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# Towards a Biblically Empowered World View Programming Approach: The World Vision Tanzania Experience Case Study



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## **ABSTRACT**

Poverty is fundamentally relational and its causes are radically spiritual in nature. Despite the many years of significant investments in development aid across the continent, current efforts to a large extent seem to be having little impact and poverty levels remains a challenge. Approaches seem to be treating only the symptoms and not the root causes of poverty. World Vision's empowered world view approach seeks to enable men, women, and children to ultimately change behaviours in a manner that will ensure sustainability and positively reinforce resilience capacities to absorb shocks, adapt to change, and transform risks into opportunities.

Available evidence from the pilot programme conducted by World Vision Tanzania for the last three years is a clear demonstration that a consistent and systematic implementation of an empowered world view approach that is biblically grounded, culturally literate, and defined by hope, can help break the underlying dependence mind-set and a sense of powerlessness and unlock the potentials within communities in realising their own transformation.

It is also a call for development practitioners to join the dialogue and embrace a Christ-centred approach in order to deal with the root causes of poverty and help improve the well-being of children and the communities.

**Keywords:** poverty, transformational development, empowerment, world view, well-being of children

## **1.0 Background and Context**

### **1.1 Faith and Development dilemma: An Overview**

It's a known fact that spiritual and material progress does not always go hand-in-hand. Some might even argue they never can. However, most people would accept that improving the lives of the entire human family must draw not only on the talents, efforts, and organization of millions of people, but also on the common values, such as the conviction that no one is truly well-off while others are desperately poor, and that the world's knowledge and opportunities should be available to all. It's a fact that the role of the Church extends beyond the material welfare of its members, and even beyond temporal concerns altogether. Faith and development share common grounds. In a continent that is notoriously religious, faith leaders are close to the poor and among the most trusted representatives. Faith communities offer health services, education, and shelter to the vulnerable and disadvantaged (World Bank 2001 p.23).

Typically, faith is part of the poor's personal identity, the foundation of their sense of community, and the basis of their hope. Faith communities are not only among the poor; in many cases they are the poor. Belshaw, Calderisi and Sugden (2001) argue that the Church in Africa has been growing—from 60 million members in 1960 to more than 300 million today—and, therefore, its development role must be taken seriously, not just because it is trusted and broad-based within Africa, but also because it is part of a global movement capable of improving the lives of the poor (p. 62)

The definition of the people's well-being by the poor is holistic and the good life is seen as multi-dimensional, with both material and psychological dimensions, that includes a dependable livelihood, peace of mind, good health, and belonging to a community. It encompasses safety; freedom of choice and action; and care of family and spirit. It is life with dignity. On the other hand, the poor are held down by multiple disadvantages: material and social deprivation, physical insecurity, and powerlessness. The dilemma is that while poor people are in the informal, insecure part of the society, most development assistance focuses on the formal system (Narayan 2001 p.35).

However, giving to those in need what they could be gaining from their own initiative may well be the kindest way to destroy people, as Lupton (2011) argues. There seems to be a missing link, and that link, often ignored by many, is an approach that

addresses the spiritual and relational causes of poverty as a foundation for any development work, and hence the need for biblically empowered world views as new lenses to address the root causes of poverty (3).

## **1.2 The quest for new lenses to understand poverty and development.**

Current efforts to a large extent seem to be having little impact, and poverty levels remains a challenge. The World Bank estimates that 1.22 billion people lived on less than \$1.25 a day in 2010, compared with 1.91 billion in 1990, and 1.94 billion in 1981. Notwithstanding this achievement, even if the current rate of progress is to be maintained, some 1 billion people will still live in extreme poverty in 2015—and progress has been slower at higher poverty lines. In some developing countries, we continue to see a widening gap between rich and poor, and between those who can and cannot access opportunities. It means that access to good schools, healthcare, electricity, safe water and other critical services remains elusive for many people who live in growing economies. Other challenges, such as economic shocks, food insecurity and climate change, threaten to undermine the progress made in recent years. Children are the most affected by this (World Bank 2014).

Across East Africa, where the largest two world religions (Christianity and Islam) are related, some maintain that religion and socio economic development belong to different spheres and are best cast in separate roles. But the wide array of faith institutions and development agencies across the world share a central focus on poor people, concern about patterns of social exclusion, and a searing disappointment in the face of unfulfilled human potential (Marshal 2005).

The World Bank acknowledges the need to address the underlying disempowered world view of the poor and argues that social development, which focuses on the need to “put people first” in development processes, tells us that poverty is more than having low income—it is also about vulnerability, exclusion and isolation, unaccountable institutions, powerlessness, and aggravated exposure to violence. Mainstreaming social sustainability involves addressing a comprehensive range of social opportunities, risks, and impacts. Achieving sustainable development requires balancing the needs of present and future generations and has become a rapidly growing global concern. At least three critical

factors—economic, ecological, and social (including faith)—should take a central place in discussions of growth and poverty-reduction (World Bank 2014).

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), while acknowledging the potential within the poor, argues that rural poor people are fully capable both of integrating themselves into the mainstream of social and economic development, and of actively contributing to improved economic performance at the national level, provided that the causes of their poverty are understood and conditions are created that are conducive to their efforts. This affirms the view that no amount of national or international assistance will radically improve the rural situation unless such transformation is based on the aspirations, assets and activities of rural people, and unless poor people own the change process (IFAD 2003).

Marshal (2005), while discussing the role of faith in development, notes that there is consensus of the need to make Faith-Development Partnerships a priority. This is rooted in the belief that faith organizations have earned high levels of community trust, work directly on development, often promote links among communities across national boundaries, spur people to grapple with ethical issues ranging from corruption to equity, promote public support for development assistance, and help forge consensus around hard choices. In this regard, faith is at the core of any meaningful development.

On the other hand, it must be appreciated that the voice of the local faith communities has been loud, clear, and consistent against societal ills, as evidenced in the case of the struggle in South Africa to end apartheid (Oladipo 2001).

Closer to home, the United Republic of Tanzania's 2025 Development Vision best expresses the challenge posed by the disempowered world view of the poor, manifested in form of external dependence and the erosion of confidence, dignity and determination, the mindset of the leaders and people of Tanzania, an education system that which is not geared towards integrating the individual into the community and not able to spur entrepreneurship and self-employment. The strategy recognizes the need for a development oriented culture of hard work and creativity, a culture of saving and investment, a developmental community spirit, a broad human development strategy that engages all players, a learning society to improve quality of life, an incentive system to reward such attributes as

excellence, creativity, innovation, and finally education as a strategic change agent (United Republic of Tanzania 2010).

Myers (1999), in his masterpiece *Walking with the Poor*, suggests the need for an integrating frame that is holistic. He joins likeminded people such as Chambers, Friedman, Christian and Jayakaran, who advocate for a systematic approach to poverty eradication. For them, the nature of poverty is fundamentally relational and its root causes are fundamentally spiritual. Poverty affects the five key relationships in which every human lives, namely: relationship with God, self, others, community and environment. Each of these broken relationships finds expression in the poverty systems. To address poverty effectively, one must, therefore, employ a systematic and holistic approach that recognises the context of every community. Accordingly, sin is what distorts these relationships and is the root cause of deception, distortion, and domination. In that case, when God is on the side lines or written out of people's own story, they do not treat each other well (p. 65-75).

However, the good news is that despite these challenges, there is a growing consensus uniting the global community that faith has a critical part to play in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will only be possible if practitioners understand and address cultural and religious roles (both positive and negative) in achieving the wellbeing of children.

### **1.3 Attempting to Define World View and Its Relationship with Development**

#### ***1.3.1 Introduction***

At a time when development partners are seeking to understand the relationship between poverty, culture, religion and development, new strategies are needed to foster transformative change. Culture and cultural diversity are increasingly seen as catalysts for creativity, innovation, renewal of ideas and societies. According to Selter (2014), culture precisely enables sustainability as a source of identity and social cohesion, helping people make sense of the future and those development policies responsive to cultural contexts yield stronger and more sustainable development outcomes. The cultural sector is also a driver of sustainable development which generates income, creates decent jobs and improves livelihoods.

#### ***1.3.2 Defining a world view***

Every culture exists within larger structures called “worldviews.” In her new book *In Search of Human Nature*, Mary Clark (2002) defines worldviews as “beliefs and assumptions by which an individual makes sense of experiences that are hidden deep within the language and traditions of the surrounding society.” These worldviews are the shared values and assumptions on which rest the customs, norms, and institutions of any particular society. This view is shared by Kraft (2005) who sees it as a culturally structured set of assumptions, values and commitments and/or allegiances underlying a person’s perception of reality.

Both Myers (2011) and Newbiggin (1998) see the big separation between the spiritual and material world, which has been caused by the Western world view. This dichotomy results in a tragic pair of reductions. First, poverty is reduced to a merely material condition having to do with the absence of things like money, water, food, housing and the lack of just social systems, also materially defined and understood.

Second, development is reduced correspondingly to a material series of responses designed to overcome these needs. This absolute separation between the spiritual and the physical is a tenet of modernity, which is currently a dominating world culture. Hierbert (1982) on his part calls the big divide between the modern and traditional cultures “the excluded middle.”

Stonestreet (March 2010), in an article published in the *Christian World View Journal*, clarifies that a biblical world view is not merely holding to Christian morals, is not just living life with Bible verses attached, is not automatic from being “saved,” and finally is not Christian reactionism. In contrast, he argues that a true biblically empowered world view is biblically grounded, is culturally literate, and is defined by hope. These three inter-related qualities define the biblically empowered world view. From this understanding, programmatically, an empowered world view for development embraces this whole-life, biblical view of our world and is not satisfied compartmentalizing certain parts of life (e.g spiritual) as more important than other parts of life (physical, social, environmental).

### ***1.3.3 Function of world view***

In exploring world view, a primary concern is also to attempt to understand its specific contribution to the individual or community. A worldview functions as a guide to

life, and as Charles Kraft (2005) argues, that world view is the lens to organise relationships, define their identity—self-image, shape values and relationships—help in understanding of their history, organise their responses, view reality, shape their values and commitments as well as understanding the role of spiritual powers in the life of any group of people. In that respect, a world view helps to explain, evaluate, validate, prioritize, interpret, integrate, and adapt to various events, people, and processes in a community, including engaging in any development activity (Jayakumar 2001).

#### ***1.3.4 Formation of world view***

As a system in which people organize themselves, world view of any community is formed as a result of several inter-related relationships, such as economic, social, political, religious, and bureaucratic. It is the sum total of all inter-related systems working together (Corbett and Fikkert, 2012).

#### ***1.3.5 Worldview effect on development***

To understand the relationship between world view and development, one needs to examine the example of Jesus' own development in Luke 2:52: "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men." Jesus' development involved growth in the intellectual or mental aspect (wisdom), in the physical aspect (stature), in the spiritual aspect (in favour with God), and in the social aspect (favour with men). These four core areas are the core of any meaningful development effort and shape the process and strategies we use as key players in the community development process, shape dialogues and activities around the approaches to be taken, determine the indicators for measuring success from the community's perspective, as well as shape how those activities lead communities to transformation. Moreover, culturally-sensitive approaches to development programs can increase effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs by effectively addressing its human, social and economic dimensions (Selter, 2014).

## **2.0 Learning from the World Vision Tanzania Experience**

### **2.1 Overview on Tanzania**

Tanzania is still categorized as one of the least developed, low income, and food deficit countries in the world. More than 40% of the population lives in chronic food-deficit districts where irregular rainfall causes recurring food shortages. Poverty remains widespread, and recent figures indicate that more than 58% of the population live on less

than \$1US dollar per day. The frequent food crisis across the Horn of Africa impacts a significant portion of this population while stunting stood at 42% during 2009/10 Tanzania Demographic and Health Surveys. There is also widespread watershed and landscape degradation where large tracts of land have been severely damaged as a result of misuse, corruption, and exploitation. The majority have limited access to capital in rural areas, leading to poor financing of quality inputs, warehousing, value addition, transportation capacities, and accessibility to viable markets. This is coupled by the inability of farmers to organize as a trading block taking advantage of economies of scale. This context leads to poor agricultural productivity and profitability.

## **2.2 The Triggers for change and a search for a new approach to development in World Vision Tanzania**

Following years of successive implementation of programs across the country, and with communities showing little or no signs of breaking from the dependence syndrome, World Vision Tanzania underwent several reviews to re-examine its approach with a view of improving program effectiveness. For example, the Ministry Review of 2006 identified several existing gaps in the current programming approach that do not appear to critically encourage community ownership of the development process. Secondly, the community institutions that were formed during the program existence have continued to depend on external support and donation for their own development, perpetuating dependency syndrome. It further reviewed that the current Area Development Programme (ADP) structure is not sustainable, lacks proper feedback from both ends, community leaders admitted not to have autonomy on people's participation, and the approach does not deal with the root causes of poverty (World Vision Tanzania 2003).

A new leadership came on board from 2010, which embarked on a search for an alternative. The net effect was the consensus that there was urgent need to review field operations and refocus more on empowerment as a preferred approach to facilitating sustainable change in communities. The Tanzania Empowerment Approach Model (TEAM) was developed through a consultative process. However, following field testing of this approach, it was felt that a more biblically Empowered World View (EWV) approach could provide better results given the context of the country and in line with the organization's unique Christian identity as a value add to development.

This led to a reflection and learning process focused on piloting and testing the various approaches and models on a Biblically empowered world view approach in partnership with other like-minded organizations such as Samaritan Strategy Africa, Christian Impact Mission, Tear Fund, IcFEM, Chalmers Centre and local communities.

### **2.3 The Empowered World View Approach**

The Empowered World View (EWW) approach has been an integral part of the Resilience and Livelihoods programming and is considered a foundational pillar in Securing Africa's Future, ensuring sustainable livelihoods of rural poor farmers.

As a process that involves several multi-sectoral approaches and interventions, EWW seeks to empower communities socially and spiritually to enable individuals; families and communities discover their value as people created in the image of God. The approach focuses on working with faith leaders, small holder farmers, communities and partners to strengthen their capacity so as to address their socio-economic needs in order to fulfill their vision and community aspirations.

EWW recognizes and builds on the social and spiritual capital of the communities including individuals, groups, networks, and institutions to enable people gain control of their own lives so as to provide for their children. The approach acknowledges and affirms the fact that the community has been there developing and working to meet their needs for survival and that if properly challenged, facilitated and empowered, the communities have the capacity to transform themselves. It emphasizes on empowering the communities to articulate their vision for transformation and for them to find the means by which they can attempt to move toward this vision. In this way, individuals, groups and communities are facilitated to tell their own stories as critical to understanding their present and their identity as well as get a glimpse of a possible future in the light of God's story of community transformation.

### **2.4 Focus of the EWW**

As an integrated approach, the Empowered World View seeks to enable men, women and children to ultimately change behaviours in a manner that will ensure sustainability and positively reinforce resilience capacities, the ability to absorb shocks, adapt to change and transform risks into opportunities.

The EWV focuses on four key areas:

- a. Community Transformation - empowering communities (small holder farmers) to break from powerless and dependent mind-sets and embrace transformational development.
- b. Partner Transformation - equipping faith leaders and other partners to advocate for mind set, systems and structure changes in their own communities.
- c. Organizational Development - mobilising World Vision entities to support by developing, implementing and monitoring strategies that promote empowered world view and the accompanying organizational development changes to improve the wellbeing of children.
- d. Skills Development for frontline development facilitators/volunteers - building skills of frontline development facilitators and community volunteers to apply project models appropriate for sustainable change.

To realize the above, five core enabling factors work inter-changeably to support the vision and process. These include:

- a. Strengthen social capital and influence policy: Encouraging farmers (communities) to participate in savings, producer, or caregiver groups; trade associations; and market networks or other coalitions, to pursue collective actions that reinforce resilient livelihood. These community-based organizations (CBOs) ensure local ownership and sustainability. By building on social capital and equipping citizens to understand their rights through Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) and other advocacy activities, they can advocate for improved policies both at the local and national levels (e.g. child protection or access to markets for smallholder farmers) and hold governments to account for its commitments (e.g. investments in infrastructure, schools, and health systems). This opens the way for enduring institutional changes that reduce poverty.
- b. Promoting innovation and learning: individuals and communities that innovate can spark systemic changes in behaviours, policies or institutions that can have a lasting structural impact in poverty reduction. This can be achieved by increasing the number of private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and other CBOs that

apply new technologies or management practices (e.g. mobile-based management information services across value chains or improved crop varieties). Basic skills, including functional literacy, basic numeracy, financial literacy, and work readiness skills, including livelihood preparedness, employment skills, entrepreneurship skills, and technical and vocational skills, are essential here. Progress on primary education curricula as well as specialized training curriculum around all resilience and livelihood project models is vital to ensuring success and spurring innovation.

- c. **Entrepreneurship, Markets and Youth:** reducing dependency means creating conditions for individuals to pursue responsible and sustainable economic activities that build up assets and in turn resilient livelihoods (especially for youth and women). Private sector engagement and demand-driven approaches are vital to sustainability and self-financing models. Households and communities must create and participate in markets and link to the economic dynamism underway in Africa. Building input supply retail networks, training agro-dealers and livestock agents, public-private partnerships, linking savings and producer groups to formal credit, loans, and markets, as well as other on and off farm jobs and youth programs offer pathways to sustainable employment and incomes.
- d. **Gender Equity, Women and Girls, and Transformed Relations:** Through models like Community Change, Channels of Hope for Gender, and MenCare, harmful social norms can be identified and addressed in order to foster conditions where men, women, girls and boys care for each other, for their community, for their environment, and the wider world. Building on their sustainable presence and influence with their congregations and wider communities, churches and other faith-based organizations are actively engaged, through programs like Channels of Hope, to advance positive community change. Building trust, equitable gender relations, conflict prevention and resolution, voluntary sharing of time and resources, and the valuing and protecting of all children, especially the most vulnerable, provides a foundation for resilience. The inclusion of youth and women in community-based organizations, leadership roles, and market opportunities helps build this foundation for resilience.

- e. **Aligning with Donor and Government Priorities:** By coordinating with the Global Alliance for Action for Drought Resilience and Growth as well as the Global Alliance for Resilience in the Sahel (AGIR-SAHEL), World Vision resilience programming aligns with other donors and local government priorities, further leveraging resources behind resilience and connecting communities to wider networks.

## **2.5 The Desired Future and Benefits in Communities**

Achieving the dream of a fully empowered community is a process. As the implementation has been ongoing, World Vision hopes to witness:

- Communities that drive their own lives rather than depending on the agencies, donors and government to provide them with free services
- Improved self-esteem and an enhanced household economic capacity
- Community-led initiatives and groups of productions that drive own transformation
- Communities appropriately utilising locally available resources for the benefit of all while adapting to the rampant climatic changes
- Existence of community owned safety nets and development funds providing their own social services (water supply, school construction, health facility construction, roads, etc.)
- Strong and effective engagement by churches and other faith leaders in interventions that transform the minds and hearts of individuals, families and communities to attain the wellbeing of children, especially the most vulnerable
- Restored relations within families, across faiths, gender, and the environment
- Profitable agriculture and livestock production practices by the small holder farmers and pastoral communities, (high value agricultural crops and livestock breeds) leading to availability of quality and quantity food; individuals within the communities with financial literacy, business basics, agricultural basics, etc., and repaying loans (100%) for economic activities.
- Christian values prevailing within communities, individuals and families, and guiding the development process.
- Children protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence

- Communities having a voice to demand for public services from service providers in their own communities (World Vision Tanzania 2013).

## 2.6 The Results So Far

Notable results have already been seen in the changes in strategy, re-alignment of organizational processes and resources towards the TEAM approach, increased advocacy for change by faith leaders and other partners as well as enhanced capacities of frontline workers. Below is a summary of some accomplishments from the implementation of the specific empowered world view approaches.

- ***Samaritan Strategy Africa:*** According to the World Vision Tanzania (2014) semi-annual report, as a result of rolling out this initiative in 22 ADPs, and with over 1006 field staff, faith leaders, and community leaders including smallholder farmers trained, 607 individual and 69 farmer group projects have been established, without any external assistance, and using people's own initiative. These enterprises range from agricultural activities, bee keeping, brick making, pig farming, fish farming, goat keeping, and chicken farming. As a result, the culture of dependence is slowly being broken down as people realise their God given potential and resources that are within their reach. This represents a significant shift from previous reports where the same community members have been expecting agencies like World Vision to initiate projects for them. With increased household incomes, more children are being taken to school now, cared for, nurtured and protected in their own families as parents take their roles to improve the wellbeing of their families.
- ***Christian Impact Mission (CIM):*** Almost two years ago, WVT and CIM entered into a partnership agreement to roll-out the "Operation Mwolyo Out," an effort to transform the people's mind-set from dependence of hand-outs to a more self-driven transformation. Church leaders are at the forefront in championing this change. The effort targeted two communities that have not had previous operations. As a result, two communities were identified (Marurani and Mbuyuni). Previously, these communities were experiencing perennial food shortages due to unreliable rainfall, lack of income to support their families, and high poverty levels. The two programs focused on identifying potential farmers and opinion leaders to attend a

one week exposure and learning tour to CIM's centre in Yatta, Kenya. Later, there were follow up visits to train them on rain water harvesting techniques and farming using water pans, and to help them establish start-up projects in their villages. They also formed a village producer group. All these were done with no external funding from WVT except for the training costs. In both Marurani and Mbuyuni villages, almost a year since this started, more than 300 water pans have been dug solely by the community without any external help. More than 30 savings groups have been formed to help organize their activities with a portfolio of over Tsh 70 million (USD 43,750). Farming activity have already commenced by growing high value cash crops such as tomatoes, cucumber, cabbage, and carrots through dry land farming. Pastors are modelling by promoting and establishing poultry, entrepreneurship, keeping livestock, farming, water pans, etc. People's attitude towards farming has improved as a majority view farming as business and this is attracting more rural farmers to engage in more profitable farming, as one pastor and who is also a farmer has testified:

*“When I came from Yatta, I started a goat project. So far, I have about 50 big goats and 20 small ones. I have also started a saving group in my church ... so members of my church have no problem of paying fees for their children as they are able to save and take loans ... Pst. from Kisongo/Makuyuni”, World Vision Tanzania Progress report (2014).*

- **Chalmers-Church based savings group program:** In September 2013, World Vision Tanzania and the Chalmers Center began a pilot project of church-centered savings groups in three ADPs (Kisongo Makuyuni, Makindube, and Nyasa) to determine the value-added to the participating churches of having a savings group as a ministry of the local church. The idea was to empower community members within churches to improve their income levels and the wellbeing of their children. A total of 25 Church Focused saving groups (10 Kisongo Makuyuni; 10 Makindube and 5 Nyasa) have been formed while 22 community savings groups (10 Kisongo, 10 Makindube and 2 Nyasa) have been formed in this pilot project. A mid-term evaluation of the project was conducted from May 19-25, 2014.

The research found that in the past 8 months, a total of US \$ 24,452 (Kisongo 14,716; Makindube 6,641 & Nyasa 3,095 ) was raised through savings and social funds from 25 church-centered savings groups while a total of US \$ 25,226 (Kisongo 13,755; Makindube 9,956 and Nyasa 1,515) was raised from 22 community savings groups in the same period. Therefore, a total of US \$ 49,678 was raised from both church-centered savings groups and community saving groups. When this financial data is compared with data collected from January 2014 during baseline (US \$ 9,244), the increase of US \$ 39,645 savings for the past 4 months demonstrates continuing demand for savings groups in churches and communities.

Furthermore, it was found that a total of US \$ 15,331 (Kisongo 9,418; Makindube 4,165 and 1,748 Nyasa) loans were disbursed to 263 church-focused saving groups members, while a total of US \$ 15,076 (Kisongo 8,352; Makindube 5,874 and Nyasa 850) loans were disbursed to 251 community savings group members. In total, US \$ 30,408 loans were disbursed to 514 savings group members among 813 savers who are the direct beneficiary of this project. This implies that the project savings group members are not only active in saving, but also in taking loans that can help members to increase household assets and tend to household expenses such as school fees and medical expenses, as it was demonstrated during baseline survey. This is evident that local communities are able to help themselves come out of their poverty, according to Chalmers and World Vision mid-term review report (2014).

## **2.7 Key Challenges Encountered so far**

Transformational development is a complex and messy process. Implementing a biblically empowered world view programming approach in a global and large organization like World Vision faces several challenges. Furthermore, several challenges arise as a result of the multidisciplinary nature of dealing with the worldview. From the Tanzania's experience, five key challenges stand out:

- i. ***Internal organizational capacity:*** To effectively implement a biblically empowered world view paradigm, it calls for a new set of lenses, both for staff and as an organization. This calls for an incarnational lifestyle that puts Christ at the

center of our lives and work. However, due to diversity, agreeing a common frame of what that frame of an empowered world view poses a challenge. Changing this culture sometimes takes time. There is also a challenge related to integrated world view programming in other sectors.

- ii. ***Community's own mind-set***: Most poor communities are usually victims of a web of systems that disempower them. Breaking these systems and freeing them from the dependency mind-set takes time, resistance, and sometimes often gets polarized and perceived as proselytism.
- iii. ***Resource/donor expectations***: Most donors shy away from funding capital projects and prefer programs instead. In addition, much of the funding has a fixed implementation period, thus ignoring the community's pace of adoption. Balancing the donor expectations versus the need for an empowerment approach may seem to be delaying "real" results that many donors want to see. This remains a big dilemma for World Vision in their development approach. In addition, there is also the fear that involving ourselves with a biblically empowered world view processes is too narrow in approach and restrictive in many contexts.
- iv. ***Contextual challenges***: Transformational development happens in a context. Given the diverse contexts World Vision operates in (Christian, Muslim, Traditional, etc.), the challenge has always been how to do sensitive programming, while respecting and upholding the rights of all. Another issue related to this that has been raised is related to whether a biblically empowered world view alone can guarantee the much needed transformation in communities.
- v. ***Measurement of the impact of EWW***: Key changes sought through the empowered world view approach are qualitative in nature and are difficult to program and measure. Many of our development professionals and evaluators have not been trained in matters related to world view sensitive programming.

## **2.8 Relationship with other technical sectors in World Vision**

As indicated earlier, addressing the root causes of poverty through an empowered world view programming approach is a multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary process. The organization's experience in Tanzania has shown that there is need to engage key technical sectors. In the past two years, the organization's approach has sought to integrate the

empowered world view as a foundation in the Securing Africa's Future programming whose focus is: economic/household income development, natural resources management and social safety nets. To realise this goal, therefore, the organization has sought the integration of key technical sectors such as economic development, education, health and nutrition, advocacy and peace building as well as disaster and the accompanying project models, such as Village Saving groups, farming God's way, Citizen Voice and Action, Channels of hope and celebration of families in order to grow resilient communities.

## **2.9 Key Lessons Learned and Recommendations**

In its implementation of the empowered world view approach, valuable lessons have been learned and recommendations made for further improvement. These include, but are not limited to:

- **A multi-sectorial and multi-disciplinary approach.** There is urgent need, therefore, to actualize integration so that the real needs of communities can be matched with the right development responses. This includes taking serious the holistic view of poverty in order to develop a holistic response.
- **A culture change is needed.** A cultural shift (heart, mind, soul) is urgently needed in terms of our "world views" on resources, development, and the relations therein. Its this new paradigm that should shape the character and the capacity of both the development facilitators.
- **Community owned as a preferred approach to improving community livelihoods.** There is need to prioritize the community's own resource persons and community driven processes that guarantee sustainability.
- **Articulate, plan, implement and measure EWV within our programs.** Most of World Vision's programs usually leave out this critical component. The critical path process is a good beginning point to initiate community and partner dialogue around this subject. There is need to embrace the disciplines of prayer and fasting as effective tools of social action with and on behalf of the poor and must be utilized appropriately to achieve the intended goals of any program.
- **Recover the role of faith as central to any development.** Every community has a faith. In most African communities, faith is everything. There is need, therefore,

to clearly articulate the faith motivations in our development agenda in ways that are empowering and at the same time appropriate.

### **3.0 Conclusion**

This case study has affirmed the importance of a biblically empowered world view programming approach in achieving the lives of communities. It has underscored the fact that any meaningful development for the wellbeing of children must seek to address the core issues that hold communities back and perpetuate the dependency syndrome, and that people's world view is at the center of it. It is important to highlight that Christian development agencies need to pay attention to the fact that development must wrestle with the prevailing customs and beliefs which hold people back from progressing in their web of lies and must be unmasked. To do this effectively, the disciplines of prayer and fasting need to be embraced as effective tools of social action with and on behalf of the poor and must be utilized appropriately to achieve the intended goals of any program and that the gifts of the Spirit are valid skills and must be fully employed in all phases of development. To effectively engage the context for transformational development, there is need for spiritual preparedness on the part of both the organization and the development facilitator. In this way, organizations will be moving towards achieving sustainable change and significantly improving the social and spiritual well-being of children and their families.

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