could contribute to reducing our financial and social problems, but they lack money to open their workshop. They are just idling away and adding to the problems.

As pointed out in the demographic profile of the selected communities in 5.2.1, all the participants are farmers; however, this is not necessarily a matter of choice. The following remarks reveal that the participants have had to concentrate on farming because they lack money to invest in other small businesses or self-employment.

SC3: We do not have money to start our own business; that is why everyone is depending on farm produce for survival.

SC4: We have many problems in this community as you can see; even those who have hand work but do not have money to buy the needed equipment to open their workshops have come back to farming again.

The participants lamented that a lack of capital for small-scale business, which could provide an opportunity to earn a livelihood, had forced some of the women to indulge in sexual relations outside of marriage in order to survive, as pointed out by one of the SCs below:

SC2: Married women are not left out, as they indulge in adultery just to make ends meet. Some of our women also have problems with what to do to keep themselves busy. Most of them have acquired skills but lack take-off capital.

This indicates that capital seems to be a serious challenge for the participants, who wish to improve their source of income and better their conditions. Participants were of the view that a micro-loan could go a long way towards enhancing their source of income and increasing their means of survival. This finding supports that of Bert (2012: 25), who describes a micro-loan as a technical tool for economic development and poverty reduction. The idea is that a small amount of money is given to an individual, group of people or a community to obtain the things they need to increase their economic power. Bert (2012: 25) adds that micro-loans can help farmers to buy equipment or seeds to boost crop production; these loans can also help street vendors acquire inventory to sell, or set up small shops. Kobia (1995: 281) suggests, in the same vein, that access to credit, management training and marketing opportunities is a key factor that can promote small-scale business enterprises.

5.3.1.4 Bad roads

Roads are referred to as open ways or routes of travel for humans, animals and vehicles (Akroyd, 2003: 182). Access to good roads has many social benefits. It can increase the community's income and access to health care, education and other services (Packer & Tenney, 1980: 292). Inadequate roads were cited by the participants in this study as another key challenge. Bad roads were identified as a problem, because these could put rural people off from markets and employment. The participants explained that the poor roads, which could have been useful in transporting farm produce, have compelled men to carry crops to the market on motorcycles, while women have to transport crops from the farm to the village or market on their heads.

SC1: We have problem of road. Our roads are extremely bad. When God blesses us and we record bountiful harvest from our farms, our immediate challenge is how to bring the farm produce home.

SC2: The issue of roads is one of the major problems in this community. We often have difficulties in transporting our farm produce to the market due to bad roads...

SC4: The road is great challenge for us in this community. We struggle both in the rainy and dry seasons. There are only a few people who come to buy our crops with poor prices and we have no choice because it is also very expensive to carry it to the market ourselves.

One of the CDFs explains to me that the communities are being neglected by the government, possibly because they do not have an accessible road. USAID (2006: 21) points out that a country needs good physical infrastructure for transportation in order to strengthen competitiveness and expand productive capacity. In other words, a poor community could gain economic, social and political benefit from an improved road. The villagers could easily transport farm produce home or to the market, go to the hospital, get to school on time and find jobs when they have good roads. On the other hand, when the roads are of poor quality or absent, business is constrained and life is made more difficult for the populace.

5.3.1.5 Health problems

De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 187) argue that good health is an essential element of human well-being. When an individual, family or community is in a healthy condition, they will be more productive than when they are plagued with sickness. Health increases the level of human dignity; people will be able to care for themselves and their families (Akroyd, 2003: 182). Inadequate health care therefore can increase individual poverty as well as constitute an obstacle to poverty reduction. People are more likely to find it difficult to face educational setbacks, low levels of productivity and the loss of jobs if they are not in good health. Poor health thus may push the poor into greater poverty. Health care is one of the basic principles of the MDGs, in which the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health and the combating of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other diseases are serious considerations (Enabudoso *et al.*, 2006: 3).

The participants in the current study, however, indicated that they have various health challenges related to the very issues addressed by the MDGs. The communicable diseases that could be contracted in their communities include diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria and typhoid fever. Other health challenges include epilepsy and asthma, as well as maternal and child mortality. The participants were concerned about the lack of available health-care facilities in their villages; they have to transport pregnant women and the sick through their hilly and rough roads to a nearby community for medical help. The stories below illustrate their experiences:

SC1: There was a time in this village a woman started labour in the night; we took her on the motorbike to the cottage hospital. Because the road is bad and hilly we managed to get there but when we got there the woman was already weak. The nurses tried their best but the child

came out dead. You see, if for instance we had someone to help her at home, the child would not have died.

SC2: When children or even adults experience severe fever, stomach pain or any kind of illness in the night, we have to wait till daybreak before going to the hospital. We don't want to travel in the night because of bad roads and insecurity.

They also indicated that, as farmers, they are at risk of health-related problems that may need emergency medical attention, but because they do not have medical facilities or access to immediate attention, there are unnecessary expenses and perhaps even loss of life, as noted below:

SC3: When we go to the farm, especially during the raining season, we experience snake bites, injuries, and deep cuts by cutlass or local hoe. When it happens like that, we use local means of treatment, which are not safe and it also takes a long time to get cured.

This indicates that action needs to be taken in order to salvage the situation in rural communities. Inhabitants need to have easy access to medical care when the need arises. Participants SC1, SC2, SC3 and SC4 acknowledge that the majority of the victims of health challenges are women, children and the elderly. The participants acknowledged that the accessibility of health-care services is a big challenge in their communities. They pointed out that they are seriously in need of health-care services, which could enhance their health and well-being.

Another key problem cited with regard to health was the absence of safe drinking water. According to Riverson (1995: 137), water is a basic feature of human existence. A person may live for many days without food, but cannot survive for a few days without water to drink. Water is also essential for personal hygiene and to grow food. Riverson (1995: 140) adds that people in rural communities get their water from ponds, springs, rivers and streams. During the rainy season, these sources give water in abundance, but during the dry season, the dwellers may have to travel for many kilometres to fetch water. This is the typical experience of rural people in Nigeria. During the process of this research, the respondents pointed out that, apart from the distance, they have to treat the water before drinking it to decrease the risk of contracting various water-borne illnesses. This is reflected in the following quotations.

SC3: Lack of clean drinking water is another thing that is affecting us in this community [...]. We have to boil the water before drinking it. In fact we drink from the same source as cattle on the farm.

SC4: There is also a problem of good drinking water; the people are living in a rocky area so access to water is a big issue in this community. In the past we were seriously struggling. Some of the places we get our water are not clean because we also wash and bath in the same source.

This indicates that access to clean water and health are closely related challenges for the communities in this study. For example, drinking contaminated water could be responsible for rampant cases of intestinal and parasitic diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery, typhoid and cholera, which are found in poor and underprivileged communities (Riverson, 1995: 138). This means “the health of the village people will be improve once they are given access to supplies of clean and uncontaminated potable water” (Akroyd, 2003: 193).

It can be argued that the function of water is not only limited to the basic human need for drinking, but it also is key to the production of food and improving livelihoods and the environment. Ready access to clean water is an essential way to reduce poverty, especially among farmers. The availability of clean water in rural and/or poor communities can improve individuals’ level of productivity and potentially move them beyond subsistence-level farming, for example. It also is imperative for individuals to have a basic level of knowledge about health and hygiene practices. This may necessitate health education activities being planned and directed at those responsible for health and hygiene at home.

5.3.1.6 Spiritual issues

Myers (2011: 142) explains that spiritual causes of poverty play a significance role in making (and keeping) people in a state of poverty. For instance, people may spend money on charms for protection and to counteract fears of ancestors, alcoholism, corruption and violence. Time may also be spent on feast days as against spending the time working and generating an income. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the spirituality-related problems in the selected communities in this study, participants were asked to explain who they trust, turn to or consult for help in times of crisis, such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection. Carelessness about godly activities was pointed out by the participants as one of the problems in their communities. They lamented that only a few community members were committed to

activities that can bring about spiritual growth, such as weekly church activities. The participants claimed that the majority of community members were influenced by materialism and were preoccupied with how to become wealthy and acquire modern gadgets. It was claimed that most of the young males, for example, preferred to spend their time watching football and movies, running after politicians, drinking and womanising, as illustrated in the quotations below.

SC1: People are more concerned about the things of the world than Godly things. For instance, when it comes to football, you see the youth and even married men would prefer to go and spent the whole time watching football. The issue of politics is also a big problem. People run after the politician looking for what to eat. Most of the people are influenced more by self-desire and worldly pleasure than by the fear and love of God. People go about drinking alcohol, womanising, among others, but when it comes to the things of God, they are nowhere to be found.

SC3: People pay much attention to materialism, and on what they will get rather than what they will give out. People are more into the things of this world. Both adult and young people can spend the whole day at a movie house but may not endure Bible study or any other church activities.

The most common spiritual problem of the people, as cited by the participants, was the former's instability in who to turn to or trust when they were faced with crises such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection. The participants explained that, in most cases, the people preferred to consult traditional healers; some go to the hospital and some go to their parents first in search of a solution. The pastor is considered the last option. Some of the participants claimed that the reason that members of the community in general choose to consult 'witchdoctors', 'native doctors' or traditional healers is due to poverty. For example, if someone is suffering from malaria and does not have money to go to the hospital, he/she goes to the traditional healer who is nearby and provides cheap or free medicine. However, some of the participants noted that they had been taught the word of truth and would never think of going to such places to seek help; they would rather consult their pastor or go to hospital. The following quotations capture the participants' experiences:

SC1: [....] few people in this community when something happens to them such as sickness or family issues will invite the pastor for prayer or go to hospital. Most of them prefer to go and

consult witchdoctors (herbalists) or prayer houses. When they might have gone to several herbalist, or relations or prayer houses and there is no solution, they will now resort to their last hope, the pastor.

SC2: In the case of sickness, people take the sick person to the native doctor before the pastor, but some other times the opposite. When it is death, people go to the pastor for burial.

SC3: There are three types of faith adherents in this community, namely Christianity, Islam and indigenous religion. So everyone goes to the places where their needs will be met. Some will go to the hospital, some to the native doctor, some to the pastor, and some will go to their parents for help. Not everyone believes in the power of God. Some people believe whenever something happens to them, it must be caused by another person. For such people, native doctors are first choice before the pastor or hospital.

The findings in the above quotations do not imply that traditional health-care systems should be abolished. The traditional health-care systems may be less expensive; healers are often always available and some of the herbs used are harmless or helpful. VerBeek (2002: 64) notes that, in some cultures, most of the healers believe that God is behind their ability to treat or heal people. As such, in the healing process, prayers are first offered before attempting to give the traditional or herbal medicine. One cannot be certain about the hygienic use of local medicines. This indicates that, in an environment in which traditional health care centres are found, the community development worker needs to provide some technical assistance, especially on the hygienic usage of locally made medicine in particular.

5.3.2 The causes of poverty in communities

The challenge of poverty is not new in African countries (O'Donovan, 2000: 42). In Nigeria, for instance, there are numerous refugees, displaced people, homeless and street children, and street beggars in the major cities and towns. Some of these individuals are believed to have found themselves in this condition due to natural disasters or religious, political and civil crises. Some authors would argue that the root causes of rural poverty lie within the socio-economic (distribution of wealth and power in society) and environmental (shortage of resources, poor conditions or degradation of the environment) domains. Others, however, may believe that individuals, families and communities are poor because of idleness, drunkenness, ambling, unwise expenditure, incompetence, ignorance and insufficient intelligence (Dixon,

1990: 53). These are crucial challenges that need the response of concerned philanthropists, either as individuals or organisations, to take active measures.

At the level of the selected communities' causes of poverty, not all of these factors were identified. Only those pointed out by the participants in this study could be analysed. The knowledge obtained about the reasons for people's poverty assisted in deepening the understanding of holistic social transformation of ECWA's POD. The aim of this study therefore was to explore robust and possible ways to enhance ECWA's POD intervention as a faith-based development intervention. It thus was necessary to assess and analyse the causes of poverty affecting the people in the poor and disadvantaged target communities to which they provide services. This provided better insights that allowed an understanding of whether ECWA's POD has been able to achieve its stated mission and vision by overcoming the challenges in the project areas. In an effort to understand the causes of poverty, participants from the selected communities were asked to describe some of these causes in their communities.

The participants' responses show that there are many issues responsible for the persistence of poverty in their communities. The following sub-themes emerged: unemployment, mismanagement, illiteracy, disunity and religion. Each of these is discussed in more detail next.

5.3.2.1 Unemployment

Ucha (2010: 51) has identified unemployment as one of the major factors that contribute to poverty in Nigeria, as it has negative effects on individual and often community sources of livelihood. As in many other African countries, the dependence of poor people in Nigeria on informal economic activities has helped them manage to create livelihoods. Ucha (2010: 51) states that approximately two thirds of the poor eke out their livelihood from subsistence agriculture, either as small famers or as low-paid workers. This means that, if their food needs are not adequately met, household members cope by diversifying their employment activities so that even the most demeaning jobs are taken, despite low pay.

The responses of the participants in the current study suggest that the people in these selected communities are unemployed, especially in the formal sector, and as a result most of them are living in poverty and from 'hand to mouth'. When an individual's or family's average income is low, it would be difficult to pay for social needs or church-related expenses. Most of the

participants in this study indicated that a lack of formal employment was a key cause of poverty in their communities and had a negative impact on their well-being. Informal economic activity, specifically farming, thus is their only or main source of income or means of livelihood. As reflected in the following remarks, individuals sell their farm produce to meet their and their children's numerous basic needs, such as for food, schooling and medical care.

SC1: We are not employed by the government or any organisation and we do not have any source of income, except what we produce from our farms. It is from the sales of farm produce or animals that we buy fertiliser and then to settle taxes or community charges and our children's school needs.

SC2: [...] our one and only salary is our harvest; the year we experience poor harvest we are in trouble...

SC4: We eat from what we get from the farm and sell some portion to be able to raise money to address other family needs and attend social ceremonies such as weddings, naming ceremonies, burials, school fees and medical bills.

The participants also explained that their economic condition, which is as a result of poor income or the lack of formal employment, forces them to borrow money from well-to-do individuals, to whom they also have to pay interest.

SC2: When we are in dire need, we often are compelled to take a loan to repay after harvest, of course, with some interest. We wish we could have better means whereby we would not have to be indebted and repay debts with interest.

SC3: It is a shameful thing to be begging or borrowing to meet our family needs, if you cannot pay back at the time you promised is another problem. Not everyone will believe you when you say you do not have it.

The participants pointed out that unemployment, especially among the youth, could be responsible for many explosive social crises in the society, as highlighted below by one of the SCs:

SC1: Our children these days do not give much regard to instructions by parents. They are into many vices, such as alcoholism, smoking, even taking hard drugs. When they are drunk,

they disturb the peace of this community; they steal our farm produce and sell it at a cheap price just to meet such needs.

Another significant challenge, particularly with regard to rural dwellers, is that the few youth who are educated are also jobless. This indicates that their efforts towards employment are almost fruitless. For instance, the participants reported that most of the youth who managed to attend a certain level of education did not have jobs, let alone those who dropped out of primary or secondary schools, or those who did not attend school at all. Some of the SCs noted the following:

SC1: Our children lack employment, so they are just sitting at home; we have to struggle to give them food, buy clothes, and even soap.

SC4: Most of our children who have gone to school and graduated have no jobs. They are just idling away.

The above findings show that the participants are concerned about their low income due to the lack of formal employment. They desire that this challenge be addressed with all seriousness. However, Bert (2012: 22) argues that employment does not guarantee escaping poverty. A worker, therefore, can still be poor if his/her salary is not enough to keep the family above the \$2 poverty line. Moreover, there is limited opportunity to accumulate wealth if the worker has no job security or is paid a low salary. This indicates the need for employment to improve and better the immediate and future condition of the poor (Bert, 2012: 23).

Similarly, Sen (1999: 94) points out that the effect of unemployment on the lives of individuals is more than merely a loss of income. Some of the other effects include psychological harm; the loss of work motivation, skill and self-confidence; an increase in ailments, morbidity and mortality rates; the disruption of family relations and social life; the hardening of social exclusion; and accentuation of racial tensions and gender asymmetries. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 7) note that the causes and results of poverty that most people face have been attributed to unemployment. Unemployment is a cause of poverty, since jobless people may not have income that would enable them to adequately meet their basic needs for housing, food, medical care and education. At the same time, unemployment is a result of poverty since poor health caused by an unbalanced diet; poor housing and a lack of good education may prevent people from obtaining and sustaining gainful employment.

This indicates that there are significant challenges relating to job opportunities in Nigerian rural communities and, in reality, the government, which remains the largest source of employment, is no longer sufficient for the populace. Although the private sector is also playing a vital role in increasing the level of employment, demand remains on the increase. According to Kobia (1995: 280), small-scale business enterprises are significant in our societies as a means of employment for the populace. This suggests that, if the church could mobilise and support poor and underprivileged communities with funds and management training to embark on self-employment, this could contribute significantly to alleviating poverty.

5.3.2.2 Mismanagement

The participants indicated that, unproductive or extravagant expenses, inappropriate priorities and a lack of planning and storage of food, which is the only source of their economy, are the key causes of poverty and have increased their level of poverty in their communities. Participants mentioned that they were not patient in preserving their crops; after harvesting, they sell everything and squander or misuse the money so that they experience extreme hunger before the next season, as indicated in the following quotes:

SC1: I must confess that some of us do not spend our money on things that will benefit us and our families. Some of us sell farm produce and use the money to drink alcohol, some spend their money on organising parties, and some use their money for expensive dresses. As a result, when they get money it is finished within a short time, then they go on begging before they eat.

SC4: [...] in most cases after the harvest, our people sell their farm produce without reserving anything that they will eat later in the year. When you come here on our market day, particularly in the harvest period, you will see how people will just carry their crops to the market without budgeting on what to buy. They sell the crops and spend the money overnight and before you know, what they have is finished.

This indicates that proper control of individual or family resources could result in the increased well-being and economic stability of the family. Some of the women acknowledged that they played a greater role in planning how family resources are to be used. In other words, they claimed that women play a great role in sustaining family wealth. This is evident in the following remark:

SC3: *As a wife, if my husband and I struggled hard to bring something to the house, if I don't plan well on how to use what we brought, within a short while everything will vanish. If, for instance, when the harvest is brought home and my husband tries to take everything to sell at the market at once, it is my duty as a wife to advise him on the implication of his action. If not, our children would have nothing to eat [...] you see I have to plan how to manage the little we have.*

The above findings concur with Myers's (2011: 116) assertions that most poor people are kept in this situation because they have to sell their property to settle social requirements, or because of natural or man-made disasters, the exploitation of the poor, physical incapacity and unproductive expenditure or poor business investment.

5.3.2.3 Illiteracy/ignorance

According to Warburton (1998: 28), education is an essential element in the pursuit of sustainable development; if ordinary people do not care to know about sustainable development by changing their attitudes and behaviour, any policy or programme will fail. It is only through participating in the practical implementation of policies and projects that people are able to learn to perceive the social, political and economic issues in the community and take action to salvage themselves. According to Chambers (1983: 110), illiterate people often are isolated from the outside world, and are not well informed about events beyond the neighbourhood. This indicates that their children may not be able to go to school or drop out in the process. The illiterate often also live in remote areas, without trading centres, and some struggle to access political structures (Chambers, 1983: 110).

The participants in the current study identified illiteracy as one of the key causes of poverty among the villagers. They claimed that there was limited information about what is happening around the communities. In different ways, the participants pointed out that illiteracy was responsible for the lack of access to social services by individuals, households and communities. One of the main issues cited with regard to illiteracy was stress due to the high level of poverty and lack of infrastructural facilities. In the light of this, the participants desired their children to be educated so that the latter would be able to "save" their collective situation. Participants acknowledged that education had a role to play in improving the community's infrastructure, providing employment and increasing productivity. Literacy can liberate people from the vicious circle of poverty; it brings wealth and development, not setbacks or misfortunes, as highlighted in the following response:

SC1: Lack of education is a major setback in this community... Our most persistent need is a school for our children because illiteracy leads to poverty and underdevelopment. We believe that if only we can make our children acquire or attain a certain level of education, gradually we shall be able to salvage ourselves from the difficulties we are facing. Our children would be able to provide the road, the clinic and maternity care.

The above quotation indicates that illiteracy is a major obstacle in community development. This finding concurs with Swanepoel (1992: 9) assertions that illiteracy may result in an inferiority complex. Illiterate people may believe, for example, that innovation must come from educated people. Some of the participants explained that, despite the fact that they themselves did not attain any level of formal education, they understood that a lack of education can lead to poverty. The participants also pointed out that education can go a long way towards reducing idleness, bad influences and lawlessness among the youth in their communities. This is reflected in the quotation below.

SC2: Our children and other unbelievers shuttle from one beer parlour to another from village to village on drinking sprees because they are idle and jobless. If they were able to go to school and are able to learn or if they are educated, they will be looking for jobs in the city instead of staying at home running up and down and disturbing the peace of our community.

The participants indicated that formal or informal education can help them to improve productivity. The finding in the following quote reveals that the entire population of this sample depends on local farm produce for their livelihood. The participants lamented that the food crops they produced were not sufficient for domestic consumption, let alone for meeting other social needs:

SC3: You know [...] even in farming, times have changed. I mean the method of farming or agricultural activities applied in those days is not the same as in the modern days. Today there are modern techniques of farming which we don't know. Therefore, we need to have them and learn how to use the modern techniques so as to have a plentiful harvest.

As in the above quotation, the participants acknowledged that poverty still existed in their community, not only because they lacked modern techniques of agriculture, such as modern equipment, improved seedlings, fertilisers and pesticides, but also because they lacked the necessary knowledge to use immediate resources. The following response captures their experience:

SC4: *One of the big causes of poverty in this community is ignorance, especially how to properly utilise the resources around us. As you can see all the people in this community depend on agriculture as a means of living. We keep cows; unfortunately, we don't know how to use the cows to cultivate our land or even to use the cow dung as manure in order to fertilise the land.*

The above quotes agree with Amartya Sen (1999: 95), who notes that social changes in terms of increases in literacy levels can enhance individuals' capability to live worthwhile and less vulnerable lives. Vincent (2009: 141) adds that the high quality of local schools often supports a society's workforce capabilities and drives residential growth. Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 9) acknowledge that the "inability to obtain education keeps people in [a] position of vulnerability and powerlessness". For instance, societal literacy may provide a skilled workforce and improve productivity, which could lead to poverty eradication by increasing incomes. Literacy also provides individuals access to health, education and job opportunities and reduces inequality.

The WHO (2003: 16) explains that education is strongly linked to the improvement of health care for children, families and communities. This means the importance of education in enhancing the well-being of individuals and society cannot be overemphasised. It could be important in the following ways: education can be a vehicle for development in any society; it can be a catalyst for the development of individuals; it can be a means for the attainment of the full social and economic potential of the individual or society; it can be a channel for the development of the intellectual capacity of the populace to understand, analyse and appreciate problems and the environment; and it can be a pivot to acquiring the physical and mental skills necessary for the development of the individual and society at large.

Therefore one can argue that there is a need for the church to enlarge and promote the space for public education for children and adult members who are uneducated. The poor need to be taught in a simple language the causes and preventive measures of various diseases in their communities and potentially how to combat their poverty through self-employment.

5.3.2.4 Disunity

According to Brueggemann (1984: 44, 48), a spirit of unity is a strong pillar that can keep people together. In addition, community unity is an element of *shalom* and may serve as a guarantee for the safety and well-being of a community. This suggests that unity is a powerful

component of community development, and the elements of a united community are the practices of loving, caring for and respecting one another.

As a Nigerian it is obvious that ethnic and religious conflicts have been a major problem in Nigeria, and one of the main contributing factors to the persistence of poverty.⁷¹ This is also true of the selected communities where this study was conducted. The participants in this study explained that the most crucial problem that was seen as causing poverty among individuals, families and the broader community was the disunity that exists among them. Generally, financial challenges were identified as one of the causes of family conflict. This is especially problematic when the poor have insufficient money to pay for children's education, hospital bills or house rent, or to buy enough food for the family or daily needs. The most common factors that contribute to disunity, as cited by some of the participants, included the following: self-centeredness, jealousy, hatred and envy; the participants believed that these attitudes were barriers to their source of blessing. The following responses express the participants' experiences:

SC1: We lack unity in this community. We are disorganised. Everybody appears to be on his or her own. There is evidence of jealousy, envy, hatred in our community.

SC2: There is no co-operation among the members of our community. No caring for one another, but hatred, jealousy and envy of each other's progress.

SC3: Certainly, poverty is persisting in this community because of hatred and jealousy. My belief is that if there is unity, we shall be able to overcome poverty. We shall be able to do something to better our homes and our town; nothing will be impossible to accomplish. Whatever we seek from God, we won't get it because of the malice and hatred we harbour in our hearts against one another.

The most challenging issue is that disunity among the respondents appears to reflect more of an internal conflict. Hughes and Bennett (1998: 216) point out that internal conflict can create greater poverty than external conflict, because it destroys the social trust necessary for the healthy functioning of communities. Such a crisis could arise when one party seeks to dominate the other. This is illustrated in the quotation below:

⁷¹The issue of ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria has been a serious change to individuals, community and national development. Unequal distribution of national resources and misuse of political power are key contributing factors for the ethnic and religious conflicts (Saint, 2012: 113).

SC4: *Disunity, or poor relationship between husband and wife, lack of trust that is, people do not trust each other, they are individualistic and you find that everyone is on his or her own. There is constant conflict because everyone wants to be the head over the other either at home or in the community.*

Therefore, based on the above findings, one could argue that a lack of unity and co-operation and misunderstanding between people in a given community, if not managed or controlled, could add to the community causes of poverty. This is because conflicts that exist among members of families or communities as a result of hatred, jealousy or envy are a serious challenge that requires intervention by religious or any concerned organisation. The lack of co-operation between members of the communities was also identified by participants as a by-product of disunity and has resulted in negative effects, as described below by one of the CDFs:

CDF: *The people in this community are not ready to work or co-operate with us no matter what you do as a community development worker to help or mobilise the people in such community; they would not pay attention because they want to live a self-contained life.*

In short, the finding shows that a lack of unity could have a negative impact on individuals, families and community development. The common characteristics of disunity that are cited by the respondents include hatred, jealousy, distrust, co-operation and individualism. These are contrary to the values that make a community what it should be. Individuals in a community are expected to live not according to one's private interests, but rather according to the goals of the community and others members of the community.

5.3.2.5 Religious issues

It is argued by Myers (2011:144) that the most essential cause of poverty is spiritual; he describes sin as that which has distorted unity and peace in the community. The effects of sin among the populace are characterised by domination, division, and unjust and abusive behaviour. Since God is often side-lined in human activities, individuals mistreat each other. Myers (2011:145) explains that sin is manifested in both individuals and social structures. The consequences of sin lead to poverty entanglement. Thus the poor are denied access to social power and personal agency; because there often is a web of lies and disempowerment, the poor are constrained from growing; because there is deception and dominating relationships, individuals are unable to love God and neighbours and therefore lack *shalom*. The element of

spiritual poverty includes broken relationships with God, each other, the community and environment. Besides these wrecked relationships, there is fear of spiritual oppression, demons and ancestral powers, as well as a lack of hope and belief that individuals' conditions can improve (Myers, 2008: 689). This suggests that a lack of generosity, deprivation from rightful ownership of property, exploitation, corruption and injustice are key causes of poverty.

The participants in the current study are religiously conscious. They are aware that sinful acts are contributing factors to the persistence of poverty in their communities. The most common words or phrases that participants used to describe sin include: failure to obey God's instructions or doing what displeases God, and improper conduct. The participants believed that if someone was sinning, he or she may not escape poverty; however, those who obey God may be spared from poverty. The following remarks reveal their conviction:

SC1: Sin breeds poverty a lot. For example, when one indulges in drinking alcohol and/or fornication or adultery is that not sin? Such a person will certainly look for money by all means to indulge him or herself in improper conduct.

SC2: Based on my understanding, sin is what displeases God. One of the characteristics of sin is envy and since you envy your brother or sister for what he or she has, God could block your chances of acquiring yours.

SC3: I see poverty as a child of sin. So I believe that anyone who indulges in sinful practice will be poor, especially in this community, because money will be spent in trying to settle issues.

The participants also lamented that some of their children who had refused to be God-fearing or learn about what the participants perceived to be a moral life were multiplying the community's problems. This also made it difficult for the children to receive instruction from their parents. Instead, the former indulge in bad practices, which contribute to poverty. The participants believed that, if their children paid attention to God's instruction, their community would be better, as pointed out in the following response:

SC1: We have a huge problem in the area of child upbringing. Our children these days do not give much regard to instructions by parents. They refuse to go to church activities where they

can learn good behaviour. On the contrary, they are into many vices, such as alcoholism, smoking, even taking hard drugs.

Owing to the fact that women are generally viewed as the most vulnerable in the communities when it comes to poverty, some of the women in the selected communities were reported to be engaging in what was perceived by participants as immoral acts simply to earn a living:

SC4: Sin is doing what is contrary to the will and purpose of God towards humankind. For example, some women are involving themselves in acts of fornication and adultery. Some of them will sell themselves in order to raise money to feed themselves and their children.

The overall causes of poverty discussed in this study concur with Myers's (2011) analyses of various root causes of poverty, which can be described as physical, social, mental and spiritual causes. The physical causes include the lack of food, shelter and clean water, as well as physical weakness. These physical causes undermine the fundamental well-being and survival of human beings (Myers, 2011: 135). The social causes of poverty, meanwhile, include the perpetuation of social activities and a whole system of social injustice and misery. Myers (2011: 135, 138) adds that customs, traditions and inadequate worldviews are crucial elements that contribute to social poverty.

Examples of the mental causes of poverty are limited knowledge and technical information. This can result in poor nutrition, illness, and alcohol and drug abuse. Poverty thus also exists within the mind and spirit, as poverty of being that has negative effects on human dignity (Myers, 2011: 139). Myers (2011: 142) further notes that spiritual causes of poverty should not be ignored in the process of community development. This is because people may continue to believe in spiritual power relations with ancestors. As a result, individuals may spend money and time seeking spiritual protection and blessing. Spiritual causes of poverty are clearly viewed from a relational problem that does not exist, which could hinder peaceful co-existence within communities; without peace it will be difficult to experience sound human well-being and life abundance. That is why taking the spiritual aspect of poverty into consideration is crucial. When spiritual poverty is addressed it could restore the community into a good relationship with God and their fellow human beings within the community, and with the environment.

At this point I want to conclude that poverty alleviation may come through creativity and hard work. That is, without creativity, hard work or extra effort, good planning and the

implementation of these plans, wealth may not result. However, it must also be understood that people may not be blamed for their poverty because, in reality, there are historical causes of poverty, such as colonialism, racism, classism and patriarchy. In some societies, power structures and systems have been designed so as to maintain the power of the privileged. In that case, someone can be very creative and hardworking and even spiritual, and yet that person will remain poor due to his/her race, for example, or by being in any other way a marginalised group in society that is not afforded the same opportunities given to others and that has the system stacked against it.

5.3.3 The effects of these issues on the selected communities

Chambers (1983: 111) and Burkey (1993: 13) emphasise that poverty and the effects of poverty are connected. The former author refers to this connection as the “poverty trap”⁷² and the latter terms it a “vicious circle of poverty”.⁷³ Spitzbeck (2005: 305) adds that the impact of poverty is felt by an individual, family and community. Poverty thus includes the social circumstances that structurally exclude certain people or groups from access to the resources needed to conduct their life. The effects of spiritual poverty, on the other hand, include broken relationships; fear of spiritual oppression, demons and ancestral powers; and a lack of hope and belief that one’s condition can be better (Myers, 2008: 689). According to Sen (1999: 94), the effect of unemployment on the lives of individuals is more than merely a loss of income. Other effects of unemployment are psychological harm; loss of motivation to work, skills and self-confidence; disruption of family relations and social life; and the hardening of social exclusion (Sen, 1999: 94). Understanding the effects of poverty therefore is crucial to the discussion of TD (Stewart, 1997: 1). Development projects are geared towards positive change, whether physical or spiritual, and the change should be measured by the results seen in the target society.

From the previous discussion of the basic problems and causes of poverty in the selected communities in this study (see 5.3.1 and 5.3.2) it is evident that these communities have basic needs that are not being met, such as for water, education, infrastructure and employment opportunities. Another identified problem is ignorance, which also could serve as a major

⁷²Chambers’s (1983: 112) opinion is that poverty is caused by a lack of assets; isolation due to location and illiteracy; powerlessness due to a lack of social and economic power, which is often caused by exploitation; and physical weakness through illness.

⁷³Burkey (1993: 14-16) draws a vicious circle of poverty to explain how poor health and illiteracy affect income, as well as how poor income affects education and health. In the vicious circle of poverty, he explains that some of the courses of poverty are economic, social and political.

challenge with regards to the standard of living and the enhancement of the well-being of poor people in the communities. In an effort to understand the effects of these challenges, the respondents were asked to explain how these problems have affected the families' and community's development.

The participants mentioned that insufficient clean water seriously affects their families and community development. In the quotations below, the participants indicate that their struggle to fetch water consumes their time and energy as they have to get up early to queue for water. This has also caused economic setbacks in their communities, since people who were interested in coming to invest in their communities could not do so due to limited access to water.

SC1: Our women normally wake up at midnight to fetch water. It is less during the rainy season but terrible in the dry season. If we have clean water there will be no need to get up early and walk for one or two kilometres to fetch water.

SC2: Because of the lack of water some people wanted to migrate and settle with us, but they refused to do so because there is not enough water. But we must also work to see that unity is maintained in this community if we must live together.

SC3: [...] you see some people want to run little businesses but no water, no electricity, to preserve whatever they are producing or to produce something, lack of good road so that they can market their products.

The finding in the quote below shows that the lack of clean drinking water also has a negative effect on the community's health. The participants complained about the stress that they had to endure before obtaining water; their problem was not only the distance walked to fetch the water, but also how they struggle with animals before being able to collect the water. This no doubt has a negative effect on their health, as described in the following response:

SC1: The most painful thing then is that you have to get up very early in the morning and walk to the river to fetch water; if you get there late you may find pigs already playing in the water. If you wait for day time, the story is the same; cows are already there so we end up drinking in the same place with cows. But now you can just go to the well or to this mono pump to fetch your water and proceed with other activities.

These findings concur with those of Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 8), who point out that communities that lack access to clean water are liable to face health problems. This means access to clean water decreases the likelihood of individuals contracting or transmitting water-borne diseases and improves the quantity and quality of food production.

Low income was also identified in 5.3.2.1 as having a negative effect on rural people. Some of the participants in the current study explained that they had to borrow money in order to survive. The annual harvest sometimes was insufficient to take care of all their needs. Some face hunger by the middle of the year, and thus need to go borrowing. This suggests that people in the targeted communities may be unable to give offerings, tithes or other contributions to the church. Those who are in dire need often are compelled to take loans that would have to be repaid after harvesting, with interest. This means that if the targeted communities have other sources of income they would not have to be indebted and repay debts with interest.

Another key issue cited by the participants, which has rendered the majority of the community members poor, is economic factors, as noted in 5.3.3.3. The participant in SC1, for example, lamented that these economic factors have led most of the children to drop out of school, since some parents cannot afford to pay school fees, as in indicated in the quote below:

SC1: Yes ... poverty is affecting us; because of that some of our children have dropped out of school; their parents cannot afford to pay school fees.

All the participants pointed out that a lack of electricity is affecting economic development. For instance, the amount of money they spend on batteries and fuel to be used in generators can be used for other things. They have an interest in running small businesses, but there is no electricity to preserve whatever they are producing. They also identify a lack of good roads and communication networks as key problems affecting their development. Members of the community have missed job opportunities, and have lost their lives and properties as a result of bad roads.

As noted in 5.3.2.2 above, the participants in SC1, SC3 and SC4 agreed that mismanagement of family resources had reduced the majority of community members to living in abject poverty. It had led most of their children to drop out of school, since some parents could not afford to pay school fees. Some of their children suffered nutritional challenges, since the parents could not afford to give them good food. The most crucial effect, according to these

selected communities, is the spiritual cause of poverty, which has a negative effect on human relations, and relationships with God and the environment. These broken relationships could be rebuilt by a holistic development approach that is informed and shaped by a biblical framework for transformational development. This is because, for Christian development workers, when people turn to hearing the gospel of salvation they are likely going to experience meaningful transformation in their economic, political, social and spiritual lives as well (Myers, 2011: 145).

5.4 Summary of Key Findings

Drawing from the findings in this chapter one can deduce some of the harsh realities affecting the well-being of the rural communities in the current study. These findings reveal that individuals are undergoing diverse difficulties, which range from the social, political and economic, to the psychological, emotional and spiritual. The results of this study reveal the participants' desires to improve their physical, social, economic and human infrastructure, as well as their spiritual well-being. Each of these aspects is summarised below.

With regard to the physical infrastructure, the findings reveal that communities are concerned about the lack of good transportation systems and argue that the provision of these could enhance speedy and sustainable community development. The lack of an access road therefore is a major factor. Individuals and communities are separated from the social amenities and basic needs that would be provided for by an adequate transportation system. For example, geographically, participants are situated away from business centres and this distance is compounded by bad roads. This means it would be difficult for those who want to come to the rural communities to invest, especially during the rainy season.

Another point of concern was the social infrastructure. The findings in this chapter (see 5.3.1.5) show that the communities are desperate to access adequate or quality health-care services in times of emergencies. Similarly, the participants cared about the education of their children, but lacked available schools and training facilities that would allow their children to become productive people in society. The participants lived in poor houses compared to other residential buildings in towns or cities. It was also evident that the individuals and communities in this study were at risk of contracting various diseases. This highlights the need for clean water, basic sanitation and education, quality food and access to networks.

Economic development infrastructure is another key area that demands serious attention. The investigation revealed the communities' desire to have access to equity capital to operate small businesses in the absence of industries that can provide them with employment. Another limitation to economic development is the lack of water and electricity, which affects residents and constrains businesspeople from coming to these communities. Electrical and telecommunication systems for both personal and business use are also not available or adequate in these communities.

The participants' concerns were also centred on human infrastructure. The findings reveal that, although there were available human resources in the communities, not many individuals had acquired formal education. The participants highlighted that formal employment was a big challenge that must be addressed; they indicated that some of them had learned handwork but did not have access to credit to run small businesses. There thus is a pressing need to increase job opportunities for the communities' dwellers.

In relationship to the communities' religious life, most respondents indicated that there was limited knowledge about God. Many community members were said to be perpetual drunkards, and engaged in all kinds of 'ungodly' activities. These are issues that the respondents noted were fuelling the poverty of community members. As the findings reveal, some people in rural areas squander their resources in immoral behaviour. A righteous life is seen as prolonging the life of people. In addition, creativity and hard work can alleviate poverty and good management of resources can lead to positive and sustainable change.

Community health is another key issue cited by the selected communities with regard to religious practices. For an individual, household and community to obtain a secure livelihood, there must be access to quality health care. The participants acknowledged that there are numerous health-related problems in rural communities, and when they are faced with such challenges, few among the community members, especially committed Christians, usually first turn to the pastor. Such people understand that a pastor is not only a preacher, but also a doctor. The participants indicated that those people who were not strong Christians first turned to traditional healers. Sometimes it depended on the nature of the sickness; if a person was sick, they first tried to buy pain relievers, but if the sickness persisted, they then would claim that the sickness not ordinary, by implication, they thought it was witchcraft or spiritual forces such as demonic attacks. The severity of sickness would determine how to respond. Some individuals or families would consult a medical person and others the pastor, before

going to the hospital, whereas others approached herbalist or ‘witchdoctor’ without contacting the pastor.

This reminds us that human beings have always been in search of meaning and purpose in their lives. According to Nash and Stewart (2002: 17), this search brings individuals to a sacred connection. This sacred awareness leads them to develop deep insights into the meaning and significance of their lives and the integration of all aspect of their being. This makes the spiritual need an important aspect of human needs that could contribute to sustainable well-being when taken into consideration. Nash and Stewart (2002: 15-16) further note:

The spiritual element of the person is the aspect of an individual’s psyche, consciousness and unconsciousness [...]. It is in terms of the spiritual dimension that a person strives for transcendental values, meanings, experience and development; for knowledge of an ultimate reality; for belonging and relatedness with the moral universe and community and for union with the immanent, supernatural powers that guide people and the universe for good and evil.

This shows that development practitioners may fail if they overlook the spiritual human needs and concentrate instead on social, economic and political needs. People’s affiliation to spiritual powers may lead them to reject development efforts in fear of possible adverse reactions from their ancestors. In that case the people may prefer to spend money buying charms for self-protection (Myers, 2011: 142). This means that spiritual sensitivity can play an important role in upholding human dignity and the worth of human beings, regardless of their social, political, economic and cultural backgrounds (Nash & Stewart, 2002: 19).

The spiritual needs of human beings are critical. Spiritual nourishment can result in a healthy community, but if these spiritual needs are not taken into proper consideration in development projects, the efforts may be judged as incomplete or inadequate. This study argues that, while material and non-material human needs are fundamental factors for effective human development, spiritual needs are more crucial, because these are likely to stimulate people to think positively towards God and their fellow human beings. Therefore, God and human relationships, as well as relationships within the community with fellow human beings and with the environment, are both important aspects of development.

I therefore, argue that it will be erroneous for a Christian ministry to assume that it has fulfilled the ministry of the gospel by preaching to the people. Neither is it safe to concentrate on individuals' physical needs alone. Such patterns demonstrate a serious separation from the example of Christ and the early church in dealing with community (O'Donovan, 2000:65). The secular understanding of holistic development does not consider the spiritual transformation of the populace. The churches, at this juncture, need to develop holistic alternatives and models that would allow for men and women to contribute meaningfully to personal and national development. The findings of this study show that both socio-economic and spiritual challenges have affected the populace negatively. Due to low or inadequate economic activities, insufficient food and other challenges, life has not been easy for the participants in this study, and the communities that they represent. These individuals also are at risk of developing various health-related adversities. Sin was perceived as one of the key causes of poverty, which means the church will need to make a greater effort to address the issue and also to encourage people to put their trust in God and take church activities seriously.

5.5 Conclusion

The painful reality of poverty in the selected communities within which the ECWA's POD operates is obvious. Poor health care, insufficient food and poor food quality, an unclean environment, inadequate educational facilities, unemployment and disunity, to name some of the existing challenges, are all indications of the complexities of the community that need to be addressed. It is clear that there is a need for quick and decisive action with regard to the communities' most pressing needs; however, it may not be possible to solve the problem of poverty overnight; it has to be a process. The challenge of poverty is significant for development workers and organisations concerned with human well-being. This is because poverty is seen as a deficit, or lack of freedom to grow; as physical weakness and entanglement. Poverty also is seen as hardship, misery, starvation and a situation in which living conditions are so low that people are excluded from the community in which they live.

The question of how the local church should respond to the plight of the poor requires serious thought. The needs of these individuals are not just financial, and God requires that people, especially in the local church, should respond positively. This is the most important reason for the principle of empowerment being crucial. Instead of making the needy feel dependent,

helpless and hopeless, empowerment builds up their dignity and responsibility and gives them a sense of their importance and value. They can become self-reliant, or employed through small industries around them. Practical skills development in the areas of petty trading, automobile or electronic repairs, hairdressing or weaving, furniture or carpentry work and the like also has the potential to go a long way in improving their well-being. This is because government alone cannot handle the numerous problems facing the communities in this study. In the next chapter a descriptive analysis of the activities of the ECWA POD and the contribution of these towards poverty alleviation in these communities will be provided.

CHAPTER SIX

THE REMEDIAL MEASURES AND IMPACT OF ECWA'S POD PROGRAMMES

6.1 Introduction

The description and analysis of poverty, its causes and effects were dealt with in Chapter Five and are in line with the popular and theological viewpoints on the nature and causes of poverty as discussed in 3.3.1 and 3.2.3. These were physical, social, mental and spiritual poverty. Physical poverty is the lack of food, shelter and clean water, and physical weakness (see 3.3.3). The elements of social poverty are the practices of injustice, some of the community customs, traditions and inadequate worldviews. Mental poverty has to do with the limited knowledge or technical information with regard to the best use of available resources (Myers, 2011: 139). Spiritual poverty is clearly viewed from the perspective of a relationship that does not exist, which has hindered *shalom*, and without *shalom* there will be no well-being and no abundant life. Sin is that which affects humanity's relationship with God, community and the environment (see 3.3.3). All of these causes of poverty have direct implications for human dignity. It has been argued that the primary aim of Transformational Development (TD) is to ensure that just and peaceful relationships are restored on all levels – social, spiritual, physical and economic. At the same time, TD argues that materially or spiritually changed people are able to discover their true identity and recovered their true vocation as faithful and productive stewards as gifts from God for the well-being of all (see 3.4.3 and 3.4.4).

This chapter seeks to explore two objectives of this study: the first is to identify the remedial measures taken through the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) People Oriented Development (POD) programmes. The second is to evaluate, using Myers's TD standards and indicators, to what extent the programmes have or have not acted on or affected the lives of the beneficiaries holistically (see 4.3.3.2 and Appendix B). To achieve these objectives, the results of the semi-structured interviews with the ECWA pastors and POD community development facilitators, and the focus group discussions with the selected communities, are presented, analysed and evaluated. Areas of assessment are the physical and spiritual transformations of the beneficiaries. The historical background, remedial measures taken to improve the socio-economic challenges highlighted in 5.3.1, and their impact will be both

discussed and analysed using the holistic criteria of TD, as in 4.3.4. The chapter is basically guided by the overall research question of this study raised in 1.4: “Have ECWA’s People Oriented Development programmes led to Transformational Development of the poor communities in northern Nigeria?”

6.2 The Context of the Research Project

As stated in Section 1.2, ECWA is an indigenous Nigerian church with branches abroad. Its ultimate goal is to “glorify God and [to] communicate the gospel to the lost, disciplining and equipping believers, organizing them into local churches and caring for the needy in the world through advocacy and social services” (ECWA,2007: 3). ECWA pursues this goal through the establishment of various ministries, departments and agencies, one of which is ECWA’s People Oriented Development. This section provides a short historical background to and the focus and working approach of ECWA’s POD.

6.2.1 Historical background to ECWA’s POD

Turaki (1993: 3) notes that the birth and growth of ECWA started with small steps of personal compassion and moved towards a larger and collaborative action for social and spiritual change. The movement was fuelled by the fervent prayer of an individual (Mrs Gowans), who rehabilitated volunteers (Walter Gowans, Rowland Victor Bingham and Thomas Kent) – the first pioneering missionaries. Even though the vision and desire for a fruitful ministry encountered discouragement, the missionaries’ determination against various odds eventually allowed success. Turaki (1993: 4) argues that ECWA missionaries, in addition to their emphasis on the preaching of the gospel, “believe[d] strongly in the works of charity and social improvement of other people through medical, educational and agricultural or industrial services”. Oshatoba (1985: 50) adds that the growth and development of the work of these missionaries can be compared with the parable of the mustard seed. The fruit of their ministry is characterised by establishing churches for worship and fellowship, Bible and secular education, medical centres, orphanages and radio stations. Today, the church has not only spread its branches to all parts of Nigeria, but also to other parts of Africa and abroad.

The history of POD as an ECWA development agency goes back to 1989. The agency was separated from ECWA’s Rural Development and Community Health Programmes (Kasai, 2008: 3). The factors that necessitated the split include the ineffectiveness of the Rural

Development and Community Health strategy, which contributed to the failure of the two organisations to adequately meet the numerous needs of the rural poor and, coupled with the downturn in the Nigerian economy in the late 1980s, made the ministry unsustainable. This led to the formation of the POD (Kasai, 2008: 3). The mission of ECWA's POD is to "promote and improve sustainable living conditions, through effective community mobilization and capacity building of the underprivileged communities" (Kasai, 2008: 3). The ultimate goal of POD is to attain sustainable holistic development, and the mandate of POD involves holistic community-based development as a demonstration of God's love for humankind (Kasai, 2008: 4).

The ECWA's POD was organised into four project phases, with a specific focus on poverty alleviation and community development. Phase one was initially planned for three years (1989 to 1992), but was extended to December 1994. Phase two started from January 1995 to July 1998, while Phase three was from August 1998 to December 2000. The fourth phase was from January 2001 to December 2003. Phase five started maybe in January 2004 and ended in December 2006 (Kasai, 2008: 3). The ECWA's POD applies the strategies of participatory learning and action (PLA)⁷⁴ and capacity building to the project's implementation (Kasai, 2008: 4). This method has been applied to assist the beneficiaries to become aware of and reflect on causes and consequences of their situation, and then takes action towards becoming self-reliant by using locally available resources.

Recently, a Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP) approach has been introduced. The CCMP is a strategy used in reaching the community through the local churches (Akawo, 2012: 2). The role of field staff is that of facilitator or coach in the development process. The field staff do not impose or initiate projects for the communities; instead, community development committees (CDC) are formed and are guided by POD CDFs to identify their needs, and to plan and implement any project relevant to their situation using locally available resources (Kasai, 2008:4).

6.2.2 Focus and working approach

Kasai (2008: 28) notes that the focus of ECWA's POD is on ensuring that the living conditions of poor communities are improved. Its mission is to promote the empowerment of poor and underprivileged communities through institutional strengthening and capacity

⁷⁴ The participatory learning and action was identified in 2.3.3 as a good strategy within the participatory development paradigm.

building of community members. A literature review of the foundation of ECWA's POD shows that POD was founded to ensure that Nigerian communities attain sustainable, holistic development. As such, ECWA's POD community projects include the following: the digging of wells; building public toilets, schools, clinics and churches; the planting of fruit trees; HIV/AIDS awareness; road rehabilitation; improved farming; and economic empowerment (Kasai, 2008: 28).

Davis *et al.* (2011: 90-91) summarise the strategic working plan and development goals of ECWA's POD as follows:

- i. Promoting and sustaining the living conditions of the poor and underprivileged in Nigeria;
- ii. Mobilising and building the capacity of target communities towards sustainable development;
- iii. Increasing food security in target communities through sustainable agricultural practices;
- iv. Promoting sustainable water supply by empowering target communities to explore alternatives;
- v. Promoting healthy communities through community-based health-care services;
- vi. Promoting harmonious relationships in target communities; and
- vii. Improving the economic well-being of the people in target communities.

This strategic work plan and development goals are vital principles and policies that may produce a positive and sustainable result. Kasai (2008: 3-4) notes that ECWA's POD is committed to community-based development to ensure that people's lives, potential, full participation in development activities and the utilisation of locally available resources through communal effort are core values in POD. These core values include total honesty, transparency and accountability at all levels, and respect for leaders. The ECWA's POD is premised on the notion that God's love extends to all humankind and must be demonstrated by action through the church, and that life is God-given, sacred and must be preserved.

6.3 Analysing the Remedial Measures of ECWA's POD

This section analyses the efforts of ECWA's POD in demonstrating the love of God to poor and underprivileged communities, particularly in Northern Nigeria (Kasai, 2008: 4). The

assessment will focus on water supplies, food security, the provision of health services and facilities, economic empowerment, infrastructural projects such as education and transport systems, environmental sustainability and spiritual development. The information herein is from the semi-structured interviews with POD CDFs and documents from POD office.

6.3.1 Water supply

Inadequate and impure water supply can be responsible for many sicknesses in a community. Sicknesses can thus be controlled when there is sufficient and good water in the community (Batchelor, 1981: 92). Provision of water in rural areas is a priority in ECWA's POD. A review of the available data on ECWA's POD indicates that water supply programmes are designed to help communities have access to clean and safe drinking water so as to reduce water-borne diseases in the targeted communities (Kasai, 2008: 5). The POD CDFs assist communities in digging concrete-lined wells, local wells and boreholes. The CDFs also aid with water sanitation and the renovation of wells. When analysing responses from the interviews with the CDFs, it became clear that their effort is to ensure that the people have safe drinking water. The result of the interviews as quoted below shows that the facilitator's role is to encourage the community and teach them basic skills on how to dig wells so that they can have potable water. As the CDF1, CDF2 and CDF3 explain:

CDF1: We were motivated to be involved in this project because most of the communities we visit, we discover that they fetch water from the stream which is a long distance, and the water is not clean, which is not good for their health.

CDF2: I teach them how to preserve and make use of clean water. This is because I discovered that most of the diseases that kill their children and even some adults were due to drinking unclean water. In some communities where there is no source of water we teach them to dig wells. We teach them how to dig wells and, after teaching them, we allow them to do it by themselves.

CDF3: Like I said earlier, we always want to see that the people have safe drinking water. We do that through what we call sustainable water supply, where we encourage the community, facilitate and teach them to acquire skills on how to dig wells to can have portable [sic] water.

In my interactions with all the CDFs about the POD programmes' concern for the provision of safe drinking water, their responses show that the community dwellers, with the help of PODCDFs, assess the community's sources of drinking water. This motivates the members of the community to see the need for developing a better, more hygienic source of water. The CDFs provide leadership and mobilise the community and other necessary resources to sink concrete wells or dig local wells to provide water for domestic use, as revealed in the following figures.

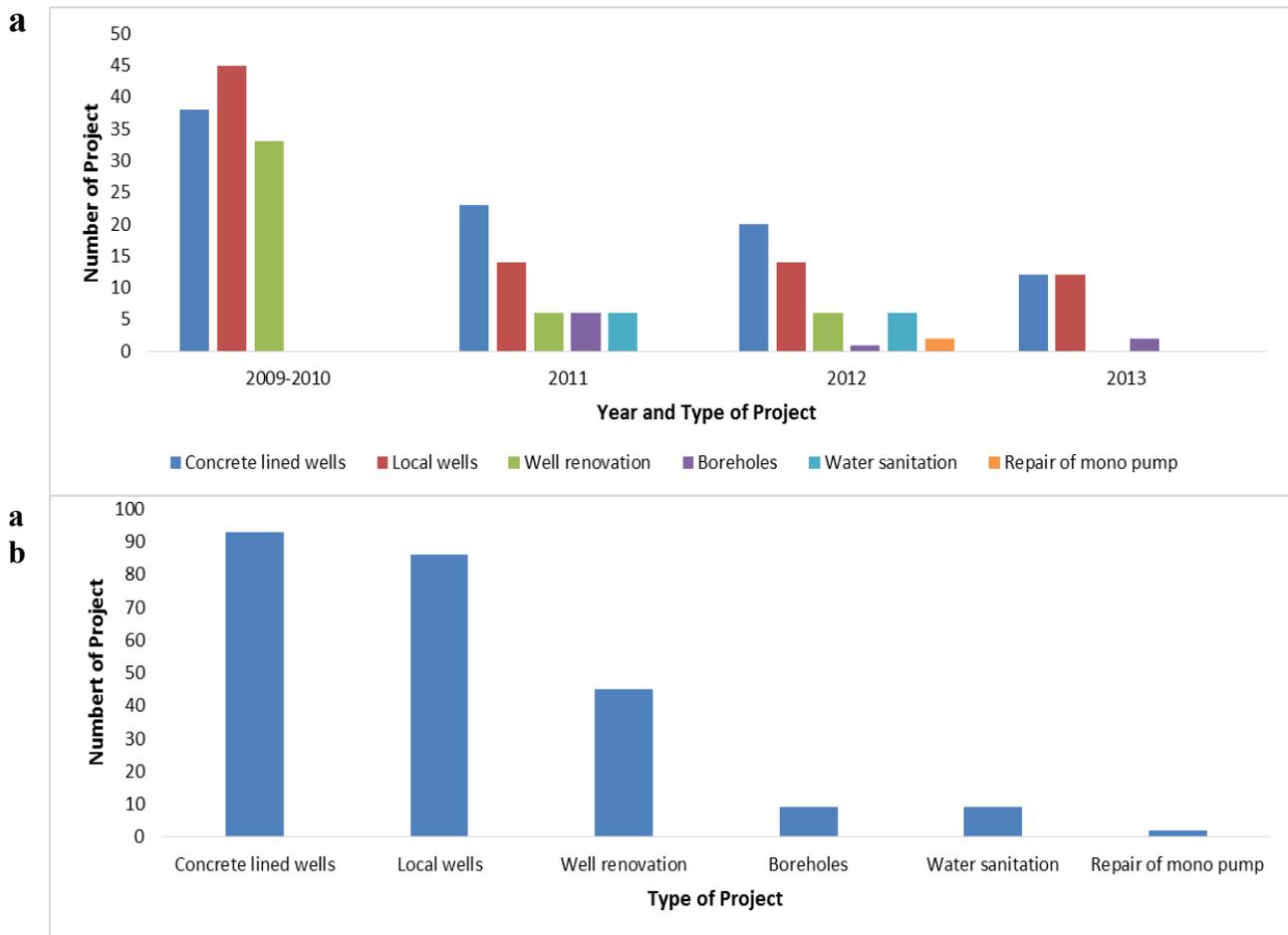


Figure 6.1: Year, type and total number of projects undertaken on water supply (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 20)

Figure 6.1(a) above shows the number of projects, year and type of project, while Figure 6.1(b) shows the total number of projects and the type of projects on water supply undertaken by POD. Provision of water is an essential component of basic human needs. For example, Figure 6.1(b) shows that, between 2009 and 2013, projects involving a total of 93 concrete-lined wells, 86 local wells, 45 well renovations, nine boreholes, nine water sanitations and two repairs of mono-pumps were completed. I found some of these projects in use during my

visit to the communities. Photographs of some of these sources of water were taken during this research, as seen in Appendix C.

However, one can also argue that the availability of water in the poor communities in this study should not only be essential for drinking or the reduction of disease, but also for increasing crop production. Bert (2012: 23) reminds us that access to irrigation can provide families with opportunities to diversify their livelihood activities and potentially increase their income. In this sense, people with land could reliably grow rice or vegetables instead of working as labourers or waiting for rainfall to water crops. Those without land could benefit by working within new inland fisheries (Bert, 2012: 23). This indicates that promoting irrigated farming can contribute towards achieving food security, improving public welfare and generating economic growth.

6.3.2 Food security

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2003: 16) notes that food security and nutrition are important factors that can influence the health of the poor. That is, those who suffer from chronic hunger would have less nutrition. This can affect the immune system, which could lead to physical weakness and powerlessness and thereby affect ability to produce more or save for individual or family use. According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2011: 5), the poor quality of food is one of the factors that leads to physical weakness and constant illness that results in people being unproductive, thereby becoming consumers, beggars or dependants.

In order to reduce this cause of social poverty, the WHO (2003: 57) notes that agricultural development is the best way in which development agencies can reduce poverty and improve food security. Therefore, in addition to water supply, the finding from the interviews with CDFs indicated in the quotes below reveal that POD uses agricultural activities as a means of promoting and improving productivity in poor communities. In the quotes below, the ECWA's PODCDFs explain that the quest for engaging in sustainable agriculture/food security projects arose from the high demand for chemical fertiliser in rural communities. In response to this, the CDFs train rural farmers who cannot afford to buy a bag of fertiliser in how to make local fertiliser and in crop rotation techniques. These methods are intended to help the people improve the fertility of the soil and bring about an increase in the production of food.

CDF1: *The farmers here have farmlands, farming equipment, but lack skills and technical know-how to make use of them. Therefore, we train them in how to make use of simple ways of farming. In most cases they sell all the farm produce after the harvest without reserving anything to eat later in the year. As a result of this, most of them face difficulties having year-round food to eat. So we also teach them how to manage farm produce; we teach them how to plan and reserve part of the harvest for food.*

CDF3: *There is what we call farmer's school. In farmer's school, volunteers are trained in food production and management techniques. After finishing their food security training we ask them to go and demonstrate what they have learned in their communities under the supervision of the facilitator. The training covers every aspect, that is, every stage of farming that will let the community understand how farming should be carried out. So it is just a learning school at the end of which we see the advantage of local farming system over the modern way of farming.*

CDF5: *We notice the scourge of hunger in these communities as a result of ignorance. We train them in how to manage their farm produce because when they harvest the farm produce, they don't manage it well and before they realise it, they run short of food.*

These responses are in line with the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) (2006: 30) reports that agriculture plays an important role in the Nigerian economy, but that agricultural performance has been poor and shows little sign of improvement. This is due to a multitude of factors, such as unfavourable domestic price policies, and an increase in land use rather than an improvement in technology. This has contributed to CDFs being proactive in providing orientation on organic farming and traditional farming methods that have been neglected due to mechanisation (Kasai, 2008: 5). In addition, the CDFs facilitate skills development within the community with regard to bee-keeping, compost making, food preservation, dry season farming and rice processing, as described in the following figure:

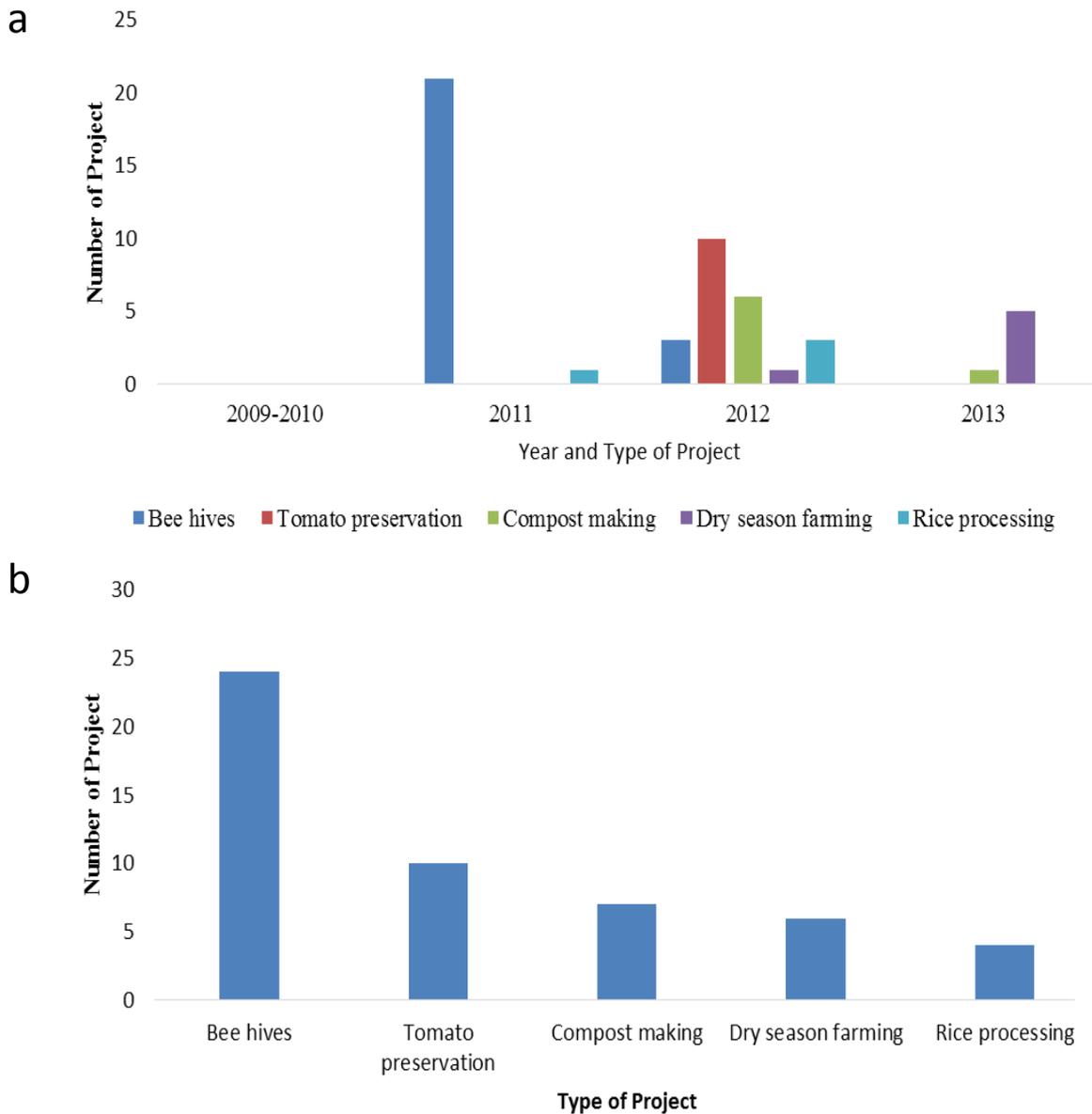


Figure 6.2: Year, type and total number of projects on sustainable agriculture/food security from 2009 to 2013 (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 22).

Figure 6.2(a) above shows the number of projects, year and type of project, while Figure 6.2(b) shows the total number of projects and type of projects undertaken by ECWA’s POD on sustainable agriculture/food security. Figure 6.2(b) indicates that, between 2009 and 2013, POD trained 24 communities on bee-hives, ten communities on tomatoes preservation, seven communities on compost making, six on dry season farming strategies and four communities on rice processing.

When analysing the need for food security and the effort to obtain water supply, one can argue that focusing on improving food security projects not only aims at income generation and access to social services for vulnerable people, but also seeks to improve their health care. When individuals and families are stimulated and supported with strategies that enhance the availability and quality of food production, poverty and hunger are likely to be reduced. As revealed in 5.3.1, the communities were identified as people who depend on farming as a means of survival. They grow various crops that are both for domestic and commercial purposes, yet they do not have a proper understanding of how to preserve their food for a long time; there are also poor harvests due to land infertility and inadequate farming equipment, skills and preservation methods.

In pre-colonial Africa, and in other developing countries, agricultural production in rural areas was mainly for direct consumption by the farm household (Dixon, 1990: 21). At present one can argue that surplus production for commercial purposes is an important venture and should be encouraged in any effort towards community development in Nigerian rural areas. Large agricultural activities would not only reduce the challenge of food shortages and starvation, but the surplus could be sold to other parts of the country and abroad. In the absence of modern scientific knowledge of food storage, attention should be paid to training the local people in post-harvest storage skills to avoid food damage.

6.3.3 Community-based health care

As mentioned in 5.3.1.5, community health care was a serious challenge faced by the communities under study. Improving community access to health care is a crucial component for sustainable development. According to Bert (2012: 22), wealth does not increase health; instead, knowledge of disease control practices, such as hand washing, may control the rapid spread of major childhood disease such as diarrhoea and pneumonia. Similarly, the WHO (2003: 3) suggests that, if better health for the poor could be achieved, then action must be taken in areas of education, food security, safe water, sanitation and energy. The WHO (2003: 3, 16) adds that the health of the poor can also be improved by their access to income so that they can afford food or health services. By so doing exposure to the risks of injuries and human or natural disasters could be reduced (WHO, 2003: 16).

In line with these realities, Kasai (2008: 4) points out that POD intervention in community health include health education, the training of voluntary health workers (VHWs) and

traditional birth attendants (TBAs), and raising awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention and home-based care. In the quotations below, the CDFs explain that ECWA's POD community health-care project is aimed at providing poor and underprivileged communities access to quality health-care services. The CDFs pointed out that these community health projects are aimed at reducing infant mortality and constant sickness in poor communities. However, the CDFs' strategies are not focused on curative measures, but rather on preventing ill health through awareness creation and education on public hygiene, as indicated in the responses below:

CDF4: I create awareness, technical assistance on projects like sustainable agriculture, community-based health care, and sustainable water supply. These activities always lead to various physical projects like well-ventilated, improved pit latrine, firewood-saving stoves, etc.

CDF5: My main duty is creating awareness or educating the people about health issues. I teach them how to dig wells and toilets, clean their environment, about breastfeeding and weaning of children. Other areas are HIV/AIDS and other infectious or communicable diseases, and some of the things to do in terms of emergency either at the farm or at home. I do not force them to take my advice, but we look at the need together before taking action.

The CDFs also explained that the POD community health-care projects are based on the needs of the target communities. In this manner, the CDFs usually embark on projects that are simple and that require resources or materials that are affordable to the vulnerable population, who may not be able to afford health-care services from expensive clinics or hospitals. The community health projects not only provide poor people with affordable medical care and enhanced quality of life, but have also been a channel for the propagation of the gospel, as the respondent below explains:

EP3: This [...] clinic has been of a great help for the propagation of the gospel. Most of the beneficiaries of the clinic are not only Christians. Or let me say, the non-Christians who benefit from the clinic are more than the Christians. As part of services to humanity we invite less privileged people on several occasions to give them free services after they have listened to the sermon preached to them. So this clinic's services have helped a lot in propagating the gospel of Christ.

The figure below highlights some of ECWA’s POD community projects on health care, which reflect the efforts of POD in assisting communities to have access to quality and affordable health-care services.

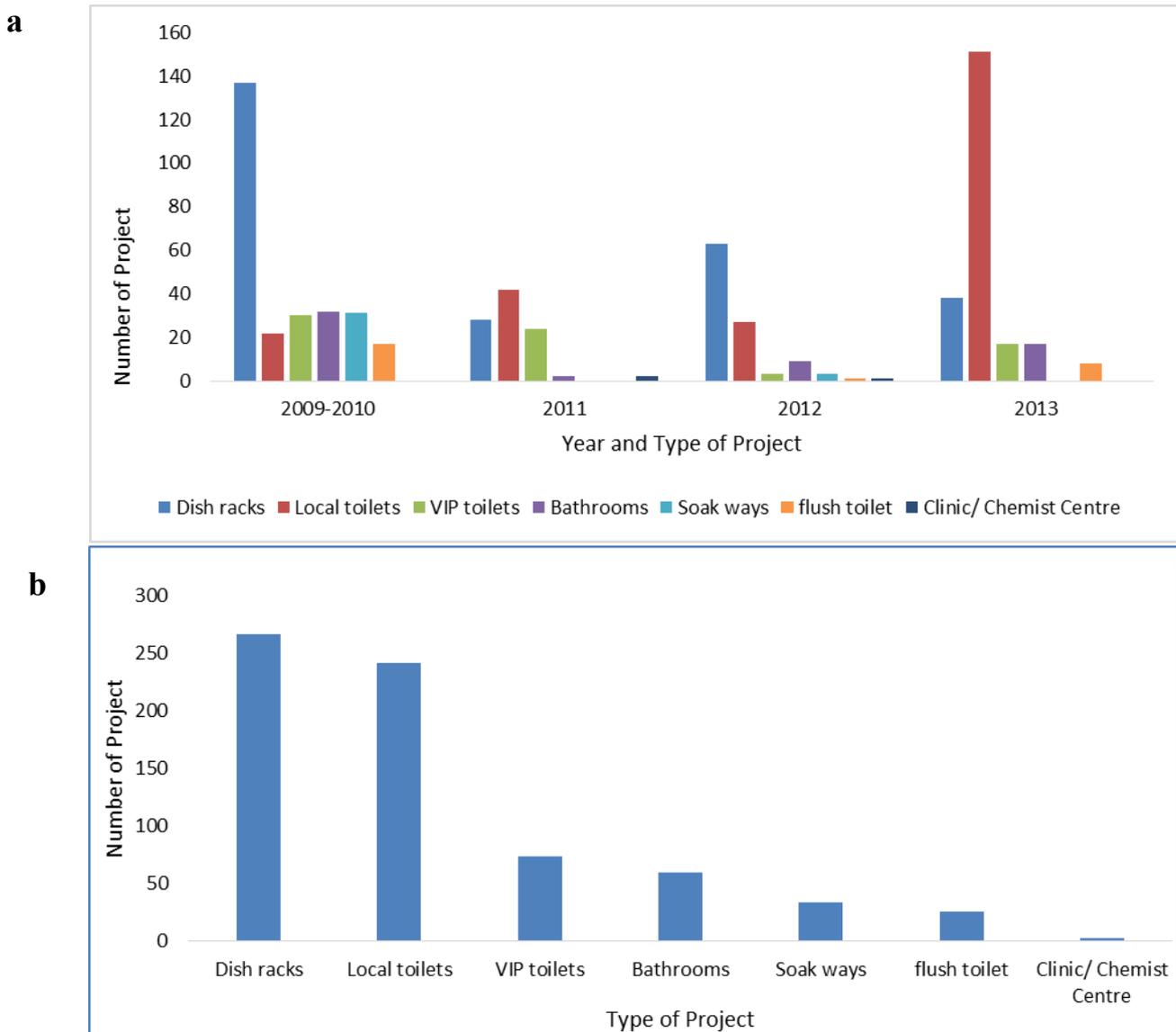


Figure 6.3: The number, year and type of community health projects (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 21).

Figure 6.3 (a) above shows the number of projects, year and type of project, while Figure 6.3(b) shows the total number of projects and the type of projects on public health care of the target communities. Figure 6.3(b) shows that ECWA’s POD CDFs are working hard to ensure that the public health care of poor and disadvantaged communities is improved. From 2009 to 2013, 266 dish racks were constructed in various communities, 241 local toilets were constructed and 74 VIP toilets were excavated or built. In addition, POD officials were able to

facilitate the building of 60 bathrooms, 34 local soak ways, 26 pour flush toilets and three clinic/chemist centres. There have been more dish racks, local toilets, VIP and flush toilets, bathrooms and soak way projects than these. These are less expensive and yet can prevent an individual from contracting illness. On the other hand, the clinic/chemist centres are fewer due to the fact that these require some financial investment from the community, who must also pay to be served.

The information in Figure 6.3 above suggests that the most effective approach that could enable people to have some control over their health is community-based health care. The improvement of the health-care system is thus central to sustainable development. The ability of individuals to effectively pursue their livelihoods, produce and consume is undermined if there is no due concern for public health. This explains why the SCs pointed out in 5.3.5 that they are facing considerable health challenges; this emphasises the relationship between health and poverty. The SCs understood that healthy individuals can work harder and become more productive members of society. This shows that ECWA's POD active involvement in addressing poverty by improving access to basic healthcare for the poor and underprivileged communities is appropriate and commendable.

6.3.4 Economic empowerment

Economic development is a situation in which individuals or groups of people are able to make an effort to boost production for direct consumption and also sell the surplus for cash (Burkey, 1993: 36). The people themselves have to analyse their problems, identify causes, acquire knowledge and set plans on how to salvage their situations (Burkey, 1993: 36). The SCs in 5.3.1.3 cited economic problems as one of the key issues that they are facing. The quotations below show that POD has embarked on various economic development activities for poverty alleviation. These economic development activities are intended to ensure and promote self-help and/or public employment. Some of the projects carried out include small-scale businesses, grain storage, the rearing of cows and birds, and soap making, as highlighted in the quotations below:

CDF1:[...] *in terms of economic empowerment, we try to mobilise women's groups, men's groups and youth groups to have a kind of co-operative service among themselves within the community, so as to help themselves by themselves [...]. We train them to use the resources*

within their reach to start doing something useful in order to help themselves, and some of the women are catching the vision.

EP3: [...] *we also lay emphasis on economic empowerment. This is because in most of the homes there are so many needs, so soap training becomes an economic empowerment aspect in POD activities. It helps the women to meet some of the domestic needs without waiting for the husband to do everything for them.*

CDF4: *Apart from the sustainable water supply, we also have what we call economic empowerment. In economic empowerment, we mobilise women, men and the youth to participate in self-help activities that enhance their source of income.*

In one of the DCCs, an ECWA pastor (EP) stated that the youth, married women and widows are the main targets in terms of economic empowerment, as the following remark indicates:

EP3: *Right now in our DCC we have the widows development forum, whereby they have fellowship in which they are trained in how to be self-reliant so as to help themselves and their children because their husbands have left them with children. So they are being trained in entrepreneurship such as soap making, cattle rearing, poultry farming and many other economic empowerment activities.*

This suggests that one of the roads to overcome poverty is economic empowerment. This is an essential component in the process of community development. A local church can face the challenge of poverty by struggling against social injustice; denouncing its causes and urging those who have resources to share with the poor (see 3.3.3). At the same time, the poor cannot overcome their condition by placing their hopes on the wealth of others. Instead, it is argued here that the only way out of their condition is that of self-reliance activities. The Christian commitment to practical solidarity is in response to the mandate concerning brotherly love by way of serving and helping the needy to become self-reliant. In order to ensure such self-reliance, ECWA's POD seeks to ensure that their target communities "drink water from their own cistern" (Proverbs 5: 15). Figure 6.4 below shows some of the local projects on self-reliance.

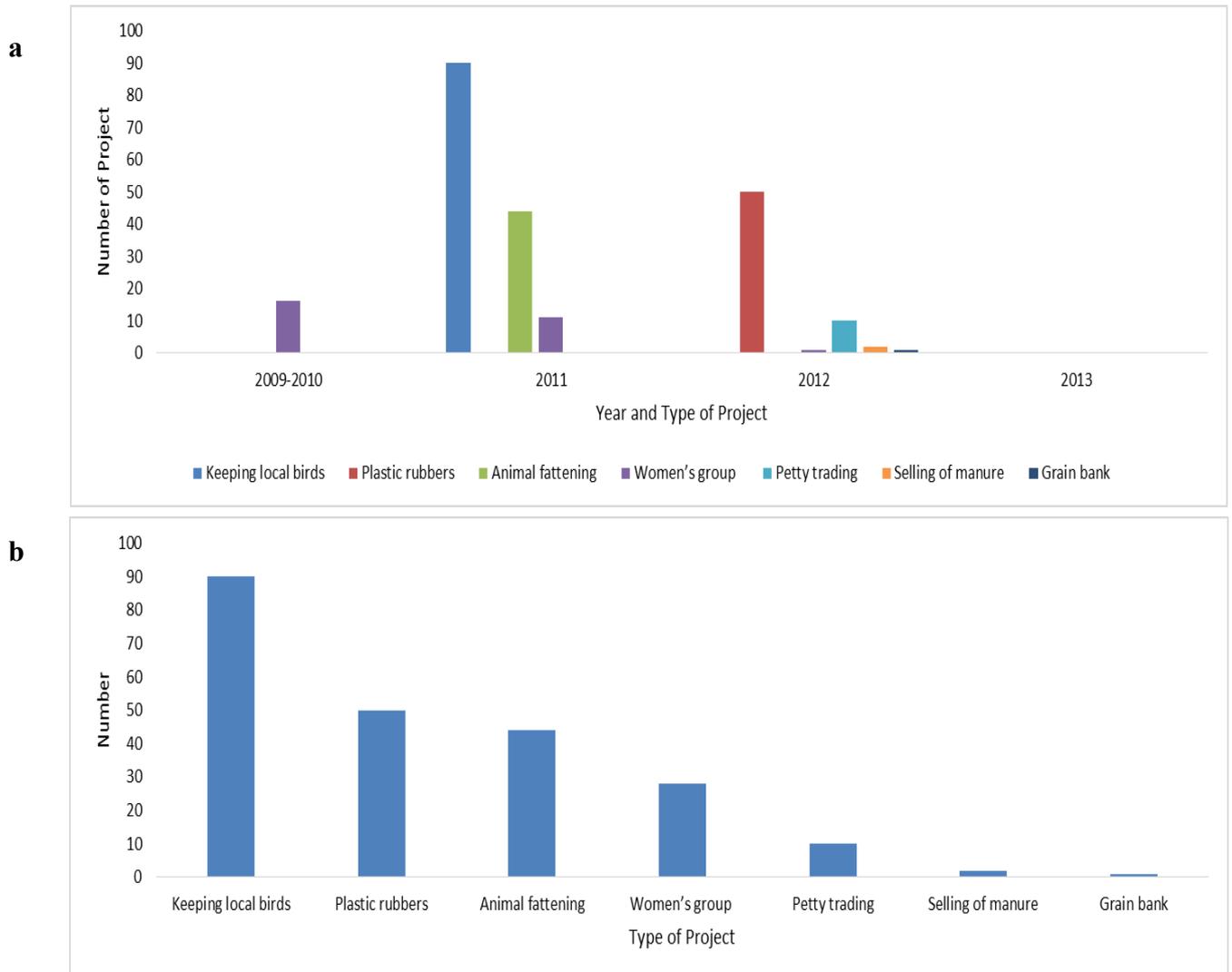


Figure 6.4: The number, year and type of projects involving economic empowerment (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 25).

Figure 6.4(a) above shows the number of projects, year and type of project, while Figure 6.4(b) shows the total number of projects and the type of project on economic empowerment. It is evident from Figure 6.4(b) that POD has initiated various economic empowerment activities intended to improve the economic well-being of the target communities, especially women and youth. That is to say, the source of income generation for the POD target population is from the sale of farm and locally made produce, which enables individuals to make a living or to augment their annual income. For instance, Figure 6.4(b) shows that, between 2009 and 2013, ECWA’s POD CDFs were able to train 90 people on how to keep local birds, encourage the community to purchase 50 plastic rubber seats for rental services, train 44 people in animal husbandry, support the formation of 28 women’s co-operative

groups, train ten communities on how to run petty trading, two communities on how to gather and sell manure, and one community on grain banking.

6.3.5 Infrastructural projects

An infrastructure is a basic system and service that is necessary for a country or organisation to run smoothly. Good infrastructure, such as roads, schools and information networks, help greatly in economic development (Hornby, 2010: 770). In sections 5.3.1.2 and 5.3.1.4, the SCs indicated the limited educational facilities and weak transportation systems as key problems facing the communities under study. In response to these realities, the main infrastructural projects embarked upon by ECWA's POD, as pointed out by the participants in the quotes below include the building of schools, road rehabilitation, and the construction of bridges and churches. Some of the ECWA pastors who were interviewed acknowledged that contributing to national development in terms of infrastructural projects is aimed at aiding the well-being of individuals and communities.

EP1: In terms of education we have a university, a school of health technology, a school of nursing and midwifery, and many secondary and primary schools in which men and women are equipped for a better tomorrow. We also have a pharmacy that is producing medicine and even a good drinking water-processing company and ECWA Production Limited (EPL), which produces books and Christian literature.

EP3: As a church, we have built primary and secondary schools, a hospital and other social service programmes for the well-being of people. Some of the youths gathered themselves and built a school for income generation and job creation as a means of helping themselves.

A lack of infrastructural facilities in rural communities, such as schools and hospitals, is a factor that could prompt many people to migrate from rural areas to large cities and towns. Okafor (2011: 363) claims that such migration occurs due to people searching to meet their needs for higher or better education, employment and better living conditions. There is a high rate of poverty in the Nigerian villages, as cited in 5.3.1, and an unavailability of certain basic social amenities in the rural areas. In the following figure, a description is provided of ECWA's POD infrastructural activities.

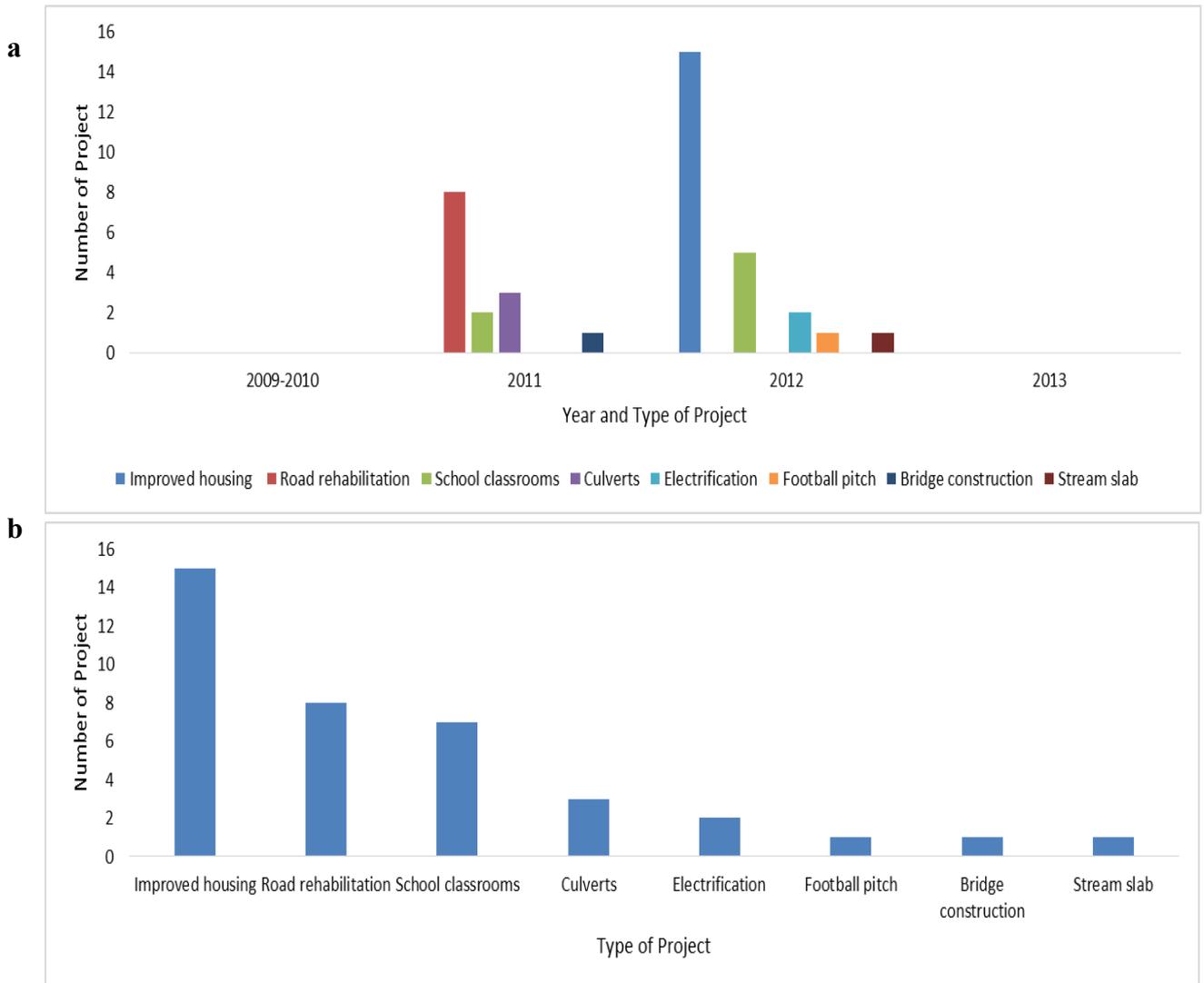


Figure 6.5: The number, year and type of infrastructural projects undertaken (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 24).

In Figure 6.5(a) above, the number of projects, year and type of project are shown, while Figure 6.5(b) describes the total number of projects and the types of infrastructural projects undertaken by ECWA’s POD. Figure 6.5(b) shows that the value attached to infrastructural development by ECWA’s POD is strategically focused on guaranteeing and improving the socio-economic conditions of poor communities in Nigeria. As can be seen in Figure 6.5(b), 15 housing structures were improved, eight roads were rehabilitated, seven school classrooms were built, three culverts were constructed, two electrifications were undertaken, one football pitch and one bridge were constructed, and one stone pitching and cementing stream was made.

These infrastructural projects were built and utilised as a means of promoting the economic well-being of the populace. The aim of these projects is for the availability of learning facilities and transportation systems to contribute immensely to income creation, and to the economic growth of individuals and their communities.

6.3.6 Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is an essential foundation upon which human livelihoods depend and, if the environment is used to improve human welfare, then it has to be maintained for current and future use (Munslow, 2001: 507). This means that environmental sensitivity is an essential element of transformation. The world around us needs to be cared for in terms of stewardship and preservation (Bragg, 1987: 45). In addition, environmental sustainability includes social transformation directed towards meeting basic human needs and enhancing people's quality of life, such as sources of income, health care and housing (Davids, 2008: 32). An unclean environment was identified in 5.3.1.5 as being a health hazard. This means conservation, management and/or control of exploitation and pollution of the natural resources could be important elements of environmental sustainability.

This research found that environmental sustainability is part of the POD programmes. Both the CDFs and EPs pointed out that poor environmental hygiene or sanitation could be responsible for contaminating the target areas with various diseases, as revealed in the following remarks:

CDF1: There are a lot of health challenges in the community that people are faced with. The reason for the rise in the issue of health is because of dirty environment.

EP2: The environment is littered with dirt all around and the people do not have the conscious education, the awareness of how to control the dirt in their local environment.

This suggests that bad sanitation affects people's health. The WHO (2003: 16) asserts that "[p]oor people's health and mortality are directly affected by exposure to environmental threats". For example, communities that live in a poor environment characterised by a lack of good housing, safe water and sanitation, and exposure to air pollution, are likely to contract illnesses. The following table illustrates some interventions by ECWA's POD in its efforts to improve the communities' quality of life and protect against environmental destruction.

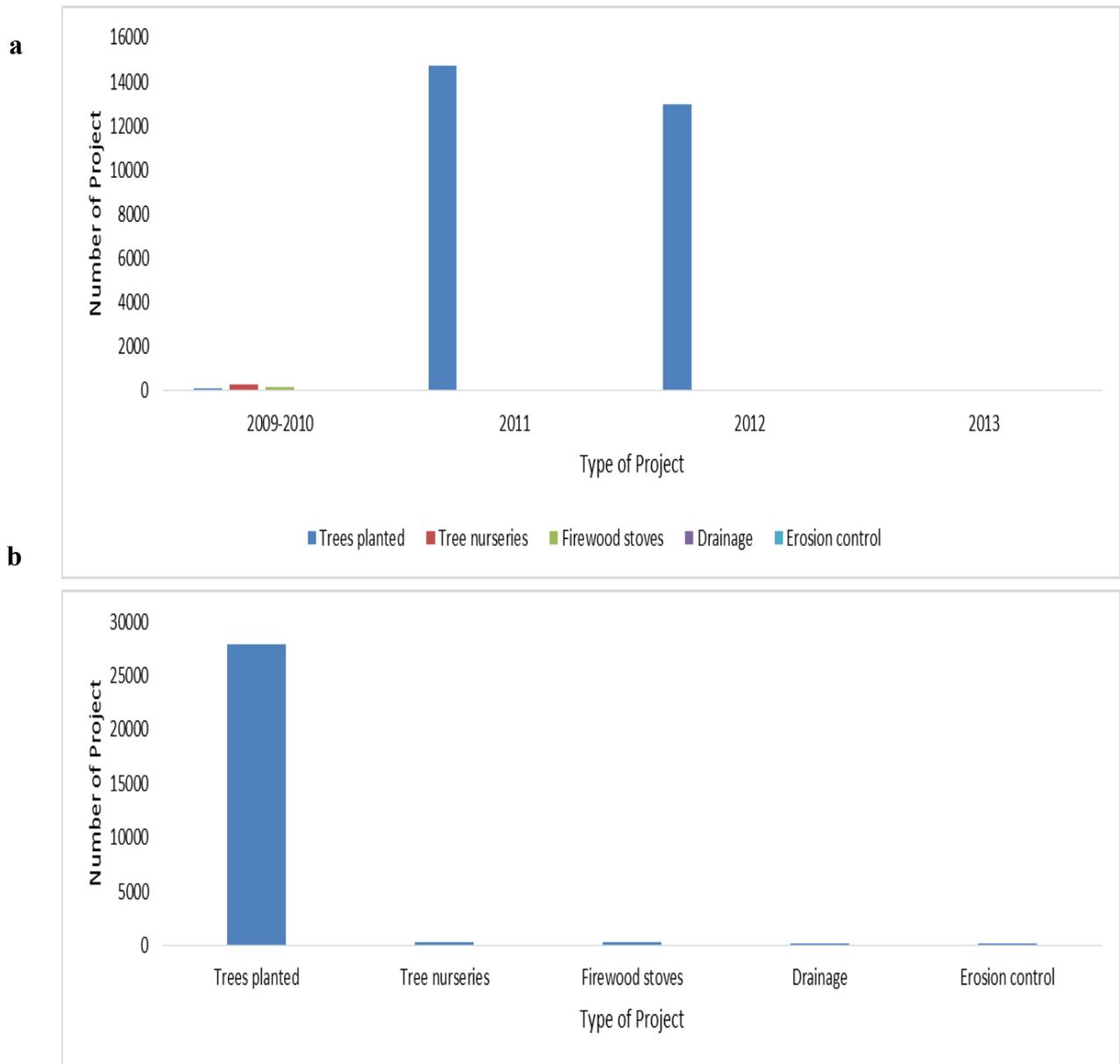


Figure 6.6: The number, year and type of environmental sustainability projects undertaken (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 23).

Figure 6.6(a) above shows the number of projects, year and type of project, while Figure 6.6(b) shows the total number of projects and the types of project undertaken by ECWA’s POD on environmental sustainability. Figure 6.6(b) shows that, between 2009 and 2013, a total of 27 871 trees were planted, 322 community tree nurseries were planted, 299 firewood-saving stoves were constructed, and four drainage and three erosion control projects were completed.

The above efforts highlight the significance of environmental sustainability in community development in response to human well-being. Societal actions that degrade and damage the

environment, such as the increase in air and water pollution and the depletion of plant and animal species, should therefore be of concern to the church. Communities that protect their natural resources and preserve the environment from deterioration are more likely to achieve sustainable economic transformation, which in turn promotes community health and the creation of self-sustaining communities (Roseland & Henderson, 1998: 165). That is, environmental sustainability activities ensure, in the current interaction with the natural environment, that the future cannot be affected.

The above analyses on water supply, community health care, food security, infrastructural and economic development and environmental sustainability show that efforts have been made to alleviate poverty. These efforts, however, cannot adequately eradicate poverty unless the church continuously struggles for justice, equity, and the well-being of all for the present and future generations. Therefore, as discussed in 3.3.3, the Bible considers ‘the poor’ as those who lack economic goods, are dying of hunger, are illiterate and/or those who are exploited or dominated.

6.3.7 Spiritual development

The Bible plays an important role in the principles and practices of TD. Myers (2011: 330) explains that the most fundamental reasons for engaging the biblical story in development activities are that it provides a true source of the human story and a reliable guide to the goals and means of human transformation; it re-connects human beings and their Creator; it brings hope to the hopeless and it reveals human identity (see 3.4.6). As indicated in the communities’ profile in 5.3.1, religion is a fundamental aspect in the lives of the people in the current study. Understanding the ECWA’s POD efforts in spiritual development, and in particular how the programmes highlight the role of the living and creative word of God to people, is crucial.

In an effort to comprehend the changes from religious development activities in the project area, the CDFs were asked if they do biblical teaching at the project area during the development activities. The CDFs explained that devotions are held, prayer is offered and biblical teaching is observed during their development activities. As shown in the quotations below, some of the facilitators pointed out that biblical teaching is seen as an essential ingredient that strengthened and encouraged their immediate beneficiaries, who are Christians, Muslims and African traditional religion adherents. It also is clear that one of the

driving forces for the church's involvement in community development is spiritual renewal. For example, separating the spiritual and physical human needs was addressed in 3.2.1 as a central theological challenge. The following response shows that ECWA's POD CDFs pay attention to spiritual needs:

CDF1: Christians, Muslims and idol worshippers, whatever religion our beneficiaries practise, we use the Bible verses as basis of what we are doing in their communities.

CDF3: Even though most of the communities here are Muslim-dominated areas, I use biblical references to educate people to properly understand the aim of their development activities.

The following responses reveal that biblical teaching is also used to help people discover their identity in God as their creator and provider. It is also to let them know that their activities are rooted in the Bible.

CDF1: We tell them that all humankind is God's creatures and God did not create us to suffer. He created us in his own image and likeness to enjoy the good things he created.

CDF2: The reason we give biblical teaching is to let them know that God is the source, provider and sustainer of everything he created. We use God's word to let people know that God did not create us to suffer but to live happily.

CDF4: We do give our time to biblical teaching as backing to whatever content we are facilitating to give the target communities the evidence that our activities with them are with God's approval.

The CDFs explained that the insights from the biblical stories, particularly the experiences of past heroes and heroines of faith, are meant to stimulate beneficiaries to see the need to be innovative. Scripture is used to encourage beneficiaries to avoid a dependency syndrome by making use of what is around them to bring about positive and sustainable transformation in their individual lives and communities.

CDF1: Yes, we use the story of a poor widow in the book of II King 4:1-7 to encourage the communities on resource mobilisation or how to raise money. We explain to them how the prophet told the widow to use what she had and, like that widow, it means there is something within their reach that can be used, no matter how small it is.

CDF2: When we teach them how to make soap, we tell them some biblical story on how to work with their hand so as to earn a living. We quote Paul, who says let everybody work with his or her hand and not depend on others. So we tell them not to lose hope that they will not make it again; they should know that they can do something by themselves in order to be what God intends them to be.

CDF3: In all the project areas I have a biblical verse that fits in with what I do. For example, when I am talking about environmental protection, I refer people to the book of Genesis, particularly the story of creation. I explain to the people about the responsibility that was bestowed on humankind to take care of the environment.

When analysing the above findings, it is evident that, although the CDFs have used the Bible as a tool for transformation in the development process, this has not been done sufficiently or in accordance with the principles and practices of TD. The TD principles and practices require that the role of change agents (lay or clergy) is not to tell people “what the Bible says or mean[s]”, but instead to use open-ended inquiries into the Bible story as it applies to the practical lives of individuals and communities (Myers, 2011: 334). The change agents need to become part of the community so as build just relationships, and help people recovery their identity and vocation (see 3.4.3). The community members analyse and make sense of their reality by themselves, think theologically about their social, political and economic situation, and then take action (Myers, 2011: 334).

The CDFs were further asked to explain how the lessons obtained from Bible studies have helped people to solve problems in their community. The following quotations were the responses of the CDFs:

CDF1: Of course yes. In one of the communities here, as a result of our water supply project there are so many people who have come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, they have accepted Christ as their personal Lord and saviour because of the kindness shown to them.

CDF2: Yes, it has helped the people improve their relationship with God and with one another. Giving them biblical teaching has encouraged the people to see the need of giving their lives to Christ.

CDF3: Yes, yes the use of biblical passages has helped the people in different ways. A clear example is the issue of peace building. In this community there were clashes and serious

confusion among the people about the issue of occultism, witches and wizards, and court cases. At one point in time people were using cutlasses, machetes and other weapons to pursue one another because of the abovementioned problem. But when I came we set up Bible studies and a prayer group in which the word of God is being studied and people are being prayed for. Since then there is a high level of transformation in the community, whereby people can now come together and they are trying to solve their individual and community problems.

CDF4: [...] our Bible studies has helped reduce the problem of indiscriminate bush burning, and random defecation has drastically reduced and has led to tree planting activities and sinking of VIPs respectively

CDF5: O yes, it has. Like in one of the communities where I serve, a village head had a problem, what I did was to encourage him; I and the pastor also prayed and fasted with him, on that note I think we have done something on the spiritual aspect.

Ultimately, the lessons learned from the Bible story should emphasise God at work in the community, increase community members' knowledge about their physical and spiritual life, and encourage individuals to apply spiritual truth to their local situation (Myers, 2011: 336). For instance, Osmer (2008: 9) insists that the prophetic task of the church is, firstly, to encourage the individual or community to see itself as God's people who can trust that God will travel with them as they begin to change and journey towards a better future. Secondly, preaching and teaching Biblical stories help the people recall God's actions in the past and serve as guide to them in times of change and crisis (Osmer, 2008: 9).

6.4 Analysing the Impact of ECWA's POD Programmes on Beneficiaries

The ECWA's POD programmes' overall goal is that communities attain sustainable, holistic development, and the mission is to promote improved and sustainable living conditions of underprivileged communities. The aim of this study was to provide evidence that transformation can be viewed from a holistic perspective in the lives of beneficiaries (see 1.5.1). The ECWA's POD activities could be judged as making an impact if there are substantial changes that have occurred in people's standard of living as a result of the programmes' interventions. This section seeks to assess the extent to which POD interventions have caused changes in both the physical and spiritual lives of beneficiaries (see

1.5.2). To achieve this objective, the following main themes were evaluated: socio-cultural and religious changes, attitudes towards Christians and the gospel, spiritual development and the quality of service, as proposed in 4.3.3.2 and Appendix B.

6.4.1 Socio-cultural and religious changes

As pointed out in 4.3.3.2.1, the standards of TD require that churches in the project area are active in the political, social, religious and cultural life of the area's communities in order to affect holistic change. At the same time, the indicators of real changes can be viewed from some examples of visible activities and services provided to the communities. The SCs therefore were asked to explain some of the ECWA's POD programmes that were carried out for the well-being of the people in their communities.

6.4.1.1 Socio-cultural change

The respondents pointed out that they had experienced some positive and remarkable changes in their communities as a result of ECWA's POD interventions. These changes emerged in the following themes: awareness, self-help activities, team work, and health-care activities. The most common change cited with regard to self-help was the beneficiaries' ability to become aware of the causes of their predicament and how to get out of it. The respondents confessed that an orientation on how to conduct a small business had been the main contribution of the POD CDFs towards improving their standard of living. Being aware of their situation and taking action about it had helped members of the community take ownership of their lives, instead of living like beggars or waiting for distant relatives or the government to do everything for them. The views of the participants below capture their experiences:

SC1: POD has educated us concerning the prevailing circumstances as well as the causes of poverty in our community and how we can get out of our predicament through self-help activities, communal work, trading or commercial activities, rearing animals and engaging in different activities, which have helped us.

SC3: Our wives can make soap and body cream for our domestic use. Some of our youth can go out to build wells for other people to make a living. All of these are because of POD. We were living in ignorance but POD came to educate us, and now we are a better people.

The SCs in 5.3.2.1 cited unemployment as one of the causes of poverty in their communities. The quotations above show that these communities understand that POD programmes are designed to empower them with business skills. This is because an income-generation project is a good strategy to fight against unemployment. The health-care activities cited by the participants in the quotes below involve environmental sanitation, hygienic toilets and water sources. Also in the quotes below, the participants allude to the fact that they were ignorant of many things in the past. For instance, they claimed to be living in a dirty environment, defecating in the bush at night and drinking unclean water.

SC1: [...] in the past we were ignorant, but to God be the glory, we are progressing. We now can dig and built toilets, wells, clean our environment.

SC3: We thank God for what POD is doing amidst us. We now can keep our town/homes clean, drink clean water, go to rest room for our convenience and organise our kitchen utensils and our apartment well.

SC4: POD has opened our eyes to see the need of living in a clean environment, by encouraging us to build bathrooms, wash our plates and keep them on dish racks, regular bathing, and building grain barns to keep our crops.

The provision of pit toilets and clean water, and keeping the environment clean could reduce the risk of contracting typhoid and cholera, as well as controlling indiscriminate defecation in communities (People Orientated Development of ECWA, 2013: 26). Enhanced team work was also a significant cultural change. In 5.3.2.4, disunity was cited as a cause of poverty. As a result of the POD programmes, the participants indicated that they were now changed people. They can now come together, saved money and, through joint efforts, built a church, rehabilitated their faulty roads and solve some of the problems within the community, as illustrated below:

SC1: Yes... it was because of the coming of POD we could come together and are able to raise the church building as you can see [...] As a result of the coming of POD, we in this community have been able to save money on three occasions to help in community needs.

SC2: POD has been able to make people in this area to co-operate with one another. For example, POD has caused people to give us backing by joining hands in building the church. These stones you are seeing in the church were the result of joint effort or communal effort.

And because of POD, we have been able, through community effort, to erect a bridge across a stream as a result of which we cross over easily now. Because of the POD officer, some of the community problems are resolved.

This means that Christian development agencies should not overlook or be ignorant of the cultures of the community in which they serve, as in the modernisation thinking (see 2.2.1). Instead, development projects must integrate the liberation of individuals, families and communities within the unique socio-cultural context in which they live, as highlighted by Paredes (1987: 78). As seen in 3.4.1, the goal is to bring people and their cultures under the Lordship of Christ, and to ensure freedom and wholeness in a more just community so that everyone will enjoy fullness of life – now and in the future (Samuel & Sugden, 1987: 260).

6.4.1.2 Religious change

Holistic development is beyond the mere provision of clean water, health-care services, food security and infrastructural development. There has to be evidence of spiritual growth. Osmer (2008: 136) observes that attending to human spiritual life is crucial in obtaining God's blessing of the material. This is because God does not reveal Himself in an abstract absoluteness, but rather in a personal and intimate relationship. Human deeds, good or bad, move God to action accordingly. This indicates that, in community development, the focus should be on facilitating changes that help beneficiaries put aside their hopelessness or helplessness and actively trust God, who is at work in their situations. In this regard, the goal of TD is to look forward to seeing the targeted communities recovering their true identity and discovering their true vocation.

The fact that the POD's programmes involve holistic community-based development as an act of demonstration of God's love to humankind reveals their spiritual influence in the lives of the beneficiaries. In order to know whether POD programmes have made an impact on the spiritual growth of beneficiaries, the SCs were asked to explain whether they received biblical teaching during these development activities and whether the biblical insights had helped them in solving community problems. These are the participants' responses:

SC1: *Yes, we do receive biblical teaching during the development activities.*

SC2: *No! He only teaches us how to be independent. ECWA is doing well by sending to us the POD officer to come and help us dispel poverty amidst us.*

SC3: *No! He only comes to do his work. But our church pastor in this community does teach us from the Biblical teaching every Sunday and even within the week.*

SC4: *Yes, we learned how to read the Bible always and also be doers of the words of God, to trust in God in any situation you find yourself.*

When analysing the above findings, it is apparent that not all the CDFs provide biblical teaching during the development activities. However, the fact that some of POD programmes' beneficiaries are non-Christian does not stop the CDFs from starting the project activities with devotions, prayers and Bible reading or study at the project areas. This means prayer and studying the word of God are important steppingstones toward Christian maturity, which can also lead to action (Morisy, 2008: 85). In the following remarks the participants note that some of them had learned how to read through Bible studies, while some had learned the importance of hard work and living in peace. The participants were asked whether the insights and lessons obtained from the Bible studies helped in solving the beneficiaries' problems in the communities. These were the responses:

SC1: *Well, we want to let you know that with the help of POD we now experience unity and commitment through our Bible studies.*

SC3: *In the past we did experience crises with families and the community, but the Bible teaches us to be united and do things with one accord. It dispels quarrels amongst us too. The Bible has taught us how to be patient and how to forgive others. It also helps us to avoid living in sin and how to live with other people harmoniously.*

The above testimonies from the members of the target communities show that the Bible study method has helped them solve some of their family and community problems. The respondents in SC1, as cited in the quotation below, explain that some of them now can read the Bible. There is unity in the community; the community members have erected a church building (see Appendix C); and there is an acknowledgement of the necessity for hard work and increased knowledge of God. The participants also reflected that one of the major lessons learnt from the Bible study was living in unity with one another. The respondents said that the word of God (the Bible) had helped considerably in changing their lives.

SC1: *Certainly much learning has taken place. Through the POD effort, now, if there is any church project to be carried out, even those who do not go to church also join in such tasks.*

With the coming of POD, and when they started teaching in this community, church attendance became filled to capacity. We have begun to read the Bible and we even know some Hausa writing. So, by the grace of God, we are making progress in our knowledge of God and what he wants us to be in life. We have learned what the Bible says about laziness, idle people and what is the benefit of hard work.

Myers (2011: 97) emphatically states that the Christian transformational agenda includes sharing the biblical story in the way people can understand it, respond and be saved. The poor are not to be viewed as passive objects of oppression and humiliation (see 2.2.1). As kingdom-minded people, our response to the issue of poverty should be calling the poor and the non-poor to interpret events in a way that affirms the existence of God that is, loving God, who is deeply concerned about the affairs of the poor and powerless (Myers, 1999: 50). According to SC4 below, daily reading of the Bible and prayer life had improved, which had also led to the resolution of some problems in the community:

SC4: [...] we can now read the Bible always, and to trust in God in any situation you find yourself. It has helped us to be committed to prayer, trusting God, and to be patient with other people in all situations. Through the Bible lessons we now know how to resolve our family and community conflicts, especially among church members. In a situation where the other party is not a Christian, we meet with the community leaders to resolve the issue and try to live in peace with everyone.

The finding above shows that the words of grace and hope that change agents have to offer could emerge from an active seeking of God's guidance through the use of the Bible. In the process of community development, practical theologians have to be grounded by an active seeking of God's guidance on how to use the Bible to foster change in project areas (Myers, 2011: 230). God speaks to human needs through daily study and reading of the scripture. Osmer (2008: 139) notes that it is through this normative task that the change agent can connect God's judgment and grace in Christ with the specific social situation of a given community.

6.4.2 Attitude towards Christians and the gospel

As mentioned in 4.3.3.2.2, the standards for judging the impact of a development project include those outside the church having a positive view of Christians, and beneficiaries of the

project deepening their understanding of the nature of the God of the Bible and becoming more open to listening to the verbal proclamation of the gospel. The indicators of transformation, on the other hand, are viewed from the words used by community members to describe Christians, the character of the God of the Bible, and the number of people seeking or participating in discussions of spiritual matters, attending Bible study or attending church services. When the participants in the current study were asked to describe people's attitudes towards Christians and the gospel in the selected communities, the following themes emerged: views about Christians, understanding of God, weekly church activities and interest in church activities.

6.4.2.1 Views about Christians

The SCs were asked to describe how people outside the church tend to view the church members in their communities. In the quotes below the respondents point out that non-Christians and non-ECWA members had commented positively on the impact of ECWA's POD programmes on the lives of the beneficiaries. Two themes emerged from their responses: positive relationships with God and positive relationships with one another. A friendly relationship was cited by the respondents in relation to non-Christians and non-ECWA members.⁷⁵ According to the responses, ECWA members in the SCs are said to be united; as such, they are conscious of anything that can bring them down (see the participants' responses below).

SC1: Oh yes. People, especially our neighbours (the Muslims) have good testimonies about us. They often say, before now, the ECWA people were not united, but now they are united, they do their things together.

SC2: Our relationship has attracted people's attention so much so that we are very care[ful] the way we live our lives. Yes, we have to be conscious because people are watching and assessing our lifestyles as they know us by our conduct.

SC3: We are grateful to God because we are an icon in this town. To the Muslims and the indigenous religious practitioners we are a model to them, and whatever needs to be done in this town, we must approve of it before it is successful. For example, the maintenance of this road was not successful until we announced it in the church before it was done. Because of

⁷⁵ Although the non-ECWA portrays the church members in a good light the ECWA members not that are few internal challenges they are facing.

ECWA's integrity in this town, a Muslim said he will tell his brother to join ECWA whenever he is ready to be part of the church.

SC4: The people outside the church see us as those who meet to worship God; we meet to pour out our minds and problems to God through prayer, where we share our burdens with the pastor and find solutions to them.

When responses regarding the participants' relationships with God were analysed, the respondents cited that listening to the gospel being preached, fellowship and the worship of God were the main characteristics among them that non-Christians and non-ECWA members had described. The following quotes illustrate their experience:

SC1: We attend church activities, and the word of God is preached to them. As a result, even those who are not believers are also taking good care of their compound and the surrounding.

SC2: Due to our relationship with one another and in our fellowship in church, some of the unbelievers here said they had seen the light in our lives and even some of them are beginning to go to church. These days, they allow their wives to come and learn with us in the church premises.

However, SC1 lamented that, when ECWA's POD started their development activities in their community, many people attended, but now everybody was gone, leaving only two women with great responsibility in the women's wing. This is illustrated below:

SC1: At the beginning we were up and down for days learning and discussing about self-help programmes, but now the POD officer will come but not many people are interested. In fact, only two of among many women are keeping the women's group alive.

At this juncture, it can be concluded that sound biblical teachings can go a long way in the project areas. The project beneficiaries need to know the whole truth about their situation from a biblical and theological perspective. Being thoroughly grounded in the word of God has the potential to contribute towards the physical and spiritual sustainability of beneficiaries (Myers, 2011: 230).

6.4.2.2 Understanding of God

When the respondents were asked to describe their understanding of God, SC1 and SC2 pointed out that they had limited knowledge of God and, knowing the reasons behind that,

they had taken steps to improve their knowledge of God by going to church and by sending their children to school. On the other hand, SC3 and SC4 were certain about who God is and what God is to them. The responses below capture the experiences of these four SCs:

SC1: Yes, we have knowledge about God, although not so deep. The cause of inappropriate knowledge about God are self-imposed, the people are not serious. It is the person who gives his/herself learning that acquires the knowledge. We often have Bible studies, but very few people attend. If we are to be frank, there is no way you will know about God if you do not study the word of God, the Bible.

SC2: Most of the people in this community do not have adequate knowledge of God, although we have taken the step for deeper knowledge of God: first by going to Church and by learning how to read the Bible. We have sent our children to school because our ignorance of God could be due to illiteracy. So we believe that literacy will definitely help our children to know God, and through them we too will get to know Him.

SC3: God is the Father, the Holy Spirit and the Creator of all things. He is my Lord and my Saviour. He created heaven and earth and every other thing you can see and the unseen. He has the power to give life or take it away, that is why whoever understands this, will appreciate that there is God. People in this town testify that they are children of God.

SC4: We see God as our creator, our provider, as protector and helper.

The responses above indicate that God can be trusted as their creator, redeemer and governor of their lives. Unfortunately, not all of the people in the targeted communities have a better understanding of the nature and character of the God of the Bible. The goals of evangelism and transformational development have to lead to changed people and changed relationships. Evangelism focuses more on the relationship between man and God, while transformational development is more concerned with all relationships of humankind with God, others, and creation. This indicates that ECWA's POD CDFs need to reinforce their effort in this regard.

6.4.2.3 Weekly church activities

The respondents listed almost the same weekly church activities (Monday to Saturday). The main church activity is the Sunday worship service. This is followed by midweek prayer every Wednesday, and Bible study and fellowship group meetings, such as the women's, men's and youth fellowship. The following quotation describes these activities:

SC1: *The main church activity is the Sunday worship service. We also have weekly activities like daily morning devotion at 04:30 and midweek prayer every Wednesday at 16:30. There is also one prayer meeting that is for everybody in the town, which takes [place] at 19:30 after dinner. At an appointed time during this prayer there will be total silence everywhere in the town because of the prevailing circumstances in the country, which is why we are praying for peace. There are fellowship groups in the church; we have women, men and youth fellowship.*

SC2: *There are many activities in this church, but the attendance is very low. People used to attend morning devotion, Bible study and midweek prayer meetings, but people are very slow now. There are also fellowships, but illiteracy did not allow us to understand what was going on.*

SC3: *Our church activities include midweek prayer meeting, Bible study and Children and Adult Sunday school.*

SC4: *We have activities like the prayer meetings, Bible studies and we also have fellowship groups like men, women and youth.*

The above quotations suggest that most of the SCs have similar or identical church activities. Respondent SC1 provided details of the times, days and manner in which activities are held.

6.4.2.4 Interest in church activities

The number of people seeking or participating in discussions of spiritual things such as attending Bible study or attending church services is key indicators of TD. In response to the question on how interested church members are in the abovementioned church activities, the respondents noted the following:

SC1: *Truly speaking, most of the people are not committed to weekly activities like the Sunday worship service. The only group we can commend is the women's fellowship, but the rest we still need God's intervention in their lives.*

SC2: *Most of the people are not committed to Sunday service, not to even talk about weekly activities. Only women are trying, but men and youth are still very far off.*

SC3: The attendance of the weekly activities is very low because people are in for making money instead. Very few are interested in attending Bible study, even though our pastor is trying to organise teaching for us.

SC4: People are not always committed, especially during the farming season, but they normally turn out in good numbers after the farming season. Sometimes we do not usually hold church programmes during that time and sometimes people come late from their farms.

The above findings show that ECWA's POD beneficiaries are active in, but not committed to, church activities. In general, attendance is poor when it comes to weekly church activities, unlike the Sunday service. The reasons cited by SC3 and SC4 are economic struggles and the prioritisation of farming activities. Another possible reason could be the separation of POD activities from those of the local churches; the former is responsible for social service, while the other concentrates on the spiritual aspect of the people (see 3.2.1).

6.4.3 Spiritual development

It was noted in 4.3.3.2.3 that the spiritual development standards and indicators of TD are evident in the descriptions of what controls individual lives, what people do or whom they turn to when they are afraid of something, and who or what they believe controls the lives of the transformational worker in the project area. Therefore, failure to reflect on the role of the spiritual aspect of human life could rob people of the opportunity to determine their own values and priorities (VerBeek, 2002: 67-68). The questions of what influences the lives of people, and who the person is whom they trust or turn to or consult for help, were asked during the focus group discussions. The participants' responses are presented and analysed below:

6.4.3.1 What influences people's lives

In order to analyse the spiritual life of the people in the targeted communities, the respondents were asked to explain what they think influences the lives of the people in their communities. The descriptions of what controls individual lives, based on the result of the focus groups discussions with community members, are as follows:

SC1: People are more concerned about the things of the world than godly things. For instance, when it comes to football, you see the youth and even married men would prefer to go and watch football. The issue of politics is also a big problem. People run after the

politician looking for what to eat. Most of the people are influence more by self-desire and worldly pleasure than the fear and love of God. People go about drinking alcohol, womanising, among others, but when it comes to the things of God they are nowhere to be found.

SC2: Intemperance is our biggest problem among men and youth. This is what averts them from coming to fellowships and other Church activities. The issue of witchcraft is another problem that brings suspicion among people.

SC3: People pay much attention to materialism, worldly passion and what they will get rather than what they will give out. For example, if something were to be brought here for free, everybody will come for it. People are more into the things of this world. Both adults and the youth can spend the whole day at a movie house, but may not endure Bible study or any other church activities.

When analysing the above finding, one finds that the target communities under study pay less or no attention to the influence and leading of the Holy Spirit. Instead, they are more concerned about the here and now.

6.4.3.2 The person to trust, turn to or consult for help

As stated in 6.2.7, the Bible is an indispensable tool that can be used in POD project areas to assist beneficiaries in thinking about change. Bible study can help people understand that God is essentially concerned with their well-being. As such, the book of James (1: 27) notes that a genuine Christian faith must include practical, physical and spiritual dimensions. The respondents in the current study thus were asked to explain whom they trust, turn to or consult for help in times of crisis, such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection. The following responses capture the respondents' experiences:

SC1: Some of the people in this community – when something happen to them, such as the sickness you mention and family issues they will invite a pastor to come and pray. However, there are many who prefer to go and consult witchdoctors (herbalists) or the prayer house. They do not care about going to the pastor; it is only when they may have reached a deadlock before they will return to the pastor's house. When they may have gone to several herbalists, or relations or prayer houses and there is no solution, they will now resort to their last hope, the pastor.

SC2: Whenever there is any misunderstanding between a husband and wife and the wife feels she cannot bear it, she takes her problems to her parents. In the case of sickness, people take the sick person to the native doctor before the pastor, but some other times the opposite. When it is death, people go to the pastor for burial.

SC3: There are adherents of three types of faith in this community, namely Christianity, Islam and indigenous religion. So everyone will go to his/her choice where he/she think his/her need will be met. Some will go to the hospital, some to a native doctor, some to the pastor, and some will go to their parents for help. The truth is, everyone goes to where his/her conscience leads. Not everyone believes in the power of God. Some people think whenever something happens to them, it must be caused by another person, therefore before the pastor gets to know about the problem, such persons have already left to a native doctor before they may finally come to the pastor for help when everything fails.

The above findings show that not many people in the target communities are able to trust, or turn to or consult God for help during difficult times. People do not seem to understand that God created a perfect world (cf. Genesis 1), but that people started to experience pain, sickness, poverty, hunger, hatred, war, corruption and injustice when sin entered and distorted God's perfect creation. In spite of the fall of humankind and the entrance of sin, God's desire for humankind's welfare is made clear in the scripture. God is concerned about total human well-being; in other words, both spiritual and physical wholeness (cf. Genesis, 1: 28-30 and 3.4.4). The transformational worker therefore can better help the people to move from their moments of crisis, suffering and pain to moments of hope and opportunity through the use of relevant Bible stories. Those who have gone astray from the 'right way' and a wholesome relationship with God can now turn towards the path of peace and justice and live with one another without fear, because God's plans and purposes are unchanged.

6.4.4 Quality of service

As highlighted in 4.3.3.2.4, standards of TD that relate to the quality of services provided include the ability and interest of a change agent to learn and understand local customs, perceptions of the change agent as a caring person who loves God and the beneficiaries of their development projects, as well as perceptions of the change agent as a dependent person who prays and acts as a spiritual person. These TD indicators were observed by the language used as the POD CDFs conversed with community members as they dwelled among the

people in rural communities, and the words used by community members to describe the CDFs (see 4.3.4). When analysing the participants' responses to the question relating to the quality of services provided by the EWCA's POD CDFs, the following themes emerged: language of communication, living in the community, and the CDF's relationship with the people. Each of these will be discussed in greater detail below.

6.4.4.1 Language of communication

Myers (2011: 212) explains that a holistic practitioner's success in any development effort depends on the change agent's ability to humbly seek to understand the culture of the people and not merely to make assumptions about what he or she thinks is best for the people from his or her own perspective (see 3.4.1). This suggests that the language used by a holistic practitioner to converse with community members plays a significant role in the project. The indigenous language may seem parochial to a change agent, but it is important because it is specific to the realities of people's daily lives. The change agent must make an effort to build a society in which all members have equal rights and equal opportunities, in which all can live at peace with their neighbours without suffering or imposing injustice, being exploited or exploiting.

The language that the POD CDFs used to communicate with beneficiaries during the development activities in the project areas was probed. The responses below indicate that the CDFs and beneficiaries had a convenient language of communication. The participants explained that even though some of them may be able to understand English, the use of Hausa enhanced the flow of communication. This means the numerous languages in Nigeria cannot be undermined in development efforts. To the best of my knowledge, there are three basic languages of communication, namely Ibo in the East, Yoruba in the West and Hausa in the North of the country. A community worker's effectiveness is thus likely to be undermined if he or she cannot communicate in the language of the people living in his or her project area. The following responses illustrate the respondents' answers to the question whether the POD CDFs understand and communicate with them in their local languages:

SC1: The POD officer communicates with us in Hausa, and also speaks to us in English, or also uses our local language.

SC2: We don't understand each other's local languages. However, the Hausa language used during the development activities we both can understand and we speak it in this community apart from our local language.

SC3: Our POD officer speaks Hausa; therefore the communication is in the Hausa language. We like it that way because this is the only language everybody understands. Although we will have no problem accepting any other person, even if he or she speaks English, we have few people who can help interpret for us.

The above responses show that there is an appropriate language of communication between POD CDFs and their beneficiaries. The effectiveness of TD is ultimately determined by beneficiaries and the transforming relationships that they are able to have with each other and God. The language of communication thus plays an important role in development activities. Good theories and principles are not the ultimate means of effective development. As already pointed out in 3.4.2.1, transformation is about optimal relationships, which can only be achieved through the use of techniques and programmes by individuals with the appropriate attitudes, mind-sets and professionalism (Myers, 2011: 219). Holistic practitioners must use the right means of communication in the right place. It therefore was crucial in the current study to investigate whether POD CDFs practise these principles during their development activities.

6.4.4.2 Relationship with people

Myers (2011: 219) reminds us that the attitude of a change agent plays a great role in the transformation process. Holistic practitioners are characterised by the ability to love God, be a good neighbour, and to be patient and humble. In other words, the kind of attitudes, mind-set and heart the transformer has towards the beneficiaries of any development project matters considerably for the completion and sustainability of that project (Myers, 2011: 220). The participants therefore were asked to describe their relationship with the POD CDFs. The following responses show that the CDFs demonstrated a positive attitude toward the beneficiaries.

SC1: If you [ask] us about our relationship with the POD worker in this community we will say our relationship is very cordial. Our people love her so much, we call her Mama POD, to the extent that when she fell ill, the people were concerned and asked about her health.

SC2: We do not have a problem with the staff. Although we would have preferred him to come and stay with us, because by so doing we will know each other much better.

SC3: We are so grateful for what the POD officer is doing in this community. He is very hard working. Many a times when he taught us something, we immediately turned a blind eye. He is so patient with us and he is very compassionate and loving. He always led us by example. Sometimes we don't even know how he gets money to do something for us. Some of our people don't want to give, they only receive and when it comes to work, sometimes they disappear, leaving the few doing the work.

SC4: He relates to us very well by discussing with us how to carry out the project activities. He carries us along; we plan together; he also contributed during the time we were digging the well, and POD brought us digging implements to assist.

The respondents were positive about their relationships with the CDFs. They acknowledged that the CDFs relates well with the members of the communities. The practical life and spoken words of the Christian workers thus can be used by the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of beneficiaries and bring the latter to the point of wanting to make changes in their material and spiritual lives. The change agent does not always know what is good for the people, even as an indigene or an expert. It is only by spending time visiting and living with the villagers that the change agent can realise what really matters to the people. In this case one would argue that the change agent now could organise workshops, group discussions and visits, and give training on public health or agricultural activities, business orientation and infrastructural development. These projects also have to be designed and implemented based on local needs.

6.4.4.3 Living in the communities

Transformation takes place within a particular community, and the people who live in the community have a detailed story about their situation. Burkey (1993: 73) notes that, when a change agent spends time living with the people in a community, he or she will become more familiar with and get to know them and their community with all its socio-economic relationships. Therefore, in accordance with the principles and practices of TD, the respondents in the current study were asked if the POD CDFs live in their communities and, if not, what the reasons for this were. If the CDFs did live in the respondents' communities, the latter were asked how the CDFs' presence had helped in the project area. These are the participants' responses:

SC1: *Well [...] the POD CDF does not live in this community but rather lives at our DCC headquarters. According to what we were told, we are not the only community that the worker is handling. So there is no way the worker will come and stay here with us. However, we would love the worker to come and stay in this community so that at all times we need the worker's help the worker will be available to us.*

SC2: *He doesn't live with us; he lives in another town.*

SC3: *No! He lives elsewhere, but comes here from time to time. But obviously, it will have been more helpful to us. For example, if we needed his help at night it would not be possible because he is not living in this town. As he comes here off and on, sometimes before he comes back we have already forgotten what he taught us during his last visit. Some times before he arrives here, some people have already left for their farms, school or marketplace.*

SC4: *No, but if he is living with us it will be more helpful because we will learn practically from him.*

Although the respondents indicated there was a good relationship with the CDFs, as pointed out in 6.4.4.2, the above findings show that the participants' responses were not positive about the CDFs residence. All the communities that were visited pointed out that the CDFs did not live in their communities and that they only came to visit or for the purposes of training and conducting workshops. The POD CDFs told me during the interviews that they did not stay directly in the communities in which the project was being conducted. Their reason for this was that each CDF is expected to work with eight communities, so they design visit days for each community. They choose one community in which to stay, usually the DCC headquarters, and then visit the other communities to perform their responsibilities. Some of the facilitators explained that they would have preferred to live among the people, but due to the work load on them, it was not possible to be in each community at the same time.

This shows that one of the principles of TD, namely the change agent living in the target community, has not been sufficiently adhered to. According to Myers (2011: 205), the holistic practitioner does not visit a community with a better story to tell the individuals or groups of people in the community. Rather, the holistic practitioner allows his or her story to join with the stories of the community. In this case, the principle of TD requires that holistic practitioners should go to the people, live in their villages, listen carefully to their stories and then determine how the practitioner's story can fit into the community's stories. Myers (2011:

207-209) points out that the community's stories are both seen and unseen world. This means that, when the change agent is far from the community, only the visible can be seen, but when the agent is closer to the people, the unseen would be revealed (see 3.4.21 & 3.4.2).

6.5 Summary of Key Findings

Research objective four (see 1.5.2) involved evaluating the impact of ECWA's POD programmes on the lives of beneficiaries. The discussion in 6.3 shows that POD programmes had made an impact on the lives of the beneficiaries to a great extent. The participants indicated that their physical and spiritual lives had improved as a result of the POD programmes, as summarised below.

6.5.1 Physical well-being

The beneficiaries' responses from the focus group discussion show that there is an appreciable level of improvement in their living conditions in the communities under study. Beneficiaries explained that the ECWA's POD programmes had raised their consciousness of what is happening around them and showed them ways of overcoming various difficulties facing them and their families. These include self-help or self-reliance programmes, creating awareness, and emphasis on communal work and a business orientation. The respondents indicated that these and other initiatives had helped them to struggle to get what they desired, and not to depend on other people, relations or the government.

Similarly, the historical background and activities of ECWA's POD indicate that the organisation is actively involved in improving the well-being of poor and underprivileged communities in Northern Nigeria. The findings discussed in this chapter highlight that the POD programmes have contributed significantly to enhancing the quality of people's lives. Some of the contributions are the provision of water supply, sanitation, road rehabilitation, economic empowerment, food security, health centres and schools. The POD CDFs facilitate and emphasise the use of locally available materials.

From the analysis of the remedial measure taken by ECWA's POD so far (see 6.3), one can argue that, in spite of the aforementioned vital achievements, there are areas that need improvement. There is the need to build social capital for sustainable development. 'Social capital' here refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which these are

embedded, as described by Munslow (2001: 504). In 5.3.2, the respondents indicated that unemployment, and the mismanagement of family resources (such as farm harvest) due to illiteracy and disunity were the main causes of poverty in their communities. This indicates that social capital is the glue that can hold society together and without which there can be no material or spiritual well-being. That is, without social capital, society at large will collapse, which was the cries of the community under study (see 5.3.1.3).

Despite for the fact that ECWA's POD has made a significant effort to empower people economically, as indicated in 6.2.4, one could still argue that human resource development has not been attended to. Morse (2004: 86) notes that economic development is important and could contribute to human well-being, but it is not the ultimate. People must be the centre of human development, because when development is people-centred it is definitely going to be sustainable. People must be able to realise their potential and vocation and become faithful stewards of God's creation. Therefore, development efforts should concentrate on improving people's standards of living and self-reliance. That is, individuals, groups of people and communities should be able to cater for themselves (August, 2013: 73).

Burkey (1993: 35) suggests that human resource development is the bottom-line approach to skills development. This means human resource development is a key element that should receive much attention. That is, skills development needs to be prioritised in order to suit the overall organisational strategic objectives. This is necessary because development can only be sustainable when an individual or community develops a sense of self-respect, and becomes more confident, self-reliant, co-operative, tolerant of others and aware of personal shortcomings, as well as the potential for positive change.

6.5.2 Spiritual development

The ECWA's POD involvement in holistic community-based development as a demonstration of God's love to humankind reveals its spiritual influence in the lives of beneficiaries. The beneficiaries of the ECWA's POD programmes are Christians and non-Christians. On that note, devotions, prayers and Bible reading or study were used as a starting point in the project areas. Testimonies from the target communities, as mentioned in 6.3.1.2, show that this approach has helped solve the problems of various families and communities. Some members of the communities have learned how to read through Bible study, while some have learned the importance of hard work and living in peace with one another.

This shows that ECWA's POD has contributed to the spiritual development of the targeted communities. However, from my personal observations and critical analyses of the findings in 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and 6.3.3, I would argue that ECWA's POD programmes have not sufficiently succeeded in improving the spiritual lives of the people in the targeted communities.⁷⁶ Most of the successes recorded were measured by the number of projects, not in terms of transformed lives. The Kingdom values of peace, unity and justice therefore were not given much attention. There was an element of little follow up of beneficiaries. For example, each CDF is expected to work in eight villages, in terms of which the communities are given one or two days in a month and then the rest of the supervision is left to an unskilled village committee.

For example, in 6.4.3.1, the respondents explained that the people in their communities were influenced by materialism and self-desire and reported that the fear and love of God was secondary, so they do not promptly turn to or consult God for help in their difficult times unless other means have failed them (see 6.4.3.2). As indicated in 6.4.2, the respondents stated that they were well commended by outsiders for the changes they had made as a result of the POD programmes. However, it unfortunately remains clear that they still have limited knowledge of the person of God. Almost all respondents listed church activities that could help in their spiritual growth, yet they had less interest in attending the activities (see 6.4.2.1, 6.4.2.2 and 6.4.2.3). I therefore would argue that POD CDFs need to re-strategise the holistic approach in the process of executing a development project. The CDF needs to carry the Bible in the process of digging the well, helping the community fix a bridge, planting trees, showing the people how to farm or grow their crops, or in the process of providing business orientation and health awareness, and can also describe to the people how the gospel can help them in settling conflict or bringing unity to the community.

As such I argue strongly that spirituality has a vital role to play in sustainable development, but little attention has been given to it by the activities of POD. Although religious organisations are not expected to use development programmes to manipulate and impose their perspective on their beneficiaries, the influence of spirituality on sustainable development cannot be overlooked. This is because spirituality shapes development-related decisions and actions, both for and against change and, consequently, a failure to explore the

⁷⁶I am tempted to assume that the respondents were just trying to tell me what they think I needed to hear, or maybe they were scared that if they did not compliment the POD effort or the CDFs, the projects and assistance would stop.

role of spirituality in development may result in a faulty foundation and less effective interventions. Therefore, any interventions that ignore spirituality, either intentionally or unintentionally, affect not only people's spirituality but also matters such as the environment, gender relations and community interdependence.

This study holds the view that socio-economic development cannot be separated from spiritual development (see 3.2.2). Therefore, emphasising and insisting on the preaching and teaching of biblical stories based on the situation and context of the people is a matter of necessity. The messages must recall God's actions in the past and serve as a guide to people in times of change and crisis. For instance, the beneficiaries should understand what the Bible has to say about clean living or why they have to work hard to earn a living. This will enable them to see the practical values in the Word of God and why they should trust and obey the God of the Bible. In other words, we should not make an attempt to only meet the physical needs of the people and then expect them to accept the gospel, or the other way round. The ultimate reason for Christians embarking on development projects is first to help the beneficiaries realise the potential that God has for them in every part of their lives, and then to help them work towards reducing or alleviating their poverty level. When their hope and confidence are revived and their standard of living has improved, they are strengthened to give glory to God.

6.6 Conclusions

This study understands that ECWA's POD programmes have recorded some success in terms of community development in Nigeria. Progress has been made in the church's efforts to reduce poverty and raise the standard of living of poor and underprivileged communities. Nevertheless, based on the facts pointed out in 6.4.1 and 6.4.2 above, it is clear that ECWA's POD programmes have done well, but that the efforts have not led fully to transformational development. This is because focusing on socio-economic empowerment alone, although it is essential, may not be sufficient to meet the range of human needs, which include abstract human needs such as dignity and spiritual development. According to Wink (1992: 10), any effort to transform an individual or community without due concern for or attempting to address spirituality is bound to fail. My point of argument in this thesis is that, if development is not holistic and integrated, in other words if it ignores the spiritual aspects of development, then there is no variance between what the church/faith-based organisations do and what

secular agencies organise. The indication of success of faith-based development agencies, such as ECWA's POD, should not only centre on social, economic and political aspects, but also on the religious aspect of human life.

The concept of TD, as discussed in 3.2.1, is not a theoretical debate, and neither is it a mere development strategy. It is, rather, a Christian theological response to human need. The concept argues that change agents should be able to help the beneficiaries of development programmes recover their identity and discover their vocation so that they, in turn, can build a future for themselves. Everyone needs a sense of freedom from all levels of life challenges. The challenges of poverty, oppressive systems, hopelessness and gender inequalities must therefore be addressed seriously and actively by the church. By so doing, human dignity would be enhanced as people become self-reliant and capable of organising themselves toward fulfilling their potential. A key problem in the community development efforts of EWCA's POD programmes is a limited understanding of TD and difficulties in applying the holistic principles and practices of TD in the development of policy objectives, strategies and well-conceptualised and articulated development programmes.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The central focus of my study was to conduct an impact evaluation of the ECWA People Oriented Development (POD) programmes in selected benefitting communities in Northern Nigeria. The study was guided by the following evaluative research question: *Have ECWA's People Oriented Development programmes led to Transformational Development (TD) in the poor communities of Northern Nigeria?* The primary aim of this study was to provide evidence that TD can occur holistically in the lives of beneficiaries. In order to meet the research aim, various literatures was reviewed and empirical research was conducted with a special focus on:

- i. The various theories of community development;
- ii. The concept of TD as a holistic framework for the church in respond to human;
- iii. Socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities;
- iv. Remedial measures taken by the ECWA's POD;
- v. The extent POD programmes have affected the lives of beneficiaries holistically; and
- vi. Recommendations for a holistic approach in ECWA's POD.

As mentioned in section 1.5.2, the study objectives were intended to gather knowledge that can contribute towards on-going efforts by ECWA's POD to enhance people's physical and spiritual well-being. This chapter presents a summary of the literature reviewed and the findings from empirical study. The chapter also draws a general conclusion and makes recommendations with regard to how the church can re-strategise or reinforce the concept of holistic ministry, and recommends areas for future research.

7.2 Summary of the Literature and Empirical Study

7.2.1 Literature review

Chapter Two focused on the first objective of this study, which was to explore the various existing theories pertaining to community development. To meet this objective I explored the traditional, recent and pragmatic approaches to community development. The traditional theories explored were the Modernisation and Dependency Theories. The recent trends in

development theories explored included Postmodernity, Gender and the Participatory development paradigm. The pragmatic approaches to development that were explored were the Millennium Development Goals, the African concept of development and Faith-based engagement in development. The chapter concludes that:

- i. Traditional development theories: On the one hand, the proponents of Modernisation Theory claim that less-developed countries are underdeveloped because their populace is illiterate, lack resources and skilled manpower, and is characterised by high levels of corruption, poverty, various cases of disease and inadequate institutional frameworks. The only way out is economic growth based on Western models, including the removal of the indigenous knowledge and culture of the poor countries to be replaced by that of the West. The theory is actualised by the mixing and interaction of people from different parts of the world, easy and mass production of goods and services, access to formal education and healthcare, and easy transportation systems, among others. However, the promotion of Western culture and the neglect of the local context affect the poor countries. On the other hand, proponents of Dependency Theory argue that Modernisation creates a gap between developed and less developed nations. Furthermore, they maintain that the model of capitalism had a destructive influence on less-developed countries. This is due to its unequal balance of trade, which ended up exploiting less-developed countries, making their products cheaper for foreign buyers while imports of foreign goods were more expensive for less-developed buyers. Although the dependency activists corrected the failures of the Modernisation approach, they failed to initiate an appropriate development process to replace the flaws of modernisation.
- ii. Recent trends in development theories: One of the recent trends in development theory and practice is a focus on gender. The motivation for Gender and Development emanated from the fact that women were marginalised and dominated on social, economic and political levels. Special programmes that could empower women to gain access to and control of a diverse range of assets were formulated. Postmodernist Theory arose as a critique of this exclusive focus on special groups and certain angles of development. The Postmodernists argue against unitary theories of progress and scientific rationality. They insist that there is no single objective account of reality because everyone experiences reality differently. Instead, they advocate for a multiplicity of voices, diversity and cultural relativity. They condemn the tendency to

focus on exclusive groups and issues, such as women or the landless. Instead, these theorists prefer self-reliance and participation. The Participatory paradigm in recent development theory favours people-centred development. The vision of people-centred development is to return control of resources to the people and their communities; to provide opportunities for people to obtain a secure livelihood within the context of their culture and value systems; and to ensure self-respect, dignity and self-reliance among individuals and the community in a way that promotes participation in their own development projects.

- iii. Pragmatic approaches to development: Pragmatic approaches to development include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the African concept of mutual work experience, and the efforts of faith-based development organisations. The MDGs, formulated by world leaders, seek to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equity, reduce child and infant mortality, improve maternal health, combat deadly diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development, among others. This vision was adopted by less-developed countries. The African concept of development embraces the spirit of mutual work through practical work experience and communal projects, which uphold the virtues of self-help. The elders in the communities were responsible for teaching young ones through systematised apprenticeships in agriculture, art and crafts so that community members are appropriately equipped to control their own environments for the better. Faith-based development organisations are another pragmatic development approach, which is at the forefront in dealing with the issue of poverty and social justice. They are uniquely good in conflict resolution and prevention and humanitarian support. They incorporate a variety of development activities, such as education, health care and various agricultural activities that contribute to the well-being of various communities.

Chapter Three met the second objective of the study, which was to discuss TD as a uniquely Christian framework for development and poverty alleviation. The chapter was divided into three sections, the first of which focused on understanding the concept of TD, which included the theoretical basis, specific reference to theological challenges and distinctions between Christian and secular concepts of transformation. The second part critiqued the popular concept of poverty and offered a theological reflection on poverty and social injustice, while

the third and final part of the chapter explored some characteristics of transformation. The chapter produced the following conclusions:

- i. The concept of Transformational Development: The study established that there was a misconception with regards to the relationship between evangelism and social action. In that fallacy, the sacred and secular or religion and development are viewed as separate entities. TD addresses this error by arguing for holistic ministry, which integrates the physical and spiritual. The transformational approach aims at achieving sustainable human development, in terms of which people would be able to enjoy fullness of life with justice, dignity, peace and hope. Christian engagement in social transformation is therefore to be seen as a Kingdom response to powerlessness. In that sense, authentic development must reverse the process of disempowerment by dealing with the relational dimensions of poverty; combating forces that create and/or sustain powerlessness at all levels; and/or challenge the process of disempowerment by rereading the history of the poor from God's perspective. This makes the Christian goal and motivation for social transformation holistic. It focuses on restoring broken relationships; ensuring justice, peace and hope; and helping communities to recover their true identity and discover their vocation as stewards of God's resources.
- ii. Popular concept of poverty in relation to TD: According to the study, the poor are popularly viewed as those who are weak, isolated, vulnerable and helpless, or as those who lack access to social, economic and political power and are unable to reach their potential. Similarly, biblical scholars have used various terminologies to describe the nature of poverty from the perspective of broken relationships that inhibit *shalom* in all its meanings. They argue that the cause of poverty is spiritual. Sin distorted the original plan of God and caused corruption and oppression in human society. The church is therefore in a good position to respond from a holistic perspective to reconnect people to God, and to one another.
- iii. Characteristics of transformational development: Culture, context and indigenous knowledge are key characteristics of TD. People's way of life, beliefs, values and customs, as well as the institutions that express them, must be respected. The gospel bearer must communicate the gospel of word and deed within the context of the beneficiaries, because no culture is above another. Just relations must be the focus of development, as unjust relations are the root causes of the inequalities in society. Thus, the affirmation of people's dignity and self-worth is mandatory for a

transformational agenda. People need self-esteem, not dependency – which implies inequality, to be fully human. Therefore, all people should be empowered intellectually, physically, mentally and spiritually to enjoy the God-given blessings of creation. Individuals or communities must be free to grow in their physical, mental, social and spiritual life.

7.2.2 Findings from the empirical study

Chapter Five described the socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities as contained in the third objective of this study. In this process I explored the key problems and their causes and effects in the lives of the people in the study area. The aim was to assess the impact of ECWA's POD programmes on beneficiating. The chapter identifies the socio-economic challenges facing the selected communities in Northern Nigeria. The chapter found that:

- i. There are key problems faced by the selected communities: The findings reveal some of the harsh realities affecting the well-being of the targeted communities, such as food shortages, meagre education facilities, economic challenges, bad roads, health problems and spiritual issues. The communities undergo diverse difficulties, which range from the social, political and economic, to the emotional and spiritual.
- ii. Causes of poverty in the selected communities: The findings show that there are many issues responsible for the persistence of poverty in these communities. The causes of poverty include unemployment, mismanagement, illiteracy, disunity and religious issues. In the meantime, the people continue in their struggles and desires to improve their infrastructure, day-to-day living, as well as spiritual well-being.

Chapter Six addresses the fourth and fifth objectives of this study, which were to explore the remedial measures taken by ECWA's POD programmes and the impact of the attempted development programmes on the lives of the beneficiaries. The overall discussion in this chapter was consistent with Myers's (2011) standards and indicators of TD, which entail a change of attitude toward God, one another, society, the Christian Gospel and spirituality. The analysis was done from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with ECWA pastors, POD community development facilitators and the beneficiating communities of POD programmes. The findings of this chapter are as follows:

- i. Remedial measures of ECWA's POD: The ECWA's POD has been at the forefront in applying various means to enhance the well-being of people and communities in terms of praxis, strategy and engagement. Some of the significant contributions of ECWA's POD include programmes on self-help and awareness, and an emphasis on communal work. Some of the physical projects are water supply, food security/sustainable agriculture, community-based health care, economic empowerment, infrastructural development projects, and environmental sustainability. Spiritual development activities include devotional times, prayer meetings, Bible readings and Bible study.
- ii. The impact of ECWA's POD programmes: The physical well-being and spiritual life of the people were evaluated. The finding shows that the POD programmes have made an impact on the beneficiaries' socio-economic conditions, although this is not encouraging compared to the vision and mission statement of POD as in 6.2.2, and looking at the current situation in the target communities as described in 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3. Furthermore, devotional times, prayer meetings, Bible readings and Bible study, which are used as starting point in the project areas, have not made much difference in the beneficiaries' spiritual lives. The participants claim that some members of the communities have learned how to read through Bible study, while some have learned the importance of hard work and living in peace among each other. However, there was no sufficient evidence that the spiritual activities had helped them solve various problems of families and communities; they have limited knowledge of God; church activities have received poor attendance; only a few trust God in terms of difficulties (cf. 6.4.2.2, 6.4.2.3, 6.4.2.4, 6.4.3.1 and 6.4.3.2) and disunity was cited as a leading factor for the persistence of poverty in the communities (cf. 5.3.2.4).

7.3 General Conclusion

The findings in Chapter Five (above) indicate that it is not possible to conclude that ECWA's POD programmes have sufficiently led to Transformational Development of the targeted communities. This is because, despite the above-mentioned efforts and achievements of ECWA's POD from the findings in Chapter Six with regard to development programmes, the target communities continue to experience the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment and lack of spiritual growth (see 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3). The people still seek out traditional healers [witch doctors] instead of consulting the pastor for prayer or going to the hospital for treatment. Despite the Bible studies and prayers conducted within the POD

programs, beneficiaries still complain of biblical illiteracy and local congregations and pastors are not an integrated part of these programmes (see 5.3.2.4, 6.4.3.1 and 6.4.3.2).

The lack of an appropriate approach to development probably contributes to the persistence of poverty in these communities. For example, ECWA assume that a more efficient approach could be the separation of POD as an agency with professional CDFs to meet physical needs, while the local church pastors focus on spiritual needs. The ECWA pastors I interviewed admitted that community development is an essential part of Christian ministry, but received less attention. The respondents lamented the fact that most of the ministers concentrated so much on addressing the spiritual aspects, while not taking the physical properly into consideration. The inability of the CDFs to act theologically in the project, as described in 6.4.1 and 6.4.2, could also contribute to the insufficient achievement of holistic transformation. The ECWA pastors interviewed acknowledged that ECWA is doing holistic ministry, but identified evangelism as the key task of the church, and believed that ECWA's POD CDFs should focus on meeting the social needs of the people, while the pastors concentrate on preaching the gospel. Unfortunately, this approach maintains the retrogressive traditional dichotomy that is contrary to the concept of TD.

Therefore, the discovery is that, if ECWA's POD efforts do not apply the principles and practices of TD, their efforts may be considered inadequate. Because focusing on socio-economic empowerment alone or separately on spiritual progress, is not sufficient to meet the full range of human needs. The pastors' insistence on evangelism alone is not holistic. If development is not holistic and integrated, then there is no difference between what the church/faith-based organisations do and what secular agencies do. I propose the transformational approach for ECWA's POD because it is the most appropriate theological and contextual framework for a holistic Christian response to the challenges of social development (see the summary of Chapter Three above). The approach will help ECWA's POD to ensure that their target communities enjoy fullness of life with justice, dignity, peace and hope.

Furthermore, the church needs to embrace a transformational development approach, because it focuses on healing the broken-hearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives, recovering sight to the blind, and announcing the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19). In other word, it addresses the total needs of human beings (physical and spiritual). Those who have various spiritual shortcomings need God's mercy and grace; those who are sick, in prison, in need of

food, clothes, water to drink and shelter need someone to welcome them, have fellowship with them, and share in their struggle (cf. Mathew, 25: 35-36).

More so, a TD approach aims at ensuring just and harmonious relationships: the right relationship with God, fellow people with the community and the environment. Domination, operation and exploitation are abnormal in human relations. Unjust relations are the root causes for the disparities and inequalities in society. This means that any attempt to transform a social system without addressing both its spiritual and outer forms is doomed to failure. Only by confronting the spirituality of an institution and its connections can the total entity be transformed.

In TD, the fundamental issue addressed by salvation is the broken relationships between God and human beings, which were distorted by sin. In other words, sin disrupted the perfect work of God, and salvation is the overcoming of the alienation and disruption and the reconstruction and transformation of all realities affected by the powers of sin (Baker & Le Bruyns, 2008: 779). In this regard, the church, through its various development organisations, should communicate the blessing of salvation to the sinner and his/her restoration to divine favour and to a life of an intimate relationship with God, who is the all-sufficient source of life, strength and happiness. Moreover, moving toward a better human future requires that relationships that work, relationships that are just, peaceful, and harmonious have to be developed.

Hope ultimately is an element of transformation. There must be an attitude of expectation that there is a better future, and at the same time there is a need to put smiles on the faces of the hopeless and marginalised people in society. The notion of the good news to the poor should not only be a spiritualised gospel; rather, it also needs to be a message of hope and comfort to those in real situations of suffering and deprivation. The transformational agenda includes sharing the biblical story in such a way that people can understand that they can have confidence in God, whose goodness and mercy are to be relied on and whose promises cannot fail. This notion of hope is not set on people, riches, self-righteousness, or religious centres, but on God, who freely and graciously saves without disappointment.

The person applying TD principles will have to be a holistic transforming practitioner. Such a practitioner will contribute meaningfully and effectively to community development. A holistic practitioner is expected to be a good neighbour; this requires that the practitioner

willingly loves and is kind to neighbours. He/she has to learn to be patient: a successful worker does not rush or try to work so as to gain human praise; it is about the Kingdom purpose. So the practitioners need to take time to do the best to the glory and praise of God (Myers, 2011: 219).

7.4 Recommendations

The study presents the following recommendations in accordance with the principles of TD and as a theological framework for responding to human needs. It is hoped that the recommendations would assist church development organisations and ECWA's POD in particular, in the undertaking of community development that is based on a holistic approach.

7.4.1. *I recommend that community development should be taught in all ECWA theological schools.* I acknowledge that a Christian worker who wants to make an impact in the project area must have the technical knowhow, skills, strategies and knowledge of the dynamics of needs in the project area. However, I suggest that theological and biblical knowledge could be key tools a holistic practitioner can use to handle the physical and spiritual challenges. In other words, since the Christian approach is holistic, the Christian worker's knowledge must be holistic too. So combining the knowledge of social science and of scripture is a prerequisite for engaging in transformational development.

The above recommendation is based on the fact that POD is in need of more manpower. Field workers are few and cannot cover all needy communities. Unfortunately, most of the pastors in the communities do not have the technical knowledge of community development facilitators, and this adds to the need of pastors to undergo training for community development. Although POD's main duty is to create awareness of how the available potential and resources can be used, it would be good if they are able to provide some financial assistance to beneficiaries who would like to take on micro-business projects.

7.4.2 *It is also a matter of necessity for POD Community Development Facilitators to obtain a minimum theological training.* Techniques and programmes are important, but the holistic practitioner's need a holistic knowledge to achieving holistic development. The holistic practitioners work at fostering good relationships beyond the Christian community. In that sense, the holistic transformer should be able to teach, help, counsel and guide people in

spiritual life and family or community affairs, and in all kinds of personal, domestic, material and non-material problems.

7.4.3. *There is need for POD Community Development Facilitators to reside in a particular project area in order to encourage the people after training to put into practice what they have learned.* The holistic practitioner who relocates to the project area would be able to carefully study and become familiar with the social and cultural system of the communities. Burkey (1993: 5) echoes Chambers's analysis of the flaws of most people who are keenly concerned with rural development, but who are neither rural nor poor. Often the strategies for project conception and implementation they use do not represent the aspirations and interests of the targeted.

The church development organisation represents the community of called ones and is in a better position to proclaim to the materially and non-materially poor that hope, as confidence in God whose goodness and mercy are to be relied on and whose promises cannot fail, is a matter of necessity. The church's call and ministry, on the other hand, are about overcoming social barriers that can result in social transformation. The church should be able to insist on principles and values that promote the value of human life and build a collective vision that is holistic and relevant to the context of the people.

7.4.4 *I recommend that the concept of social service needs to be reconsidered and/or reinforced within ECWA as a denomination and through its local congregations.* This is because the church is not only called to discharge spiritual truth, but is also called to participate actively and be involved in people's everyday life, which includes the provision of relief and welfare material such as food, healthcare and shelter, which should not be taken casually. Relief and development aid from the church is likely to be more liberating than that from foreign donors. The poor are expected to live through generous donations from God's people. Various means through which to support the poor include generosity, lending freely, and scattering abroad gifts to the poor. This is because showing kindness to the poor is like lending to the Lord (cf. Proverbs, 19: 17).

7.4.5 *Aside from providing relief and welfare to poor people as the POD programmes are currently doing successfully, the POD will do much better by empowering people locally.* It is obvious that community development begins in the everyday lives of the local people and is the initial context for sustainable transformation (see 3.4.1). The church development

organisation should focus on empowering people locally. The range of such development activities could include capacity building, local business initiatives, job training and the provision of affordable housing. The vision of people-centred development insists on justice, sustainability and inclusiveness as the defining principles of authentic development. The element of local empowerment includes: diversification of local economies to support local needs and encourage cohesiveness, reduction of waste and the integration of trade with other communities. Empowerment strengthens people to live on their own; to upgrade their way of life from mere strategies for survival in their physical and social environment; to become aware of their constraints and to give them access to the resources required for removing such constraints; and to acknowledge their right to plan and control their destiny in accordance with the resources available to them.

7.4.6 *I also recommend that the church should embrace the gifts of ordinary members and be involved in social transformation on all levels of society.* The church must invest its wealth by organising co-operatives and local banks that do not seek to make profit by the “world’s” standards, but rather to promote the physical and spiritual growth of the community. They can also organise seminars and workshops on topics such as Christian faith and economic empowerment, agricultural projects, economic sustainability and others. A whole range of areas for training over time could include, for example, marketing and trading, auto mechanics, tailoring, shoe making, hair dressing and modern methods of farming.

7.4.7 *Promoting holistic well-being of community is another key recommendation.* This is because although health is the foundation of human activity; it opens up the gate back to the society and possibilities for social transformation. A healthy community health is not only about the absence of disease; it encompasses essential conditions and resources like peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, social justice and equity. This means that, by ensuring community hygiene, agricultural productivity, education, and economic empowerment and infrastructure, the church will grow a total well-being of communities.

7.5 Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Studies

The current study concludes that ECWA’s POD has contributed to the physical and spiritual well-being of poor communities in Northern Nigeria. However, as recommended in this chapter, I argued that active participation in the undertaking of community development that is based on a holistic approach as the central component of human development, and as a

theological framework for the church's pursuance of community development and poverty alleviation, is needed.

The study therefore recommends that there is need to research and compare the impact of the government, NGOs and faith-based intervention in poor communities in Nigeria and possibly look more closely at the interaction between these stakeholders. Further study on Gender and Development is crucial. More research on the concept of Transformational Development is needed considering the fact that there are several studies (books and articles) within the field community development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire for focus group and individual interviews

1. Focus Group Questions

Name of community-----

People-----

Population-----

Economic activities-----

Religious/denomination-----

1. Understanding the context of the selected communities

- a) Can you please describe key problems people are facing in your community?
- b) What do you think are the causes of these problems you mention?
- c) How have these problems affected the family or community's development?
- d) Explain your understanding of sin and its relationship to poverty?

2. Identifying cultural and religious change

- a) Explain some of the ECWA's People Oriented Development (POD) programs carried out for the well-being of the people in your community?
- b) Do you receive biblical teaching during these development activities?
- c) How do the insights and lessons obtained from the Bible studies help you in solving the problems in your community, if at all?

3. Identifying Attitudes towards Christians and the gospel

- a) How do people outside the church tend to view the church?
- b) Describe people's understanding of God in your community.
- b) Can you list the church weekly activities and
- c) How interested are the people in the above listed church activities?

4. Identifying spiritual life

- a) What do you think influences the lives of the people in your community?
- b) In times of crisis such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection, who do you trust or turn to or consult for help?

5. Identifying quality of Witness

- a) What language does POD staff use to communicate with you during development activities in your community?
- b) Do POD staff live with you in this community: if not why and yes how his presence does help you?
- c) How would the members of your community describe the POD staff?

2. The POD Staff Questions

Staff Name-----

Education Level-----

Work Experience-----

Position in POD-----

Married or single-----

1. Understanding the concept of transformational development

- a) Explain your understanding of sin and its relationship to poverty?
- b) Describe your understanding of transformation.

2 Identifying cultural and religious change

- a) Can you explain some of the development programs carried out by POD in this community?
- b) Do you give biblical teaching and insight during your development activities in this community? If you do, please explain why you do so?
- c) Describe how the insights and lessons obtained from the Bible studies have helped people in solving problems in their community.

2. Identifying quality of Witness

- a) Can you speak the local language of this community? If you do, please explain how it has helped you during the development program.
- b) Do you live in the community? If yes explain if it is helpful and if not why?
- c) Do you consider evangelism more important than social action? Why or why not?
- d) Do you pray and encouragement members of this community before embarking on development activities?
- e) Can you please describe your relationship with the members of this community?

3. The ECWA's Pastor Questions

Name and Surname-----

Education Level -----

Work Experience-----

Position in ECWA-----

1. Understanding the Mission/goals of ECWA and its relationship to development

- a) Describe ECWA's self-understanding as a church and its relationship to development within the Nigeria context.
- b) What do you consider to be the most important task of the church and why?
- c) Please describe the strategies applying towards achieving these goals?
- d) Explain your understanding of Transformational Development.
- e) Describe, if any, the relationship between what you are doing and Transformational Development.

2. Identifying Attitudes towards Christians and the gospel

- a) Can you please describe how you think people tend to view ECWA members?
- b) How do ECWA members understand the person of God?
- c) Can you list the church weekly activities and
- d) In your view how interested are ECWA members in the listed church activities?
- e) Please describe the involvement of ECWA members in evangelism?

3. Identifying spiritual life

- a) When the members of your church are faced with crisis such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection, who do they trust or turn to or consult for help and why?

Identifying quality of Witness

- a) Do you consider evangelism more important than social action? Why or why not?
- b) If the members of this community are asked to say something about ECWA how would they describe you?

Appendix B: Standards and indicators of TD (adapted from Myers, 2011:359)

| STANDARDS | INDICATORS |
|--|---|
| Cultural and religious change | |
| Churches in the project area are active in the political, social and cultural life of the area's communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of activities based on interviews with pastors and other church leaders. • Descriptions of church activities by community members, examples of services provided to the communities. |
| Development technology is accompanied by explanation, which points to the activity of God. | Examples of explanations based on interviews with staff and project committee members. |
| The Bible is used in appropriate ways with people in communities as they plan activities, make decisions and solve problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions of applications discussed during Bible studies in the community. • Examples based on interviews with staff and project committee members. |
| Attitudes towards Christians and the gospel | |
| Attitudes toward Christians become more positive over the life of the project. | Words used by community members to describe Christians. |
| People deepen their understanding of the nature of the God of the Bible. | Words used by community members to describe the character of the God of the Bible. |
| People become more open to listening to the gospel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people seeking or participating in discussions of spiritual things, attending Bible studies or attending church services. • Number of conversations about some aspect of the gospel between staff and community members. |
| | |

| Spiritual Power | |
|---|---|
| | Descriptions of what controls individual lives, based on interviews with community members. |
| | Descriptions of what people do or to whom they turn when they are afraid of something, based on interviews with community members, pastors and those who are sought for help. |
| | Descriptions by community people of whom or what they believe controls the lives of the development worker. |
| Quality of Witness | |
| How the Staff learns the local language, is culturally sensitive and show interest in learning and understanding local customs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations of language used as staff converse with community members. • Comparison of appearance of staff dwelling with typical dwellings in the community. |
| Staff members are perceived as caring people who love God and their neighbours. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff knowledge of the local religious beliefs and practices. • Words used by community members to describe the staff. |
| Staff are perceived as dependable people who pray and act as spiritual people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions by community members of prayer experiences with staff. • Observations of staff as they interact with community members' encouragement to pray and the inclusion of prayer in conversations or meetings. |

Appendix C: Some development projects

Children learning centre and church project



Rural road and agricultural project



Water supply project



Water and sanitation project



Appendix D: Sample transcriptions of interview and focus group discussion

1). Interview with POD Community Development Facilitator

Interviewer: Sir, can you please state some of the key problems people are facing in this community where you are serving?

Respondent: Some of the key problems people are facing in this community include: lack of formal education, access to political representation and economic backwardness. There is also a problem of good drinking water; the people are living in a rocky area so access to potable water is a big issue in this community. Poverty is another main problem in this community, majority of the people lack means of living. The issue of occultism and witchcraft thereby causing division among the people is another big problem in these communities. Hunger: the people do not usually have food all year round, drunkenness, environmental hazards, and experiences of sickness.

Interviewer: So what do you think are the causes of poverty in this community?

Respondent: Some of the causes of poverty in this community include: lack of education, ignorance on how to properly utilize the God given resources around and the spirit of dependency. The people here have the resource but how to make use of the resources around them is a problem. They also like to depend on what the government or other organization will do for them. Laziness is another cause of poverty. They do not want to work hard to earn a living rather waiting for what someone will do for them as individuals or as community.

Interviewer: Please state the causes of poverty in this community?

Respondent: Ignorance of the God's giving resources of the community and the proper utilization of the resources. The people have deficiency in proper management of the God given resources and laziness, the spirit or attitude of consuming rather than producing.

Interviewer: What is the key root of poverty in these communities?

Respondent: The key root of poverty in this community is the ignorance of how to discover the God given resources and also how to properly utilize what they have is a big problem. Almost all the people in this community depend on agriculture as a means of living. However, they keep cows but don't know how to use the cows to cultivate their land or even to use the cow dung as manure in order to fertilize the land. They are not being patient in preserving their crops so much that after harvest they sell everything and squander or misuse the money to the extent that before they next season they experience extreme hunger.

Interviewer: Based on your answers above can you please explain how it is affecting their families and communities development?

Respondent: Ignorance is actually affecting the development of these communities because I discovered that they have the resources but due to ignorance they are living in extreme poverty and hunger, they do not have enough food to eat all year round. Not that they did not have a good harvest, they will harvest plenty crop but within a short time it will finish. For example on market day particularly at harvest period people will just carry their farm product to the market without any reason no budget on what to buy they sell the crops and spent the money overnight and before they know what they know is finish. They are sick because don't

know how to mix food items such as protein, vitamin and minerals which can properly build their bodies and make them look healthy.

Interviewer: Describe your understanding of Transformational Development?

Respondent: Transformation is changing one's lifestyle to a better one. Transformation Development is when someone is transformed from the situation whereby he/she is living. Like the example of the fall of humankind, the coming of Jesus Christ is a way of transforming humankind so as to bring back that former relationship with God that was broken by sin. The restored relationship will enable humankind walk with God; that working with God is a transformation from sin to a spiritual life.

Interviewer: What role do POD play in the well-being of people in this community?

Respondent: The role POD play is to stimulate the people to act by themselves so that they will have a sustainable development. POD also serves as a catalyst and motivator. I use some motivational tools so as to carry people along in the communities I work. This helps people understand the situation they are and go into action by themselves. At the end the people out that they are one doing it not that someone is doing it for them.

Interviewer: Can you list some of the development programs of POD?

Respondent: We create awareness, community capacity building, economic empowerment, peace building, child right protection, food security, community base health care, and sustainable water supply. There is also what we call famers school. Farmer's school is where by the volunteers after they have finish their food security training they will go and demonstrate what they have learned in their communities under the supervision of the facilitator. Every aspect that is every stage of farming which will let the community sees how farming should be carried out. So it is just a learning school at the end we see what is the advantage over the traditional way of farming.

We also lay emphasis on economic empowerment. This is because in most of the homes there are so many needs, so soap training becomes an economic empowerment aspect in POD activities. It helps the women to meet some of the domestic need without waiting for the husband to do everything for them.

We are also doing our best in improving their health condition by encouraging each family to have a personal pit latrine.

Interviewer: Do you give biblical teaching during your development activities?

Respondent: Yes I do give biblical teaching. Even though most of the communities here are Muslim dominated area yet I use biblical references to educate people properly understand the aim of their development activities. In fact in almost all the projects I have a biblical verse that fits in to what I do. For example, in one of the communities when I talk about environmental protection I referred people to the book of Geneses particularly in the story of creation. I explain to the people about the responsibility that was bestowed on humankind on how to take care of the environment.

Interviewer: Ok sir. But why do you think it is important to use biblical passages during the development agenda?

Respondent: I use biblical references in my development activities because the Bible is the word of God and is the way of life.

Interviewer: Can you also explain if the use of biblical passages has help in solving the individual or community problems?

Respondent: Yes, yes the use of biblical passages has helped me help people in difference ways. A clear example is the issue of peace building. In this community there were clashes and serious confusion among the people about the issue of occultism, witches and wizards and court cases. At a point in time people where using cutlasses, machetes and other weapons to chest or pursue one another because of the above mention problem. But when I came we set up Bible studies prayer group in which the word of God is being studied and people are being prayed for, since then there is a high level of transformation in the community whereby people can now come together putting themselves together and are trying to solve their individual and community problems.

Interviewer: How do outsiders tend to view the church members in these communities?

Respondent: While, sometimes the non-believers and other denominations in these communities view ECWA members as special people; in fact they are view with high regards. Sometimes they see them as if they are worshipping different God only that the devil has blinded their faces that they cannot see clearly. for example in time of diarrhea epidemic you find out that among non-believer and others there is much difference because they usually have high level of infection compare to ECWA members.

Interviewer: What is the general understanding of God in this community?

Respondent: People are calling God, God, God, God, they are mentioning God, God, God in their day to day activities but in the practice if you analyse or look critically or carefully look at them you see that there is a less understanding about the kingdom of God. People do not really understand about what the kingdom of God is all about.

Interviewer: Can you please outline some of the church activities you have here?

Respondent: Apart from church activities which comprise morning and evening services, mid-week prayer, Sunday school and Bible studies there are agencies group's activities such as the new life for all, choir, women, youth and the men fellowship group meeting.

Interviewer: How interested are the people in the above mentioned activities?

Respondent: Yes, I can say that only those who belong to the agencies groups that make effort to attend the fellowships group activities. But when you talk about the church activities as listed above the attendance is very poor.

Interviewer: How often then do they come to you for spiritual guidance?

Respondent: Well, very few come to for spiritual guidance some go to their pastors and some go to the herbalist especially those who are not committed Christians.

Interviewer: What do you think influence the lives of the people?

Respondent: Most of the people in these communities are influence by globalization i.e. what is happening in the world, how to become wealthy modernization gargets.

Interviewer: When the members of these communities are with problems to whom do the turn to for help?

Respondent: When the members of these communities are face with different challenges some trust God still others trust the other ways. When I say other ways I mean there still others who use to consult the herbalist, witch doctors. They usually say this sickness is not ordinary it is not for the hospital or pastor affairs. About fifty per cent of the members of these communities consult herbalists, witch doctors.

Interviewer: In what ways do you help the people solve these problems?

Respondent: The method I use in helping the people is through awareness. I let people knows that it is only God who has a final solution to one's problem particularly in terms of healing God is the great physician. This is because the witch doctors usually cause confusion and conflict among the communities members. Experience have shown that when one consult witch doctors, the witch doctor will tell you that it is your father, mother or your father who is responsible for your problem. So through awareness we discourage people from consulting irrelevant people for solution to their problems, we also advise them where to go when there is a problem. Another thing we do is advocacy, we use to carry advocacy to clergy. This is because the clergy men are the community leaders, people look up to them; they listen to them and obey them in most cases.

Interviewer: What influences your life as a service provider in these communities?

Respondent: My motivation comes from God and my employers. I see this work as purely the hand of God in my life and ministry.

Interviewer: Can you speak the local language of the people where you are serving?

Respondent: Oh yes, I can speak the local language of the people.

Interviewer: Explain how this has helped you in the process of your work?

Respondent: My ability to speak the Hausa langue has help me greatly because there are some hidden practices and cultural things that it only takes the person who hears the langue can be able to distinguish. If a person want to work in this community and is not a Hausa speaker he/she will find it very difficult.

Interviewer: Thank you. Do you live in the communities where you are working?

Respondent: Actually, I do not live among the communities where I serve. The reason is that I have about eight communities so there is no way I will be in these communalities at the same time. But what I do is that I have chosen to stay in one place that is at Gani and go to those communities to perform my duties and comeback.

Interviewer: Do you think it would have been better if you were staying in the community?

Respondent: Of course, leaving in the community can help greatly because if one is not living in the community most of the things may not be made non to the development worker.

Interviewer: And what do the communities members say about you?

Respondent: Well I believe they will say I am trying although as a person I cannot conclude to say this is what they will say, but they have been saying that I am trying.

Interviewer: What name do they call you?

Respondent: They call me POD.

Interviewer: Do you pray and encourage them before conducting any development activities?

Respondent: Yes, I do pray, I do have a personal devotion before embarking on development activities and we also pray with them.

Interviewer: And do you think there is a good relationship between you and the people?

Respondent: Yes, I am sure that my general relationship with the people is cordial, there is a good understand.

Interviewer: What about the pastors in the local churches?

Respondent: In the same way, there is a good relationship between me and the pastors. But sometimes my relationship with the pastors is too poor, when there is a program organize by POD the facilitator have to on day to day visit. Most of the pastors show less concern about POD activities that is why I suggest that this subject be taught in the seminary.

Interviewer: Do you think it will be good to teach development studies in all ECWA theological schools?

Respondent: Of course, yes. It is important to teach community development in all the ECWA seminaries and Bible colleges. The reason is that most of the pastors are ignorance about community development. This is because you see some pastors are concern about spiritual development forgetting the physical need which may prevent somebody even to grow spiritually. So teaching this community development will help our ministers when they are dealing with the spiritual they can deal with the physical because some of the problems are physical not spiritual.

Interviewer: Thank you very much sir for given me the chance to interview you.

Respondent: Thank you too for coming. I wish all the best in your research.

2) A focus group discussion with a selected community

Interviewer: Can you please describe key problems people are facing in your community?

Respondents: We have problem with road and the medical care or health clinic and maternity, as well as electricity. This year, strong windstorm destroyed our houses. Come to think of it, there is object poverty. Many of our children who have gone to school and graduated have no jobs. Many of them have acquired skills but lacks take off capital. They are just idling away. The prevailing situation is openly aggravating matters as poverty is increasing. When God blesses us and we record bountiful harvest from our farms, our immediate challenge is how to bring the farm produce home, coupled with the challenge of bad road which makes it difficult to transport the farm produce to the market. Because of the lack of good or motor-able roads, men have to be carrying the crops on motorcycles to the market while women also transport the crops from the farm to the village on their heads and even to the market. Sequel to the poverty, in most areas, when our children complete primary and secondary schools, they do not proceed to Tertiary institution because their parents do not have the financial resources to send them to school. Only few of our children have gone to the University. Our church has not been spared by poverty.

Interviewer: Which of the above mention problems that have the greatest impact on the majority members of your community?

Respondents: What disturbs us most is lack of education. Lack of education is a major setback in this community. We believe that if only we can make our children acquire or attain a certain level of western education, gradually we shall be able to salvage ourselves from the difficulties. Our children would be able to provide the road, the clinic and maternity.

Interviewer: Based on your answer can you please explain how this is affecting your family and community development?

Respondents: As you know education is not limited to knowing how to read and write. So there are many ways in which lack of education is affecting us. For example: Our children these days do not give much regard to instructions by parents. They are into many vices, such as alcoholism, smoking, even taking hard drugs. There is the problem of womanizing, theft and unemployment. Married women are not left out, as they indulge in adultery just to make ends meet. Many women also have problems with what to do to keep themselves busy. Many of them have acquired skills but lacks take off capital. We also have the challenge of witchcraft and secret cult. We however thank God because our prayers are yielding fruit because these are in the decrease. There is lack of unity in this community. We are disorganized. Everybody appears to be on his or her own. There are evident of jealousy, envy, hatred in our community. Peaceful coexistence is lacking amongst us, ignorance and inability to dignify who we are and what we have. Our belief is that if there is unity, we shall be able to overcome poverty. We shall be able to do something to better our homes and our town, nothing will be impossible to accomplish. Certainly, poverty is the cause of hatred and jealousy. Whatever we seek from God, we won't get it because of the malice and hatred we harbour in our hearts against one another.

Still on the issue of alcoholism or drunkenness our children and other unbelievers shuttle from one beer parlour to another from village to village on drinking spree because they are idle and jobless. If they were able to go to school and are learned they will be looking for jobs in the

city instead of staying at home, running up and down disturbing the peace our community. Another problem is lack of plan in the home or family life. For instance, as a wife, if my husband is struggling hard to bring something to the house, if I don't plan well, on home to use what he brought within a short while everything will vanish. If for instance when he brings harvest home and he tries to take everything to sell at the market, it is my duty as a wife to advise him on the implication of his action. It means that husband and wife must reason together if they want to have positive change in their family life. Even in farming, times have changed. The method of farming or agricultural activities applied in those days is not the same as modern farming techniques. Therefore, we must appreciate what we have and plan well, if not, poverty will persist.

Interviewer: How then do you combat or overcome poverty that parades the land as mentioned above?

Respondents: We combat poverty through farming and rearing of animals or husbandry. When we farm or rear animals, we eat thereof and sell some portion to be able to raise money to address other family needs and attending social ceremonies such as wedding, naming ceremonies, burials, school fees and medical bills. It is from the sales of farm products or animals that we buy fertilized and then to settle taxes or community charges and school needs. Unfortunately, some people, what they realize from the harvest in a year can hardly take care of all their needs. For some people, by the middle of the year, they are already facing hunger, to the extent that they go borrowing. In such circumstances, such people are unable to give offering or tithes and others charges in the church. When we are in dire need, we often compelled to take loan to repay after harvesting, of course with same interest. This makes it easy for us to survive the hard times, but of course it has its drawback, because it is often bitter or painful at payback time. We wish we could have a better means whereby we would not have to be indebted and repay debts with interest.

Interviewer: What do you understand by sin, and does it by any means have any relationship with poverty?

Respondent: Sin is engaging or doing what displeases God. If you are sinning, you cannot escape poverty, but if you are with God, you won't suffer from poverty. Sin breeds poverty a lot. For example when one indulges in drinking alcohol and or fornication or adultery is that not sin? Such a person will certainly look for money by all means to indulge him/her-self in an improper conduct. In fact based on my understanding sin displeases God. Another characteristic of sin is envy. This is because since you envy your brother or sister for what he or she has, God could block your chances of acquiring yours. Therefore, I see poverty as a child of sin. No one who indulges in sinful practice that is not poor in this community. Moreover spiritual aspect of human poverty seems to be dangerous because it could lead people to eternal death. You may be physically wealthy but lack the fear of God which is equally poverty.

There is this other sin that God does not like. For instance, if my friend and I are into farming like groundnut or anything kind of farm crop and my friend records more harvest because of his or her hard work, I may be jealous at the person, and may even plan to pull the person down. Such things bring down the church and the community. This thing is more common or peculiar among the women in our community. We envy one another a lot.

Interviewer: What role does the ECWA's people Oriented Development (POD) plays in the well-being of the people in your community?

Respondents: POD has been trying to educate us and creating awareness concerning the prevailing circumstances as well as the causes of poverty in our community and how we can get out of our predicament through self-help activities. POD has been teaching us how we can salvage our situations by self-help and communal work. They do that by encouraging us to go into trading or commercial activities, rearing animals and engaging in different activities which can be of help to us. POD has been raising our consciousness's and showing us ways of overcoming difficulties that have been bedevilling our homes because even up to the present, we are still ignorant, but by the grace of God, this year, we shall combat poverty in this town. They taught us to struggle on our own to get what we desire, and that we should not live like beggars every day, not to wait for some relations somewhere, or wait on government to do everything for us.

POD has been teaching us trading techniques as well as agriculture and cleanliness and also how to deposit our money in the bank. We have noticed some positive and remarkable changes in the Church and the community as a whole. It is obvious that if you want something from government, you must also do something. POD has taught us how to dig and build toilet. Because of the coming of POD, in this community we have been able to raise the church building as you can see it. As a result of the coming of POD, we in this community have been able to save 10 per cent on three occasions to help in community needs. And because of POD, MDG has dug three bore-holes for us in this community. POD has been able to make people in this area to cooperate with one another. For example, POD has caused people to give us the backing by joining hands in building the church. These stones you are seeing in the church were the result of joint effort or communal effort. And because of POD, we have been able through community effort erected a bridge across a stream as a result of which we cross over easily now.

Interviewer: Can you please describe the mission and goals of POD in your community?

Respondents: As we mention above, I think POD wants us to get of our poverty situation. As you can see they teach us some business-tips and techniques, like how to fry beans cake, some are taught how to rear sheep and goats. Presently, I have six cows in my house; you will go and see them.

Interviewer: Do you receive biblical teaching during development activities carried out by the POD in your community?

Respondent: Yes we do receive biblical teaching during the development activities. They teach us the ward of God, and how to read the Holy Bible. They even brought us a black board so that we could learn how to read and write what we learn from the Bible. These two women you are seeing now, before POD came, we were ignorant, but we thank the POD staff. We have begun to read the Bible and we even know some Hausa writing. We have learned what the Bible says about laziness, idle people and what is the benefit of hard work. So by the grace of God we are making progress in our knowledge of God and what he want us to be in life.

Interviewer: Have the insights and lessons obtained from the Bible help you in solving your family and community the problems, if at all?

Respondents: You ask if the biblical insights have helped us in solving our problems in this community. Well I want to let you know that with the help of POD we now experience unity and commitment to studying the Holy Bible. Certainly much learning has taken place. Through POD effort now if there is any church project to be carried out; even those who do not go to church also join in such tasks. With the coming of POD and when they started teaching in this community, the church attendance is filled to capacity. I think if the church does well, so also will the people of the area be good, and the contrary will be the case if the church does not fare well.

Interviewer: How do your neighbours (I mean non-ECWA or even unbelievers) describe your lifestyle?

Respondents: Oh yes. People, especially our neighbours have good testimonies about us. Because of POD the people say, before now, the ECWA people were not united, but now they are united, they do their things together. They attend church activities, and the word of God is preached to them. As a result, even those who are not believers are also taking good care of their compound and the surrounding. They begin to see the light in our lives and even some of them are beginning to go to church. These days, they leave their wives to come and learn with us in the church premises. There's something one of the teachers taught us that we should enter the town if we notice what some people are doing that is improper, we should inform them and teach them what they should do. Even I have benefited from that. Because they came and organized my compound because prior to their coming, my house was scattered and unkempt, with Pots were just lying about the compound. But because of POD I have gained a lot, to the extent that I teach other people. If I see anything that is correct, I point it out and they take correction, and they are happy.

We are grateful to God for the teaching. We pray that God cause to make more progress, and stay alive on the progressive track. People are watching and assessing our life styles as they know us by our conduct. Although when POD first came many people were coming for the program but now, everybody has gone, leaving only two of us with great responsibility among the women wing.

Interviewer: Please describe people's understanding of God in your community?

Respondents: Yes, we have the knowledge about God although not so deep. The cause of inappropriate knowledge about God is self – imposed, the people are not serious. It is the person who gives his/herself learning that acquires the knowledge. We often have Bible studies, but very few people who attend. If we are to be frank, there is no way you will know about God if you do not study the word of God, the Bible.

Interviewer: What are some of the church activities carry out here in your church?

Respondents: The main church activity is the Sunday worship service. We also have weekly activities like daily morning devotion at 4:30am and midweek prayer every Wednesday at 4:30. There is also a general prayer meeting which takes at 7:30 after dinner. During this prayer at an appointed time, there will be total silence everywhere in the town because of the prevailing circumstances in the land, that is why we are we are praying for peace. There are fellowship groups in the church; we have women, men and youth fellowship.

Interviewer: How interested are your members in the above listed church activities?

Respondent: Truly speaking most of the people are not committed to weekly activities like Sunday worship service. The only group we can comment is the women fellowship but the rest we still need God's intervention in their lives.

Interviewer: Please explain what you observe that is really influencing the lives of the people in your community?

Respondents: People are more concerned about the things of the world than godly things. For instance, when it comes to football, you see the youth and even married men would prefer to go and watch football. The issue of politics is also a big problem. People run after the politician looking for what to eat. Most of the people are influence by self-desire and worldly pleasure than the fear and love of God. People go about drinking, womanizing, but when it comes to the things of God they are nowhere to be found.

Interviewer: In that case when you are face with problems such as sickness, fear, oppression, neglect or rejection, who do you trust or turn to for help?

Respondents: Some of the people in this community when something happen to them such as the sickness you mention and family issues they will invite a Pastor to come and pray. However, there are many who prefer to go and consult witchdoctors (herbalist) or prayer house. They do not care about going to pastor, it is only when they may have reached a deadlock before they will return to the Pastor's house. When they may have gone to several herbalist, or relations or prayer houses and there is no solution, they will now reseat to their last hope, the Pastor.

Interviewer: How does POD staff help you in addressing these problems?

Respondents: Yes, the POD staff has been helping a lot. She has been encouraging us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to grow in the fear of the Lord. We believe that the she is doing this so that we can experience both physical and inspirit growth.

Interviewer: Please describe your relationship in this community with the POD staff?

Respondent: If you us about our relationship with POD worker in this community we will say our relationship is very cordial. Our people love her so much, we call her Mama POD, to the extent that when shell fell ill, the people were concerned and asking about her health.

Interviewer: What language does she use to communicate with you during the development activities in your community?

Respondents: Wherever she comes, she communicates with us in Hausa, she also speaks to us in English, and she also uses our local language.

Interviewer: Does the POD staff lives with you in this community, if not why and if yes how has it helps you in the community?

Respondents: No the staff does not live in this community but lives in our DCC headquarter. According to what we were told we are not the only community. So there is no way a staff will come and stay here with us. However we would love that any of the workers to come and stay in this community so that we can be helped at all time.

Appendix E: A consent letter to ECAW's POD regarding the research



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Department of Practical Theology
& Missiology
Faculty of Theology
171 Dorp Street
Stellenbosch
7600
South Africa
18 September 2013

To whom it may concern

Re: Request to conduct a research study:

Ephraim Yoms is a pastor in ECWA Lafia DCC Nigeria and currently a PhD student in Practical Theology (Theology and Development Studies) Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He is expected to conduct a research study as a requirement for the degree. The research study has an empirical dimension. I therefore request for permission for him to conduct this study in your community.

The topic for Rev Yoms' research is: Transformational Development as Theological Challenge: An Evaluation of ECWA People Oriented Development Program.

This is a Practical Theological study as it involves an evaluation of the impact of ECWA's POD programs in the lives of beneficiaries. The aim is to access and understand their spiritual transformation as a result of POD programs. The participants in the study are proprietor, social service providers and beneficiaries who are recipients of social services. The research will run for the duration of four months, namely October 2013 to January 2014. Both individuals and groups will be interviewed and each interview will be for about one and half hours. Participants will be asked to voluntarily participate and will be allowed to withdraw their participation for whatever reason at any time. The research will be conducted in absolute confidentiality and the anonymity of the participants will be protected at all stages of the research as well as in the reports on the final findings. Should you have any questions regarding the participants' rights as research subjects, you may contact the researcher (yomsepho@yahoo.com or +27822669010, +2348105250996) or contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.



DEPARTEMENT VAN PRAKTIËS TEOLOGIE • DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Teologie en Ontwikkelingsstudies • Chair for Theology Development Studies
Privaatsak/Private Bag X1 • Matieland • 7602 • Suid-Afrika/South Africa
■ +27 21 808 3856 • ☎ +27 21 808 3856 • nbowers@sun.ac.za



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Your cooperation in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Bowers Du Toit'.

Dr Nadine Bowers Du Toit
Supervisor
Senior Lecturer: Theology and Development
Tel: +27 808 3856
E-mail: nbowers@sun.ac.za

Appendix F: Written permission from the ECWA Headquarters



Evangelical Church Winning All

ECWA Headquarters

No.1 Noad Road, P.O.Box 63, Jos Plateau State, Nigeria. Fax:234-073-457624
Telephone: 073-450902,450901,454482,454484, E-mail: ecwaheadquarters@ecwang.org, website: www.ecwang.org

28th May 2013

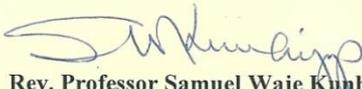
To whom it may concern

LETTER OF PERMISSION

With reference to the above subject.

I am writing to certify that Pastor Ephraim Yoms is a Doctoral student at Stellenbosch University with student number 16428331 in Theology and Development studies. Pastor Yoms is our employee and he has our consent to conduct his research in the People Oriented Development of ECWA (POD).

Please feel free to contact me for any further inquiry.



Rev. Professor Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, PhD
ECWA General Secretary

*Founded as S.I.M 1893, Registered as the Evangelical Church of West Africa 1956, Now Evangelical Church Winning All
Registered Trustees: Rev. Dr. D. B. Waya, Rev.(Dr.) Mari Habu, Chief (Dr.) S. A. Oshatoba, Rev. Dr. Simon Ibrahim,
Dr. Basil O. Nwosu, Dr. Philip S. Usman, Elder Musa Faruk Yisa, Dr. Peter Shehu Abdu
All Correspondence Should Be Addressed To The ECWA General Secretary*

Appendix G: Ethical clearance approval



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Approval Notice New Application

19-Aug-2013
YOMS, Ephraim

Proposal #: DESC_Yoms2013

Title: Transformational Development as Theological: An Evaluation of the ECWA People Oriented Development Programs

Dear Mr Ephraim YOMS,

Your DESC approved **New Application** received on **29-Jul-2013**, was reviewed by members of the **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on **16-Aug-2013** and was approved.

Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: **16-Aug-2013 -15-Aug-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 (DESC_Yoms2013)** 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:

Permission letters
Research proposal
DESC form
Questionnaire

Sincerely,

Susara Oberholzer
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)



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Approval Notice Amendment

07-Aug-2015
Yoms, Ephraim E

Proposal #: DESC/Yoms/July2013/43

Title: **Transformational Development as Theological Challenge: An Evaluation of the ECWA People Oriented Development Programmes**

Dear Mr Ephraim Yoms,

Your **Amendment** received on **07-Aug-2015**, was reviewed by members of the **Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)** via Expedited review procedures on **07-Aug-2015** and was approved.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

Appendix H: A digital turnitin receipt

<http://learn.sun.ac.za/mod/turnitintooltwo/view.php?id=79786&do=d..>



Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

| | |
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