PHD Thesis Title:

Experience of World Vision India Fieldworkers – Role and Discretion at the Interface of Organisation and Communities

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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June 2019

DECLARATIONS

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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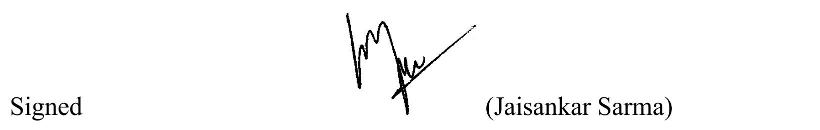

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Abstract

The agency and the role of fieldworkers in development NGOs are very important as they shape development projects through their cumulative daily interactions with community members and local partners. Using *Street-Level Bureaucracy* by Lipsky (1980), this research examined the tensions experienced by NGO fieldworkers, discretion they exercised and the coping mechanisms they put in place in responding to such tensions in their work. The overall research methodology is qualitative, with the use of in-depth qualitative interviews for data collection from fieldworkers and their managers in seven long-term, rural development programmes of World Vision India. Additionally, various documents of World Vision International and World Vision India were analysed.

This research has shown that the street-level bureaucracy as a framework is applicable for NGO fieldworkers albeit with some important differences. NGO fieldworkers experienced tensions in their work primarily because they were instrumentalised and their agency was not intentionally considered as an asset in the daily practices of the NGO. Fieldworkers experienced specific tensions as a result of policy conflicts and ambiguity and organisational performance management expectations due to a mismatch between organisational expectations and community dynamics. Fieldworkers were constrained in their exercise of discretion due to the pervasiveness of managerial approach and developed coping mechanisms through routines of interactions to manage their tensions.

This research adds to and expands the street-level bureaucracy in important ways. NGO fieldworkers expressed their discretion differently than how Lipsky envisages. NGO fieldworkers developed routines in their interactions with communities in order to make the complex task of implementing NGO plans and policies more manageable at the community level and not for the purpose of limiting demand from clients or controlling clients. Routines of interaction observed in NGO fieldworkers differed from Lipsky's and included the following: a) routine of intermediation and distancing, b) routine of rationalisation c) manipulation of target data reporting and d) use of personal resources. Additionally, this research observed the critical role that values and faith plays in the expression of positive discretion by NGO fieldworkers. Positive discretionary behaviour was observed when the values or particular competencies of fieldworkers guided the choices made by fieldworkers, resulting in improved benefits for clients. There were several instances of fieldworkers going beyond their call of duty, drawing from their own personal resources to address some of the policy gaps. Perception of programme fit and managerial support enabled the fieldworkers to consistently express their positive discretion.

Key Words: NGO Fieldworkers, Development Discourses, Street-Level Bureaucracy, Actor-oriented approaches, Policy Conflicts, Design, Monitoring and Evaluation, Child Sponsorship, Fieldworker tensions, discretion, coping mechanisms

Acknowledgments

At the outset of this thesis, I would like to give thanks to God, who is the source of every good and perfect gift, including the gift of learning. I would like to thank my wife, Saro, for without her loving support I would not have even dared to start this PHD journey, let alone reach the finish-line. I want to thank my children, Joshua and Pavithra, whose own academic pursuits inspired mine.

I would like to sincerely thank World Vision International for supporting me in my studies and World Vision India for giving me full access to their staff and documents for my research. Their willingness to allow someone to critically study their work is an indication of their desire to continually improve their practices.

I want to express my profound gratitude to the faculty and staff at the OCMS who provided a rich learning environment that was flexible in nature and fitting for people like me who return to pursue academic scholarship after a gap of many years. OCMS faculty were a caring group of Christian scholars who provided intellectual stimulation and support along the way. This PHD research and thesis would not have been possible without the amazing supervisors that I had: Dr. Bryant Myers, Professor of Transformational Development at the School of Intercultural Studies at the Fuller Theological Seminary and Dr. Ruth Kattumuri, Co-Director at the India Observatory at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences. They were always available, encouraging, insightful and knowledgeable. They accompanied me in my journey from the initial research proposal to the final submission of the thesis. They patiently read all my drafts and provided timely feedback. Even though Dr. Alan Fowler of the Wits Business School was not a member of the supervisory team, he provided valuable guidance, for which I am very grateful. I would also like to thank my colleagues in World Vision International, Camilla Symes and Dr. Jayakumar Christian for reviewing various chapters, responding to some of the findings and providing me feedback based on their knowledge of World Vision's work and their experience.

Last but not least, I want to thank the fieldworkers of World Vision India who trusted me and shared their time, perspectives, experiences and life stories with me. It is to them that I dedicate this thesis.

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List of Abbreviations

ADP	Area Development Programme
AIADMK	All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Khazagam (*Tamil Nadu regional political party*)
BJP	Bharathya Janata Party (*Indian political party*)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDF	Community Development Facilitator
CWB	Child Well-Being
CWBO	Child Well-Being Outcomes
DME	Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Khazagam (*Tamil Nadu regional political party*)
DPA	Development Programming Approach
FBO	Faith-Based Organisations
FY	Fiscal Year
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LEAP	Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
OCMS	Oxford Centre for Mission Studies
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (*Hindu nationalistic organisation*)
SLB	Street-Level Bureaucrat
TD	Transformational Development
TDI	Transformational Development Indicators
VDC	Village Development Committee
WV	World Vision
WVI	World Vision International
WVUS	World Vision United States

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

1.1 Critical Role of NGO Fieldworkers in Development

The pivotal role of the fieldworker at the interface of NGOs and communities has been recognised for a long time (e.g. Taylor and Jenkins, 1989; Tilakaratna, 1987). This function has been characterised in many ways: facilitator, change agent, gatekeeper, technical knowledge resource and relational broker. Fieldworkers have also been challenged as 'modernising disruptors' of tradition and culture, and agents of foreign interests. The importance of fieldworkers in NGOs doing development work cannot be over-emphasised. They are the ones at the coalface, representing the organisational vision, mission and values to communities and planning and implementing programmes on behalf of NGOs. They are also expected to be the guardians of the feedback loop by ensuring that the hopes and aspirations of the people that NGOs serve are reflected and related to the strategies and plans that NGOs end up with. However, very little attention has been paid in development studies to the lives and roles of the fieldworkers in development programmes, despite the recognition of the transformative nature of the work done by them. The role of fieldworkers from developing countries remains unexplored and undervalued (Ahmad, 2012:177; Fechter and Hindman, 2011:5). Though the fieldworker is often at the lowest rung of the organisational hierarchy, he or she is nevertheless in a critical position to make or break the project (Jackson, 1997:239). The critical role of frontline fieldworkers is well captured in the following statement:

> Defining the role and competencies of change agents is vital for effective development. Get this wrong and no matter how much else is done well, sustainable development will not be likely (Fowler, 1997:60).

Development projects of NGOs are shaped through cumulative daily interactions of fieldworkers with community members and local partners over a period of time (Jackson, 1997:239). A fieldworker provides the interface between the NGO and people, interpreting projects to communities, as well as community realities and perspectives to NGOs. By virtue of their presence in communities and the intermediary role they play, a fieldworker may not necessarily exist as a passive instrument, but has the opportunity to actively shape the content and quality of community engagement in

programming processes. Project designs or plans, when they are developed, reflect the intentions of what the NGO would like to accomplish sometime in the future, but it is the fieldworker who implements project designs in the reality of any given moment – in contexts that are more complex and dynamic than what can be portrayed in neatly packaged design documents. A fieldworker is thus required to play an interpretive role between NGO and communities in managing diverse expectations and implementing programmes in messy and dynamic contexts, leaving ample room for exercising judgment and discretion.

1.2 Expectations for Fieldworkers

Development discourses within an NGO, its formal and informal organisational culture and its planning and management systems shape the NGO expectations for its fieldworkers.

Development discourse is not only about how development is described in the formal policies and documents of the organisation, but also how it is assumed, discussed and practiced in its day-to-day life. Development discourse of an NGO could be based on a rationalistic and scientific view, in which development is primarily understood as a management exercise of implementing a plan developed by technical experts. This understanding leads to a scenario where the role of the fieldworker is to faithfully implement plans developed by others. Alternatively, theories of change underlying development could emphasise that social changes happen through participation and empowerment of poor communities to analyse information and take actions on their priorities. If development is seen as an open learning process of exploration where poor people play a central role, then the role of the fieldworker is primarily a facilitator of participatory processes. Development could also be understood as mobilising communities to claim their rights and entitlements given to them through universal human rights or country-specific laws with the goal of transformation of power relations. Based on this view, the role of the fieldworker is as an activist in promoting responsible and empowered citizenry and accountable governance. Finally, development could also be seen as a complex and adaptive system, characterised by iterative learning and approaches that are innovative, risk-taking and network-based. In such a case the role of the fieldworker becomes one of a searcher, networker, connector, innovator or boundary spanner. It is seldom that any

one of these discourses exists exclusively in an NGO, but the dominant mode of thinking plays a major role in shaping the role of the fieldworker.

Planning and management systems of NGOs could be located somewhere on a continuum: at one end of the continuum where development is primarily viewed as a management exercise of implementing sound plans developed by experts which are not easily amenable for changes. And at the other end, development is seen as an open, participatory learning process that recognises the unpredictable and dynamic elements in a given context, which are not easily amenable for planning and management control, nevertheless seen as crucial to the success or failure of projects. Here, planning process is seen as inevitable, but plans themselves are more flexible. Additionally, the more the planning and management system of an NGO is towards an open and participatory learning process, greater the space and freedom fieldworkers would have in their daily practices. However, most development NGOs typically approach project cycle management through the use of planning tools such as logical framework to represent theories of how project interventions would bring about the intended changes. The demands for upfront planning, fast-paced approach to implementation of pre-planned activities and expectations for cost-effectiveness and immediate results tend to characterise many donor funded development projects of NGOs. According to Fowler whether fieldworkers are valued, incentivised and rewarded by the NGO management for being responsive to communities, collaborating with partners and promoting downward accountability, or only for diligently implementing pre-planned programmes and submitting reports on time, will directly determine how fieldworkers carry out their work (1990:17).

Administrative and reporting requirements and other commitments take up significant portion of fieldworkers' time. For example, a recent mapping of time use by fieldworkers in World Vision offices in December 2018 found that they spent almost 40% of their time on child sponsorship activities and 20% of their time on other administrative and reporting activities, leaving only about 40% of their time for programming and community engagement activities. Most fieldworkers reported that they usually worked between 10 to 12 hours everyday for five or six days of the week. According to Ramalingam institutional demands on the fieldworker for information and reports can add a huge burden on the fieldworkers and take away time from their community engagement (2013:3). It is not uncommon in the aid system, including

NGOs, for staff to spend up to a quarter of their time on providing information and reports. If the organisational culture views plans as blueprints for implementation, then any time spent on process elements such as eliciting participation of people or relationship building could be perceived as unaccounted, a waste of time and under-performance by the organisational management, as there are pressures to deliver on pre-planned project activities within time and budget.

1.3 Fieldworkers and Their Work Contexts

NGO fieldworkers are often located in communities away from the NGO headquarters and project offices. Fieldworkers' work contexts are different from their managers and almost everyone else in the organisation. They are at the lowest rung of the NGO management structure. They are expected by their organisation to understand the community contexts in which they live, promote community participation in programme planning, implementation and monitoring and provide timely information and reports to NGO management. Being away from NGO headquarters and project offices, fieldworkers may not fully understand the organisational context or demands that their management faces from donors and other stakeholders, but only what is being demanded of them.

Unless they originally come from the communities in which they work, there might be a social distance between fieldworkers and the people they serve. Community members may not see them as *lowly* NGO workers, but as representatives of rich and powerful NGOs that have financial resources and access to important information and people. Also, fieldworkers directly hear and see the needs and opportunities in communities on a first-hand basis and experience conflicts that occur during the course of programme implementation. They might get enrolled into the agenda of community elites who might want to benefit from NGO programmes and, in turn, enrol them into their agenda in order to expedite programme implementation or resolve conflicts they experience. They may well understand certain aspects of community contexts in which they work, but as the anonymous quote goes, "*we don't know who discovered water, but it wasn't fish*". Those embedded in a particular context may not be able to objectively view and understand their contexts fully.

1.4 Fieldworker Agency and Discretion

Giddens says that to be a human being is to be a purposive agent (1984:3). Two principal elements constituting agency are knowledgeability and capability of individuals to make free choices and take action to realise the purposes of those choices (ibid, 1993:90,96). In development studies, this notion of agency may apply to the people that NGOs serve, as well as fieldworkers of NGOs who work with them. However, according to Jackson development studies might have given too much importance to issues of planning and management systems prevalent in the aid sector, while presenting fieldworkers as more powerless to affect the system than they actually are (1997:237). The fieldworker has power in informal ways and lived realities of communities. Fieldworkers have opportunities to express their agency relationally, in processes of social interactions so as to influence their own NGO management, community members and others (ibid, 1997:244). It is likely that the agency of the fieldworkers interacts with the broader structure of the NGO's organisational culture, mandates and management and planning systems in contributing to community engagement in development projects. According to Holmes, fieldworkers' personal characteristics, preferences, behaviour and their ability to choose between action and inaction can interact with the planning and management systems of the NGO in determining the negotiated character of development outcomes (2001:8). Fieldworker discretion, however invisible can come into play in a number of areas in their everyday work. For example: the selection of community members to take part in consultations and participative methodologies; facilitation of programming planning and implementation processes; representation and interpretation of outcomes from community consultations and participatory exercises to inform decisions; determining criteria for selection of beneficiaries for specific activities; amount of programme and budget information shared with community members; information on communities and programme implementation passed on to NGO management; the content to be included in the formal reports; so on and so forth.

2. STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRACY

Lipsky (1980) coined the term 'street-level bureaucracy' to describe the policy-making role of public service workers of government agencies who have discretion in the execution of their work in providing services to citizens. This would include teachers,

police officers, social workers, judges, health workers and many other public employees who interact with citizens on a daily basis and provide them with access to government programmes. Lipsky argued that the routines established by street-level bureaucrats to cope with uncertainties and pressures they face *become* the public policies experienced by clients rather than intents of policies, as they exist on paper (1980:xii). The same argument could be applied to some extent for NGO fieldworkers – experiences of communities that NGOs serve might be different from what NGO policies and programme design documents state. NGO fieldworkers might use their discretion and coping mechanism to bridge this gap and manage their tensions. This autonomy and discretion of fieldworkers could either help or hinder the policy objective that the NGO seeks to implement through its projects. The diagram below illustrates the position of fieldworkers at the interface between NGOs and communities.

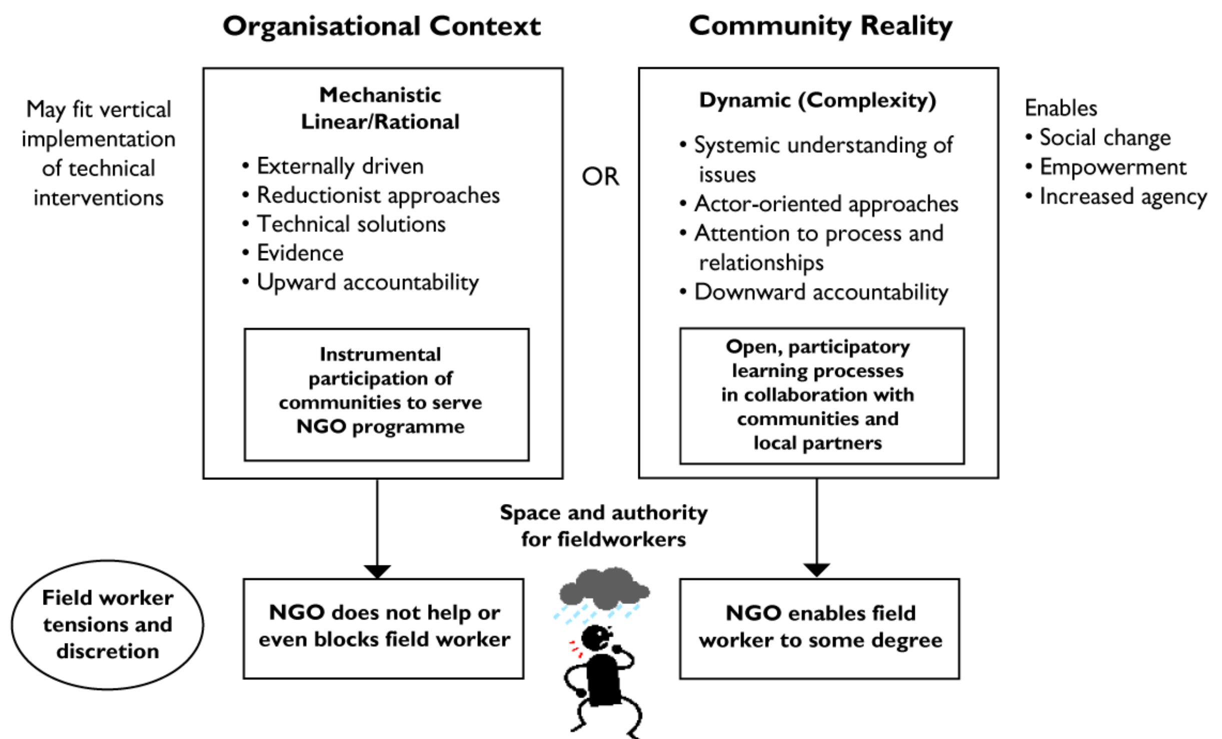


Diagram 1: Fieldworker Tensions

In applying the framework of street-level bureaucracy to NGO workers, it is understood that there are substantial differences between frontline workers of government agencies that Lipsky writes about in *Street-Level Bureaucracy* (1980) and NGO fieldworkers. Unlike government agencies, NGOs don't have the statutory authority. However, there are some similarities as well. For example, both government

frontline workers and NGO fieldworkers interact on a daily basis with individuals and client groups who their respective agencies serve. NGOs with financial resources, providing essential services to people, can have significant influence among their client groups similar to government workers. For these reasons, it is worth examining the street-level bureaucracy for its relevance to NGO contexts.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As explained above, the main concern of this research is to examine the tensions or constraints experienced by NGO fieldworkers as they work at the interface between the organisation and communities, the discretion they exercise and the coping mechanisms they put in place in responding to such constraints in their work. The main research question for this PHD thesis is: *To what extent are the NGO fieldworkers able to manage the tensions experienced in their daily practices as they work at the interface between the organisation and communities?* Sub-questions under the main question include:

1. What NGO organisational policy-related conflicts do fieldworkers experience as they work at the grassroots?
2. What challenges do fieldworkers experience as they try to meet NGO performance expectations and accountability requirements?
3. What formal and informal elements of the organisational practices and culture support or hinder meeting such expectations?
4. From the perspectives of fieldworkers, what are the community expectations for the NGO-initiated development programmes and to what degree do community members enable meeting such expectations through their participation?
5. What are the beliefs and actual daily practices of the fieldworkers and how do they help them to manage any tensions they experience in their work?

The working hypothesis is that fieldworkers are able to effectively manage any tensions they experience and express discretion in support of NGO objectives to the extent they feel enabled by their management and the formal and informal elements of the organisational culture, perceive responsiveness from communities to participate in the NGO development programme and establish routines and coping mechanisms in their actual daily practices.

The term fieldworker applies to persons who play the intermediary role between the NGO and communities being served through development projects. Fieldworkers implement NGO-funded development programmes in communities and are paid employees of the NGO. Fieldworker discretion is defined as the right to choose between specific types of action and inaction in a given situation by the fieldworker. This involves judgment and interpretation of what is stated or not stated in a project design, plan or NGO policy and application of the same in a specific context by the fieldworker.

4. RESEARCH SETTING AND APPROACH

The setting for this research was World Vision International, an International NGO doing community development work in 67 countries. World Vision is one of the international NGOs that place emphasis on fieldworkers and their role in communities. This is an essential part of their development approach as described in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Organisational discourse on development, including its formal policies, strategy and design documents, and informal aspects of the organisational culture and practice of development over the years provide the overall context for this research. Fieldworkers from seven long-term Area Development Programmes (ADP) of World Vision India in the state of Tamil Nadu were selected for the purpose of field data collection. World Vision uses a community development approach in ADPs to strengthen the capacity of communities and local partners to improve the wellbeing and development of their children. ADPs are planned and implemented within specific geographic areas of a country, selected due to high levels of vulnerability in children and communities. ADPs typically run for about fifteen years, largely funded through child sponsorship. All programmes selected for the study had been running for at least three years.

Each Area Development Programme selected had between three and six fieldworkers, with assignment of a number of communities for which each fieldworker was responsible. Fieldworkers lived in one of the communities they served. Fieldworkers were World Vision India’s representatives to the communities, with responsibilities for keeping good relationships, promoting community participation in programmes and monitoring of sponsored children. Each fieldworker looked after

between 10,000 and 20,000 people spread out in about 10 to 25 villages and monitored between 400 and 750 registered children.

This research was led by an insider-researcher, a senior staff member in World Vision International. Ethical issues were considered as part of the research design. Efforts were made to avoid or limit any bias resulting from insider research and maximise opportunities. The overall research methodology could be described as qualitative, with the selective use of phenomenological inquiry tools and processes to ensure the research findings are expressed in fieldworkers' own voices to the maximum extent possible. In-depth qualitative interviews were used for data collection from 27 fieldworkers and their managers in seven ADPs. Additionally, various documents of World Vision International and World Vision India were sourced and analysed. Additional data was collected from limited number of Village Development Committee representatives and selected senior leaders of World Vision International to triangulate the primary data from fieldworkers. Data analysis of both qualitative interviews and documents involved organising the data in transcripts and finding themes through a process of coding to sort the data with the aid of computer software MAXQDA and representing the data in discussions with the use of relevant secondary data.

5. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

While a number of research studies have anecdotal references to fieldworkers, there are very few that focus on the topic of NGO fieldworkers and how their presence, everyday choices and behaviour within and outside the planning and management system affect NGO policy and programme objectives. This particular research undertaken within the context of World Vision's work in India addresses this critical gap in development studies. This thesis applied the theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy by Lipsky (1980) empirically to research the discretionary behaviour of NGO fieldworkers and through findings expands the theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy at least in two different ways:

(1) NGO fieldworkers expressed their discretion differently than how Lipsky envisages. According to Lipsky, street-level bureaucrats develop patterns of practices in order to limit demand from clients, maximise the available resources and control clients (1980:82,83). NGO fieldworkers developed routines in their interactions with communities in order to make the complex task of implementing NGO plans and policies more manageable at the

community level and not for the purpose of limiting demand from clients or controlling clients. Routines and simplifications that Lipsky observed in government bureaucrats included: a) rationing services; b) controlling clients and reducing the consequences of uncertainty; c) using frontline workers' resources economically and d) managing the consequences of routine of practices (1980:86). Routines of interaction observed in NGO fieldworkers differed from Lipsky's and included the following: a) routine of intermediation and distancing, b) routine of rationalisation c) manipulation of target data reporting and d) use of personal resources and resourcefulness.

(2) This research observed the critical role that values and faith plays in the expression of positive discretion by NGO fieldworkers. Lipsky makes an assumption that the frontline workers don't retain their idealised notions and values when they initially joined the bureaucracy for the long term, as the structure and work pressure of the agency have a homogenising effect on them (1980:82,83). This particular research undertaken in the context of fieldworkers in a faith and values-based NGO, did not find this assertion substantiated. Positive discretionary behaviour was observed when the values or particular competencies of fieldworkers guided the choices made by fieldworkers, resulting in improved benefits for clients. There were several instances of fieldworkers going beyond their call of duty, drawing from their own personal resources to address some of the gaps due to mismatch between NGO plans and community realities. Perception of programme fit and managerial support enabled the fieldworkers to consistently express their positive discretion.

The findings and the analytical framework proposed can be applied to other contexts of fieldworkers and has relevance to other NGOs and institutions, which are guided by faith or certain values in providing services to their clients. Fieldworker discretion could be sanctioned and channelled in alignment with agency policy objectives by ensuring programme fit and managerial support.

6. Structure of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, this thesis contains eight chapters.

Chapter 2 is a literature review of theoretical concepts that are relevant to this thesis. Given the limited literature and analysis available on the topic of NGO

fieldworkers, this chapter begins with an examination of *Street-Level Bureaucracy* by Lipsky (1980), along with its application to study fieldworker discretion in the context of NGOs. Following this, two contested and inter-related areas of development work by NGOs that affect fieldworkers' everyday life and work are explored in this chapter. This includes a) development discourses that are based on actor-oriented approaches versus approaches that give prominence to external interventions and b) notions of upward accountability to donors and NGO senior leadership versus downward accountability to community members and local partners, which constitute the dual contexts of fieldworkers' work.

Chapter 3 records the history of World Vision International, the international NGO in which this research was undertaken. It provides an account of organisational governance and structure, evolution of its development discourse and practice, which provides the organisational context to understand and analyse the role of fieldworkers, tensions they experienced and coping mechanisms they put in place.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodological questions and issues considered in planning and designing the research in using a focused qualitative study to find answers to the questions listed in this chapter. Steps taken to address any potential concerns resulting from insider-research are explained. Research approach is described with details on data sources, field data collection, analysis and writing, recognising the limitations of what can be said based on evidence.

Each of the chapters from 5 to 8 discusses findings in light of the research questions. Chapter 5 analyses policy-related conflicts experienced by fieldworkers at the grassroots due to conflicting or ambiguous organisational policies. These conflicts could be either due to client-oriented goals being at odds with the agency's vision for societal changes at large, client-oriented goals being in conflict with organisation-oriented goals or goal conflicts due to conflicting expectations arising from different stakeholder groups. Chapter 6 explains conflicts primarily originating from setting and measuring the performance of fieldworkers. How a focus on short-term results conflicted with long-term policy objectives and caused tensions for fieldworkers is explained. This chapter also captures other organisational practices and cultural elements that either supported or caused tensions for fieldworkers' performance. Chapter 7 examines community expectations for fieldworkers and to what degree community members enabled meeting such expectations through their participation. It

explores tensions experienced by the fieldworkers due to conflicts with community members and their expectations. Chapter 8 discusses the beliefs and actual daily practices of World Vision India fieldworkers in response to tensions experienced by them. It explores their discretionary patterns and coping mechanisms in light of street-level bureaucracy framework. It provides descriptions of conditions under which fieldworker discretion was maximised towards NGO policy and programme objectives.

Chapter 9 draws the findings discussed in chapters 5 to 8 and reviews them in light of Lipsky's *Street-Level Bureaucracy* framework and other relevant academic literature for application to NGO fieldworkers, summarising key contributions of this particular research to theory and knowledge. Specific recommendations coming out of this research on how NGOs could make use of fieldworker discretion in support of their mission and policy objectives are included, along with suggestions of important topics for further research inquiry in this concluding chapter.

Chapter 2: Street-Level Bureaucracy and NGO Fieldworker Tensions: The Literature Surrounding the Problem

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a theoretical underpinning for this thesis, surrounding the factors that affect the role and tensions experienced by the NGO fieldworkers in community development work. This chapter begins with a literature review of the street-level bureaucracy framework developed by Lipsky (1980) to examine its relevancy to study NGO fieldworker roles, tensions, discretion and coping mechanisms for purposes of this particular research thesis. As explained in the Chapter 1, Street-Level Bureaucracy has been used to frame the research questions and subsequently develop research instruments and discussions in order to understand fieldworker tensions and coping mechanisms.

Following the review of the street-level bureaucracy for its relevancy to NGO fieldwork context, the literature review is focused around two contested and inter-related areas of development work by NGOs that affect fieldworkers' everyday life and work in their dual contexts of organisation and communities; a) Development discourses that are based on actor-oriented approaches versus approaches that give prominence to external or outside interventions. The notion of agency is reviewed in relation to actor-oriented approaches to development. b) Upward accountability of NGO workers to senior leadership and donors on one hand and downward accountability to community members and local partners on the other. These two areas of development work constitute the dual contexts of fieldworkers' roles. NGOs and communities have different sets of dynamics, expectations and requirements for the fieldworkers. As will be shown in the review and discussion of literature, fieldworkers are caught in conflicts that arise from these two contested areas in their day-to-day life and work: conflicts arising from development discourses and conflicts due to different realities of NGO organisational and community contexts. This section begins with a brief review of NGOs involved in community development work.

Given the use of street-level bureaucracy, it was important to conduct the research in specific NGO programmes that intentionally included the notion of serving individual clients as part of doing development work in communities. Most NGO work tends to be population or group-based projects where processes, discussions, stories

and statistics are often focused on groups of people and not on individuals. Child sponsorship connects individual sponsors with individual children in developing communities with individualised expectations both on the part of the sponsors and children. In light of this, programmes funded through child sponsorship were selected for this research and literature on child sponsorship is briefly reviewed as part of the organisational context of NGO fieldworkers.

2. Relevancy of Street-Level Bureaucracy Framework for Studying NGO Fieldworkers

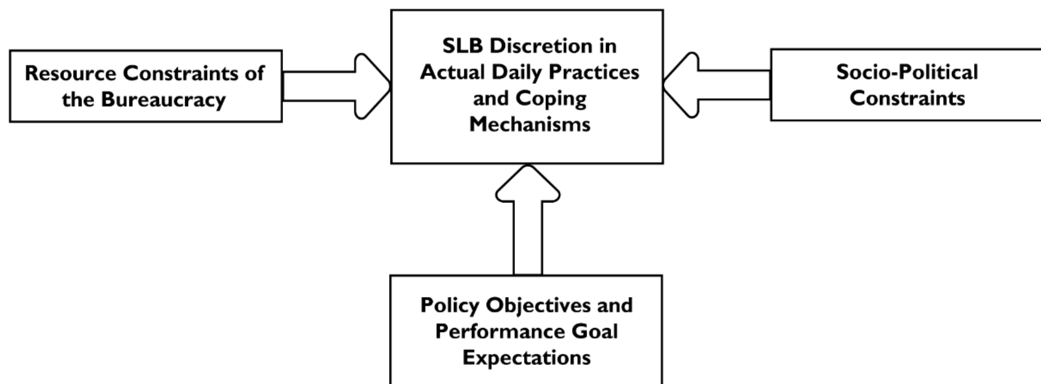
2.1 Summary of *Street-Level Bureaucracy* by Lipsky

The theory of street-level bureaucracy first published by Lipsky in 1980 discusses the work of frontline workers of government. Since Lipsky came up with the concept of street-level bureaucracy, it has continued to inform a wide range of scholarly work, mostly in the field of public administration, but to a limited extent in NGO development work.

Street-level bureaucrats (SLB) are the teachers, health-care providers, social workers, public defenders, police officers, judges, and other public employees who provide government services, enforce the law, and distribute public benefits to citizens directly (Lipsky, 1980:3). As the bureaucrats operating at the 'street-level' in the implementation of government's policies and welfare programmes, they directly communicate and interact with the general public. In discharge of their duties, they exercise some discretion over what services are offered to whom and how the services are offered. Lipsky argues that discretion is inevitable in the work of SLBs as they work in complicated situations, which cannot be reduced to programmatic formats, completely devoid of human judgments (ibid, 1980:15). SLBs have relative autonomy in their work and have different job priorities than managers. They have a need to process workloads expeditiously – process large amounts of work with inadequate resources and they must develop shortcuts and simplifications to cope with the press of responsibilities. This autonomy and their work situations allow for discretion (ibid, 1980:16-17). The SLBs are affected by 1) the socio-political context in which they discharge their work, 2) how they experience agency policy and performance expectations themselves and 3) resource constraints of the agency relative to the mandate of the agency and clients' needs (ibid, 1980:27-33). SLBs seek to cope with

these factors by routinizing certain behaviours and practices in their everyday work to manage their situations and expectations (ibid, 1980:81-85). These coping mechanisms typically thwart the original intents of policies they are tasked with implementing. For example, this may involve restricting services through the differentiation of clients. For clients they find 'deserving', or likely to respond to their added attention, they can make governmental resources more obtainable by providing additional information about loopholes, eligibility requirements, benefits that are poorly publicised, etc. Bureaucrats can also make the cost of service to clients they deem 'undeserving' inordinately high, by increasing wait times, withholding information, or imposing psychological burdens (ibid, 1980:86).

Diagram 2: Researcher's Depiction of Street-Level Bureaucracy Framework



2.2 Relevancy of the SLB Framework to Study NGO Fieldworkers

2.2.1 Fieldworker Tensions

From studying fieldworkers' roles in promoting community participation in the Action Aid programme in Gambia, it was learned that fieldworkers lacked knowledge on the organisational policy and the required training on participatory techniques. The short-term nature of fieldworkers' contracts had a negative effect on their motivational level (Holmes, 2001). A research on actor-oriented approaches to improving agriculture productivity found out that fieldworkers struggled to communicate project objectives to farmers, to establish their roles and identity in communities and negotiate participation in the face of opposition to the participatory methods. In addition, fieldworkers struggled with witnessing extreme poverty in communities while programme activities were focused on long-term development (Jackson, 1997). Studying the role of gender

mainstreaming by fieldworkers of micro-finance programmes in Bangladesh, it was learned that attitudes of fieldworkers and lack of gender sensitivity within the organisations were major challenges to the policy objectives (Goetz, 1996). A study on fieldworkers in Bangladesh reported on tensions they experienced in their professional and personal life: lack of organisational space to provide input, lack of feeling valued within the NGO hierarchy, poor salary structure, lack of promotion opportunities, fear of transfer to undesirable locations, inadequate training, heavy work loads, job insecurity, lack of childcare and education facilities for children due to remote postings and lack of proper housing (Ahmad, 2001). Another study on fieldworkers in Pakistan discovered a similar set of problems and added harassment of female fieldworkers and increased vulnerability of NGO workers due to terrorism-related issues (Siddique, 2012). The above examples point to tensions arising from policy dissonance with field reality, fieldworkers' own experience with and interpretation of the NGO policies, conflicts in development discourse, organisational positioning and personnel policies and practices towards fieldworkers.

Fieldworkers of NGOs experience tensions similar to street-level bureaucrats of government agencies due to conflicts and ambiguities that exist between client-centred and organisation-centred goals (Lipsky 2010:44). As discussed in the sections that follow, conflict in organisational policies and discourses on development tend to create practical challenges for fieldworkers at the field level. 'Artefacts of Evidence and Results' discussed later on in this chapter, shapes practitioners life on a daily basis, as they become 'technologies of power' to exercise control over field practitioners and field-based processes. The urge to exercise control over outcomes by donors and the senior leaders could be indicative of the tendency not to accept the complex nature of how development happens and come up with elaborate systems of measurements, reporting and quick results (Eyben, 2013:22).

2.2.2 Fieldworker Discretion

In everyday practice, NGO fieldworkers are not merely instruments to implement ideas and plans conceived by others in the NGO headquarters, nor are they passive responders to the initiatives of villagers. Fieldworkers' personal attitudes and biases manifest themselves in their behaviour and engagement with community members in proportion to the freedom they have in their everyday work. For example, Goetz narrates how male loan officers of a micro-credit programme in Bangladesh, due to

their own background, labelled and negatively stereotyped women as backward and illiterate in promoting gender equity policy (1996). In a family planning programme in Kenya, community-based health workers limited the choice of contraceptives to their clients due to their own beliefs that contraceptive pills cause infertility (Kaler and Watkins, 2001).

The relative autonomy of fieldworkers, living in communities and away from NGO headquarters, could provide them space to exercise discretion as they face constraints resulting from their work environment and social contexts. Their exercise of discretion could often be invisible to others due to reasons such as: how their divergences from plans are represented or explained away in reporting; achievement of agreed performance targets; difficulties involved in supervision of intangible aspects of fieldworkers' roles (e.g. promoting community participation, quality of relationships, etc.); complicity of community members in fieldworkers' representations to visitors; suppression of information on certain aspects of programme plan to community members; and suppression of information on the community context to management (Holmes, 2001).

Autonomy and discretion of the fieldworkers could either help or hinder the NGO policy and programme agenda, depending on how the fieldworkers personally experience such policy objectives in the first place. Quoting from a study on fieldworker discretion that was based on Lipsky's work in implementing gender and development policy in Bangladesh:

> …. these lower-level bureaucrats are *de-facto* policy makers, because of the feedback effect of accumulated everyday decisions on policy making. … Their own attitudes and practices have a powerful effect upon the success of these programmes in challenging the terms of gender relations. Most often fieldworkers' own biases undermine the more progressive aspects of these policies… On the other hand, field workers may use their discretion more positively… (Goetz, 1996:i).

Street-level bureaucrats establish routines in order to negotiate between organisational expectations and the complex realities on the ground (Lipsky 1985:83). Goetz, in her study, found that fieldworkers in Bangladesh established routines of interaction with clients for determining eligibility, limiting demand for services and encouraging deference based on social distance in application of gender and development policy in microcredit programmes (1996:22-30). Similarly in another study in India, fieldworkers of an agricultural project subverted the anti-subsidy policy of the project and derailed the exclusive poverty focus by being enrolled into the agenda of the 'super

participants' and legitimised decisions through participatory processes (Jackson 1997:242). A study of a family planning programme in rural Kenya found out that community based distributors of contraceptives changed specific aspects of family planning programming and limited selection of specific contraceptive methods in alignment with their personal beliefs and concerns for clients' health (Kaler and Watkins, 2001). Another study on Action Aid in Gambia found that while the NGO had created 'sanctioned areas of discretion' for the fieldworkers to interpret their tasks within a general framework given by their superiors, it allowed for 'unsanctioned discretion' to take place, creating a problem for the organisation (Holmes, 2001:20). All these studies point to similarities between frontline workers in government agencies and NGOs when it comes experience of conflicts and exercise of discretion in application of agency policies.

A synthesis of findings from four selected research studies based on the SLB framework is provided here to show the relevance of the street-level bureaucracy as a theoretical framework for this research: 1) Jackson focuses on a sustainable, low-cost agriculture project in India staffed by village-based project staff. Diaries kept by such staff are analysed to reveal how the social position and discretionary actions of fieldworkers shaped projects (1990); 2) Goetz examines how fieldworkers used their discretion to interpret and implement gender-equity policy in one NGO and one government credit programme in Bangladesh (1996); 3) Kaler and Watkins studied how community-based workers in Western Kenya tried to achieve their own goals in promoting the agency's family planning programmes (2001) and 4) Walker and Gilson studied nurses' perceptions and the behaviour of front-line health providers in implementation of a new policy of providing free healthcare to clients (2004). Two of the examples below (Jackson, 1990 and Goetz, 1996) are from NGOs and the other two are from government civil servants (Kaler and Watkins, 2001; Walker and Gilson, 2004).

Table 1: Example of Fieldworker Tensions and Consequences

	Actions Taken by the SLB	**Tension Experienced by the Fieldworker**	**Consequences of the Actions**
Jackson (1990)	Mutual enrolment of farmers and FWs into each other's agenda. Subversion of the anti-subsidy policy and exclusive poverty focus of the project by the FWs.	It was important for the FWs to clearly establish their identity in communities distinct from government agencies and others. There was constant pressure from	Harmony and participatory group action were used as reasons to introduce external-input and subsidy dependent agriculture, which were contrary to the project

	E.g. provision of pesticide spraying equipment by the project to groups with 'super participants' and their engagement in the discourse of participation	communities for subsidies. FWs needed to manage contradictions in the project approach; emphasis on participation on one hand and sustainable, low-cost agriculture on the other.	objectives and philosophy. Exclusive poverty focus of the project was compromised as the FWs worked with 'surplus' farmers to help 'deficit' farmers who were 80% of the population
Goetz (1996)	Labelling and negative stereotype of women as backward and illiterate by male fieldworkers and community members. While women were included in higher proportion for credit programmes, gender equity policy objectives were not given attention. Often, loan money lent to women was used by their husbands.	Beliefs/values of most FWs, especially males, were not in alignment with the policy. FWs sensed a lack of genuine commitment to the policy from the policy makers. FWs believed the policy push came from external donor constituency. However, giving loans to women, the FWs considered, was efficient credit management.	Gap between expansive policy objectives and meagre accomplishment to promote gender equity objectives despite the higher proportion of women borrowers in the credit programmes.
Walter and Gilson (2004)	Supported the policy objective of free care for patients. Reduced quality of care due to increase in caseload and resource constraints. Limited patients through routine of categorisation.	Increased demand in the number of patients due to removal of user fees without proportionate increases in resources, resulting in heavier workload and limited managerial support. FWs felt threatened by the social environment in which they worked.	Policy objectives might not have been fully met through the exercise of discretion and compromise of successes in increased access through removal of user fees.
Kaler and Watkins (2001)	FWs change specific aspects of family planning programming and limit selection of specific contraceptive methods.	FWs advancing their own self interest by seeking respect, recognition and obligation from clients. FW's own beliefs that contraceptive pills can cause infertility and concerns for clients' health.	FWs' actions affected the ability of clients to make informed choice about family planning method for their specific needs. It was possible that some clients could not get any contraceptive methods.

Socio-political contexts in which the SLBs worked and their organisational work environments led the SLBs in these particular examples to develop everyday practices that included coping mechanisms, as presented below.

Table 2: Examples of Fieldworker Coping Mechanism

Socio-political Context	**Work environment**	**Personal beliefs and values**	**Coping mechanisms**
- Pressure from elite/super participants (Jackson 1990) - Suspicion and fear among community	- Lack of genuine belief in the policy by the policy makers (Goetz 1996) - Donor requirements	- Emphasis on community harmony over poverty focus (Jackson 1990) - Gender bias (Goetz	- Self enrolment into clients' agenda (Jackson 1990) - Promotion of clientilism (Jackson 1990; Keller and Watkins 2001)

members (Jackson 1990) - Gender bias in communities (Goetz 1996) - Threatening social environment (Walker and Gilson 2004).	(Goetz 1996) - Heavy demand and workload (Walker and Gilson 2004). - Limited resources to support policy change (Walker and Gilson 2004). - Limited managerial support (Walker and Gilson 2004).	1996) - Superstitious belief that pills cause infertility (Kaler and Watkins 2001) - Personal commitment (Keller and Watkins 2001) - Fear of new patients from different social backgrounds (Walker and Gilson 2004).	- Lobbying for change of policies (Jackson 1990) - Routines of interaction: favouritism, categorisation, dissuasion and distancing (Goetz 1990; Walker and Gilson 2004) - Restricting services (Kaler and Watkins 2001) - Suspicion of patients (Walker and Gilson 2004) - Compromising quality (Walker and Gilson 2004)

Based on the above examples, street-level bureaucracy as a theoretical framework has relevancy for application in researching frontline worker discretion as they serve client groups and individuals in delivering policy objectives or administer welfare programmes on behalf of NGOs. Even though NGOs don't have the statutory authority of government in providing services to people, NGOs do wield a lot of power in communities due to the resources they have and programmes they run. Fieldworkers are the frontline workers of NGOs in communities and they share many characteristics similar to their counterparts in government agencies.

2.3 Criticisms of the Street-Level Bureaucracy Concept

Some of the criticisms of street-level bureaucracy that have relevance to this particular research are included in this section. It is mentioned that the analysis in the street-level bureaucracy framework does not give much attention to the role of professionalism and the impact it has on the relationship between frontline workers, their managers and the nature of discretion (Evans, 2011:368). It is important to note that both the NGO fieldworkers and their managers often have similar professional background and competencies in community development work, which might affect the discretionary practices of fieldworkers.

In order to understand the nature of discretion in contexts where services are fragmented or distributed between multiple organisations, it is argued that practices beyond a single bureaucracy need to be examined (Scourfield, 2015:914). Much of the NGO work in communities involve multi-stakeholder partnerships, which means that discretionary practices of NGO fieldworkers need to be understood along with discretion exercised by the representatives of such partner agencies or institutions.

The discretion at the frontline does not always lead to policy dissonance, but can lead to improvements in client meaningfulness, which in turn, lead to improved

willingness of frontline workers to implement the policy (Tummers and Bekkers, 2014:540-542). Similarly, social capital that might exist within a bureaucracy could lead to greater levels of discretion by the frontline workers (Wade, 1992:51). There is a need for reframing of the street-level bureaucracy by taking into consideration the agency of frontline worker and not only an implementation control–discretion narrative (Maynard-Moody and Musheno, 2012:18). Community values of clients have a role in shaping the discretionary practices of street-level bureaucrats (Weissert, 1994:250). NGOs are often described as value-based organisations, and it is possible that NGO fieldworkers share or display such NGO values in their relationship with clients (Fowler, 1990:11). For example, NGO fieldworkers might be motivated by a sense of calling and idealised notions of serving the poor in their work and these values might influence their behaviour with the clients they serve. Some of these criticisms might be relevant for this particular research.

Another criticism is that Lipsky wrongly paints managers as guardians of policies whereas frontline workers as the ones who deviate from the policy. The concept of street-level bureaucracy focuses only on discretion by the frontline workers but brackets off managerial discretion, which can provide the basis for discretion at the frontlines (Evans, 2016:604-606). Micro-environment in which street-level bureaucrats function are important forces that shape managerialism, professionalism and client empowerment and offset the defensive act of discretion by frontline workers as described by Lipsky (Ellis, 2011:221). Given that NGOs have decentralised offices away from the NGO headquarters along with microenvironments of fieldworkers in which immediate managers play a dominant role may affect patterns of fieldworker discretion.

Having examined the relevancy of street-level bureaucracy for the purpose of this particular research, the subsequent sections begin with an introduction to NGOs followed by discussions on two contested and inter-related areas of development work by NGOs that affect fieldworkers' everyday life and work.

3. Development Non-Governmental Organisations

The term Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) was coined in the aftermath of the Second World War when the United Nations made a provision for international citizen organisations that were independent of their member governments to become observers

in UN affairs (Lewis, 2011:7). It was also during this period that a number of international NGOs came into existence. While NGOs deal with a range of issues, such as human rights, peace-building, environment and others, this research is concerned with NGOs that do development work in poor communities. The number, scope, total spending and influence of development NGOs have continued to grow over the past thirty years (Dogra, 2012:3-4). Development NGOs are those primarily working on issues of poverty and injustice with communities in developing countries based on civic engagement, social mobilisation and reliance on social capital (Fowler, 2002:2-4). Non-Governmental Organisations doing development work are non-profit and voluntary organisations that might operate at local, national or global levels. Local level NGOs doing development work are called either Grassroots Organisations or Community-Based Organisations. At national level, they could either be Southern NGOs, working in developing countries, or Northern NGOs, which originated in one or more developed countries and have headquarters there. But when it comes to development work, Northern NGOs may have offices in the Southern countries and so might be considered as international NGOs (Kang, 2011:221; Fowler, 1997:9). Very often, NGOs at local, national and international levels work together in the field.

Many development NGOs, including World Vision International, as discussed in Chapter 4, started as relief or welfare agencies in response to human suffering and, over a period of time, transitioned into development agencies. Causes of poverty that were initially understood as 'lack of things' or 'deficit' or 'natural' shifted more towards structural causes of injustice (Eade, 2000:9). However, a variety of approaches and activities, ranging from meeting the basic needs of people to capacity building of institutions, and provision of technical expertise to transformation of systems and structures, continue to be bundled together as part of 'development'. Korten in his seminal work on *Getting to the Twenty-first Century* describes four types or levels of development responses: a) relief and welfare, b) small-scale, self-reliant local development, c) sustainable system development and d) people's movements (1990).

The terms 'participation' and 'participatory' were adopted by development agencies for the first time in 1960s and 70s largely in reaction to failure of top-down donor funded development projects of industrialisation and other major projects. Participatory approach to development had its proper origins in the1970s in the work of Paulo Freire (Chambers, 1997:106). The notion that the poor and marginalised should

shape development strategies and play a leading role in their implementation has become a core belief for many development NGOs. Beginning in the early 1980s, participation has come to be seen as a technocratic design consideration in development projects of governments and NGOs in order to ensure project success and thereby its importance has come to be seen essentially in its instrumental value (Cleaver, 2001:36). Community participation aligned well with the egalitarian values and ideals of development NGOs and spoke to the democratic expectations of donors (Bernstein 2005:119). Participatory discourse recognised that participation could be abused and there are varying degrees of participation (e.g. Arnstein 1969:217-221; Bunch 1982; Rahnema 1992:116 and Uphoff, Cohen and Goldsmit, 1979:281).

Participatory citizenship or rights-based approaches to development emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These approaches viewed people not as participants in development projects but as 'active claims-making agents' based on their citizenry rights and responsibilities conferred by the state (Hickey and Mohan, 2004:3). The concept of participatory citizenship required those who work in development to view citizenship essentially from the perspective of those who have been so far excluded from development, in its attempts to turn citizenship into behaviours and everyday practices and thereby engage with issues of power. This understanding of participatory approach proposed two avenues for participation by citizens in development. Firstly, the rights of people as citizens to claim specific entitlements and services and hold the service providers accountable, as participation was seen as a basic right to claim entitlements such as healthcare, education, protection and others. Secondly, forming associations and groups to counter the effects of poor governance and performance monitoring of service provision by the state and escalate the issues as necessary to the higher levels of government and media (Mohanty and Tandon, 2006:13).

The concept of 'adaptive development' or 'doing development differently' is a relatively new topic under considerable discussion among development NGOs within the past five years or so (e.g. Green, 2016; Stroh, 2015; Ramalingam, 2013). However, there is not much consensus around what it means in practice and what the implications are for development NGOs (Cattaneo, 2015). Adaptive development is, in many ways, a response to growing recognition that development problems are dynamic, complex and interconnected and solutions are not simple. Many development initiatives fail because they treat complex problems as simple ones with 'single right answers'.

Solving one part of a complex problem may lead to other problems. Ramalingam mentions that applying the principles of adaptive development requires openness to continuously learn and adapt development approaches and goals to complex realities and search for interconnected, systemic and network-based solutions (2013:265-270). Burns and Worsley emphasises the importance of a network of people participating in a series of uncoordinated actions rather than in formal decision-making processes (2015: 161). One group of people might be originators of an idea, but as it evolves and new lines of inquiry open up that go in different directions, ownership might come from a different group of people. The success of a change process is determined by who engages with it, who adopts it and who champions it over a period of time. Actions are not according to some pre-determined plans and followed by formal decisions, but they are guided by complex realities and on-going conversations. In adaptive development, goals change and strategies become adaptive over time as unexpected changes happen. People genuinely participate when plans are not seen as maps, but as a compass for change processes that are dynamic in nature (ibid, 2015: 161-170). Development thinking and practice of NGOs have continued to evolve over the years and there may be agreement around certain general principles and standards (e.g. Global Standards for CSO Accountability; A BOND Approach to Quality in Non-Governmental Organisations; ICRC code of conduct and SPHERE standards for humanitarian programmes). However, there are no unifying theories on how development happens or how it must be carried out by NGOs.

Fowler lists sixteen advantages of NGOs in comparison to their government counterparts in doing community development work such as; being able to work with the poor, elicit their meaningful participation, being flexible and responsive, ability to mix responses and approaches depending on contexts, getting the right balance between processes and outcomes, cost effectiveness and others (1990:11). Kang cites similar such strengths of NGOs based on a review of literature on NGOs (2011:224-226). However, these comparative advantages are called into question as not being based on evidences and constructed on idealised notions of NGOs set against a fictional representation of governments (Biggs and Neame, 1996:34). Smillie lists several weaknesses of NGOs including; inability to scale-up; competition among NGOs; lack of coordination; concealing high overhead costs; lack of responsiveness; project mentality and others (1994:162-187). Some other criticisms of international NGOs

doing development work include transferring neo-liberal ideas of development to developing countries, substituting local governments when it comes to service provision, not being accountable to communities they serve and difficulties in assessing NGO performance (Edwards and Hulme, 1996:6-9). Too much focus on sustainability of NGO organisational development is mentioned as an impediment for effectiveness in serving the poor (Lofredo, 2000:64-69).

4. CHILD SPONSORSHIP

As mentioned in the introduction, in studying fieldworker roles, tensions and coping mechanisms, it was deemed essential to select programmes that have the dimension of serving individual clients in addition to targeting populations and groups. In order to accomplish that goal, programmes implementing interventions such as microfinance or therapeutic feeding programmes that focus on chronically malnourished individual children could have been chosen. However, in order to ensure representation of the broader range of work usually undertaken by development NGOs, it was decided to choose a programme type that is more broad-based, multi-sectorial in nature and widely practiced among international NGOs, yet serving individual clients. Child sponsorship fits that bill. Moreover, international NGOs that do child sponsorship require the organisation to be directly operational with fieldworkers on the ground, implementing programmes and serving clients. For these reasons child sponsorship is briefly reviewed here in terms of how it is used in development and its effect on fieldworkers' roles.

Watson and Clarke (2014:2) and Smillie (1995:136) emphasize that child sponsorship is a major form of humanitarian and development assistance and a form of fundraising that has proven to be successful for many international NGOs, including World Vision. The power of child sponsorship lies in connecting an individual sponsor with a needy child (Zylstra, 2017). While sponsorship appears to directly connect a sponsor to a child in need, it is the institutional processes and system that make it functional and productive. Monthly remittances from sponsors flow through the NGO and are used to finance development programmes in communities in which sponsored children live. Child sponsorship provides a flexible form of funding for international NGOs and therefore it is sought after (Dowd et al, 2014:100).

While there continues to be much criticism on the legitimacy of child sponsorship as a valid way of doing child development or community development work, several NGOs have changed how programming using child sponsorship is done in order to minimise the negative effects (e.g. Eekelen, 2013; Wydick et al, 2013; Herrell, 1986). A typology based on how NGOs organise programmes with child sponsorship could include; a) individual support of children in institutions such as orphanages or schools where funding helps a child; b) individual support of children in a community setting where funding benefits children and family; c) support of children through community development programmes where children might directly or indirectly benefit from combined contributions of many sponsors and d) support of children through rights-based programming, especially focused on the convention of the rights of the child where all members benefit from the initiatives (Watson, 2014:41-65). Although many NGOs have moved away from providing direct and exclusive assistance to an individual sponsored child, the child remains the focus and one to one communication between the child and sponsor is a key principle in child sponsorship (Smillie, 1995:136). Even though Child Sponsorship is practiced in the context of community based development programmes, it still remains highly individualised both for the sponsors and the children who are sponsored. Sponsorship has an individualising force in communities, as the progress of individual children gets monitored and reported to sponsors and individual children receive and send communication to sponsors (Bornstein, 2005:87). Sponsors' focus on one child could obscure the need for children who are not sponsored and the surrounding community (Herrel 1986:241). Traditional criticisms of child sponsorship has included; inequality of relationships between the child and the sponsor, that it fosters dependency, is discriminatory in nature, provides a platform for imposing faith and patronising relationships, excessive bureaucracies and high level of overhead costs (e.g. Eekelen, 2013; Fieldston, 2010).

There has been some academic debate about the type of communication between sponsored children and sponsors, on the potential benefits as well as its ethics, but it is a very labour intensive effort due to the number of sponsors and children involved and the need to make the relationship between the child and sponsor as credible as possible (Watson and Clarke, 2014:76, 77). Child sponsorship has specific requirements such as correspondence with sponsors, annual progress reports, holiday greetings and regular monitoring of children that could be labour intensive and take time and effort of

fieldworkers away from doing development work. Monitoring of sponsored children and management of communications would typically require separate processes and efforts from development work carried out by fieldworkers and volunteers. However, World Vision programmes attempt to integrate correspondence with child participation activities and reposition child sponsorship as a catalyst to strengthen community focus on child wellbeing (Pierce and Kalaiselvi, 2014:151-153). In summary, child sponsorship presents an additional layer of complexity for fieldworkers; amount of time and labour commitment to administer child sponsorship at the community level; explaining child sponsorship to community members time and time again, managing complaints and grievances of community members, undertaking efforts to integrate child sponsorship requirements as part of programming and repositioning it as part of child-focused community development work.

5. ACTOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT

The following sections, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, review literature pertaining to two contested and inter-related areas of development work by NGOs that affect fieldworkers' everyday life and work.

5.1 Agency and Power

Since agency of people is a primary consideration in development work and agency of fieldworkers is central to this research, *The Constitution of Society* is a good place to start this part of the literature review (Giddens, 1984). This is a formative piece of work on agency and power of social actors in shaping social structures and social changes. Giddens says, "to be a human being is to be a purposive agent" and agency is defined as the following:

> Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things, but to their capability of doing those things in the first place, which is why agency implies power…. within the limits of information, uncertainty and other constraints that exist, social actors possess 'knowledgeability' and 'capability'. They attempt to solve problems, learn how to intervene in the flow of social events around them and to a degree monitor their own actions and how others react to them… (Giddens, 1984:9).

According to Giddens, knowledgeability and capability to take purposeful actions define agency of an individual. Knowledgeability involves understanding the roles and rules of the social structure around the actors and capability involves changing those

rules towards a purpose. So an agent is a cognitive and a reflexive actor and how actors interact with roles and rules over time leads to changes.

> To be an agent is to be able to deploy a range of causal powers, including that of influencing those deployed by others. Action depends upon the capability of the individual to 'make a difference' to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events. An agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to 'make a difference', that is, to exercise some sort of power (Giddens, 1984:14).

Giddens argues for inclusion of individual motivation and action in considering social change processes. The individual is located within a time and space, but will be able to cause social changes even though it may not be fully predictable at the outset. The social structure changes the human beings, but human beings also change the social structure (1984: 27, 28). Human agency is important both to reproduction and transformation of social structure and he calls this continuous process of reproduction and transformation of structure through individual action as 'structuration' (ibid, 1984:17). Agency is expressed in social relations and can only be effective through them if it has to make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs. The ability to influence others depends essentially on the actions of a sequence of agents, each of whom provides interpretations in accordance with his or her own agenda or perspective. Development as a social change process involves a network of actors who gets enrolled in each other's agenda in communicating specific claims, information, orders and goods. Since all forms of dependence connote power, this would mean that even those who are in subordinate positions wield power over the activities of their superiors (Kothari, 2001:144). This suggests that fieldworkers should not been seen merely as instruments to carry out NGO's strategy and programme design, but they need to be a core part of the strategy and design to bring about the intended changes. If development is understood as a profoundly human undertaking affected by a number of factors that are intrinsic to individuals, networks and groups, then it can't be easily programmed through a blueprint approach to planning. If development is essentially human processes that depend on agency, vocation, competency and values of individuals and groups of people, then the agency and role of fieldworkers in working with people in communities needs to be at the forefront of NGO-initiated development projects.

NGO fieldworkers have been occasionally called 'change agents' in recognition that development work involves social changes (e.g. Fowler, 1997:85). Structuration theory referred to earlier implies that fieldworkers as purposive agents have the power

to cause changes in social structures and systems that they are part of and interact with, including communities that they work with, and the NGO organisation that they are members of (Giddens, 1980: 281-304). Notions of agency are constructed differently in different cultures and how people interact with each other. This means that agency of fieldworkers needs to be taken into consideration in planning processes and should not be ignored in analysing how different conceptions of knowledge, power and influence might shape responses of different actors to various issues facing them or policies being promoted in community development and social change processes.

5.2 Personhood and the Image of God

Bible verses from Genesis 1:26, 27 that declare God creating human beings in His image and likeness have been understood and explained in a variety of ways (Grenz, 2007). Middleton has put together a helpful survey of some of the interpretations of what it means for human beings to bear the 'image' or 'likeness' of God as recorded in the Genesis account; power to reason, ethical conformity of human beings in their obedient response to God, relational capacity of human beings and their special role of representing God's rule in this world (2005:19-26). In the biblical narrative, God grants power and agency to human beings with freedom to relate and communicate with others and even resist God (ibid, 289). Human beings have great significance because they bear the image of God and they have irrevocable dignity and value or worth that is conferred or bestowed on them by God (Kilner, 2015:250,251). This means that there is also basic equality among human beings because everyone uniquely bears the image of God. Such an understanding of the image of God in people means that those who are in lower positions or marginalised do not need to define themselves by the disparaging viewpoints of those who may be socially over them. The implications of being bearers of God's image are that people would need to care, protect and respect others in their treatment of them and being created in the image of God is an invitation for human beings to pursue mutual concern for each other, other-centeredness or neighbour-love (Mahoney, 2010:701). Understanding that human beings as created in the image of God has significant implications for how we understand development; we are to be co-creators with God with the power to observe, reason and act on our common good (Myers, 2011:61). We are actors with a purpose and are given gifts and tasks for the wellbeing of others. The primary implication of such an understanding of bearing God's image for Christian faith-based NGOs such as World Vision is that human

agency and vocation are the basic premise for doing development work and programme plans or financial resources are only secondary resources. This understanding of agency and vocation need to apply both to the community members and the fieldworkers who work with them on a daily basis.

From the perspective of the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God (Colossians 1:15). If Christian NGOs such as World Vision could consider Jesus as a 'development actor' who was sent by His Father to carry out a mission in the world, did He have the freedom to carry out the mandate given to Him? Or was He just someone who slavishly carried out detailed instructions from above? How much freedom did He have? So asks us to consider the fact of incarnation – the divine Son of God who willingly became a genuine human person – is presented in the Bible (2010:207,208). He chose to stand in solidarity with the poor and the needy. He preached good news to the poor and comforted those who mourned. The gospels, which narrate Jesus' words and actions in this world, reflect His agency and relationship with His Father through the Spirit (So, 2006:11,12). In other words, there was no dissonance between what Jesus spoke, did, His identity and relationship with the Father. Christian development workers need to have such an 'incarnational spirituality' modelled after Jesus Christ, living out their Christian values among the poor, seeing them as being made in the image of God and thus expecting the poor people to be the primary actors in their own development (Myers, 2011:232). Myers says that the most important thing a Christian development worker can do is being present with God and the poor – being open and willing, not controlling but letting things unfold. Once again, these readings suggest that the investment of the agency of development workers in the life of the poor is seen as being more important than implementation of well-planned programmes and projects in promoting development (ibid, 2011:233).

5.3 Agency and Transformational Development

This research is undertaken within the context of a Christian faith-based NGO, which espouses transformational development as one of its missions. Christian faith and theology that undergirds World Vision's understanding of transformational development makes the agency of fieldworkers an imperative and not an optional resource. While the phrase 'transformational development' is increasingly being used by both secular and faith-based NGOs, Christian NGOs such as Tearfund, Food for the

Hungry International and World Vision use the phrase to convey the centrality of the Christian faith in their development understanding and practice (Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte, 2010). As explained in Chapter 3, World Vision's mission statement calls attention to transformational development as one of its six ministries.

The phrase 'transformational development' consists of two words, transformation and development. The Cambridge Dictionary defines transformation as a "radical change in character, condition or composition". This goes beyond incremental changes. The same dictionary defines development as "a specified state of growth or advancement or progress". While the term, 'transformation' connotes a radical and an inside-out change; 'development' can be incremental and something that is external, observable and measurable. So when these two words are brought together into one phrase, 'transformational Development', it communicates a process involving deep, radical, internal changes in people, groups, processes and systems leading to measurable, external advancement or progress.

The idea of transformational development links inner change and personal transformation as part of development work and attributes the work of God's Spirit to inner transformation that leads to how power is exercised in ways to help people rather than to hurt them, to uphold the dignity of others rather than to take advantage of them in vulnerable situations and to be able to care for and share with others (Mitchell, 2014:96). Connection between inner transformation and development is seen as the two-fold goals of transformational development; a) changed people who have restored their identity as children of God and recovered their vocation as productive stewards of God's creation and b) changed relationships that are just and peaceful (Myers, 2011: 190-202).

This idea of transformational development influences how World Vision understands and articulates the nature, processes and ends of development. Transformational development breaks down the divisions between physical, social and spiritual aspects of life and sees them as coherent whole (Wilson, 2011:103). The Board of World Vision International affirmed the integrated nature of development in 2011 by declaring that "Development without a spiritual dimension is poor development, and poor development neither empowers people nor produces sustained change". Transformational development is always focused on persons and developing personhood and it happens through the actions of communities and community

institutions (Sugden, 2003:72, 73). We can summarise these literature by saying that an understanding of transformational development calls faith-based development organisations to: a) view people and communities as interconnected and whole; b) link inner transformation or radical changes in values, attitudes and worldviews with external changes or progress and c) consider the agency of the development worker and community members both as a resource and as an end goal of development.

It is important to note that there are theological criticisms on the use of the concept of "transformation" to refer to community development work carried out by Christian NGOs such as World Vision or churches (e.g. Willmer, 2001:195). For these could never amount to transformation because the Kingdom of God as portrayed in the gospels has to be understood as both "already" and "not yet". From a Christian theological perspective, development as "mission" is carried out between the "already" and "not yet" times. Willmer says that "transformational" development cannot be understood by putting the entire weight only on the basis of what God has "already" accomplished through Christ in this world (2001:195).

6. EXTERNAL INTERVENTIONS IN DEVELOPMENT

Long builds on Giddens' theory on structuration and critiques existing models of development that view social change and development as primarily emanating from the centres of power in the form of interventions and ignore the agency of individuals as social actors (2001:11). He mentions that models of development used by official development agencies are mostly based on deterministic, linear and external views of social change. Externally imposed development models may fail to take contextual variations or heterogeneity that may exist in specific contexts into consideration. He argues that externally originated interventions as they enter the life-worlds of individuals and groups are mediated and transformed through social actors in specific contexts. Actor-oriented approaches suggest that people are not disembodied social categories within their social or organisational structures, but they actively process information and make decisions on how to use that information in their dealings with other institutions and people. To some extent, this could explain why two equally competent human beings might respond differently to issues and conditions that appear somewhat similar (ibid, 2001:12-14). Individual choices are shaped by people's prior experience, beliefs and background but also by larger frames for meaning and action. It

is only natural that externally originating interventions would have some effects, either positive or negative, on local initiatives. Social changes happen when there are on-going interactions and tensions between the agent and structure through a process of action and reflexivity, mutually affecting each other (Costa and Murphy, 2015:18). We can infer from these references that understanding development as a social change process and not merely as time and space bound projects have significant implications for development NGOs - agency of fieldworkers and that of other actors, their relationships and network patterns become critical considerations in thinking about and planning for development.

A complete separation of formulation of policy, strategy or programme designs from their implementation becomes an over-simplification of a complicated set of social processes that would require on-going reinterpretation during the process of implementation by all the actors involved (Long, 2001:31). The tendency to view development as a discrete set of interventions within a specific time-space setting leads to a problem-solving approach and promotes an idea that the problems are best solved by dividing up what is complex and integrated by nature into specific sectors or academic disciplines (Clay, 1985:184). An understanding of development as primarily happening through externally originated interventions, planned as time-bound projects may lead to an over-reliance on so-called evidence-based best practices that do not give much credence to local contexts, domination by external technical specialists, linear and logical planning to problem solving and project cycle management, with an instrumentalist view of fieldworkers and others involved. Negotiated character of development outcomes requires an iterative process of learning, forging consensus between diverging parties, adaptation and implementation rather than a straightforward implementation of policies (Clay and Schaffer, 1984:11). While simple development problems that require technical solutions may be responsive to straightforward implementation of specific interventions, it could be problematic when senior management expects strategies, programme design and performance standards to be implemented by others without any changes, as such expectations are removed from how changes really happen in specific local contexts. Such misconceptions tend to take an instrumentalist view of both the fieldworkers and community members who are the targets of interventions by development agencies.

6.1 Use of Fieldworker Agency in Development Programmes

Hirschman studied eleven long-term development projects of the World Bank to identify structural characteristics of projects so that their successes and failures in relation to the project objectives could be explained. Based on the analyses, he articulated 'the principle of the hiding hand' to explain projects that succeeded (1967:11-14). Each successful project was accompanied by two sets of offsetting characteristics: a) unsuspected threats to the success, especially during the later stages of the projects and b) unsuspected remedial actions that were taken to overcome the threats. He mentioned the creativity of people who worked on the projects, especially those in developing countries, which was underestimated at the time of design as part of the unsuspected remedial action to overcome the threats (ibid, 1967:13). Part of the challenge, he says,

> Creativity always comes as a surprise to us; therefore we can never count on it; and dare not believe until it has happened (ibid, 1967:13).

Even social actors and fieldworkers could very well underestimate their own capability until the required energy for action becomes necessary in light of problems or opportunities they face. As difficult as it is to foresee and plan with certain knowledge of how community contexts might evolve during the course of programme implementation, it would also be equally difficult to plan how fieldworkers should respond when contexts do change. The only realistic option is to ensure some degree of flexibility in programme plans and allow decision-making space for programme personnel on the ground.

The agency of the fieldworker was well recognised and fundamental to some of the earlier community development approaches that were based on the approach outlined in, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire (1970). Freire stated that oppressed people should develop critical consciousness of their situation through dialogical action and learn to think for themselves through a grassroots pedagogical process facilitated by a grassroots educator. Freire related critical consciousness and the resulting synthesis of thought and action as a way to reclaim humanity, to become humanised (ibid, 1970: 47 to 49). For example, a programme on participatory organisations for the rural poor in Sri Lanka reflected this Freirean thinking and stated that:

> …The role of the animator (community facilitator, change agent, catalyst or activist as variously called) is seen as a central factor in the generation of self-reliant grassroots

> initiatives. The essence of this role is a catalytic one of stimulating the rural poor to a systematic reflection of the causal factors in their poverty and deprivation and of assisting them to realise their self-reliant potentials through their own organised efforts (Tilakaratna, 1985:i).

What these approaches are suggesting is that the agency of the fieldworker is essential for the local ownership of social changes and its sustainability. Few examples of academic scholars who give importance to actor-oriented approaches to development are mentioned below. Generally, they tend to emphasise essential qualities required for the fieldworkers and not just technical competencies, so that fieldworkers could invest their agency in development efforts. Here the emphasis is not so much about the role the fieldworkers play, but their attitudes, character and behaviours. Examples from selected works are given below:

Myers state that if transformational development is about transforming relationships, then fieldworkers on the ground should have the right set of attitude, mind-set and professionalism. They need to live out the principles of transformational development. He goes on to list several essential qualities required in field practitioners (Myers, 2011:221-226).

Key character traits such as patience, listening, learning from communities, respectfulness, empathy, perseverance, diplomacy, etc. are all crucial for an effective fieldworker. Communication and negotiation skills are vital and so are the abilities to diagnose and analyse a situation. An effective fieldworker requires a deep understanding of the community that he or she works with (Fowler, 1997:84).

It is important to 'being nice' to people and showing courtesy, respect, patience, generosity and sensitivity in working with communities (Chambers, 1997:233). Ultimately personal beliefs and values should guide fieldworkers in how they choose to respond to the constraints they face in their organisational work environment and community social contexts. Chambers in his aptly titled article on 'The Primacy of the Personal' writes:

> This is the fact that individual personal choice of what to do and how to do it mediates every action and every change. Policy, practice, and performance are all outcomes of personal actions. What is done or not done depends on what people choose to do and not to do…. (1996:246)

Development professionals, including fieldworkers, being 'uppers', typically seek to gain credibility, status and power in their work with 'lowers', which makes it hard for them to understand local realities of the poor. He calls for a reversal of attitudes and

behaviours for outsiders doing development work in local communities (ibid, 1997:32). Chambers makes an observation that every person has some room to manoeuvre, create space for others, form alliances with others and thereby have the vision and the courage to make changes (1996:247). This requires fieldworkers to make a personal commitment and resolve, over and above the structure within which they work, so as to disempower themselves, hand over the baton to the poor, devolve discretion, encourage the initiatives of others and promote genuine forms of community participation (ibid, 1997:237). Heaton-Shrestha mention that fieldworkers who come from urban-educated, middle-class backgrounds need to learn and make changes to their attitudes, speech and behaviour and shed any professional biases and other symbols of power as they work with marginalised communities (2004:43). This was true for all the fieldworkers who were part of this particular research study. Even though most of them hailed from rural communities, they were urban-educated and only three fieldworkers came from communities that were nearby the programme areas where they served.

7. Performance Accountability in NGOs

As mentioned earlier, another contested area that creates tension for the fieldworkers originates from differences in the understanding and practice of accountability; upward accountability for performance to the senior leadership and donors on one hand and downward accountability to community members and local partners on the other hand – two stakeholder groups of people that fieldworkers need to keep in mind as they do their work. Accountability for NGO performance is a key area where donor preferences and requirements could conflict with, or differ from, community realities, needs, preferences and expectations. Accountability is related to how power is distributed and used in organisational relationships. While there are many definitions for accountability in the context of development work, it is the means by which individuals and organisations report to a recognised authority (or authorities) and are held accountable for their actions (Edwards and Hulme, 1995:8). While the industry-wide used terms ‘upward accountability’, referring to NGO accountability to donors and other senior leaders, and ‘downward accountability’, referring to NGO accountability to local communities, might be value-laden and evaluative in nature, these two concepts are briefly reviewed below.

7.1 Upward Accountability

Official aid is replete with terms such as 'measurable outcomes', 'managing for results', 'evidence-based practices' and 'value for money'. Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness (OECD, 2005) and Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008) are good representations of donor expectations for performance and results, which were developed on the basis of certain principles for promoting effectiveness in development aid. They were adopted by the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD and agreed upon by over 100 countries. 'Managing for results' is part of the commitment expressed as, "countries have transparent, measurable assessment frameworks to measure progress and assess results" in order to improve the quality of development work financed by international aid and undertaken by governments, UN organisations and civil society agencies including NGOs (OECD, 2008). This discourse on management for results is translated into practice through certain 'artefacts of results and evidence' such as logframes, indicators, targets, baselines, reports, performance reviews, randomised control trials and evaluations (Eyben, 2013: 6-8). These artefacts are used for planning, implementation and monitoring development programmes. These could be useful and bring clarity to development work or make a mockery of how development actually happens, depending on the power relations that exist within the organisational structure and how these artefacts are required to be used (Ramalingam, 2013:79). These artefacts are 'good servants' to those who know how and when to use them, but become 'bad masters' when their use is enforced with strict rules and regulations based on one's own understanding and interpretations. This donor imperative for results is pervasive throughout the NGO sector to the extent that fieldworkers have internalised the need for evidence for results for any donor-funded projects (Eyben, 2012:2).

Upward accountability to senior leadership and donors exclusively relies on quantification for measurement as quantitative results are seen as more objective and professionally respectable in comparison to qualitative results. Donors favour certain types of knowledge and skills over and above traditional knowledge of local communities or fieldworkers who would not typically possess competency in quantitative analysis (Eyben, 2013:11; Chambers, 1997:38). Quantitative targets measure people as individual entities, whose lives are shaped by actions of others (Eyben, 2015:832). Quantitative targets reinforce established narratives around simple

and clear causal chain on how to solve development problems and tell uncomplicated story lines to senior leaders and donors (Ramalingam, 2013:34). Expectation that comes through donor demands for performance and accountability in the form of standardised reports with a focus on measurable inputs and outputs underpin principal-agent model of a working relationship between donors and NGOs, rather than a partnership between equals and that this type of monitoring and evaluation requirements from donors that emphasises short term, quantitative and tangible results turns accountability into accountancy (Edward and Hulme, 1995:197). While numbers may tell some aspects of changes that happen due to development projects, they don't tell the whole story or the efforts it take to achieve them and the consequences. Descriptive analyses of changes are often context specific, nuanced, reflect complexity of change processes and require greater effort to communicate and comprehend (Ramalingam, 2013:40).

Much of this performance expectation for upward accountability, results and hard evidence get operationalised in NGOs through a cascade of strategies, business plans, assessments, programme designs, reports, scorecards, evaluations, audits and performance management of individual staff members. Fieldworkers who have responsibility to implement NGO policies and programmes in communities are the ones responsible for implementation of plans and on-going measurement and reporting. Working with the requirements of upward accountability characterises the daily life and performance management expectations for the fieldworkers.

7.2 Downward Accountability

NGOs being civil society organisations have a diverse range of stakeholders in addition to donors who fund their activities. This includes communities and local partners that NGOs serve. Promises NGOs make to people they serve and objectives and social values they promote give them the ability to mobilise resources and volunteers in the first place and so NGOs' legitimacy to some extent depends upon their accountability back to communities they serve for their continued existence, activities and impact (Jagadananda and Brown, 2010:116). NGOs are assumed to be more effective than governments in reaching the poor and obtain their true and meaningful participation as they operate on the basis of certain values and so this should translate into NGO downward accountability to those they seek to serve, in addition to upward accountability to donors and senior leaders (Mitlin et al, 2007:1700; Fowler 1990:11).

Downward accountability empowers the poor that the NGOs serve (Kilby, 2006:952-954).

However, downward accountability in large NGO funded programmes could be problematic for a few reasons: 1) Downward accountability involves transfer of power to community members in decision making including programming choices, use of resources, indicators for success and others. Top down programming with external funding, developed by technical experts on the basis of evidence based best practices and downward accountability may not be fully compatible (Ebrahim, 2003:813); 2) Power dynamics that exist between fieldworkers and community members may hinder development of downward accountability (Chambers, 1997:32). An additional observation of the researcher is that even though fieldworkers live in communities and work with community members, they are materially and socially at a distance from people in poor communities they serve by virtue of their employment, education and association with an NGO. Community members may see fieldworkers as outsiders who live among them in order to implement programmes of the NGO that they work with. They may see fieldworkers as individuals who have access to resources and connections with outsiders that could benefit them. Fieldworkers could experience resistance and fear from sections of local communities in accepting NGO programmes and face the temptation to depend upon local structures and enlist the help of established elites in communities to efficiently deliver development interventions. A number of scholars describe patterns of mutual enrolment of established elites and development workers into each others' agenda as elites are often seen as key informants, opinion leaders, innovative farmers, educated, open-minded, concerned for others, etc. (e.g. Mosse 2004:84; Kelsall and Mercer 2003:297).

Despite the growing interest among donors and NGOs in the concept of 'downward accountability' to communities and recipients of aid, the results and evidence requirements are driven mostly by 'upward accountability' to donors and decision-making by senior leaders. Here are a few examples from the literature review: a research study examining NGO reports, disclosure statements, performance assessments and evaluations, observed that upward and external accountability to donors was emphasised and downward accountability to communities was underdeveloped (Ebrahim, 2003:813). Another study found out that donor reporting and other requirements prohibited NGOs from being accountable to the poor (Andrews,

2014:99). A study on downward accountability of NGOs in Ghana learned that NGOs engaged community members in getting their endorsement in pre-planned programme plans and were largely tokenistic in order to gain legitimacy and lacked any downward accountability (Bawole and Langnel, 2016:920). It is suggested that the accountability in NGOs is largely pragmatic and needs-based in nature so as to ensure continual flow of funds and sustainability of the institutions themselves rather than based on any idealistic notions of accountability to the poor (Cavill and Sohail, 2007:231). Donors and personnel of aid agencies who are closer to donors wield greater power than those who are tasked with implementation of programmes and the recipients of development aid (Wallace et al, 2007:38; Edwards and Hulme, 2002:208). However, such upward accountability is often cloaked in visible manifestations of community participation, while achieving the planned outputs and spending the budget on time (Mosse 2004:161).

Forms of accountability are also reflected in the selection of local community groups or organisations an NGO chooses to work with - whether it searches for local organisations that already exist or initiates new ones. If the development thinking is to build on local initiatives then engagement with local informal associations that already exist might be appropriate. If a local organisation is formed or induced by an outside NGO then it is likely that the local organisation may define itself by taking on the identity of the founding NGO and develop a patronage relationship and dependency (Fowler, 1997:95). In such cases, local organisation is held accountable by the founding NGO for the use of its funds and implementation of programme activities reinforcing upward accountability rather than the other way around. Even when NGOs work with local organisations that already exist, they might treat them as *project carriers* (ibid, 1997:222) and can very well undermine their local initiative and legitimacy (ibid, 2000:37). Among large NGOs, it is mostly those that partnered with autonomous apex people organisations are the ones that had sufficiently demonstrated downward accountability (Wils, 1996:76).

While it may be true that in majority of the donor funded development programmes formal downward accountability mechanisms may not be in place, fieldworkers have a need to feel accepted by community members along with endorsement or approval by community leaders or authorities on an on-going basis. This acceptance provides the basis for fieldworkers to implement programmes on a

timely basis and meet the expectations of their NGO management. This may imply informal or tacit forms accountability for some of their work, at least with some sections of community members or community elites. The concept of downward accountability may operate differently in traditional communities than how formal, upward accountability works with donors and senior leaders in the NGO headquarters.

7.3 Conflicts due to Contested Areas in Development

Conceptual understanding of actor-oriented approaches vis-à-vis external interventions and notions of performance accountability get translated as development discourses and organisational practices within organisations. They could be broadly classified into two categories; a) participatory approaches that rely on actor-orientation and downward accountability and b) managerial approaches that emphasise the role of external interventions in development and upward accountability. One is a more agency-oriented and process-centric participatory approach, with emphasis on continuing exploration and learning and the other one, a managerial approach where rationality and evidence-based external interventions drive changes. Managerial and participatory approaches are based on different theories of change on how development happens, the agency that drives development and where control and accountability lie. The managerial approach emphasises planning for predictable outcomes and the management design to deliver on the planned results with clear lines of accountability to the donors. The participatory approach is focused on participation and ownership of the poor in development processes that are more open-ended and locally relevant, with a strong emphasis on learning. While in the participatory approach there might be clarity on the issues to be addressed and some of the directions to be taken, development outcomes are not pre-determined, nor are the exact tactics to achieve outcomes. NGOs and their donors simultaneously use both managerial and participatory discourses, tools and techniques without acknowledging or reconciling the tensions that exist between them in terms of conceptual underpinnings and practical implications (Wallace, et al, 2007:31). Mosse in his account of *Cultivating Development* describes how aid agencies systematised managerial approach within their own institutional processes of performance management and accountability, while still expecting community participation within such managerial approaches. One of the results of this is that field practitioners are often caught in this conflict of discourses as they shape programming practices and performance expectations (2005:97-99).

Expectations for both a participatory approach in working with the poor and the delivery of pre-determined results based on a managerial approach co-exist in NGOs and, to a large extent, such expectations fall on the shoulders of the frontline workers. They are left on their own to manage the tensions that exist between these two discourses.

This tension to deliver pre-determined results while showing tokens or vestiges of participation of people creates moral or ethical dilemmas for fieldworkers. This expectation to achieve predetermined results through participation is described as 'bureaucratic populism', to convey the idea that civil servants try to create conditions in which people can become qualified (that is they develop responsible public behaviour) to participate in both the processes and benefits of development (Montgomery, 1998:4). This lies somewhere in between exploitation and empowerment, but it is neither exploitation nor empowerment. This concept of bureaucratic populism might be applicable in NGO-funded programmes also, as people are expected to show some degree of support for NGO activities, even though they may not meet their needs, so as not to miss out on any likely benefits in future (ibid, 1998:4). Programme implementation by fieldworkers is always guided by operational plans and budgets and constrained by organisational systems and procedures. Participatory requirements do not obviate or supersede the need for institutional requirements (Mosse, 2001:24). For Christian NGOs, such as World Vision, participation is linked to its understanding of transformational development, but management systems and structures still are important to meet donor funding requirements and organisational control over activities. The following example might illustrate the irony in fieldworkers trying to apply both participatory and managerial approaches in practice. Hilhorst narrates an example of how local NGO fieldworkers in the Philippines were required to follow a step-by-step model based on an externally planned intervention in forming a 'people's organisation'. This meant that the NGO fieldworkers needed to avoid 'interference' from local people in the process of forming such a people's organisation (2003:103).

Eyben calls the rational and managing development for results 'substantialism', which sees development in specific entities such as gender, results, sectors, outcomes, outputs, etc. and the other mode of thought that sees development in terms of processes, patterns, relationships, etc. as 'relationalism' (2010: 380-394). Being a relationist is not just about having a focus on people but a keen interest in processes

more than results. Her argument is that many staff, especially those in the field, while officially subscribing to the substantialist worldview, function as 'closet relationists', and by doing so unwittingly make the substantialist view of development viable and make it appear effective (ibid, 2010:394). The relationist approach by the fieldworkers, 'below the tip of the iceberg', could be both problematic as it is not transparent and accountable to others, but at the same time effective as it makes the substantialist approach to development viable and produces results. Ramalingam mentions that this tendency to simultaneously operate at these two different levels, one at the level of development discourse that is officially subscribed to and another one in terms of relational processes, is reinforced by the co-existence of parallel cultures in aid organisations (2013:86). This tendency to operate at two levels could have implications for frontline workers who have a strong commitment to development causes. They may end up working long hours of unpaid overtime work due to the need to engage in relational processes that are not articulated or recognised in the managerial approach in order to make it viable.

8. CONCLUSION

To summarise the above discussions: Street-level bureaucracy framework developed by Lipsky (1980) provides a relevant framework to study NGO fieldworkers' tensions, given the similarities between government workers and NGO frontline workers and also in consideration of similar such studies. NGO fieldworkers are caught in the tensions arising from two contested and inter-related areas of development work: a) Development discourses that are based on actor-oriented approaches versus approaches that give prominence to external or outside interventions; b) Upward accountability of NGO workers to senior leadership and donors on one hand and downward accountability to community members and local partners on the other.

Actor-oriented approaches to development point to the importance of the agency and role of NGO fieldworkers in development as social change processes. However, NGOs manage development projects as a discrete set of interventions within a specific time-space setting with emphasis on external interventions and clear accountability to donors while expressing commitment to participatory approaches development and downward accountability. Simultaneous applications of managerial and participatory discourses on development lead to ambiguous policies and conflicts in performance

expectations for the fieldworkers. An exclusive donor focus on upward accountability often leads to the indiscriminate use of 'Artefacts of Evidence and Results' and exercises control over field practitioners and field-based processes (Eyben, 2012:2). Given the autonomous nature of their role, fieldworkers develop discretionary patterns and coping mechanisms to manage the tensions they face in their daily work. These coping mechanisms could either support or subvert the NGO agenda in their work with communities.

Chapter 3: Introducing World Vision International and World Vision India

1. INTRODUCTION

This particular chapter traces the history and context of development thinking and practice of World Vision and provides the organisational context for this particular research. Purpose of this chapter is to present some important aspects of World Vision which then open up ground for academic probing and bring into focus certain critical issues within the organisation which will be further discussed later in the thesis, e.g., theories or framework of development such as transformational development and the idea of the wellbeing of children, role and place of strategy, organisational contribution to development, its approaches to design, monitoring and evaluation, reporting of results, relationship between support (funding) offices and field offices, among others. All of these have a direct bearing on the work of fieldworkers.

World Vision International is one of the largest international NGOs in the world with the global budget for the fiscal year that ended in September 2017 at US$ 2.7 billion and the total number of its worldwide employees being 39,562 (Gasgara, 2018:2). It is not a single entity, but a federal partnership of autonomous NGOs operating in 98 countries that are mutually committed together by a 'Covenant of Partnership', mission statement, core values, statement of faith and global governance structures. World Vision International is vested with certain 'reserve powers' to carry out certain functions on behalf of all its members. World Vision is one of the few operational NGOs, along with Plan International, Care and Save the Children, that designs and implements its own programmes in communities, rather than implementing programmes through operational partners at the local level (Smillie, 1995:59). Since its origin in 1947, World Vision has maintained its Christian identity, with an expressed commitment to meeting the spiritual and physical needs of the people it serves even though the practical application of such a commitment has continued to evolve over time (King, 2014; Mitchell, 2014:94). World Vision International is multi-faceted and is involved in humanitarian relief, community development, advocacy and microfinance work. This chapter traces the history and context of development thinking and practice of World Vision and provides the organisational context with relevance to this study.

2. ORIGINS OF WORLD VISION

According to Rev. Bob Pierce, the founder of World Vision, it was his encounter with one needy child in China that changed the course of his life and led to the birth of World Vision. While there are variations in the description of that encounter, they all mention Rev. Bob Pierce, an American evangelist visiting China in the summer of 1947 for evangelical crusades. While there he met Tena Hoelkeboer, a teacher, who introduced him to a girl child, White Jade, who had become a Christian but lacked funds for her basic necessities and school supplies. Rev. Pierce claimed that he gave Hoelkeboer his last five dollars and agreed to send the same amount each month to help the woman to care for that girl child. At home in America, he challenged his audience in churches and Christian gatherings with the needs of individual children in Asia and asked them to do something about it (Graham and Lockerbie, 1983:74). In 1950, World Vision was incorporated in Los Angeles, USA. The first child sponsorship programme began three years later in response to the needs of children orphaned at the end of the Korean War (World Vision International, 2008:22). Rev. Bob Pierce felt that God had called the organisation to care for orphans. An American could sponsor an orphan child living in a Christian institution in Korea for ten dollars a month. Sponsors `could exchange photos and letters with their foster children and provide extra gifts (King, 2014:263). Through the 1950s to 1970s, there was a rapid expansion of World Vision to many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Fundraising offices opened in Canada and Australia, followed by Germany, UK and New Zealand. World Vision offices in developed countries have the primary responsibility for fundraising, while the offices in developing countries have the primary responsibility for working with the poor.

Until 1978, World Vision remained as an American organisation. As World Vision continued to grow and expand in the 1970s, the Board of Directors saw an increasing need for higher levels of unity and coordination between the diverse and distant offices of the growing organisation. On May 31, 1978, the Board of Directors drafted and signed a Declaration of Internationalisation, establishing World Vision International, as well as an International Council to meet every three years beginning in 1980. The declaration outlined a framework for the partnership: an ethos in which to work, a theological frame in which to operate, and a set of objectives by which to be governed. While the Declaration of Internationalisation was a major step toward a

stronger and more effective partnership for a rapidly growing organisation, issues to consider are how equitable are the relationships among the support (funding) offices and field offices at an operational level? Is there mutual accountability between the funding offices and field offices based on their respective roles and responsibilities? It is not necessarily uncommon for Northern member of an NGO organisation to exert greater power over their Southern counterparts despite they are all members of one federal structure (e.g. Ebrahim, 2003).

The following are considered as the 'core documents' of World Vision International:

1. Vision Statement: This states that "Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness and our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so". The Triennial Council adopted it in August 2004.
2. Mission Statement: This dates back to 1992. It identifies World Vision as an international partnership of Christians with a mission 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". It identifies transformational development, emergency relief, promotion of justice, partnership with churches, public awareness and witness to Jesus Christ as the six areas of mission.
3. Core Values: World Vision's core values document provides explanation for the following statements made in the first person: "We are Christian", "We are committed to the poor", "We are stewards", "We are partners" and "We are responsive".
4. Statement of Faith: This was the earliest of the core documents, adopted in the 1950s, and articulates the tenets of the Christian faith.
5. Covenant of Partnership: It reminds every office that they are twin citizens; citizens of a particular office or country, and citizens of the World Vision Partnership.

Mission and vision statements and core values speak to the core identity of an organisation and the purpose of its existence. They are developed to provide guidance to staff in their everyday behaviour and decisions and promote cohesion towards a common cause (Babnik, et al, 2014:612,613). Employees' construction of the mission and vision in their minds would differ from the official versions of the mission and

vision, unless and otherwise there is continuous reorientation through organisational processes and signposts (Kopaneva and Sias, 2015:364). Based on researcher's own experience, while there are constant references and reminders about the vision statement and core values within the life of World Vision, the mission statement is referred to only on an occasional basis. Core values are mentioned as required key competencies in job descriptions and provide a key parameter for setting and measuring performance objectives of employees.

3. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

World Vision consists of 98 national offices around the world, grouped in what is referred to as the World Vision 'partnership'. World Vision International, currently called the 'Global Centre' and established as the international coordinating body in 1978, provides global coordination for the partnership, and ensures that global standards and policies are pursued. Its board of directors provides oversight, and its body of members (the 'Council') is the highest governing authority for certain fundamental decisions.

World Vision national offices, many of which are governed by their own boards, are brought together as part of the partnership through the mission statement and core values described earlier. National Boards are composed of church and civic leaders and business professionals that govern the work of their respective national offices. Seven regional offices provide oversight for the national (field) offices. The National/Country Director reports to the National Board and also to the Regional Leader. National offices located in developed countries are primarily involved in raising funds, while national offices in developing countries are primarily involved in disaster management, long-term community development, advocacy and microfinance work. However, this distinction between offices in developed and developing countries has been changing over the past twenty years with a number of national offices in middle-income countries raising funds as well as implementing field programmes. World Vision India is one such office, which raises funds from the Indian public and also implements programmes in poor communities. More than 99% of World Vision employees work in their countries of origin and in WV India, all employees are Indian citizens (Gasgara, 2018).

4. DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Smillie (1995:136) mentions that child sponsorship as a fundraising mechanism has proven to be exceptionally successful for many organisations, including World Vision. Pierce and Kalaiselvi (2014:143-147) describe the evolution of child sponsorship in World Vision and its role in helping children in the following manner: supporting institutional child welfare in 1950s and 1960s; supporting child and family welfare in 1970s; child welfare within a community development paradigm in 1980s; child and community development through area development programmes in 1990s and 2000s and partnering with communities and local partners towards the wellbeing of children since 2011. In other words, child sponsorship funded programmes have shifted dramatically and expanded their programming approach over the years to include families and communities. Programmes have transitioned from providing direct and exclusive assistance to sponsored children to working with others in contributing to the wellbeing of all children, while maintaining the one to one nature of relationship between individual sponsors and children through exchange of letters, giving gifts and sponsor visits. World Vision's intent at present is that sponsored children benefit along with other children through programme activities, without the provision of exclusive benefits only for sponsored children (ibid, 2014: 153-155). Improvement in the wellbeing of all children, including sponsored children, has come to be seen as the barometer for overall development of communities. While some of these changes are due to criticism of child sponsorship in general, and World Vision in particular, others are due to its own changing understanding of the nature and causes of poverty and how best to contribute to the wellbeing of children.

Globally World Vision sponsors over 3.5 million sponsored children, raising more than US$1.3 billion each year to support area development programs across 57 countries (Gasgara, 2018). This growth has been made possible through making children and their needs the focal point of all its marketing activities. People are persuaded to help when they see the needs of an individual child presented with a sense of urgency. Once a sponsor has agreed to sponsor a specific child, connections are made and relationships formed and sustained through sharing of personal information and pictures (Eekelen, 2013:471). The mechanics behind child sponsorship in the organisation make the connection between the child and sponsors possible, resulting in regular long-term monetary gifts. Child sponsorship brings with it expectations both

from the child / family of the child being sponsored and the sponsor. Through their participation in sponsorship, a child/family of the child expect to benefit in some specific ways and similarly a sponsor expects that his or her monthly giving to make a real difference in the life of the child. Since funds given by many sponsors are pooled into funding for specific programmes, child sponsorship provides greater degree of flexibility to support (funding) offices than public grant funded programmes. How specific children who are sponsored benefit from a community based programme becomes an important issue to consider.

While child sponsorship provides the core sustainable funding for World Vision, a significant portion of its total funding comes from other sources, such as bilateral and multilateral government donors, major donors, corporations, foundations and funds raised through mass public appeals for various causes.

5. Development Thinking and Practice

5.1 Transformational Development (TD)

The term 'transformational development' was formally introduced as part of the mission statement in 1992, and it was during this time that World Vision gradually started moving away from a welfare model to a more 'empowerment'-based approach through Area Development Programmes (ADP) as described in the next section. Poverty was understood as multi-faceted and multi-dimensional and was defined as:

> Poverty is a surmountable human condition of deprivation and broken relationships often threatening their survival and involving unacceptable human suffering, in which people are unable to fulfil their God-given potential. Poverty is the result of broken relationships, and exploitation by unjust systems, processes and powers, in the social, religious, economic, political, bureaucratic, environmental and cosmic domains at the local, national, regional and global levels (World Vision International, 2003).

There was recognition that transformational development was a process, with God as the main agent. World Vision's role was seen as working alongside the poor and the oppressed as they pursued their own transformational development, in partnership with sponsors/donors, governments, churches and other NGOs.

> Transformational Development is a process through which children, families, and communities move toward wholeness of life with dignity, justice and hope. The scope of Transformational Development includes social, religious, economic, political, bureaucratic, environmental, and cosmic domains at the local, national, regional, and global levels. The Transformational Development process recognizes that God is already involved among the poor and the non-poor. Human transformation is a continuous process of profound and holistic change brought about by the work of God. Hence, the process and the impact of Transformational Development must be consistent with the principles

and values of the Kingdom of God (Transformational Development Core Documents, World Vision International, 2003)

TD policy is further discussed in Chapter 5, but certain dominant themes from the organisational discourse on TD are briefly mentioned here:

a) TD is holistic in nature, meaning that spiritual, social and physical aspects of development or wellbeing are interconnected and it is difficult to address one without the others.

b) The importance of inner transformation in development was part of the discourse. Since poverty was not understood just as material, but also as the 'poverty of the spirit', so TD was the response needed to help the poor and the oppressed to recover their 'marred identity" as children of God and 'lost vocation' as stewards of God's gifts (Christian, 1999:147).

c) TD is community-based. This meant that local communities are the primary level of World Vision's interaction in transformational development with the poor and oppressed. Community-based transformational development requires active participation of community members in all aspects of their development. This did not mean working exclusively at the local level, but rather implied the development of community leadership capacity to establish interdependent and empowering relationships with others within the national and international context, to address those matters that impact people's lives (World Vision International, 2003).

d) TD is focused on the wellbeing of all children. World Vision's focus on wellbeing of all children was recognition that young girls and boys are most affected by the consequences of poverty. It affirmed that children have the potential to be agents of transformation for their families and communities, in the present and future. It called for investment in children as a means to fight poverty within a framework of sustainability and it considered the wellbeing of children as a key indicator of sustainable community development (ibid, 2003).

e) Mutuality of Transformation: World Vision's involvement in transformational development meant that there is a need for continuing transformation of all partners, including World Vision staff, boards and donors, as well as churches, NGOs and governments (ibid, 2003).

TD Framework included five areas of desired change including; a) wellbeing of children, families and communities, b) children transformed as agents of change c)

empowered and interdependent communities, d) transformed relationships and e) transformed social systems and structures. Programming standards such as DME and technical interventions were subsidiary to these principles and the understanding of TD rather than being an end in themselves.

TD framework provided a highly aspirational view of development. It provided a set of principles and long-term directions rather than clear outcomes that could be achieved through a project mode of thinking. As we would see in Chapter Five, this understanding of development created ambiguities and conflicts when strategic priorities and programme design choices were made on the basis of child wellbeing outcomes.

5.2 Transformational Development Indicators (TDI)

In 2003, World Vision put in place a set of Transformational Development Indicators (TDI) developed in alignment with the TD framework to be measured in every ADP. The overall purpose of TDI was "to show the status of the quality of life of communities, families and children where World Vision is facilitating community based, sustainable, transformational development programmes" (Transformational Development Indicators, World Vision International, 2003). In implementing the TDI, there was recognition of the creative tension between partnering with a group of communities, each of which had its own values and priorities for development, and maintaining values and priorities consistent with the World Vision ethos. It was expected that World Vision worked out goals, objectives, standards and indicators together with community partners in a development programme. There was an ethos, however, within which goals, objectives and standards are determined and that ethos was based on the TD framework as described earlier. The TDI were designed to give expression to the TD frame in concrete ways. World Vision believed that the TDI, as core indicators of the TD frame, could demonstrate the basic quality of life in all contexts of its development work. The intent was not to attribute the indicator results to World Vision's work only, but to know the status of children, families and communities based on the TD framework and to take necessary action. TDI included a set of indicators related to health, nutritional and educational status of children that were readily measurable, but also qualitative indicators, such as community participation in development, participation of children in development, emergence of hope among people, people and groups caring for each other, sustainability of

community-based organisations, relationship with churches and staff spiritual development.

With TDI there was an attempt to measure and report on intangible and qualitative aspects of transformational development, which were central to World Vision's understanding, in addition to certain key quantitative indicators related to the wellbeing of children. Indicators such as emergence of hope, caring for others, social sustainability, community participation and Christian commitment, were based on descriptive analysis. Underlying motivation behind these qualitative indicators was that the process of collecting data through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews and analysis would be transformative at the local community level, in addition to the data that it would generate for learning and reporting purposes at the national, regional and global levels. TDI were measured and reported in every programme once in three years from 2003 to 2012 (Transformational Development Indicators, World Vision International, 2003). Thereafter measurement and reporting on TDI were dropped as organisational requirements when Child Wellbeing Outcomes (CWBO) were adopted and World Vision's development programming focus almost exclusively shifted towards child wellbeing, along with measures that would focus on World Vision's contributions to the wellbeing of children. Main reasons for dropping Transformational Development Indicators appear to include: a) they were not exclusively focused on the wellbeing of children, b) they were not measuring and reporting World Vision's contributions but the status of communities in which World Vision was working. World Vision wanted something that would exclusively show its contribution to development and c) comparison of results from qualitative indicators across programmes were not possible.

5.3 Focus on the Wellbeing of Children

In 2010, Child Wellbeing Outcomes (CWBO) were adopted by the Board of Directors as World Vision's understanding of child wellbeing. These outcomes were developed on the basis of *the Ecology of Human Development* by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as explained later in this chapter. These outcomes were meant to help World Vision articulate how children develop, what affects their development and who has responsibility for enabling them to develop fully. Child Wellbeing Outcomes (CWBO) were, in essence, World Vision's way of describing a holistic picture of child wellbeing and providing a common language for World Vision staff across the partnership. It

included four major aspirations and fifteen outcomes that described the developmental outcomes for children that contribute to these aspirations.

Table 3: Child Wellbeing Outcomes

Goal: Sustained wellbeing of children within families and communities, especially the most vulnerable *Luke 2 v 52 "And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and people."*			
Girls and Boys			
Enjoy good health	**Are educated for life**	**Experience the love of God and their neighbours**	**Are cared for, protected and participate**
Children are well nourished	Children read, write and use numeracy skills	Children grow in their awareness and experience of God’s love in an environment that recognises their freedom	Children are cared for in a positive family and community environment and have safe spaces to play
Children protected from infection, disease, and injury	Children make good judgments, can protect themselves, manage emotions and communicate ideas	Children enjoy positive relationships with peers, family and community members	Parents or caregivers provide well for their children
Children and their caregivers access essential health services	Adolescents are ready for economic opportunity	Children care for others and their environment	Children celebrated and registered at birth
	Children access and complete quality education	Children have hope and vision for the future	Children are respected participants in decisions that affect their lives
Foundational Principles: Children's rights and dignity are upheld (including girls and boys of all religions, ethnicity, HIV status & disability)			

The rationale for Child Wellbeing Outcomes included that: 1) There is a connection between sustained action in communities and a focus on children and the most vulnerable. 2) Concern for children can unite communities in ways that other issues cannot. Children can be the social and cultural glue, which sustains community involvement. 3) Investment in children at an early age can generate huge returns to society, including greater success in education, higher income levels, reduction in risky behaviours and expenditure on welfare services, as well as improved civic health and governance. 4) Investing in children and their immediate caregivers can break the intergenerational cycle of deprivation, and lead to sustained change for individuals, communities and ultimately society. From a theological perspective, it was argued that children are born with the same rights and dignity as adults and these flow from their status as children of God. Protecting and empowering children as gifts from God and the promise of hope for building just societies is a divine calling. From a political

perspective, it was seen that children are a barometer of poverty. Children experience poverty differently than adults do because of their vulnerability and lack of legal and economic status in society. How children are doing, in all aspects of their lives, reflects the overall health and development of the family, community and society they live in. A thriving society values all children, especially the most vulnerable, and upholds their human rights. Childhood poverty can have lifelong consequences. Children are especially vulnerable to shocks, trauma and poverty. The most important figures in children's lives, their parents and caregivers (especially women), are often disempowered, poor and illiterate, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Breaking this cycle of intergenerational poverty, it was felt, required a fresh approach to development (Child Wellbeing Reference Guide, World Vision International, 2012).

This understanding of child wellbeing is based on *the Ecology of Human Development* by Bronfenbrenner (1979). This is summarised as "*child development is incorporated in a hierarchy of nested social systems in which what happens outside the immediate experiences of the developing child affects what goes on inside the experiences of a child, as much as, if not, more than the biological and psychological aspects of the child*" (Garbarino 1980: 435). An ecological understanding of how children grow and develop is in recognition that children are members of several social groups such as their family, neighbourhood, community, school, religious groups and other distant groups at the same time and they interact with and are affected by all these nested social systems. The concept of child wellbeing engages a broader and interconnected set of areas, not just in relation to children's healthy physical growth and intellectual development but also their sense of security, dignity and expression of their agency. This concept of wellbeing builds on Sen's capabilities approach, but from the perspective of children (Sen, 2001:70,71). Improvement in just one aspect such as health or education is not a guarantee that a child enjoys wellbeing in life. Thus two things to remember in relation to World Vision's understanding of child wellbeing are; a) it is affected by the ecology in which a child is a member of and b) it is interconnected and whole. When one aspect of wellbeing is affected, it affects the others.

5.4 World Vision's Approach to Development Programming (DPA)

World Vision's Approach to Development Programming (DPA) was developed in 2011 to provide step-by-step guidance for programmes with a focus on child wellbeing

outcomes: how to start, manage and transition development programmes in various countries where World Vision works. DPA was summarised as "equipping local-level staff to work effectively with communities and partners towards the sustained wellbeing of children, especially the most vulnerable". DPA was mentioned as a platform to integrate and focus World Vision's development programmes on child wellbeing priorities found in the country office strategy. At its heart was the 'Critical Path', an iterative pathway designed to build a conducive environment for open dialogue and on-going relationships between World Vision and local partners towards formation of multi-stakeholder partnerships to achieve common priorities for child wellbeing. The journey along the Critical Path recognised that God was already at work in a community. It was portrayed as a process of seeking to discern how to join in God's work through prayer and reflection based on a study of scripture and listening to children, communities and local partners (World Vision International, 2011). Along the Critical Path, local level staff were expected to engage with communities and local partners to find out more information about them and current work or projects being undertaken to improve child wellbeing. Building on this engagement, communities were to identify their vision and priorities for child wellbeing. ADPs were expected to work alongside local partners to achieve this by facilitating dialogue, capacity building and coaching of local partners. This approach recognised existing processes, potential and opportunities, then developed programmes in order to move towards a shared vision for child wellbeing (ibid, 2011).

As the CWBO got expanded into practical guidance in DPA: a) A goal of transformational development was almost exclusively articulated in terms of improvement in the wellbeing of children, including children as being agents of change; b) Other areas of change mentioned in the TD policy, such as empowered and interdependent relationships, transformed relationships and transformation of social systems were considered as a means towards achieving the wellbeing of children, rather than as legitimate ends in themselves; c) There were clear expectations that development workers lived among the people they served, had the required core competencies to fulfil their roles and they engaged in regular, intentional reflection and learning that led to improved practice; d) In line with the TD policy, World Vision was seen as one among many partners in the DPA; its role being a catalyst and builder of the capacity of local partners and partnerships for child wellbeing. It is noteworthy to

mention that an iterative and somewhat organic process of working with communities and local partners was framed in a highly structured, step-by-step procedural guide.

Based on the researcher's own understanding, the purpose of DPA was to ensure that the principles of TD were utilised to achieve sustainable child wellbeing outcomes through the lens of an ecological approach, where not only children but families and communities benefited. The concern was if development is adult centric, children can be made invisible. But if children are at the centre, everyone benefits if the work is approached through an ecological lens for children's growth and development.

5.5 Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Programmes

Similar to other NGOs, World Vision used logframe as a project management tool. Logframe included 4 hierarchical levels of change with indicators for success and an analysis of internal and external assumptions that might present a risk to the achievement of the objectives. Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning (LEAP), as it was called in World Vision, provided standards and guidelines for design, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. It included six overlapping components such as assessment, design, monitoring, evaluation, transition and reflection. Logframe was a standard requirement as part of any design document and provided the basis for developing detailed implementation plans. World Vision's LEAP manual stated that, "Logical framework, or logframe, helps in communication of theories and programme descriptions so that everyone can understand what a programme is trying to achieve and how it is going to achieve it. A logframe outlines objectives, indicators to measure success, and a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan" (2005:41). A logframe provided a summary of a project around which agreements are reached, more detailed implementation plans are developed and budgets are committed. A summary of a literature review on logframe is provided in Chapter 2.

Indicators were like the central nervous system within a logframe, for it helped the management to know whether programme activities were being accomplished, leading to the intended changes. In LEAP framework, an indicator was defined as a quantitative or qualitative measure that is used to demonstrate change and the extent to which programme or project activities, outputs, outcomes and goals are being, or have been, achieved (World Vision International, 2005: 22). Indicators for activities and outputs were called 'monitoring indicators' and indicators for outcomes and goal were

called 'evaluation indicators'. Table 1 illustrates the logframe used within World Vision.

Table 4: Outline of Logframe

	Summary of Objectives	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal				
Outcome 1				
Output 1.1				
Output 1.2				
Output 1.3				
Activity 1.1.1				
Activity 1.1.2				
Activity 1.1.3				

6. AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

This section provides a description of World Vision's Area Development Programmes (ADP) that provided the platform to put into practice organisational development thinking and guidelines as described above. World Vision works with groups of communities in vulnerable regions of a country defined by an Area Development Programme. Using the funds raised through child sponsorship, ADPs seek to improve child wellbeing by engaging poor and vulnerable communities and working with them through local partnerships over the longer term; typically fifteen years. Globally, World Vision supports 1,580 ADPs. A general description of an ADP is provided below, but there are variations in application from one country to another.

World Vision uses a community development approach in Area Development Programmes (ADPs) to improve the capacity of communities and local partners to care for the wellbeing and development of their children. ADPs are planned and implemented within specific geographic areas of a country, selected due to high levels of vulnerability in children and communities. This vulnerability may be due to poverty and chronic under-development, conflict, isolation, post-emergency redevelopment or a range of other factors. WV commits to a long-term, multi-phased approach to work with partners. Local partners may include government agencies, CBOs, other NGOs, churches and other FBOs, community groups and private businesses.

In the initial start-up phase, WV staff negotiate with political, government and civil leaders for permission to work collaboratively with them and with local community members to undertake an ADP. The second phase involves community awareness-raising about children's rights and wellbeing, secondary research using existing data sources and consultation with local stakeholders, including those who are particularly vulnerable. Ideally, this work is led by local stakeholders and supported by World Vision. The work continues by identifying and agreeing with communities on the most significant issues impacting their children's wellbeing. Usually, two or three major priority areas are selected, such as mother and child health, nutrition, education, livelihood development, child protection, and water and sanitation, which deals with issues such as malnutrition, poor quality education, a lack of access to clean water and food insecurity. As priorities are identified, strategies for addressing those priorities are also identified. This includes World Vision's project models, developed on the basis of evidence-based practices, to be implemented. Child sponsorship is explained to communities and children are selected in consultation with community members for enrolment in child sponsorship during this phase. This 'assessment and design' phase is an intensive process, which can take twelve to eighteen months.

This is followed by two or three programming phases, each lasting three to five years. During these phases, programmes are implemented using community development approaches: building the capacity of communities, partner organisations and governments to address the identified issues, and using existing models or developing new ones as required by local circumstances. Usually, two or three priority issues are addressed in the first phase. Baseline data is collected for each phase, and mid-term and end-term evaluations are conducted. These provide the basis for programme learning and revised planning. In the second and third phases of programming, existing programmes may move to new locations within the ADP, additional programmes or even additional priority issues may be added in existing locations, and existing programmes may be modified, based on monitoring and evaluation findings.

The final transition phase may take one or two years, and is intended to ensure that communities and partners can sustain activities that will enable them to provide for their children's wellbeing. The community development approach is critical to ADP programming. It includes a commitment to consultation, local identification of needs

and priorities, and local engagement in planning, implementation, and evaluation of all programmes. It establishes local infrastructure (groups, committees and so on) and builds capacity in community members, workers and other partners and stakeholders, partly through education and training but also by providing resources and contributing to the building of material infrastructure where required. The approach also includes working in partnership with other organisations, community groups and government agencies and services, and using multi-sectorial approaches. This implies tackling multiple issues at once, or multiple aspects of the same issue at once, because many elements and many systems need to be in place to promote the wellbeing of children.

7. Role and Place of Strategy in World Vision

It has been observed that NGOs and other organisations that are considered to be third-sector often borrow management fads and fashions such as strategic planning from the business world and apply them indiscriminately while not valuing many of the characteristics traditionally associated with the voluntary sector (Long, 2001:192). While there might be a kernel of truth in such an observation, strategic planning is a necessary exercise for development NGOs to link their vision, mission and identity to the right activities, while ensuring their relevance for the external contexts in which they operate (Fowler, 1997:46). World Vision's strategic planning and prioritisation followed this spirit, and WVI Board of Directors approved the first strategy of World Vision Partnership. In the document strategy is defined as:

> World Vision Partnership strategy is an on-going dialog of alignment. It is about how to best align shared efforts and shared resources across the entities of the partnership to achieve World Vision's vision and mission. Considering the breadth and diversity of our operating environments and fund raising markets, our Partnership Strategy provides the "guidance" to partnership entities (World Vision International, 2007).

The phrase, 'on-going dialog of alignment' reflected a sentiment that strategy is not set in stone, but would need to respond to changes in contexts, opportunities and threats that might emerge. At the highest level, World Vision selected some principles that would provide guidance to all other strategic choices. These principle-level choices addressed both what the organisation wanted to become—its character—and what the organisation wanted to achieve. These principle-level choices were informed by the mission, core values and vision. Principle-level choices for World Vision included; an intentional bias in tackling the causes of poverty rather than relieving symptoms, empowerment of communities as opposed to service delivery, to be driven

by needs in the field rather than by donor-driven needs and to maintain the multiple ministries of relief, development and advocacy rather than being focused on any one single ministry. World Vision's strategy for the period of FY2011 to FY2016 cascaded from these principle-level choices, and included a set of strategy goals, child wellbeing targets that national offices were expected to contribute to and report against, certain organisational development goals and guidelines for country prioritisation for resource allocation purposes. The overall strategy goal was to achieve the wellbeing of 150 million of the world's most vulnerable children by 2016. National offices were asked to come up with their own target number of children that they would reach as part of their strategy process.

7.1 Child Wellbeing Targets

It is worth mentioning that the strategy for the years 2011 to 2016 included a set of child wellbeing targets, as they influenced the strategic priorities and programming choices of the national offices. Child wellbeing targets included: a) Children (in the age group of 12 to 18) report an increased level of their overall wellbeing; b) Increase in children (ages between 0 to 5) protected from infection and diseases; c) Increase in children (ages between 0 to 5) well-nourished and d) Increase in children who can read (by age 11). The four targets reflected World Vision's global priorities and one of the aims of the child wellbeing targets was to focus the work in the field and measure its impact over time.

National offices' contribution levels to specific CWB targets were determined by analyses of secondary data as part of the strategy development process. The analyses included a threshold mapping exercise, which looked at national level indicators for various aspects of child wellbeing and levels of changes were determined. All programmes were required to include CWB targets that were in alignment with national office strategies and appropriate to their contexts. National offices were asked to contribute to targets that were relevant to their strategic priorities, to contribute to two, three or even all four targets. The work was expected to be field-driven within existing programmes, by fully integrating them into programme design, monitoring and evaluation. Each national office was asked to produce annual reports on their contributions to CWB outcomes. These were then aggregated and summarised at the regional level and then eventually at the global level. The aim was that this would strengthen World Vision's ability to generate hard data on the impact of its work, help

gain credibility both with the communities its programmes served and the governments and funders that it sought to influence.

7.2 Shift in Discourse from TD to CWB

So the shift in emphasis from transformational development to child wellbeing occurred between 2010 and 2012. Child wellbeing outcomes superseded transformational development framework. Development Programming Approach (DPA) provided guidance on how child wellbeing outcomes were to be pursued in collaboration with local partners and communities. Transformational development indicators were dropped from being organisational measurements in preference for child wellbeing targets. For an organisation such as World Vision International, with a very large child sponsorship component and marketing activities focused around the needs of children, that this paradigm shift from transformational development to child wellbeing as the primary way of understanding development was understandable. This change had a few important organisation-wide implications:

A) Development aims became much less abstract and much more concrete and immediate. Wellbeing of children provided one single way of looking at poverty and development across World Vision offices.

B) Development became mostly 'local' and the broader national and global causes to poverty or the broader 'ecology' of child wellbeing was not made obvious, even though that did not have to be the case.

C) Some of the emphasis that TD framework had on 'softer' and broader community aspects such as transformed relationships, transformation of system and structures and mutuality of transformation were lost or reduced. As mentioned earlier, an ecological understanding of child wellbeing may not underscore power issues and structural barriers to child development. As a result, advocacy to address structural causes of poverty were not emphasised as much as they were in TD framework.

D) Fifteen specific child wellbeing outcomes grouped under four major aspirations made it possible for World Vision national offices to focus their strategic priorities in terms of specific age groups of children or sectors. This meant that development aims articulated as child wellbeing outcomes could be translated into objectives and outcomes for programmes and projects much

more easily. Programming interventions could be much more standardised across various contexts on the basis of evidence-based practices that exist.

E) Results of World Vision's work became more easily measurable and reportable through child wellbeing targets. These measurements and reporting were about World Vision's contributions and had the potential to become implicit performance measurement for national offices.

8. World Vision India

World Vision started operations in India in 1950 and an office was established in Calcutta in 1958. It started supporting six childcare institutions in the year 1960 and small-scale community development projects in partnership with local churches in the year 1970. It constituted a local World Vision India Board in the year 1975 with registration under Tamil Nadu Societies Act. It started transitioning to an Area Development Programme (ADP) approach as described earlier in 1990. In 1992, World Vision India started raising funds locally in India in addition to international contributions. Currently World Vision India works in 135 Area Development Programmes, located in 185 districts, spread across 25 states and one union territory. For the fiscal year that finished in September 2017, the total budget for World Vision India was US$ 57.9 million, out of which US$ 13.9 million was raised by World Vision India from donors in India. This research was carried out in the seven rural ADPs in the state of Tamil Nadu. This state had a total of ten ADPs including three urban ADPs, which were not included in the study.

The size and scale of its operations required World Vision India to make strategic choices on what priorities it would focus on by taking into consideration its mission, vision, external needs, opportunities, resources available and organisational capabilities. Strategic priorities enabled World Vision India to articulate its thematic areas of contribution or its 'value proposition' and promote its work to donors and other key stakeholders, such as its own local board, support (funding) offices and various departments of the Indian government. Strategic priorities in turn determined the measurements for reporting results of its work to these stakeholders. There are of course various approaches to strategy planning available to NGOs; at one end of the spectrum, it could be top-down and prescriptive and at the other end, very flexible, adaptive and continually evolving. Strategies could be stated at a high level with

articulation of principles and overall aims or it could be prescriptive in providing tactical level details (Mintzberg et al, 2002). World Vision India chose a more top-down and prescriptive approach to its strategy.

World Vision India developed its new strategy for a period of five years, articulating its priorities for programming for fiscal years 2014 to 2019. This field research was conducted during this particular strategy cycle. World Vision India articulated the following as its strategic mandate for the five-year period:

> World Vision India will seek to equip, empower and facilitate children to thrive; young people to be agents of change and leaders to be equipped and sensitized to champion justice and inclusive growth (Country Strategy, World Vision India, 2013).

The country strategy included five strategic directives: a) reduce hunger, malnutrition and childhood illnesses; b) enhance quality education; c) ensure child participation and protection; d) build resilient communities and e) promote value-based governance. There were two or three strategic objectives under each of the five directives. Strategic objectives were focused on specific areas of child wellbeing. There were key performance indicators for each of the objectives. National-level partners and coalitions required for each strategic priority were identified (World Vision India, 2013). All 135 Area Development Programmes (ADP) of World Vision India were expected to align their objectives with one of these strategic directives as relevant to their context.

World Vision India's accountability to achieve the strategic directives and objectives and report on results was clearly articulated in its strategy document. Strategic directives, objectives and key performance indicators were specific and unambiguous with clear separation of ends from the means. There was no explicit acknowledgment or implicit assumption in the strategy document about any chances for unpredicted changes within World Vision India or the external policy and social contexts, which might warrant a change to the strategy. The strategy gave a distinct impression that everything that was required to be known or learned in order to achieve the objectives articulated in the document was already known. Principles of participation, joint assessment and development of a common vision as articulated in the TD policy and World Vision's Development Approach were missing or were implicitly assumed in the strategic priorities. The primary purpose of the strategy appeared to be matching internal capabilities with external problems and opportunities for partnering through a formal planning process, rather than reflecting the need for an adaptive, iterative and evolving approach, depending on the circumstances. The

strategy applied to the whole of India. Diversity of local contexts, variations in local priorities and aspirations, and capacity of local partners where development programmes would be implemented were largely seen as issues for programme staff and fieldworkers to overcome through facilitation during the course of implementation. While nine regional offices of World Vision India had administrative autonomy, they were all required to implement the strategy in a consistent manner and adhere to other common standards and processes on programme monitoring, reporting, sponsorship, financial and personnel management.

World Vision India made an intentional choice for its fieldworkers to live in communities. Even though not stated in the strategy documents, what was assumed was that the fieldworkers needed to be present among the poor and develop trust relationships as an expression of the commitment to organisational mission and values. Human resources policies were specifically developed to encourage and support fieldworkers along with their families to live in communities where they served. Business processes were organised in a way that did not require fieldworkers to frequently visit the ADP office or the World Vision India headquarters.

9. WORLD VISION INDIA FIELDWORKERS

Each ADP in India had between three to six fieldworkers who were called the Community Development Facilitators (CDF). Each CDF was assigned a number of communities for which he or she was responsible. CDFs were required to live in one of the communities they served. The CDF was the face of World Vision India to the communities that she or had responsibility for. CDFs were responsible for forming and developing good relationships with community members and local partners, promoting community participation, programme planning, implementation and monitoring at the community level, and monitoring of sponsored children. Each fieldworker was responsible for a population between 10,000 and 20,000, spread across10 to 25 villages and responsible for between 400 and 750 registered children.

During the course of this research it was found that CDFs were provided with necessary tools and amenities such as a motorcycle to travel around, a mobile phone and a tablet computer with a data card to access the online information systems of the organisation. The organisational model and administrative business processes were deliberately structured in a way that the CDFs did not have to leave the communities in

which they worked on a frequent basis for office meetings, nor were they burdened with too much administrative responsibilities; no paper based reports were required from the CDFs. They could submit all the monitoring information, financial reporting and information on sponsored children online. This helped them to avoid the extra work of capturing information on paper-based forms once and then transferring that information to a computer later on. By ensuring that the fieldworkers were not caught up in too many meetings or too much administrative work, the organisation had freed them up to focus on working with the communities that they were responsible for. If there were any urgent paperwork to be completed, someone from the office would visit the CDF in the field rather than requiring the CDFs to visit the office. This was contrary to what is often mentioned in the literature about the demands on the fieldworkers for information and reports from the NGO headquarters (e.g. Ramalingam, 2013:3; Holmes, 2001:26). CDFs visited the ADP office located in the district headquarters once every two weeks for half a day of meetings and reflections. They attended an annual Development Training Institute, organised specifically for the CDFs, consisting of weeklong training on technical topics such as health and education. ADPs were encouraged to send the CDFs on quarterly exposure visits to other programmes run by World Vision India or other NGOs. By their own accounts in qualitative interviews, the CDFs were paid well and cared for by the organisation. An annual team retreat was organised for the CDFs and their spouses. Quite a bit of thought and resources had gone into ensuring that the CDFs were well equipped and supported to live in the communities where they served, build relationships with local people and promote community participation. World Vision India management had striven hard in trying to achieve a balance between tangible and intangible incentives for the CDFs to remain in the field and be available to communities to build good relationships with members and carry out the programming work (Edwards and Fowler, 2002:442). Requiring the fieldworkers to move to the rural communities with which they worked and supporting them to live and operate from there, WV India considered, was an essential part of helping the fieldworkers to learn about and learn from the poor, build relationships with them and do programme planning and implementation with their full participation. A sample of two CDFs based on their interviews is briefly introduced below to give an idea of profile of people on the frontlines that were tasked with carrying out the mission, vision, strategy and programme implementation of

World Vision India. However, the roles they performed, tensions they experienced and coping mechanisms they employed are discussed in greater details in the ensuing chapters.

Introduction to CDF # A1

He was 43 years and had worked in World Vision India for over 16 years, always as a CDF. He had two bachelors' degrees, one in economics and another one in theology. He moved to this ADP only a year ago. His wife and two children lived in their hometown in the neighbouring state and he visited them twice every month. They had always lived together as a family before, but he said that he didn't want to drag his family along with him every time he moved as it affected his children's education. His wife and children understood the nature of work that he did and they supported him.

He believed that God had called him to lead people out of poverty. Just as God told Moses to "let my people go", he believed that God had called him to "let my people go out of poverty". Recently one family of four committed suicide, leaving a note saying that they had not eaten for 3 days and nobody cared for them. He felt a sense of responsibility when such things happened in communities. He believed that God would ask him "you were there and why didn't you do anything about it?" He said that he prayed constantly and was moved to tears whenever he saw extreme poverty and the plight of the people.

He was responsible for ten communities, involving a population of about 10,250 and 375 sponsored children were under his care. He developed a monthly schedule for his work. He usually left his house around 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. to visit communities, returning back around 12:30 for lunch. He left again around 2:30 p.m., returning back around 7:00 or 7:30 p.m. He worked during weekends when he was not visiting his family. He said that children were not available during weekdays due to school.

P.S. This CDF was killed three months after the interview when he was hit by a truck while visiting local communities for work.

Introduction to CDF # D3

She was 37 years old with a postgraduate degree in social work. She joined World Vision in 2001 as an intern in an ADP. The manager recommended her for work as a CDF. This was her third ADP since she joined World Vision. She said that she was able to do this work because of her Christian faith. She has been in this ADP for six years. She was married with two children but her family lived in a city some 120km away from the ADP site. She lived alone in one of her target communities, and visited her family every weekend. Everyone in her family was very supportive. Her extended family took care of her children when she was at work. Without her family support, she said that she could not do this type of work. She felt guilty about not being with her children and taking care of them when they were younger. However, she felt that in today's world, both husband and wife had to work but her husband couldn't be in the ADP area with her as there were no employment opportunities for him.

She was responsible for seventeen villages consisting of 10,250 people and 460 sponsored children. Her communities were spread over 16km. Commuting was usually not a problem, but she worried for her safety whenever she needed to pass by a local alcohol shop on one of her routes. Referring to her logbook and rattling off the hours that she worked for several days, she commented that she typically worked ten to twelve hours a day and a CDF job was not possible if one works only eight hours a day.

She said that she liked this work a lot. The work was a challenge to begin with, however she mentioned that once a CDF was accepted by the community members, it could be a lot of fun. A CDF needed to establish confidence with people. Now, she believed the people trusted her. She took pride in telling that she knew each one of the 460 sponsored children who lived in her communities by name.

10. CONCLUSION

This chapter has tried to paint a picture of the organisational history and context of World Vision International and World Vision India and how its development thinking and practice has evolved over the years. This provides relevant background to understand the role of fieldworkers at the grassroots as they are tasked with representing the organisational vision, mission and implementing the strategic priorities. Organisational policies and development frameworks form part of the organisational discourses on development and are further analysed in the following chapters to shed light on the research questions.

World Vision International is a complex and a large organisation with operations on the ground, but is not necessarily unique in this regard. Other organisations such as Save the Children, Plan International and Oxfam share many similar characteristics and lessons learned from this research would have broader application beyond World Vision. One of the challenges of managing a large international NGO such as World Vision is that it has “too many bottom lines” due to a complex pattern of multiple stakeholders and diverse range of expectations (Anheier, 2000 quoted by Lewis, 2001:193). This is very true for World Vision. It tries to satisfy the expectations of a range of stakeholders, including communities they serve, sponsors and donors who fund the programmes, local management and boards, local partners, government agencies, line management and funding offices. Expectations or perceptions of such expectations from such a diverse range of stakeholders influence policies, organisational practices and the work of the fieldworkers.

Chapter 4: Methodology

1. Introduction

The effectiveness of a research project is determined by the appropriateness of its research methodology. The research aims and objectives should be achievable with the use of the research methodology. Taking this into consideration, this chapter explores key debates in social sciences research, identifies and describes methodology for this research, information on the research participants, methods used for data collection, analyses and interpretation in arriving at the research aims. The term ‘methodology’ is used here to refer to discussions on how the research is done and the critical analysis of methods of research, whereas ‘method’, as a term, refers to the techniques or research methods used to collect and analyse data (Blaikie, 2004:8). The adoption of research methodology, including methods used for data collection, analyses and interpretation of data and the selection of study participants and data sources are consistent with the body of literature on street-level bureaucracy and conducive for the study of fieldworker agency and roles in NGO contexts. Steps taken to address ethical considerations including insider-research are explained in this chapter.

The overall approach is qualitative research, based on a flexible research methodology with selected research processes and tools borrowed from the phenomenological tradition of inquiry. In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with fieldworkers and their managers in seven Area Development Programmes of World Vision India. World Vision International and World Vision India documents were analysed as secondary data sources. MAXQDA12 software was used for qualitative analyses including coding and classification of coding as the basis for descriptive analyses and writing of the narrative. The initial research proposal was finalised and accepted by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) in May 2014 at the conclusion of OCMS phase of studies. Research aims were further revised and improved in May 2016 as part of the MPhil phase of studies in order to make them more realistic and achievable. Data from primary and secondary sources were collected between July 2015 and November 2016. Formal analysis of data, reflection and writing was undertaken from the beginning of November 2016 onwards.

Before delving into the specifics of the design for this particular research, it will be helpful to briefly step back and summarise key debates in respect to social research. These debates have been helpful in shaping and influencing the decisions and choices made as part of the research design.

2. KEY ISSUES IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

2.1 Positivism, Empiricism and Quantitative Research

Early positivism to social research started with Comte who identified society as a phenomenon that could be studied (Babbie, 2015:59; Baronov, 2004:11). The positivist approach believes at its core that progress could be planned, controlled, achieved, and measured by rejecting any role for metaphysics and by following empirical methods and protocols for prediction of certain predetermined results (Cowen and Shenton, 1996:27). Progress is thought to be a linear progression of the human potential that is limitless, irreversible and universal. In the positivist understanding, experts with knowledge and resources play a central role as interventionists to bring about development. Positivists are empiricists by definition and are driven by statistics. Growth is understood as a technical matter and as a result of authoritative interventions and is seen in terms of economic indices. Positivist assumptions about development and social change have been questioned and refined by researchers working both within natural and social sciences. For example, during the 1930s and 1940s, Popper, criticising that a future observation might prove an exception to a rule previously established through empiricist approaches, argued for a deductive approach in which hypotheses were first developed on the basis of existing theories and then tested empirically. This approach to research is sometimes referred to as post-positivism or post-empiricism (Ritchie, et al, 2014:9). The tenets of positivism and post-positivism are often questioned by researchers working in qualitative traditions (e.g. Silverman, 2001; Hammersley, 1995). Most social researchers using quantitative methods do not end up producing scientific laws, but come up with cumulative generalisations through critical examination of data so that it no longer conforms to a straightforward version of positivism (Silverman 2001:11). However, the idea that an independent and objective world exists out there and can be quantitatively measured and reported is alive and well in the 'official' development aid and often seen as more objective and scientific than qualitative approaches (e.g. Eyben, 2006; Chambers, 1997; 06).

2.2 Interpretivism and Qualitative Research

The origins of qualitative enquiry can be traced to Immanuel Kant, who argued that perceptions are not just about human senses but also interpretations of what senses might communicate. And so, knowledge of the world comes from one's interpretations of what happens and not just on the objective basis of what happens. Therefore the process of knowing and the resulting knowledge transcends empirical enquiry. Based on such reasoning, researchers practicing qualitative approaches placed greater value on human interpretations of the lived experiences of people and the researchers' own interpretations of the topic being studied (Ritchie, et al, 2014:11).

There are many definitions of qualitative research, but the following was found to be particularly comprehensive and useful:

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations… At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:3).

The above definition includes the notion that qualitative research involves the appropriate and rigorous use and collection of a range of empirical materials that can describe life experiences of individuals and groups. Similarly, qualitative researchers employ a variety of practices to interpret and explain in order to get a better understanding of the topic being studied. Qualitative research based on a set of interpretive practices is not dependent upon any one methodological practice. It draws upon and makes use of multiple approaches and methods to provide insight and knowledge (ibid, 2005:7). In qualitative inquiry data collection happens in a natural setting with sensitivity to people and places that are studied and data analysis is inductive in order to establish patterns or themes (Creswell, 2007: 37).

2.3 Critical Realism

As a general rule, in doing qualitative studies a researcher will not be able to ascertain cause and effect relationships, but only to explore, describe and explain the topics being studied. Whereas quantitative research, especially experimental studies, will be able to identify cause and effect relationships and answer questions such as 'what caused what?' (Leedy and Ormrod, 2015:140). Roy Bhaskar rejected both the positivist view that cause and effect are related in a set way and the interpretivist view that

everything is based on representations, but by focusing on certain factors within the context of research, cause and effect relationships can be identified because they are regularly confirmed (1975). Critical realism, as a midway between positivist and interpretivist approaches to research, holds a view that an independent reality exists outside of people's imaginations, thoughts and perceptions. However, it also recognises that such a reality is subject to subjective interpretations and perceptions of people (Edwards, et al, 2014:4). This particular research falls largely within this paradigm of critical realism that objective reality is something that is present independently of those who observe it, but is understandable only through perceptions and interpretations of individuals.

3. DEFINING THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research was chosen as the methodology for this particular research for the following reasons (Leedy and Ormrod, 2015:140,141):

a) Descriptive nature of qualitative research: This aspect can help bring out the multifaceted nature of work situations of NGO fieldworkers, relationships with and performance expectations of management and community members, tensions they experienced and coping mechanisms they put in place in responding to such tensions.

b) Opportunities for interpretation: Qualitative research can enable the researcher to bring new insights to the topic of fieldworker discretion and coping mechanisms and their influence on NGO policy implementation.

c) Verification of concepts and frameworks: Qualitative research will enable the researcher to test the assumptions, claims and the theory of street-level bureaucracy framework by Lipsky (1980) for application for the fieldworkers of NGOs in their real life contexts.

d) Evaluation: Qualitative research will allow the researcher to evaluate NGO policies and formal and informal practices of NGOs from the perspective of their fieldworkers.

For the above reasons, and also in consideration that this would be an exploratory and interpretive study and the availability of relatively limited literature on NGO fieldworkers, a qualitative study was considered to be appropriate. Qualitative research

is also relevant in order to be able to account for multiple possible realities based on individual experiences of NGO fieldworkers. However, within the broad range of approaches to qualitative research, a flexible approach was taken in consideration of the research aims, questions and the context. This is explained in the sections below.

3.2 Introduction to Phenomenological Research Inquiry

A flexible research methodology was designed, consisting of qualitative methods in consideration of the research aims while ensuring the required criteria of trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability) and authenticity were met. Within such a flexible approach, many of the tools from phenomenological tradition of qualitative inquiry were borrowed in pursuing this research study. Phenomenological research tradition is briefly introduced below. However, the researcher is hesitant to declare this as a phenomenological study for reasons described at the end of Section 3.3.

Phenomenological research is based on the tradition of critical realism that there is an objective world that exists but it is interpreted through experiences of individuals (Sarantakos, 2005:44). All qualitative researchers are exploring a phenomenon based on naturalistic and interpretive approaches, taking into account the perspectives of the participants as the starting point (Ritchie, et al, 2014:3). However, phenomenology is a philosophy and a specific approach to qualitative inquiry with the early work being philosophical in intent and the research methodology developed out of it. Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer and Merleau-Ponty were the philosophers who established phenomenology as a way of understanding the world (Earle, 2010:287). It was van Manen who introduced specific guidelines for doing interpretive phenomenological research, which has been used in various professional disciplines such as psychology, education, social work, law and nursing and to a lesser extent in development studies (1990).

Phenomenology is the study of lifeworld, the world as people experience it, pre-reflectively. It aims at attaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of everyday life and offers the possibility of plausible insights that brings us into more direct contact with the world as people experience it (van Manen, 1990:8). Phenomenology aims to reduce individual experiences regarding a phenomenon to its universal essence, to understand the very nature of the thing (ibid, 1990:177). It is a careful, systematic and reflective study of lived experience of human beings (Usher and

Jackson, 2017:2). It aims to understand the phenomenon as experienced by the participants in their own terms. It provides description as close to the human experience as possible. Phenomenological reflections are not introspective by the participants, but retrospective by the researcher (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998:96; van Manen 1990:10). Data collection almost exclusively depends on lengthy interviews of individuals who have had direct experience of the phenomenon. Interviews are semi-structured in nature with the focus on the phenomenon being researched. The researcher is required to be attentive to cues, expressions and questions from the participants. The researcher is expected to suspend all judgments and any pre-conceived notion that may influence what is being 'heard' by the researcher. This is sometimes called 'bracketing' biases by the researcher through identifying personal experiences with the phenomenon and setting them aside so as to focus on the experiences of the participants (Leedy and Ormrod, 2015:145; Bernard, 2012:20,21; Creswell, 2007:78). This neutral stance of stripping away all prior understandings and judgment of the phenomenon in order to be able to approach each participant in a fresh and a new way is not necessarily supported by all phenomenologists as being practically feasible (Usher and Jackson, 2017:8).

A phenomenological researcher is expected to take on the responsibility of transforming information provided by participants during qualitative interviews in exploring and elucidating a particular phenomenon (ibid, 2017:8). Major steps in phenomenological research include identification of the phenomenon to be studied, acknowledging and setting aside the researcher's own beliefs based on personal experiences with the phenomenon, developing thoughtful questions suited for a phenomenological study, data collection through in-depth interviews or conversations with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and reflection, analysis, interpretation and writing up by the researcher.

3.3 A Flexible Research Methodology

An important premise of street-level bureaucracy is that fieldworkers exercise discretion and develop coping mechanisms in response to how they experience organisational policies in their real world situations (Lipsky, 1980:15-17). So in that sense, it is the lived experiences of NGO fieldworkers that is to be researched, potentially leading to new insights into the tensions as they experience them, discretion they exercise and coping mechanisms they put in place in responding to such tensions. It was important for the researcher that the fieldworkers were not instrumentalised

through their participation in this research through a process of data extraction and phenomenological inquiry processes would enable their voices to be heard in their own terms and their shared experiences made known, leading to new insights.

It is critical to mention here that most of the studies to explore the policy-making role of 'street-level bureaucrats' in government and nongovernmental organisations have used case study as the research methodology. An important characteristic of the case study approach is that it presents an in-depth understanding of the case within its real world context (Yin, 2016:16). Case study methodology was also used by a few researchers who studied NGO fieldworkers using street-level bureaucracy as the framework (e.g. Holmes, 2001; Goetz, 1996). However, there are a few notable exceptions when the emphasis was to understand the agency and experience of the frontline workers or participants in order to make meaning of such experiences. Some examples are provided here:

> Hogue in studying how frontline youth workers made sense of the work they did and how these meanings translated into street-level policy, used phenomenological inquiry (2015).
>
> Similarly, Messer-Knode used a phenomenological methodology in studying the essence of the experience of volunteers in community development and how those experiences were understood (2007).
>
> Antonio studied how development is understood among NGO practitioners and community beneficiaries using a phenomenological research methodology (2015).
>
> Parrill used a phenomenological research design to explore the meaning ascribed to participation by urban community members in a community development work based on the theory of transformational development (2011).
>
> Mathis carried out a qualitative phenomenological study to explore the challenges faced by women in the social service non-profit sector when it came to leadership development within the organisations (2017).

To summarise, the common pattern emerging from the aforementioned examples of research, if the purpose of the research were to understand how an organisation's policies were mediated and distorted through the intermediation of frontline workers, case study as the research methodology would be appropriate. But if the primary emphasis were on the agency and experiences of frontline workers or research

participants, as in the case of this research, then phenomenological research could be considered appropriate. The following quote provides a good rationale on why phenomenological inquiry processes might serve this particular research well:

> The type of problem best suited for phenomenological research is one in which it is important to understand several individual's common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It would be important these common experiences are understood in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007:60).

Here is another reason why a case study approach could have been slightly problematic for this particular research. If a case study approach were chosen, the entire NGO, World Vision India, would have been chosen as a single case to be studied or a few Area Development Programmes where the fieldworkers worked as multiple case studies. In all cases where case study methodology was chosen to study the policy making role of street-level bureaucrats, the agencies in which they worked were considered to be the cases and not the fieldworkers. The researcher sought to study the experiences of NGO fieldworkers and not the experiences of the NGO or projects wherein the fieldworkers carried out their day-to-day work. It was important to hear from the fieldworkers and their voices to come through in the research. For these reasons, case study was not chosen as the main research method. In order to provide an important source of triangulation of qualitative interviews of fieldworkers, organisational context of NGO fieldworkers was studied through analysis of various relevant documents and through interviews with the managers of the fieldworkers.

However, the point here is not to make an ideological commitment to the particular research tradition of phenomenology, but based on an understanding of the range of research traditions or paradigms available and taking into consideration the research aims and context, a flexible research methodology was designed and it bears many characteristics of the phenomenological tradition, but this may not be strictly a phenomenological study. Research methodology for this study could also be more accurately described as being based on a pragmatic approach (Ritchie, et al, 2014:19). It is important to mention that research aims in phenomenological studies are strictly limited to finding out the essential nature of a particular phenomenon, first-hand lived experience of the phenomenon of interest. In this respect, this particular research goes outside the bounds of phenomenological research by seeking to find out not only the fieldworkers' experience of tensions, but also factors that caused such tensions, fieldworkers' response to the tensions they experienced and their discretionary patterns

and coping mechanisms. Secondly, this chapter does not provide philosophical explanation of phenomenology as phenomenological studies often do and so in this respect also this study might miss the mark of being a phenomenological study (Creswell, 2007:62).

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

The main method for this particular research was in-depth interviews with research participants. As mentioned earlier, phenomenological traditions depend almost exclusively on in-depth interviews with carefully selected participants (Leed and Ormrod, 2012:145). Approach to interviews tends to be less structured in qualitative research, as there is much greater interest in the participants' experience and points of view on given topics. The researcher has a greater degree of freedom to depart from any question guide to follow up, responding to participants' direction, in taking the interview as the researcher needs rich, detailed answers (Bryman, 2012:470). As the specific focus of the interview is known in this research, semi-structured interview was considered to be appropriate (May, 2011:135). In-depth interviews guided by a question guide were useful in order to generate in-depth personal accounts, to understand the personal context and for exploring issues in detail and depth. Also, given the issues of power and status of the researcher within the organisation, in-depth interviews with individuals were considered to be more appropriate to explore issues than group interviews (Ritchie, et al, 2014:60). Long interviews with 5 to 25 carefully selected participants are recommended in phenomenological studies in order to reach data saturation (Flynn and Korcuska, 2018:35; Creswell, 2007: 60, 113). As explained in detail in the sections below, 27 fieldworkers from seven development programmes of World Vision India were interviewed for up to three hours, in addition to informal time spent with each one of them as participant observer during community visits and over a meal.

The relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is well discussed in literature, including whether the content of the interview is generated through the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee or whether the content existed before the interview process. However, many scholars hold the view that while the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee will influence the data generated,

interview data remains an important way to understand other people's thoughts, ideas and opinions and has value beyond the context of the immediate interaction (Ritchie, et al, 2014:179). Patton notes that a directed interview process affects those being interviewed and it could help them to become better aware about themselves by thoughtfully sharing their experience of a phenomenon (1990:353-354). In-depth interviews are well accepted as an effective way of investigating how participants experience a phenomenon. Researchers need to interpret the interview data, including the way in which it was collected (Ritchie, et al, 2014:181; Bernard, 2011:158).

4.2 Qualitative Review and Analysis of Documents

In addition to in-depth interviews of fieldworkers and their managers, content analysis of key documents was also undertaken as part of the research. A document contains written text. A document can be in a physical form on paper or a file stored in a computer. A document may be considered as physically embodied texts, where the containment of the text is the primary purpose of the physical medium (Scott, 1990: 12-13). Document analysis is a systematic and detailed examination of the contents of a particular body of materials in order to identify themes and patterns. Often it is not a stand-alone research method, but is carried out in conjunction with other methods such as phenomenological studies in social sciences. Document analysis can also be helpful in triangulation of findings derived from other sources, such as interviews (Leedy and Ormrod, 2012:148). Documents need to be situated within the organisational or cultural contexts in which they are written so that it is comprehensible and the content is amenable for analysis (May, 2011:209). There are two benefits associated with extracting data from documents: a) they are non-interactive and b) the data exists in documents independent of the research. The data is 'naturalistic' as it is not influenced through interaction with the researcher and it already exists, regardless of the research. These factors give document content analysis some degree of authenticity and the research process with documents is unobtrusive in nature (Hess-Biber and Leavy, 2011:228). It is important that the documents being analysed for research would be considered as 'official documents' by the organisation (Bryman, 2012:562). Four criteria for assessing the quality of documents selected for analysis include: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and clarity of meaning (Scott, 1990:6).

Qualitative analysis of documents is an important method for this research, as the research topic called for the study of organisational policies, including strategies,

guidelines, programme designs and job descriptions that spelled out organisational expectations for fieldworkers. Similarly, programme reports and performance reviews of field staff gave valuable information on how the fieldworkers performed against such organisational expectations. Several official documents of World Vision International and World Vision India were sourced and studied as part of this research. Some of the required documents were available in the public domain, and others were accessible to staff members of World Vision International, such as the researcher in this case. Details of these documents are provided under the section on data sources. None of these documents were written for the purpose of research, but in order to provide guidance to World Vision offices, programmes or individual staff members or to report back on the performance of a programme or a staff member. All the documents were ‘official’ in the sense they were all in their final form and approved by the relevant officers of World Vision, vested with the organisational authority to do so. Documents pertain to the organisational entities and programmes from which study participants were selected and so they are fit for the purpose of the study.

5. SELECTION OF RESEARCH SITE AND PARTICIPANTS

In qualitative research, selection of the study population and sample should serve the purpose of inquiry and ensure validity of the research findings. This particular research aim calls for the study of fieldworkers who are employees of NGOs, tasked with implementation of development projects in local communities. NGO fieldworkers were the research participants mentioned in the research questions, as they experienced tension in their work and exercised discretion and coping mechanisms in responding to such tensions. This meant that selection of the research site should take into consideration: a) an operational NGO that planned and implemented development projects in local communities; b) employed fulltime fieldworkers who lived in a community, with responsibility for NGO programmes; c) nature of fieldworkers’ jobs required them to interact with community members and local partners, as well as NGO management on a regular basis and d) NGO was large enough, operating a number of development projects in a homogenous geographic area with the likelihood of being able to enlist a reasonable number of research participants for the study. Drawing fieldworkers from the same NGO would help ensure that all the fieldworkers had similar terms and conditions in their job, consistent performance expectations with

responsibility to implement the same NGO policies in their work. A homogenous geographic area with similar socio-economic conditions would help in limiting differences in external factors influencing fieldworker discretion and coping mechanisms. The above criteria would help to focus, reduce variation among study participants and help with analysis in coming up with the findings (Patton, 1990:183).

World Vision India as described in Chapter 3 fit the parameters as the NGO for study purposes. It was important that programmes funded through child sponsorship were chosen for study purposes, as explained in Chapter 1 and again in Chapter 3. Lipsky's theory of street-level bureaucracy includes the notion of agency personnel interacting with individual clients in discharge of the organisational policies (1980). Most NGO programmes typically serve a population or a group of people. So the researcher wanted to select an NGO that had programmes, which are broad-based, multi-sectorial in nature and widely practiced among international NGOs, yet serve individual clients. Child sponsorship fit that requirement, as there are expectations that individual sponsored children would benefit from the NGO programmes with communications back and forth between the sponsored child and the sponsor. Moreover, international NGOs that do child sponsorship require the organisation to be directly operational with fieldworkers on the ground implementing the programmes and serving the clients.

The researcher being a staff member of World Vision International had free access to people, policies and documents required as data sources and had the knowledge of the organisational context, history and programming. These were clear advantages for choosing World Vision India as the research site. Of course, being an insider-researcher brought with it certain challenges along with opportunities, which are addressed in a later section in this chapter. Having selected World Vision India, all the seven Area Development Programmes that were operational in the rural districts of the southern state of Tamil Nadu were selected for the study. Three development projects in the urban areas of Tamil Nadu were left out of the study as the urban contexts could present a different set of challenges than the rural contexts to fieldworkers. The researcher's familiarity with Tamil language and culture was an important consideration, as doing field research in Tamil Nadu would enable formal interviews and casual conversations with the fieldworkers to be had in Tamil. While the fieldworkers were conversant in English, they felt uninhibited from time to time to

express themselves more freely in Tamil than in English. Working with the fieldworkers in Tamil helped the researcher to achieve a degree of trust with them. The researcher did not experience any problems or perceive any hesitancy on the part of the research participants during the interviews.

Seven rural Area Development Programmes combined together, had a total of 27 fieldworkers who were willing to participate in the research. So the selection of NGO, development projects and fieldworkers were purposeful in consideration of the research aims. The 27 fieldworkers of World Vision India selected for the study were in the context of child sponsorship and may not be representative of the views and experiences of the range of NGO fieldworkers across different contexts and so the research findings would not be generalisable for the NGO sector as a whole (Ritchie, et al, 2014:350). However, the findings may be transferable to other NGOs in the context of child sponsorship and to the extent that they share similar characters with World Vision India (Ritchie, et al, 2014:351; Leedy and Ormrod, 2012:152). It was expected that the research could shed light on the underlying NGO processes around fieldworker roles and explain behaviours, beliefs and experiences of fieldworkers. Twenty-seven fieldworkers provided sufficient sample size pertaining to one homogeneous region and it was within the recommended range and no new information was forthcoming from the research participants by the time the last few participants were being interviewed (Flynn and Korcuska, 2018:35; Patton, 1990:186).

6. DATA COLLECTION

6.1 Data Sources

Data sources included 27 Community Development Facilitators (fieldworkers) drawn from seven rural ADPs located in Tamil Nadu State, managers of these seven ADPs, several policy documents, guidelines and reports of World Vision International and World Vision India as listed below. ADP names are anonymised as they contain the names of districts where they were located and all of which still continue to operate. In addition to the data sources listed below, ‘memoing’ technique was used to make notes of what was observed, heard, experienced and thought by the researcher in the process of data collection, analysis and reflection (Groenewald, 2004:48). Tables below provide details of data sources and the time period when the data was collected.

Given the research is primarily concerned with fieldworker tensions, discretion and coping mechanisms, some basic descriptions of research participants are provided. Of the 27 fieldworkers interviewed, five were women and the rest were men. While all the fieldworkers lived in communities they served, only eleven of them were living together with their families within the communities, while the rest lived alone and visited their families who lived elsewhere during weekends and public holidays. Except for one CDF who was 37 years old, the rest were aged between 40 and 60 years. Five out of 27 fieldworkers had bachelor's degrees and the others had postgraduate degrees in a relevant topic. Most of the fieldworkers were seasoned development workers. All managers had postgraduate degrees.

Table 5: Number of Fieldworkers and ADP Managers Interviewed

ADP	**Number of Fieldworkers Interviewed**	**Number of Managers Interviewed**	**Interview Period**
A	6	1	July 2015, October 2016
B	5	1	July 2015, November 2016
C	3	1	October 2016
D	3	1	October 2016
E	4	1	October 2016
F	3	1	July and August 2016
G	3	1	October and November 2016

Each ADP was a given an alphabetical code and each CDF was given a numerical code, followed by the alphabetical code of the ADP in which the person worked. The names of the state government administrative districts in which the seven ADPs are located are: Nagapattinam, Perambalur, Pudukottai, Theni, Villupuram, Vellore and Virudhu Nagar.

Additional primary data have been used from the following sources for the purposes of triangulation of findings derived on the basis of semi-structured interviews with the fieldworkers. Appropriate references are made whenever such additional primary data sources are used in Chapters 5 to 8. These additional primary sources included for the purpose of triangulation include:

(i) Local community members, including community leaders and volunteers from village development communities in all seven Area Programmes. Some of this data were "naturally occurring" during field visits and

additional data was collected to validate fieldworkers' input on specific areas of community conflicts or discretion exercised by the fieldworkers in response to specific problems faced by community members.

(ii) Additional World Vision documents as needed that are not referenced below

(iii) Views of representatives of senior management of World Vision on specific topics that emerged from interviews with the fieldworkers. This included a) researcher himself as he is a member of the senior leadership team and was involved in the development of many policies and guidelines discussed in this thesis; 2) Three other senior leaders including the Country Director for World Vision India who was accountable for the area programmes where field research took place; Senior Director for Transformational Development of World Vision International and Country Director for another large World Vision office. This is in order to represent the management views at the appropriate points in order to confirm or nuance the positions given in World Vision's official policy documents.

Table 6: Documents Reviewed as Data Sources

Source	**Name of the Documents Analysed**	**Document Analysis Period**
World Vision International	1. Ministry Policy and Framework on Transformational Development, 2004 2. Ministry Policy on Child Sponsorship 3. Learning Through Evaluation and Planning (LEAP), 2005 4. World Vision's Approach to Development Programming, 2011	April to June 2015
World Vision India	1. Design Documents of seven Area Development Programmes, 2015 2. Annual Reports of seven Area Development Programmes for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 3. World Vision India Country Strategy. Chennai, India, 2013 4. Community Development Facilitator Job Description, 2016	June 2015 to December 2015
	1. Performance Reviews of 27 Community Development Facilitators, 2016	February 2017

6.2 Data Collection Instruments

A question guide was designed around fieldworkers' understanding of expectations from the organisational management, communities, support received, their experience of tensions in their work places, discretion they exercised, coping mechanisms they put in place and contexts or situations that influenced or affected experience of the phenomenon (Flynn and Korcuska, 2012:80). The question guide provided the researcher a general framework or a map to develop questions, sequence those questions, ask follow-up questions and as the interview progressed, assess which information to pursue in greater depth (Patton, 1990:284). Also, minimum biographical information was collected for each fieldworker. Another question guide was developed for interviews of managers of the fieldworkers. Question guides that were used for in-depth interviews of the fieldworkers and the managers are attached as appendix 1.

6.3 Field Data Collection

The researcher identified his own beliefs about the importance of the fieldworker role, organisational positioning, tensions experienced by fieldworkers and other aspects pertaining to research questions to be self-aware and 'bracket' personal positions in order to fully 'hear' the participants during the interview and informal conversations. Pre-data collection statement of researcher's own beliefs and opinions about fieldworkers is attached as appendix 2.

Interviews took place in the natural settings of the research participants, while ensuring privacy and avoiding interruptions (Creswell, 2007:37). For fieldworkers, interviews always took place in one of the communities they were responsible for - either in a community meeting hall, a school classroom or in the office of the village development committee. For ADP managers, interviews always took place in their office. Research participants were informed about the general nature of the research and were given the choice to participate or not to participate. Sufficient information on the research was provided to the participants so as to enable them to make informed decisions regarding their participation. However, specific research aims were not shared with the participants so as not to influence participants' perspectives ahead of the interviews (Leedy and Ormrod, 2012:106). Informed consent was obtained from each participant with the assurance that information shared during the interview would be anonymised.

The researcher introduced himself as a 'research student' who wanted to learn about the work of fieldworkers directly from the fieldworkers and their managers. The researcher typically spent one whole day with each of the Community Development Facilitators. On the interview day, morning was spent with the individual fieldworker, seeing some of their work in communities. The fieldworker always decided which communities the researcher would be taken to and what activities the researcher would be shown. Each fieldworker was requested to take the researcher to a community and show or explain some aspect of the work that he or she had done and was proud of. The main purpose of the community visit was to build relationship with the participant, make him or her feel appreciated and put the person at ease. In many cases, it was meeting with representatives from the local village development committees or specific families that have benefited from the development work. The mode of transport was a ride on the fieldworker's motorbike or public transport. This provided opportunity for informal conversations between the researcher and the fieldworker. The researcher made field notes of the narratives provided by the fieldworker during this time spent together. This was followed by lunch, during which time the researcher and the participant would discuss the field visit in the morning, share their respective backgrounds, information about their families and discuss common issues of interest. The morning community visit and lunchtime provided opportunities for the fieldworker and the researcher to relate to each other informally and other than as a senior staff member from World Vision International and a fieldworker. After lunch, the researcher carried out the formal in-depth interview of the fieldworker for between two to three hours using the question guide. Key topics in the question guide were explored while being flexible for the interviewees to raise issues and shape the conversation to some extent. Participants' responses were probed further to achieve depth of explanation such as their experiences, opinions, beliefs, values and circumstances. The researcher refrained from commenting on any answers by the participants or summarising or paraphrasing participants' answers, but listened and took notes. Sufficient time was allowed for each interview. With the permission of the interviewees all interviews were recorded, along with copious notes that were taken. Each interview was finished with the researcher thanking the participant and assuring them once again that the information would be anonymised.

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

7.1 Analysis of Interview Data

Data analysis involved three main stages: a) organising the data in transcripts; b) finding themes through a process of coding to sort the data and c) representing the data in discussions. Once the data was transcribed, as required, it was translated from Tamil into English, uploaded on to computer using MAXQDA12 software to help with analysis. The transcripts, along with notes, were read in their entirety several times. Memos of short phrases, key ideas and concepts were embedded within the transcripts as part of this reading exercise. These memos helped in creating tentative codes at first, which were refined after getting thoroughly immersed into the data. The researcher started with a smaller number of codes, as per the research questions, but through the process of reviews of the transcripts, refined and expanded the lists of codes, finishing with a total of 34 subcategories of information, organised under seven major categories, which were used to further reflect and write the narrative in light of academic discussions on pertinent topics. The table of categories used for analysis is presented below.

Table 7: Categories for Codes and Sub-codes for Analysis

Codes	Sub-Codes
Management Expectations for the Fieldworkers	Relationships with community members
	Community participation
	Networking and collaboration with local partners
	Timely completion of planned activities, spending budget and meeting the targets
	Meeting sponsorship requirements
Management Support for the Fieldworkers	Manager's awareness of fieldworkers' tensions
	Manager's consideration of fieldworkers' needs and strengths
	Logistical and administrative support
	Enable support from others in the team
	Training support
Fieldworker Perceptions of Community Expectations of Them	Expectations that are not in the plan
	Expectations for hand-outs
	Expectations of the elites
	Programming process-related expectations
	Expectations for child sponsorship
Fieldworker Perceptions of Community Support for Them	Support from VDC
	Support from local partners
	Relationships with local community members
Experience of Fieldworker	Contrary development discourses

Tensions	Pressure to meet the target and spend the budget
	Tensions due to child sponsorship
	Lack of organisational space for fieldworker voice
	Conflicts due to administrative requirements
	Community conflicts due to mismatch of programming expectations
	Conflicts due to expectations of elites
	Conflicts due to community's fear of conversion
Fieldworker Responses - Discretion	Routine of intermediation and distancing
	Routine of rationalisation
	Manipulation of target data reporting
	Fieldworker discretionary support for VDCs
	Unique expressions of discretion
Fieldworker Responses – Coping Mechanisms	Adjusting to organisational expectations
	Seek and provide peer support
	Prayer and spiritual practices

The researcher did not find the data analysis, interpretation and narrative writing as distinct steps, but as an iterative process. This process of moving from reading and memoing, looping into describing, classifying and interpreting is sometimes called as data analysis spiral (Creswell, 2007:151). The first step of the analysis of qualitative data was to read and re-read the transcripts of interviews multiple times. In doing this, experience of the participants became the main focus in analysis. Detailed notes of everything that was of interest in relation to the research questions were recorded. The researcher probed the feedback and voices of the fieldworkers regarding their reliability by triangulating data from different fieldworkers to cross check against one another and to identify any significant emerging patterns or contradictions. Significant statements or quotes that reflected the emergent themes were highlighted, identifying 'clusters of meaning'. The researcher did not do any quantitative analysis on the number of times each code appeared in the transcript, something typically associated with quantitative inquiry to report on the magnitude and frequency. However, the researcher looked at the number of passages or statements connected with each code as a pointer towards participants' viewpoints and included qualifiers such as 'majority' and 'few' in writing the narrative (ibid, 2007:152). The selection of significant statements and quotes from interview transcripts as part of the reflective report writing included: a) representative points and quotes: the key points and quotes that were felt to best represent the emerging theme; b) divergent points and quotes: any points, quotes or examples, which were different from others, but were felt to represent an important minority

perspective and c) high interest quotes and examples; any other quotes or examples that were felt to be of special interest. Care was taken to ensure that report writing was descriptive to convey what the participants experienced in regard to the phenomenon including the organisational and community context or the setting that influenced participants' experience (ibid, 2012:81,82). The lived experiences of participants provided the starting points for reflections by the researcher, in light of academic literature and debates on relevant topics (Errasti-Ibarrondo, 2018:1724).

7.2 Analysis of Document Data

Researchers can dive in and out of documents to gain deeper insight into the ideology embedded in the content and examine how the dominant discourse is produced through what it includes and excludes and how some knowledge gets subjugated (Hess-Biber and Leavy, 2011:238). There are no strict protocols necessary in analysis of written materials other than reading and rereading researcher's empirical materials, trying to identify key themes that emerge. In research designs, where the qualitative document analysis is not at the centre, but more in a complementary sense, no sophisticated analytical methods may be needed (Perakyla, 2005:870). The analysis of the content of documents was approached through understanding the contexts in which they were written. The analysis of documents involved a search of underlying themes found in them (Bryman, 2012:557).

All the World Vision documents were in English. They were read multiple times and were coded against emerging themes using MAXQDA12 software as part of the analysis. The same sets of codes were used to analyse both the transcripts of in-depth interviews and the documents. All the documents, with the exception of performance reviews of field staff, were reviewed prior to interviews of field staff. But the performance reviews of fieldworkers were read and analysed only after their interviews, so as not to bias the researcher in approaching the participants. The software programme MAXQDA12 was very useful for the laborious task of online searches, line-by-line coding and memoing (Groenewald, 2004:51).

8. Criteria for Assessing the Quality of the Qualitative Research

Bryman (2012: 390-393) provided two primary criteria for assessing the quality of qualitative studies. Efforts have been made to establish the quality of this particular research to meet these criteria:

1) Trustworthiness: This is made up of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility of the research has been ensured through diligently following the established standards of good practice for data collection, analysis, interpretation and narrative writing as described in this chapter. Transferability is made possible through providing rich accounts or details of the context and culture in the narrative so that others are able to make judgments about transferability of the findings to their own specific contexts. Dependability has been enabled by making the complete records and information accessible from all stages of research so that others could assess the extent to which inferences of the study could be justified based on research methodology and data. Confirmability has been achieved through making every effort in not allowing the personal values and inclinations of the researcher to sway the conducting of the research and the findings one way or the other. This is described to some extent in the next section of this chapter.
2) Authenticity: This includes the notion of fairness. Pains have been taken to fairly represent the different viewpoints among research participants, including the fieldworkers, managers and the wider organisation. Authenticity is further enabled by helping the research participants to articulate their experiences of the phenomenon through in-depth interviews and active listening and thereby feel appreciated and valued.

9. Ethical Considerations in Research

Ethical issues were given due consideration to ensure the following: quality and integrity of the research; seeking informed consent from the research participants;

respecting the anonymity of the research data; voluntary participation of participants in the research; avoiding harm to the participants; and the research is impartial and independent. The research proposal was reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of OCMS to ensure that the accepted standards for research integrity and ethical practice are met in the conduct of the research.

At the time of the research, the researcher served as the Global Director for Technical Services in World Vision International with responsibility for managing child sponsorship, programme information management and provision of technical services to World Vision offices. He was responsible for the development of a number of policies and guidelines that were reviewed as part of this researched, including: Policies on Transformational Development and Child Sponsorship; Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning (LEAP, World Vision's DME standards) and World Vision's Development Programme Approach. He was open for critique that would potentially emerge through this research.

9.1 Informed consent and anonymity of data sources

World Vision India management introduced the researcher as an insider-researcher and explained that the research activities were part of an academic programme and not connected with his work in World Vision Global Headquarters. Participants were given a choice whether to participate or not in the research.

Participants' informed consent was obtained before they were interviewed. In each of the cases, they voluntarily agreed to participate. Once they agreed to participate, they were told that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time (Leedy and Ormrod, 2012:105). The participants were assured of the anonymity of the data sources. Research participants were informed that both their names and the ADP in which they worked would be anonymised in the analysis and the write-up. All the files of documents, recordings and transcripts were given codes as their names.

9.2 Insider-Researcher - Opportunities and Challenges

Griffiths (1998:361) defines the insider-researcher as someone who enters the research site with intimate knowledge of the group being researched. An insider-researcher is someone whose study is concerned with the setting in which they work (Teusner, 2012:85). Based on these definitions, the researcher for this particular study was an insider. The researcher has been involved in development work over the past 35 years,

of which five years were spent as the manager of fieldworkers in development programmes of World Vision.

As an insider-researcher, the researcher was privileged to receive an enhanced sense of trust from the research participants. He was also aware of the organisational history, context, policies, strategies and people and had easier access to relevant documents and to the participants for this research (Floyd and Arthur, 2010:3; Mercer, 2007:6). As an insider-researcher there were several advantages, including intimate knowledge of the organisation, both the formal aspects, as expressed through the mission statement, strategy and financial statement, and the informal aspects, as experienced by its members through culture, norms, networks and power dynamics, which provided a sharp contrast to the formal aspects of the organisation (Teusner, 2016:85).

On the other hand, the relative power and the privileged knowledge of the researcher and how it could potentially affect the behaviour and responses of the participants was a major consideration in the development of research methodology. There are differing opinions on how the relationship between the researcher and the researched could potentially influence the knowledge being created. Research, whether it is conducted by an insider or an outsider, cannot be value-free and so the researchers should try to make their beliefs, assumptions and positions as clear as possible, while trying to be non-judgmental (Ritchie, et al, 2014:8). Reflexivity in qualitative research is regarded as being particularly important in this regard. Reflectivity and reflexivity on the part of the insider-researcher are valuable to improve the quality of the research (Tuesner, 2016:88).

9.3 Steps to ensure the quality and integrity of the data

Since the research study was based solely on the programmes of World Vision India, the following efforts were made to limit any bias resulting from the researcher being an insider-researcher:

As required in the phenomenological research and as a reflective insider-researcher, the researcher identified and wrote up his beliefs, assumptions and convictions about NGO fieldworkers before meeting them. This indeed helped the researcher to ‘bracket out’ of personal beliefs and helped the researcher engage in ‘active listening’ to the participants. Listening well helped establish good rapport with the research participants during the interviews. Also, this helped the researcher to be

reflexive enough and avoid systematic and conscious bias and try to be an empathetic and neutral person in data collection, analysis and narrative writing (Ritchie, et al, 2014:181).

As an insider-researcher with tacit knowledge gained through years of experience in the organisation, one could make too many assumptions and the researcher could feel ‘too close’ to the data. In view of this, whenever the answers were brief or were not explicitly stated in order to make the data meaningful, the researcher further probed the participants to clarify and explain (Bernard, 2011:167; Patton, 1990:327).

Triangulation of interview data with programme designs, reports and performance evaluations of the fieldworkers assured the conformability of the data from in-depth interviews of the fieldworkers. The researcher shared draft copies of Chapters 3 and 5 with two senior leaders of WVI and the National Director of India. They were requested to review whether the history, policies and positions of WVI and WV India were represented accurately and fairly in the writing of the narrative. Feedback provided by them was considered as appropriate during subsequent revisions.

The researcher did not carry out his official duties while being in the field for data collection. Also, he politely declined to provide any explanation for, or defence of, the organisational policies and guidelines, either prior to or during the interviews. In cases of any requests from the participants for the researcher’s opinions or guidance on any particular organisational policies or positions, they were provided only after the data collection was completed.

The researcher, being an ethnic Tamil, found ways to relate to the fieldworkers other than being a senior staff member from World Vision, breaking down the organisational power barriers to the largest extent possible. Time spent with each fieldworker during informal community visits and lunch provided opportunities to connect with each other as people with common interests well beyond the organisation in which they worked together.

The researcher did not cede control of any aspect of the research either to World Vision International or World Vision India in any way. The only commitments agreed were to provide a copy of this thesis to World Vision and to develop a set of recommendations that would be made outside of the thesis to World Vision International senior leadership.

10. Conclusion

The use of qualitative methodology with the use of in-depth interviews of participants who have experienced the phenomenon, along with document analysis, aided with soliciting necessary information and gaining answers to the research questions. Ethical issues were considered in the research and prudent efforts were taken to avoid potential biases that could result from inside-research within the researcher's own organisation and ensure that it did not affect the study. A substantial use of direct quotes have been included all through the chapters discussing the findings, in order to give voice to the study participants and also to avoid an additional layer of analysis.

Collecting data focusing on one region of one country of one international NGO limited the generalisability of the study findings, but the relevant thematic findings are transferable to other NGOs that share similar characteristics. Although World Vision International and World Vision India have unique organisational characteristics and culture, they operate within the larger context of NGO development work at global and national levels and collaborate with, or compete against, other NGOs for advocacy, funding, media relations and public reputation. Strong parallels can be observed across the international NGO sector involved in development work and so this research has the potential for wider relevance beyond World Vision. Comparing and linking findings from this study with inferences from other relevant studies could further strengthen the case for transferability (Bryman, 2012:406). Rich context data is provided so that those who read this dissertation could infer comparability in the organisational contexts so that appropriate decisions could be made on transferability of the findings.

This research would generate new knowledge regarding the relevance of street-level bureaucracy to understand the role of fieldworkers in NGO settings and stimulate additional inquiry by research scholars in development studies. It is also expected that this research inquiry would lead to an enhanced level of appreciation among NGO leaders, donors and others about the agency and the role of fieldworkers, and the complexity and intricacy involved in the work that they do at the grassroots. Hopefully, these contributions could influence improvement in professional practice among NGOs involved in development work.

Chapter 5: Policy-Related Conflicts Experienced by NGO Fieldworkers at the Grassroots

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses policy-related conflicts experienced by fieldworkers at the grassroots, based on field research. In particular, this chapter will explore ambiguities exist in the roles of SLBs due to policy-related conflicts. Policy conflicts might arise for three different reasons; a) client-oriented goals might be at odds with the agency's vision for societal changes at large, b) client-oriented goals could be at conflict with organisation-oriented goals and c) goal conflicts due to conflicting expectations arising from different stakeholder groups (Lipsky, 2010:40,41). Data sources for this chapter include various policies, strategy and programme design documents and interviews with 27 fieldworkers from seven programmes and seven respective programme managers.

The phrase 'policy environment' is used in this paper in a broad sense to mean a set of principles or guidelines that are officially adopted by World Vision International (WVI) or its subsidiary, World Vision India, to guide decision-making or action at the grassroots level by the fieldworkers in India. As explained in Chapter 3, World Vision had a series of policies, strategies and programme design documents that guide ADPs. The policy environment of World Vision pertaining to its development work is described both in Chapter 3, as well as at the outset of this chapter, to provide the organisational context for the role and expectations of fieldworkers as they work at the interface of the organisation and communities. How fieldworkers experienced and related to these policies, strategy and design documents determined the extent to which their intents were translated into action at the grassroots.

The Mission Statement was considered a core document of WVI and was approved by its International Board and International Council. The Mission Statement speaks of the identity and calling of World Vision Partnership. The WVI Board approved the policies on Transformational Development (TD) and Child Sponsorship, articulating key principles that govern decision-making by World Vision offices. The senior leadership of WVI approved World Vision's Development Programme Approach (DPA) and this would be considered not as a policy but as an important guideline in planning and managing ADPs. As disclosed in Chapter 4 on research

methodology, the researcher was involved in contributing to the development and approval of the policies on Transformational Development and Child Sponsorship and was responsible for the development of World Vision Development Programme Approach (DPA), in his leadership role in World Vision International. WV India's Board approved the country strategy for India and WV India's senior leadership would be accountable to its Board for the strategy execution. Programme design documents would have been reviewed and approved by the Director of World Vision India and the funding offices that provided funds for the respective ADPs, with accountability to WV India management and the funding office, for timely implementation of activities as per the approved designs.

2. Policy Environment of World Vision International

The elements of mission statement, vision statement, policies and strategies of World Vision International and World Vision India as described in Chapter 3 are very relevant for analysis and discussions in this chapter, but they are not repeated here. World Vision International's (WVI) policy on TD and Child Sponsorship policy are attached as Appendix 3 and 4 respectively.

2.1 Programme Design, Annual Plans and Budgets

Each ADP that was part of the field research focused on one of the five strategic directives of World Vision India: ADPs A, B and D focused on the strategic directive of 'reducing hunger, malnutrition and childhood illnesses', whereas the other four ADPs; C, E, F and G focused on the directive of 'ensuring child participation and protection'. Logframes on each of the strategic directives are attached as appendix 5. ADPs were expected to develop their plans around a package of tried and tested interventions that had external evidence for strong likelihood of success in achieving the intended results. In World Vision's terminology, these were called 'specialised project models'. For example, the first group of ADPs that focused on reducing hunger, malnutrition and childhood illnesses implemented a specialised project model called 'Timed and Targeted Counselling'. This project model included a standard package of activities aimed at improving the prenatal and antenatal care for mothers, strengthening the capacity of healthcare workers, increasing access to health care, strengthening early childhood care and development centres, identifying and following up on malnourished

children. The second group of programmes that focused on the strategic directive of ensuring child participation and protection, implemented a specialised project model called 'Child Protection System Strengthening', which included activities such as formation of children's organisations, improving birth registration, training on parenting skills, setting up community based child-protection mechanisms, working with, and capacity building of, child protection units of local governments. There were also 'enabling project models' that could be combined with 'specialised project models'. For example, 'Citizen Voice and Action' (CVA) was an enabling project model that provided a methodology to mobilise and equip citizens to monitor government services, and facilitate an advocacy methodology that could potentially result in the improvement of government-provided services. Another example of an enabling project model was 'Channels of Hope' which provided tools and methodology to mobilise faith communities to engage in social issues such as caring for people living with HIV/AIDS or protection of children from violence and exploitation. World Vision India ADPs, like most other NGO programmes, used logframe for their planning purposes. Typically, logframe forms the centre of the design document. It includes four hierarchical levels of change (including goal, outcomes, outputs and activities) with associated measurements and an analysis of internal and external assumptions that may present a risk to the achievement of the objectives. Each ADP studied had a five-year programme design with a logframe, detailed implementation plans and budgets. There were targets associated with each and every activity in the detailed implementation plan. Targets and budgets were divided up for each Community Development Facilitator (CDF). This system of using logframe, indicators and targets for performance management at the level of ADP and for each CDF is discussed in detail in Chapter 6 in relation to performance management of fieldworkers.

3. Policy Linkages to Fieldworkers' Roles

Fieldworkers in World Vision India programmes were called 'Community Development Facilitators' (CDF). Standardised job descriptions for CDFs mentioned that they were the primary links between World Vision and communities and local partners. The purpose of a CDF's role was mentioned as transformational development of children, families and communities:

> Community Development facilitator lives and works within communities to facilitate transformational development – in the lives of children, families and communities… The

> development facilitator helps partners build on their existing strengths and assets and facilitates access to technical and financial resources from Government, local partners, World Vision and other sources (World Vision India, 2016)

A CDF was expected to promote communities' priorities for child wellbeing, in alignment with World Vision India's strategic directives, and draw from the resources, strengths and work of communities and local partners in fulfilling such priorities through multi-stakeholder partnerships (ibid, 2016). The standard job description of World Vision India for the CDF is attached as Appendix 6. While the job description stated that the purpose of the CDF's role was to live and work in communities and promote transformational development by building on existing strengths and assets, the details were very much about how CDFs could draft local actors into partnering with World Vision to implement programmes as per the programme designs. This tenuous link between transformational development as the purpose of World Vision's development work on one hand and the top-down strategy-driven child wellbeing priorities driving programming at a practical level on the other hand positioned CDFs for conflicts and ambiguity in their role.

Clear themes of potential role conflict and ambiguity emerged when the job description of a CDF was analysed in light of various organisational policies, strategy, Development Programming Approach and the design document. These themes of policy conflict and ambiguity were confirmed in analysing the interview transcripts from the fieldworkers and their managers. These themes merit examination in light of CDFs' experience at the grass roots include: a) different underlying theories on how development happens; b) role of local partners in development; c) use of project models and d) child sponsorship policy expectations for community development purposes.

4. Conflicts in Policy Experience at the Grassroots

This section explores each of the four themes of policy-related conflicts experienced by the fieldworkers at the grassroots.

4.1 Conflicts due to underlying theories of how development happens

According to TD policy and DPA, fieldworkers were facilitators of the transformational development process that was owned by communities and local partners. It was expected that such a transformational development process be focused

on the wellbeing of children, especially the most vulnerable, as predetermined by the national strategy. Several CDFs and ADP managers were concerned that an exclusive focus on child wellbeing was rather narrow and may not necessarily lead to transformation of people and communities as the Mission Statement and policies called for. If transformational development was the agenda, few CDFs and managers felt that communities and families might not necessarily choose to frame the issues in terms of promoting child wellbeing:

> Transformation is not on the agenda. Some of the problems are deep rooted. Even if malnutrition is the main issue here, we are not able to address the root causes, values and worldview-related issues. Here in this community, challenges are marriages within the family and alcoholism. Our design is like horses with blinkers on. Our programme design is developed from the perspective of providing technical solution for specific issues. We have no time to think or space outside the box. Everything has become so 'evidence-based' that we have no space for local realities (ADP Manager # B, July 2015).

> We were working multi-sectorially before. That was much more need-based, in discussions with community members… Technical Programme design came down from the national office. We were asked to tell the community members that child protection was chosen. Community members questioned us on why child protection was chosen as we had done other work in the past. I have a number of mismatches between the design and plans of World Vision and the community needs. I find it difficult even to have conversation in such situations. Last year there have been floods and fire in the communities that we serve… we went took pictures and captured information but could not do anything. I couldn't commit anything on behalf of World Vision, as I wouldn't be able to fulfil them (CDF # C1, October 2016).

> Bonded child labour was the major issue, but has been resolved to 98% or 99%. No parents want their children to be in beedi [*local cigarettes*] industry as they were once before. The only way out of this situation, parents believe, is to help their children to get higher education for which they request help from WV. We are not able to provide that (CDF # F1, August 2016).

World Vision's policies on TD and child sponsorship had a broader focus and were more general, expecting communities to set their own priorities for development in dialogue with World Vision. Transformational Development Indicators (TDI) measured important and some intangible aspects of TD, which were not limited to World Vision's programming work. DPA was also non-prescriptive in allowing communities, local partners and World Vision, although following a set process, to choose their own priorities, as long as the outcomes were focused on child wellbeing. When it came to WV India's country strategy and programme design and plans, they were more specific and driven by the need for tangible and immediate results, focused on child wellbeing. High-level policies tended to be more inspirational, using a participatory discourse and focused on the longer term. Strategy and programme designs were based on a reductionist approach of development that articulated health,

education, child protection, etc. as separate issues and something to be addressed through standardised and specialised solutions. Table 8 compares the general and broad-based nature of TD policy, Child Sponsorship policy and DPA guidance and the more specific approaches of World Vision India Country Strategy and Programme Design documents on programming priorities:

Table 8: Comparison of Programming Focus

Exemplary Quotes from Policies and Development Programme Approach	**Exemplary Quotes from Strategy and Programme Design**
Transformational development programs reflect an integrated physical-spiritual understanding of human beings; the world they live in and the way people develop…. Transformational development programs include appropriate sectoral interventions. Such interventions are planned and implemented to build local capacity and accountability. Technical interventions meet internationally accepted sector-specific standards and guidelines (Transformational Development Policy, World Vision International, 2001)	The strategy has five key strategic directives each underpinned by a number of objectives, measures and targets so that we can measure our performance on a regular basis. 1. Reduce malnutrition and childhood illnesses 2. Enhance quality education 3. Strengthen child participation and protection systems 4. Build resilient communities 5. Promote value based governance (Country Strategy, World Vision India, 213)
Programs supported by sponsorship focus on the wellbeing of children by enabling families and communities to improve health, basic education, spiritual and emotional nurture, protection from abuse, violence and exploitation, and development of sustainable livelihoods. Special note is taken of children affected by HIV/AIDS and disabilities (Child Sponsorship Policy, World Vision International, 2014) The programme vision and priorities are developed with and owned by the community and local partners. The child well-being aspirations and outcomes are not imposed on communities by WV. Rather, they inform the dialogue with communities and stakeholders that lead to a shared vision and priorities for child wellbeing. It is not expected that all of the priorities will be addressed at one time (Development Programme Approach, World Vision International, 2014)	<u>Goal:</u> Children enjoy healthy childhood <u>Outcomes</u> 1) Improved Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) practices towards decreasing childhood malnutrition and morbidity; 2) Increased coverage, access, utilization for sustainable WASH practices; 3) Increased nutritionally resilient households; 4) Strengthened systems and structures towards reduction of childhood malnutrition and morbidity (ADP Design Document, World Vision India, 2015)

One of the senior leaders commented:

> Global level policies and guidelines are expected to be general and broad-based in nature but as they get applied in particular geographic areas, they need to become more specific. We need to balance community needs and priorities against the past performance of the organisation, resources available and people capacity and that is the role of strategy and programme design processes (World Vision International Senior Leader # B, March 2018)

It is reasonable that country strategy and design documents help interpret policy intents into more situation specific objectives or priorities. However, the way it was cascaded

down might reflect a different way of thinking about development than how the policies and DPA guidance described the nature of development. For example, priorities could have been formed around how local communities understood and articulated issues such as, developmental life stages of children, or more integrated approaches to improving the nutritional status of children or strengthening livelihoods of people to stop child labour related issues without breaking them according to isolated sector groups. Communities might often think about development problems and priorities in an inter-related or integrated manner. A reductionist approach to development reduced the notion of ownership, participation and joint setting of priorities by local partners as instrumental to achieve World Vision's priorities, rendering the role of fieldworkers to become instrumental as well. As discussed in Chapter 3, an ecological understanding of child wellbeing is nested within the broader social systems in which children are members of and broad-based and interconnected (Garbarino 1980: 435). Separating health, nutrition, education and child protection was not true to World Vision's own expression of child wellbeing.

> Segmentation of issues as malnutrition, child protection, etc. works against a community-based approach. We need to understand the issues on an integrated basis. We go into community with a ready-made package. We ask the communities to participate in what we have planned (ADP Manager B, July 2015).

One or two CDFs felt that even while focusing programmes on a single subject, such as malnutrition, it should be possible to connect with the broader set of issues facing the communities and aim for a more holistic impact. However, there were no expectations from World Vision to do so, neither did the programme design documents allow them space to do that:

> This community is full of superstitions, giving the girl child in marriage to maternal uncle, etc. Alcoholism is a major issue. Changes in these areas take a lot of time. While there are no specific targets for achievement in these areas, we can connect malnutrition to these transformational issues (CDF # D1, October 2016).

On one hand, World Vision wanted to uphold the general ideals of participatory development by expecting local people and partners to set development priorities and retain control of programme planning and implementation. But on the other, not only were the specific child wellbeing objectives of World Vision predetermined as goals for ADPs, but also how such goals were achieved through the use of evidence-based project models was also equally set ahead of time. There was an assumption that child wellbeing priorities selected by communities and local partners would be in alignment

with World Vision's strategic directives determined on the basis of secondary data. However, this was not the case according to CDFs in four out of the seven ADPs:

> Earlier we used to do a lot of PRA-type activities such as wealth ranking, seasonal diagrams, etc. as a result people participated a lot in targeting beneficiaries. But now with a single focus on malnutrition, we have come up with our own criteria and community participation in beneficiary selection has become less and less. With strict targeting criteria defined by WV, we are not able to focus on the poorest of the poor or the most vulnerable… we need to help only those who are able to meet the targeting criteria (CDF # B3, July 2015).

> We were working in multiple sectors before. That was much more need-based, in discussions with community members. Child protection was prioritised for this programme based on secondary data. Programme design came down from the national office. Community members questioned us on why are we not working with them like in the past (CDF #C2, October 2016).

A few CDFs reported that over a period of time they have come to understand and appreciate the relevance of strategic directives chosen for their programme and the effectiveness of project models in meeting a critical need in the communities they serve:

> ADP's focus is to 'reduce malnutrition and childhood illnesses'. Initially I struggled with the chosen priority – I felt that this priority was shoved down my throat. But now, I have come to see the need and its relevance. For example, government records say that there are no severely malnourished children in our communities. But when we did the survey we identified a number of children who are severely malnourished and so the programme is meeting a critical need. Now people can identify children who are malnourished and what are the locally available nutrient-rich foods. Parents now understand anaemia in young adolescent girls (CDF # E1, October 2016).

Selection of child wellbeing priorities for specific ADPs to focus in the development of programme design was made at the World Vision India headquarters by technical specialists based on secondary data on specific topics such as levels of malnutrition, antenatal and prenatal care, prevalence of childhood diseases, primary school enrolment rates, prevalence of child labour and others. Senior leadership's perception was that communities were experiencing problems in specific areas such as nutrition or education or violence against children and they would inherently know what their own critical issues were and with good facilitation by fieldworkers, they would be supportive of selected priorities. And it was the role of fieldworkers to facilitate community participation in programme planning and implementation. Another related reason, as Chambers states, could perhaps be, that senior leadership in NGOs tend to have more specialised education than community members and fieldworkers and so might see issues in specific academic disciplines such as nutrition, health, education, etc. and take a problem solving approach (1997: 34). This

expectation from senior leadership that managerial and participatory approaches could be used simultaneously validates what was stated in Chapter 2; senior leaders in aid organisations do not realise that managerial and participatory approaches are based on different theories of change on how development happens, the agency that drives development and where control and accountability lie (Wallace, et al, 2007:31). It was assumed that the sense of control and assurance that come from the use of managerial approach to deliver on planned outcomes could go well together with fulfilling policy aspirations for participatory development. From the leadership perspective, any participatory process that does not deliver measurable improvement in a child wellbeing outcome was seen an excuse for poor performance and poor quality development work. Processes are often intangible and difficult to account for, unless and otherwise they are monitored and documented. Even then processes could vary from one context to another. Another reason for the leadership to focus on a specific issue was that World Vision could not afford to spread its resources thin and try to solve every problem being faced by communities, but should focus its resources, expertise and efforts to respond to a few priority issues.

The heart of the matter was a conflict between two different discourses on development: on one hand, a reductionist approach to understanding development by focusing on a singular issue, such as childhood malnutrition or child protection, with a standardised solution package based on a certain universal understanding of how to address the problem by World Vision; on the other hand, what mattered the most to local communities were the critical issues that faced them in their own contexts and Aid organisations like World Vision break down the complex and interconnected issues facing the poor rural communities into specific and separate problems through a classic reductionist approach and simplify complex problems into simple cause-and-effect relations, developing standardised solutions to bring a level of certainty in planning (Chambers, 1997:42). This reductionist approach is rooted in Western modernity and enlightenment, which is based on a worldview that progress could be planned, controlled, achieved and extended in specific areas of life by following empirical methods and protocols for prediction of certain predetermined results. We see the origins of positivist approaches during the rise of industrial capitalism and the French revolution, where progress was thought to be linear, where experts with knowledge and resources play a central role as interventionists to bring about development (Cowen and

Shenton, 1996:27). Based on such a positivist thinking, there are three basic elements in a development intervention: an object for development, the intervention is accomplished by an actor in a precise manner according to some clear set of expectations and the object will respond in a pre-determined manner resulting in progress (Preston, 1982:46,47).

In three of the seven ADPs, CDFs expressed a greater level of perception of 'Programme fit'. Programme fit is defined here as the degree to which CDFs perceived that the programme design and the main issue it addressed were relevant in responding to the critical needs experienced by community members. Korten mentions "programme fit" points to the importance of relationships between needs in a specific context, tasks or activities undertaken and the organisational competence (1980:496). This included ADP # A and D which focused on mother and child health and nutrition and ADP # G on protection of children against violence. Programme fit was not merely about the secondary data pointing to the needs and issues mentioned in the programme design, but CDFs agreeing that the programme design addressed the issues and needs in communities as they experienced it. After all, people's needs are experienced in the interaction between political, social and economic factors in specific contexts and secondary data do not fully communicate how people experience their needs in their specific contexts. Fieldworkers who live among them can get to understand and perceive whether "programme fit" is present or not. This speaks to the need for fieldworkers' support for the NGO programme design and policy objectives.

> We validate the statistics from ICDS at the community level and help parents and community members to see who among their children are malnourished and its effect overt the longer term. We try to reach all severely and moderately malnourished children (CDF # A1, October, 2016).

> I like the focus on nutrition as we have a high need for nutrition programme. We have 33% children under 5 who are malnourished. I see some behaviour changes in communities – it may not be 100%, but I see positive changes. For example, we don't have any more childbirth at home; all births are done in institutions. Hand washing has improved significantly and no more diarrhoeal deaths in communities (CDF # D3, October 2016).

> It takes time to get the support of community people. It takes time to get results. A CDF needs to persevere. It requires dialogue with community members. Child participation is critical as thinking of the older generation and the younger generations are different. Children need to have avenues to express their views, responsible for their own development. We have many cases of children becoming change agents in their own families and communities (CDF # G2, October 2016).

But in other programmes, that was not the case. CDFs in these programmes were caught in this conflict as they were based in communities, had developed close

relationships with people and understood the issues and needs as people experienced them, but were still expected to deliver on certain pre-determined results based on a standard set of interventions that they did not perceive as addressing the real needs. Perception of programme fit was missing based on analysis of primary data from these four ADPs.

Another source of conflict was the role that advocacy played in development work at grassroots level. TD policy envisioned 'Transformed Systems and Structures' as a desired area of change and mentioned that, "Transformational development programs intentionally address policy, systemic and structural constraints on development by promoting change in systems and structures…" (World Vision International, 2002). DPA also placed emphasis on local level advocacy as a critical component of WV's development programmes because they should seek to tackle the root causes of child wellbeing issues, not just the symptoms (World Vision International, 2011). But in DPA, local-level advocacy was exclusively focused around improving accountability of government agencies to ensure good quality and timely service provision, using tools such as 'Citizen Voice in Action':

> Local advocacy is a critical component of WV's development programmes because WV seeks to tackle the root causes of child well-being issues, not just the symptoms. In most areas many of these root causes are issues of governance, leadership and capacity. Local advocacy targets policies and practices that affect the daily lives of children and other citizens in the communities where they live. Local advocacy provides tools, which empower communities to ensure that government and other authorities deliver on their commitments to child wellbeing. This leads to better, more accountable service delivery in sectors including health, nutrition, water, education and social protection (World Vision International, 2011:17).

But the CDFs had to tackle some tricky issues of power and politics if they were to take on some of the local issues that were very important to the communities, but they did not feel they would have the institutional support to be able to do so.

> At more senior levels of the organisation, they do not want us to directly engage in advocacy on major issues. They would want us to motivate the community and help raise their voices, but do not stand in solidarity with people. When it comes to advocacy, we work with local level community groups to monitor service provision by the local government agencies (CDC #A3, October 2016).

> I was told that I should do advocacy only through community organisations and I should not jeopardise my safety or the organisational reputation (CDC #B3, August 2015).

Objectives of the advocacy efforts were to enable citizens to hold the governance structures accountable to improve the quality and timeliness of service provision. However, according to the CDFs, this is a limited view of advocacy for their

community contexts and did not go far enough to address local issues of power and politics to 'transform systems and structures' as the TD policy called for. We need to recognise that there are limits to NGOs being able to address the development ills affecting the poor through promotion of responsible citizenry and accountable governance by the state. To quote from the World Bank initiated study on *Voices of the Poor*:

> The state has largely been ineffective in reaching the poor. Although the government's role in providing infrastructure, health, and education services is recognised by the poor, they feel that their lives remain unchanged by government interventions. Poor people report that their interactions with state representatives are marred by rudeness, humiliation, harassment, and stonewalling. The poor also report vast experience with corruption as they attempt to seek health care, educate their children, claim social assistance or relief assistance, get paid by employees, and seek protection from the police or justice from local authorities. (Narayan et al, 2000:5)

Participatory citizenship approaches appear to be effective in delivering short-term, universalistic benefits that tend to benefit both the poor and the elites, but is not effective in exclusively serving the needs of vulnerable population (Blair, 2000:25). For example, a participatory citizenship based approach may be effective in promoting a malaria campaign, or an effort to improve access to and quality of primary education as it benefits all families in a geographic area. However effectiveness of participatory citizenship to provide improved wells in a geographic area where marginal groups live or take actions against powerful elites working against the interests of the poor may be questionable. One reason for this could be due to the way in which child wellbeing outcomes are conceptualised in the first place. Houston critiques the ecology model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) on which the child wellbeing is based that it fails to take into consideration issues of power and that structural barriers to child development which cannot be fully resolved without addressing conflicts of interest and power issues (2017:58).

4.2 Conflicts Regarding the Role of Partners

The following synopsis could be derived about the role of local partners in development programming by a combined reading the TD policy, the DPA and the CDF's job description: a) By focusing on the wellbeing of children, and by developing good relationships with community members and a diverse range of local partners, fieldworkers would be able to bring them together for action; b) With fieldworkers' facilitation, communities and local partners would be able to identify and agree on a set

of shared priorities, in alignment with World Vision India's strategic objectives; and c) World Vision would be one among many partners in contributing to the wellbeing of children. The DPA placed significant emphasis on local-level partnering.

> World Vision seeks to work effectively with a wide range of groups and organisations in ways that strengthen and empower them…Partners can include government, churches and other faith-based organisations (FBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), local businesses and informal community groups – including groups of children and youth ... Most of these formal and informal groups were in the area before WV arrived and will be there long after WV departs. One of WV's most valuable roles is to help key groups come together to focus on local child well-being priorities, help them find forms of collaboration that make sense in context then strengthen their capacity if necessary. This enables the groups to address child wellbeing challenges effectively both in the near term and in the long term – well after WV's presence in an area ends. Local ownership and capacity are critical to sustaining improvements in child wellbeing (World Vision International, 2011:14).

Partnering guidelines were based on the principles of equity, transparency and mutual benefit for all parties involved, while contributing to a shared goal.

> WV seeks to promote these principles (*equity, transparency and mutual benefit*) in all collaborative relationships, because they greatly improve the quality and impact of working together. These principles enable trust, mutual respect and sustainable relationships, leading to the empowerment of local partners and fostering the sustainability of child wellbeing (ibid: 2011:15).

As part of the field research process, design documents of ADPs were reviewed, in addition to interviews with CDFs to understand the role of local partnering with community-based organisations. CDFs in all programmes made it a priority to form Village Development Committees (VDCs) and work with them as the primary partners at the community level. Plans from ADP A are cited here as example. The design for this ADP included working with a range of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) such as self-help groups, children's clubs and village development committees to promote community participation towards "social and political empowerment of communities" with CBO capacity as the indicator for success of this objective (ADP design document, 2010:23). The ADP formed Village Development Committees (VDCs) to channel community participation into World Vision planned programme activities, rather than seeking to find out what community-based structures and organisations were already in existence, what purposes they were fulfilling and how the ADP could partner with them on the basis of any shared vision. The communities participated in World Vision planned and initiated programmes rather than World Vision supporting local partners in on-going development activities based on the aspirations of the people and any local vision for development. ADP manager # A

mentioned that he did not consider working with self-help groups that were already in existence when the ADP arrived at the scene in 2010 because the state government was channelling certain loan programmes through these structures and according to his opinion, these structures were too politicised. Based on the interviews with the CDFs, ADP # A organised a VDC in each village before any activities were initiated or funds made available. Formation of a VDC was the first activity that the CDFs carried out. The CDFs also ensured that the Village Development Committees had a membership of 70 to 100 people with representations from various sections of the village. The main purposes of the VDCs were limited to providing input into the plans developed by ADPs and to selecting beneficiaries for various activities based on the criteria determined by the ADP. The VDCs effectively served the instrumental purposes of community participation in achieving the planned objectives and spending the budget on time in Kilayur ADP. The well-structured VDCs played a central role in disseminating the information on programme implementation in Kilayur ADP.

> Our development committee exists for the sole purpose of planning and implementing World Vision's programs. If World Vision is not here, we will not have the committee. If World Vision were to leave the community tomorrow, we would dissolve the committee (Women participants of a VDC, ADP # A, July 2015).

In addition to VDCs, CDFs in all seven ADPs worked with a range of government agencies that helped them to plan and implement specific project models as per the design documents. Government agencies who were local partners included: Child Protection Units at the district and the block level, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Block Development Offices, District Collector offices, Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs) and local schools. According to the CDFs, all the four principles of partnering, equity, transparency and mutual benefit, were applied in local partnering relations with government agencies. Local partners helped CDFs to accomplish the objectives and reach the targets as per the programme designs and make government technical staff available for World Vision's programmes. World Vision helped the local partners with materials and training so that government agencies could fulfil their mandates. One challenge in working with local partners that was mentioned by the CDFs was that World Vision's requirements were not flexible enough to adapt to any changing conditions. This was especially true when it came to financial contribution from local partners to ADP-initiated programmes:

> We might have budgeted only 30% for a programme with the expectation that the remaining funding would come from the government partners, who might later tell us that

> they don't have the expected funds. What can we do? We are stuck and are not able to achieve the target in a given time. We need to explain the situation in our office, expecting them to accept the new situation. We can be seen as poor performers in such situations (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> We also have our own limitations when it comes to partnering with others – our financial systems and processes are not flexible enough. WV insists that other partners to do their tasks first (ADP Manager # B, July 2015).

In some cases, CDFs had formed networks and collaborated with local agencies outside the programme design to meet specific needs of communities. Such local partnerships were neither part of the programme design, nor part of their reporting:

> Since I have legal background, I have been able to help young children to navigate criminal justice system – not getting them arrested by the police on misdemeanour charges. I have helped families of fishermen who are languishing in Sri Lankan prisons by helping them to work with relevant government departments to access help (CDF # A3, October 2016).

> I would not be able to change or influence World Vision's programming, but I can try to influence other NGOs and government agencies to meet the specific needs of the communities that I serve. For example, I networked with Lion's Club in the area to put up a compound wall and gates for a school where the women teachers were regularly being harassed by thugs from a nearby road (CDF # B3, July 2015).

The following could be inferred as findings based on discussions with CDFs, managers and a review of the design documents: a) In all cases, CDFs worked with those local partners who were essential for them to help implement the programme design. It was not an open-ended process, as DPA suggested, seeking to find out who the local actors were, what they were doing in contributing to the wellbeing of children, what the shared vision and common priorities were and how to work with them. b) There was participation by community-based VDCs in providing input into programme activities, the selection of beneficiaries and contribution of financial resources that served the instrumental purposes in helping the ADPs to implement all the planned activities. As per the earlier reference, VDCs as local organisations formed by the ADP # A, took on the identity of the project and developed a patronage relationship and dependency (Fowler, 1997:95). They served as *project carriers* and did not provide any observable forms of downward accountability (ibid, 1997:222) and c) World Vision's strict financial systems and business processes were not conducive for financial partnering between local partners and the ADPs. According to a World Vision India senior leader that the Government of India regulations for foreign funded NGOs working in the country required on the part of World Vision to have strict financial procedures and systems which came in the way of financial partnering with local

agencies (Feb, 2018). It is likely that World Vision India might have been over cautious, as few other NGOs had lost their licenses to operate due to lax financial procedures. World Vision programmes playing a convening role to bring together various partners and collaborating on the basis of a shared vision and priorities for child wellbeing would have required greater degree of openness, flexibility and context specificity. Clear and specific strategic directives and programme design did not offer such space for fieldworkers to form open, collaborative local partnerships that DPA guidance expected, but only instrumental partnering was possible.

4.3 Conflicts in the Use of Project Models

According to DPA, a project model brought together globally recognised good practices for improving child wellbeing. These were the approaches that WV recommended for putting its strategies into action. DPA mentioned that the project models could help programme staff to have confidence in using technically sound approaches without having to design completely new projects. Also, it was suggested that WV could share project models with local stakeholders and potential partners as an effective way to contribute to child wellbeing priorities jointly defined by the community. These project models could be adapted to fit the needs and opportunities in a local context (World Vision International, 2016:29). Policy guidance recognised the presence of specific root-causes that were unique to the local context in addition to certain universally agreed and established causes that inhibited the wellbeing of children. This required programme design to be done on the basis of local understanding of the issues, as well as global knowledge of project models in order to improve the wellbeing of children. It was the role of the CDF to work with community members and local partners to identify and analyse such root-causes and bring local, contextual issues to project models.

The intent behind the project models was that every programme staff and community would not need to 'reinvent the wheel', but they could benefit from proven learning from other places in tackling similar problems. This gave a degree of confidence to the donors and the organisational leadership that strategic objectives were likely to be achieved as programmes implemented tested and tried practices, contained in the project models. However, World Vision India treated project models like prefabricated building blocks that could be efficiently put together with minimum adaptation in developing a programme design, indicators to measure success and

estimating budget required. Fieldworkers' experience of project models at the grassroots was very different from what the policy documents stated. Strategic directives and objectives were selected at the National Office level based on secondary data on child development. Programme designs were developed by technical specialists at the headquarters based on project model guidance with no space for adaptation at the local level. The role of the CDFs on the ground was merely implementation: to share the details with local partners, discuss the tactics of implementation, decide on the targets and get on with implementation:

> Only occasionally I have been able to make major changes to the plans based on community and partner input. One example is to develop watershed to increase ground water table. … The structure requires us to focus on activities, complete the targets given and we need to adapt ourselves to the expectations placed on us (CDF # A5, July 2015).

The actual planning and management system of ADPs studied appeared to be based on an implicit assumption that development was primarily a management exercise of implementing a specific plan developed by the technical experts from outside. In such a management exercise, participation, local partnering, community ownership, etc. were seen as tactical design considerations to ensure expediency in achieving programme objectives. The underlying development paradigm was that World Vision India could bring 'the best practice solution' to the problem and make changes happen in a short period of time. Participation of poor people was largely for the purpose of adoption of best practice solutions brought to them, including behaviour changes on their part -- and the poor and local partners were not seen as having much to offer in developing the solution itself. Variations in contexts where development interventions were implemented were seen as relatively minor issues that should be addressed during the course of implementation of development programmes.

> WV has good systematic planning which is helpful. But sometimes we don't get the alignment between seasonal calendar of communities and our plans. We need to finish our activities and budgets on time. Sometimes our plans and systems don't mesh in well with community realities (CDF # A4, October 2016).

> Programme planning is done at the National Office level and not at the community level – how do they know the needs of the communities that I work with? CDF knows the community from A to Z…. but don't have much to do with field-level planning and decision-making (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> I am being asked to do programmes whether they are relevant to the local context or not. For example, children who are above 16 don't want to come to children's club meetings, but we are being asked to mobilise all the children. I am being asked to form a cluster level CBO. But people are not interested. We can't force CBOs on people. I argue and fight with my managers. My performance reviews are being affected (CDF # C2, October 2016).

Although it was not commonly reported by all the CDFs, a few of them expressed that their knowledge and contributions were not valued by technical specialists who worked on programme designs:

> Some times technical leads talk down to us – as though CDFs don't know anything and they know everything. Nutrition technical lead shows disrespect to my community members and me. I have shared about this with my managers (CDF # D3, October 2016).

Some of this lack of flexibility for local adaptation could have been due to the prevailing management culture in ADPs and World Vision India to a large extent.

> My manager tells me that the design document is like the Bible. Follow what it says (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> Design was developed by the national office. They shared the design document with us and we shared our perspective. But the design document is my Bible and I can't go outside of it and I can't change it (CDF # E1, October 2016).

From the management perspective, core project models were about standardising processes and interventions that have been found to systematically work across a variety of contexts to design and implement programmes that are cost effective and deliver results. As one senior leader from World Vision International mentioned, "*As World Vision, we need to do fewer things that work well and do them really well instead of doing a lot of things and doing them in a mediocre manner. We need to build our core competency around the core project models prioritised in the strategy and deliver good results which will help us to communicate our brand and impact to donors clearly*" (February, 2018). What was perhaps missing in such a perspective was that "good technical interventions" involved in improving good health, nutritional status and increasing food production are only one part of the solution. The other part includes other considerations such as culture, relationships, values and additional 'soft" issues that are critical in development, which are often local and context specific. These cannot be easily standardised and scaled up. So-called "soft" issues such as relationships could actually be hard for aid agencies (Ramalingam, 2013:91). Professionals by nature are driven to simplify what is complex and standardise what is diverse (Chambers, 1997:42). Fieldworkers based in the field could understand what was lacking in project models, but felt that they had very limited opportunity to make them relevant to their local contexts.

4.4 Conflicts in Child Sponsorship Expectations

Although World Vision's policy emphasised equality and inclusion of all children, whether they were sponsored or not, it was also expected that every sponsored child would benefit from the programme in some identifiable ways. The expectation was based on an implicit assumption that there would be general alignment between what the programme was trying to achieve where the individual sponsored children lived, and the issues they were facing. This could be difficult although not impossible, as World Vision's programmes were operating at community-level and targeting a group or population, whereas the needs and context of individual sponsored children were varied and different from each other. Programmes targeting groups of families and children might not necessarily benefit every individual sponsored child according to their expectations or specific needs they were facing in their own unique contexts. This is a classic problem of street-level bureaucrats dealing with clients as 'categories of action', whereas clients experiencing their needs as individual problems and expecting treatment appropriate to their specific needs (Lipsky 2010:60). For example, in promoting child sponsorship to prospective sponsors, World Vision makes generic promises such as the following:

> Child sponsorship helps a child in need. When you sponsor a child, you help provide essentials like clean water, nutrition, education, and more while you connect through letters and photos. All with the goal of helping your sponsored child and their community break free from poverty for good (https://www.worldvision.org/sponsor-a-child).

Here the emphasis is on a specific child. However, World Vision's programmes using programme design, logframe, targets and reports are not designed to help a specific 'child in need' with essentials, but focus on, 'their community'. Staff can get caught up in the logframes, targets and reports which tend to be sector specific, rather than looking at the specific context and tailored to the needs of a 'child in need'.

World Vision India expected CDFs to explain child sponsorship to community members as a way of bringing a focus on the wellbeing of all children and not as a mechanism to help specific children. The sponsors were to be seen as 'partners', who contributed to the community's development, and through their relationship with the children, shared in the joys of the community's progress. CDFs were expected to position sponsorship as a community mobilisation mechanism to track progress of vulnerable children. A number of tools and resources were developed by World Vision India and World Vision International to help CDFs with such a positioning of child

sponsorship (World Vision International, October 2014). However, none of these guidelines helped CDFs to avoid conflicts arising from a more traditional understanding of child sponsorship, both by community members and CDFs.

> We try to explain that it is child sponsorship resource that help the general community to develop… they understand, but still have expectations for specific benefits. Last week, I went to visit one sponsored child – child's mother asked me why do you come and ask the child to write a letter when you don't give us anything? I told her about a number of programmes that we do at the community level, but she was not happy. She asked me if the entire community was benefitting, then why are you sponsoring only a few children and you need to support my child's education. I felt that her question was valid and she was stating a fact – I was not able to answer her questions (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> Sponsorship presents problems when we don't give any exclusive direct benefits. There are expectations for direct benefits when we ask them to write introductory letters, reply letters, take pictures, videos, etc. and it is natural that they would have such expectations for us. Even though we do programmes at the community level, families raise issues with us because we have not provided exclusive direct benefits to them (CDF # G3, October 2017).

Problem was that World Vision was not marketing some impressions or variations of child sponsorship by linking a representative or ambassadorial child to sponsors, but connecting individual children who faced specific needs and issues in their own contexts with individual sponsors. So the idea that sponsored children are some kind of representatives of their communities as an explanation lacked merit.

What was also important to note is that neither the World Vision India strategy, nor the programme design documents mentioned anything about meeting the needs of specific sponsored children. There was this gap between the Child Sponsorship policy requirements that sponsored children should be among the primary beneficiaries and the strategic directives and programme plans not providing guidance on how the policy expectations should be delivered. CDFs experienced policy conflicts between the requirements of the strategic priorities of WV India, programme design documents and child sponsorship policy. An ADP focusing on malnutrition as the main issue would be primarily working with families with children below the age of five years, but the sponsored children could be of any age up to eighteen years. Given this discrepancy, sponsored children above the age of five could not directly benefit from the nutrition programme implemented in their communities. In order to address such issues, ADPs implemented some programmes in schools where older children were studying by organising children's clubs, implementing life skills curriculum and other such activities so as to increase the likelihood of every sponsored child participating in some kind of programme activity organised by World Vision. But the CDFs faced questions

from parents of sponsored children who felt that they were not benefiting sufficiently from World Vision's programme in an appropriate manner:

> We asked our office that we wanted to focus on education in our programme as most of our sponsored children are above the age of five years and their needs are not addressed in nutrition programme. Government is already addressing the malnutrition issues… When we tell the national office, they ask us to provide orientation to communities (CDF # E2, October 2016).

In discussing this particular issue with a senior leader in World Vision India, the response was:

> World Vision's approach of inclusive and group based activities (such as children's clubs, school based activities) allows children to learn new skills and have opportunities to form new relationships. Such activities positively affect the lives of these children. To meet its donor promise, WV has a policy that seeks to ensure that all sponsored children participate in programme activities. Meeting the individual needs of specific children is not World Vision's objective, rather it is about responding to specific priorities that can benefit most children. Also, the interactions that happen between the CDFs and sponsored children and their families and regular monitoring of sponsored children along with exchange of letters with the sponsors also contribute to their wellbeing (World Vision India senior leader, February, 2017).

This observation was corroborated by the findings from a multi-country research on child sponsorship commissioned by World Vision International and conducted by RMIT University in Australia:

> Evidence suggests that WV activities and processes are inclusive and do not discriminate in terms of participation… Across all sites, children were able to effectively participate in group based activities. Households with a sponsored child and sponsored adolescents were more likely to report participating in, or benefitting from, WV activities…. There were some positive associations between receipt of letters and gifts in all sites, although the nature of the wellbeing outcomes varied. Receipt of letters was associated in different sites with increased adolescent hope, happiness, self-efficacy, resilience and educational aspirations. There were positive associations between *writing* letters and hope, self-efficacy and resilience (Feeny et al, 2017:19-21).

Although this explanation from the World Vision India senior leader and the RMIT research report have merit from the perspective of community based programmes that are focused on the wellbeing of children, it did not appear to fully resolve the issues from the perspective of specific sponsored children and their families who were facing issues and challenges in their own particular situations due to the "individualising force" of child sponsorship (Bornstein, 2005:87). CDFs were the ones who faced this conflict with individual families in the communities.

One of the child sponsorship practices that was explicitly contrary to the policy emphasis on equality and non-discrimination of all children was the use of 'gift notifications'. While programme activities included in the design document did not differentiate between children who were sponsored and those who were not, child

sponsorship allowed individual sponsors to send gift amounts to their sponsored children, in addition to their monthly giving. This was purely voluntary on the part of sponsors. Families of sponsored children who received such gifts could use that as an investment to improve their housing or income generation activities or invest in the child's education. Only a fraction of sponsors sent such gift notifications to the children they sponsored. World Vision had allowed this practice because some sponsors wanted to send such additional gifts. As will be seen in Chapter 7, this particular practice of gift notification caused significant challenges for the CDFs at the community level. This contradiction existed when the policy on child sponsorship was created and was not dealt with because of differences of opinion between programme staff and marketers in funding offices. They had different objectives and metrics to track. Fieldworkers were the ones who experienced tension at a practical level due to this conflict. This type of tension that arises from different expectations of stakeholders is not very uncommon in street-level bureaucracies (Lipsky 2010:40).

The child sponsorship policy had specific requirements of monitoring every specific sponsored child once every three to six months to make sure that the child had not left the community, the child remained healthy and continued to go to school and to follow up if there were any gaps. Every CDF had to personally monitor somewhere between 400 to 650 children in communities they were responsible for, which meant they would need to monitor a certain number of children every day, in addition to their work of planning and implementation of programme activities. World Vision India required CDFs to personally monitor each and every child, in addition to any community volunteers who might be involved, as part of their commitment to sponsored children and the sponsors. This often meant that CDFs needed to work during weekends when children were at home. It was during such times of monitoring that the CDFs had to face parents who were unhappy that their children did not benefit as much as they thought they should.

> We have multiple sponsorship priorities at the same time – monitoring of sponsored children, gift notification, introductory letters, etc. This affects my ability to be involved in my local church or attend to personal activities. Too much sponsorship work –it can take more than 50% of my time. Annual Progress Reports alone can take up to three months. Our vision is for every child, but our focus is on the sponsored children. I find this contradictory. I developed a system of peer to peer monitoring of children focusing on all children to help ease the sponsorship monitoring work, but World Vision India does not accept it as a valid approach (CDF # F3, August 2016)

> World Vision's standard is that I monitor each and every child within 180 days, but that may not be sufficient. For example, a sponsor might suddenly visit and the child and the

> family could have moved away and not available to meet with the visiting sponsor. The question I'll get from the senior leaders will be when did you last see the child and if I tell them I saw the child five months ago, it wouldn't be acceptable. So I make it a point to monitor every child once every three months, more than what the standard requires (CDF # B3, July 2015).

Senior leader responsible for child sponsorship at the global headquarters of World Vision International concurred that monitoring of individual sponsored children takes significant amount of time, but it was an important part of World Vision's commitment to sponsored children and sponsors. Regular monitoring of sponsored children allowed World Vision staff to interact with the children, develop relationships, monitor their wellbeing and do follow-up case management as required. Field staff were encouraged to integrate monitoring processes of programme activities and sponsored children so that they are not parallel to each other. A senior leader of World Vision International commented that a sponsorship mobile application was developed to make the process more efficient and reduce the time that field staff spend on monitoring of specific sponsored children. Completing data digitally is typically faster than writing on hard-copy forms, it replaces use of hard copy forms wherever feasible and also, it eliminates filing of hard copy Child Monitoring Forms (February 2018)

The use of smart phone for monitoring made this task more efficient and less time-consuming. However, some parents were concerned that the digital images of their children could be altered and potentially abused. Some of the older CDFs felt that the smart phone was stopping them building good relationships with the sponsored children – instead of looking children in their eyes while talking to them, they were keying in the data. Many CDFs felt that the smart phone was both a blessing and a challenge. While it helped them to be more efficient with the use of their time, it made them less effective until they mastered the technology. Tools to enhance efficiency and productivity did not necessarily promote relationships and effectiveness.

> Use of mobile platform for sponsorship monitoring is good – but we look at the mobile instead of looking at and talking to community people. We are not able to spend time with people to build relationships. We are focusing our time on World Vision's systems (CDF # F1, August 2016).

> WV systems are both a help and a hindrance. I am very happy with the mobile application – I don't have to write. I can touch. I don't have to take reams of paper with me, transfer data and deal with missing data. Sponsorship monitoring is made easy with this technology. However taking photos and videos of registered children is very difficult from community perspective. They are worried whether we will Photoshop the pictures of girl children. I understand that it is natural for parents to have such a fear (CDF # G2, October 2016).

From the organisational perspective, child sponsorship provided a number of advantages. First and foremost, child sponsorship provided durable, long-term funding for programmes and organisational support costs, unlike public institutional donors who provided funding for a maximum of three to five years for a specific programme. Even if a few sponsors cancelled their sponsorship, funding could still continue to flow as money from many sponsors was pooled into a child sponsorship programme. It was precisely because of this that World Vision could operate ADPs for fifteen years without being too concerned about securing new sources of funding every few years. Also, child sponsorship provided flexibility in terms of how the funds were used, as long as sponsored children and the communities in which they lived were included in programme activities and regular communications with sponsors were ensured (Eekelen, 2013:471). World Vision India tried to balance these strengths with potential challenges, such as perceptions of discrimination of non-sponsored children, the extent to which the sponsored children were benefiting and the administrative challenge of managing child sponsorship in the implementation of its strategic priorities. Some of the conflicts described here were consequences of such a balancing effort.

5. CONCLUSION

This particular chapter responded to one of the research questions, "*What NGO organisational policy-related conflicts do fieldworkers experience as they work at the grassroots*?" It traced the conflicts experienced by the fieldworkers due to the contradictory or ambiguous nature of policies, strategy and programme design documents developed by those who were not fieldworkers for application and use by those who were doing fieldwork on a daily basis. Lipsky suggested that goal expectations for the agencies in which the street-level bureaucrats work often tend to be ambiguous or conflicting and client-centred goals conflict with organisation-centred goals (2010:27, 41). This particular field research found this assertion by Lipsky to be true in the organisational policy environment of World Vision India fieldworkers. Firstly, the conflicts between client-centred goal and the organisational vision for societal change: as the analysis has shown, there were conflicts arising from policy intentions of transformational development and child sponsorship for facilitating changes at macro community-level, while at the same time expecting to ensure that somehow individual sponsored children would participate and benefit from such

programmes targeting groups of people or the population. The fact that specific issues and needs facing the individual sponsored children might not necessarily be the same as the general category of children living in the same geographic community was simply overlooked or it was assumed that fieldworkers would be able to work through such individual issues in discussion with family members or community level partners. Practical difficulties of fieldworkers arising from this policy conflict were not understood or appreciated by the organisation. Similarly general policy objectives of transformational development such as empowered and interdependent communities, transformed systems and structures and transformed relationships conflicted with very practical, specific and clearly defined project models that sought to improve mother and child health, reduce malnutrition and improve parenting skills.

Secondly, Lipsky mentions that client-centred goals conflict with organisation-centred goals. This was also proved to be true in programmes where the research was undertaken. WV India's organisational need for strategic directives and evidence-based project models to assure pre-determined results conflicted with how communities understood their own issues, challenges and priorities. Organisational safety concerns and risks from getting involved in high profile advocacy issues prevented fieldworkers from getting involved in tricky issues of local power and politics to meet community needs.

Thirdly, Lipsky mentions that goal conflicts might be due to conflicting expectations arising from different stakeholder groups. From the study it appears that policies, especially at the higher level, served a different purpose than providing guidance or parameters for action at the grassroots level. The proposition that "policy primarily serves to mobilise and maintain political support than to orientate practice" certainly rings true (Mosse, 2005:14). Higher-level policies and guidelines such as TD policy and Child Sponsorship Policy were created largely to satisfy the motivational needs of senior leaders, development professionals and others in the organisation for idealised concepts of programming, whereas country strategy and programme design documents emphasised and expanded on selective aspects of the higher-level policies and provided parameters for action at the grassroots to satisfy the organisational need for evidence of results. TD policy understood transformational development both as a process and actions, but strategy and programme designs were all about actions based on a blueprint approach to planning. TD and Child Sponsorship Policies and DPA

predominantly used a participatory lens to understand development, whereas country strategy and programme design documents viewed development as a managerial exercise of planning and execution. It is not that the senior leadership had no notion of ideal scenarios of Transformational Development since such notions were there in the TD policy documents. The failure of such notions to be embodied in actual practice may be due to the kind of core values that the senior leadership truly embraced, that is, the espoused values in the written official policy documents could be secondary in comparison to other more primary values such as the need for managerial control and accountability for results. It may also be indicative of the broader environment within which aid organisations such as World Vision functions and the pressures they face. Organisational processes that enable fieldworker participation in the formulation of policies, strategies and design documents could have been helpful to reconcile some of the conflicts.

Chapter 6: Effects of Performance Management and Related Organisational Practices on the Fieldworkers

1. INTRODUCTION

Performance management is a relatively recent phenomenon in development NGOs in comparison to public sector and private sector agencies (Lewis, 2007:9). Embedding performance reviews of individual employees as part of wider human resources management became widely adopted in public sector and private sector agencies in the late 1980s and the early 1990s (Fetcher and Williams, 2016:388). International NGOs adopted similar such practices in the ensuing years. Performance management provides a system for integrating the management of individual employee performance as part of organisational performance. The essential theme in performance management is congruence of individual employee performance objectives and contributions with that of the organisation as a whole. The performance management cycle includes activities such as directing, managing, supporting, appraising, developing and rewarding an employee for performance (ibid, 2016:401).

As NGO funding has become highly competitive and pressures for NGO accountability to donors for results and cost efficiency has grown over the years, so have efforts to improve internal management processes, systems and accountability for performance of its individual employees. Organisational and programme objectives as per policies, strategies, standards, plans and donor expectations get translated into performance objectives for departments and individual employees. Fieldworkers at the end of this NGO organisational chain of command are included in the scope of performance management processes. NGOs like World Vision tend to emphasise the primacy of certain core values in their organisational setup. However, it is a difficult balancing act to undertake performance management functions such as planning, controlling, directing and monitoring of individual employee performance, which tend to be hierarchical and instrumentalist, and carry them out in ways that reflect organisational core values so that they could be enabling, consultative and participatory at the same time (Lewis, 2007:19).

Lipsky speaks to the issue of ambiguity and challenges involved in setting and measuring performance goals in street-level bureaucracies. Long-term performance goals could be idealistic and ambiguous, but they are mostly measured through the

accomplishment of short-terms objectives at the ground level on an on-going basis by the street-level bureaucrats. Additionally, it is often difficult to measure standards of quality associated with such outputs (Lipsky, 2010: 48). This chapter explains the effects of short-term results focus on results by World Vision India on the fieldworkers and its relationship to the higher-level policy changes the organisation was seeking. It explores questions such as how the performance objectives connected to the organisational core values get measured, if at all, and what tensions performance measures and targets for programme implementation produce for the fieldworkers. This chapter also captures other organisational practices and cultural elements that either supported or caused tensions for fieldworkers' performance. Data sources for findings in this chapter include various policies, strategy and programme design documents, performance reviews of fieldworkers by their managers and interviews with 27 fieldworkers from seven programmes and seven programme managers. Response from senior leaders of World Vision India and International is also included as part of the discussions.

2. Performance Management in World Vision India

World Vision India had a performance management system in place for its Community Development Facilitators (CDFs), which included setting performance objectives for the fiscal year on the basis of its strategic priorities, programme objectives, plans and organisational standards for financial and sponsorship management. ADP managers conducted a mid-year review and a year-end review of performance of CDFs against the performance objectives. World Vision India headquarters and Programme Managers organised training activities to help CDFs in their learning needs. Around the month of October each year, staff members self-reviewed their performance for the previous fiscal year against each objective, provided verification for actual achievement and self-rated their performance. Then the manager met with the staff member, provided his or her feedback and a performance rating on each objective. The performance review system required each objective to be rated along a five-point scale (World Vision India, 2016). CDFs would get an annual merit increase to their salary ranging between 1% and 5%, depending on the overall rating they received in performance reviews and what their current salary was within the salary scale for CDF's grade level.

3. SETTING PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

3.1 Programme Targets and Performance Measures for Fieldworkers

Each of the seven ADPs studied focused around one 'main problem' that children were experiencing at the local level. Sometimes this was referred to as the 'focal' problem. This was determined on the basis of analysis of secondary data in relation to each of the strategic priorities of World Vision India. In the case of seven ADPs that were studied the main problem happened to be either the need to improve protection of children from violence or improve children's health and nutrition and the problem was turned into an overall goal in the logframe. Detailed plans were developed for implementation of activities and achievement of output targets, leading to outcomes and the project goal as mentioned in the logframe. Budgets were developed for the detailed implementation plans. CDFs were tasked with implementing activities and reporting on outputs achieved on a monthly basis. Most of the outcomes and goals were beyond the immediate remit of the CDF's actions, not possible to measure and report on a short-term, but required special evaluations.

To give an example, one of the outcomes of ADPs that focused on child protection was, "families become a safe and enabling environment for children". This outcome had the following outputs: number of families trained in parenting skills; number of men sensitised in gender and domestic violence-related issues; number of children addicted to substance, tobacco and alcohol use rehabilitated and number of parents addicted to substance, tobacco and alcohol use rehabilitated. Each output had a number of activities (World Vision India 2015). Similarly, ADPs that focused on improving children's health and nutrition had several outcomes, one of which stated, "Improved ante-natal care and post-natal care services" which had the following outputs: number of mothers of children 0–23 months who received a post-natal visit from a trained health care worker within two days after birth of their youngest child; number of pregnant women registered in prenatal classes; Number of maternal deaths (post-partum) and percentage of mothers of children aged 0–23 months who reported that they attended four or more antenatal visits before the birth of their youngest child (ibid, 2015). Several activities were planned under each of the outputs. Data sources for the output indicators on mother and child health were the health records of local partners such as PHC (Primary Health Care) units or ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme). Data sources for output indicators related to protection of

children from violence were programme reports submitted by the CDFs. CDFs were responsible for achieving outputs, which by nature required data collection on an on-going basis. All the indicators reviewed in logframes of programmes were quantitative measures stated as numbers or percentages of target population that participated in a specific activity. The only exceptions to quantitative indicators were goal and outcome level indicators (i.e., evaluation indicators) for child protection, which were quasi-quantitative in nature. In other words, these indicators sought to measure changes in certain qualitative aspects of life through survey methods by asking survey participants to assign ranks or scores on specific pre-developed statements.

Baselines values for all indicators in the design document were established within the first year of implementation. Baselines served as a starting point for measuring or demonstrating change in the situation related to project implementation. Quarterly targets for achievement were set against the baseline value of each indicator. Targets were set for the entire ADP area based on demographic data and then divided up for each CDF based on the demographic data of specific communities that each CDF was responsible for. CDFs then split the annual targets for each month of the fiscal year. CDFs gathered data during the course of implementation and reported against the targets set for monitoring indicators, while evaluation indicators were measured through special evaluation exercises that were undertaken either annually or once every three to five years. Achieving targets for monitoring indicators in communities was one of the primary performance measures for the CDFs. According to ADP managers, targets were set high by the technical specialists from the World Vision India office:

> Every year we set targets at the beginning of the year based on the demographics. Technical departments give us targets based on objective data from WHO. For example, we expect 140 children to be chronically malnourished children…. We will do the screening. Then we will start programme implementation (ADP Manager # A, July 2015).

> Targets are set by the DME (Design, Monitoring and Evaluation) manager and the technical lead… They came and explained baselines and targets (ADP Manager # D, October 2016).

> We did baseline and based on which, we set targets. 5500 families are targeted for this programme over a period of five years, which we split up over five years and then we divide amongst the CDFs (ADP Manager # G, Nov 2016).

Even though World Vision International's LEAP standards stipulated project reports to be submitted only once every six months, World Vision India required the CDFs to submit monthly reports to ensure project management discipline:

> We review the achievement of targets on a monthly basis. For example, PD HEARTH programme, every malnourished child – thirty mothers and children – need to come for twelve sessions (ADP Manager # A, July 2015).

In summary, programme planning and implementation was carried out as an exercise of delivering technical solutions on the basis of evidence-based best practices (project models), following a rigorous management approach that valued timely implementation of plans and budgets and reporting on outputs accomplished.

4. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

Performance objectives and reviews of each CDF by their ADP managers were reviewed as part of the research. Performance review of CDFs did not include any feedback or input from community members and local partners that they worked with on a daily basis, but only from an organisational viewpoint. In reviewing them it was found that performance objectives were consistent across all the ADPs. Differently worded, all of them included performance objectives such as: build relationships with community members; implement planned objectives and achievement of programme targets on a timely basis; meet child sponsorship requirements; network with CBOs to plan and implement programmes; ensure collaboration and resource mobilisation with local partners. Timely implementation of programmes as per the plans and budget was the most often mentioned performance objective, over 40 times in the performance reviews of 27 CDFs. Performance objectives on working with CBOs, collaboration and resource mobilisation with local partners and meeting sponsorship requirements each had moderately high levels of mentions, between 25 and 30. Building relationships with local communities and working closely with people had the least number of mentions, only nine times. Perhaps it was assumed by the managers that forming relationships with community members was implicitly necessary for the entire work of the CDFs rather than being a performance objective on its own. However, in analysing the written feedback of ADP managers as recorded in the performance review forms, very rarely anything was mentioned about the CDF's relationships with community members or their role in promoting community participation. In instances when there were such comments, they were about the instrumental nature of such relationships or community participation in achieving the programme objectives rather than about communities' own initiatives with CDF's support. For example, in reviewing the performance of CDF # D1, the manager made comments such as, "good efforts taken to

accomplish the targets" and "timeliness is needed in meeting all deadlines, especially sponsorship requirements". During the course of the interview, it was observed that this particular CDF spent several hours a day with community members, getting to know them and building relationships with them. But there was no reference to any of that in the performance feedback from the manager. ADP Manager # A commented on the CDF # A1 that, "Communities participated well in programmes implemented" and nothing more to acknowledge and affirm any of the community engagement work. Manager # C remarked on the performance review of CDF # C2, "It is good to note that annual implementation plans were implemented on time…all the training programmes were implemented as per the plan and on schedule".

During interviews, ADP managers confirmed that achieving the programme targets on time and fully spending the allocated budget was the top most performance expectation for the CDFs. According to ADP Manager # C, primary criterion to assess the performance of the CDFs was their 'absorptive capacity', referring to whether a CDC could implement all the planned activities and spend their assigned budget on time (July 2015).

> Achievements of targets given in the Indicator Tracking Table and spending of the budgets on time are the important criteria to assess the performance of CDFs (ADP Manager # C, October 2016).

Performance objectives on achieving programme targets and spending budgets on time were seen as the most important by the ADP managers for a number of reasons: a) CDFs needed such targets to perform at an optimal level in their work; b) focussing on programme targets and spending money on time would help the ADP to achieve child wellbeing as planned; c) it helped the ADP to be seen as performing well and for the funds to keep flowing and d) the targets were realistic and not hard to achieve (even though they were set at a high level). To a large extent, the ADP managers were not sympathetic to the plight of CDFs in trying to achieve the targets.

> We give programming guidelines to CDFs. We expect them to deliver on the expectations. We need to push them from behind. For example, in ADP X, CDFs used to do speedy follow up (ADP Manager # D, October 2016).

> We would have a maximum of 30 activities and targets…. 20,000 people will be reached in the whole ADP within a given year. ADP manager is accountable for that number. In FY16, we reached 26,700 people (ADP Manager # A, July 2015).

> Targets are set at a high level as we want to reach saturation among the population and so the pressure will be there…. For example, this year we need to reach 2790 pregnant mothers. We need to form 240 children's club. We have formed only 60 so far and we

> need to form 190 more within this fiscal year. There are guidelines – children's clubs have to be age appropriate…(ADP Manager # D, October 2016).

> Achieving targets mean achieving results. For example, if the target says that 100 parents will be equipped with parenting skills, it is not only about having the knowledge, but the parents are able to put the knowledge into practice. I cross check the results by doing focus group discussions with community members and children to find out about changes in parenting approaches by parents (ADP Manager # F, July 2015).

> I believe the targets are realistic. There is not much pressure to achieve the targets. A CDF is responsible only for four to six programmes at community level… (ADP Manager # B, July 2015).

> They need to carry out the work of World Vision without saying "no"… If we get extra funding, there will be extra load on them – but it is not for our own benefit, but for community benefits (ADP Manager # E, October 2016).

Two out of seven managers (ADP Managers # A and G) displayed understanding of constraints that the CDFs were facing and mentioned that they provided their CDFs some degree of freedom within the parameters of programme plans and organisational expectations:

> We lay emphasis on systems, spending and policies rather than community participation. We know the problems that communities are facing. Our requirements are such that we need to complete the activities in a given period of time. Community participation is a time-taking process. We are in a hurry to accomplish the activities and report on the outputs…we have so many pressures, such as reports, sponsorship correspondence. I allow CDFs to make use of opportunities to change specific activities even though they may not be able to change the overall focus or objective. I give them freedom to some limited extent, within the framework of programming guidelines (ADP Manager # A, July 2015).

> Sometimes for genuine reasons, the CDFs may not be able to achieve the targets. We need to review and understand the reasons for not being able to meet the targets. Outcome level changes are more important than achieving changes…. All of my 3 CDFs are outstanding – CDF # 1 is an expert in documentation, plans well, fantastic in networking. CDF # 2 is strong in advocacy and child protection issues… and CDF # 3 is very strong in community engagement. They work with total commitment and dedication. They are very cooperative and easy to work with (ADP Manager # G, November, 2016).

Other managers took a stricter view that a CDF needed to adhere and not deviate from the designs and plans and anything less than achieving the targets and spending the budget on time was poor performance:

> If CDFs are not able to complete some activities on time, I can subcontract the work to another local NGO (ADP Manager # B, July 2015).

> Logframe and plans are developed by the national office and we need to fit into it. CDFs could provide input when they are in development but not go outside of it, once they are finalised (ADP Manager # C, October 2016).

> Those CDFs who are able to grasp the issues quickly they are also able to mobilise people quickly and achieve the targets easily (ADP Manager # D, October 2016).

It is reasonable to expect that when a manager is held accountable for the delivery of performance targets, then he or she would demand the same from fieldworkers. There is no other way for a manager to meet the targets without imposing them on those who implement programme activities. Orientation to targets and fear of failure were institutionalised in the organisation despite the highly personalised nature of relationships that existed. The performance management system of World Vision India valued, incentivised and rewarded the fieldworkers for timely implementation of pre-planned programmes and submitting reports on time and not as clearly when it came to engagement with communities and being responsive to the diverse needs of the people. Salary increases were linked to the performance measurement ratings. This affected the CDF's ability to provide feedback to their managers on challenges they were facing:

> The performance review is linked to merit increase in World Vision. Because of this, I am not able to raise critical issues with the senior leadership during performance appraisal process. I would suggest that performance appraisal be delinked from salary increase and change the focus on staff development. Currently the performance appraisal is treated as an event rather than helping the staff to grow and develop (CDC B3, August 2015).

> I have never failed to achieve planned activities or meet the given targets. I always exceed the targets given… I get discouraged when I don't get performance review and merit increase that matches the hard work or the quality of my work (CDF # C2, October 2016).

Though it was not acknowledged, performance targets had some positive aspects for the fieldworkers. It provided them a basis, numerical evidence, to be able to defend their performance with their managers. There were only rare instances of fieldworkers appearing to be unconcerned about not being able to meet their performance targets. If they were going to be judged on the basis of community engagement processes, indicators would have been hard to come by and left to the subjective interpretations of their managers.

It is important to note that CDFs did not necessarily display a clear understanding of the larger organisational context of World Vision India as to why their management expected them to complete certain performance targets on time or ensure under-spending. For example, donors may reduce funding provided to World Vision India if the under-spending exceeded a certain level; not achieving performance targets could be seen as poor performance of World Vision India by the funding office. One of the possible implications of the CDF's close proximity to communities was their limited understanding of the organisational pressures and that their world was different from that of the managers.

It is also important to point out certain omissions in the performance reviews of CDFs. For example, performance reviews did not explore questions such as how the CDFs demonstrated commitment to organisational core values or the Mission Statement; how they related to other members of their team; if they took any risks or innovations in their work with community members and local partners or if they learnt and grew over the past year. By overlooking these values, appreciation of committed work or relational aspects, a hierarchical and instrumentalist view of CDFs was reinforced through performance review process.

5. Conflicts Experienced by Fieldworkers

5.1 Nature and Numbers of Targets to be Achieved

Typically a CDF had responsibility for implementation of between 15 to 30 different activities in about 10 to 25 villages, covering a population of 8,000 to 20,000. They worked with a range of local partners such as Village Development Committees, children's clubs, various government agencies and other NGOs in implementation and monitoring. Planning, preparation and implementation of planned activities in coordination with local partners took several hours a day. A CDF might visit two to three communities in any given day and quite a bit of their time was spent in identifying and organising the right number of people required for various activities. As seen from the earlier examples, output indicators were almost always defined in terms of the number of people who participated and benefitted from specific activities run by World Vision or a local partner such as Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), a Primary Health Care (PHC) facility or who attended training programmes or awareness sessions, etc. Village Development Committees often played a supportive role in selecting and organising people to participate in the right type of programme activities. Depending on the nature of activities, some were held at the individual community level or at the local partner institutions (e.g. local school or ICDS, etc.) or in the ADP office. As mentioned in Chapter 4, CDFs developed daily schedules for their work on a monthly basis, received their manager's approval, maintained logs of where and how they spent their time, noting any observations, monitoring information, etc., which the Management Information Systems Coordinator of the ADP reviewed on a monthly basis.

One aspect of fieldworker tension was the criteria associated with programme targets. Some of the targeting criteria were plain and simple, such as pregnant women who should participate in antenatal programmes; girls in the age group of 10 to 18 years who needed to participate in programmes focusing on adolescent girls; parents of young children who were expected to participate in parenting seminars, so on and so forth. But there were other programming criteria such as selection of children from families that meet certain vulnerability criteria, which made the selection of participants more complicated from the perspectives of the CDFs. However, from an organisational strategy perspective, it made good sense to include such targeting criteria so as to reach children from needy families with finite amount of resources available.

> Lot of new policies from WV India could be obstructive – examples: being poor is not enough, but WV India has very specific child vulnerability criteria for selection of beneficiaries (e.g. disability, orphans or semi-orphans due to HIV/AIDS). They want us to ensure selection of sponsored children also. There are very poor families that may not fit these criteria and we are not able to help (CDF # C3, October 2016).

> To provide assistance only to families of malnourished children makes it difficult for me to provide assistance to some of the very needy families. I have a child-headed household in the village – I can't help them in any way due to the criteria given to select families for providing assistance (CDF # B2, July 2015).

> They set very high targets – twenty types of targets, from exclusive breast feeding, therapeutic feeding of severely malnourished children, economic development assistance. Target criteria are sometime difficult. We are asked to focus on the poorest of the poor with children under the age of five…. But there might be poorer families without under-five children. No matter how much we explain, people don't accept our explanation (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> We need to follow the guidelines and can't change the programming… for example, there was a fire accident that affected four families, one of them happen to be the family of a sponsored child … WV programmes may help only those families that are 'on the list' (CDF # A3, October 2016).

Identifying people who fit the criteria and reaching the target number was a major source of tension for most CDFs. CDFs worked hard to meet the targets, as the alternative meant that they would be seen as poor performers and they could become the reason for their programme being seen in a poor light by the senior staff of World Vision India. Not meeting the programme targets could also likely result in under-spending of the budget, which in turn could result in the ADP losing some of the money that was committed by the funding offices. Accomplishing the activities, achieving the outputs and spending the budget were part of the fiduciary requirement

for donor funding (World Vision Support Offices, March 2014). However, very few of the seven ADP managers were supportive of the CDFs when targets were occasionally under-achieved:

> We can't revise the targets – they are set in stone. If I don't accomplish what I am expected to do, then the whole team gets affected. I will do my best to achieve the targets. It is rare case only that we don't achieve targets… there will be reasons if the targets are not achieved. We try to carry forward the targets to next year (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> I came here in June – but I had to achieve a lot of targets in four months as there was a gap of four months – I had to achieve eight months targets in four months period. It would always be a stress to go on holidays…. My targets will start getting accumulated. If the targets are not achieved, my performance reviews get affected. Managers may speak to me and reprimand me. I might have achieved 90% but it wouldn't be sufficient for the manager (CDF # A3, October 2016).

> If the programme activities get delayed, the project might get a poor audit or the visitors may get disappointed. Any delayed activities may also affect my performance assessment (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> I try to achieve the targets to the extent possible. If I am not able to achieve some targets, I explain the reasons. That affects my performance review. I don't worry about what performance ratings I receive. I don't care whether I receive 3.0 or 3.5…(CDF # B1, November 2016).

> There were a very few times when I hadn't achieved the target – organise children's clubs or children's parliaments with certain number of children. I did my work, but community didn't take ownership. My manager was supportive (CDF # D3, October 2016).

CDFs obtained the signatures of everyone who attended meetings or participated in programmes as monitoring records to back up their reporting. This also served as backup documentation for expenses involved in purchasing food provided during meetings. Since participation was purely voluntary and there were no tangible material benefits associated with participation in most programmes, there were no assurances that the right number of people would turn up for any event. Food or snacks served during meetings was not always a strong enough motivating factor for most people to participate in meetings during busy seasons. Participating in World Vision's programmes meant that sometimes poor people had to leave their farm work or household work unattended or, if they were daily wage earners, they had to forego a half or full day of wages they would have otherwise earned. If events were held in any central location, people had to spend their own money in public transport or use their own mode of transport in attending such meetings. ADP managers saw this as a contribution of people to programme activities.

> Targets are necessary for WV. But you need to take a realistic approach. You can't achieve all the targets – there are reasons. We forget that WV only set targets, but people are the

> targets. Changing people's attitude is not within our control. We can bring people for meetings and they do come, sacrificing their daily wage of 150 rupees. On top of that, they spend their money in coming to the meetings. Every month we do seven or eight meetings and we would have 100 to 120 people… we have ten meetings in November. ADP manager told me that it is people's contribution for their own development. I don't accept his proposition that it is people's contribution. Many of them come to the meeting out of a sense of obligation to us (CDF # B1, November 2016).

> When we invite people for training sessions and awareness-raising, they come to meeting with expectations that World Vision would provide them help. We spent quite a lot of money on training community people on important health issues. Community people expect us to pay for travel. Sometime, we spend our personal money to pay for their travel. We would have invited 100 people to come to meetings, but only 30 would show up and we would have ordered food for 100 people. If we don't show the participants list with the signatures of all 100 participants, World Vision wouldn't pay for food expenses (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> ADP office would ask us from time to time to bring certain number of people to meetings. I would have worked hard, prepared ahead of time to mobilise people to attend meetings and called them over the phone the previous evening. I would not be able to sleep the night before the meeting and feel anxious until everyone that I invited showed-up for the meeting (CDF # C1, October 2016).

Reaching the target numbers put enormous pressure on the CDFs, but the managers were under pressure themselves to reach the overall targets. A few managers were aware of the tension that the CDFs were facing due to the excessive focus on achieving targets, but others were not sympathetic:

> Sometimes for genuine reasons, the CDFs may not be able to achieve the targets. We need to review and understand the reasons for not being able to meet the targets. Don't bring participants list just for the sake of numbers – right targeting is essential (ADP Manager # G, November 2016).

> If CDFs are not able to complete some activities on time, I can sub-contract specific activities to another local NGO (ADP Manager # B, July 2015).

Whether the managers were sympathetic to the plight of the CDFs did not make much difference in terms of their expectations to achieve the targets. CDFs passed on some of the pressure to community members and local partners. Communities and local partners perceived ADPs as resource-rich and the CDFs appeared to have the goodwill of community members, as people participated in programmes and attended meetings so as not to miss out on any future benefits or in order not to upset their relationships with CDFs. Additionally, it is important to note that specific targets were assigned to individual CDFs and so the system did not intrinsically promote team work among the ADP staff, but, to the contrary, in some ADPs it promoted subtle forms of healthy competition among them (ADP Manager # A, July 2015 and CDF # G2, October 2017).

5.2 Effects of Short Term Results Focus

Several CDFs felt that being so excessively focused on targets did not give them much time to nurture relationships with community members. Planning and implementation of a number of activities, coordination with local partners, monitoring sponsored children spread out in several communities and other administrative responsibilities kept the CDFs busy. All but one CDF had a motorbike to travel around, which meant that they were task-oriented in visiting communities and had to be deliberate about creating space for casual conversations 'over a cup of tea' with community members. There was not much space to pursue new opportunities during the course of programme implementation if they were not part of the original plans. Some CDFs were afraid that the development work in communities driven by the targets was becoming more transactional than transformational.

> There are eleven targets – for each target I need to state how many, when would I complete, what is the budget and expenses? I have responsibility for 29 villages. It is a large area. I am losing my peace and I am not able to cope. I am not able to give attention to all the villages. I can go to one village once per month, but the targets need to be achieved in all the villages. How is this possible? I am afraid that I am losing close contact with communities… I want to be able to remember the names of people. Time is a major constraint. WV expects me to spend money on time. But I would need to spend time with community before I can plan and implement a programme properly (CDF # B1, November 2016).

> Can World Vision reduce the system requirements for the CDF? Can we relax a little bit on the targets and the timing? World Vision has highly standardised requirements. Maybe WV India is getting pressure from WV International. I am afraid whether WV would become more like corporates in the future. Expectations can become contractual – do these things, get results and get the budget (CDF # D2, October 2016).

Some CDFs questioned whether achieving the outputs necessarily led to the achievement of real changes in the lives of the people. Annual targets developed on the basis of demographic data or baseline surveys were, at best, estimates and not precise numbers. For example, formulaic predictions on how many women within a population would likely get pregnant in a given year would have some built-in margin for error, or some children might not want to join a children's club being organised in their communities. Also, estimations based on demographic data and baseline surveys replaced consultations with community members on who and how many could really benefit from planned programme activities:

> There are times that I feel that we are working for the targets. Some CDFs may feel satisfied when they reach the targets and stop with that. For example, before the end of the year, I need to split children's clubs into age appropriate manner – divide children in the age groups of 6 to 11 and 12 – 18 years into separate groups, reach 150 pregnant mothers for ANC and PNC related issues. I work through primary health care nurses to reach the

> targets. We estimate targets based on our knowledge, but you could never be sure whether you can achieve the targets. Annual targets are problematic… Quarterly targets can be more reasonable as we can do it based on current information. Sometimes we are able to 'carry forward' the under achieved targets to the next year. But we may not be able to do it for targets that have budget associated with them as budgets can't be carried forward into the next fiscal year (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> We need to have some basis for setting targets. For example, do a PRA type activity in communities to assess the scope of the problem. Sometimes it is difficult to achieve the targets, as people may not be ready or willing to participate. We chase after targets and forget transformation. Funding and budget are available only around planned programmes with targets (CDF # A4, October 2016).

Setting absolute targets and expecting the CDFs to achieve them communicated the notion that it was entirely dependent upon the programme to achieve the targets and diminished the role of the local partners and their contributions:

> For example, we might have budgeted only 30% for a programme with the expectation that the other % would come from the government partners, who might later tell us that they don't have the expected funds. What can we do? We are stuck and are not able to achieve the target in a given time. We need to explain hoping the office to accept (CDF A5, October 2016).

While some reported positive changes in the lives of people, other CDFs questioned whether such changes were due to the activities and output targets achieved. For example:

> We have targets to measure number of toilets constructed, toilet usage, but no targets for reduction in diseases… we may use some selected stories to describe the higher level change. Another example, we might give a tailoring machine to a widow…. She might say that she earned Rupees 150 one day. Then we try to say that she earns Rupees 4500 per month by multiplying it by 30, but that would not be true (CDF # B1, November 2016).

> Targets can come in the way of our mission. For example, I have target to raise the awareness on child rights for 4000 families. But it is not that simple. I need to coordinate with so many government departments if I need to do it well (CDF # G2, October 2016).

> My targets are at the output level. However, I do see some behaviour changes – it may not be 100%, but I see positive changes. For example, we don't have any more childbirth at home; all deliveries happen in clinics. Hand washing has improved significantly and no more diarrhoeal deaths in communities (CDF # D2, October 2016).

> We have been able to address the problem of underweight among children under five years of age due to the awareness that we have created rather than through outputs and activities that we have carried out. We have engaged at multiple levels – mothers, pre-schools, community leaders (CDF # A2, July 2015).

By measuring and reporting what was more easily measurable and within the management control of the programme (i.e., outputs and budget), what really mattered in terms of positive changes in the life of people (i.e., outcomes and goals) did not get much intentionality in day-to-day operations of the CDFs. Organisational rationale for

prescribing certain activities and outputs was that they were 'evidence-based' in contributing to the outcomes and goals. However, transformational changes in values, self-identity, relationships with others, behaviours, attitudes towards future, etc. are far more intangible, context-specific and difficult to measure. While much attention was given to the *hardware* of evidence-based technical activities, there was not much space within the tightly controlled planning and management system of the ADPs for the *software* of facilitating transformational changes that would have required a more open approach that was sensitive to the local context, flexible in its plans and responsive to iterative learning. There was the risk of organisational mission getting lost in the strategy and programme plans. Exceptions to this norm are discussed in Chapter 8. This would have required a greater degree of organisational confidence in CDFs than in designs, project models and other tools. This misplaced confidence rendered CDFs feeling powerless to some extent.

> A CDF is seen to be an instrument to implement activities according to plans and not seen as a person who can contribute based on his thinking and initiative. Only expectation is that I achieve the targets that are given to me (CDF B2, October 2016).

> I feel that I am in a cage – focused always on implementing activities as per the plan. My ability to think freely is constrained (CDF # D3, October 2016).

The performance management system of planning and reporting exercised control over the day-to-day practices of the CDFs and performance measures through its incentives and sanctions kept them focused on achieving the targets. As discussed in Chapter 2, 'the artefacts of evidence for results' such as logframes, indicators, targets, baselines, reports, performance reviews, and evaluations had perverse consequences within the organisational context of World Vision India, where hierarchical ways of working and lack of organisational space prevented open dialogue, adaptation and change. Logframes, indicators, targets, and reports were embedded in the organisational practice through performance management of fieldworkers and the imperative for results became so pervasive that fieldworkers internalised the need for evidence for results (Eyben, 2013: 6-8; Ramalingam, 2013:79). It did not appear to encourage continuous learning, open dialogue, risk taking and innovation or downward accountability. These artefacts dictated the day-to-day life of the fieldworkers and had a totalising effect on them. Managers and those with authority required the fieldworkers to strictly follow the rules and regulations as they understood and interpreted them. This upward accountability to senior leadership relied entirely on quantitative targets

and results and it confirmed Chamber's viewpoint that quantification favours knowledge and skills of technical specialists over and above traditional knowledge of local communities or fieldworkers (1997:38). Quantitative measures gave a false sense of control to the managers and simplified what was by nature a complex undertaking and highly contextual (Eyben, 2013: 8,9). As per Ramalingam, it reinforced established narratives around simple and clear causal chain on how to solve development problems and tell uncomplicated story lines to senior leaders and donors (2013:34).

Downward accountability to community members would have been difficult to promote when a) there was no downward accountability within the NGO management and accountability was one-way only from fieldworkers to their managers, and b) downward accountability would have required transfer of authority to make decisions on programme designs, budgets and indicators of success to local community groups. It would have been difficult to accommodate downward accountability as the basic orientation for programme planning, results focus and reporting was towards the senior leadership and donors.

In discussing this with a senior leader in World Vision International, the prevailing organisational culture in World Vision India was mentioned as the primary reason for the controlling way in which project models, logframe, indicators and quantitative indicators were used and these tools and resources could have been used with greater degree of flexibility to encourage dialogue, discussions and make midcourse corrections in projects (February 2018). Another World Vision office in a different country with the same donor requirements and financial needs but with a more open institutional culture might have fostered a different relationship between these 'artefacts of evidence for results' and the fieldworkers. However exploring this topic was beyond the scope of this particular thesis. In order to test this assertion a comparative study between programmes managed by World Vision India with programmes in another country would have been required. Also, we need to bear in mind that it is possible that the organisational culture of World Vision India and the 'artefacts of results and evidence' could mutually reinforce each other. At the minimum, it is reasonable to assume that World Vision India's culture might have been helpful to bring out the issues associated with the 'artefacts of results and evidence' very clearly.

6. FORMAL AND INFORMAL ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

Topics that have recurring mentions by the CDFs during interviews and discussions as either being supportive or disruptive to their work outside of programming and performance management are discussed in this section. Most of the issues discussed may be a reflection of the prevalent organisational culture within World Vision India and cannot be generalised for the whole of World Vision International or to the broader NGO fieldworkers.

6.1 Training, Development and Career Advancement Opportunities

Newly-joined CDFs participated in World Vision India orientation programmes. Additionally, CDFs participated in annual training events focusing on a new project model or technical aspects of programme implementation. Examples of training that were given in the past three years include: Citizen Voice in Action (promoting social accountability), child protection system strengthening, child rights, Channels of Hope (engaging faith communities to address stigma-related HIV/AIDS or child protection issues) and nutrition programming. Several CDFs reported that they found the World Vision offered training as being useful to them in their work. Some of the ADP managers mentioned that they organised quarterly visits for the CDFs to other ADPs or programmes run by other NGOs for learning purposes. For example, ADP Manager # A reported that CDFs from his ADP visited another ADP during the past quarter to learn about peer child monitoring (August, 2016). Annual performance objectives or reviews did not have any mentions of personal or professional development goals for the CDFs or in what aspects of their work they had grown or developed new sets of competencies in comparison to the previous year. Much of the training and development opportunities had a bias towards technical aspects of development work and not so much on the softer aspects of community engagement, facilitation, brokering partnerships or collaboration with others and similar such topics. There was a bias towards action in training and development without much space for on-going reflection on what was working well, what was not, what were they learning and what needed to change. This lack of space for reflection is a common characteristic among action-oriented NGOs (Lewis 2007).

As discussed in Chapter 3, most of the CDFs had been in the job for over a ten-year period. CDFs were transferred from one ADP to another every four years, but

always as a CDF. With fewer number of ADP manager positions available than the CDF positions, there was not much opportunity for the CDFs to get a promotion. Interestingly, none of the ADP managers interviewed had been a CDF prior to their posting as ADP managers. Lack of career growth opportunity was a sore point for many CDFs. This is very similar to the findings from the research studies on fieldworkers in Bangladesh and Pakistan (Ahmad, 2001; Siddique, 2012).

> Not much opportunity for growth for the CDFs. I joined World Vision as a CDF and will retire as a CDF. Not much opportunity for my own growth and development. Personally I joined MBA program, but could not complete. I am not able to develop my technical knowledge or English language skills (CDF # F1, August 2016).

> CDF should have opportunity for promotion and growth. We may not be able to speak in good English, but we have good community knowledge. That should count for something. They should try us out when opportunities come up (CDF # G2, October 2016).

From World Vision India's perspective, CDF roles were not designed as an entry-level position to evolve into more senior roles over a period of time, but as a very important role in its own right. Organisational importance accorded to the role was reflected in the relatively high level of salary and benefits provided to the CDFs, so that they would want to remain as CDF for the long haul. World Vision India CDFs were paid relatively well and received generous benefits considering their field location, which is described in Chapter 4. This was acknowledged by the fieldworkers themselves and very different from the poor salary structure reported by research studies on fieldworkers in Bangladesh and Pakistan (Ahmad, 2001; Siddique, 2012). CDFs in World Vision India were being transferred from one ADP to another every four years so that they a) could experience a different set of challenges in their work and didn't grow complacent and b) didn't become so embedded in any one context with chances for developing conflicts of interest. However, lack of career progression opportunities could be a demotivating factor for the CDFs and the fact that none of the ADP managers had ever been in the shoes of a CDF showed that no one in the organisation could personally understand the potential and challenges of the CDF's role in their oversight capacity.

6.2 Office Based Staff and the CDFs

Every ADP studied had a certain number of staff who were office-based; an ADP manager, who was the team leader and supervised all the other staff including the CDFs, a Management Information Systems Coordinator who was responsible for all

monitoring and evaluation, a Finance Coordinator who was in charge of financial administration, a Logistics Coordinator responsible for purchases and logistics and a Sponsorship Coordinator with responsibility for all child sponsorship administration. Each office-based staff member had specific expectations for CDFs, timelines for reports and information. The MIS Coordinator reviewed the logbooks of CDFs, provided guidance on how to monitor activities and collected monitoring information from CDFs. The Sponsorship Coordinator expected CDFs to monitor individual sponsored children every three months, ensure that correspondence with sponsors took place on a timely basis and annual photos of children were taken as per the specifications. The Finance Coordinator monitored whether spending by CDFs was according to the budget and ensured that expense settlement by CDFs met the accounting standards. The Logistics Coordinator was responsible for all supplies that the CDFs needed for their programme implementation. About half of the CDFs felt that they had too many supervisors over them with uncoordinated priorities and tight timelines.

> We have too many supervisors. For example, Logistics Coordinator, M&E person, finance coordinators, sponsorship coordinators, ADP managers – all of them have specific expectations for the CDFs. We have few CDFs, but a lot more people to instruct them on how to do this work. Sometimes I get pulled in different directions. There will always be time pressure on us (CDF # A3, October 2016).

> You say that CDFs work where 'rubber meets the road'. But it seems like that the CDFs are the roads and everyone goes over it. Sponsorship Coordinator, Logistics Coordinator, MIS, ADP manager and community people all have expectations. It is 'V' shaped management structure with CDFs at the bottom. Personal relationships are good. But office-based staff need to visit at least one community and try to do our work so that they can understand the issues. They ask us questions expecting us to find the answers. For example, finance person may ask for a bill, M&E person may ask for success stories (CDF # B1, November 2016).

> I don't enjoy the constant interruptions. I will be doing something and they will give me urgent deadline for something else (CDF # E1, October 2016).

> We have multiple priorities. We get constant interruptions. I lost my cool with people on occasions. Organisation has very high expectations for the CDFs (CDF # D2, October 2016).

From the organisational perspective, CDF was the intermediary between the ADP, community members and local partners. Having too many ADP staff directly interact with community members and local partners could cause confusion. When CDFs visited the ADP office every second Wednesday, they had half a day allocated to follow up with the office-based staff on any pending requirements. If there were any

urgent issues, office-based staff visited the CDFs in the field rather than requiring the CDFs to make frequent visits to the office. Most of the organisational business processes for finance, child sponsorship and purchases were organised in a way so as not to distract the CDFs from their work in communities. A few cases of tension that existed between the CDFs and office-based staff might have been due to working style and lack of coordination in setting priorities rather than any substance based on organisational design.

6.3 Centralised Payment System

World Vision India had instituted a centralised payment system for all vendors and payees across the entire country operation. The purpose of the system was to prevent possible corruption and make the operation more cost efficient. It was expected that whenever CDFs needed to pay money for a programme expense they would collect the tax identification number [PAN card] and bank account information from the payee or vendor and pass on such details to their office, which would be scanned and sent to the World Vision India headquarters. After necessary reviews and approvals, World Vision would make direct payment into the bank account of the vendor or payee. This system had been in place for about six months when this research was conducted. While this centralised payment system had a number of benefits for World Vision, it caused tensions for almost all the CDFs in the following ways: a) CDFs were no longer making direct payments to the vendors and payees, which meant they were not necessarily seen as being the ones with the organisational authority to dispense money and b) There was a time lag of one to two weeks between when goods and services were provided by the vendors and when the vendors or payees received the money. CDFs faced pressure from the vendors and payees during this period.

> Centralised payment system takes time. Often I need to pay money out of my pocket as payment takes time (CDF # C1, October 2016).

> WV India has instituted a centralised payment system – so we are not involved in local payment. So this has created gaps between us and others that we work with (CDF C3, October 2016).

> I have vendors come to my home and trouble me for delayed payments. Sometimes it takes 20 days to get payment. I can’t do anything else (CDF # D3, October 2016).

> All the checks to the vendors and community based programmes are issued directly by the national office and so our ability to monitor is limited (CDF # F3, August 2016).

Centralised payment did reduce the stature of CDFs in the eyes of vendors and payees from being decision makers and representatives of World Vision to that of administrative intermediaries with all power and decision-making centralised at the World Vision India headquarters. There was also the added inconvenience of having to respond to frequent inquiries and distress calls from vendors whenever the system got clogged up resulting in delayed payments. Organisational efficiency through centralised payment, as important as it was from the donor perspective of 'value for money', created tensions for CDFs on the ground.

6.4 Space for CDFs' Voice within Organisational Processes

Most CDFs felt that there was no organisational space for them to voice their grievances or provide feedback and suggestions to the senior leaders of World Vision India beyond their own immediate manager. Similarly, many mentioned that if they had an opportunity to know why certain organisational decisions were made, they would have been able to better understand and appreciate the pressures and the challenges the senior leadership was facing. Even within the ADP team, there was not much space for reflection or perhaps it might have been a case of ADP managers not knowing how to facilitate open team interactions and reflections. Some of the CDFs felt that there could be negative repercussions if they spoke up during team meetings. Many commented during the course of interviews that the researcher was the first one among the senior leaders of World Vision to spend such quality time in listening to them.

> When I share these issues and challenges at the ADP team meeting, I don't hear other ADP manager and the CDFs reflecting on the problem together with me… they make me feel as though I am a poor performer (CDF # A4, 2016).

> We don't have many opportunities for team reflection and learning from one another (CDF # B2, July 2015).

> We have no forum for the voice of CDFs to go up. People are afraid when they speak up, there would be a mark against them. They don't allow us to freely share our problems and express our opinion. You sit down and talk freely with us. I don't know what problems WV India senior leadership faces…. It will be good for us to know so that we can modify our expectations (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> We don't have a forum for CDFs to express our views or voices. Our voices are often not heard (CDF # F2, August 2016).

Without such space for dialogues and discussions with CDFs as a collective group, World Vision India missed out on organisational learning opportunities. While CDFs

often acted as a peer-reference group among themselves, not having an organised and formal forum meant that CDFs missed out on learning from and supporting each other. CDFs could have become part of the solution to some of the tensions they were experiencing in their work.

6.5 Corporate Spiritual Practices

Corporate spiritual practices such as devotions, fasting, prayer and family spiritual retreats were regular events in all the ADPs. Every day began in the ADP office with a time of singing, sharing a brief devotional thought from the Bible and prayers for staff members, programme activities, sponsored children, donors and others. ADP staff including CDFs spent one day every month in collective 'fasting and prayer' for the communities in which they worked. All CDFs, along with their families, from all over India participated in a World Vision India annual spiritual retreat. These corporate spiritual practices were important for the CDFs as they provided them relief from stress and a break from their daily routine.

> Sometimes we experience tensions between the CDFs and the office based staff. Morning devotions and prayer time help bring down the stress level. Spiritual atmosphere of the ADP help us to forgive each other and accept each other (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> I also enjoy family retreat. I have a day of prayer once every month, which I find refreshing (CDF # B2, July 2015).

> WV provides spiritual nurture on a regular basis. For example, we spend one day every month in prayer; we have an annual family retreat. I find this very helpful. These days are special as I can forget about my work, and focus on God. (CDF # E3, October 2016).

World Vision India's spiritual activities were intentional efforts to instil a spiritual motivation and commitment to serving communities and not for the purpose of influencing communities with evangelistic activities. Spiritual practices were seen by CDFs as assets that could help them overcome obstacles and succeed in their work. Christian identity was important for World Vision staff. Christian teachings helped them frame their work and express their aspirations. World Vision India's spiritual practices could be seen as an acknowledgment that not all the results from programming work were a function of implementation of 'evidence-based best practices' and within the managerial control of the organisation.

7. CONCLUSION

This particular chapter responded to two inter-related research questions, "*What challenges do fieldworkers experience as they try to meet NGO performance expectations and accountability requirements*?" and "*What formal and informal elements of the organisational practices and culture support or hinder meeting such expectations*?"

In researching the performance measurements of CDFs, Lipsky's observations on the ambiguous nature of setting and measuring performance metrics for street-level bureaucrats were confirmed for NGO fieldworkers due to the nature of social changes being sought (1980: 48). While the polices of World Vision spoke of transformational changes and project design documents mentioned high level goals and outcomes such as "Families become safe and nurturing places for children", performance management was more or less exclusively about short-term deliverables such as "Number of families trained in parenting skills". Short-term deliverables became the surrogate measures for the long-term changes, but the connection between short-term changes, such as outputs, and long-term changes in outcomes and goals was tenuous and hypothetical in nature. According to CDFs, achieving programming targets did not necessarily mean achieving the intended outcomes and, to an even lesser degree, achieving transformational changes in the lives of people. In instances when there were such high-level changes, CDFs did not always attribute them to achieving the targets but to other causes. This chapter explained how a focus on short-term results became the over-riding concern of CDFs in the field and was often at the cost of not being able to focus on higher-level changes. Performance objectives were stated and measured in isolation from the organisational core values. Achieving targets for programme implementation was the top most source of tension for the fieldworkers. This chapter traced how the performance management system was a major driving factor in ensuring that the fieldworkers accomplished all the activities and outputs and spent the budget on time as per the plan. Artefacts of evidence and results helped to establish management control through a strict, top-down system of use by the fieldworkers in planning, implementing and reporting results. Community members and local partners had no role in the performance management of the fieldworkers. Downward accountability was missing due to a 'target focus' by the NGO.

In examining the ‘target focus’ of World Vision India, here are some possible conclusions: a) The flip side of the performance management system was that the entire organisation was dependent on fieldworkers achieving programmatic targets as they worked at the frontlines. Each CDF needed to achieve targets assigned so that the ADP as a whole could achieve the targets and meet its objectives. The ADP needed to achieve the targets so that the funding office could be satisfied that the programme implementation was going as per the plan, their money was making a difference in the life of poor people and the fiduciary requirements of the donor funding were met. The ADP needed to achieve the targets so that World Vision India could achieve its strategic priorities. The entire organisational system was dependent on all the CDFs at the grassroots level implementing programmes as per the plan, achieving the targets, reporting on them and fully spending the budget so that the organisational development narrative could be sustained. Quantitative measurements and reporting provided a sense of control for the managers and made what was complex and contextual into something universal and simple and b) In emphasising the achievement of targets, World Vision India affirmed that the global knowledge embedded in the project models and the logframes of ADP designs as being implicitly superior to local contextual knowledge. In the process, technical specialists became the decision-makers and CDFs were instrumentalised to execute the plans developed by others.

On one hand, World Vision India had heavily invested in having CDFs live in communities and developing relationships with community members, as shown in Chapter 3. Much importance was given to the training and development of CDFs and corporate spiritual practices. On the other hand, there was almost an exclusive focus on achieving programme plans and targets and improving cost efficiency through the centralised payment system. CDFs, by virtue of living in communities, understood the local context and community members well, but the value of such relationships and local knowledge were not intentionally leveraged by the organisation through formal management processes for the transformational agenda, as articulated in policy documents. There were no formal opportunities for the CDFs to share their experiences and reflect on their learning as part of organisational development processes. This tension very much reflected the policy conflicts described in Chapter 5. Achieving output targets became the surrogate measures of performance for the CDFs in the absence of performance measures that truly reflected the purpose of their position,

which was to achieve the outcomes and goals of the ADP through transformational development processes.

Chapter 7: Community Expectations, Participation and Conflicts Experienced by NGO Fieldworkers at the Grassroots

1. Introduction

Clients are not among the 'primary reference groups' for street-level bureaucracies due to the non-voluntary nature of their participation (Lipsky, 2010:45). This is true in government bureaucracies where government agencies are often the only providers of essential services such as health and education for poor citizens and this is even more obvious when it comes to more coercive services, such as law enforcement. Lipsky's assertion is that when participation is non-voluntary, then clients are not in a position to discipline the street-level bureaucrats and street-level bureaucrats have no need to satisfy their clients (2010:54). Since the resources are scarce, if one group of clients leave health or education services, another group of clients are ready to take their place. NGOs don't have the statutory authority of government agencies and, by definition are voluntary organisations. Community participation in NGO programmes is expected to be voluntary in nature. However, for a few reasons, even in NGOs participation may not be fully voluntary in nature; a) NGOs might be offering essential services that the government service providers might not be able to offer and hence poor people could become dependent on NGO services and b) there are many competing priorities to people-centeredness in NGO projects that could hamper their voluntary participation. Operating necessities of NGOs interfere with people-centeredness in practical realities despite policy positions to the contrary. This chapter examines what the community expectations were, based on fieldworkers' perspectives, for the NGO-initiated development projects, and to what degree community members enabled meeting such expectations through their participation. What tensions did fieldworkers experience due to any conflicts with community members and their expectations?

Villages in which CDFs worked consisted of heterogeneous communities with conflicting interests on specific issues. Expectations of various communities were shaped by unique needs and problems they were experiencing in their own social and political settings, people's perception of what World Vision India had to offer and the broader context of welfare and development work by the state government and other NGOs. CDFs' experience of conflict in communities was due to the following reasons: failed expectations of free assistance, feelings of non-inclusion by those who did not

directly benefit from the programme, community elite's desire to use World Vision programmes for their own ends, expectations shaped by a traditional understanding of child sponsorship and World Vision's Christian identity. World Vision's Christian identity and child sponsorship were mentioned as the two most frequent sources of conflicts with community members by CDFs. Village Development Committees (VDC), which were community-based structures formed by CDFs, served as a means to support CDFs in managing conflicts and supporting programme implementation as per plans and budgets. It was mostly women and not men who extended support to the work of CDFs. Relationships between the CDFs and community members and the CDFs' standing in communities played a key role in how the CDFs handled community conflicts. Data sources for this chapter include interviews with 27 CDFs from seven ADPs and also observations of CDFs' interactions with community members during field visits.

It is appropriate to include a few observations on the notion of 'community' at the outset of this chapter. Each CDF in the seven ADPs was responsible for certain number of villages. Most villages typically consisted of multiple communities, rather than an entire village forming one single community. The working definition of a geographic community used in this chapter involved the following components: a) members who share a personal-relatedness; b) members who live in a geographically-bounded area with a sense of personal identification with the place they live in; c) social interaction or interdependency of members with each other. They are able to influence others and are influenced by others; and d) they have a shared history and will have a common future experience, destiny together, etc. (Christenson and Robinson 1989:5-9; McMillan and Chavis 1986:4). In summary, a sense of cohesion, shared experiences and aspirations, personal-relatedness and connection with the place define a geographic community.

Seven districts of Tamil Nadu where each of the ADPs is located consisted of people from various castes and occupational groups and faced a diverse range of needs and opportunities. Population in ADP areas were of Hindu majority but some villages had between 5% and 10% Muslim and Christian populations. Villages included people from scheduled castes, ranging between 10% and 40% and scheduled tribes between 0% and 20%. Scheduled castes are those that are included in one of the schedules of the Constitution of India as being historically disadvantaged indigenous people of India,

who were previously 'untouchables'. Scheduled tribes are communities who historically lived in tribal, forested areas who were disadvantaged and not in the mainstream of society (Indian Constitution 1950, articles 341 and 342). The rest of the population consisted of many Hindu upper caste groups. Households belonging to scheduled castes were situated in different geographic sections, mostly on the outskirts of villages. While it is becoming more common for people from upper castes, scheduled castes, tribes and people from different religions to attend joint meetings, they still could not be considered as members of the same community, depending on the nature of the programming work that the CDFs did. Some of their needs and expectations were different from each other. For example, in ADP A, a few upper caste families were trustees of local temple land and traders, whereas scheduled caste people were long-term tenants of the temple land, who were going to court claiming ownership title for the land at the time when the field research data was being collected. In ADP E, there had been clashes between upper caste Hindus and Muslims during the months of June and July 2014. In four out of seven ADP areas, there were local conflicts between the members of regional political parties, DMK and AIADMK.

In addition to community members, expectations and participation from local partners are also discussed in this chapter. Local partners include community organisations such as Village Development Committees (VDC) formed by World Vision, self-help groups (SHGs), local government agencies and other NGOs operating in the geographic areas.

2. Fieldworkers' Role in Shaping Community Expectations

All seven programmes studied had been in operation for a varying number of years before the new strategy cycle began in 2014 and subsequently programmes were redesigned as per the strategic priorities. Programmes were more integrated and multi-sectorial in nature before the new strategy and programme redesign were developed. When the new strategy was finalised, requiring a greater degree of focus, overall programme objectives, such as reducing malnutrition or child protection, was chosen by the national office for each ADP based on secondary data. As mentioned in Chapter 5, programme redesign was developed by technical specialists in the national office, on the basis of evidence-based best practices (project models). CDFs held community consultations before the finalisation of programme redesign for two purposes;

conducting community-level consultations that would justify the relevancy of the overall programme objective selected to the funding office, while at the same time, convince community groups that the overall programme objective selected for the area was appropriate for their needs. For example, every Area Programme design had a standard paragraph that included statements such as the following:

> World Vision India initiated Area development program in xxx block of xxx District in 1996, working with 49 villages from 24 Panchayats. The program was mainly focused on Agriculture development, Leadership, Education, Health, Economic development, and Malnutrition. ADP has chosen Child Health and Nutrition as technical program for E Area program in LEAP3. So as to explore the child well being issues in XXX area, ADP has used various tools like community conversation, spider diagram, identifying vulnerability, exploring the community assets, social mapping etc. These tools were used with women, men, adolescents, girls, boys groups, and also individual interviews were conducted with panchayat presidents, block medical officer, FBO leaders and NGOs. As a result of the various exercise done in field, the threshold indicators analysis, the secondary data and the evaluation findings, the ADP, the stakeholders and the community came to a conclusion that Addressing Malnutrition and childhood illness will be the priority for next phase of the ADP (ADP E Design Document, November 2015).

This legitimisation through community consultations was important as World Vision guidelines, such as World Vision's Development Programme Approach (DPA), emphasised the need for input from communities and local partners in setting programme priorities. Community consultation and input was also important from the perspective of the donor and funding office. As Bornstein says, community participation aligns well with the egalitarian values and ideals of development NGOs and speaks to the democratic expectations of donors (Bernstein 2005:119). Reasons for the use of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) type tools and community consultations were to explain and educate key stakeholder groups in communities on the importance and relevancy of the overall programme objective, gather data that could be referred in the design documents and prepare the ground for implementation. This process seemed to fit what is sometimes referred as 'facipulation' in the participatory methodology literature, which combines facilitation and manipulation or facilitates processes in a manipulative manner to reach a foregone conclusion (e.g. Robinson and Beary, 1995:139). The following quotes suggest that these might not have been 'consultations', but efforts to explain and persuade community members about decisions that have already been made:

> I brought ten people from my community to a meeting in xx. National office prepared the design and the ADP manager explained what the design document contains and people gave input into the design. I have no idea whether any changes to design was made due to input from people. I have no specific examples to share (CDF # C3, October 2016).

Role of the CDFs is to gather information using the tools provided by the national office in the programme design process. WV India required a single sector focus…Child protection and participation was selected as the area of focus for this ADP (CDF # F1, August 2016).

It points to the power of NGOs and the fieldworkers to set the agenda, frame and steer discussions towards specific predetermined ends. PLA tools were used simply as a means to advance the pre-planned, top-down perspectives. Community members and local partners gradually learned to anticipate and conform to World Vision's perspectives for programming priorities conveyed through CDFs to them. Judging by the dissonance between what was stated in the design documents as the outcomes from community consultations and CDFs' responses during interviews, it could be reasonably concluded that community input on what they needed for programming was shaped to some extent by their perception of what World Vision had already decided to offer. Having gone through this process of legitimisation of the programme objective and programme design with community stakeholder groups, aims of on-going consultations were at a tactical level to develop detailed implementation plans, select communities and participants for specific activities and any problem solving.

We receive guidelines from the national office for the annual plan. It will clearly articulate what the program objectives are, what programme interventions can be undertaken, what is the budget available, etc. This provides us the basis for us to discuss with communities. We tell them what programs could be implemented in their community based on guidelines and we ask them to select participants and we go and visit them. We organise committees with people who are interested to join (CDF # B5, November 2016).

Programme design was done at the national level, but the target communities and participants are identified here. I don't think it is necessarily bad. It provides us guidance. It gives us good measures and directions for our work. It gives us structure (CDF # G1, November 2016).

This information was corroborated through discussions with the leadership of a few village development committees in ADPs # A and B.

We have formed people development committee – with a total of 75 members and organised into 4 sub-groups: economic development, education, health & hygiene and sponsorship. World Vision office communicates which programs will be done in a given year and sub-committees select beneficiaries for each program (Men members of one village development committee from ADP # A, July 2015)

World Vision staff introduced themselves as an organization that helps children. We told them who could benefit from the programmes they wanted to offer. We helped them to select the most needy families, the poorest of the poor, families of malnourished children, widows and families with too many children (Women members of one village development committee from ADP # B, July 2015)

This process of community consultation, including PLA exercises, gave an appearance of community participation in the planning processes and legitimisation of a predetermined programme objective, while at the same time providing a platform to advance top-down planning. The day-to-day preoccupations of CDFs were operational and practical, focused on management mandates, but tangible manifestations of participatory action was felt important (Cleaver 2001:37). Community participation was mainly instrumental in nature. Meeting expectations for programme management was far more important for managers than to leave them as open-ended outcomes from bottom-up participatory processes. There is some inherent tension in expecting vertically managed project staff with clear performance expectations (along with due rewards and punishments) to 'empower' people and deliver pre-determined results based on 'participatory' approaches to development. As Mosse mentions, what was expected from fieldworkers was programmes that are well planned and implemented on time and within budget, delivering the planned outputs together with visible manifestations of 'participation' (2005:161).

3. Community Expectations as Sources of Conflict

3.1 Expectations for Free Assistance

All seven ADPs operated in the larger context of Tamil Nadu state government implementing a number of welfare programmes, where goods and services were provided free of cost or at heavily subsidised prices to families in the state. While all families were eligible to benefit from some of the welfare programmes, households below the poverty line were beneficiaries of eighteen populist schemes. Examples of such schemes included provision of four grams of gold and Rupees 50,000 to girls who completed a degree or diploma, free laptops for all students studying in higher-secondary schools and colleges in government and aided institutions, bicycles for girl students in higher-secondary schools, comprehensive healthcare insurance, baby care kits, mobile phones and subsidised loans (Source: The Hindu daily newspaper, 6 December 2016). This might have been vote bank politics and cost the state exchequer a high proportion of its budget, but the people were accustomed to receiving free goods and services from the government and, according to a few CDFs, this mind-set was prevalent when it came to people's attitudes towards external NGOs operating in their communities, including World Vision.

> Sometimes they don't want to take initiatives, but expect us to do everything for them. Government has given a lot of freebies to people and they have an expectation to receive benefits. It takes a lot of explaining, patience and prayer (CDF # E2, October 2016).

> In the state of Tamil Nadu, government gives a lot of welfare to people and so they expect handouts and it is difficult to change community mind-set (CDF # E3, October 2016).

> People have expectations to receive handouts and as a result they don't come to the meetings (CDF # F3, October 2016).

> Our budget is focused on health and hygiene awareness, mother and child health, but people expect things that are free, free, free…(CDF # A4, October 2016).

What was not stated by CDFs was that they might have also liked World Vision to provide handouts for a few reasons; a) World Vision was seen as being a resource-rich NGO by communities and local partners and they were under pressure due to such a perception; b) they felt that giving free gifts would have made their job, especially explaining child sponsorship, easier and c) giving handouts would have given them a status as benefactors and made them popular among people. But there were other CDFs who felt that giving any free assistance was contrary to sound principles of development.

> I believe WV should not distribute any handouts even in sponsorship. Such a practice would be counteractive. A CDF should be able to explain child sponsorship to communities and households. If you can't do it, then you are not worth your salt as the CDF. When we freely distribute things to people, they don't learn responsibility. I am very clear on this. I just don't like free gifts to sponsored children. It creates jealousy and feelings of discrimination among those who don't receive any. Some CDFs like to give things as they get honour and respect from people…. But we don't need to give such free gifts. If I can teach the parents health and hygiene, then they would be able to bring up their children well (CDF # G1, November 2016).

> Communities can often come up with a long wish list. I give them orientation on what is feasible and what activities might contribute to the ADP objectives. Personally speaking, I am not very keen about alleviating the immediate needs. I would rather address the root causes of the problems even though it may take longer term (CDF # A6, July 2015).

> We have problems that come up from time to time when some selected people receive certain benefits and others don't. While we explain the criteria for targeting beneficiaries to everyone, not everyone understands the rationale. Everyone benefits in some ways, but everyone wants everything. This has not necessarily caused any division in the community, but misunderstandings may linger for a few days (Women members of one village development committee, ADP # A, July 2015)

This mismatch of understanding and expectations between community members and CDFs, and among the CDFs themselves, pointed to a lack of knowledge and ownership of the plans and budgets, as they were not developed in close collaboration with CDFs, community groups and local partners. In some cases, relationship between CDFs and community members appeared to be more like patron and clients rather than

working together as partners. This led to assumptions by community members about the available resources and mismatch of expectations.

3.2 Child Sponsorship as a Source of Conflict

A source of community conflict in relation to child sponsorship was that while specific children were sponsored by specific sponsors, they were not treated as individual clients as per the expectations of parents of sponsored children. Sponsored children were seen as a category through well-developed routinization of sponsorship service standards monitored on a quarterly basis and mass processing of annual progress reports and Christmas cards to sponsors, similar to the characteristics of street-level bureaucracies described by Lipsky (2010:45). This was of course understandable for reasons of efficiency in organisational performance. Responding to the personal needs and opportunities of each and every one of the 3,000 or so sponsored children at an individual level would have been very expensive, even more labour intensive and would not have supported the objective and principles of development at a community level.

CDF # C1, provided the researcher with an unsolicited written list of community conflicts due to child sponsorship, which summarised the issues well: child sponsorship not meeting the immediate needs of the families as per the expectations of the parents; practice of gift notification benefiting only a few children; unexpected cancelation of sponsorship by some sponsors; older sponsored children not being available in communities for monitoring purposes and only some sponsored children receiving letters or visits from the sponsors while others not receiving either (October 2016). Most CDFs felt that a traditional understanding of child sponsorship included notions of direct assistance to individual children in need. That was how World Vision India used to practice child sponsorship prior to 2010 and how a few other NGOs were continuing to do child sponsorship in neighbouring geographic areas.

> Child sponsorship has reference to direct assistance …we take pictures and videos and letters, etc. People know that sponsors give money to assist a child in need. We need to allocate some money, however modest it might be, for direct assistance to individual sponsored child. It could be as small as 500 rupees per child per year. In my area, Compassion is also working. Compassion gives a lot of direct assistance and World Vision doesn't give any and it is only natural people compare Compassion and World Vision. I feel bad (CDF # A4, October 2016).

As mentioned in the earlier section, one or two CDFs did not reflect this type of understanding of child sponsorship. However, they were an exception to the norm.

Some of the communities where the CDFs worked were well connected with the outside world through the Internet and cable television. They were well informed about how child sponsorship worked and its economics. This meant that the CDFs had to be completely transparent with them, which was uncomfortable for them.

> In communities that are politically aware and have access to internet and TV, we find it difficult to do child sponsorship. People know how much sponsors contribute. They are able to work out the revenue that could likely be generated through the number of sponsored children in their communities. They ask us what is our total budget? How much has been spent in their communities? They don't easily accept our responses… WV is not changing with the times. Do we need sponsorship? If we can raise money without sponsorship, we can do this work more freely (CDF # B3, July 2015).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the practice of gift notifications was very challenging. It was well-known among the senior managers of World Vision India and World Vision International that gift notifications were problematic and contradictory to World Vision's approach to child sponsorship. However, this practice was allowed to continue, as the funding offices in World Vision didn't want to deny their sponsors an opportunity to express their generosity in giving additional gifts to children in developing countries.

> Sponsored children don't receive single exclusive direct benefit except a few children who receive gift notifications – it is extremely hard to get them to do Annual Progress Reports or Christmas card for their sponsors (CDF # C2, October 2016).

> Only a few sponsored children receive gift notifications – it is very difficult for the parents to accept that…. Some parents ask us to change the sponsors who don't give their children any gifts – all that I can do is to explain that it is entirely up to sponsors whether they want to send any gifts or not. I tell them that those who receive gifts are just lucky! (CDF # E4, October 2016).

> We have a number of problems associated with sponsorship. Some children receive gift notifications, but others do not. Some children continuously receive gifts, even up to 5 gifts per year but others do not receive any. That creates challenges in communities (CDF # E1, October 2016).

While CDFs had to face unhappy parents of sponsored children, they also had to manage the disappointment of parents whose children were not sponsored in the first place. Even though not all sponsored children received special material benefits in the form of gift notifications, the mere fact that some children were sponsored and their children were not, was, in itself, sufficient to make them feel disappointed. Sponsored children received occasional letters from their sponsors and all of them were visited once every three months by a member of World Vision staff. This created some degree of distinction between the families of sponsored children and non-sponsored children.

> When I visit sponsored families to get reply letters for sponsors, then others from neighbouring families come to see if we are going to give them any gifts. For example there are 400 children including 175 RC in village XX – I can monitor sponsored children, but to monitor all children is difficult (CDF # B3, July 2016).

> We need to follow the guidelines and can't change the programming, for example, there was a fire accident that affected four families, one of them happened to be family of a sponsored child … We may help only those families that are 'on the list'. Focusing only sponsored children in case of illnesses and accidents and not being able to help other children, cause issues for us (CDF A5, July 2015).

A recent multi-country research commissioned by World Vision International and conducted by RMIT University in Australia confirmed these conflicts due to child sponsorship:

> Two perceptions of inequality were identified in relation to child sponsorship across most of the ADPs: perceptions of inequality of benefits between sponsored and non-sponsored children; and inequality between sponsored children in what they receive from their sponsors. Unsponsored adolescents saw the benefits received by those who were sponsored and also wanted to receive these things. Some parents without sponsored children viewed the selection of sponsored children unfair. Parents of sponsored children contrasted what their children received with what others had received and felt disappointed, saying that they expected more support…. There was evidence of jealousy of the benefits to sponsored children by both children and parents – though this was not universal. Sponsored children who did not receive these benefits could personalize this failure and assume responsibility for the lack of relationship with their sponsor. Non-sponsored children and families experienced jealousy more intensely. Parents complained more than children about the inequitable distribution of these benefits. It was clear that it does cause friction within the community and cause some children (sponsored and non-sponsored alike) to feel disappointed and confused. (Feeny et al, 2017:23)

CDFs would have had conflicts one way or the other in managing community expectations for child sponsorship; since the programmes did not provide direct assistance exclusively to sponsored children, it led to conflicts with parents of sponsored children. On the other hand, if direct assistance had been provided exclusively to sponsored children, there would have been even more conflicts and divisions in the community as a number of children and their families would have been left out from receiving such benefits.

3.3 Expectations of the Elites

Relationships between CDFs and village leaders, such as panchayat presidents, political party leaders and other influential people were challenging at times. On one hand, CDFs needed their consent and support, or at least their tacit agreement to operate in communities, but on the other hand, they didn't want them to interfere too much in the work that they were doing. It was a difficult balancing act. A few CDFs mentioned indifference, non-cooperation and, at times, hostility from locally powerful individuals.

> We want to work with people from scheduled castes, but thevars [dominant high caste community] want to be the intermediaries. During times of flood relief, we wanted to give boats to those who were affected but they were workers of high caste thevars. We wanted to form small groups of five people and give each group a boat. But thevars didn't want us to help them. They were afraid that people from lower caste would become equal to them. I tried to explain, but when some of them wouldn't listen and I had to ignore them. There were threats of physical attacks on me (CDF # A3, October 2016).

> I was not able to take any action on specific issues facing children due to the attitude of the government officials. For example, there are liquor shops very close to public schools, which affect the education of children. I tried to raise the issue with the government officials and they completely ignored the problem (CDF # B2, July 2015).

In other cases, village leaders at a local level wanted a greater degree of recognition and a role in programme-related decisions where they saw opportunities to extend their influence and power-base.

> In village X, there is one communist leader as the panchayat president. We were doing a street theatre to raise awareness about alcoholism. He disrupted the theatre. I had to pacify him by inviting him to give a speech and honouring him in public by covering him with a shawl (CDF # A3, October 2016).

> There are local divisions based on political party affiliation. I need to keep connection with all the political parties so that programme is not seen as favouring one political party against the other (CDF #A2, October 2016).

> Political leaders in villages, xx and yy expect World Vision to implement programmes only through them so that they can get the patronage of the local people. I had to resort to threats of pulling back programmes from communities and get the CBOs to manage some of the local power issues (CDF # F3, August 2016).

A few CDFs experienced personal conflict when they witnessed abuse and injustice by locally powerful people in communities, but felt that their hands were tied by World Vision India from taking any direct action. They were concerned that World Vision was worried about potential reputational risks and organisational sustainability for World Vision India resulting from escalation of issues and any political implications.

> I tried to take action when a 4-year-old girl was abused in another community, but got threatened. World Vision did not want me to take action. I was told that I should do advocacy only through children clubs and community committees and I should not jeopardise my safety or the organisational reputation (CDF # B2, July 2015).

> One sponsored child was raped and killed. Child's father didn't want to file a police report because the perpetrators were from higher caste and the family of the sponsored child was afraid. I took the risk, got the family to file a report, do a post-mortem and got the criminals arrested. I kept the ADP manager informed, but there was no official support from World Vision (CDF # A3, October 2016).

World Vision India's position was practical given that it was an international Christian NGO operating in contexts that were politically, religiously and socially sensitive.

There was one case, discussed in Chapter 8, in which the CDF, tactfully working behind the scenes, brought together relevant local community organisations, government departments, police and the news media in getting such issues addressed without World Vision directly implicated.

It appeared that most CDFs were willing to publicly acknowledge and honour local leaders, but were not agreeable to their hijacking of World Vision's programme exclusively for their political and personal purposes. Only in rare cases, CDFs challenged or worked in direct conflict with local elites, but in most cases tried to pacify them or avoid having to face such conflicts. Navigating local issues of power and politics is an important competency for the fieldworkers. These kinds of conflicts were to be expected and prepared for when the status quo is disturbed and social power dynamics are altered through engagement and development work with traditionally marginalised communities. What is described here are the most apparent forms of dominance and interference by village elites that some of the CDFs had identified and grappled with. There were probably other instances of dominations exerted by locally powerful people that were either unnoticed by the CDFs or they got co-opted into, which were not mentioned during interviews. For example, leaders of Village Development Committees could have influenced CDFs in not so subtle ways in the selection of beneficiaries. They were not powerful from the perspective of the CDFs, but they were, in all likelihood, seen as people of influence by community members due to their close working relationships with World Vision and CDFs. Another example is possible influence exerted by those community members who frequently and eagerly attended World Vision meetings, thereby influencing programming decisions including the selection of beneficiaries. Established elites were seen in such cases as key informants, opinion leaders, educated, open-minded, concerned for others, etc. and fieldworkers worked though them in delivery of project activities (Mosse, 2005:84).

3.4 World Vision's Christian Identity

World Vision India was very clear in identifying itself as a Christian NGO serving all people without any regard for their religion, caste or creed. It was not evangelistic in its activities even though a few CDFs mentioned that they prayed with individual community members when they were specifically requested to do so. All the CDFs were Christians who attended local churches and practiced Christian spiritual practices

such as prayer, Bible study and fasting as individuals and as a team. CDFs mentioned that many community leaders and groups might have had an underlying suspicion that World Vision was doing programmes in communities in order to convert them to Christianity. In a few communities where there were local chapters of BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party*,* a right-wing Hindu party) or RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, a Hindu nationalist, paramilitary volunteer organisation), CDFs experienced more explicit forms of hostility. Conflicts based on World Vision's Christian identity were due to the following reasons: a) World Vision was a resource-rich Christian organisation which could potentially use its funding, relationships and programmes to convert people and b) Christians did not necessarily separate practice of their faith from its propagation. People knew from their past experiences that it was natural for believing Christians to share their faith with others and so, despite its claims to the contrary, CDFs would try to convert community members to Christianity.

> Some people question us whether we are here to convert them … I need to patiently listen to everyone. People question us on both sponsorship and our Christian faith the most. It takes time to get them to understand and trust us (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> When I started working here in the communities, nobody would come for meetings because they were afraid that we would convert them to our religion, but now they ask me to pray and I do pray for them in my individual capacity. I have seen a lot of healing in communities when I pray (CDF # E4, October 2016).

> I have problems with BJP and RSS in a few communities. They think that we are here to convert the people (CDF # F2, August 2016).

> Now we have RSS in the area. They have created some trouble in meetings, but I am not too worried as I have community support (CDF # B5, November 2016).

CDFs were aware and sensitive to the fact that they were Christians working in religiously diverse communities and any overt forms of evangelism or public displays of their faith could have negative repercussions, not only for them, but also for the whole of World Vision India. Many of them mentioned that they regularly prayed for community members, especially for those who opposed them. As will be seen in Chapter 8, prayer was one of the coping mechanisms for the fieldworkers from the tensions they experienced in their daily work. Some of the CDFs mentioned sharing their faith with individuals when opportunities arose during the course of their work, but they were quick to clarify that they did so only in their private, individual capacity, not as a matter of official policy and only after establishing good relationships with people. CDFs were not necessarily engaging in open discussions and dialogue on child

wellbeing and development-related issues based on how different religions or faith traditions approach such topics (with the exception of the ‘channels of hope’ project model in a few ADPs). By openly discussing spirituality and development-related issues with community members and faith leaders, some of these conflicts could have potentially been reduced.

Where there has been suspicion or negative perceptions about World Vision’s Christian identity, these were appeared to be overcome or managed by prolonged exposure to activities and engagement with those who were supportive of the work. Seeing the beneficial outcomes for individuals, families or communities of engaging with programme activities built trust and confidence that World Vision’s Christian identity was not sectarian, and it was seeking to engage with all members of the community, and was not linked to proselytization.

4. Community Support for CDFs’ Work

4.1 Village Development Committees and Women Participants

There was always a constituency in communities that would directly benefit from whatever programmes World Vision India would offer. Village Development Committees (VDCs) were an effective means to channel instrumental participation of those who could potentially benefit from World Vision programme activities and who, in turn, helped the CDF with planning for implementation. For example, according to the management reports and interviews with CDFs, ADP # A organised a VDC in each village before activities were initiated or funds made available (July 2015). CDFs ensured that each Village Development Committee had a membership of 70 to 100 people with representations from various sections of the village. Each VDC was further divided into four subcommittees, with responsibility for health, education, livelihood security and child sponsorship. Each subcommittee had three leaders: a president, secretary and treasurer. Each subcommittee and the entire VDC met regularly once every month and recorded the minutes of their decisions. The CDFs did not share budget-related information or delegate decision-making authority to the VDCs, other than soliciting their input into the selection of beneficiaries (ADP # A Design Document, July 2015). The VDC was an effective form of community organisation, in all cases with a proportion of people who directly benefited from World Vision’s programmes as members. VDCs became self-reinforcing, as their participation resulted

in their on-going benefit from programmes, while helping CDFs with programme planning and implementation. VDCs also provided support to the CDFs in managing child sponsorship-related expectations to the highest extent possible. In a few ADPs, subcommittees of VDCs monitored the health and education status of sponsored children and helped explain how child sponsorship worked to community members. If a sponsored child dropped out from school, VDC members would come to know about it and alert the CDF for follow-up action. In most ADPs, VDCs were a good source of support and acted as buffer between the CDFs and people who caused them trouble. It is important to note that VDCs were temporary structures, setup primarily for the purpose of implementing World Vision's programmes. During community visits to ADP # A together with CDF # A5, VDC members confirmed that the structure would cease to exist once World Vision leaves their community (July, 2015).

> People development committee exists for the sole purpose of planning and implementing World Vision's programs. If WV is not there, we will not have the committee. We will dissolve the committee, if WV were to leave our community (Women members of a village development committee, ADP # A, July 2015).

However, based on discussions with community members and CDF # A5, VDC as a structure did not seem to weaken other local community groups such as self-help groups. It was observed during visits to communities that CDFs interacted mostly with women, in addition to children and youth of both genders. It was mostly women who made up VDCs and several CDFs mentioned that it was mainly women who participated in other meetings and supported the work of the CDFs. In some respects this was due to the nature of the programme activities themselves and a prevalent understanding in communities that child wellbeing was the responsibility of mothers. This was even more so when it came to protection of children from certain types of violence and child health and nutrition-related issues. In most of the ADP areas, alcoholism among men was a major problem, and, as a result, women bore a greater degree of responsibility in bringing up the children.

> Mostly women come for meetings and not men. If men come, they would leave early (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> Getting men to share their expectations and perspectives is a challenge. It is usually women who participate (CDF # G2, October 2016).

> We have statistics for all the women in childbearing age. We go and tell them ahead of time about the training (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> Our role is to organise women and communities for development. When women lead, others would follow. There would always be challenges and those who oppose and those who have vested interest. We need to persist and we can overcome challenges (CDF # E4, October 2016).

> Men are very afraid to let women lead from the front. Panchayat leaders are the most difficult in this regard (CDF # G1, November 2016).

Other reasons for the increased levels of women's participation could have been that they were more readily available than men for participation in activities. CDFs might have seen women as being more submissive and easier to work with than men. Out of 27 CDFs in the seven ADPs studied, only five were women. Within the social context of rural Tamil Nadu, it did not seem to be a problem for male CDFs to work closely with women members in communities, except when it came to discussions on sensitive topics on reproductive health and the male CDFs worked through Primary Health Care nurses on such topics.

Women were willing to pay the costs of their participation in VDCs and other meetings, often spending their own money for transport and sometimes sacrificing daily wages because, they might have valued the benefits more than the costs (Lipsky, 2010:56). Values were often tangible and material even though not everyone benefitted from every programme. Even if they were not immediately benefitting, there was always the hope that they might be able to benefit from a future programme or have one of their children sponsored when such opportunities arose. There was also the intangible benefit of deriving satisfaction from working for the public good and recognition from others for doing so. The heavy caseload assigned to each CDF, including monitoring 450 to 600 sponsored children and achieving 20 to 30 targets for programme activities, required that they had a mechanism such as VDC with willing participants to support them in their work. Both CDFs and community women had a stake in preserving the relationship. Women who actively participated in VDCs also played an important role as supporters of the CDFs in managing community conflicts, whether it was suspicions arising from the Christian faith of World Vision and CDFs or child sponsorship. This involved explaining the position of World Vision on such issues in ways that other community members could understand and appreciating or pointing out the good work that was being done by the CDFs in their communities.

> This particular community xxx has people from different caste background and religions, Hindus and Muslim. We have RSS in this community, which creates problem when we organise children and communities. There are also Hindu - Muslim conflicts here. We need to be sensitive as we are Christians and they could always say that our motive is to

> convert them. One way that we address this is by having VDC leaders that know us to advocate for us and give us a platform for our work (CDC # E3, October 2016).

During one of the field visits, it was observed that CDF # F1 was present when the local VDC discussed the disturbance caused by a local politician regarding some water filters that were distributed in communities. The CDF encouraged the committee members to discuss the issue and come up with a solution to resolve the problem. The committee decided to call for a community meeting so that they could respond to the concerns and issues brought about by the local politician (August 2016). This meant that the CDF didn't have to face the local politician himself, but the VDC engaged with him.

4.2 Support from Local Partners

In addition to VDCs, CDFs worked with a range of local partners such as local BDO (Block Development Offices), ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services), PHC (Primary Health Care) units, Child Protection Units, other government departments and other NGOs. These collaborations were on the basis of World Vision's plans, but there was mutual benefit both for World Vision and the local partners. Government partners had the official mandate to implement certain policies and programmes, provided local level technical staff and monitoring data, which helped World Vision and CDFs. Similarly World Vision provided additional material resources (such as hand-washing facilities in local schools or improved stove and cooking utensils to ICDS and others), which benefitted local government programmes. Additionally, CDFs did community level campaigns to increase the enrolment of community members in government-sponsored programmes. CDFs' connections with other agencies brought in benefits for local partners.

> We get statistics from partners such as ICDS. We try to reach all severely and moderately malnourished children (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> I networked with Lions Club to erect a compound wall and gates for a school where young women teachers were being harassed by local thugs (CDF # B5, November 2016).

> Many of our local partners like working with us, because we make it easier for them as community people trust us more (CDF # C2, October 2016).

> I am able to tap government resources from various schemes they have and channel them to households in communities that I serve. Last year I got more than 100 lakh [10 million] rupees from various government agencies to my communities (CDF # F2, August 2016).

There were occasional conflicts when statistics included in World Vision documents showed higher levels of malnutrition among children than the government statistics or when a local government agency had committed to provide a certain percentage of funding for a joint programme, such as toilet construction, but the funding was delayed, resulting in CDFs not being able to achieve certain programme targets on time. But these conflicts seemed few and far between and were generally resolved smoothly as both parties benefitted from such a relationship. As described in Chapter 5, CDFs had the support of local partners to implement programmes as planned.

4.3 CDFs' Positioning in Communities and their Relationships

According to many CDFs, World Vision India enjoyed a good reputation with local partners and communities and, by extension, CDFs as the local representatives of World Vision had a good standing in their midst. This was due to the perception of World Vision India by community members and local partners as being resource-rich, but at the same time not corrupt as the local government agencies or some other NGOs.

> World Vision has a good reputation in the community that we are not involved in corruption or support corrupt activities (CDF # C2, October 2016).

> World Vision has a good name among the people. People know that we work for their good (CDF # D3, October 2016).

> WV is recognized among other NGOs because of our integrity. We have a good reputation for being above board when it comes to financial transactions. So people and other NGOs respect us for who we are and want to work with us. Community members respect me. For example, few people would smoke in front of me (CDF # B5, November 2016).

> Because of World Vision, I get respect and honour in communities that I work with. My extended family also respects me because my job involves serving people. I am grateful (CDF # E1, October 2016).

This overall perception of the moral uprightness of World Vision and that it was working for the good of the people, the CDFs believed, earned them the support of many people and local partners for programme implementation even though the programme objective and designs were not developed in consultation with them. What was unstated, but could be observed in interactions between CDFs and community members, was the social distance that existed between CDFs and community members. Community members always addressed CDFs as 'sir' or 'madam' and were very deferential in their interactions with them. Rural Tamil Nadu is a context where distinctions based on social status such as age, gender, education, wealth, caste,

seniority in jobs, etc. are very manifest and this was evident in relationships that existed between CDFs and community members. It is difficult to decode whether the honour and respect shown to CDFs was due to the good work and integrity of World Vision or due to status difference and social distance that existed between CDFs and community members.

Many CDFs mentioned relationships that they had formed and cultivated helped them to win the support of many people and working with children helped them in their work.

> When I show care and concern for the people, they accept me. I am able to do sponsorship work, take pictures, etc. even though World Vision does not provide direct benefits (CDF # G3, October 2016).

> We did a campaign for hand-washing and the use of sanitary napkins for adolescent girls… now the usage is widespread. Being a male, initially I had to solicit the help of village nurses and ICDS staff members to have discussions on this topic, but now I have good relationships and am able to discuss these topics directly (CDF # E2, October 2016).

> People know that we are sincere and honest in our work and compare us with the staff of other agencies who might be corrupt. This helps us to build bridges and create support structures in communities. Patience and perseverance are needed for working in communities. It takes time to build relationships, you need to be able to listen and accept what they say rather than judging them. We need to be able to understand their thinking. Don't ever get angry with people even when they talk harshly with you… understand where they come from and patiently explain. We need to start with building relationship with children first and that can help us build relationship with parents. Children can help mobilise parents. I visit people in their houses and spend time with them (CDF # E3, October 2016).

Living in communities made it possible for CDFs to get to know people. Child sponsorship, for all its challenges, allowed them to visit individual homes and interact with children and their parents on a regular basis. CDF # D3 mentioned that she knew by name each of the 463 sponsored children who lived in her communities (October 2016). These relationships might have been selective, characterised by deferential treatment, mutually instrumental, laden with expectations and sometimes contentious based on unfulfilled expectations. Nevertheless, these were on-going interactions, expectations based on trust and adjustments to such expectations over a period of time.

5. Conclusion

This Chapter is in response to the research question, "*From the perspectives of fieldworkers, what are the community expectations for the NGO-initiated development*

programmes and to what degree do community members enable meeting such expectations through their participation?"

In reviewing the findings described above, we need to bear in mind that there are always specific constituencies and groups of people in any community that benefit from specific programmes NGOs might be offering and would support the NGO activities; it may be households with children under five years of age, parents of young children who go to the local school, those who benefit from a local clinic or community leaders who tend to have a major say on the selection of programme beneficiaries. There is mutuality here, as NGOs need such groups of people for implementation of its programmes, people also need NGOs for any personal benefits they could potentially gain. Community expectations, conflicts and support for the CDFs discussed in this chapter need to be understood in this broader context of mutual roles and expectations between the CDFs and groups of community members. Communities are not homogeneous or uniform in nature. As in street-level bureaucracy, relationships were mutually instrumental between the fieldworkers and VDC leaders, community leaders, parents of sponsored children and local partners and they were willing to pursue their relationships so long as there were mutual benefits (Lipsky 2010:55,56). Mutuality is not necessarily a bad thing and it is one of the principles for effective partnering. Whenever the mutual benefit was in question, such as sponsored children not getting direct benefits, but the fieldworkers taking photographs and collecting information from them to benefit the overall population, there was tension in the relationships.

Despite the conflicts experienced, CDFs managed to secure the general consent and cooperation of community members and local partners in order to implement World Vision's programmes in communities. In none of the ADP communities were programmes either stalled or withdrawn due to conflicts or non-cooperation from community members or local partners. Unlike street-level bureaucracies of government agencies, cooperation was not enforced in settings that symbolised the power of CDFs or World Vision India (Lipsky 2010:117). There was nothing in the setting itself that required compliance of community members for all the meetings were held in common places such as community halls. This was one benefit of CDFs living and working in communities rather than based out of the ADP office. CDFs met with community members where they lived rather than community members meeting with CDFs in the office in which they worked. Even in child sponsorship, it was CDFs who visited

sponsored children in their home rather than asking sponsored children and their parents to visit them in their office. The place of interaction between CDFs and community members was a major factor in reducing conflicts. Cooperation or participation was neither freely given, nor enforced, but emerged over a period of time through discussions and mutual enrolment of CDFs and community members into each other's agendas in community settings. In many cases, community members, especially mothers, could sense the genuine commitment, care and concern of CDFs towards their communities and their children which went beyond the programmatic input of World Vision. This provided the basis for trust that developed between CDFs and community members in resolving conflicts. With the exception of child sponsorship, where each sponsored child could have been considered as an individual client, all the other programmes engaged with a group of community members who interacted with each other for participation in programmes. This meant that they had some collective negotiation power, however small it might have been, given the predetermined nature of World Vision's plans. This allowed for group processes to bring the conflicts in to the open and resolve them to some extent. Village Development Committees, especially women, were a source of support for CDFs.

Despite some of the community conflicts discussed above, overall relationships between fieldworkers and most community members were congenial, which provided the basis to resolve conflicts. For the fieldworkers, it was often about balancing and making use of relationships and social capital that they had earlier developed, as well as the credibility gained, to offset any negative issues and challenges they faced in communities, whether it was due to child sponsorship or World Vision's Christian identity. Perhaps from the community members' perspective, consideration was more about the overall value of the NGO work among them and the relationships and networks with fieldworkers rather than challenges posed by specific aspects of the NGO work. From fieldworkers' perspectives, most community members were appreciative of their presence and work among them.

Chapter 8: NGO Fieldworker Discretion and Coping Mechanisms

1. INTRODUCTION

Lipsky's central argument is that street-level bureaucrats develop coping mechanisms when they face constraints in their work situation to manage demand for services exceeding resources. They are able to develop coping mechanisms because they have broad discretion arising from ambiguous goals that do not provide clear guidance to their work and difficulties in measuring performance. Client groups with whom street-level bureaucrats work are not the primary reference group for the street-level bureaucrats (2010:81).

Lipsky uses the terms, 'discretion' and 'coping behaviours', or 'coping mechanisms', interchangeably in his discussions on the behaviour of street-level bureaucrats in providing services to their clients within the context of their relative autonomy from organisational authority and resource constraints they face (e.g. 2010: 19 and 82). Discretion could be understood as freedom exercised by the frontline workers in decision-making by interpreting or applying policy guidelines during the course of the discharge of their responsibilities. Coping behaviour involves accepting the pressure of work as a given and finding ways to deal with it or making the best of it. Discretion could imply either some space or freedom is intentionally granted for the frontline workers in the interpretation of policies or freedom is taken by the frontline workers even though it is not explicitly granted (Hupe and Buffat 2013:551). According to Lipsky, much of the discretionary decisions by the frontline workers are unsanctioned by the agency headquarters and discretion by the frontline workers results in a gap between policies as written and policies as implemented on the ground (Lipsky 2010: 18). Coping behaviours may not necessarily mean frontline workers have any manoeuvrability in decision-making, but simply find ways to manage or survive the pressures created in the implementation of agency directives. Such coping behaviours or mechanisms may not necessarily change the policies or directives of the NGO, but could be at a personal cost to the frontline workers as they find ways to manage the pressure through some other ingenious ways. As discussed in the earlier chapter on managing performance expectations, fieldworkers had limited manoeuvrability to diverge from NGO policies or performance expectations in decision-making, but had

developed some coping mechanisms to deal with the pressures of their work. This chapter examines both discretion and coping mechanisms exercised by fieldworkers in managing the tensions they faced, whether such tensions were due to policy standards, performance expectations for fieldworkers or community conflicts fieldworkers experienced at the grassroots level.

Street-level bureaucrats develop patterns of practices in order to limit demand from clients, maximise the available resources and control clients (Lipsky, 2010:82,83). This chapter discusses the stated values and beliefs and actual daily practices of World Vision India fieldworkers in response to tensions experienced by them as described in Chapters 5,6 and 7.

2. FIELDWORKER DISCRETION

CDFs developed routines and simplifications in their interactions with communities in order to make the complex task of implementing World Vision India's plans and policies more manageable at the community level. Routines of interaction observed in CDFs who worked in World Vision India ADPs included: a) routine of intermediation and distancing, b) routine of rationalisation c) manipulation of target data reporting and d) use of personal resources and resourcefulness which are described below.

2.1 Routine of Intermediation and Distancing

In a few ADPs studied, the CDFs recruited relatively well-educated women from communities to work with them as 'volunteers' to assist in their day-to-day tasks. They were involved in activities such as selection of beneficiaries from communities and preparation and implementation of activities, thus short-circuiting community-based processes or structures, which would have required more time from the CDFs. In ADPs where there were no formal volunteers identified and nominated, certain women leaders of Village Development Committees (VDC) functioned as assistants to CDFs. Being volunteers for the ADP and association with CDFs gave them a certain status and power in the eyes of others in the communities. If they had been community volunteers for the community's own priorities of child wellbeing, then efforts would have been taken to equip them with knowledge, skills and other tools required for them to play such a role rather than merely carrying out errands for CDFs in their day-to-day work.

This system of volunteers allowed CDFs to manage their workloads by delegating certain tasks, such as mobilising and gathering people for meetings before the CDFs would show up, selecting and screening beneficiaries on behalf of CDFs or simply dealing with difficult community members. ADP managers and World Vision India management discouraged the practice of CDFs working through such volunteers. In some communities, practice of volunteers acting as the go-between created mistrust and suspicion between the community members and the CDFs. During interviews, CDFs # B6 and B7 reported that even though it was difficult for them to deal with the suspicion and mistrust of some of the community members due to the work of the volunteers, they felt they had to work through the volunteers in order to expedite programme implementation. They thought that they could slowly win over the trust of community members over a period of time. When the Village Development Committees (VDCs) were formed later on in ADP # B, only those people who had earlier received benefits from the ADP agreed to join these structures. During visits to communities along with the CDFs, it was observed that the volunteers and those who had earlier received benefits were acting like brokers for the CDFs and shared a sense of responsibility in representing programme activities in their communities.

This routine of intermediation by formal or informal volunteers helped the CDFs to maintain some degree of social distance between themselves and community members. In a culture where people with higher status in terms of gender, education, wealth, caste background and perception of power are treated with a degree of deference, intermediation helped CDFs to keep their distance and expeditiously complete all the activities. In all cases, ‘volunteers’ were women who were perceived to be more dependable, available and compliant to complete the tasks given to them by the CDFs. Even though CDFs lived in the communities, this social distance and intermediation by volunteers was necessary for them to manage tensions in their day-to-day work.

2.2 Routines of Rationalisation

CDFs frequently employed routines of rationalisation either to persuade or intimidate community members and shared alternative narratives on contentious issues related to programme activities, selection of beneficiaries or child sponsorship. These were not necessarily consistent narratives, but tactics they employed differed substantively depending on specific situations or people they were encountering. A number of CDFs

mentioned that skill of negotiation and ability to use different tactics as very important to be an effective CDF. At least two CDFs quoted an old Tamil proverb in dealing with difficult community members that roughly translates as, "some cows will let you milk only when you sing to them and others, only when you dance to them". The inference being that you should be prepared to use whatever tactics it takes to get the job done. Tactics might include persuasion or intimidation. For example, in trying to explain why some children received gifts from their sponsors and others didn't:

> Only way to explain this to people who are stubborn and don't want to understand how sponsorship works is by asking them to reckon those that receive gifts from sponsors as lucky people and those that don't receive gifts are unlucky…. And a CDF doesn't determine who gets to be lucky and who doesn't (CDF # E 3, October 2016).

> I try to explain that your child is a representative of the community, providing a link between communities and donors and we never promised any direct benefits to individual families. I tell them if they are not happy they can withdraw their children from sponsorship (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> I manage this [child sponsorship expectations from community members] only through good relationships and by being able to share success stories from our work (CDF # G3, October 2016).

An often-repeated phrase during the CDFs' interviews in discussing how they managed conflicts arising from programming choices or child sponsorship was, "I try to explain by saying…" Explanations given to community members on the same set of issues were different from one CDF to another and also very contrary to how they truly felt about the specific issue in discussion. From the interviews with the CDFs it was known that they, in fact, had a lot more sympathy and agreement with community members' viewpoints on some of the issues as explained in the earlier chapter on, 'Community Expectations and Fieldworker Tensions', than they cared to openly admit to the community members. However, they struggled with these issues personally or among themselves as CDFs, but toed the organisational line and tried to explain the issues away when community members brought such concerns to them.

2.3 Manipulation of Target Data Reporting

A few CDFs openly admitted to practices in target data collection and reporting that they were not sure met the required standards or the intent behind the reporting standards. As targets for most programme activities were split across twelve months, a proportion of the total number of people reported as having participated in a specific activity would be repeat participants who would have come for multiple meetings over

a few months, rather than new and additional participants every month. Similarly, some of the participants might not necessarily meet the strict targeting criteria for programme activities. For example, mothers who accompanied their daughters for counselling sessions on prenatal care would be counted as an additional participant towards the target.

> I split the total targets into monthly targets and try to achieve the targets every month. Sometimes the same people come for training every month. The number adds up, but at least 50% of the people are double count…. Total number could add up to 1000, but there would be double and triple counting of some people…. I am worried whether I am committing sin and doing false reporting. But World Vision is very strict about target reporting. If I don't meet the targets and spend the budget, they think that I am not performing well (CDF # B4, November 2016).

What was not known through the research was the prevalence of this kind of inflated reporting on the accomplishment of targets but it was mentioned by two or three CDFs and it is worth mentioning here. It might be more prevalent than what surfaced during interviews due to the following reasons: a) Targets were based on demographic data without any consultation with community members or CDFs. Such targets could be unrealistic for reasons elaborated in the chapter on Performance Management; b) Lack of emphasis and accountability for community-based processes in planning and implementation. If this had been in place, it could have brought a healthy balance of quality of implementation as a consideration to the focus on accomplishment of output targets and c) Strict enforcing of achievement of targets as part of performance management of the organisational obligation to provide evidence for immediate results was significant. CDFs did not have the power to influence community realities to align with programme plans nor the organisational strategy and programme design to align with community realities, but they could decide how they chose to report when it came to accomplishment of output targets. When numbers were insisted upon, CDFs found a way to come up with a number that could add up, but was inflated. It would have been entirely likely that some of the ADP managers were aware that such practices were going on, but they must have decided to turn a blind eye as they were also dependent on CDFs reporting full achievement of targets as planned.

2.4 Agency and a Perceived Sense of Calling

Almost all the CDFs mentioned that they derived their primary motivation and a perceived sense of calling from their faith in God to serve the poor as fieldworkers. It was important for them that World Vision was a Christian organisation. A strong

relationship between who they were, what they were doing and a positive attitude towards their work emerged in the analysis of data:

> I consider this as God's ministry and that is the reason I joined World Vision. I see this as God's work and serving the people. God appointed me as a CDF to do His will (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> My mother dedicated me for God's ministry when I was a child…. However, I didn't want to become a pastor, but I consider what I do as God's work. I do this work unto the Lord (CDF # B3, August 2015).

> I wanted to join a Christian organisation, serve God's kingdom, in order to reflect God's love through words and deeds (CDF # E1, October 2016).

> By being a CDC, I have become a better person. I have learned to depend on God more and more. I have become a better listener and learner. Communicating respect to others is very important in this role. I needed to gain the trust of the people. Changes are made possible only through the work of God, as we expect people to participate on a voluntary basis (CDF # F1, August 2016).

Additionally, several CDFs mentioned their own personal background of growing up as poor and their childhood experiences as the reasons for working as CDFs:

> I joined because I believe WV's work is a ministry. I was a child labour, rolling beedies [*local cigarettes]*. I understood the struggles of the families and children in the area. I was rolling beedies for about 15 years as a child…. As a child, I could not have time to study or play. My father would give me a daily target of about making 750 or 1000 beedies and it could it take up to 4 hours. If I didn't finish, my father would beat me. This was my daily experience as a child. People who roll beedies on a daily basis can develop asthma, TB or develop hunchbacks (CDF # C3, October 2016).

> I come from a Hindu background… a friend of mine introduced me to Christ. I come from a village community and I am the only one in my family who went to school. So I have always been interested in helping people from rural background to access education. My work in communities is about providing education – in a broader sense of the term (CDF # E2, October 2016).

> I was born in a community where female infanticide was practiced. I was born with dark complexion. My grandmother counselled my parents to kill me as a child. But my father didn't want to follow the counsel. He let me live. I was a sponsored child. As a child I came to know the Lord and I wanted to serve people, especially girl children and World Vision gave the platform. I am glad that I could join World Vision as a CDF (CDF # G1, November 2016).

Changed people who have restored their identity as children of God and recovered their vocation as productive stewards of God's creation are mentioned as some of the goals of transformational development (Myers, 2011: 190-202). This appeared to be true for the majority of CDFs. Their own sense of identity and a perceived sense of calling provided the CDFs the basis for their engagement with communities and work among the poor. Mutuality of their own personal transformation and transformational

development of communities is also implied in many of these statements. Corporate spiritual practices that are described later in this Chapter nurtured this sense of identity and calling and encouraged the CDFs to view their work as God's ministry. Spiritual aspect gives a strong motivation to people about why they do what they do, encourage them to look for better ways of doing it and try to make a difference in the life of people (Craft, Foubert and Lane, 2011:93). It would be reasonable to propose that identity and a perceived sense of calling as being factors in some of the positive discretion exercised by the CDFs resulting in benefits to clients or client meaningfulness as described below.

2.5 Use of Personal Resources

Whenever CDFs exercised discretion, it was shaped by, and expressed within, the planning and management systems put in place by World Vision India. CDFs generally felt constrained to focus on delivering programmes as per the logframe and fully spend the budget within a given year. Many of them mentioned that it would be very difficult to get approvals for a revision of plans during the course of the year based on any changes in the context or any new opportunities that may emerge.

However, an important illustration of discretion did arise. Since the fieldworkers lived in villages, boundary lines between their personal and professional life were somewhat blurred; they tried to meet some of the individual or community needs outside of the ADP plans through their own initiatives and without the financial resources of the institution and in so doing exercised discretion in ensuring that the management expectations for results were fully met. CDFs used their personal knowledge, networks and connections to help community members on issues that were outside the scope of programme plans and they were not part of the management reports as well. All these activities were verified by the researcher through field visits and talking to community members.

> I am able to work through Panchayat to do things that World Vision can't do. E.g. we helped construct 26 houses for tribal families with government resources and that too, without any corruption. ADP didn't have to spend any money. Now we have tribal children live in those houses and go to school who wouldn't have otherwise. Other panchayats have contributed to setup water filtration systems in local schools (CDF # B2, August 2015).

> I would not be able to change or influence World Vision's programming, but I can try to influence other NGOs and government agencies to meet the specific needs of the communities that I serve. For example, I networked with Lion's Club in the area to put up a compound wall and gates for a school where the women teachers were regularly being

> harassed by thugs from a nearby road. My initiatives such as this are not based on any organisational expectations for me, but I do these to derive personal satisfaction (CDF # B3, August 2015)

> A CDF has to know about different things, for example what are the government schemes. I have been here in this ADP only for a short time, for about six months and I have helped four or five families. Since I have legal background, I have been able to help young children in criminal justice system and ensured that they didn't get arrested by the police for minor offences. I helped a widow to access social security from the government. I helped a sponsored child who was injured in an accident to get insurance claim of Rupees 600,000. A CDF has to be flexible and adaptable (CDF # A5, October 2016).

> I can do activities that are not on the plan if there is no budget required. For example, I worked with the panchayat to get toilets constructed for families. We got more than100 toilets constructed in village X (CDF # E3, October 2016).

Similarly in ADP # F, a cluster level VDC wanted to support young students from poor families who were formerly child labourers for college education. There were no programme plans or funds available to support such a programme. However, VDC had a collection of funds available with them through the repayment of loans to their members from a grant that World Vision India had given to them in the years past. With the CDF's encouragement, the VDC developed guidelines to use some of the funds to provide scholarships to children from needy families for higher education.

In examining the ADP plans and reports, there were no mention of these instances. There was no financial support from ADPs to address these issues, nor were these reflected in the performance reviews of the CDFs. To make the managerial approach of logframe, indicators, targets, etc. sufficiently viable, the CDFs engaged in processes and relationships with people, organisations and networks that were below the tip of the iceberg, not visible to others in World Vision India. This engagement resulted in community action beyond the scope and recognition of the planning and management system of World Vision India.

There were a few instances where CDFs reported that they paid from their personal resources to help needy families or pay for community members to use public transport and attend ADP organised meetings. It is not believed that CDFs spent significant amounts of their personal resources on community members, in which case the issue would have come up a lot more clearly during the interviews, but it was brought up by a few CDFs to infer that there was a pattern here.

> When we invite people for training and raising awareness, they come to meeting with expectations that WV would provide them help. We spent quite a lot of money on training community people on important health issues. They expect us to pay for travel. We spend our personal money to pay for their travel (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> There are several vulnerable families in the community that ask for assistance all the time…. Families lack basic needs. They come to us for help. I help out of my personal expenses or make collection among the staff. I have gone to school administrators and advocated on behalf of very vulnerable families. I personally help a few girl children to continue their education (CDF # C1, October 2016).

As individuals caught between communities and the institution, the CDFs had to balance their commitment to community interests with a preoccupation with meeting the performance expectations (Goetz, 1996:10). Their commitment to community priorities and interests influenced their discretion to act only when it did not disrupt the institutional planning and management system. In instances, when CDFs' efforts conflicted with the organisational policies, standards and systems, or managerial expectations, they were asked to refrain from implementation of such solutions. For example, as discussed earlier, monitoring individual sponsored children every so often was a major responsibility of the CDFs which took anywhere between 30% and 40% of their time. CDF # F1 came up with a creative solution of peer monitoring of children by children themselves.

> I started community-based child monitoring. I organised children in every street; selected and trained one boy and one girl responsible to monitor every child living in their street for their health, education and talents and potential. I organised a monitoring committee. I developed community-based child monitoring system to monitor all children to help ease child sponsorship monitoring work, but WV India did not accept it as valid and required me to personally monitor every sponsored child (CDF # F1, August 2016).

CDFs were asked to discontinue the peer monitoring system and to continue their labour intensive, personal monitoring of each and every sponsored child. Rejection of peer monitoring of children system developed by F#1 was due to the fact that peer monitors could not be held accountable by World Vision India if the required standards in monitoring were not followed. Risk averseness of World Vision India, whether it was the unwillingness to directly get involved in local issues of injustice or the rejection of a peer monitoring system proposed by a CDF, limited the ability of CDFs to exercise discretion and innovate in their work.

It is important to note that several of the positive 'discretionary' practices mentioned above should have been a core part of what CDFs did on a day-to-day basis. These practices were very much in accordance with World Vision's policy and understanding of transformational development. However, given the dominant managerial emphases on strategy and DME processes, these became discretionary activities underneath the surface and were not part of the CDF performance management. Given the evolving nature of these activities in specific local contexts, it

would have been difficult to predict them ahead of time and develop detailed implementation plans. Exercise of discretion made the work more meaningful to the CDFs rather than simply implementing the programme plan. They derived personal satisfaction from being able to use their agency, knowledge and capability to help people in need. Being able to exercise their discretion would have helped them in establishing their own personal identity and credibility. It is important to note that this helped fieldworkers to accredit their acceptance by communities and, to some extent, the successful outcomes of development work to their personal efforts on behalf of the people.

3. Positive Expressions of fieldworker agency and discretion

All the positive examples of fieldworker discretion cited above, as instructive as they are, were episodic or random occurrences in otherwise consistently compliant work-related performance of the CDFs. Only in two ADPs # A and G, regular patterns of positive expressions of discretion could be observed in the CDFs' work with the sanction of their immediate managers. In ADP # A, CDFs closely worked with the VDCs that they had formed and helped VDCs undertake advocacy efforts that were not in the original programme plan, to help achieve programme objectives on nutrition and livelihoods. In ADP # G each one of the three CDFs expressed their discretion in their own unique ways to achieve programme outcomes on child protection and wellbeing.

3.1 Fieldworker Discretion in Support of Village Development Committees

In ADP # A, trust relationships that existed between the fieldworkers and members of VDCs mutually reinforced each other's role and contributions. According to the CDFs in this ADP, they engaged with the VDCs on a regular basis and provided support to them whenever people wanted to discuss critical issues in their own situations and take action. Based on interview discussions with the CDFs, and confirmed through community visits and discussions with VDC members, here are a few examples of people's own initiatives through VDCs with the help of CDFs.

Example 1: 60 families from scheduled caste backgrounds live in A1 community. They have all been living in thatched houses on land that belonged to powerful trustees of the local temple for the past 60 years. The CDF participated in the VDC meetings and provided them with guidance on a regular basis. The VDC petitioned the district

collector and filed a case in the local court in July 2014 for land rights so that they could own the land in their names. The verdict from the court was that the families could continue to live on the land for any number of years, but couldn't put up any permanent structures.

Example 2: Community A2 faced an acute shortage of drinking water. The VDC discussed the issue over a period of time and staged a protest against the panchayat president who was not supportive and did not show much interest to solve the problem. The CDF provided them with guidance on how to escalate the issues to higher levels of the government. After several attempts, in January 2015, the district collector sanctioned a reverse osmosis system to be setup in their community.

Example 3: Public water tank in community A3 was unusable, with deposit of sediments over a number of years, and several feet of silt had to be removed for the water tank to support families in the area to be able to plant at least one crop in small plots of land every year. The VDC undertook the effort in June 2015, but a local politician with vested interests filed a false allegation against the VDC to the district collector and got the work suspended. VDC members met with a state government minister and requested his intervention to continue the work. The district collector was asked to investigate the false allegation by the local politician and subsequently the local panchayat completed the work. The role of the CDF in the process was to participate in discussions and provide guidance as needed.

None of these instances were mentioned in the six-monthly reports that the ADP # A submitted to World Vision India headquarters or to their funding office. All these instances involved advocacy efforts by Village Development Committees with the help of CDFs. CDFs and the ADP manager were not confident that World Vision India would have supported them if any of the advocacy efforts had resulted in reputational risks for the organisation or challenges to the on-going work of the ADP. But working with community-based organisations such as VDCs provided a platform for CDFs to address issues that were locally important, but not in programme designs. According to the CDFs in this programme it was these advocacy efforts, and health and hygiene education they were providing at the local community level, that made it possible to achieve the overall programme objectives and reduce the level of malnutrition rather than the planned activities.

This consistent pattern of advocacy efforts in support of VDCs in ADP # A clearly stood out, as CDFs in a few other ADPs did not appear to support or engage in such activities even when directly requested by community members. For example, in ADP # B, in discussing critical issues being faced people, a group of women from a village development committed responded by saying:

> If there were no alcoholism in this community, there would be development. Only women work hard, but men keep on drinking. How could there be development? Tasmark [state government approved liquor shops] are inside the village. Children follow the bad examples of grown up men's drinking habits. There is no peace at home because of men's drinking. We are ready to join any fight or struggle you can help start against alcoholism in our communities (Women members of a village development committee in ADP # B, July 2015)

CDFs in this ADP did not feel that they would get their manager's approval if they were to support VDC members to engage in advocacy activities.

3.2 Unique Expressions of Discretion by Individual Fieldworkers

In ADP # G, each CDF expressed discretion in their own unique ways based on their passions, competencies, community needs and potential opportunities. CDF # G1 displayed passion and commitment to community engagement, promoting gender equity and, in general, a deep understanding of transformational development by promoting dialogue, discussions and changes on key issues.

> My job is to promote transformation in the life of people. What is transformation? For example, in a community divided into two due to caste issues didn't want to take water from the same pipe. I formed a peace committee and helped explain how God's gifts don't differentiate between people. It took several meetings and prayers before everyone agreed to use the same water source – this is an example of transformation. I have been on my knees, fasting and praying on several occasions (CDF # G1, November 2016).

> Transformation has to be in people's thinking and in their relationships. For example, there are communities here where they wouldn't want girls to ride bicycles or two wheelers. Men would get upset when they saw me on a motorcycle. In that community, I worked with adolescent girls and helped them learn cycling. It took a while to change their attitudes. Open defecation, child marriage, child labour are all issues that need transformation, internal change in how people think and how they choose to behave and relate. Programmes alone cannot bring transformation. It requires persistent dialogues and engagement through relationships. It takes time. Programmes can give you platform to bring such transformation. You need to spend time with them (CDF # G1, November 2017).

During the course of her interview, she mentioned the importance of not arguing with people, but engaging in respectful dialogue, giving people time and space to think and reflect on issues and not forcing changes on them. She provided several examples of her community engagement to change traditional practices that did not require budget

or pre-planned activities, resulting in positive changes, such as getting parents to accept and value the birth of girl children and challenging traditional practices that forced adolescent girls to drop of out of school when they reached puberty.

CDF # G2 expressed a particular calling to issues pertaining to justice for children, especially for those who were abused, sexually or otherwise. He was able to organise two hours of after-school tuition for children in villages that he was responsible for, with the help of village volunteers whom he had trained to monitor children for any violations to their rights. Given World Vision India's disinclination to get involved in high profile advocacy issues involving locally powerful people, this CDF diligently worked behind the scenes to bring together a number of key government and nongovernment agencies with a mission and mandate to protect children and eventually got perpetrators of such crimes arrested and tried in courts of law. CDF # G2 provided the researcher with copies of police reports (called a 'First Information Report' in India) and local newspaper articles covering such cases and court convictions, where there were no mention of World Vision or the work of the CDF. This work required a great degree of sensitivity and careful preparation, as communities were socially stratified into different caste groups.

> In village G1 one guy was abusing six children. He was a big shot as he used to give loans. When we worked together and got him arrested, a number of people opposed. We had to be patient with those who opposed us. I needed to do proper planning. I had to spend one week to coordinate with the departments, work with different stakeholders. He got imprisonment for eighteen years. I didn't get the support from World Vision, because it is a high profile case. We used to inform the manager and provide some information without giving all the details. There have been three such cases. It can become a communal case. This guy used to take pornographic pictures of girls that he abused and sell it to others. I had good support with the government departments – Child Protection Unit, National Child Labour project, local police station, panchayat, social welfare department and child help line (CDF # G2, October 2016).

Having lost his own young daughter unexpectedly two years earlier, this issue of child protection was particularly important to him. He mentioned that he derived his life mission from the scripture, "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me" (Matthew 25:40 NIV). During the course of interviews, he mentioned about the importance of listening and relating to children and the sensitivity required in working with them. He talked about the potential ripple effect of helping a few children to finish high school and college education on the rest of the family and the wider community.

CDF # G3 was a superior networker and documenter. He claimed that his work in communities was 'evidence-based' with documented evidence for all his work and

results from such work, detailed in a journal, along with photographs. He had a complete list of all children with any disability in the communities that he was responsible for and how, in liaison with government institutions and private agencies, he had been able to find necessary help for each and every one of them. He had an extensive collection of newspaper clippings of all locally relevant development issues, such as child marriage, child labour and mother and health related issues. He mentioned that he used these as resources to promote discussions on locally relevant development issues in children's clubs, in meetings with adolescent girls. He had another detailed register on resources that he had been able to channel from local partners over the past three years towards specific community needs and opportunities. Such resources did not flow through World Vision's accounting books, but directly to communities that he worked with. For example, during the particular month of October 2016, when he was interviewed, he had been able to mobilise Indian rupees 290,000 (equivalent to US$4,800) from a partner agency to help setup a tailoring unit for local women entrepreneurs.

> Even though there is not much budget, I am putting a lot of emphasis on networking and tapping resources from other agencies to work with us. We should not shrink back because World Vision has low budget. There are so many resources and opportunities available from outside that we wouldn't have time to make use of. Development is not dependent on World Vision's money. Network and collaboration are much more important. Social welfare department, Nehru Yuva Kendra and State Trade Department have a lot of programmes, but they don't have access to communities that we have access to (CDF # G3, October 2016).

He mentioned the importance of equity and mutual benefit in partnering and the need to co-brand any joint initiatives. He was also keen on inviting local press to cover joint initiatives with other agencies, giving partner agencies credit for their contribution. As a result, CDF # G3 mentioned that other agencies preferred working with him even though he had introduced them to the other CDFs working in his ADP.

What was interesting was that the exercise of discretion by each CDF was distinct and different from each other and, as a result, their work in communities, outside of programme plan and budget, was also markedly different. Each CDF functioned like an independent change-agent propelled by his or her own convictions, perception of issues and opportunities and based on their own competency and calling. Their exercise of discretion happened within the broad parameters of 'protection of children from violence', somehow contributing to the overall programme objective that World Vision had envisioned for the ADP.

3.3 Conditions that Facilitated Fieldworker Agency and Discretion

In examining ADPs # A and G, there was a combination of two conditions that made this consistent pattern of discretion by the CDFs possible. It was not that the CDFs in these two ADPs were better qualified than others, nor were the ADP managers any less determined than other managers in achieving the programme outputs and targets. But it was a combination of two conditions coming together which provided the ideal condition for this positive and consistent expression of fieldworker discretion: a) There was a greater degree of 'programme fit' as expressed by the CDFs. Programmes were addressing issues or themes that CDFs felt were very pertinent to the needs facing communities and the organisational capacity to meet the needs; and b) Discretion of managers who recognised the strengths of each CDF and provided them with some degree of freedom and space to pursue their specific areas of interest that contributed to the programme objectives. As will be seen below, it was important that these two conditions coexisted for the positive expression of fieldworker discretion. It was the interaction between these characteristics that led to consistent and positive expression of discretion by the CDFs. In other ADPs, only one of these characteristics was present but not both of them together. These two factors combined together created the necessary managerial and bureaucratic space in these two ADPs for creative expression of discretion by the CDFs.

3.3.1 Perception of Programme Fit

ADP # A operated in a district where over 40% of children under the age of five had a severe degree of under-weight malnutrition and over 40% of households were without access to water from an improved source. High incidences of diarrhoea and water-borne diseases were reported among children. This programme focused on improving children's nutritional status and mother and child health, following an integrated set of interventions, including activities to improve access to water. Similarly, ADP # G was located in a district with the third highest child labour population in the state, with close to 10% of male children employed in the matchbox and fireworks industry on a part-time basis. In these two programmes, there was wide acceptance among the CDFs that the programme designs addressed the critical needs of the people they served. In other words, there was support for World Vision India's policy objectives in these three ADPs.

However in ADPs # B, C, D, E and F while the secondary data supported the choice of overall programme objective, there was no common consensus among CDFs, World Vision India headquarters and, according to CDFs, community members. This lack of consensus created a conflict at a fundamental level for the CDFs. In ADP # A and G, this consensus on the overall programme objective allowed the CDFs to exercise their discretion largely towards the overall programme objective in ways other than what the plans had envisaged. CDF discretion in ADP # A and G broadened the scope of responses to the issues of child nutrition and health and violence against children from how the logframe had defined activities, outputs, outcomes and the overall programme goal. When it came to an issue such as violence against children, causes for which are deep-rooted in local contexts, social beliefs and practices, there are simply no packaged set of evidence-based practices that be could be readily applied and would work equally in every context, which allowed room for actor-oriented approaches.

3.3.2 Managerial Discretion

Additionally, what made this different perspective possible in ADPs # A and G was that the managers recognised and valued each CDF for his or her strengths and allowed space for their different passions and skills to be expressed.

> CDF # A1 spends most time with people. People really like him. He works intentionally. His CBOs are beginning to function better…. CDF # A5 is a good leader and he is good in mobilising communities. He is a lawyer. He takes ownership on advocacy-related issues. He has written a few booklets on child rights… We address things through advocacy. But we have organisational fears, as it is very risk averse– would the organisation support me if they get engaged. I tell the CDFs to work with the VDCs and get them to take the lead. (ADP Manager # A, July 2015).

> All three CDFs are outstanding. Each have their own strengths: CDF # 1 is very strong in community engagement. CDF # 2 is strong in advocacy and child protection issues. CDF # 3 plans well, he is an expert in documentation, and he is a fantastic networker. They work with total commitment and dedication. Sometimes they are delayed in completing activities. They look to me for recognition and encouragement, which I try provide in team meetings. Some of them expect me to get involved in their programming related decision-making. But I don't spoon-feed them and I expect them to make their own decisions (ADP Manager # G, October 2017).

Both ADP managers # A and G expected their CDFs to make decisions on their own. It was not that that they were less concerned about achieving the output targets than the other ADP managers, but they recognised the strengths of each of the CDFs. For example, annual reports had a reasonable balance between reporting on output and outcome objectives:

> Under-weight malnutrition rate among under-five children in our communities has been reduced from 52% to 27% in the past two years (ADG # A Annual Report, World Vision India, September 2014).

> As a result of regular training all CBOs that we work with such as three cluster level Federations, 36 Self Help Groups, 21 Panchayat level Child Protection Units, 19 children's clubs, 14 child parliaments and 30 volunteers have gained knowledge on child rights, identifying the issues like child labour, different kinds of child abuses, child marriage, child trafficking.... During the reporting year they have identified and resolved 25 child abuse cases and stopped 174 child marriages with the support of local partners…. During the same period, 74 children who had dropped out of school have been encouraged to re-join school and continue their education…(ADG # G Annual Report, World Vision India, November 2015).

In ADPs # A and G six monthly reports included outcome level changes, pointing to positive changes in the life of people, such as reduction in malnutrition, issues of child abuses resolved, number of child marriages stopped and dropout children who got back to school. Other ADPs stopped with reporting on outputs that focused on World Vision's activities such as number of parents trained, number of children who participated in children's clubs and other similar such data as per the definition of output indicators in the logframe. None of the other managers displayed an understanding of the unique skills and gifts of their individual CDFs or affirmed the importance of fieldworker decision-making as did the ADP managers # A and G. Even though all seven managers of the ADPs studied reported to the same branch manager of World Vision India, what appeared to matter the most for CDFs' discretion was their own immediate manager that they reported to. After all, managers have their own discretion to either allow or restrict the expression of fieldworker discretion (Lipsky, 2010:19, 25; Evans 2011:380).

In summary, in ADP # A and G, having consensus on the programme objective between World Vision, CDFs and community members provided the parameters or framework within which fieldworker discretion could be expressed, expanding the scope of the CDF's work beyond the confines of logframe and project plans. And having a supportive manager enabled the CDFs to consistently express their discretion without any fear or feeling that they were subverting the official policies of World Vision. After all, managers too have their discretion whether to allow discretion by fieldworkers or not. Without the combination of these three factors, fieldworker discretion could only be expressed randomly or episodically.

3.4 The Question of Programme Budget

One additional factor that was noticed only in ADP # G is worth mentioning, as it appeared to increase fieldworker discretion. The low level of budget provided time and space for the CDFs to pursue activities outside of programme plans. Of the seven programmes studied, four of them were funded by World Vision India, with child sponsorship from Indian donors, and the three others by World Vision's funding offices in Japan and USA. Monthly subscriptions by Indian sponsors was set at a much lower level in comparison to how much the sponsors in Japan and the USA paid and, as a result, Indian-funded ADPs had a much lower budget than US and Japan-funded ones. For example, for the fiscal year 2017, the annual budget for the three internationally-funded programmes ranged between US$300,000 and $350,000, and the annual budget for the four locally-funded programmes ranged between US$75,000 and $100,000. ADP # G had the lowest budget among all the seven programmes studied. This basically meant that pressure to spend money before the end of the fiscal year was almost non-existent in comparison to better-funded programmes. ADP budget was sufficient to pay for staff salary, office rent and other administrative expenses and a few other activities. CDFs were completely dependent upon resources and contributions from community members and local partners for planning and programme implementation. This lack of management pressure to spend money helped the ADP manager and CDFs to focus on programme outcomes or changes in the lives of people and not just accomplishment of outputs and activities that World Vision could carry out on its own.

> Earlier we preferred to spend the money – but now, we are focused on results. Sometimes for genuine reasons, the CDFs may not be able to achieve the targets. We need to review and understand the reasons for not being able to meet the targets. Don't bring participants list just for the sake of numbers – right targeting is essential. Transformation in the lives of people who have been targeted is more important. Outcome level changes are important than output changes. We can't claim that we are the only reason for such changes (ADP Manager # G, October 2017).

While CDFs in other locally-funded programmes mostly viewed low budget as a constraint or as a problem, CDFs and the ADP manager in ADP # G thought that it was an opportunity to partner with communities and other local partners. They viewed their own identity, competencies, their access to community members and trust relationships as very valuable assets that could be leveraged towards changes in communities. The

following quotes from CDFs exemplify the stark differences that existed between the CDFs in ADP # G and CDFs in other ADPs that had low budgets:

> Now our budgets are small and our work is to run our mouths. We were told that the budget is frozen and now, we are not able to carry out our plans and meet people…. World Vision would ask us to plan for programmes, but later on freeze budgets. I don't get job satisfaction any more. I have lost my freedom. There are so many policies and guidelines, but no budget. It is extremely hard for us (CDF # C1, October 2017).

> Main obstacle is the lack of budget. We can work with enthusiasm and commitment if we have sufficient funding (CDF # C2, October 2017).

> Budget crunch is the main issue and we feel restricted due to budget challenges. We are not able to carry out activities due to budget concerns (CDF # F2, August 2016).

> Spending quality time with people is the biggest gift that a CDF can give to people. They see us as God's children for spending time with them. So budget is not the issue and we can do a lot without programming money (CDF # G1, November 2016).

Having a large budget focused the attention of CDFs in ADPs # A, B and D on spending programme budgets and accomplishing the output targets as per the plan. Having a low budget in ADPs # C, E and F made the CDFs feel constrained and limited in what they could do. But in ADP # G, having a low budget helped the CDFs to focus on outcome objectives, changes in the lives of people and, more importantly, it created time and space for them to develop relationships, understand the issues at a deeper level, develop networks, focus on both monetary and non-monetary resources available in the broader environment, whether it was training volunteers to do after-school tutoring or collaboration with other agencies. Although scarcity of resources would be a problem in government agencies that provide essential services to its citizens, it is not the same in NGOs, which do not have a mandate or statutory requirement to provide services to citizens. So what might be a constraint for a street-level bureaucrat in a government agency could actually be an opportunity for a NGO fieldworker under the right set of circumstances (e.g. Lipsky 2010:27, 32). Since this particular characteristic was observed only in one of the seven ADPs studied, it is by no means conclusive, but may be a reasonable hypothesis to state that tight budget might possibly increase the discretionary space for fieldworkers as opposed to constraining it. This particular observation requires further research inquiry.

4. Fieldworker Coping Mechanisms

CDFs developed some coping mechanisms to manage the pressures they faced in their work. Coping mechanisms are differentiated here from discretion in the sense that coping mechanisms helped CDFs to manage any pressures they experienced in the work without necessarily affecting the organisational policies or directions. CDFs employed a number of coping mechanisms to address the constraints that they faced in their organisation work and community contexts: 1) Conceding to organisational expectations and priorities, 2) Peer support among CDFs and 3) Prayer and spiritual practices.

4.1 Adjusting Expectations from the Ideal to the Actual

A few CDFs mentioned that they tried to 'personally adapt' themselves to the organisational expectations and demands rather than to challenge or question the expectations, even though their personal position and preferences were different from the organisation's. When interviewed, there was almost a tinge of sadness about their own inability to influence World Vision's India's policies and guidelines and a resignation to a reluctant compromise.

> We need to adapt ourselves to our situation and demands on our work (CDF # A4, July 2015).

> We need to dance to their tunes. I am not sure that World Vision understands our struggles (CDF # E1, October 2016).

Although it was mentioned explicitly by a few CDCs, part of the reason in 'personally adapting' oneself to the organisational expectation and not challenging the management was the fear of jeopardising a relatively high-paying job with World Vision India.

> I get paid well in World Vision and if I leave my current job, [outside World Vision India] I may not get paid as much as I am paid here (CDF # B3, July 2015).

> World Vision has good benefits for CDFs living in communities. Whether your parents take care of you or not, World Vision supports you well (CDF # A2, October 2016).

> The role gives me status within my family and community. I am paid well and I am a long-term staff of World Vision (CDF # C2, October 2016).

> World Vision is very supportive of women staff and they give us equal status with men. No other organization gives such equality. They show us concern and care. They give maternity leave (CDF # G1, November 2016).

One of the unintended consequences of paying the CDFs well and taking good care of them, while the prevailing organisational culture expected compliance, was that CDFs accepted organisational positions and directions on issues such as programme targets without any questions. While the compliance might have been grudgingly given, there was no resistance or pushback. Both the organisation and the CDFs could have benefitted from having opportunities for open conversations even if the policy positions of World Vision India could not be changed. The organisational management could also build on the strength of the loyalty of CDFs by involving them in open conversations that provide input for improvements.

Adapting themselves to organisational pressures meant that, for most CDFs, working long hours and adhering to higher standards of compliance than World Vision India required of them. It was a common practice among CDFs to start working very early in the morning and continue long into the evenings. Many CDFs consistently worked over weekends. Several CDFs mentioned that they brought their work along with them when they went on holidays. Both World Vision India and CDFs saw their role as '24-7', meaning that they had to be available, no matter what day or hour it was.

> You cannot work for eight hours, you can't keep to specific work hours as it takes more time. Be ready to work at anytime. I work on weekends as well. I keep my meetings on Saturdays and Sundays because that's when children are available in communities (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> I can take leave, but when I get back my work will be pending for me. I still need to achieve the targets. Even when I am on leave, I will get phone calls from communities and from World Vision. I need to take the child list and other documentation with me when I go on vacation. I forfeit a lot of holidays (CDF # E1, October 2016).

The monitoring of sponsored children and preparation for sponsorship communication took a significant portion of the CDF's time. Additionally, school-going children were more readily available during weekends and this meant that CDFs ended up working over weekends. There would always be urgent situations requiring communication to sponsors, so when CDFs go on any leave, they would need to be accessible by phone. Being available without regard for weekends or holidays was often seen by the management as a sign of their commitment to poor communities. Several CDFs went beyond the call of duty on certain standards for child sponsorship and had a very rigorous monitoring system in place. For example, CDFs were required to see every child once every three months and monitor their health and education once every six months. But many CDFs monitored individual children once every month via phone.

> I need to monitor each and every child within 180 days. But I aim to see every child once every month. I have the cell phone numbers of each and every child – 90% of children have phones – if not, I have the phone numbers of parents or the next house neighbour (CDF # B4, November 2016).

> I have registered children living outside communities for education. I have networks with people outside where the children are studying. I ask them to monitor children on my behalf and send me pictures via What'sApp (CDF # C2, October 2016).

> I have 45 children studying outside the community. I have their phone numbers. I call them and talk to them (CDF # E1, October 2016).

CDFs had put in place their own personal, arduous monitoring system just to be on the safe side of the management. CDFs felt that they would be accused of poor performance by World Vision India in case the family of a sponsored child had migrated out of community or a child dropped out of school or had fallen ill in between the monitoring cycle and if the sponsor of that specific child happened to visit or inquire. Similarly CDFs had put in place other systems to keep evidence for their work 'just in case' something should go wrong and they were asked about it. Many CDFs clearly felt that they had to protect themselves by creating elaborate systems of evidence for possible defence of themselves if there were any future accusations of wrongdoing or poor performance. Organisational culture where risk aversion and over-compliance became the norm did not encourage innovation by CDFs, which would have invariably required them to take risks and occasionally fail in their ventures. CDFs did not feel that they had the safe space to be able to do that.

4.2 Peer Support among Fieldworkers

Emotional and social support among street-level bureaucrats to deal with stressful situations in their work is a well-established coping mechanism (e.g. Spiro, 2017:420; Foldy and Buckley, 2010). There was a strong sense of camaraderie among the CDFs both within and across ADPs because all of them saw a disconnection between performance expectations and realities on the ground. They unofficially supported each other when the work was excessive or when a CDF was facing a particularly problematic situation. This was especially true in selected ADPs that were internationally-funded with high-levels of budget and pressure to spend money and achieve targets. This confirmed Lipsky's observation that peer support is essential to sustain worker morale in agencies that experienced a great level of strain in performance expectations (2010:46).

> I got into accident a few months ago and as a result I was not able to work for fifteen days, but I had help from other staff (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> We support each other in our ADP team, for example, in the installation of the reverse osmosis system in three of my communities, I had the support of all the CDFs (CDF # A4, October 2016).

CDFs worked in isolation for the most part but they sought and received support from others when needed. For example, it was mentioned during interviews that female CDFs, although they were few in number and spread among ADPs in Tamil Nadu, had a tight network amongst themselves and were in regular communication. They had frequent discussions over the phone to share challenges they were facing and how they were managing them. The researcher did not hear or observe peer criticism among CDFs about one another even, though performance targets were set for individual CDFs, potentially leading to competition among them. Also, there could have been plenty of room for mutual criticism based on issues such as accessibility and perceived open-mindedness of the communities each CDF was assigned to, however none was heard.

4.3 Prayer and Spiritual Practices as a Coping Mechanism

According to many CDFs, prayer and other spiritual practices were important aspects of how they coped with stress in their work, whether it was conflict with community members, opposition from RSS or concern over whether the expected number of participants would turn up at a World Vision meeting so that targets could be met.

> Sometimes we experience tensions between the CDFs and the office-based staff. Morning devotions and prayer time help bring down the stress level. Spiritual atmosphere of the ADP help us to forgive each other and accept each other (CDF # A1, October 2016).

> I have worked with HIV/AIDS people when the whole community had rejected them. I got them help from the government and local churches. It took time for attitude changes. It took a lot of prayer and God's mercies (CDF # E1, October 2016).

> Communities expect us to listen to them. Sometimes they don't want to take initiatives, but expect us to do everything for them. Government has given a lot of freebies to people and they have an expectation to receive benefits. It takes a lot of explaining and patience and prayer. We need God's favour and guidance (CDF # E2, October 2016).

> Prayer is the most important factor in my work. I always give priority to prayer. Monthly prayer meetings and spiritual retreats organised by World Vision gives me energy for the work (CDF # G3, October 2016).

Very often, prayer and having faith in God were mentioned as the first response to questions on what coping strategies CDFs were employing in response to the tensions they were experiencing. CDFs understood prayer as having a relationship with God, sharing problems they were experiencing and asking for help from Him. CDFs prayed individually, with their families and with their co-workers. They did not necessarily look to prayer as a 'quick-fix' to problems they were experiencing, but they believed in the effectiveness of prayers and that God answered them. They believed that prayer helped them to either accept the situation or helped to change the situation that they were in. Prayer gave them a familiar ritual to rely upon when they felt that the situation they were in was out of their control. They viewed prayer as a resource to draw upon when they needed guidance, strength, comfort or a good relationship with others. Many studies have confirmed prayer and religious practices as positive coping strategies for people going through stress in their lives. Positive coping patterns included, among others, forgiveness and reconciliation, collaborative positive coping with others and spiritual support (e.g. Bade and Cook, 2008; Pargament, Smith, Koenig, Perez, 1998).

5. CONCLUSION

This particular research chapter examined the research question, "*What are the beliefs and actual daily practices of the fieldworkers and how do they help them to manage any tensions they experience in their work*?".

Unlike street-level bureaucrats, World Vision India fieldworkers did not have broad discretion. They neither controlled the inputs of what went into programme plans and budgets, nor did they make decisions on programme outcomes (Lipsky, 1980:81). They had no control over the ADP they worked in, nor specific communities they were assigned to and they could not determine the pace of their work. These were all decided for them. However, they exercised selective and limited discretion, when the exercise of discretion helped them to meet the organisational performance expectations or, at a minimum, when it did not prevent them from doing so. CDFs conceded to organisational expectations in large part in order to safeguard their organisational position and personal wellbeing. Limited discretionary space resulted in risk aversion by the CDFs.

A synthesis of findings of tensions experienced by the fieldworkers of World Vision India, actions taken by them and consequences of such actions are provided below:

Table 9: Fieldworker Tensions and Their Responses

Tension Experienced by Fieldworkers	Actions Taken by Fieldworkers	Consequences of the Actions
Policy contradictions due to differences in development discourses including pre-determined strategic priorities and designs.	Representations of participation to justify programme design. Exercise of discretion to address local needs when it did not disrupt the organisational expectations.	Cloak of legitimacy from the funding offices for programme designs. Personal fulfilment of FWs and acceptance of FWs by communities. Accrediting some achievements as personal efforts and connecting personal actions and effective outcomes.
Policy contradictions in relation to child sponsorship.	Routines of rationalisation by giving excuses for policy contradictions. Management of conflicts through local volunteers and leaders.	Conflicts were not resolved, but temporarily managed. Potential feelings of jealousy and discontent among both the sponsored and non-sponsored.
Pressure to meet various quantitative targets on time as per the design document.	FWs' daily schedule and work driven by the need to meet quantitative targets. Some degree of data manipulation. Intermediation by VDCs and local volunteers.	Missed opportunities to leverage FWs' agency for transformational agenda. Apparent effectiveness of managerial approach to development. Feelings of disempowerment and guilt by FWs.
Excessive workload, especially in relation to number of participants required for various activities to meet the quantitative targets.	Routines of intermediation by recruiting local volunteers / leaders to do community organisation and screening of beneficiaries	Mutual enrolment of local leaders and FWs in each other's agenda. Some degree of suspicion. Potential bias in beneficiary selection.
Community-level conflicts due to mismatch of expectations, expectation of elites and WV's Christian identity.	Providing a platform, recognising local elites and making use of intermediaries, influences and networks to pacify.	Mutual enrolment of local leaders and FWs in each other's agenda. Some degree of suspicion.

When CDFs perceived that there was consensus on programme objectives between World Vision, CDFs and community members, combined with a supportive manager, they were able to express their agency in a conscious and reflexive manner on a consistent basis. Managerial focus on achievement of outcome-level changes, not merely requiring accountability for achieving outputs and activities, resulted in necessary flexibility and manoeuvrable space for the fieldworkers. A supportive manager was found to be essential, both to recognise the strengths and competencies of individual fieldworkers and also to provide permission for the expression of their discretion. Based on the research findings, fieldworker discretion enabled by perceived

‘programme fit’ and a supportive manager, within the context of a faith-based and values-based NGO, could be considered by the management as an asset to support its policy objectives.

Chapter 9: Conclusion - NGO Fieldworkers and the Street-Level Bureaucracy

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the findings discussed in chapters 5 to 8 are brought together and reviewed in light of Lipsky's *Street-Level Bureaucracy* framework and other relevant academic literature for application to NGO fieldworkers, summarising key contributions of this particular research to theory and knowledge. Specific recommendations coming out of this research on how NGOs could make use of fieldworker discretion in support of their mission and policy objectives are articulated and important topics for further research inquiry are suggested. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the researcher has had responsibility for many policies, strategic priorities and organisational practices and functions, which are critiqued in this dissertation. And it is likely that the researcher may have future opportunities to work towards relevant changes in light of the learning from this particular research.

This research is based on the application of the theory of *Street-Level Bureaucracy* by Lipsky (1980), to study NGO fieldworker discretion as they work at the interface between NGO organisations and communities. Following is a brief summary of *Street-Level Bureaucracy* on the work of civil servants who provide services to clients of various government agencies. As the bureaucrats operating at the 'street-level' in implementation of a government's policies and welfare programmes, frontline workers directly communicate and interact with the general public. In discharging their duties, they exercise some discretion over what services are offered to whom and how the services are offered (Lipsky, 1980:15). Lipsky argues that discretion is inevitable in the work of street-level bureaucrats as they work in complicated situations, which cannot be reduced to programmatic formats, completely devoid of human judgments. Street-level bureaucrats have relative autonomy in their work and their job priorities are different than those of their managers. They have a need to process workloads expeditiously – get large amounts of work done often with inadequate resources – and they must develop shortcuts and simplifications to cope with the pressure of responsibilities (ibid, 1980:27-33). This autonomy and their work situations allow for discretion and, through the exercise of discretion, clients' policy experience is different from policy intent (ibid, 1980:81-85).

NGOs do not have the statutory authority or accountability to provide services as government agencies do. However, there are some ways in which NGO fieldworkers share similar traits with their government counterparts and could be considered as street-level bureaucrats: a) Many NGOs, including World Vision, attempt to ameliorate poverty or improve children's wellbeing to a large degree through technical solutions and this invariably involves strengthening service delivery, either through direct actions or influencing and improving government services, b) While most activities of NGOs serve a group of people or a population without focusing on individuals who might be part of such groups, some activities of development NGOs do focus on individual clients and take a 'case management approach' and c) In resource-poor communities, NGOs can exercise quite a bit of influence if community members perceive NGOs as being resource-rich or having influence with those who wield power that could potentially benefit them.

This thesis applied the theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy by Lipsky (1980) empirically to research the discretionary behaviour of NGO fieldworkers and through findings expands the theory of Street-Level Bureaucracy at least in two different ways:

(1) NGO fieldworkers expressed their discretion differently than how Lipsky envisages. According to Lipsky, street-level bureaucrats develop patterns of practices in order to limit demand from clients, maximise the available resources and control clients (1980:82,83). NGO fieldworkers developed routines in their interactions with communities in order to make the complex task of implementing NGO plans and policies more manageable at the community level and not for the purpose of limiting demand from clients or controlling clients. Routines and simplifications that Lipsky observed in government bureaucrats included: a) rationing services; b) controlling clients and reducing the consequences of uncertainty; c) using frontline workers' resources economically and d) managing the consequences of routine of practices (1980:86). Routines of interaction observed in NGO fieldworkers differed from Lipsky's and included the following: a) routine of intermediation and distancing, b) routine of rationalisation c) manipulation of target data reporting and d) use of personal resources and resourcefulness.

(2) This research observed the critical role that values and faith plays in the expression of positive discretion by NGO fieldworkers. Lipsky makes an

assumption that the frontline workers don't retain their idealised notions and values when they initially joined the bureaucracy for the long term, as the structure and work pressure of the agency have a homogenising effect on them (1980:82,83). This particular research undertaken in the context of fieldworkers in a faith and values-based NGO, did not find this assertion substantiated. Positive discretionary behaviour was observed when the values or particular competencies of fieldworkers guided the choices made by fieldworkers, resulting in improved benefits for clients. There were several instances of fieldworkers going beyond their call of duty, drawing from their own personal resources to address some of the gaps due to mismatch between NGO plans and community realities. Perception of programme fit and managerial support enabled the fieldworkers to consistently express their positive discretion.

The findings and the analytical framework proposed can be applied to other contexts of fieldworkers and has relevance to other NGOs and institutions, which are guided by faith or certain values in providing services to their clients. Fieldworker discretion could be sanctioned and channelled in alignment with agency policy objectives by ensuring programme fit and managerial support.

2. NGO FIELDWORKERS' EXPERIENCE OF TENSIONS

NGO fieldworkers, similar to street-level bureaucrats serving in government bureaucracies as Lipsky describes, experienced tensions as they implemented NGO policies and programmes in communities. Findings on the sources of tension are described below.

2.1 Policy Conflicts and Ambiguity

Lipsky suggested that goal expectations for agencies in which street-level bureaucrats work often tend to be ambiguous or conflicting. Lipsky mentions that street-level bureaucrats experience policy related conflicts when there are: a) conflicts between client-centred goals and the organisational vision for significant societal change (what Lipsky calls 'social engineering goals'), b) client-centred goals conflict with organisation-centred goals and c) conflicting expectations arise from different stakeholder groups (2010:27, 41). As shown in Chapter 5, there are contradictions within the cascade of NGO policies, strategies and programme designs studied due to

reasons that resonate well with Lipsky and these contradictions are a source of fieldworker tension.

The causes of disconnect in the cascade of organisational policies, strategies and design documents are certainly worthy of consideration. The senior leaders had an understanding of the ideal notions of transformational development since they are clearly mentioned in the TD policy documents. The failure for such notions to be embodied in actual practice may be due to reasons such as: untested hypothesis that transformational development principles could be applied to achieve wellbeing of children in specific areas; participatory and managerial approaches to development could be reconciled or, the kind of core values truly embraced by the top level management, that is, the espoused values in the written official policy documents could be secondary in comparison to other more primary values when faced with the realities of donor funding requirements and organisational sustainability related issues.

As policy intents were translated into strategies and then into designs, they squeezed out the space for fieldworkers by: a) pursuing development as a managerial exercise with emphasis on technical interventions, in which the role of technical experts was more dominant and the fieldworker's role instrumental; b) reducing the importance of process in development; and c) separating NGO policy formulation from implementation where policy formulation served the needs of different organisational insider stakeholders.

Development as a managerial exercise: One area of policy conflict worth noting is the nature of development as described in the NGO policies and how they were cascaded down through strategy and programme design documents in a contradictory manner. While the vision and principles of transformational development endorsed in the policy spoke to the 'whole' of development in an integrated manner, based on a participatory approach, strategy and design documents spoke to 'parts' of the whole, with an emphasis towards a managerial approach and evidence for results. Wilson says that principles of transformational development should break down the divisions between physical, social and spiritual aspects of life (2011:103). While policies of World Vision International spoke to transformational development as whole, strategies and programme designs reinforced the divisions between physical, social and spiritual aspects of life. It is difficult to facilitate a transformational development process solely on the basis of a management paradigm of development. Shift of the organisational

development paradigm from transformational development to focus on child wellbeing outcomes helped solidify a managerial approach to development. Dropping transformational development indicators in favour of child wellbeing targets meant that the scope of measurement was limited mostly to World Vision's own programming contributions rather than broader changes that were happening among children, families and communities in alignment with its understanding of what transformational development was.

Reducing what is complex and varied into something simple, specialised and standardised is part of the managerial approach to development in aid organisations (Ramalingam, 2013:22,24; Chambers, 1997:42). This is because managerial approach to development essentially takes a problem solving approach, breaks down problems into manageable units and implements specific interventions to respond to them. According to Ramalingam, the emphasis is to look for single right answers to solve specific problems with the use of technology, expertise, resources and how-to guidelines (2013:26). In this approach, role of the fieldworkers and participation of community members become technocratic design considerations to ensure expediency and accuracy in implementation of the single right answers, guided by the 'how-to' manuals. It virtually ensures that technical experts and those with authority and resources retained the real power to make decisions. Here the argument is not against good management practices in NGOs, nor is it against making well considered application of good practices that aid community have learned over the years in development projects. But if development is approached as a managerial exercise with certainty of what needs to be done in order to produce certain pre-determined results, then it inevitably instrumentalises both fieldworkers and community members and marginalises their agency.

Also World Vision's choice of child well-being objectives based on ecological approach to human development by Bronfenbrenner (1979) to frame its development objectives probably meant that issues of power and politics were not considered well. Noting that the ecological approach is not an operational concept, if child wellbeing outcomes were looked at as a stand-alone framework, then people could miss the issues of power and politics in their consideration of how to contribute to the wellbeing of children in a sustainable manner. Houston critiques that one theoretical gap of ecological approach is its limited consideration of issues of power and he proposes

alignment of ecological model with Bourdieu's (1996) concept of agency, power and structure to consider issues of power in child development (2017:58-62). As World Vision shifted its development paradigm from transformational development to child wellbeing, the need for addressing the structural causes of poverty and inequality was not as clear as it should have been. Role of advocacy was limited to improving the quality and accountability for service provision. Local issues of power and politics where fieldworkers would have had a central role to play were left out in strategy and project design considerations.

Reducing the space for process elements in development: Transformational development principles were referred as 'process elements' and the organisational bias was towards outputs, which were the immediate measurable results. There was a separation of 'means' from the 'ends' in strategy and design documents. Fieldworkers were the ones who were tasked with implementation and would have been responsible for development 'process'. According to Mosse process in development could mean any of the following: a) taking into consideration the importance of relationships with people, contextual elements and non-project actors in influencing the course of a project, b) having a flexible attitude towards design and being willing to make changes based on on-going learning and c) being open and ready to make adjustments in response to those elements that are not amenable for planning or managerial control (2001:4,5). Managerial approach to development did not recognise the need for these process elements, and as a result fieldworkers were not expected to exercise discretion and judgment, and development became more of a mechanical process of implementing what is stated in the design documents.

Bryant Myers in his book, *Walking with the Poor*, mentions that in transformational development the process of developing programme designs should be considered as being more important than the design itself (2011:239-241). The argument is that social change is not linear and predictable, and so a problem-solving approach will not work. Design development needs to be iterative, adaptive and based on on-going learning. The approach should be about 'learning our way to future and not planning our way to future'. Myers builds on Korten's earlier work, based on a five-programme study in Asia, on the importance of the learning process as opposed to a blueprint approach to development planning. Korten mentions that community needs are a function of political, social and economic contexts in which people live and

programme requirements cannot be determined apart from their contexts, which requires on-going learning and adjustments (1980:499-502). Ramalingam states that for mutual transformation of everyone involved in development work, emphasis needs to shift from treating knowledge as a transactional commodity to learning processes (2013:59). So when process gets de-emphasised, learning is not deliberate or intentional in project design, monitoring and management. Any learning that occurs is mostly single-loop learning, just learning to do something better rather than double-loop learning that questions the existing practices. Purpose of monitoring in single-loop learning is to correct any mistakes and report any gaps and not to look for alternative solutions. Also, process elements do not get much attention of the management due to difficulties in standardising and reporting on process indicators, which are qualitative, context specific and descriptive in nature. Moreover process indicators may call into question some key assumptions about the relevance of interventions in project designs that are often unarticulated. Existing mental models and assumptions get reinforced without due attention to process elements and on-going intentional learning through monitoring, reflection and commitment to making changes. Also, as mentioned by numerous scholars, standardised and quantitative indicators portray a sense of objectivity, professionalism and control for the management (e.g. Eyben, 2012; Chambers, 1997:39-41; Espeland, 1997:1110). They keep the narrative simple, straightforward and make evidence-based practices devoid of contextual elements more easily scalable. It is also more difficult to attribute qualitative, transformative changes to the particular actions of any single aid organisation such as World Vision.

An additional observation in this regard is that aid organisations such as World Vision face the challenge of inherent conflict between development as a social change process and development administration as a managerial exercise. Ramalingam says that development administration requires predictability through planning, resource allocation and performance monitoring for managerial control (2013:20-21). Financial stability of NGOs including World Vision, at least in the short term, is dependent upon effective development administration, more than any deep and meaningful social changes as articulated in their vision and mission statements. Dale makes an argument that development planning as a social change process needs to be separated from project planning for development administration (2013:13). He says that project plans could summarise certain parts of the development planning process. This view could be

challenged because development planning as a social change process and project planning as development administration are based on a different set of theories, accountabilities and control mechanisms.

One contribution of this research is to provide evidence that when context and processes are de-emphasised, it proportionately reduces the discretionary space for fieldworkers. Fieldworkers are meant to be 'context experts', responsible for facilitating local processes of learning and action and when the process is de-emphasised or squeezed out, the domain for fieldworker engagement and expression of their agency is curtailed. This is contrary to what is required in actor-oriented approaches.

Separation of policy formulation from implementation: Additionally, separation of strategy and design development from implementation limits the use of fieldworkers' agency as they are tasked with implementing other people's ideas. Operational level requirements for implementation often tend to be prescriptive in nature. This kind of separation is based on a view that development of design is a higher level activity requiring management and technical oversight, and implementation is all about adherence to the details prescribed in the design and faithfulness in its execution. Goetz says that such an understanding is more about organisational structure of command and control in decision-making and implementation rather than the structuration that Giddens (1984) describes –as fieldworkers being part and parcel of recreating and transforming structures through individual actions (1996:3). In World Vision India's case, the fieldworkers lived in the community and in close proximity to the people that they served. The organisation had invested in fieldworkers with a relatively good salary, benefits and opportunities for their professional growth. Fieldworkers had good knowledge and relationships with various community members and local partners. Nevertheless, their agency was used by the organisation only for the limited purpose of what was considered to be a straightforward implementation of programme plans that others had developed for them. Unfortunately, what the 'right hand' gave in terms of the organisational importance of fieldworkers, the 'left hand' took away through managerial control. Fieldworkers' capability to critically think and take actions to influence social events and processes around them in a purposeful way was not an intentional part of the organisational design in achieving its mission, strategy and programme objectives.

Hirschman mentions that in World Bank funded programmes the ingenuity of development workers was often under-estimated in programme designs, which was also evident in the context of this study among WV fieldworkers (1995:13). Despite the organisational intent, as articulated in World Vision's Development Programme Approach, to enable fieldworkers to live out their 'intentional spirituality' of being present with God and the poor with openness and willingness, their practical organisational value in their everyday work was based on their instrumental worth. This does not mean that the fieldworkers did not selectively use their agency to take purposeful action on their own in certain situations, but just that it was neither expected nor encouraged by the organisation, except in some limited cases.

As Lipsky mentions, fieldworkers have a certain degree of autonomy as they are based in the field, away from their managers' oversight and their work conditions are different from their managers (2010:19). Often NGO project offices have decentralised management structures, as in the case of ADPs studied in World Vision India. According to Chambers decentralised management structures of project offices, autonomy of fieldworkers and participatory decision-making, as opposed to unidirectional top-down decision-making and information flows, are supposed to expand on the fieldworkers' decision-making powers and participation of vulnerable groups (1997:227). Findings from this research have confirmed that a decentralised project team from the NGO headquarters and physical autonomy of fieldworkers from the management do not necessarily lead to either participatory decision-making at an organisational level or expansion of fieldworker discretion. A managerial approach to development limits fieldworker discretion, as conformity is required through a command and control structure from the NGO headquarters to fieldworkers at grassroots level, accompanied by a compliance-oriented organisational culture. Actor-oriented approaches to development that rely on the fieldworkers' expression of their agency could be risky in the short-term, from the NGO organisational perspective, but it can build the fieldworkers' sense of commitment to the organisational objectives over the longer-term.

2.2 Organisational Expectations for Fieldworker Performance

Lipsky speaks to the inherent tensions between the job expectations of managers and street-level bureaucrats (2010:18,19). For example, managers are focused on results and therefore try to limit worker's discretion in order to ensure them, but the street-

level bureaucrats are interested in securing the requirements of completing the job. Lipsky also points to the challenges involved in setting and measuring performance goals in street-level bureaucracies. Long-term performance goals could be idealistic and ambiguous, but they are mostly measured through accomplishment of short-terms objectives. Additionally, it is often difficult to measure standards of quality associated with such outputs (ibid, 2010: 48). One of the contributions of this research is to show that Lipsky's observations on the tensions involved in setting and measuring performance metrics for street-level bureaucrats are applicable to NGO fieldworkers.

Functional accountability of NGOs for short-term deliverables to the exclusion of long-term objectives is mentioned in development literature (e.g. Desai and Howes, 1996:101; Edwards and Hulme, 1996:13). According to Becker et al, measuring performance only for monitoring of immediate outputs and not for alignment with the organisational core values or growth in organisational competencies is not conducive for organisational growth of non-profits (2011:257). It also gives an impression that achieving means is akin to achieving ends. Outputs are often deemed essential for upward accountability of programmes to their senior leadership and funding offices. Given that there were limited organisational discourses in World Vision India on downward accountability to community members or local partners, all that the fieldworkers and managers needed to be concerned about was accountability to the senior leadership and to those who funded the programmes. As mentioned earlier, according to Ebrahim, downward accountability requires monitoring and learning systems that emphasise long-term social change and they need to be simpler and more qualitative in nature (2003:158). If accountability were downward, then the focus and orientation of fieldworkers would be towards communities and local partners, but if it were upward accountability then the orientation would be towards the NGO institutional needs. But monitoring and learning systems reflect the development approach and priorities that are at the heart of an NGO programme and not just something to be accommodated along with upward accountability. In other words, it is hard to reconcile a managerial approach to development with downward accountability to communities and local partners. Downward accountability involves transfer of programme-related decision-making to local communities. Wils mentions that among large NGOs, it was mostly those that partnered with autonomous apex organisations of people being served that had demonstrated better downward accountability (1996:76).

But in the case of World Vision India programmes, they only partnered with local organisations that solely depended on World Vision for funds and programmes. Downward accountability would have required fieldworkers to be responsible for participatory processes at the community level, whereas upward accountability prevailed, which had fieldworkers focused mostly on achieving outputs and reporting against the objectives agreed by donors and management.

Scholars and practitioners have long been aware of the limitations of using planning and monitoring tools such as logframes, indicators and targets in setting goals and measuring them (e.g. Eyben, 2013; Myers, 2011; Mosse, 1998; Korten, 1980). Nevertheless, they continue to be used because they are deeply institutionalised in aid organisations and they are used even when certain types of donors may not be asking for them to be used. Eyben described these as “artefacts of results and evidence”, but, as shown in Chapter 6, these have become “artefacts of management control” (2013:12). One of the contributions of this research is to clarify that managers in aid organisations might be taking a stricter view of control and insist on more rigorous forms of accountability than what donors may require. One good example of this is that NGOs, including World Vision, use very similar planning and reporting requirements for child sponsorship funded programmes, as well as bilateral or multilateral donor government funded programmes. As confirmed by Rabbitts, child sponsors are engaged through organisationally-embedded practices, such as letter writing, gift giving, visits or prayer and not through submission of programme designs and reports (2104:290). As described in Chapter 4, programme designs, logframes, targets and reports did not support World Vision to help a specific ‘child in need’, nor did it help with ‘community break free from poverty’, as advertised, but focused on narrowly defined sector specific objectives. World Vision International did not need these planning and reporting requirements to fulfil sponsors’ expectations but they were used to ensure its own ‘programme quality’ standards and evidence for its impact. So these planning and programming requirements of World Vision International were a reflection of the deeply embedded nature of the managerial approach to development in NGOs. Owczarzak calls it as the ‘audit culture’ that is prevalent in aid organisations, based on an understanding of accountability as meeting pre-determined quantitative targets (2016:327). Such planning and reporting requirements for child sponsorship funded programmes were not unique to World Vision International, but prevalent among other

child sponsorship funded NGOs, which indicates the dominance of this culture across the NGO sector as a whole, when it comes to monitoring, evaluation and accountability for results. For example, Save the Children United States had similar such requirements for their sponsorship funded programmes (Dowd et al, 2014:100).

From an organisational perspective, setting strategic goals, use of evidence-based project models, logframes, monitoring and evaluation systems, such as indicators, targets and scale up are all about working in a highly intentional and effective manner. The need for rigorous planning and accountability for results in donor funded NGO programmes is not questioned here. These artefacts of results and evidence could be useful to bring clarity to planning processes and provide guidance to implementation and monitoring of plans. In using these artefacts of results and evidence, emphasis should have been on competency of users who know when and how to use them. These artefacts should have been seen as tools or resources and not as ends in themselves. For example, monitoring indicators and targets are set up in order for programme staff and local partners to learn about implementation, reflect, make adjustments and take timely corrective actions in response to changing contexts or when originally planned activities and targets are deemed unrealistic during the course of implementation. However, when monitoring measures were used mostly for reporting purposes and falling short of set targets was seen as a performance failure of fieldworkers then these artefacts can prevent open dialogue, adaptation, learning and change and it would have a totalising effect on fieldworkers. As in the case of World Vision India fieldworkers, it could have perverse effects on fieldworkers to reach the target numbers regardless of the changing conditions so as not to displease the senior leadership or the donors. Requiring fieldworkers to report only on quantitatively measurable indicators could dissuade them from engaging in work that is important, but not easily measurable and also deter them from focusing on people that they serve. Typically, tight reporting templates of NGOs, including World Vision, focus on achievement against quantitative targets planned at the beginning of the year and providing an explanation of variance in achievement. Reporting templates may include some space for inclusion of success stories or challenges experienced, but they are usually related to programme outputs and outcomes. So reporting does not expect nor encourage capturing of anything outside the scope of programme plans. This usually means that the narrative as described in the programme design document is sustained through on-going reporting.

When the organising principle for management is based on practices of accountancy rather than mutual accountability, it tends to produce different kinds of relationships, behaviours and perverse incentives. Without disputing the need for accountability of development programmes to provide evidence for changes to the donors, it should be noted that the need for donor reporting and particular ways of understanding accountability is distorting fieldworkers' engagement with communities and how development is practiced in communities. It should be the other way around, facilitating participatory development processes to promote desired social changes and then capturing and reporting on changes using a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures, including descriptive analysis. A greater degree of openness is required on the part of NGOs and donors to explore alternative monitoring and evaluation tools, including descriptive analyses of changes in communities. Outcome mapping and the most significant change stories are some examples of such alternative monitoring tools.

As Lipsky says, the concern of managers was that the planned results were achieved, whereas the fieldworkers' interest was that the work got completed. As discussed in Chapter 6, in order to make the managerial approach of logframe, indicators, targets, etc. sufficiently viable, fieldworkers engaged in processes and relationships with people, organisations and networks that were not visible to the managers in World Vision India. There was no official recognition for everything that fieldworkers needed to do in the background for development programmes as planned to take place, as long as the targets were reported and spending was in line with the budget. Ramalingam says that this tendency to simultaneously operate at two different levels, one at the level of what was officially recognised and reported and another one in terms of relational processes, was certainly reinforced by the co-existence of both a relational and a managerial culture in the organisation (2013:86). Eyben argues that development workers behaving everyday on the basis of what actually works, that is, relational processes while framing their actions in terms of what is accepted in official development circles, which is based on rational and logical approaches is what might be keeping the official development viable (2010:393). While this might be true, it takes a toll on the frontline workers to make it actually work. As noted by Stirrat, fieldworkers end up working too many long hours due to the need to engage in processes that are not articulated or recognised in the managerial approach nor mentioned in the reports (2008:410-411). In faith-based NGOs, such as World Vision

India's context, it is often seen as the fieldworkers' commitment to be available 24 hours a day and seven days a week to work in communities if there was such a need.

2.3 Community and Client Expectations

Community members were not among the primary reference groups for World Vision India fieldworkers, similar to client groups for government services in street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010:45). Community members did not make programming choices, but choices were made for them through organisational strategic priorities, evidence-based project models and budgets provided by the funding offices. Community members might have played a limited role in selecting beneficiaries or influenced the programme in some small measures and thereby became a secondary reference group. So in that sense, clients of NGO fieldworkers are different from clients of street-level bureaucrats in the government agencies that Lipsky describes (2010:47,51). Also, contrary to government workers, NGO fieldworkers could be disciplined somewhat by community members, or at least by those who wield power in communities, by creating conflicts or refusing to cooperate. Findings of this study do not support Lipsky's characterisation of relationships between fieldworkers and clients as disruptive and antagonistic (2010:61,154). However it is worth noting here the rights of citizens in making claims on government staff as statutory duty-bearers that creates assertive civic energy and antagonisms. World Vision India fieldworkers were typically congenial with the exception of specific situations or causes as described in Chapter 7. Fieldworkers certainly exhibited feelings of empathy and sympathy towards what community members faced, which was evidenced by personal actions taken by the fieldworkers in responding to specific situations faced by community members, as described in Chapter 8.

Unmet expectations from child sponsorship were one of the main sources of conflict from community members. As explained earlier, World Vision's programmes were operating at community level targeting a population, whereas the needs and context of individual sponsored children were varied and different from each other. Programmes targeting groups of families or children did not necessarily benefit every sponsored child according to their expectations or the specific needs they were facing in their own unique contexts. This is a classic problem where street-level bureaucrats deal with clients as 'categories of action' as a group, whereas clients experience their needs as individual problems and expect treatment appropriate to their specific needs

(Lipsky 2010:60). According to Watson and Clarke, on one side of the child sponsorship model are successful one-to-one linkages, which form the basis for marketing, public relations and expectations (2014:319). On the other, the belief among NGOs is that the best way to help children in need is through helping families, communities and the broader policy environment in which children live. Aschari-Lincoln and Jager add that since programme funding through child sponsorship is pooled from multiple donors, it negates the probability of any single, external influence on the organisational strategy and reduces organisational risks (2016:615). NGOs such as World Vision want to retain funding sustainability and the flexibility that child sponsorship offers while at the same time offering programmes at community level. The responsibility of reconciling this 'category conflict' due to the mismatch of expectations and programmes offered, falls on the frontline workers as they implement community-based programmes while collecting information and taking pictures of individual children. Any guidelines developed by NGO headquarters would always fall short until this 'category conflict' is resolved.

Child sponsorship involves significant amounts of work for fieldworkers in identification and selection of children, monitoring their progress, writing reports, facilitating communication with sponsors, organising sponsor visits and following up on difficult cases (Watson et al, 2014:86; Eekelen, 2103:475). Despite this heavy workload and conflicts, child sponsorship does provide an opportunity for fieldworkers to get to know individual children and their families over a period of time, understand the opportunities and challenges facing them and, within the constraints of programme design, try to make it possible for sponsored children and their families to participate and benefit in one way or another. So these relationships with individual children and their families give fieldworkers some reasonable degree of knowledge about local communities, which could be wanting otherwise.

Another source of tension for the fieldworkers was the familiar problem of a lack of cooperation or indifference, or in some cases outright hostility, from local elites. And in most cases local elites wanted to use World Vision's programmes as a platform to gain patronage among community members. As well noted in numerous studies, fieldworkers tried to gain some degree of credibility with local elites by consenting rather than opposing locally powerful people and by complying with their expectations (e.g. Blair 2000:25; Mosse 2005:84; Kelsall and Mercer 2003:297; Goetz, 1996:23;

Arnold, 1969:216). This study finding also confirmed mutual enrolment of fieldworkers and Village Development Committee leaders and others into each other's agendas. Leaders of Village Development Committees mediated relationships between fieldworkers and community members and filtered benefits to those that were favoured by them, or at least they were perceived as having the power to do so. This served both them and the fieldworkers. This appears to be a common trait both in government bureaucracies and NGOs for frontline workers and clients to find ways of supporting each other's agendas, as there are self-interests in power relations that exist. As Mosse says ultimately what makes the projects work is not consensus achieved on logframes, targets and reports, but tacit agreements based on relationships, networks, influences, alliances, the sense of obligation felt, patronages formed and informal processes that are not acknowledged (2005:126). For the fieldworkers it was often about balancing and leveraging relationships and social capital that they had earlier developed and credibility gained to offset any negative issues and challenges they faced in communities, whether it was due to child sponsorship or World Vision's Christian identity. Perhaps from the community members' perspective, consideration was more about the overall value of the NGO work among them and relationships and networks with fieldworkers, rather than the challenges posed by specific aspects of the NGO work.

3. NGO FIELDWORKERS' MANAGEMENT OF TENSIONS

The underlying argument of street-level bureaucracy is that providing services to people can't be completely programmed and it will always involve room for human judgement. This creates space for frontline workers to exercise discretion and develop coping mechanisms when they face constraints in their work situation. The purpose of such coping mechanisms is to limit demands for services from clients, control them and maximise available resources. They are able to develop coping mechanisms because they have broad discretion arising from ambiguous goals that do not provide clear guidance to their work and difficulties in measuring performance. Coping mechanisms involve routines and simplifications whereby some people are helped and others are harmed (Lipsky, 2010:81-83).

It is clear from the findings discussed earlier that World Vision India fieldworkers had limited discretionary space due to the pervasiveness of the managerial

approach within the organisation. This research has demonstrated that when the managerial approach becomes all encompassing, prescribing every detail of what the strategic priorities are, how such priorities are to be achieved, what the indicators to be reported on are, and what the targets to be achieved are, then discretion becomes curtailed. Whitty mentions that it is the fieldworkers who are called to account for results predetermined in strategy and design documents and any delegated powers to them are reduced (2015:1372). According to Eyben, artefacts of evidence and results become like organisational fixtures that take on a life of their own independent of the authorities that required them to be used in the first place (2015:731). Typically, managers want to curtail discretionary space for fieldworkers such that they don't deviate from the organisational policies, programme plans guide every activity and achieving targets and spending the budget remains the focus. This study has shown that fieldworkers exercised selective and limited discretion, mostly when the exercise of discretion helped them to meet organisational performance expectations or, at least, when it did not deter them from doing so. Fieldworkers conceded to organisational expectations in large part in order to safeguard their organisational position and relatively good salary and benefits in the Indian NGO context. Limited discretionary space along with the fear of failure resulted in risk aversion by fieldworkers.

According to street-level bureaucracy, routines of interaction involved rationing of services by increasing the costs or time imposed or withholding information and putting in practices such as queuing (Lipsky, 2010:99-104). Routines observed in World Vision India fieldworkers with community members included: a) routine of screening or intermediation and distancing, b) routine of rationalisation c) manipulation of target data reporting and d) use of personal resources and resourcefulness. However, the purpose of such routines was to manage mismatched expectations between what World Vision had to offer and what people expected to benefit and not for the purpose of limiting services per se. While several coping mechanisms were about managing expectations of NGO management and community members, some were about meeting the community's needs out of the fieldworkers' own resources. Routine of intermediation or screening, as Lipsky calls it, involved community volunteers assuming the role of fieldworkers without the organisational authority to do so. The nature of coping mechanisms developed by government bureaucrats and World Vision India fieldworkers were different in nature. This research has also shown that unlike

government bureaucracies, resource constraint was not necessarily found to be a limiting factor for NGO fieldworkers when it was combined with other enabling factors as discussed in the next section (Lipsky, 2010: 27).

Holmes mentions that in Action AID Gambia the short-term nature of fieldworkers' contracts had a negative effect on their motivational level, which in turn affected their work on promoting community participation as per the organisational policies (2001:27). Similarly, other studies of NGOs in Bangladesh and Pakistan describe poor salary and benefits and lack of attention to security concerns of fieldworkers being sources of major stress for them (Ahmad, 2001; Siddique and Ahmad, 2012). However, in World Vision India's case there was recognition that fieldworkers are very important human resources for achieving the mission of the organisation. As described in Chapter 3, fieldworkers were well cared for by the management, with generous salary and benefits, opportunities for training and family retreats, as confirmed by several fieldworkers. Conversely this resulted in fieldworkers working very hard to meet the organisational expectations and please their managers, even when they did not agree with some of these aspects. There were perverse incentives to the fieldworkers being treated well as they did not engage in open dialogue and discussions out of a concern for any negative perception by the senior leadership and thus any negative consequences to their job security. So the challenge for the NGO leadership is to look after the wellbeing of the fieldworkers appropriate to the context, while at the same time providing an enabling environment in which fieldworkers are encouraged to dialogue and discuss divergent viewpoints without causing any threat to their job security.

A few studies found evidence of NGO fieldworkers thwarting the policy intent of the agency through the exercise of discretion (Walter and Gilson, 2004; Goetz, 1996; Jackson, 1990). However, we need to remember that it may not simply be a choice between fieldworkers either supporting or thwarting policy objectives, but there could be a third option of fieldworkers 'gaming the system' by the meeting of policy objectives at a superficial level and really missing the policy intent, as was the case with World Vision India fieldworkers manipulating the targets achieved.

4. FIELDWORKER AGENCY, SENSE OF CALLING AND DISCRETION

Fieldworkers derived their primary motivation and a perceived sense of calling from their faith in God to serve the poor. A strong and consistent relationship between their identity, their vocation and a positive attitude towards their work emerged through the analysis of data. Myers mentions that changed people who have restored their identity as children of God and recovered their vocation as productive stewards of God's creation as some of the goals of transformational development (2011: 190-202). Their own sense of identity and a perceived sense of calling provided the fieldworkers a basis for their engagement with communities and work among the poor. Spiritual aspect gives a strong motivation to people about why they do what they do, encourage them to look for better ways of doing it and try to make a difference in the life of people (Craft, Foubert and Lane, 2011:93). It would be reasonable to propose identity and a perceived sense of calling as being factors in the positive discretion exercised by the fieldworkers resulting in benefits to clients or client meaningfulness described below.

Wade points out that street-level bureaucracy makes an assumption that the frontline workers don't have any lasting commitments towards agency goals and they are primarily concerned about promoting their own self-interests in how they manage the conflicts they experience (1992:51). Also, another related assumption of Lipsky is that the frontline workers don't retain their idealised notions and values when they initially joined the bureaucracy for the long term, as the structure and work pressure of the agency have a homogenising effect on them (1980:82,83). This particular research undertaken in the context of fieldworkers in a faith and values-based NGO, did not find this assertion substantiated. Positive discretionary behaviour was observed when the values or particular competencies of fieldworkers were driven to the fore under particular circumstances, resulting in improved benefits for clients. There were several instances of fieldworkers going beyond their call of duty, drawing from their own personal resources and resourcefulness to address some of the gaps resulting from NGO plans and on the ground realities in communities. For example, some fieldworkers mentioned providing personal help for vulnerable families and some others personally paying for transport of community members to attend ADP meetings. Several examples of personal actions taken by fieldworkers to provide assistance to community members are described in Chapter 8. Formal corporate spiritual practices, such as staff devotions, family retreats and monthly fasting and prayer times organised

by World Vision India, as well as personal spiritual practices of individual fieldworkers and informal peer support mechanisms, helped the fieldworkers to nurture their identity as children or servants of God, view their work as ministry and sustain the ideal notions of their responsibilities as fieldworkers for development work among the poor.

5. CONDITIONS FOR CONSISTENT EXPRESSION OF DISCRETION

Based on the study of fieldworker discretion in World Vision India funded programmes, conditions under which NGO fieldworkers would be able to exercise discretion on a daily basis as they implemented programme activities in collaboration with communities and local partners are proposed here. This is an important and original contribution to knowledge based on the analysis and discussions of the research findings discussed in this thesis.

When certain elements came together in the fieldworkers' work environment, fieldworkers were able to express officially sanctioned, positive discretion in a consistent manner. What is proposed here is different from Lipsky's concept of discretion where the frontline workers of government bureaucracies exercise discretion only for the purpose of managing their tensions and not necessarily in support of the policy agenda to benefit their clients. Also, an argument here is that officially sanctioned discretion by NGO fieldworkers within certain parameters could be considered as an asset and therefore encouraged in development work. At the heart of the matter is that, when channelled appropriately, fieldworker discretion can help in reducing some of the gaps or conflicts in development discourses discussed earlier and affirm the agency and actor-oriented approaches. It is in the interaction of these two factors that we find opportunity, space and official sanction for fieldworker discretion. A few programmes studied displayed these two characteristics together, where fieldworker discretion was consistently expressed with the knowledge and tacit approval of the manager. In other programmes where only one of the two characteristics was present, fieldworker discretion was patchy and often without the knowledge of the programme manager.

1. One element that appears important as part of an enabling environment is 'programme fit', as perceived by the fieldworkers. Fit needs to exist, in the opinions of fieldworkers, between programmes offered, consensus around the critical limiting factor being faced by community members, programme design

and the organisational capability of the NGO. In other words, fieldworkers need to support the NGO policy objectives.

2. The second possible element that is important in the work environment is a supportive manager who can exercise discretion to allow fieldworkers freedom at a tactical level to use his or her particular knowledge, skills, passion and sense of calling in contributing to the outcomes that the NGO is seeking to achieve.

Korten, based on an assessment of five successful programmes in Asia, mentions that a high degree of fit between programme design, beneficiary needs and the capacities of the assisting organisation as the critical success factor for each programme assessed (1980:496). To the extent this understanding of 'programme fit' is present in the minds of fieldworkers, it provides the broad parameters for them to exercise discretion that can meet people's needs, while at the same time contribute towards programme priorities. In such a case, discretion, from the fieldworkers' perspective, could only support and not thwart the NGO objectives. Programme fit points to the need for consensus between community members, local partners and the fieldworkers in the selection of strategic priorities and plans, but with recognition that not everything can be pre-planned at the start. Fieldworker discretion is expressed within the framework programme objectives that the NGO seeks to achieve, and around a 'roadmap', or a plan, to reach the objectives and definition of the role and contributions of partners, along with space for initiating actor-oriented approaches along the way. If fieldworkers don't perceive 'programme fit' then they feel constrained in the exercise of discretion as that could go beyond the scope of programme design or strategic priorities. Perception of programme fit indicates the fieldworkers' supportive stance for the NGO policies. Studies point to how fieldworkers create value through their discretion when they are in support of the policy objectives and when they believe they are acting on behalf of the clients without deliberately violating the agency policies (Ellis, 2011; Maynard-Moody & Musheno, 2011). However, perception of 'programme fit' is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for fieldworker discretion.

Support of a programme manager to the fieldworker is essential for officially sanctioned discretion to be expressed in a consistent manner. Management literature confirms the significant effect that immediate managers have on a staff member's motivation, autonomy and productivity, even though top managers and leaders set the

overall tone and influence the collective value for the organisation (Schewe, 2015; Yang, Ergenelli and Ari, 2007; Zhang and Tsui, 2010:671). Ellis mentions that supportive management in a microenvironment can shape the frontline practice and enable value discretion (2011:221). Interpersonal trust provides the basis for a supportive manager to know and appreciate the particular strengths of each subordinate (Schewe, 2015:513; Li and Tan, 2012:409). According to Farr-Wharton et al, this trust-based relationship between the supervisor and subordinates increases autonomy of the subordinates (2011:3497). Pigeon et al add that staff would need to feel a personal sense of 'empowerment' by the manager to engage in forms of discretion that are visible to managers (2017:358-361). 'Empowerment' means that the self-initiated efforts by staff are supported and recognised by the manager. What all these studies tell us is that immediate manager matters the most when it comes to frontline workers' discretion; their ability to create a micro environment in which trust based relationships can flourish, manager's knowledge of the particular strengths and weaknesses of individuals allows certain degree of autonomy for their staff with a sense of empowerment. Interestingly those that feel 'empowered' engage in 'empowering' behaviour towards others.

Fieldworker discretion that is sanctioned by the immediate manager as long as such discretion contributes to the programme objective and priorities is the key criteria here. A manager does not lay aside programme designs and NGO expectations, but allows a certain level of flexibility for initiating actor-oriented approaches. This kind of discretion does not lead to conflicts with the design document and other organisational requirements and may result in additional work over and beyond them, but it affirms the agency of fieldworkers and creates visibility to the manager.

It is important that in NGO programmes based on managerial approach these two factors are present together for fieldworker discretion to be exercised on an on-going basis, with some degree of official sanction. If programme fit were not there, then it would become harder to obtain managerial support for exercise of fieldworker discretion outside the scope of programme design. If managerial support doesn't exist, then fieldworker discretion can be seen as a negative factor and can be expressed only in an ad hoc or sporadic manner.

Fieldworker discretion should be about considering their agency as an asset for development, in intentionally allowing them to take purposeful actions to bring about

social changes in line with NGO objectives, jointly agreed with community members and local partners. This is especially important when it comes to critical local limiting factors that are deeply embedded in a context in which fieldworkers can make a contribution. If development is essentially a human process that depends on agency, vocation, competency and values of individuals and groups of people to work together, influence others and make lasting changes, then the agency and role of fieldworkers in working with people in communities should be at the forefront of NGO development projects. If development is affected by motivation, aspirations, self-identity, confidence, values, worldview, religious beliefs and practices, decision-making ability, attitude towards others, relationships and the willingness of many individuals, networks and groups to work together, then it cannot be delivered exclusively through a managerial approach.

Fieldworker discretion becomes especially important when dealing with, what is generally described as, 'wicked problems' or 'messes' in development literature, recognising the limitations of rational managerial approaches to solve such problems. An open, iterative and learning approach requires providing space for fieldworkers to learn, make adjustments and take actions at local level in an adaptive manner. Hold the project team accountable for a higher-level of outcome level changes and give them freedom when it comes to embedding outputs and activities in specific local contexts in which fieldworkers carry out their work. While a package of technical interventions might be broadly applicable (such as technical interventions to improve mother and child health), it doesn't mean that the same programme design can be implemented in a similar way across all contexts. People's values, beliefs, behaviour, capacity of local partners, culture and a range of other factors vary between contexts, requiring different approaches. Ramalingam says that these so-called 'softer' aspects of development are often harder for aid organisations to put into practice (2013:91). Fieldworkers would know local contexts better than others in NGOs as they live and work at the local level and they should be involved in development and interpretation of programme designs or plans to dynamic changes in their contexts with responsibility and discretionary space to take into account these 'softer' aspects of development.

6. MOVING FORWARD

6.1 Lessons Transferable for Development NGOs in General

This research was conducted in development programmes of World Vision India, located in rural Tamil Nadu. The organisational context of World Vision India makes the findings not generalisable across the NGO sector, however, several of the findings may be transferable wherein NGO programmes share several similar characteristics with the World Vision India programmes studied.

Consider fieldworker agency and discretion as an asset rather than as a threat or risk to be constrained because it could potentially disrupt the NGO policy agenda. The fieldworker provides the interface between the NGO and the people, interpreting the project to the people and vice versa. NGOs need to bear in mind that project designs, when they are being developed, reflect the aspirations of what the NGO would like to accomplish in the future, but fieldworkers are the ones who implement the project designs in the reality of the present moment – often in contexts that are messier, more complex and dynamic than what can be portrayed in neatly packaged design documents. Ideals and values that often motivate a person to join an NGO as a fieldworker in the first place are not necessarily lost as they work with NGOs over a period of time. Carefully thought through and facilitated organisational processes and conditions can rekindle such passion and ideals in fieldworkers and, as this research has demonstrated, fieldworkers often use their discretion to promote NGO objectives and the wellbeing of people. Consider actor-oriented approaches and agency of fieldworkers as part of the strategy and programme design rather than merely as instruments to implement them.

Develop a framework and an inclusive process for international NGOs to develop their strategy, policies, programme designs and systems that would intentionally include the fieldworkers. In many international NGOs, policies, strategies and designs are developed to speak to the interests and concerns of donors and other senior stakeholders and participation of fieldworkers, if there is any at all, is largely tokenistic. Such a framework and process can help reduce the gap between policy and practice and transform the process of their development as an exercise in contributing to organisational development. Principles or transformational development in communities need to become principles for organisational development.

Ensure that human resource processes, policies and performance management systems affirm the discretionary roles of fieldworkers and are responsive to their needs and contexts. There needs to be organisational space for their voices to be heard, including supervisory discretion to allow fieldworker discretion. Performance management needs to take into consideration the congruence of fieldworkers' values, commitment to the organisational mission and contributions to intangible aspects of development, such as community participation and the quality of relationships with community members, in addition to meeting tangible performance targets for programme implementation.

Place equal emphasis on the skills, knowledge and commitment required in field staff, along with good quality design, monitoring and evaluation standards, systems and documents. While such standards and systems are important, they are merely tools and resources and not an end in themselves. If people are not competent and conversant in the use of such tools, they can be misused and results may be counterproductive. Develop programme designs and plans as diligently as possible, but once developed, use them flexibly, adapting them to changes in contexts or emerging new opportunities. Don't be afraid to make changes to logframe and design documents. Use quantitative data on achievements to inquire, ask questions, and promote discussions and learning and don't view any deficit in reaching the target data as a performance failure. Performance data can be manipulated if fieldworkers are afraid of punitive actions by the senior leadership. Train senior leaders in NGOs in appropriate use of artefacts of evidence and results. Learn to use progress reports and dashboards to query and learn rather than to reach conclusions.

Promote mutual dialogue between fieldworkers and technical specialists and, similarly, between field workers and senior leadership teams. Dialogue and conversation lead to understanding, common bonds, mutual respect, and genuinely seeking to listen to and understand what the other is saying. Development requires forms of social interaction that enable different individuals and groups within communities, as well as policy makers, service-providers, faith communities and others, who are affected by an issue, to enter into dialogue, negotiation, learning, decision-making and collective action. The goal is what Habermas calls 'communicative action' that is oriented towards reaching mutuality of reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge, mutual trust, accord and coordinated actions among

all the players involved in development, including community groups and local partners (1981:101).

Good relationships are critical to the success of organisations and development projects, but ‘relationship’ tends to be a black box that is not readily amenable to analysis or quantification. Managerial approaches tend to relegate relationships as part of ‘assumptions’ column in project logframes. Relationships between development workers, technical specialists communities, networks, institutions and others need to be treated both as ‘means’ and ‘goals’ of development work. Consider relational approaches and not just technical rationality as the basis for NGO organisational development and working with communities and local partners for transformational development. The Relational Proximity Framework by Ashcroft et al is a way of unpacking relationships and better understanding what makes them successful (2016:344-38). The Relational Proximity Framework could be applied to nurture and measure effective relationships both within NGO (e.g. between senior leadership and frontline workers; technical specialists and frontline workers and others) and in relation to their work in communities (e.g. between frontline workers and vulnerable sections of communities and relationships between different community groups).

Resist the temptation to pursue large programme budgets and consider a low or tight budget that provides sufficient funding for staff costs, operational costs and for the minimum required activities as an opportunity rather than as a constraint. It can allow NGOs and fieldworkers to focus on what is really important, be externally oriented rather than being busy with implementing pre-planned activities and spending budgets. This will help fieldworkers to engage in relationship-building, develop networks and facilitate transformational changes that do not necessarily require a lot of money, but time, trust-based relationships, mutual respect and accountability to communities and local partners with those that NGOs serve.

NGOs that do child sponsorship may need to consider integration of case management approaches to work with individual registered children within population-based programming approaches. Ways of managing the cost efficiency of such approaches could be managed through selecting smaller geographic areas and carefully emphasising the depth of engagement over the breadth of geographic coverage. Innovative approaches to training community volunteers in child wellbeing could also be helpful in developing low-cost community-based methods of managing child sponsorship. This could potentially reduce some of the tensions that fieldworkers face

due to challenges associated with implementing child sponsorship in a development setting.

Child sponsors (and other donors acquired through mass-marketing approaches) do not require programme design documents and monitoring reports like aid agencies of donor governments require. In light of this, make the programme design and reporting requirements for programmes funded by child sponsorship flexible. There are other more flexible approaches to planning, monitoring and reporting available which could be used in the place of a traditional linear approach to planning and a more descriptive analysis in reporting (e.g. planning and monitoring based on qualitative approaches such as appreciative inquiry, outcome mapping and the most significant changes).

Intentionally invest in organisational culture that values learning from community members, frontline workers and promote downward accountability. Put the emphasis on learning by staff members and volunteers, alongside knowledge management, which commoditises knowledge and more highly values certain types of 'universal' knowledge rather than local and particular knowledge. Knowledge management also gives a false impression that learning cycles could be shortened for people, with a speedy scale-up of evidence-based practices. In development work, technical interventions that are based on 'universal' knowledge should be applied alongside contextual knowledge in order for them to be effective. An enabling institutional environment, including a clear policy framework, leadership commitment, flexible funding, supportive systems and procedures, integrated and field-based training and creative management, supported by an organisational culture, in which people are encouraged to take risks, is required for fieldworkers to be effective on the frontlines.

6.2 Recommendations for Further Research Inquiry

While this research has shed light in line with the researcher's interests, it has raised a number of other related questions. These topics are listed below for research by scholars who are interested in actor-oriented approaches to development:

Examine the causal link between fieldworker discretion and budget level in NGO funded programmes: In one of the programmes studied, tight budget was found to increase the discretionary space for fieldworkers, as opposed to constraining it. So in that sense, NGO fieldworkers could be different from frontline workers in street-level bureaucracies of governments. In street-level bureaucracy, resource scarcity is

mentioned as a fundamental source of tension for the frontline workers. However, when it comes to local development work, there is acknowledgment that external funding in general puts constraints on choices by local actors in a programme (e.g. Dichter, 2003:186-187; Ramesh, 1996:115; Bunch, 1982:19-20). The tighter the budget, the implication for fieldworkers could be that they are less focused on spending budgets on schedule. Also, the smaller the budget, it is less likely to invite closer scrutiny by senior leadership and World Vision funding offices. However, as mentioned above, further research would be required to test any causal link between fieldworker discretion and budget level in NGO funded programmes.

Application of the Relational Proximity Framework for Development NGOs: Ashcroft et al propose five aspects of relationships: Directness, Continuity, Multiplexity, Parity and Commonality (2016:32-38). It is suggested that these form the context within which close relationships are more likely to develop and if one or more is missing, building a relationship tends to be harder. Given the importance of relationships within development and social change processes, test and develop the framework further for application in the context of NGO organisational development as well as, working with communities and local partners in transformational development work. What would it mean to state relationships both as 'means' and as 'goals' of organisational and community development work? How would such an understanding change the nature of NGOs' work and effectiveness? This is an important area of research to respond to criticisms by Ramalingam (2013) and Eyben (2010) of existence of parallel cultures in aid organisations and relational approaches making the 'substantialist' official views of development viable.

Fieldworkers and Network Patterns: Fieldworkers have their own networks among local community members, elites and partners that they work with on a regular basis. They influence and exercise discretion with others in this network. This is discussed to a limited extent when fieldworkers' discretion with members of local Village Development Committees is described in Chapter 7. But a further study of fieldworkers' relationships, network patterns and interactions with community members, local partners and others to understand how fieldworkers promote social changes while implementing development programme activities is warranted. Development as a social change process involves a network of actors who are enrolled

in each other's agendas in communicating specific claims, information, orders and goods.

Fieldworkers and their influence on NGO leaders and organisations: The extent to which fieldworkers as street-level bureaucrats influence NGO management and the organisational environment of NGOs needs further inquiry. Organisations such as World Vision often require fieldworkers to live and work in the communities they serve for the purposes of promoting community participation in programme implementation and contributing to the relevancy of the organisation in serving the poor and marginalised. This was implied in the job description for the fieldworkers in World Vision India, but there were no feedback loops between fieldworker learning in communities and organisational development and strategy processes. Organisational culture was not conducive for fieldworker voices to be heard. How could fieldworkers become more reflexive practitioners? What role can fieldworkers play in enabling NGOs to become learning organisations by strengthening learning loops between communities and NGO management? How can fieldworkers contribute to the development of organisational policies and strategies by reflecting perspectives, needs, and opportunities of poor communities? What roles could fieldworkers play in strengthening NGO accountability to the communities they serve?

The role of fieldworkers in strategy and programme design development and management systems of international NGOs requires exploration, possibly through action research-based approaches. While fieldworkers may not fully understand the challenges involved in raising funds, donor requirements and managing NGOs in given statutory environments, working together with them in developing strategy, programme design and management systems could potentially bridge the gap between the dual realities and conflicts they face.

Research to understand what it would take to equip and prepare NGO leaders to ensure fieldworkers' discretion could become an asset to the organisation beyond tokenism. The role and competency requirements of NGO leaders and the world in which they operate are very different from that of the fieldworkers and it requires an intentional effort to equip the NGO leaders. What changes would be required in the human resource policies and practices of NGOs to value fieldworker discretion and provide organisational space for their voices to be heard?

Another useful area of research would be to explore how child sponsorship might be redefined to reconcile the category conflict that currently exists between individualised expectations and programming at the community level. How might there be a greater degree of alignment between how the programming is carried out, how it is promoted to the sponsors and how it is promoted to the sponsored child?

7. CONCLUSION

This research was undertaken to study NGO fieldworker discretion in the context of seven Area Development Programmes of World Vision India. The main research question for this PHD thesis was: To what extent are the NGO fieldworkers in World Vision India able to manage tensions they experience in their actual daily practices as they work at the interface between the organisation and communities?

This research has enlarged the scope and reach of the street-level bureaucracy conceptual framework by examining one NGO in contrast to a government programme. Applicability of street-level bureaucracy is confirmed for NGO fieldworkers through this research as it has proven that; a) NGO fieldworkers experienced tensions in their work due to policy conflicts, ambiguity and mismatch of client and organisational expectations; b) NGO fieldworkers exercised limited and selective discretion when it helped them to meet their organisational expectations or, at least, it did not deter them from doing so and c) Fieldworkers' exercise of discretion influenced how community members experienced the NGO. But the research findings also revealed the difference between the experiences of frontline workers in government agencies and in NGOs. NGO fieldworkers retained their idealised notions and values as they worked in values and faith-based organisational contexts, as a result of which they made use of their personal resources and resourcefulness to serve their clients while according to Lipsky, street-level bureaucrats employed government agencies do not. Fieldworker discretion can be an asset for NGOs to further their policy objectives when there is 'programme fit' and a supportive manager. NGOs may have a unique opportunity when it comes to their street-level bureaucrats.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: QUESTION GUIDES

Question Guide for Community Development Facilitators

Name of the CDF:
ADP:
Date:
Time began and finished:

Explain the overall objective as learning about fieldworker's experience directly from the fieldworkers as they serve between the NGO and communities. Assure each participant of anonymity of all the information provided. Request their consent before beginning the interview and their permission to record the interview.

1. How many communities and total population that you serve? What are the main characteristics of the communities that you are responsible for?
2. Recall the time when you first joined as the development fieldworker. What attracted you to the role?
3. What do you think are the expectations of the ADP manager for you?
4. What do you think are the community expectations for you?
5. What does a typical day of work look like for you?
6. What is your role in programme planning process? What are the groups and partners you work with in planning. Given some examples.
7. How do you go about in implementing planned activities? What are the groups and partners that you work with in implementation? Give some examples.
8. How do you monitor what is being implemented? Whom do you work with in monitoring? Give some examples.
9. What happens when the planned activities are not accomplished and when the results may fall short?
10. How do you respond to any changes in the community context or if any new opportunities that come up which were not part of the initial programme plan? Share some examples of such instances.
11. What are the specific constraints that originate from the ADP office or World Vision India office that you have experienced? Share some examples. How do you manage the constraints? (Explore the nature of each constraint one by one).
12. What are the specific constraints that originate from communities or local partners that you have experienced? Share some examples. How do you manage the constraints? (Explore the nature of each constraint one by one).
13. What aspects of the role do you enjoy the most?
14. What aspects of the role do you enjoy the least?
15. Do you have anything else to share with me regarding the topics that we discussed today?

Ensure that personal details such as gender, family status, education level, where does the fieldworker originate from, where does he/she currently live, and experience on the job are gathered before the interview is finished.

Thank the participant for their time in participating in the interview

Question Guide for ADP Manager

Name of the Manager:
ADP:
Date:
Time began and finished:

Explain the overall objective as learning about fieldworker's as they serve between the NGO and communities. Assure each participant of anonymity of all the information provided. Request their consent before beginning the interview and their permission to record the interview.

1. What are your performance expectations for CDFs?
2. What are your behavioural expectations for CDFs?
3. What support do the CDFs receive in fulfilling your expectations for them?
4. What is the role of the CDFs in programme planning, implementation and monitoring?
5. What level of authority do the CDFs have in being able to change plans and programmes based on local needs and issues?
6. Who are some of your most effective fieldworkers? What characteristics or behaviour set them apart from the rest?
7. What are the criteria that you use in assessing CDFs' performance?
8. What tensions do you believe the CDFs face in their daily work? How do you or the organisation support them to manage their tensions?
9. Do you have anything else to share with me regarding the topics that we discussed today?

Ensure that personal details such as gender, family status, education level, where does the fieldworker originate from, where does he/she currently live, and experience on the job are gathered before the interview is finished.

Thank the participant for their time in participating in the interview

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCHER'S PRE-INTERVIEW BELIEFS REGARDING FIELDWORKERS

- Fieldworkers prioritise and invest time in building relationships with local communities, especially with the poor and vulnerable.
- Fieldworkers are advocates and influencers for the poor and the vulnerable both with local communities, partners and World Vision India management.
- World Vision India fieldworkers are primarily motivated by their Christian faith and love for the poor in doing what they do.
- Fieldworkers retain their values and their original motivation as they have worked as fieldworkers for several years, even though their values and motivation are somewhat tempered by the realities.
- As World Vision International and India give prominence to the role of fieldworkers and invest in their wellbeing, there is organisational space for them to express their views and opinions.
- Fieldworkers collaboratively work together with ADP manager and technical specialists in programming. They are able to bring community perspective and input into programme planning, implementation and monitoring, adapting technical guidance to their community contexts, needs and opportunities.
- Fieldworkers are paid well and are comfortable. They don't want to do anything that can jeopardize their job position and security.
- Fieldworkers do not meet the performance targets from time to time either due to poor planning or changes in community contexts or due to their own poor performance. ADP manager review when the performance targets are not met and accept them when are due to legitimate reasons.
- Fieldworkers are able to make some degree of changes to programme plans and their valid suggestions within reason are accepted by the ADP manager and World Vision India.
- Some of the fieldworkers are able to take risks and bring innovation to their work. They are pro-active in looking for opportunities and solve problems.
- Child sponsorship is labour intensive work for fieldworkers. Fieldworkers are able to align programming to meet the needs of sponsored children by including them in specific activities. From time to time, there are conflicts arising from mismatch of expectations, but they are few.
- World Vision India's Christian identity cause conflict for the fieldworkers, but they are able to resolve them through establishing goodwill over a period of time.

APPENDIX 3: WVI POLICY ON TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Preamble

Transformational development is one of the lines in the World Vision Mission Statement and therefore is a required core competency of World Vision. World Vision intends its transformational development to be fulfilled in an integrated and holistic way in relation to the other lines in the Mission Statement. Transformational development programs and processes are carried out in a way that is consistent with World Vision Core Values.

Principles

1. *Call for humility*: World Vision engages in transformational development programs accepting that transformation is a continuous process of holistic change brought about by God and that people need to be free to discover God's work among them for themselves.
2. *Definition*: Transformational development is a process and actions through which children, families, and communities move toward wholeness of life with dignity, justice, and hope.
3. *Community ownership*: Because transformational development is the responsibility of the people themselves, actions are taken that empower the community and all of its members to envision, plan, implement and evaluate the program in an interdependent relationship with World Vision, local governments, churches and other NGOs.
4. *Sustainability:* Transformational development programs are designed with the expectation that the changes are sustainable materially, socially, psychologically and spiritually.
5. *Holism*: Transformational development programs reflect an integrated physical-spiritual understanding of human beings; the world they live in and the way people develop.
6. *Mutuality*: World Visions involvement in transformational development seeks the continuing transformation of all partners, including World Vision staff, boards, donors as well as churches, NGOs and governments.
7. *Approach*: World Vision's approach to transformational development is child-focused, community-based, sustainable, and holistic.

Impact

8. *Well being of children.* Transformational development programs employ processes, actions and sectoral interventions that enhance the capacities of families and communities to a) to ensure the survival of girls and boys, b) to enhance access to health and basic education, c) to provide opportunities for spiritual and emotional nurture, d) to develop sustainable household livelihood and enhance the capacity of children to earn a future livelihood, and e) to protect girls and boys from abuse and exploitation.
9. *Empowered children* Transformational development programs employ processes and actions that enable girls and boys to participate in the development process as agents of transformation.
10. *Transformed relationships:* Transformational development programs employ processes and actions that a) invite a restored relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, 2) promote both just and peaceful relationships within households, communities and social systems, and 3) encourage a responsible relationship with the environment.
11. *Interdependent relationships:* Transformational development programs employ processes and take actions that release people and communities to influence and shape their surroundings by forming coalitions and strategic alliances for mutual cooperation and action for change.
12. *Transformed social systems:* Transformational development programs intentionally address policy, systemic and structural constraints on development by promoting change in systems and structures in accordance with the Ministry Policy on Promotion of Justice.
13. *Transformed donors*: World Vision's relationship with sponsors results over time in changes in worldview, giving patterns and lifestyles that are more consistent with Christ's concern for the poor.

Transformational development programming

14. *Design, monitoring, and evaluation:* The partnership program design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation framework is used to plan and manage transformational development programs. Ap-

propriate impact measures are established and measured to help the community and World Vision assess program effectiveness. Reports are made on the partnership transformational development indicators every three years.

15. *Technical interventions:* Transformational development programs include appropriate sectoral interventions. Such interventions are planned and implemented to build local capacity and accountability. Technical interventions meet internationally accepted sector-specific standards and guidelines.
16. *Sponsored children:* Transformational development programs using sponsorship-funding impact sponsored children and their families in identifiable ways, in accordance with the Child Sponsorship Policy.
17. *Child Protection:* Transformational development programs employ processes and actions that equip the community to identify and respond to the needs of vulnerable girls and boys in a manner that is in the best interest of the child. Transformational development programs meet the requirements of World Vision's Child Protection policies and guidelines.
18. *Gender:* Transformational development programs intentionally reveal the social situation, as well as the potential of women and girls, and strengthen families and communities to empower girls and women, consistent with the policy on Gender and Development.
19. *Resilience to crises:* Transformational development programs employ processes and actions that reduce risks and enhance capacities of families and communities to cope, mitigate, and respond to disasters, conflicts, and HIV/AIDS.
20. *Economic development.* Transformational development programs address the economic underpinnings of poverty by enabling access to financial services, markets, technology, information, and know-how in ways that increase the economic security and resilience of the whole community.
21. *Rights and responsibilities*: Transformational development programs increase awareness of human rights and international conventions and promote just practices for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, caste, disability, religion or age.
22. *Churches:* Transformational development programming seeks to build strategic alliances with local churches within the requirements of the Ministry Policy on Strategic Initiatives.
23. *Witness to Jesus Christ*: Transformational Development employ processes and actions that integrate intentional and holistic witness to the good news of Jesus Christ without violating our rejection of proselytism. This witness is consistent with the requirements the Ministry Policy on Witness to Jesus Christ.
24. *Marketing*: The marketing strategies and messages about transformational development programs are consistent with the principles and practices contained in this policy. And are consistent with the Ministry Policy on Public Awareness. Transformation of sponsors and donors is pursued.
25. *Integrated resourcing*: Integrated use of child sponsorship, major donor gifts, government grants, food, monetized food, and GIK is essential to providing the resources necessary to fully deliver on our vision of transformational development.
26. *Accountability*: Resources invested in transformational development match the purposes for which they were given. Regular reports on impact and use of resources are made.
27. *Building capacity*: The quality of transformational development programs, including our Christian witness, depends on the lives of our staff and their relationships with each other and the poor. Regular investment is made to enhance the commitment, character, competence, critical thinking, and care of staff teams.

APPENDIX 4: WVI POLICY ON CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Preamble

World Vision child sponsorship enhances the quality of World Vision's transformational development and public awareness ministries by providing sponsors, children, and their families and communities with a service that allows sharing of their resources, hopes and experiences in a way that can transform both. Child sponsorship provides the majority of resources for transformational development. Therefore, child sponsorship is a required core competency of World Vision.

Principles

Sponsorship. Reflecting Christ's love for children, World Vision child sponsorship creates a special relationship between children, their families and communities, and sponsors that contributes to the transformation of all toward fullness of life with dignity, justice, peace and hope.

Practice

1. *Transformational development*. World Vision child sponsorship supports, enriches and is seamlessly integrated into World Vision's practice of transformational development as described in the Ministry Policy on Transformational Development. Transformational development programs impact all children, including sponsored children, in identifiable ways, and treat children as active participants and agents of change.
2. *Emergency relief*. When communities are affected by emergencies, program plans are adjusted and additional resources are sought to provide an appropriate relief response.
3. *Industry standards*. Where World Vision has endorsed national or regional sponsorship codes of practice, World Vision child sponsorship programming adheres to their requirements.
4. *Well-being of children*. Programs supported by sponsorship focus on the well-being of children by enabling families and communities to improve health, basic education, spiritual and emotional nurture, protection from abuse, violence and exploitation, and development of sustainable livelihoods. Special note is taken of children affected by HIV/AIDS and disabilities.
5. *Selecting children*. Approximately equal numbers of girls and boys are enrolled, reflecting the diversity of the community as much as is reasonable. Programs assist the poorest and most vulnerable families as much as possible given the need to meet the communication and monitoring requirements of child sponsorship at an affordable cost. World Vision does not knowingly enroll a child or family already enrolled with another sponsorship agency, nor does World Vision link more than one sponsor to one child, without the knowledge of the sponsors.
6. *Parental permission*. Parents are fully informed as to the nature of World Vision child sponsorship and agree to the enrolment of their children with the understanding that the program benefits the community as well as their children.
7. *Impact on sponsored children*. Measurable progress in the areas of health, education and spiritual nurture of sponsored children are monitored and documented regularly. The impact of the transformational development program on registered children and families is also documented annually. Sponsored children and their families can articulate the impact of the program on their lives.
8. *Adequate funding*. The partnership provides resources adequate to enable national offices to meet the requirements of this policy.
9. *Sharing the* credit. Because transformational development programs draw on resources from the community, local agencies and others in addition to World Vision's, World Vision takes care only to claim those impacts for which World Vision funding is the major contributing factor. Contributions of others are acknowledged in appropriate ways.
10. *Sponsor transformation*. World Vision's relationship with sponsors results over time in changes in values, giving patterns and lifestyles that are consistent with Christ's concern for the poor as well as an enhanced relationship with God.
11. *Funding approach*. Sponsor contributions are combined with resources from other sponsors and donors to support the transformational development program. Sponsored children and their families are participants and among the primary beneficiaries of the program, while equity is encouraged among both sponsored and non-sponsored children and families.
12. *Marketing communications*. Marketing materials as a whole communicate the benefit to sponsored children and families in ways that fully express this policy and the Ministry Policy on Transformational Development. The dignity and privacy of children, families, communities and sponsors are

protected. Child sponsorship marketing and communication materials unambiguously and clearly disclose the fund approach described in number 12.

13. *Child protection*. Requirements are met of both World Vision's Child Protection Policy and World Vision's Standards for Reporting on Vulnerable Children. World Vision protects children and families from inappropriate solicitations from sponsors and also protects sponsors from inappropriate solicitations from sponsored families.
14. *Protection of child information*. Requirements are met for the protection of child photographs and personal information. Requirements of the Partnership Minimum Standards for Internet Presence are met.
15. *Customer service*. Communications and services to sponsors meet the requirements of the Customer Relations Handbook. Creativity and innovation in customer service are encouraged.

APPENDIX 5: PROJECT LOGFRAMES

Improving Mother and Child Health

Hierarchy of Objectives	Objectives	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal	Children enjoy healthy childhood	Prevalence of stunting in children under five years of age	Caregiver survey reports	Parents are aware about the importance of growth monitoring and proving their children nutritious foods
Outcome 1	Improved Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) practices towards decreasing childhood malnutrition and morbidity	Prevalence of wasting in children under five years of age	Caregiver survey reports	Parents are aware about the importance of growth monitoring and proving their children nutritious foods
		Prevalence of underweight in children under five years of age	Caregiver survey reports	Parents are aware about the importance of growth monitoring and proving their children nutritious foods
		Coverage of essential vaccines among children	Caregiver survey reports	Children's vaccination cards are available with the mother and are updated after every immunization
		Percentage of children under 5 with diarrhoea who received effective treatment of diarrhoea	Caregiver survey reports	The methods to treat diarrhoea are communicated to parents and are followed by parents / caregivers
		Percentage of children under 5 with presumed pneumonia who were taken to appropriate health provider	Caregiver survey reports	Parents take their children to consult doctors if continued cough and disturbance in their breathing
		Percentage of women who gave birth to their youngest child at a health facility	Caregiver survey reports	The pregnant women and their families plan their delivery well in advance and prepare to have it in nearby health facility for safe and secure delivery
Project Output 1.1	Improved access and utilization of Ante Natal Care (ANC) / Post Natal Care (PNC) services	# of mothers of children 0–23 months who received a post-natal visit from a trained health care worker within two days after birth of their youngest child	Validation from HMIS Data at the Block & Dist. Level	Appropriate counselling, motivation and follow-up sessions on post-natal care and its importance are stressed continuously
		# of pregnant women registered in AWC	Project records and monitoring system.	Importance of registration of pregnancy and undertaking of counselling are motivated
		# of maternal deaths (post partum)	Validation from HMIS Data at	The pregnant women are aware of health risks if they

			the Block & Dist. Level	fail to maintain appropriate healthy behaviours
		Percentage of mothers who report that they had four or more antenatal visits while they were pregnant with their youngest child	Caregiver survey reports	
Activity 1.1.1	Capacity building of programme staff, Skill enhancement of frontline workers and periodic refresher training / Village Health and Nutrition Day facilitations			
1.1.2	Awareness and knowledge creation among pregnant women and caregivers on safe pregnancy, institutional delivery, birth spacing and maternal care			
1.1.3	Engage with health system and ensure Periodic / monthly reports on ANC / PNC services			
1.1.4	Conduct coordination / networking meeting at the Block and District level to implement and scale-up ANC / PNC services			
Project Output 1.2	Improved health seeking behaviour (Treatment / Immunization) and Practicing of Healthy Timing and Spacing of Pregnancies (HTSP)	Percentage of married women practising birth spacing	Caregiver survey reports	Parents are motivated to have their children all the scheduled vaccines without fail
		# mothers oriented on WASH & diarrhoea management	Project records and monitoring system.	Adequate stock of ORS and Zinc tablets are available in the Anganwadi / ASHA workers
Activity 1.2.1	Mobilize the community to increase the knowledge on HTSP through campaigns / meetings			
1.2.2	Strengthen the routine immunization through joint monitoring / supportive supervision			
1.2.3	Promote correct health / treatment seeking			

	behaviour for management of Diarrhoea and Pneumonia			
Project Output 1.3	Improved Infant Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Practices	Percentage of children exclusively breastfed until 6 months of age	Caregiver survey reports	The mothers could convince the family members on the importance of exclusive breast feeding
		# of children aged 6–59 months who were identified as (moderate and severely) underweight who have gained weight and graduated to >-2SD (Mild and Normal)	Project records and monitoring system.	Initiation of community level support to boost the nutrition status of severely malnourished children
		# women / community members trained for early detection of malnutrition among infants, young children and pregnant mothers	Project records and monitoring system.	The use of growth monitoring and classification of anthropometry details are well understood by parents
Activity 1.3.1	Engage with block and District level ICDS, VHSNC Convergence committees to ensure Periodic / monthly growth monitoring reports for children below 5 years and other services at work			
1.3.2	Community awareness on appropriate childcare and nutrition (on the need for exclusive breast feeding, complementary feeding)			
1.3.3	Community based feeding program (UMANG, PD Hearth, CMAM) for the children with underweight and acute malnutrition based on the advice of technical team			
Outcome 2	Increased coverage, access, utilization for sustainable WASH practices	Percentage of households with sufficient drinking water from an improved source	Caregiver survey reports	Adequate and safe drinking water facilities are available within the community and are accessible any time
		Percentage of households using improved sanitation facilities (for defecation)	Caregiver survey reports	Families are motivated to use the toilets and maintain hygiene
		Percentage of parents or caregivers with appropriate hand-	Caregiver survey reports	Parents and Caregivers attend awareness programs and know the importance of

		washing behaviour		hand washing
Output 2.1	Household have access to safe drinking water	# of safe and protected source of drinking water points installed	Project records and monitoring system.	Newly rehabilitated systems, which formerly were non-functioning include: hand pumps, mechanized and solar pumps, taps, protected springs, piped water systems and rainwater harvesting systems.
Activity 2.1.1	Create access to safe drinking water in target communities through appropriate water testing, treatment and provisioning of facilities			
2.1.2	Facilitate Rain water harvesting - school, ICDS, Public health systems in target areas			
Output 2.2	Increased knowledge of hygiene and sanitation practices in the target areas	# of people participated in hygiene and behaviour change programs	Project records and monitoring system.	Community and CBOs understands the need to focus on clean drinking water
		Percentage of households with access to improved sanitation facilities (non-defecation)	Caregiver survey reports	Panchayat / CBOs work with govt and NGOs to construct toilets
Activity 2.2.1	Rollout community Led Total Sanitation in partnership with Government (household, schools etc)			
2.2.2	Promote hand washing and hygiene in the community			
Outcome 3	Increased nutritionally resilient households	Percentage of parents or caregivers able to provide well for their children	Caregiver survey reports (Customised)	The families takes care of their children well by providing them the needed basic facilities and adequate care to live well
		Percentage of households with sufficient diet diversity	Caregiver survey reports	Easy access to livelihood opportunities are available and created in the villages that helps families feed their children
Output 3.1	Facilitate viable poverty alleviation initiatives for families with malnourished children	# of trained youth who are employed	Project records and monitoring system.	Appropriate skill mapping is done before initiation of any assistance also the trained youth have job availability and willing to work
		# of families who received economic assistance, have their	Project records and monitoring system.	The income raised through the support is used to feed well for the children

		children graduated to normal		
Activity 3.1.1	Identify and provide PoP families with malnourished children with viable economic development / skill enhancement initiatives in target areas			
3.1.2	Awareness on addictive behaviours and its ill effects			
3.1.3	Youth have access to livelihood / professional skills			
Output 3.2	Strengthened community preparedness for disaster mitigation and management and linkages for food access	Percentage of children receiving a minimum meal frequency	Caregiver survey reports	Three meals a day for every individual is made available in the community through effective care and livelihood measures
		# of communities that have implemented Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities	Project records and monitoring system.	Community level IDPPs are prepared and updated every year
Activity 3.2.1	Assist the PoP families with malnourished children for Nutrition Garden / Community farming and follow-up			
3.2.2	Strengthening linkages to public welfare schemes for adequate food security			
3.2.3	Facilitate preparation of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plans at grass root level with the framework of Capacity development, Task Force formation, Early Warning Systems			
Outcome 4	Strengthened systems and structures towards reduction of childhood malnutrition and morbidity	# of trained and functional Community Health Workers providing health services at household level	Project records and monitoring system.	Community level health services and service providers make sure they provide best possible care in their facilities through appropriate learning and capacity building initiatives
Output 4.1	Strengthened functioning of ICDS and Health services	# of PHCs / CHCs / ANM Subcenters are fully functional with basic facilities	Field observation using quality monitoring checklists	Health facility centres are having adequate amenities and supplies to run in full service delivery at

				community level also the willingness of the people to use the services
		# Early Childhood Care and Development centers functioning properly	Field observation using quality monitoring checklists	The Early Childhood Care and Development centres are with appropriate learning materials and equipments to support the children's learning outcome and are monitored by CBOs
Activity 4.1.1	Identifying gaps in ICDS system and leverage support to improve the system for MNCH services (including ECCE)			
4.1.2	Organise / participate in campaigns for the communities & connect it to district & state level forums; networks and other partnerships			
Output 4.2	Strengthened adolescent health (School and Non-school)	# of children 12-17 years have access to various health programs (ICDS, School health program)	Project records and monitoring system.	Children are motivated to participate in school health program initiatives
		# of adolescent girls (12 - 17 yrs) consume IFA Tablets	Project records and monitoring system.	The importance of fighting anaemia and need of IFA tablets for better health of adolescents are appropriately communicated
Activity 4.2.1	Reaching the adolescent girls through the ICDS system to improve their knowledge on health & Hygiene			
4.2.2	Strengthen the school health programme to reach adolescent children (Boys and Girls)			
Output 4.3	Active Nutrition Committees (Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committee (VHSNC) and MAS (Mahila Arogya Samitees) of NUHM (National Urban Health Mission))	# of VHSNC/MAS engage themselves to provide Health, Nutrition and Sanitation services	VHSNC / MAS reports	Prior to the training their skill sets are appropriately assessed for better learning
		# of community action plans developed as part of local advocacy process (like CVA)	Minutes of CBOs	CBOs are trained well to use techniques like CVA and CPA methods for effective demanding of their rights

		# of community based monitoring / assessment done / evidences shared and discussed with Government and other forums	Project records and monitoring system.	The sessions / meetings have transparency and are accessible by all stakeholders
		# Partnerships / Missions / Govt dep WV is represented	Project records and monitoring system.	Appropriate partners are identified using stakeholder analysis and are documented
		# of campaigns / platforms facilitated where community / children represented their issues	Project records and monitoring system.	Local CBOs and NGOs are involved to encourage children to share their views and concerns
Activity 4.3.1	Facilitate and improve the functioning of VHSNC			
4.3.2	Engage with VHSNC and fill the gaps related to MCHN and WASH services			
4.3.3	Communities / Children empowered to represent their needs and dialogue with government by organizing public hearings / social audits / score cards / children journalism / media field trips / youth parliaments / public awareness campaigns etc			
4.3.4	Strategic partnership with relevant government departments; especially in Nutrition Mission at the Block / District Level			
4.3.5	Organise / participate in campaigns for the communities & connect it to district & state level forums; networks and other partnerships			
4.3.6	Share evidences from CVA and other tools to scale up influence and impact			
Output 4.4	Established evidences and learning			
Activity 4.4.1	Conduct baseline, periodic data collection and evaluation			

4.4.2	Conduct operation research and lessons learnt workshops			

Project Logframe: Protecting Children from Violence

Hierarchy	Objectives	Indicator	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Programme Goal	Children, families and communities are empowered to protect children from abuse, exploitation, neglect and all other forms of violence	Proportion of parents or caregivers who feel that their community is a safe place for children	Caregiver survey reports	Parents and caregivers take responsibilities to make their communities safer and enjoyable for their children.
Outcome 1	Families, communities and schools provide supportive and safe child friendly environment for children to thrive	Proportion of youth who rank themselves as thriving on the ladder of life	Youth Healthy Behaviour Survey	Parents and caregivers provide needed care and protection to their children
		Proportion of households where children's idea are listened to and acted on where appropriate	Caregiver survey reports	Children are provided adequate confidence and space to express themselves to their parents at home as well as in their communities
		Proportion of youth who have a strong connection with their caregiver	Youth Healthy Behaviour Survey	The parents / caregivers maintains good relationship with their wards to support, motivate and encourage them to grow
		Proportion of youth who report having birth registration document	Youth Healthy Behaviour Survey	Parents / Caregivers register their children's birth and have valid certificates to enable them to receive their rights
		Proportion of youth who feel that their community is a safe place for children	Youth Healthy Behaviour Survey	Community leaders and elders build their communities with appropriate supporting mechanisms in place and monitor them regularly
Output 1.1	Families become safe and enabling environment	# of families trained in parenting skills	Program Reports	Parents show interest to participate in training programs and learn well and apply
		# of men sensitised on gender / domestic violence	Program Reports	Men takes interest to attend the sessions and apply their learning
		# of children addicted to substance / tobacco / alcohol use rehabilitated	Program Reports	Child friendly educators are available and referral mechanism is in place for the affected children
		# of parents addicted to substance / tobacco / alcohol use rehabilitated	Program Reports	Committed peer educators are available and referral mechanism is in place for the affected adults
Activity 1.1.1	Organize parenting skill training for parents			1 day training content to be developed

	(Positive parenting module)			
1.1.2	Organize family enrichment programs to foster healthy families (Celebrating Families module)			Happy Family Model with Family Mission centre
1.1.3	Promote father's/men's engagement/role to ensure justice for children (Men care module)			Men care model
1.1.4	Partner with de-addiction agencies/ AA to rehabilitate children addicted to alcohol/ substance abuse and tobacco use			
1.1.5	Partner with de-addiction agencies/ AA to rehabilitate parents addicted to alcohol/ substance abuse and tobacco use			
Output 1.2	School environment improved for the safety of children	# of schools facilitated for child safety measures	Program Reports	Appropriate school based personal safety curriculum utilized
		# of school children completed the training module on personal safety	Program Reports	School Management willing to cooperate and collaborate
		# of teachers completed the training module on positive disciplining techniques	Program Reports	Teachers follow the discipline techniques
		# Out of School Children OOSC enrolled in school	Program Reports	Students who are not in school are identified and facilitated to be in school
Activity 1.2.1	Roll out personal safety module in schools for all children (Grade 1 to 10)			Personal safety curriculum
1.2.2	Conduct School safety audit and support school safety measures (structural and non-structural) as per Govt. of India school safety framework			Government of India School safety program
1.2.3	Train teachers to use positive disciplining method (Save the Children module)			2 day training content to be developed with NIMHANS / SAVE THE CHILDREN
1.2.4	Enroll Out Of School Children (OOSC) into formal schools			Remedial Education model for OOSC
1.2.5	Promote children's parliament/assembly/co			Children's Civic Awareness and Movement

	uncil and children's participation in schools			with CCVA,
Output 1.3	Community create a protective environment for children	# of people reached through awareness programs on ill effects of HTP	Program Reports	Appropriate campaigns are designed for the community on Harmful Traditional Practices
		# of faith leaders trained through CoH for Child Protection	Program Reports	Active engagement of the different faith leaders for the protection of children
Activity 1.3.1	Organize district /community level campaign /awareness programs on the ill-effects of Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP)			Child Friendly Spaces model
1.3.3	Establish Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in the community			
1.3.4	Organise Channels of Hope - Child Protection workshops for Faith Leaders			
Output 1.4	Children and Youths especially the most vulnerable have opportunities to participate in decision-making	# of Children Groups that are Functional (WV CG rating tool)	Program Reports	The age appropriate children groups are established and children are motivated through fun and participatory learning approaches
		Proportion of children participating in children’s groups	Care giver survey reports	Local leaders / youth helps to form age appropriate children groups for children to learn their curriculum
		# of children aged 6-18 years completed LSET modules (First 12 modules)	Program reports	Local CBOs, Parents/Caregivers provide support to promote LSE
		# of district / state children's assembly organized	Program Reports	Campaigns/programs organised on CP to impact the community and influence there are / city and beyond
Activity 1.4.1	Formation/strengthening of Children Groups as per WV India guideline			Content / curriculum
1.4.2	Facilitate Children's groups to plan and implement local level Advocay			
1.4.3	Conduct Life Skills Education for Transformation (LSET) for children in the age group of 6 - 18yrs			LSET
1.4.4	Organize district / state level children's assembly in partnership with Child Rights			Citizenship score cards

	network			
Outcome 2	Functional and accountable structures and mechanisms to impact most vulnerable	Proportion of youth who know of the presence of services and mechanisms to receive and respond to reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation or violence against children	Youth Healthy Behaviour Survey	The community level child protection structures are established within the communities and are accessible to the children in need
		Proportion of children under 18 years married	Caregiver survey reports	The CPUs and CBOs actively monitor the children for not getting them in marriage before 18 years
		Proportion of parents or caregivers who would report a case of child abuse	Caregiver survey reports	Parents / caregivers takes courage to report and file cases against the violators appropriately
Output 2.1	Community based functional child protection system in place	# of functional Child Protection Units (CPUs) in place	CPU Documents	Children have access to Community CPUs for their protection. CPUs and CBOs actively monitor the presence of children for ensuring protection
		# of interface meetings organized between CPU and formal child protection actors	Program reports	Increased commitment among the stakeholders
Activity 2.1.1	Complete Child Protection assessment (CP_ADAPT)			WV standard procedure
2.1.2	Establish and capacitate Community Based Child Protection Mechanism (Child Protection Unit) - Organised by Govt. and WV India			Training content to be developed
2.1.3	Organize interface meeting between formal and informal (CWC/ Dist CPU) and child protection systems (community level CPU)			
2.1.4	Establish community based feedback and complaint mechanism for children to report incidences of abuse & exploitation			Basket of options to be provided
2.1.5	Formal CP agencies are trained on child protection	# of First Responders at block / district level trained on Child Protection	Program Reports	Availability of key stakeholders for sensitisation and training programs and also cooperate in Advocacy efforts

		# Coalition/ Networks/Consortium memberships (ADP)		
2.1.6	Organize capacity building program for Duty bearers (Police, Teachers, CHV, Anganwadi Workers, Doctors, ANM, Media, JAPU, District CPU, CWC & JAPU, Labour Dept, Panchayat) on child protection			Training curriculum to be developed / Manuals to be developed
2.1.7	Organize inter-agency child protection review to ensure co-operation and accountability			Format to be developed
2.1.8	Build & strengthen coalitions of CBO/NGOs to advocate for the protection of children			FBO training / interfaith dialogue / channels of hope
2.1.9	Conduct thematic research on child protection			
Outcome 3	To make Most Vulnerable households resilient and capable of providing well for their children.	Proportion of parents or caregivers able to provide well for their children	Caregiver survey reports	Parents/caregivers generate sufficient income to meet all needs of children
		Proportion of vulnerable households that received external economic support	Caregiver survey reports	Households able to access external support
Output 3.1	Most Vulnerable households will have access to services and will advocate for their entitlements	# of HH that received benefit from at least two government schemes	CBO register	Families have access to government schemes
		# of communities that have used CVA to access services	CBO register	Community come forward to work together for child well-being
Activity 3.1.1	Organize interface mtng service provider Vul fam			
3.1.2	Facilitate Citizens Voice and Action (CVA) to ensure access to services			CVA model / citizenship cards by
3.1.3	Strengthen ICDS, and health services to protect children from disease and injury			Content to be developed
Output 3.2	Most Vulnerable families will be supported with economic interventions and skills training	# trained youth who are now employed	Program Register	Youth are willing to learn and apply their learning in their work

		# EDA supported families that experienced increase in income	EDA follow up register	Families takes appropriate livelihood opportunities to best suit their abilities and interest
		# Functional SHG's (WV guidelines)	SHG Register	SHG rated as functional as per the WV guidelines
Activity 3.2.1	Organize interface meeting between service provider and Most Vulnerable families to address grievences			SHG manual
3.2.2	Provide appropriate Economic Development Assistance (EDA)/Skill training to Most Vulnerable Families			
Output 3.3	Established evidences and learning			
Activity 3.3.1	Conduct baseline, periodic data collection and evaluation			
3.3.2	Conduct operation research and lessons learnt workshops			

APPENDIX 6: JOB DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FACILITATORS

KEY POSITION INFORMATION			
Job Title	Coordinator - Development Facilitation	Grade	
Reports To	Manager / Officer – Area Development Program		
Department/Group	Field Ministry Operations	Location	ADP / Field Offices

WORK CONTEXT / BACKGROUND

Coordinator - Development Facilitation is based at the grass roots and is the primary link between organization and the local partners including the community. He/She engages in facilitating sustainable development through a process of community empowerment, strengthening systems and program execution at a cluster of Panchayats. The working context usually rural/tribal/urban areas sometimes remote locations without proper access to transportation, communication, education and health facilities. He/She may have to adapt to a new culture, customs and climatic conditions.

PURPOSE OF POSITION:

Development facilitator lives and works within communities to facilitate transformational development – in the lives of children, families and communities The role serves as the primary link between the WV programme team and local partners including communities.. The development facilitator helps partners build on their existing strengths and assets and facilitates access to technical and financial resources from Government, local partners, WV and other sources.

7.1 MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE DIMENSION / DESCRIPTION	End Results Expected	TIME SPENT
1. Engaging and visioning with communities		15%
• Ensure effective communication about World Vision's identity, mission, vision, values and our approach to development. This includes child sponsorship as integrated within broader community engagement process • Develop and maintain a strong understanding of the local context, including government perspectives and plans, ensuring all voices are heard, especially those of children and youth, including the most vulnerable • Support critical awareness in community's response to th being of children and other vulnerable groups and ensure ipation of these groups in community development proce • Facilitate effective working relationships between local stakeholder groups and between local partners and others outside the area • Identify new partners within and outside the community, identify how these partners can work together to-	• Community understands WV's identity in this area and the role of child sponsorship • Increased number of individuals, groups and organisations are motivated and committed to improving the well-being of children, especially the most vulnerable. • Community agree upon vision and key priorities for child well-being	

<table>
<tr><td>wards shared priorities for child well-being
• Mobilize and support the creation and strengthening of groups of key stakeholders which catalyse community engagement to improve child well-being
• Facilitate and support key community meetings/workshops designed to explore and identify key priorities for child well-being</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>2. Partnering and planning with communities</td><td></td><td>15%</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Lead local planning processes using WV's development programme approach
• Facilitate the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships
• Support local level partners to identify needs and their underlying causes; and recognizing local assets and resources which could support them in meeting these needs, mobilise these in programme implementation
• Ensure technical experts from WV and partner agencies engage in the root cause analysis and project planning, assisting them to communicate with community in clear and practical ways and providing information about community needs
• Ensure local programme plans are shared with the Area Programme Manager and support is provided in the creation of annual area programme plans
• Facilitate local level advocacy with panchayats</td><td>• Community owned visions and plans for improving child well-being which are a combination of local priorities and global knowledge and good practice.
• Resources needed to implement shared projects are identified and acquired.
• Sponsorship integration project plans are finalised; roles and responsibilities of community, WV and others are agreed.
• Children are registered for child sponsorship
• Local disaster management plans are in place
• Communities are aware of and access their entitlements</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Sponsorship facilitation (in programmes where sponsorship is applicable) with communities</td><td></td><td>20%</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Facilitate development of child selection criteria
• Support the child selection process
• Facilitate the use of Child Monitoring Standards to catalyse and advance community-led child protection mechanisms.
• Ongoing implementation of sponsor communication through programme activities as per the activity designs for individual engagements
• Respond to queries on a periodical basis through ongoing visits/ activities</td><td>• Child selection criteria is clear and well defined
• Sponsor communication is engaging and meaningful
• Sponsor communication is processed as per sponsorship standards</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Partner and community capacity building</td><td></td><td>15%</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Facilitate capacity building that helps create an environment that promotes the rights, protection and participation of youth and children, including the most vulnerable
• Build the capacity of WV and partner community groups to deliver the joint outcomes effectively
• Train and coach partner community groups on appropriate skills and self-assessment methods to build their capacity for management of local initiatives
• Identify and engage relevant capacity building support from technical experts in WV and in partner agencies, as required</td><td>• Capacity of local partners grow over time
• Community is empowered and has ownership of their projects
• Local stakeholders are able to mobilise their own resources and acquire needed resources from external sources.
• Local stakeholders have an increased capacity to mitigate and manage disaster risk</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>5. Implementation and monitoring with communities and partners</td><td></td><td>25%</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Lead implementation of technical programmes within the allocated primary focus area,</td><td>• Monitoring indicators are set with partners for all the im-</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

• Facilitate the setting up of monitoring processes and indicators with partners and community for shared projects • Facilitate community, including the most vulnerable, to participate in the gathering of, reflection upon and learning from monitoring data • Contribute to analysis and interpretation of monitoring data • Ensure monitoring data is shared with relevant WV staff • Ensure reports on shared projects are communicated within community as agreed with partners • Assist partners in documenting their own learning	plemented projects • Shared projects are implemented successfully, resulting in tangible and lasting improvements in the lives of children, especially the most vulnerable. • Monitoring, reflection and evaluation are conducted jointly with communities and partners. • Evidence of progressive wholistic development of sponsored children • Learning is documented and shared as required within WV and within communities	
6. Programme team support and development		**10%**
• Engage in own personal learning and development and spiritual maturity and contribute to the development of colleagues • Contribute to ongoing reflection and learning within the team to improve programme performance	Programme team learning culture enhanced over time	