Abstract

George Nduati Woki, Spiritual Metrics: Accounting for Spiritual Transformation in International Development

Supervised by Dr. Gregg Okesson

This is a research-based study that sought to answer this question: how do Christian NGOs plan for, execute, and evaluate the spiritual impacts of their programs on beneficiaries? The question was in response to a growing concern, especially from the donor class, for Christian development organizations to show how their efforts were making a difference in beneficiaries' spiritual lives.

Using Bryant Myers' transformational development framework, this study employed ethnographic methods to present the lives of project beneficiaries in selected contexts as they engaged in a variety of development projects. The study was an observation of the totality of poverty-fighting interventions employed by the different development organizations with a view of assessing how and where spiritual capital had accumulated among project beneficiaries.

Through three thematic chapters that focused on how the organizations understand themselves and how they organize their programs, the values and practices that inform the programming, and the project evaluative aspects, the study culminated in a four-way proposal for accounting for spiritual transformation. The four-way schema consists of belongingness, sacraments, duties and responsibilities, and transcedentals.

The study takes place in rural Kenya, mostly in the community of Makuyu although it is augmented by data obtained in four other locations of Machakos, Utooni, Yatta and Ahero.

Spiritual Metrics:

Accounting for Spiritual Transformation in International Development

A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary in Conformity with the Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Intercultural Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary

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For Karie, Ashton, and Addie; because of you I have finished this journey

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List of Abbreviations

ABC- African Brotherhood Church

ACK- Anglican Church of Kenya

ADS- Anglican Development Services

CBO- Community Based Organization

CEZ- Church Empowerment Zone

CFGB- Canadian Food Grains Bank

CI- Compassion International

CIM- Christian Impact Mission

CMSA- Church Missionary Society Kenya

DJ- Disk Jockey

ELC- Ebenezer Life Centre

FBO- Faith Based Organization

FGM- Female Genital Mutilation

FGW- Farming God's Way

HIH- Hand-in-Hand

KCA- Kikuyu Central Association

KCDF- Kenya Community Development Foundation

MEDCO- Makuyu Economic Development Community Organization

NGO-Non-governmental Organization

QDA- Qualitative Data Analysis

UDO- Utooni Development Organization

VOSH- Visions of Salvation and Healing

WR- World Relief

WRK- World Relief Kenya

WRR- World Relief Rwanda

WV- World Vision

Glossary

Baraza- Swahili public meeting

Harambee- Swahili for pulling together

Maendeleo- Swahili for development, going forward

Mitumba- Swahili second-hand, used clothes

Mugithi- Kikuyu for train

Mwaki- Kikuyu for fire

Mwolyo- Kikamba for relief food

Ngai- Kikuyu name for God

Shuka- Swahili for shawl or large piece of cloth work by women around the waist

Unga – Swahili for maize flour

Chapter 1

Introduction and Background to the Study

In the summer of 2015, I accepted an internship with the international relief and development organization, World Relief (WR), that led to a three-month immersion into the small land-locked East African country of Rwanda. At the time, WR was in the middle of pilot undertaking of their 'Integral Measurement' endeavor intended to develop metrics for measuring the changes in beliefs, values, behaviors, and results in the projects World Relief Rwanda (WRR) was supporting in the country.

During this period that also involved an Independent Study course as part of my PhD studies at seminary, I was introduced into the nascent field of spiritual metrics in missiology. I was immediately captivated by the topic through interacting with my co-workers at WRR, project and thought leaders at WR global headquarters in Baltimore, MD, and emerging scholars in this field. All these interactions contributed to my decision to write my dissertation on the topic of spiritual transformation metrics.

While the internship in Rwanda provided the impetus for more research and writing on spiritual metrics, it was my growing up in Kenya that motivated me to want to make both an academic and personal contribution to a subject, place, and people dear to me.

Growing up, I spent the last three years of primary school, Standard Six through Eight (the equivalent of sixth and eighth grades), and four years of high school living in my father's ancestral home of Ndorome village in Murang'a County. The township of

Makuyu, where most data for this study arose from, is a half-hour drive from my grandmother's home (see map below). During this seven-year sojourn in Ndorome, I became remarkably familiar with Makuyu for these reasons: I was constantly sick from malaria and bilharzia and visited the hospital in Makuyu for both lab tests and treatment (it was the closest hospital to Ndorome with a lab and a well-stocked pharmacy). Many of my primary school peers often worked in the coffee plantations around Makuyu to supplement their family incomes and often told stories of wage theft, being overworked, and precarious working conditions. I also witnessed the gradual replacement of these coffee plantations with pineapples, avocadoes, and passion fruit over the years. The disappearing coffee plantations heralded disappearing work and wages for these families and exacerbated their poverty. The poverty of my neighbors and extended kin was a daily reality for me, and even at such a tender age, I associated Makuyu with this suffering.

These three factors (my own suffering, economic collapse, and the resultant hardships) coupled with my knowledge of decades-long work of NGOs[1] operating in Makuyu to ameliorate the effects of economic collapse, made Makuyu an easy choice to conduct this study.

[1] Incidental to the collapse of the coffee industry in Makuyu and indeed the whole country, NGOs like World Vision, Compassion International and others started operations in the larger Makuyu area. Some kids from my school became beneficiaries of these programs that at one time included a school feeding program for my primary school.

Introduction and Background of the Study

This introductory chapter of the study will involve a review of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) landscape as well as their brief history. Further, this section will also introduce the problem I sought to address; how to account for spiritual transformation in international development. Here I will also establish my personal background to the study because it did play an important role in site selection and how the data collection progressed.

NGOs and Development

The world of international development is dominated by NGOs of many varieties. Their proliferation following the end of the Cold War is staggering. In fact, their numbers in developing nations like Nigeria are only rivalled by churches[2]. In Kenya, one source cites about 2248 registered NGOs[3] and 4000 churches[4]. Considering that churches predate NGOs by a large margin, the present narrow gap between the two entities confirms the latter's rapid growth. While the accuracy of these numbers is contestable, the point I want to make is indisputable: there are a lot of NGOs and churches. This scenario is repeated widely in the whole developing world. Donors interested in promoting democracy and development in Africa and in parts of the global South/non-Western world prefer to channel their resources through these groups which they deem

[2] Daniel Jordan Smith, "Corruption, NGOs, and Development in Nigeria," *Third World Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (March 2010): 243, https://doi.org/10.1080/01436591003711975.
[3] venas, "List of NGOs in Kenya | Venas News," accessed October 19, 2020, https://venasnews.co.ke/2018/12/03/list-of-ngos-in-kenya/.
[4] Kennedy Sande, "Churches in Kenya – List of Churches in Kenya," *Sande Kennedy* (blog), June 10, 2019, https://www.sandekennedy.com/churches-in-kenya-list-of-churches-in-kenya/.

"unencumbered and untainted by the politics of government and the greed of the market".[5]

Largely, NGOs are grouped into the secular and faith-based although they may draw support from both secular and religious sources. It is common practice for development organizations to solicit funding from government and governmental agencies (e.g., the US government and USAID respectively) while at the same time appealing to religious organizations (churches, mosques, synagogues, etc.) to fund particular projects. The distinctions between the two groups are not simply semantic; they speak to ideological as well programmatic strategies employed in their work.

NGOs: A Brief History

The term 'non-governmental organization' entered the lexicon of development with Article 71 of the United Nations (UN) Charter.[6] This created space for the entry of self-appointed representatives of public interest to interact and organize for the promotion of common goals. Since then, the diversity and number has grown exponentially ranging from grassroot local community organizations-like those that informed the bulk of this study- to global behemoths like World Vision, Oxfam, Greenpeace, etc. Increasingly, a growing number of the now thousands of NGOs self-identify as 'religious', 'spiritual', or 'faith-based'. Drawing on a recently advanced definition of faith-based NGOs[7], these are "formal organizations whose identity and mission are self-consciously derived from the

[5] Smith, "Corruption, NGOs, and Development in Nigeria," 244.
[6] Julia Berger, "Religious Nongovernmental Organizations: An Exploratory Analysis," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 2003, 15.
[7] Kerstin Martens, "Mission Impossible? Defining Nongovernmental Organizations," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 2002, 271–83.

teachings of one or more religious or spiritual traditions and which operates on a nonprofit, independent, voluntary basis to promote and realize collectively articulated ideas about the public good…" (Berger, 16)[8].

On the other hand, secular agencies, although they often work closely and collaboratively with faith-based agencies, and often in the same communities, do not have or perceive themselves to have a mandate that extends beyond serving the material and sociological needs of those they serve. Faith-based development agencies are distinct through their affiliation with religious structures (denominations, particular churches, etc.) and doctrines. Indeed, as with the African Brotherhood Church (ABC) and Voice of Salvation and Healing Church International (VOSH) whose work constitutes part of this study, some denominations have their own development arms. These often function fully or semi-autonomously from the day-to-day business of their parent churches.

Christian faith-based development organizations contribute to the spiritual transformation in the lives of their beneficiaries by purposely designing their programs to produce concomitant outcomes.

This study focused primarily on the program aspects that differentiated the secular from faith-based approaches. The study sought to investigate, on one hand, the factors that contributed to labelling one organization secular and another faith-based, and on the other, to interrogate those aspects of a faith-based NGO's programming that explicitly targeted the spiritual well-being of beneficiaries as well as the ways in which they

[8] Julia Berger's is a compression of Marten's article cited above.

undertook to assess whatever aspects of spirituality they considered integral to their purposes. More importantly, the study examined the resultant spiritual capital that was an outflow of how the faith-based organizations (FBOs) tailored their program strategies in respect to spiritual transformation in selected contexts.

NGOs and the Fight against Poverty

Development has widely been understood as the answer to poverty and lack of progress, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been at the forefront although the distinctions between the terms are less clear.[9] There is no unanimity on the understanding of what 'development', 'poverty', and progress mean. As evidenced in literature, some see poverty as a system of disadvantages ranging from physical weakness to isolation (Robert Chambers in *Rural Development*), others see it as a circle of seemingly inescapable traps that span the range of conflict to being geographically land-locked (Paul Collier: *The Bottom Billion*), others see it as lack of entrepreneurial avenues (C.K. Prahalad: *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid*), and so forth. Expectedly, the strategies designed to address poverty, and hence lead to development or progress, closely align with one or more of the views of poverty above. Adherents of Chambers work to reduce the disadvantages while those who subscribe to Prahalad's view find their home in the micro-finance enterprise realms. Many of the cases that provided data for this study spanned these approaches. Notably, none of the organizations exclusively pursued one approach over another; rather, they combined approaches sometimes out of

[9] Most of the people surveyed for this study, in varying ways, described development as the antidote to poverty. Poverty, almost universally, was presented at the lack of material things, voicelessness, abandonment, and general backwardness.

pragmatism or need because individuals belonged to more than one organization at the same time.

Situating the Work of NGOs in the Greater Development Evolution

Popularly, material well-being and economic growth, often measured in terms of consumption as well as other physical indicators of the 'good life' e.g., high mechanization of all production, robust and expansive infrastructure, low infant mortality, increased life expectancy, etc. are viewed as indicators of a society/community well on its way to development. This is easily the characterization that is responsible for giving us the now ubiquitous designations of the developed/highly industrialized/modern, and the underdeveloped/developing/traditional/non-modern economies of the world. Many efforts by governments and non-government actors, because of this perception, are targeted towards improving these indicators. Of note also is that these indicators often are targeted at the material dimensions of poverty and hence the material deprivation indices (MDI) that are now quite popular. Of course, as in the case of this study, MDIs often miss the 'uncommon' forms of deprivation. Scholars are beginning to develop other tools to capture the fullness of poverty.[10]

The most notable campaign for improving indicators is the UN-sanctioned Millennium Development Goals; a compendium of eight goals identified during the United Nations Millennium Summit of 2000 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality, reduce childhood

[10] "Missing the Unhealthy? Examining the Empirical Validity of the Material Deprivation Indices of Poverty | OPHI," accessed January 14, 2021, https://ophi.org.uk/ophi_events/multidimensional-and-monetary-poverty-in-indonesia/.

mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development).[11]

With the deadline for meeting these goals set for 2015 now passed, many nations are running feverishly to see how their own progress measures up to the specific targets that each of the initial 189 member states committed to. Many member states made impressive strides towards the achievement of the goals, but many others came short.[12] Global economic slowdowns like those following the Gulf War, the Dot Com crash of 2001 and the banking collapse of 2008 were mostly to blame, but other factors like political upheavals, mismanagement, natural disasters, etc. also contributed.

Failure to meet the MGDs led to a rethinking of the goals which yielded a different kind of thinking about the approaches the UN needs to employ to eradicate 'extreme poverty' by 2030. The new thinking proposes five "fundamental shifts" namely: "leave no-one behind", "put sustainable development at the core of future plans", "transform economies for jobs and exclusive growth", "build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all", and "forge a new global partnership".[13] Per UN, these new foci will be building on the successes of the MGD's (plummeting child deaths, expanded access to clean drinking water, the successful fight to combat malaria, AIDS and tuberculosis) while increasingly shining the limelight on emerging issues like

[11] "United Nations Millennium Development Goals," accessed March 16, 2015, http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/beyond2015-overview.shtml.
[12] "Africa and the Millennium Development Goals," accessed December 8, 2020, https://blogs.worldbank.org/africacan/africa-and-the-millennium-development-goals.
[13] "Replacing the Millennium Development Goals - Blog - Christian Aid," 1, accessed February 24, 2015, http://www.christianaid.org.uk/pressoffice/blog/agenda-development-MDGs.aspx.

building more sustainable cities, combating climate change and protecting forests and oceans.[14]

Religion, Faith and Development

It is quite apparent that even these Millennium goals (new and old) have a perception of development that is either explicitly physical or contributory to the physical well-being of persons. Faith-based development actors, fitting in the eighth plank of global partnerships (mentioned above), have long recognized that development must be more than physical well-being and consumption. Many NGOs in international development that have responded to the MDG goal for developing global partnerships are explicitly faith-based and combine aspects of proclamation of the gospel with the demonstration through projects that help improve the overall life quality of their beneficiaries. For example, the mission statement of World Vision International is, "We regard all people as created and loved by God. We give priority to people before money, structure, systems, and other institutional machinery" (2013). The Mennonite development agency notes, "Physical survival needs must be met, but the ethical and the aesthetic are also vital for strengthening human dignity and identity".[15] This recognition has led to these NGOs integrating both physical as well as other interventions to both physical poverty and the poverty of being. These other interventions include spiritual

[14] "United Nations Millennium Development Goals."
[15] Laurie Occhipinti, "Liberating Development: Religious Transformations of Development Discourse," *Perspectives on Global Development & Technology* 12, no. 3 (May 2013): 430, https://doi.org/10.1163/15691497-12341265.

well-being, mental health, advocacy, justice, etc. Holistic mission is how many faith-based organizations describe the integrated approaches.

Faith-based development actors (Christians who are my focus here) contend that those matters that pertain to the source of life, life's purpose and meaning, as well as the afterlife are equally as important to the quality of life as food, shelter, health, inclusion, and so forth. Bryant Myers aptly observes, "In our best moments our development processes are empowering and our development technology can make short work of dirty water, parasites, malnutrition, and poor agricultural production." But this is not the best news we have, he continues "… our experience tells us that Christ has the power to seek, save, and to recompose our stories into stories of hope and purpose…"[16] It must, therefore, be important to track how well those who are beneficiaries of these holistic interventions align with both the physical and 'other' measures of well-being, none more important than the good news.

The centrality of faith and religion in the lives of most humans might help explain why faith-based NGOs play such an outsized role in international development. In Kenya for example, World Vision (WV) was by far the largest spender on projects for the reporting period of 2018-19. Of the top twenty NGOs receiving and spending funds in Kenya, WV led the way with over Ksh. 8 billion with the International Rescue Committee closing the list at just over Ksh. 1.6 billion.[17] These figures are significant if

[16] Bryant L. Myers, *Walking With The Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, Revised edition (Orbis, 2011), 310.
[17] "Resources & Publications," *NGO Board* (blog), 43, accessed December 2, 2020, https://ngobureau.go.ke/?page_id=633.

you consider that Kenya's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2019 was about $95.53 billion (Ksh. 955.3 billion).[18]

Religion and development are both visions of how the world may be transformed.[19] While religion largely focuses on the internal transformation leading to an ordering of the external world, development *per se* is about arranging the external world in such a way that it provides the material resources necessary to transform society. Even though the emphases are different, both religion and development do share important similarities. Both are suffused with values and aspirations with significant overlaps about the 'good life' that they point towards. As Deneulin and Bano observe, there are significant "overlaps between the religious and secular traditions on development issues" like human dignity, social justice, poverty, relief, equality, freedom[20], etc.

This study also sought to examine of how faith-based NGOs measured the transformation happening in the lives of those they were committed to help. Specifically, I was concerned with how these groups accounted for the spiritual transformation of the beneficiaries of their development programs. With 'spiritual' I intended to explore what I will generally refer to here as the 'God dimension' i.e., how religious faith in a transcendental creator (God) influenced and therefore became a measure of life aspirations and living well. I examined how aspiring to live lives worthy of approval by God resulted in a willingness to submit to living life in a way that conformed to the

[18] "GDP (Current US$) - Kenya | Data," accessed December 10, 2020, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=KE.
[19] James D. Wolfensohn, *Religion and Development: Ways of Transforming the World*, ed. Gerrie ter Haar (London: Hurst & Co., 2011), 5.
[20] Séverine Deneulin and Masooda Bano, *Religion in Development: Rewriting the Secular Script* (London; New York: Zed Books, 2009), 10–11.

dictates of expressed, practiced Christianity i.e., how easily people were willing to follow the dictates of their church teachings including prohibitions, the differences between the sacred and the profane.

For simplicity, thoroughness, and time constraints, my quest was limited to an examination of how Christian NGOs in international development tracked and measured the spiritual transformation of their program beneficiaries. In total, twelve formal[21] organizations constituted this study. Upon reviewing and analyzing the resultant data, I proposed a four-part approach of accounting for spiritual transformation covering the dimensions of transcendentals, belongingness, sacraments, and duties and responsibilities.

Statement of the Problem

How can Christian NGOs plan for, execute, and evaluate the spiritual impacts of their programs on beneficiaries? This was the question that I set out to answer with this study.

Accounting for both the positive and negative impacts of particular kinds of approaches to physical poverty alleviation is no longer so tenuous. For example, Robert Chambers in *Rural Development* addresses the five biases that besiege international development workers while Paul Collier in *The Bottom Billion* addresses how aid tends to retard the growth of labor-intensive export industries that are a poor country's most effective vehicle out of poverty. These two examples give us clear indicators against

[21] Anglican Development Services (ADS) was overseeing small village-level groups that worked under the moniker of Farming God's Way (FGW).

which to measure positive or negative impacts; however, doing the same for the spiritual aspects is fraught with many difficulties and moral quandaries. The exact bounds of what constitutes spirituality or the moral ground upon which anyone can stand to evaluate the spiritual growth of another are two of many problems that besiege this exercise. Another problem might be the cultural currents that guide the definitions, limits, and appropriation of spirituality. For example, working in a community where the ritual worship of ancestors and paying homage to souls departed kin is considered central to its spirituality, any measure that ignores this aspect may not truly reflect the community's full spirituality. Never has this been truer than in present African spiritualities of which this study was just a small slice.

Past debates that raged between scholars over the philosophical merits of African cosmologies are now happening or need to bear to discussions regarding the theologies of development benefactors and beneficiaries. With globalization a dominant reality today, it will no longer be acceptable to caricature the faiths and religions of beneficiary communities. To paraphrase Benjamin Ray in *African Religions*, "…we can no longer concentrate upon 'beliefs' without giving due recognition to the sociocultural and ritual fabric within which they are embedded…can't reduce African religions to a set of 'doctrines analogous to Western faiths: God, at the top, followed by a graded order of divinities, ancestor spirits, and lastly, the forest spirits and magical objects".[22] In other words, because belief systems and patterns significantly bear on the day-to-day activities of a community, any effective anti-poverty or any other intervention in such a community

[22] Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community / Benjamin C. Ray*, Prentice-Hall Studies in Religion Series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, [1976], 1976), 14.

must honestly engage the whole fabric of the community's life as it is, not as it ought to be.

Increasingly, a wide array of stakeholders in the development world are asking for greater accountability from practitioners to justify either continued funding or raising other kinds of support.[23] Because of shrinking funding pools or ever-increasing requests for funding by multiple agencies from the same sources, funding organizations and individuals are demanding, of Christian NGOs, greater spiritual returns for their investments. While most of this pressure naturally emanates from donors, an increasingly globalized and connected developing world and its supporters are asking for a different scorecard separate from, say, how many boreholes are sunk in a particular community to include other 'spiritual' indicators like conversions and commitments to serving one another. To paraphrase Reggie McNeal in *Missional Renaissance*, the new scorecard ought to focus not on "mouths fed and beds occupied", but insist on new metrics to measure the life progress of the people served.[24]

Even though the challenge of arriving at a consensus of what is and should constitute a robust way/means for measuring spiritual transformation is daunting (complexities of definition, social desirability, bias, etc.)[25], starting with the question of intentionality; why it is a worthwhile undertaking to try to give a proper account of our

[23] Jonathan M. Tirrell et al., "Measuring Spirituality, Hope, and Thriving Among Salvadoran Youth: Initial Findings from the Compassion International Study of Positive Youth Development," *Child & Youth Care Forum* 48, no. 2 (April 2019): 243, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-018-9454-1.
[24] Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church / Reggie McNeal* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2009., 2009), 2.
[25] William E Slater, Todd W Hall, and Keith J Edwards, "Measuring Religion and Spirituality: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?" *Journal of Psychology & Theology* 29, no. 1 (2001): 4.

efforts-is a great place to begin. Many Christian organizations engaged in international development approach their work with a clear understanding that their mandate is two-fold; to address the felt needs of the communities they serve, and to help those they encounter during these interventions to grow spiritually. Often, measuring progress is a lot easier in the first leg of the mandate, but more challenging in the second. While there exists any number of tools to measure this progress over the duration of projects, I was concerned about the residual impacts after the projects had ended.

The renowned development thought leader and practitioner Bryant Myers has observed in his seminal book, *Walking with the Poor*, "There is very little, if any, serious research by Christian practitioners-very few PhD studies and almost no evidence-based research into transformational development".[26] I wanted to contribute by doing a field-based assessment of the actual practices that both faith-based and secular NGOs engaged in that contributed to more than just physical well-being of development beneficiaries.

There are several compelling reasons why an investigation like this one would be incomplete if it only confined itself to the examination of either the secular or faith-based development agencies. For one, the secular agencies have a much longer history and engagement with adopting and appropriating the metrics widely employed by governments and other quasi-government players in development like the UN, World Bank, and the IMF. For example, the widely used MGDs arose out of the collaborative work of thought leaders like Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum who developed the *capabilities approach* (focusing on health, education, and income in development) which

[26] Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 49.

led to the Human Development Index (HDI), a precursor to the MGDs. Another reason why studying both (secular and faith-based) is compelling is that the faith-based agencies engage, not in essentially dissimilar development projects, but seek to add a spiritual dimension to the same kinds of projects that the secular agencies do. How the former integrated these two approaches was the impetus for this study. Further, this study sought to observe how this integration yielded spiritual fruit (look for indications that the fruit exists, how it exists, and why it exists in the ways that it does).

Towards that end (assessing the integration and observing the fruit), this study narrowed its focus to four areas where spiritual capital, which builds from both social capital ("…the collective benefit that comes from reciprocally cooperative and helpful relationships with others")[27], and religious capital ("… capital derived from one's relationship with a faith community")[28] exists. The four areas were: organizational (relating to organized activities like worship, outreach, etc.), confessional (relationship with a higher power/the transcendental/god/spirits), correlational (how the organizational and confessional aspects contribute or take away from the quality of life) and; processional and structural (the processes through which individuals or communities "secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures", and the structures such as networks, norms and social trust "that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit").[29]

[27] Cheryl L. Holt et al., "Assessment of Religious and Spiritual Capital in African American Communities," *Journal of Religion and Health* 51, no. 4 (December 2012): 1062, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-012-9635-4.
[28] Holt et al., 1062.
[29] Holt et al., 1062.

Transformational Development

Transformational development, Bryant Myers' theoretical framework that I employed for this study, gains its orientation from changed, transformed hearts. Myers uses Wayne Bragg, the originator of transformation as a theological concept, to mean the changing of the material, social, and spiritual conditions of people.[30] People's hearts are taken captive by an all-encompassing love of God and fellow humanity which then leads to an ordering of all life in alignment with God's expectations. These expectations are represented in changed lives i.e., people start to order their lives in ways that reflect God's heart (fighting for justice and equality, dealing with sin in both the personal and communal realms, etc.).

Myers uses the analogy of converging stories[31] to describe the process of development. The development practitioner's story converges with that of the community which results in a new story that both share for a while. Since the practitioner is Christian and applies his/her faith to this story, the biblical story converges with the new community story to form another story. This third story was my primary concern. The result of engaging a particular context with a particular story (meeting real needs plus sharing the gospel) and how this is appropriated by the beneficiary community is what I was interested in observing.

My interest was examining how Christian NGOs planned for, executed, and evaluated this important aspect of their work, and in comparing it with secular NGOs,

[30] Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 48.
[31] Myers, 174.

interrogate the differences, if any, in the residual impacts among those served through particular projects.

Research Questions

In order to assess the contributions to the spiritual transformation that particular ways of programming have on development beneficiaries, my work was be guided by these broad questions:

1. How do the faith-based NGOs plan for, execute and evaluate the spiritual transformation/impacts in the lives of the communities they serve?
2. How do the efforts above compare with those of secular NGOs without the need to register any spiritual transformation?
3. What are the long-term residual impacts to individual beneficiaries and communities of employing particular programmatic strategies?

Significance of Research

There are many compelling reasons why this research will be significant. One of those reasons is that it gives visibility to a people and an area that in my lifetime, have been on the receiving end of a lot of development interventions. Sadly, in spite of these interventions, there are not many positive things, speaking in a development sense, to say about Makuyu or other similarly situated places like neighboring Ithanga, Gititu or my own ancestral village of Ndorome. In many ways Makuyu is a microcosm of Africa and how its human experience is often understood through what Achille Mbembe refers to as negative interpretation; never seen as possessing things or attributes that are generally of

great value, importance, or quality.[32]I hope to challenge this view in this research by providing a grounded assessment of the efficacy of these interventions, especially in the area of Christian spirituality, and showing the resultant goodness. Secondly, this research provides, in a context-specific way, a foundation for addressing an issue that has troubled many Christian development practitioners and scholars: how to measure if their efforts make any difference in the spiritual vivacity of development beneficiaries. Thirdly, the design, execution, and data analysis of the research contributes to literature and the academy in fresh ways on the question of accounting for spiritual transformation. I am hopeful that the data developed through this research will be a guide for even more comprehensive endeavors.

The Scholarly Context of the Study

The purpose of this section is to provide some literary context for this study. I start with an overview that places the study in the nascent field of studying spirituality in development before turning the attention to some literature in germane areas of development. This is not a classic literature review but an attempt to put the study in dialogue with some of the relevant literature I encountered.

Literary Overview

There is an abundance of literature dealing with spiritual formation and maturity in the church especially (under familiar labels like 'discipleship', 'faith development', 'spiritual growth', etc.) i.e., for people already in or coming into the faith, but little as it

[32] Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 1st edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 1.

relates to those in specific contexts of international development. In a great number of places, my assumption was that the beneficiaries of poverty alleviation projects conducted through the facilitation and funding of Christian organizations were either largely professing or nominal Christians.

For example, 82.5% of Kenya's population is Christian and only 2.4% professes no faith at all.[33] By inference, the bulk of those targeted by development agencies in Kenya will at the very least be nominally Christian. Further, it is the case that most of the international development focus is rural-centric, a process that is "inseparably linked with the history of the African Christian movement".[34] In another example, Bernadette Flanagan and Michael O'Sullivan note that 40-50% of health care in Africa is provided by faith-based groups,[35] and since a major focus of international development is health, engaging with faith-based groups is a worthwhile endeavor. Paul Gifford, renowned Africanist scholar, has chronicled the long history of the mission churches' (Anglicans, Catholics, Presbyterians, and Methodists) development work in health and education. He notes that, remarkably, up to 64 percent of Kenya's education institutions are church based.[36]

In the sections that follow, I will briefly touch on the different kinds of literature that helped ground this study. Subsequent chapters of the study, especially the thematic

[33] "Https://Www.Cia.Gov/Library/Publications/the-World-Factbook/Geos/Ke.Html," n.d.
[34] Kirsten Holst Petersen, *Religion, Development, and African Identity / Edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen*, Seminar Proceedings: No. 17 (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies; Stockholm, Sweden: Distributed by Almquist & Wiksell International, 1987., 1987), 30.
[35] Bernadette Flanagan and Michael O'Sullivan, *Spiritual Capital: Spirituality in Practice in Christian Perspective* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2012), 114.
[36] Paul Gifford Gifford, ed., *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 1 edition (Oxford University Press, 2009), 46.

ones (Organizational, Values and Practices, and Evaluation), will be in deeper discourse with this and other literature.

Social Change Literature

Social change literature is foundational to the ever-increasing literature specific to different aspects of international development. This literature helped me to understand, historically, how development has evolved. From Peter Berger's *Sacred Canopy* (an examination of the relationship between two competing arguments: humans producing society and society producing humans)[37] and Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic* (a defense for the role of Christian Puritanism in the growth of modern capitalism)[38] to the more recent works like Immanuel Wallerstein's *Modern World System* (an investigation of how the unequal economic and political relationships dominate the world economic system)[39], echoes of transformation are loud. Further, as noted elsewhere in this document, 'development' is widely understood not as a broad conviction that people can do something to change their lives, but that it is a fairly specific set of ideas about the world deeply rooted in Europe's historical experience.[40] In these ways, just as Christianity itself is a Western import, development carries with it the aspirations of lives that mirror those of the industrialized West. These aspirations, including conversion to Christianity itself,

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[37] Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*, Reprint edition (New York: Anchor, 1990).
[38] Weber, *Protestant Ethic & Spirit of Capitalism* (Dovers, Paperback, 2003).
[39] Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, Text ed edition (New York: Academic Pr, 1976).
[40] Barbara Bompani and Maria Frahm-Arp, *Development and Politics from below: Exploring Religious Spaces in the African State / Edited by Barbara Bompani; Edited by Maria Frahm-Arp*, Non-Governmental Public Action Series (Houndmills, Basingstoke, England; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010., 2010), 23.

are not value-free as biblical ethicist Stephen Mott eloquently observes in *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, they have ethical and social consequences.[41]

Religion and Development

The literature cited below helped to draw for me the connection between religion and development.

The classic literature cited above, even though it does not exactly fit in the current view of development, arose out of an environment where religion played a prominent role in transforming society. Secularism may arguably be more rampant today, but the centrality of religion in societies cannot be ignored. This point is eloquently relayed by Deneulin when she observes in *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*, "Religion is unavoidable in development."[42]

Eighty percent of the world population professes religious faith; therefore, religion is, whether acknowledged or not, a common human characteristic.[43] It is true that religion is mainly concerned with people's spiritual well-being and has long played a central role in addressing the physical well-being of communities.[44] This interest is often delivered through FBOs. The role of religion in matters of human progress has spawned a variety of literature either making the case for religion to overtly play a bigger role in

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[41] Stephen Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, 2nd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 94.
[42] Matthew Clarke, *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion* (Cheltenham, Glos., UK; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Pub, 2014), 64.
[43] Matthew Clarke and Vicki-Anne Ware, "Understanding Faith-Based Organizations: How FBOs Are Contrasted with NGOs in International Development Literature," *Progress in Development Studies* 15, no. 1 (January 2015): 39, https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993414546979.
[44] Clarke and Ware, 38.

development (Ter Haar's *Religion and Development* and *Worlds of Power*) or for understanding the great potential for religion in all matters of a society's life from politics to justice (Petersen's *Religion, Development and African Identity*, Bornstein's *Spirit of Development*, Yoder's *Politics of Jesus*, etc.)

Development as Transformation

"…empirical research regarding the influence of religion on development is fragmented and still in its infancy."[45]This is the area where my study wishes to contribute. Aside from articles and edited collections like *Mission as Transformation* and *Holistic Mission*,[46] literature is scarce. A powerful case can be made about how the contributions of Woodberry's *Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy* and Goulet's *One-Eyed Giants* have shaped development scholars' understanding of the development enterprise especially how it has influenced and been influenced by governance. Indeed, as this study will show, the Kenyan government has been preaching the development gospel loudly from the halls of parliament and the pulpit.[47] Katongole's *Reconciling All Things* echoes the same themes of healing broken relationships as Myers' *Walking with the Poor.* Both concur that healed relationships produce transformed lives.

[45] Roy Mersland, Bert D'Espallier, and Magne Supphellen, "The Effects of Religion on Development Efforts: Evidence from the Microfinance Industry and a Research Agenda," *World Development* 41 (January 1, 2013): 145, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.05.030.
[46] Brian Woolnough, *Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2011).
[47] It is a common practice for politicians to get time during regular church services to 'greet the people', vernacular for politicking.

Measuring Spiritual Transformation

There is a lot of literature on spiritual growth and how to measure it but little regarding how to do the same in international development. Most of the literature in spiritual formation focuses on the areas of healthcare and discipleship in institutions (churches, schools, palliative care, etc.); however, this study draws influence and inspiration from this literature especially Moberg's *Spiritual Well-being* and the voluminous *Measures of Religiosity*[48] edited by Hill and Hood Jr. The latter is especially helpful in examining the tools that have been developed to measure religiosity which bears quite heavily on spirituality. Paul Hiebert's *Anthropological Reflections and Missiological Issues* is a great resource for accounting for a comprehensive response of Africans to Christianity, and more importantly, how they shape Christianity to fit local realities and aspirations. Relatedly, I found Miroslav Volf's *A Public Faith* and *Exclusion and Embrace* to be especially helpful in understanding how the vivacity of faith contrasts with idle faith prone to become captive to systems[49], or worse, using a version of Christianity to foment pain or injury.[50] This last point is especially vivid among Kikuyus, who formed the majority of this study, because of being victims of religiously inspired violence. Some participants of this study were displaced from their former homes by such violence.

[48] Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, *Measures of Religiosity / Edited by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr* (Birmingham, Al.: Religious Education Press, c1999., 1999).
[49] Miroslav Volf, *Public Faith*, Reprint edition (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2013), 23.
[50] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace, Revised and Updated: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Abingdon Press, 2019), 306.

Africanist Voices in Development

It is disappointing, the dearth of African voices, in development even though Africa remains one of the greatest theatres where development theories and practices are conducted. Lack of resources and limited access to distribution networks inhibits the publication of academic books and journal articles to make them available to a global audience.[51] A cursory perusal of Amazon books for African authors in development is a frustrating exercise. All is not lost, however.

Africanist authors of renown like Paul Gifford, Gerrie ter Haar, Erica Bornstein, and John Lonsdale have ably stepped in the gaps. Gifford's *Christianity, Politics and Public Life in Kenya* was a great dialogue partner at all stages of this study because of his deep knowledge of the Kenyan Christian and political landscape. Equally comprehensive in navigating Africa's modernities were Gifford's *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa* as well Gregg Okesson's *Re-imaging Modernity*. Okesson's book was especially helpful when fate took me to Ukambani where Okesson had spent many years as a pastor and teacher. His take on modernities and how they are shaped by power dynamics (how power is sought, used, and displayed), Christianity contextualized by African traditions and aspirations to fit in a modern world is eye-opening. John Lonsdale's *Kikuyu Christianities* was incredibly helpful in a self-discovery way; as a Kikuyu of the Anglican tradition, one of the four major traditions he exegetes. For

[51] LeMarquand Grant, "Founding an African Faith: Kikuyu Anglican Christianity 1900-1945 John Karanja," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 70, no. 3 (September 1, 2001): 386.

additional context for African Christianity, Emmanuel Katongole's *Reconciling All Things* and Ogbu Kalu's *African Christianity* proved invaluable.

FBOs and Development

Faith-based organizations (FBOs), church-based or otherwise, that draw their membership from the rolls of the communities in which they operate, have an ear to the ground and are intimately connected to these communities and therefore are well placed to mediate between different interest groups. Their networks are expansive and always growing. Aligning the development agenda with their agenda is not only simply smart business, but a strategic coup, "The transnational reach of faith-based humanitarian aid through the work of NGOs, and their increasing political and economic importance m*akes it foolhardy to ignore* (italics my emphasis)".[52] *Advocating for Justice*, a book by Stephen Offutt et al makes an eloquent case for often ignored advocacy of evangelical FBOs.

Because religion provides people with a foundation for moral and ethical behavior in both private and public lives, examining how development partners join hands with the communities they serve is worthwhile. *In Mission as Transformation*, Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden talk about the three-way of viewing life (the origin of life, its meaning, and the after-life dimension) thus: "The three views come together in the Kingdom of

[52] Erica Bornstein, *The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality, and Economics in Zimbabwe*, 1 edition (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005), 1.

God…the presence in history of the fulfilment of God's purposes which will bring an apocalyptic climax to human history".[53]

Development's story merges with the theological one in 'presence in history' of location in a given community, and for the Christian practitioner, his/her development vision is as much influenced by the faith and belief in being part of fulfilling God's purposes as by the specific challenges of that community. Therefore, a borehole project to provide safe potable water, beyond simple provision, can also be used as a vehicle to appeal to the spiritual goodness that a life of service to god and others can be. Christian development partners acknowledge, at least on paper, this fact: while the physical aspects of development have real felt merits, the spiritual benefits are not just desirable consequences to be or not pursued, but integral to the concept of an abundant life. Wendy Tyndale in *Visions of Development* makes this point of vibrant active faith, not a disembodied angel-like spiritual existence.[54]

Using biblical teachings, Christian development practitioners and agencies demonstrate the oft-recited God's option for the poor; that he cares especially about those that society looks down upon, not necessarily that they may abound in plenty, but that they are protected from undue oppression and exploitation. In *Bible and Poverty in*

[53] Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds., *Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel*, Reprint edition (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2009), 393.
[54] Wendy R. Tyndale, ed., *Visions of Development: Faith-Based Initiatives*, 1 edition (Place of publication not identified: Routledge, 2016), 153.

Kenya, Maurice Sakwa refers to this orientation as a "clear manifestation of the kind of duties we have towards each other".[55]

The Christian development worker cannot just hope that his/her work may result in some spiritual benefits but can be intentional in cultivating them. Per sociologist Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, the Christian development worker must adapt a praxis that deliberately cultivates spiritual vivacity because by default, when one is cultivated, another is NOT.[56] This is to say that, for the Christian development worker whose mandate includes seeking after the spiritual transformation of the beneficiaries, not doing so and keeping an account of the progress (deliberate cultivation), by default means that everything else (including negative spirituality) has room to grow and possibly flourish.

Through conversion, the process through which formerly non-Christian people become Christians, there are attendant ethical and social consequences that the Bible variously describes as "fruits worthy of repentance (Galatians 5: 22, Luke 3: 8).[57] It is precisely these 'fruits' that help us recognize the effective appropriation of the gospel message in the lives of those we witness to and therefore help us to develop indicators of spiritual growth. McNeal observes that missional followers of Christ believe that the way they "demonstrate love and service" to others will intrigue people to want to know the God who inspires such service.[58] This is a strategy that is effective and proven; pioneer

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[55] Maurice Matendechere Sakwa, *Bible and Poverty in Kenya: An Empirical Exploration* (Brill Academic Pub, 2008), 21.
[56] *Paulo Freire - An Incredible Conversation*, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFWjnkFypFA&feature=youtube_gdata_player.
[57] Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*, 94.
[58] McNeal, *Missional Renaissance*, 56.

missionaries first set out meeting felt needs (medical, educational, physiological, etc.) before sharing the good news of salvation.

One of the ways that spirituality has seeped into the wider policy conversations regarding development is the reference to spiritual capital. Its application in the arena of international development has followed a path similar to the now widely regarded 'social capital' which is itself borrowed from the language of economics.[59] Flanagan cites the work of Theodore Malloch in *Spiritual Enterprise: Doing Virtuous Business* who identifies spiritual capital as a foundational resource for responsible and successful enterprise. I contend that, in the same way that development *per se* is about increasing capacities while reducing vulnerabilities, building and increasing spiritual capital ought to be an equally major focus for the Christian development worker as the building of other capital. Spiritual capital then becomes a significant resource for specifically, personal and social, and to a lesser degree, ecclesial transformation.[60]

This kind of focus, of spiritual and social capital accumulation, is well expressed in the bioethics arena where both secular and religious, albeit not without controversy, morality constantly intersect. None of this is more apparent than in the field of medical intervention.[61] On the one side, Christians affirm the general centrality of intervention, and on the other, harbor deep reservations in specific contexts like postponing death, curing disease, ameliorating pain and disease, etc.

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[59] Flanagan and O'Sullivan, *Spiritual Capital*, 1.
[60] Flanagan and O'Sullivan, 3.
[61] Mark J. Cherry, "Religion without God, Social Justice without Christian Charity, and Other Dimensions of the Culture Wars," *Christian Bioethics: Non-Ecumenical Studies in Medical Morality* 15, no. 3 (December 2009): 277–99, https://doi.org/10.1093/cb/cbp020.

As much as both processes are, of formation and maturation, I was more imminently concerned with the residual impacts i.e., the lasting benefits that remained well after a particular project had concluded in a given community.

Scope and Delimitations

To make this study feasible and doable within a limited timeframe, I set some boundaries for guidance. Other limitations were imposed on me by the study environment itself. For example, the use of vernaculars (Kikuyu, Kikamba and Luo) in the general conduct of data collection had some bearing on how the research progressed.[62] My fluency in Kikuyu and Swahili greatly helped in conversations.

The context of this study was rural Kenya where most of the development programs were concentrated. This focus is illustrative in several ways some of which I have already alluded to earlier. Quickly, most of the development agenda is focused on the peasantry already concentrated in the rural areas. Further, since this study was more or less a comparative impact assessment case examining the practices of overtly Christian NGOs, situating it in rural Kenya was vital because the story of Christianity's expansion in Kenya and indeed most of Africa has followed a rural-to-urban trajectory. Ironically, the places where missionaries first settled and started churches, schools, and health facilities themselves transformed into urban centers with time. Examples of these include Kikuyu, Kabete and Thogoto just outside Nairobi, Kaimosi in Western Kenya, Kericho in

[62] As part of pre-planning, I was careful to engage with respondents conversant with English; however, the level of authority of the language varied widely with different respondents. Such situations required some translation from a vernacular to English or vice versa. Something would of course be lost in translation.

Rift Valley, Nyang'ori in Nyanza, among others.[63] In this regard I concur with Terrence Ranger, who while contributing to *Religion, Development and African Identity*, observed, "I believe that development in Africa must be founded in the rural areas and that it must involve recognition of the hopes and ambitions of the peasant communities which constitute the vast majority of Africa's rural population".[64]

This study was also limited by the understanding that faith-based international development NGOs do not decide to locate their projects in specific areas primarily because of an assessment of great spiritual need. In fact, and this they share with the secular groups, they are attracted to these contexts because of overtly material or social needs (providing clean safe drinking water, immunizing infants, increasing agricultural production, reconciliation post-war, etc.). The religious dimensions of their work are, it seems, a corollary albeit, an important one, to the overall development agenda. As such, they are "interested in improving the material conditions of the communities as a necessary step-but only a step-towards social justice".[65] The understanding of how NGOs decided on project site selection was a delimitation because project beneficiaries never understood spirituality to be a key focus of the project to start with. Asking about how their spirituality had changed during the course of a project was not the easiest of quests.

Other challenges included the linguistic one I alluded to earlier. For example, the concept of spirit translates the same for soul in my native Kikuyu which is also the mother tongue of most Makuyu dwellers. It was challenging to elicit comprehensive

[63] Zablon Nthamburi, accessed October 25, 2020, https://dacb.org/histories/kenya-beginning-development/.
[64] Petersen, *Religion, Development, and African Identity / Edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen*, 29.
[65] Occhipinti, "Liberating Development," 428.

responses to questions of spiritual transformation when the respondents did not have the facility to distinguish, in the question, whether I was asking about the spirit or the soul. Further, when happenstance led me to Ahero in western Kenya where Luo is the vernacular, I had to rely on my contact to effectively translate what he understood my questions to be to the respondents. I was at his mercy because I do not speak Luo. In Ukambani where Kikamba is the vernacular, I had less trouble because I speak/understand Kikamba because it is a Bantu language like my mother tongue of Kikuyu. Relatedly, the lack of theological understanding (all the respondents including pastors did not have formal theological training) limited the depth of responses.

I also explored the ways in which the NGOs planned for and implemented projects, and more importantly, how they identified, prioritized, and tracked/measured spiritual transformation. I applied this lens to the ways in which these organizations defined 'poverty' because these ways of defining it have clear ramifications for the selection of programs, methodology, and the arenas of local life that they determine to be outside their scope of interest.[66] When poverty is conceived as a lack of material stuff (money, food, clean water, etc.) or the absence of social justice (oppression, lack of voice in policy decisions, etc.), the approach to alleviate it or ameliorate its effects moves in tandem with the particular conception.

This study was limited to self-identifying Christian NGOs and not other faith-based organizations[67] which abound in the Kenya development scene. The Muslim and

[66] Occhipinti, 430.
[67] Muslims, Hindus, and others are also engaged in development activities.

Hindu communities have a long history of being involved in development in Kenya especially in education and health sectors. In the same breath, I also examined the work of a secular NGO working in the same kinds of projects as the faith-based ones to provide data for further comparative analysis. Studying a secular NGO is crucial in the sense that, on the face of it, religious NGOs offer an alternative discourse and praxis model that is rooted in a particular vision of how the world is and how it ought to be. The *raison d'etre* of secular NGOs is usually limited to issues largely framed as economic, health, educational, or any number, but religious NGOs carry a vision of a world that is infused with social justice, equity, forgiveness, bearing each other's burdens, and so forth.[68]

Finally, without settling the finer points that distinguish both religion and spirituality, I adopted Sinnott's definition of both as quoted by David Moberg, a leading voice in measuring spirituality, "Spirituality is one's personal relation to the sacred or transcendent, a relation that then informs other relationships and meanings of one's own life…Religion…refers to practices and beliefs related to a particular dogma system".[69]

I am personally of the opinion that spirituality is the broader of the two even though plenty of overlaps exist. Spirituality has birthed many religions and therefore cannot be divorced from religion although it is entirely possible to be spiritual and not religious or religious without being spiritual. Further, as I investigated the questions of spirituality in development, I was guided by Allie Scott's three differentiating polarizations between religiousness and spirituality namely; organizational religion vs.

[68] Occhipinti, "Liberating Development," 428.
[69] David O. Moberg, "Spirituality Research: Measuring the Immeasurable?" *Perspectives on Science & Christian Faith* 62, no. 2 (June 2010): 102.

personal spirituality, substantive religion vs. functional spirituality (focus on sacred contents and their effects), and negative religiosity vs. positive spirituality.[70] I also fully acknowledge that it is impossible to come up with *the* measure of spirituality because no measure is ever an equivalent of the phenomenon it seeks to measure;[71] it is always a representation quite obviously skewed in the favor of the one who measures. As much as possible, I sought to marry my interpretations with the definitions held by my research subjects.

Clarifying Key Terms

The world of development has grown and evolved a great deal since introduction in everyday parlance by President Harry Truman. Development now hosts a whole cadre of experts and is a genuine area of academic pursuit in many universities and other tertiary institutions.

This section will attempt to provide working definitions of key terms and concepts as they have been defined and used by others in the world of development and in literature (including dictionaries). Later in the study, other understandings or definitions will emerge based on how the interviewees who provided the data for this study (development beneficiaries, workers/experts, administrators) understood and used them. These terms and concepts will include *development, poverty, culture, spirituality, religion, metrics, progress, transformation, values, sacred, secular*, and *modernity*.

[70] Moberg, 102.
[71] Moberg, 106.

The World Bank defines *poverty* as "pronounced deprivation in well-being"[72]; therefore, if *development* is the cure for poverty, it must be understood as the totality of interventions that increase individual, communal, and societal capacities for well-being while reducing vulnerabilities that reduce well-being. Development is understood as both process and idea or set of ideas about improving life's conditions and outcomes.

The idea of *progress*, that human history is the story of steady advance from a life more dependent on the whims of nature to one of more control and domination of the same as the result of economic and technological advancements that ultimately yields increasingly better standards of living[73] (faster travel, better health outcomes, longer more productive lives, etc.) is prevalent in this world of development. I entered this study knowing that this was the mainstream understanding of what development constitutes.

I was also particularly attentive to the unique contributions that faith communities added to this discourse, especially the emphases on the transcendent and how its understanding affected ordinary everyday life and impacted people's views of the afterlife. In other words, I was attentive to how *religion* (the practices that characterize the relationship between humans and the divine)[74] or "…the practices and beliefs related to a particular dogma system"[75], and *spiritual well-being* (the…" affirmation of life in a

[72] Tirrell et al., "Measuring Spirituality, Hope, and Thriving Among Salvadoran Youth," 242.
[73] Richard H. Robbins, *Cengage Advantage Books: Cultural Anthropology: A Problem-Based Approach*, 5th ed. (Wadsworth Publishing, 2008), 41, 50.
[74] Harold W Turner, "A Model for the Structure of Religion in Relation to the Secular," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, no. 27 (June 1, 1979): 45.
[75] David O. Moberg, *Spiritual Well-Being: Sociological Perspectives / Edited by David O. Moberg* (Washington: University Press of America, c1979., 1979), 102.

relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness")[76] interacted and affected the endeavors for both development and progress.

From my experiences of growing up in church in Kenya but also living in the US for the last thirteen years, that most of the people I interviewed were less analytical about *religion* (as 'some organized system of beliefs that they subscribe to')[77]; rather, they saw religion as a lens through which they experienced the world. I was cautious not to skew the study in either direction.

As noted earlier regarding the challenges of translating 'spirit' in Kikuyu, my most comprehensive understanding of *spirituality* was the way how religious faith in a transcendental creator (God) influenced and therefore became a measure of life aspirations and living well. I found that it was impossible to talk about spirituality apart from religious faith. In fact, I sensed that many people did not necessarily see spirituality and religious faith as different things.

Secularism and being *secular* imply a worldview and a way of life where the basic aspects of human existence are not only devoid of any religious faith but where also the "necessity or possibility of such a connection is denied"[78]. For this study, *secular* is to be understood as not being subject to or tied to religious expectations. This was an exceptionally fine line to draw because of how diffuse religion and religious experiences

[76] Moberg, 5.
[77] Bompani and Frahm-Arp, *Development and Politics from Below*, 26.
[78] Cherry, "Religion without God, Social Justice without Christian Charity, and Other Dimensions of the Culture Wars," 277.

are in the Kenyan national fabric. On the flipside, *sacred* is to be understood as that which has to do with the divine (deities and spirits).

My understanding of the *international* NGO borrowed from Marten's definition…" a formal (professionalized) independent societal organization whose primary goal is to promote common goals at the *international* (italics my emphasis) level."[79] The faith-based NGO would thus be identified by its 'religiousness' as characterized by: "self-identity, participants, material resources, definition and distribution of power, goals, decision-making processes, and organizational fields."[80]

On *transformation*, I affirm the observation that social change resulting from engaging with a particular development discourse amounted, to some level, an identity change that spurred the person to embark on a different journey. Bompani and Frahm-Arp observe that transformation, a key concept in current development debate, implies the need and capacity for radical change at various levels, starting with the personal and followed by social. This change allows people to imagine totally new lives and start to move in new directions.[81] This study examined, where possible, the moments and evidence of those changes and how they were sustained.

To assess the lasting impacts of a particular way of engaging in development (a Christian perspective), I explored how religious *beliefs,* convictions that something is true or exists (per Oxford Dictionary), motivated people to action in the personal and communal realms to enhance the quality of life. In this study, beliefs are an acceptance or

[79] Martens, "Mission Impossible?" 282.
[80] Berger, "Religious Nongovernmental Organizations," 25.
[81] Bompani and Frahm-Arp, *Development and Politics from Below*, 52.

acknowledgement that something (a statement, idea, or thing) is true, or it exists. Some of these include the belief in the existence of a transcendental God who is personally invested in the well-being of his people and the universe.

Values, the broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others,[82] are closely related to beliefs. Indeed, some people understand values as basic beliefs that motivate people towards what is right, moral, ethical, and good in both personal and societal realms. For this study, values were understood to mean the preferential desire for certain outcomes or statuses like generosity, hospitality, and solidarity.

Collectively, these last two concepts of values and beliefs are constitutive of the broader concept of *culture*. For this study, I adopted Michael Rynkiewich's definition of culture as "…more or less integrated system of knowledge, values and feelings that people use to define their reality (worldview), interpret their experiences, and generate appropriate strategies for living."[83]

The last concepts I would like to elucidate in this section are *metrics* and *modernity*. The former simply refers to the units of measure while the latter embraces a view of what Gregg Okesson characterizes as something contemporaneous.[84] This view is of course true without betraying the academic view of modernity rooted in the progress

[82] Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, and Michael Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, Revised and Expanded Third Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 9.
[83] Michael Rynkiewich, *Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World*, n.d., 19.
[84] Gregg A. Okesson, *Re-Imaging Modernity: A Contextualized Theological Study of Power and Humanity Within Akamba Christianity in Kenya* (Pickwick Publications - An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013), 5.

understanding of history where rationality, science, and technology are supposed to deliver world changed for the better.[85]

Summary

In this introductory chapter, I covered a broad swathe that started with how I first became interested in the subject of accounting for spirituality. This interest was sparked by an internship in Rwanda sponsored by World Relief, a global leader among Christian NGOs involved in relief and development. The study then naturally turned to NGOs and their role in development but not before tracing their brief history, their important role in fighting poverty and of course, how faith and religion have moved from the peripheries to the center of the development endeavor.

The second half of the chapter launched the study proper with the problem statement and a discussion of transformational development, the theoretical framework that the study adopted. This was followed by the research questions, significance of the research, situating the research in the relevant literary context, and finally, a discussion of working definitions of key terms and concepts that will guide the next sections of the study. This section also addressed the factors that limited and constrained this study like location choice, language proficiency, and personal history.

[85] Richard Peet and Elaine Hartwick, *Theories of Development, Third Edition: Contentions, Arguments, Alternatives*, 3rd edition (The Guilford Press, 2015), 1.

The next chapter will delve into the methodological and theoretical considerations that guided this study. Here, I will situate the study in the proper geographical, historical, and anthropological context before exploring the methods and theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 2

Method and Theory

When I was about fifteen years old and beginning to understand what my baptism and confirmation meant to my Anglican faith, one event surrounding an elderly reclusive lady shook me. The event involved what my fellow villagers were describing as demonic attacks.

What started as a rumor had quickly become a spectacle where the whole village was gathering to witness this explanation-defying phenomenon. The phenomenon involved the physical hurling of stone projectiles at the old woman that would miraculously weave their way around the human wall of protection that other villagers had put around her. Additionally, every time she would attempt to cook something, an invisible hand would dump sand in the pot at the same time that an invisible wind was trying to put out the fire.

It was a harrowing experience to watch. The poor woman was covered in pelts and emaciated from not eating. There was unanimity that witchcraft was to blame, but the solution was unclear.

My mother and other believers proposed to hold a night vigil of prayer and worship to demonstrate God's power over whatever power was oppressing this woman. Children were discouraged from being near her home during this exercise to prevent any harm from coming to us (mental, spiritual, or physical trauma). A few kids and I let curiosity get the better of us, so we watched the vigil from a distance.

Right after the stone throwing started (it was always after sunset), my mother and her group of Christians started to pray loudly and commanding the evil spirit to stop oppressing the elderly woman. Continued screaming above the din of prayers confirmed that the attacks were unrelenting. This duel between good and evil continued for the better part of the night until sometime before midnight when the screams from the elderly lady suddenly stopped. From our safe distance, we feared the worst. We imagined that the elderly lady had succumbed to the injuries or she had become too weak to scream any more. Our fears were punctured by the rapture of loud joyous singing from the believers punctuated by chants of victory which indicated that good had overcome evil.

As we later confirmed, the attacks had ceased, and the elderly lady had agreed to accept Jesus Christ as her savior. She soon started to attend one of the local Pentecostal churches, Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG). As far as I can recall, the attacks never returned.

I tell this story to highlight the spiritual realities of my childhood that mirrored the spiritualities of Makuyu my research focus area. Indeed, at only the second meeting with Anglican Development Services (ADS) representatives to map out field strategies, the question of contested spiritualities- allegiance to Christianity only or Christianity and some witchcraft- came up. One of the ADS field representatives talked about the impenetrability of the wall of witchcraft around the community of Kitini where Farming God's Way (FGW) had failed to make any converts. Any FGW sympathizers at Kitini were too afraid of what could happen to them and their families if they took up FGW.

Makuyu is an enigma in many ways including spiritually. The township is so close to one of the most important highways in the nation, Thika Road, yet so far from the opportunities that such proximity would otherwise yield and has yielded to other similarly situated towns. In fact, Makuyu appears frozen in time in a number of ways. The most poignant of these is the state of the local government hospital which, when I was growing up, was one of two sub-district level hospitals one could go to for requisite lab tests or advanced care unavailable in a local dispensary. The other such facility was in Maragua, a good two-hours' drive from my village. Today, the hospital in Makuyu is dilapidated, falling apart, and overgrown with weeds and bushes. Another way that Makuyu is enigmatic is its isolation literally and in other ways. As the base for a significant government presence (headquarters to the Divisional police and seat of the District Officer)[86], Makuyu would attract a good amount of government funds, but this appears to be not the case. The police post and DO's office reek of neglect.

Makuyu also does not seem to have benefitted as a bedroom community in the same way that other townships that dot the highway have done to grow exponentially. Witeithie, Kabati, and Kenol are examples of townships along Thika Road that have grown from small townships into medium-sized towns as people sought to escape the hustle and bustle, congestion, and high costs of living in the city of Thika.

In the following section, I will attempt to unravel the enigma that is Makuyu by peeling some of its layers. I will start by continuing some of the geographical

[86] Kenya's current constitution was promulgated on August 27, 2010 and although it did away with the former Provinces, Districts and Divisions for Counties and Sub-Counties, for some unexplained reason some old offices remained. These include District Commissioners, Officers and Chiefs. The District Officer (DO) was the third most senior position in the former provincial administrative structure.

groundwork that I have already set before placing Makuyu historically and socially in the right context. And because my concern here is how Christianity has shaped Makuyu, the context I am addressing here will skew in that direction. I will pay additional attention to the Kikuyu people, the majority of Makuyu's residents and Kenya's largest ethnic group, with a view of showing how these factors might be helpful in understanding Makuyu's religious landscape better.

Makuyu: A Geographical Sketch

The township of Makuyu is located about 41 miles north of Nairobi City along the Nairobi-Embu highway that is also the main artery from the capital Nairobi into Central Kenya and the larger Mt. Kenya region. Makuyu, about an hour's drive from Nairobi, is also about fifteen minutes' drive from Kenya's sixth largest city of Thika that was also the leading manufacturing city in Kenya before the opening of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in Athi River, an hour east of Nairobi.

At the southernmost edge of Murang'a County, Makuyu borders Kiambu County. To the east, Makuyu connects Murang'a to Machakos and Embu Counties and shares the ecological features of aridity, semi-aridity, and flatness with the adjacent areas of those counties. Makuyu is in the agro-ecological area described in government documents as Zone 4, 5, and 6 where coffee and pineapple plantations can thrive under irrigation.[87]

[87] County Government of Murang'a, "Muranga County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022," n.d., 3, https://www.cog.go.ke/media-multimedia/reportss/category/106-county-integrated-development-plans-2018-2022?download=311:murang-a-county-integrated-development-plan-2018-2022.

A map of Kenya showing the main regions, formerly Provinces

Figure 1

Source: maphill.com

Following the new constitutional dispensation of 2010, Makuyu lost its standing as an independent constituency with its own Member of Parliament (MP) as well as the seat and the trappings that come with being the seat of power. Makuyu is now one of six Electoral Wards of Maragua Constituency. Maragua is one of seven constituencies that constitute Murang'a County and also the seat of the eponymous administrative area.

Indeed, Makuyu is home to major coffee, pineapple, and avocado plantations that thrive under irrigation, but is also home to some of the driest regions of central Kenya.

The landscape is largely flat grassland savannah occasionally broken by rocky hills that jut out of the plains and dip into seasonal streams and rivers.

A map of Murang'a County showing the Divisions

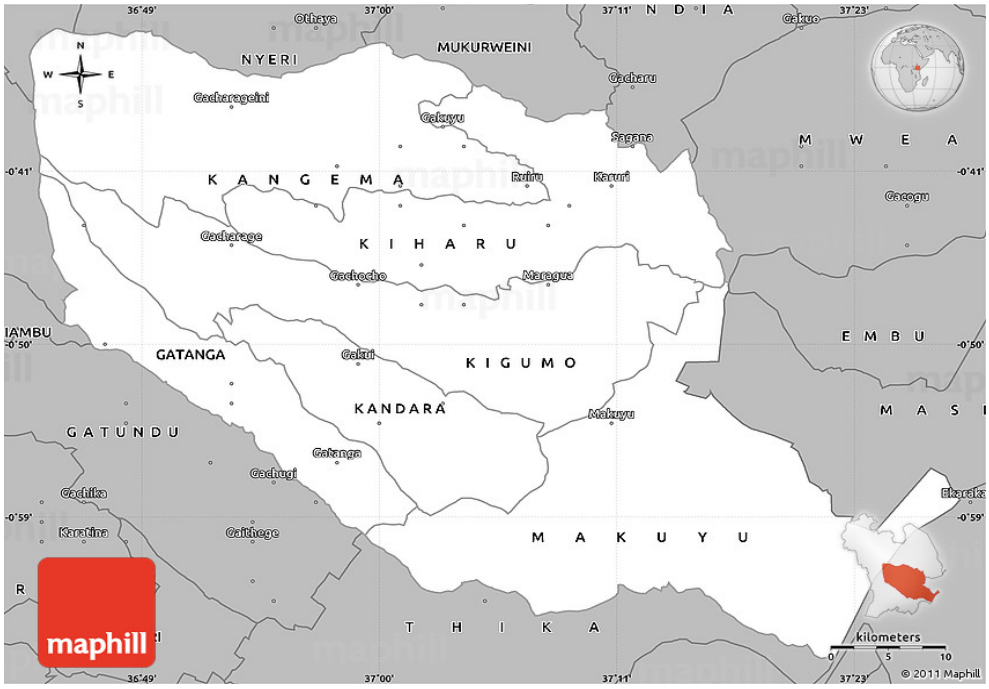

Figure 2

Source: maphill.com

Although classified among the lesser productive parts of the ecologically diverse county, Makuyu and its neighbor township, Kenol, combined for close to 41% of the total urban population (44,077 persons of 107,551) at the last census of 2009 and is projected to grow to 45,986 by 2020.[88] The total number of persons counted in the urban areas during the last census accounted for nearly 11.5% of the total county population of

[88] County Government of Murang'a, 8.

936,228 persons. With these kinds of numbers, Makuyu is arguably punching well below its weight and ought to command a bigger voice in resource allocation and use. This was probably the realization that led to the County Development Priorities and Strategies plan identifying two of the five areas of focus (Industrialization and Modernizing Agriculture) targeting the Lower parts of the County that clearly include Makuyu.[89] Notably for this study, this strategic development plan did not mention the contribution of faith communities in achieving the target development objectives.

The People of Makuyu

"Murang'a County is the origin of Gikuyu and Mumbi, the forefathers of Kikuyu."[90] It is indeed true that Murang'a County and Makuyu are almost exclusively Kikuyu, especially away from the urban centers and plantations that tend to have more ethnic diversity as people move from many parts of the country in search of jobs. Interior Makuyu reflects the Kikuyu homogeneity while the peripheries like the township itself mirrors the diversity of a more mixed workforce.

As a border Division and one that is quite close to a major city (Thika), Makuyu's population may have an over-representation of other ethnic groups apart from the native Kikuyu. The eastern neighbors of Machakos and Embu counties are responsible for the significant numbers of Kamba and Embu people respectively while the plantations and manufacturing industries add more ethnic diversity mainly from the Luo and Luhya

[89] County Government of Murang'a, 50.
[90] County Government of Murang'a, 1.

communities. Makuyu's status as a divisional police post and a former constituency headquarters does add to the ethnic diversity in uncommon ways. Let me explain briefly.

It is the practice of the Kenya government, responsible for training and posting police officers, to send police officers far away from their native homes. Reshuffles are also fairly common. The rationale for these practices is to ensure a fair enforcement of laws unencumbered by ethnic considerations. On a related point, the government also provides for armed security for elected officials at the constituency level, formerly Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of County Assembly (MCA) now. This security detail was provided through the Administrative Police (AP) that also follows the same training, posting and reshuffling protocols as the regular police. Because of these practices, places like Makuyu that served as both police posts and constituency headquarters would have a more-than-normal representation of other ethnicities apart from Kikuyu. The politics of patronage, especially during the reign of former President Moi, also saw to an over-representation in the law enforcement and military ranks by the Kalenjin, Moi's ethnic group.[91]

As a consequence of these conditions, Makuyu has a good mix of other ethnicities apart from the majority Kikuyu as well as mixed ethnicities resulting from intermarriages between different communities that now call Makuyu home. Indeed, this study interacted with two family units that resulted from just such mixing. Both were fully integrated into their respective communities.

[91] Gifford, *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 34–36.

Makuyu's citizens, be they as they are resulting from innate and 'caused' factors described above, help to move the discussion to its next phase: how politics, power dynamics, religion, and development have shaped Makuyu.

Politics, Religion and Development in Makuyu

Much has been written about pre-colonial and post-independence Kenya that I do not wish to revisit here except for bringing into sharp focus those elements I believe will elucidate my argument. Some of those elements that I will touch on include the storied history of co-operation and conflict between religion (church) and politics, and the Christianities represented in Makuyu which are invariably the products of the interactions between varying actors. In order to do this well, I will highlight what has been described as the Big Four (Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Catholics) because they continue to play a huge role in Makuyu's life, patron Christianity, and some of the thorny issues that have at times been sources of friction, and at others been the causes for co-operation between the church, community, and the government.

The Big Four are well represented in Makuyu by way of churches mostly, but also through their development work. The Anglican Communion has an active ministry through the Anglican Development Services while the Catholic Church has the Don Bosco Centre of the Salesian Sisters Order that boasts of a day secondary school, a polytechnic, and a mission station used for various services like free eye and ear clinics. I had little interaction with the development work of the other two, the Presbyterians and Methodists, except the involvement of their members in local development projects.

Raising Visibility: The Big Four

The four mainstream denominations have occupied a place of prominence in Kenyan public life partly because of their diffuse nature and also because their national leadership chose to engage the national debate over matters like corruption, governance, relief advocacy, etc. quite publicly. This engagement is not a new phenomenon but has been a feature of church-state relations going back to Kenya's colonization in 1895. More recently, it was the agitation for multi-party democracy that saw notable church leaders like Bishop David Gitari, Henry Okullu, Alexander Muge (Anglican), Timothy Njoya, John Gatu (Presbyterian), Rafael Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki, Cardinal Maurice Otunga (Catholic), Lawi Imathiu and Samuel Kobia (Methodist) publicly take on the government.[92] It is unlikely that member congregations, including those in Makuyu were not taking their cues from these national leaders about how to engage, and more importantly, in what direction to agitate and organize.

The above example highlights an area of friction; however, areas of co-operation between church and state exist as well. One of those areas involves an age-old issue of shortage of land, jobs, freedom, and opportunities and how both sides have responded. In earlier (colonial) as well as recent history (2000's), different outfits formed to agitate and force the government to address concerns (Kikuyu Central Association- KCA and *Mungiki*, respectively). The resultant initial conflict eventually gave way to allowing the church to get involved in reducing tensions as well as rehabilitating people.

[92] Gifford, 35–37.

In a curious case of co-operation between the missionaries who were often seen as the precursor to colonization, the newly literate and travelled first converts (*athomi*-readers) who would later form the vehicles that delivered independence (like KCA), produced their first KCA document on a CMS missionary's (Handley Hooper) typewriter. The document was a petition to the colonial government and immediately raised questions about how such co-operation would continue between an "…emergent associational literate politics and missionary resources."[93]

Most recently, when the proscribed *Mungiki* sect was rampaging through the country leaving in its wake much destruction and loss of life, the government's response was initially heavy-handed and forced the gang members to retreat into the countryside where, facing the same conditions of land shortage, joblessness, pursuit by the authorities, and really at attack of "… the bases of self-realisation (sic) and responsibility"[94], they began to terrorize the villages. This new reality caused different stakeholders (local and regional authorities, churches, and other faith institutions) to come together to address the problem. At the same time, *Mungiki* had brought to the fore other issues that had divided the church in its nascent days; female genital mutilation (FGM) primarily and other cultural relics of the Kikuyu like polygamy and taking snuff. FGM and *Mungiki's* threat to force it upon eligible Kikuyu women who had avoided it caused great angst and the attention of even human rights activist organizations.[95]

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[93] John Casson, "'To Plant a Garden City in the Slums of Paganism...' Handley Hooper, the Kikuyu and the Future of Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 28, no. 4 (November 1, 1998): 387, https://doi.org/10.2307/1581558.
[94] John Lonsdale, "Kikuyu Christianities," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 29, no. 2 (1999): 206.
[95] "Rights activists decry Mungiki circumcision threat," The New Humanitarian, April 25, 2002, https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/fr/node/200318.

Makuyu's local leadership together with the development partner groups, as noted in this study, came together to find a solution that dealt with the menace over time. The strategy involved the use of the diffuse nature of the groups and churches to report criminal and disruptive elements to the authorities on one hand, and on the other, to help rehabilitate those who had given up criminality back into productive community life. A similar strategy was employed to deal with the illicit liquor problem that was also running amok in Murang'a.[96]

Makuyu Christianities continue to be shaped by these currents by engaging them in their contexts. Other factors that have a bearing on these Christianities additional to those already mentioned above include the continuously shrinking land sizes that lack tittles (33,000 farmers out of 250,000 have titles to their land[97]), an ever-expanding choice of religious services (vernacular radio and TV), patron Christianity, among others.

Patron Christianity, a situation where politicians and church leaders develop mutually beneficial relationships, is common in Kenya. Paul Gifford, John Lonsdale, Gregg Okesson, John Karanja, and others have meticulously documented this phenomenon in Kenya. For this study, I will mention that the patron-client relationships are also present in local village contexts. I observed how the local Chiefs sought the help of pastors to gather people for administrative or political reasons (soliciting *harambee* money, for example), and how in return, the pastors or lay leaders received prominent seating positions (proximity to power adds credibility and clout) at *barazas* (local public

[96] "Cops Destroy 1,300 Litres of Illicit Brew in Murang'a," The Star, accessed December 31, 2020, https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/central/2018-04-11-cops-destroy-1300-litres-of-illicit-brew-in-muranga/.
[97] County Government of Murang'a, "Muranga County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022," 33.

meetings). On several occasions, one of my most common interviewees (he led and had membership in multiple groups), was conscripted to be the secretary at public meetings. This dynamic was also illustrative of how power was sought, used, and maintained. In this sense, the church is a formidable force in public life.[98]

Summary

In this section, I presented Makuyu in a geographical, historical-political, and anthropo-social context. By drawing out the geography and history, I was able to present Makuyu not only as a majority-Kikuyu area, but one whose very geography and proximity to a major city, highway and plantations have shaped its mix of immigrants. The immigrants have obviously left their mark in the resultant practices of faith or have been absorbed into the existing fabric by intermarriage or permanent settling. I also showed how politics and public life have also played a role in shaping present-day Makuyu.

In the coming section, I will turn to methodology and theory orientations that guided me in the study.

Overview of Methodology and Theory

Owing to the subject nature of this study, I employed a great deal of ethnography to faithfully tell credibly, rigorously, and authentically,[99] the stories that shape the discourse of international development in specific contexts. I recorded the real voices of

[98] Gifford, *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 41.
[99] Leonard Bickman and Debra J. Rog, eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, 2nd edition (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008), 543.

both practitioners and beneficiaries as they engaged each other using, as much as possible, their words verbatim but applying my training and experience to offer a 'thick' description of the interactions.

This study followed a basic social research approach rather than an applied research one because I did seek to expand on the knowledge base regarding the issue of spirituality in development.[100] True to basic social research, this study was motivated by a curiosity that attempted to answer the question of how, if at all, accounting for spiritual transformation during the life of projects was happening.[101] While the importance of religion and religious organizations in development continues to gain prominence, there is little writing specifically on how engaging in development from a Christian perspective spiritually impacts the lives of individuals and communities served. This is despite the acknowledgement that religion and its corollaries (faith, beliefs, spirituality, worldview, etc.) can no longer be ignored as major players in international development.

I planned for the field research to proceed largely through structured interviews, and where permissible, participatory observation. Once on the ground, I quickly found out that I needed to be more flexible and creative in my approach. In order to do everything within the time allotted (my flight tickets were not alterable without significant fines), I resulted to more focus groups than individual interviews. The groups that formed the basis of my data collection included organizational leaders (in NGOs to give access to programming details, sites, and other related matters), local leaders (both

[100] Bickman and Rog, ix.
[101] "Basic vs. Applied Research," accessed December 28, 2020, https://www.utep.edu/couri/about-ug-research/basic-vs-applied-research.html.

organizational and local), and community groups (included church groups, local development groups like Mothers Union, etc.). Individuals included actual direct project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.[102] The appendices will show the questions that framed the conversations, but there were many more questions that arose during those open conversations whose responses were invaluable. I recorded all conversations.

My research was preceded by formal and informal contacts with persons of influence as well as both internet and other research on the target NGOs. I started with exploratory consultations with key people in the target NGOs who assisted in assessing the feasibility of my research (ease of accessing non-proprietary information, determining where projects had concluded, identifying key informants on the ground, granting access to evaluation records, etc.).

I provided guided interviews to both groups and individuals and used audio-video recording equipment as well as regular notetaking to record and store information. Even though I employed guided interviews prepared well before entering the research areas, I left myself open to serendipities and other unplanned/unforeseen events that lent themselves to my altering the research questions in some respects to accommodate these eventualities. One of those serendipities was the invaluable trip to Yatta that resulted in a trove of data from the day-long interaction with the founder of Christian Impact Mission (CIM) and other guests that included representatives from a Kenyan development funding foundation. Another unplanned, but highly resourceful, undertaking was my two-

[102] Non-beneficiaries fell into two categories. One category was of persons who did not belong to any of the development groups I was working with. The other category included people who belonged to one and not another project group.

day sojourn at Ebenezer Life Centre (ELC) in Ahero, Western Kenya. One more serendipity was the realization that using more focus group rather than individual interviews was going to be a much better approach to data collection.

As noted earlier, I relied on Myers' transformational development model for this study. At the heart of it, Myers posits that social change happens from the inside out i.e., an internal change happens in the way people think and see the world that leads them to order their external lives in particular ways. As Christian practitioners, we believe that the gospel captures our hearts and minds that we order our economic, educational, health, and other facets of our lives in ways that both honor God and demonstrate good stewardship of the earth and seek the good of our neighbors.

I also tested the spiritual impact against the social-anthropological transaction theory first developed by Fredrik Barth in anthropology, but which is widely reflected in all sectors of life. Simply, this theory applies the concept of market to the whole arena of social change, i.e., it focusses on the exchange of values-material and non-material-in personal relations of reciprocity.[103] How I tested this was by asking questions to project beneficiaries targeting their reasons for participating in the projects. Generally, I got the impression that none of the beneficiaries got involved in one or another project only because of what benefits they could extract from those projects. Because development ultimately amounts to a level of conversion, the transactions between the actors involve considerable amounts of values exchange and appropriation. The development practitioners, knowingly or not, are engaged in in the process of social change whose

[103] Petersen, *Religion, Development, and African Identity / Edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen*, 86.

methods and approaches constitute a particular theory of social change.[104] This kind of change is what constitutes a development imaginary i.e., a view or conceptualization of an end-state that is widely desirable. My assessment of residual spiritual impact further illustrated that these exchanges, in some respects, amounted to long-term effects, and in others, they appeared to merely serve as means for bargaining for "maximal need satisfaction".[105]

Ethnographic Considerations: Culture, Positionality, Perspective, and Reflexivity

Karen O'Reilly observes that, ethnography as a methodology, is a theory or set of ideas that rests on a number of fundamental criteria, the primary of which is the iterative-inductive nature.[106] It evolves in design as the study progresses and draws on a variety of methods spanning a wide range from direct involvement (e.g. participatory observation) to the more detached observation. In all, however, ethnography is about contact with human agents in the contexts of their daily lives, watching what happens and listening to what is said.[107] It must also be noted that even when the ethnographer chooses to be a distant observer, he/she is not entirely an entity apart from the observation. This is because the ethnographer exercises great control in choosing a location, and perhaps more importantly, in interpreting what he/she observes. My choice of locations and nature of the study were clear manifestations of this control and represented some of my own biases regarding the study. Makuyu is the location where most of the research

[104] T. O. Beidelman, "Social Theory and the Study of Christian Missions in Africa," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 1974, 242.
[105] Petersen, *Religion, Development, and African Identity / Edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen*, 86.
[106] Karen O'Reilly, *Key Concepts in Ethnography / Karen O'Reilly*, SAGE Key Concepts (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009., 2009), 3.
[107] O'Reilly, 3.

happened, but I was also fortunate to collect data in Ukambani (Machakos, Yatta, and Makueni) and Luoland (Ahero and Kisumu). In all cases, I was able to sample the different cultural backgrounds cutting through language, rituals, religious practices, customs, etc.

On culture, easily the most prevalent ethnographic concept, during this study I interacted with both its materialist and ideational definition perspectives.[108] On the materialist side, I focused on behavior (representations of observable ways of life), and on the ideational perspective, I addressed the 'unseen' i.e., beliefs, ideas, etc. Focusing on both together, even while emphasizing one over the other at certain times, helped me to describe what I saw and heard more richly and with depth.

I entered this study not completely oblivious of my positionality.[109] A critical self-reflection of my participation involved asking myself questions like how my own biography and life experiences illuminated or clouded my objectivity. As a native of Kenya now living in the US, my formative years living among the poor and my academic life in the world's largest economy interacted in particular ways that I believe greatly enriched how I interpreted what I saw and heard. I brought considerable emic and etic perspectives to this study, which even on a participatory level, allowed me to get involved more intimately at the deeper levels of 'observer-as-participant', 'participant – as-observer', and 'complete participant'.[110] I had the language facility (fluency in Kikuyu,

[108] Bickman and Rog, *The SAGE Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, 545.
[109] D. Soyini Madison, *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics, and Performance / D. Soyini Madison* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, c2012., 2012), 7.
[110] Kim Knott, "Insider/Outsider Perspectives," in *Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 246.

Kiswahili, and quite comfortable with Kikamba) that allowed me access to metaphors and nuances that may otherwise have been lost to or missed by someone without my competence. The fact that I also looked like and was rooted in the subject communities of this study also allowed me a level of entry unavailable to a non-black and alien ethnographer in an all-black community. Even though I left Kenya for the US in 2002, I had travelled back in the interim years before this study almost every other year. These travels helped me stay grounded in the national and local changes that were taking place. These experiences were invaluable, especially when the local people felt like I was still connected to their world. Many of them knew some of my relatives including my parents.

With the above advantages, I still paid attention to the fact that ethnography is constructed; how and what I write makes me part of the study in a way that can be dangerous. To ward off this danger, I employed reflexivity i.e., "turned back" on myself to account for my own research paradigms (my education in the West regarding a research interest in Kenya, a Christian approach to development, etc.), my positions of authority (pursuing a terminal degree, relative material affluence, etc.), and my own moral responsibility relative to representation and interpretation (to be ethical and not to add or take from what I was observing).[111]

I was an outsider in these ways: Makuyu was not my home, I am now a US citizen and did not live in Kenya, my accent had changed, my mode of dress betrayed my urban sensibilities, I drove to meetings, my recording devices including my phone were uncommon, and I was on time to meetings and appointments. This last point of

[111] Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 8.

punctuality is important if you have ever been to Kenya or most African countries. Kenyans are notoriously late to events to the point of becoming a cultural peculiarity. It may have to do with the equally unreliable public transportation system, but even in the village where no transportation is necessary for short distances, people still run late. My meetings schedule had good buffers built in; I did not plan from more than two events per day.

On the other hand, my insider credibility was shored up by my fluency in Kikuyu and Kiswahili (I was actually put to test when I was asked to read from the Kikuyu Bible at a meeting), knowledge of the area including its recent political history (a long-time Member of Parliament-Nduati Kariuki- shared a middle name with me), my primary school headmaster lived in the community, and I had time for small talk and *chai*[112] from anyone who asked. It is viewed rudely if have no time for small talk especially with older folks. Because I had not 'forgotten' how to conduct myself among my people, as they referred to me in spite of my global travels, my interviewees had greater openness to let me enter their lives.

Methods and Techniques

Fieldwork

This study involved a considerable amount of my time interacting with people in chosen locations in their native environments observing their behavior and enquiring about their real-life situations. I spent relatively less time in offices perusing through

[112] *Chai* can be anything from the literal cup of tea with milk to just showing good manners by accepting hospitality and entering a host's house.

organizational documents or talking with organizational representatives; rather, I chose to devote more time and resources interacting with organizational agents as they conducted the business of development at the project levels. This is not to discount the incredible value of perusing documents and talking with organizational leaders about policies, strategies, etc.; rather, I reasoned that participating in their lives as closely as possible, would give me the best stance to learn how the people established social and economic priorities in their lives.[113] These conversations and research offered invaluable in-depth and bird's eye-level insights into organizational histories, methods, emphases, and so forth.

My first experience at fieldwork with this study was at the former offices of World Vision (WV) now owned by Makuyu Economic Community Development Organization (MECDO) for a meeting with the Chairman and Treasurer. At this meeting, they gave me access to organizational documents (legal registration, deed transfer from WV, meeting records, etc. As I was perusing documents, my hosts took turn narrating the oral history of their organization including the events leading to the transfer of property from WV. This meeting was soon followed by a tour of some of the on-site projects (rabbit and chicken rearing) as well as other projects in the community. One of those was a completed water project that brought piped water into homes. The community tour ended with another meeting, this time with local Anglican Development Services (ADS) officials. This would be my first encounter with Farming God's Way (FGW).

[113] Wolfensohn, *Religion and Development*, 143.

Of the three months of data collection this study took, more than half of it was spent with different ADS groups in the larger Makuyu area, most of them engaging in FGW among other projects. Some of those other projects included micro-finance by Hand-in-Hand (HIH) and a dam-fed irrigation project at Murira.

Outside of Makuyu, I spent three days in Machakos, and a day each in Yatta and Utooni in Makueni County. Farther afield, I spent a night and two days in Ahero and Kisumu at Ebenezer Life Centre and Voice of Salvation and Healing (VOSH) offices.

Selection, Sampling and Entry

My research problem and corresponding questions shaped the selection of places, organizations, and people to study. I already had a long list of contacts in the NGO world built through the years from academic pursuits (conferences, seminars, and a three-month long internship with World Relief Rwanda) that helped me to secure meetings with relevant organizational leaders and other practitioners. These contacts helped me to identify and contact important project-level personnel who were invaluable in laying the groundwork for eventual surveys, interviews, and participant-observer opportunities.

Other project selections were not deliberate and happened by chance. For example, my involvement with both Christian Impact Mission (CIM) and Ebenezer Life Centres (ELC) arose from a dinner conversation with a contact at Church Missionary Society- Africa (CMSA) who was putting together a field trip to CIM for a leading Kenyan local foundation's top leadership. He also introduced me to ELC's leadership because he felt that my study would greatly benefit from visiting the Ahero ELC campus. Similarly, my involvement with the African Brotherhood Church (ABC) organization

came at the suggestion of my mentor who had done previous work with ABC. In the end, eleven organizations were explicitly faith-based while two, Hand-in-Hand (HIH) and Utooni Development Organization (UDO)[114] were not. Below is a table listing the different organizations, their type and location.

Name of Organization	Organization Type	Location
Compassion International	Faith-based	Nairobi
World Relief Kenya	Faith-based	Nairobi
World Vision	Faith-based	Makuyu
LoveInc	Faith-based	Nairobi
Hand-in-Hand	Secular	Makuyu
Church Missionary Society-Africa	Faith-based	Nairobi
Christian Impact Mission	Faith-based	Yatta
African Brotherhood Church	Faith-based	Machakos

[114] UDO did not explicitly, in its official documents and website, claim to be faith-based even though its founder was a pastor, and it received a significant portion of its external funding from the Mennonite Church of Canada.

Name of Organization	Organization Type	Location
Utooni Development Organization	Secular	Makueni
Anglican Development Services	Faith-based	Makuyu
Ebenezer Life Centre	Faith-based	Ahero and Kisumu
Makuyu Economic Community Development	Faith-based	Makuyu
Gideons	Faith-based	Kisumu

I interviewed at least two representatives from each organization with some program oversight and evaluative responsibilities or experience. I also conducted fifteen interviews with singular individuals who were at times joined by their assistants, fourteen focus groups, four presentations, and five participant observation sessions.

For sampling, I initially employed the "big-net"[115] approach by mixing and mingling with as many project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as possible. This strategy served my study in two ways; one, I familiarized myself with the people and earned their acceptance (by being in tune with their practices, habits and values), and two, it helped me understand the layout of the field ("…experience the full range of

[115] Bickman and Rog, *The SAGE Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, 552.

events and activities…").[116] This strategy also lent itself to the effect of snowball sampling[117] where I was able to ask people I identified in my informal engagements as meeting the criteria for inclusion in the study to tell their friends and acquaintances about the study. This is how I found myself traveling to Ahero, Yatta, Utooni and Machakos.

To enter the area (s) of study, I used a combination of my knowledge of the area as a native of Kenya and through organizational agents with whom I was in conversation regarding the nature and location of their projects.

Data Collection Strategies: Documents, Interviews and Participation

This study was preceded by a perusal, where allowable, of documents and websites detailing the specific emphases on desired spiritual outcomes by organizations engaged in development work in the target area. Where documents were unavailable or where access was restricted or denied for proprietary or other reasons, I relied on my contacts' knowledge of their respective organizations' work. Two organizations, MECDO and Utooni Development Organization (UDO), were the only ones that granted me documents that I could not obtain on the web. MECDO's documents are noted above while those from UDO were of records-keeping nature including hand-written notes by the founder, Pastor Joshua Mukusya.

[116] John D. Brewer, *Ethnography / John D. Brewer*, Understanding Social Research (Buckingham [England]; Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000., 2000), 61.
[117] Robert Wall Emerson, "Convenience Sampling, Random Sampling, and Snowball Sampling: How Does Sampling Affect the Validity of Research?" *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* 109, no. 2 (April 3, 2015): 166.

I endeavored to participate in the lives of the communities under my study in order to not only see and hear the participants in their normal natural setting, but to seek to understand why they behaved the way they did. Participating in this way also helped me to pilot-test[118] my questions in non-imposing ways and thereby improve their consistency and reliability.

Asking questions primarily through structured interviews formed the bulk of my data-gathering strategy. My ethnographic interviews spanned the three forms of oral histories (recounting of social historical moments pertinent to this study), personal narratives (individual perspectives and expressions of events, experiences, points of view, etc.), and topical interviews (points of view given to particular subjects, programs, issues or processes).[119]

Social Historical Accounts

Organizational leaders, at all levels, were incredibly helpful in telling the stories of their organizations. I chose, where applicable, to ask clarifying questions as they told those stories. Two examples of such stories come to mind. The first one was at the Nairobi headquarters of World Relief Kenya (WRK). With more than two hours of uninterrupted time, Ollie my designated contact gave a detailed account of everything WRK was doing in Kenya while allowing me plenty of opportunities to ask questions pertinent to my research. Specifically, I was able to steer the conversation to the work WRK was doing among the Turkana people in Northern Kenya, and this allowed Ollie to

[118] Brewer, *Ethnography / John D. Brewer*, 64.
[119] Madison, *Critical Ethnography*, 28.

draw for me a detailed picture of the historical account from partnering with a local Nairobi congregation for a relief mission to culminating in the development work still going on.

The second account involves the numerous conversations I had with Tarcisius individually, at the many groups he was part of, and at barazas where he was always called upon to take notes. Tarcisius proved to be a treasure trove of information about his community for a number of reasons. One, because of his advanced age (over 75), he had seen a lot of change and stagnation in the community. Secondly and more important for this study, he detailed significant personal transformation and was also involved in many of the development groups that I would eventually mine for data.

Personal Narratives

Individual and focus group interviews yielded much valuable data for this study. With the individual interviews, I was able to drill deeper and repeatedly go back to particular points of interest. On the other hand, focus group interviews were more challenging because people would tend to talk at the same time or lose their train of thought when I eventually got to seek clarification.

Topical Interviews

I found topical interviews to be the more challenging of the three oral histories. Because seeking spiritual growth is not what attracted beneficiaries to join a development group, they appeared stumped, initially, by questions about how their own spirituality has benefitted from being part of one group or another. As I conducted more and more

interviews, my methods and strategies when trying to find answers to spirituality changed. For example, I would announce at the very onset of a session about what my research was seeking to uncover in order to prime the respondents. Successive questions would then build towards that goal.

Interviewing Protocols and Strategies

This study was guided first and foremost by the utmost respect I had for the people whose lives I was studying as well as those who granted me access to them. I did not have any contact that violated or threatened this trust nor did I induce any respondents to be favorable to my inquiries.[120] Where highly formalized protocols required written permission/consent (e.g. access to proprietary information) I complied, and for informal interviews, I still held myself to a high standard of professionalism. I always called ahead of time to check for and secure availability. Whenever appropriate, I joined in on meals and joyfully accepted food and other tokens I was offered, not for any expected benefits, but as a cultural norm of gifting guests.[121] One particular gentleman in whose home we were meeting, gave me a chicken in honor of my dad who unbeknownst to me, had spent a whole day shuttling him from hospital to hospital seeking treatment for a serious illness. For a place that still lacks emergency vehicles (ambulances), he

[120] No money or other compensation was offered for information or attendance to meetings; however, whenever possible, I added my own contribution for communal food or to assist with funeral expenses for a villager who had died.
[121] It is a common practice for an important guest to be given gifts or tokens of appreciation to go back with as a sign of goodwill and an invitation to return.

observed, he would probably have died were it not for my dad's vehicle and his willingness to drive him.

For the actual data gathering I employed both individual and focus group interviews for these reasons: avoid and over-reliance on one source of data collection, the ability to sample many voices at one setting, and to reduce the need for too many events.[122]

Data Reporting and Analysis

During data collection, I utilized two digital voice recorders, a digital camera, and a regular notepad. Often, my driver handled the photography and video recording while I was responsible for the voice recorders. Where applicable, I would give one voice recorder to a respondent while I operated the second one. The reason for the double recording was to create an additional level of data security in case one device malfunctioned or the data became corrupted. I used the notepad to note significant insights, areas of follow-up, or something noteworthy I might have overheard that the recorders may have missed.

Immediately upon leaving a data collecting event, I would go to, typically, a restaurant with a Wi-Fi connection to transfer the recordings for the day on to my laptop as well as emailing the same files to myself. I also brought along a mass-storage external

[122] "Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches: Creswell, John W., Creswell, J. David: 9781506386706: Amazon.Com: Books," 175, accessed November 4, 2020, https://www.amazon.com/Research-Design-Qualitative-Quantitative-Approaches/dp/1506386709/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=john+creswell&qid=1604534047&s=books&sr=1-1.

hard drive where I backed up all these files. Kenya has a notoriously unreliable electric power supply that one cannot be too careful about creating a lot of redundancies for data protection.[123] To guard against the inability to power the voice recorders while collecting data, I also brought along two portable chargers that I kept always fully charged.

Once all the data was gathered and saved on my computer, I started to systematically organize it in different bins. These categories included sorting the data by date, location, emphasis, and source (men, women, leaders, etc.). After this initial organizing, I embarked on transcribing all the recordings using a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software, HyperTRANSCRIBE®. This software allowed me to easily control audio and video playback with a virtual keyboard that also had the option of automatically looping selected sections for easier transcribing. I transcribed the data verbatim before returning to 'clean' the transcripts. This process involved the deletion of repetitions, removing inconsistencies, and specifically for Kenya, removing words and phrases which may have been rendered in the different vernaculars[124] during recording. Reading the transcripts several times allowed me to better understand the data and start perceiving emergent patterns that later helped in developing themes.

After transcribing the data, I started the process of coding. Again, I employed HyperRESEARCH®, a QDA software from the same vendors that allowed me to

[123] "Kenya Power Should Address Interruptions," Nation, accessed October 30, 2020, https://nation.africa/kenya/blogs-opinion/opinion/kenya-power-should-address-interruptions-1186072.
[124] It is common in Kenya for people to interject or insert words or phrases in other local languages or slang for emphasis or when struggling with putting a point forth succinctly.

generate different kinds of codes (by keyword, phrases, etc.) and also auto-code (the ability to apply a single or multiple codes to the entire data set.

Once I finished coding the data, I started to meticulously study the codes for purposes of seeing how, when combined, they would constitute a coherent theme. I then started to manually group the broad likely themes together on a word processor and again repeated the process of shrinking these broad categories into fewer emerging thematic concerns. Repeating this process over and over eventually led to a preliminary five broad themes. These broad themes were informed by the patterns in the data itself plus the nature of the inquiry from the research questions. This dissertation is a report on and about three final themes: organizational, values and practices; and evaluative.

Settling on the final three chapters was a collaborative effort that involved my academic mentor, peers, and friends. Applying interpretive tools of analysis rather than focusing on the explicitness or the semantics of the data helped me to narrow my focus on three themes that would faithfully tell the story of the data. This final selection was also helped by the research questions which helped frame the responses and therefore guided the emergence of thematic inclinations.

Organization of the Study

The remainder of this dissertation is organized into four chapters, a bibliography, and three appendices arranged this way: Chapter 3 deals with the thematic concern of organization i.e., how the different organizations that formed this study are structured, and how they go about doing their work. Chapter 4 explores the values and practices that undergird the work of these organizations. Chapter 5, the penultimate chapter, handles

the evaluative aspects of the study. Easily the most important chapter, it presents my proposal for how to account for spiritual transformation in development. Chapter 6 summarizes my findings through the analysis of data and makes recommendations for new areas of study.

Chapter 3

Organizational Focus: Anatomy and Functioning

On a warm Saturday morning, I embarked on a two-hour journey to the famed headquarters of the Christian Impact Mission (CIM) founded and headed by Bishop Titus Masika. He is a figure of some lore having been a one-time secondary school teacher and principal, author, a bishop with the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), but most notably, as a pioneer in novel solutions to food insecurity and poverty eradication.

Visiting CIM was not part of the original planning for my research, but it turned out to be one of the most important, nonetheless. The opportunity arose from conversations with a dialogue partner working in the office of Community Relations at Church Missionary Society-Africa (CMSA) who was organizing a field trip to CIM for a collection of development players; a church group and representatives of a Kenyan development foundation- Kenya Community Development Foundation (KCDF). He believed that my research would benefit enormously from this field trip and he was right.

The first hour and a half of the trip to Makutano-Yatta was on a recently upgraded tarmac road that gave way to a rough stretch of unpaved gravel road to CIM headquarters. The last half hour was both very bumpy and rough to drive on, but the discomfort disappeared at the sight of our destination which truly captured the cliched oasis in the desert mantra. The lush, green, and tree-lined compound stood in stark contrast to the parched, brown, and bare homesteads we crawled past before arriving at CIM. I was greeted by a huge banner prominently displaying the CIM motto of

'Transformed Individuals for a Transformed Community' and the bishop himself in his signature Kaunda suit and cowboy hat.

After hosting us to a sumptuous breakfast of which all the ingredients were grown on site, the bishop led my team through a thorough tour of what he described as the demonstration farm (although it was quite honestly a small industrial production) before gathering us in a modern classroom for a three-hour class on everything CIM.

As would be expected from a bishop, prayers preceded all transitions; breakfast, start of class, lunch, and eventual dismissal at the end of the day. The centrality of prayer, despite the audience not being all Christian, was notable. At least two guests from KCDF were Muslim and one was Hindu. It was also clear from both the teaching and explanation for why this demonstration showcase had become such a success focal point nationwide and internationally that faith, belief, and religion were central to the results.[125]

This short record of my visit to CIM will serve as a worthy launching point for the argument and discussion that will form the rest of this chapter. On the one hand, the narrative highlights two sides of 'organizational' that will be at play in the coming sections. One of those sides is the noun that symbolizes an entity, and the other is the verb side which implies the action of organizing. On the other hand, the narrative highlights the integrated interplay of actors from different backgrounds in the pursuit of developmental goals. Significantly too, the narrative places faith, religion, and belief centrally in the discourse and practice of development and the reality of transformation.

[125] "Six Murang'a MPs Visit Yatta to Learn about Water Pans," The Star, accessed August 26, 2020, https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-05-08-six-muranga-mps-visit-yatta-to-learn-about-water-pans/.

To proceed thoughtfully, let me offer this understanding of how I will be employing the term 'organization'. One understanding is any entity put together for the purpose, in this context, of bringing about a desired development goal (food security, sanitation, education, etc.). The other understanding to be held simultaneously with the first one, is how the said entity conducts its work to achieve a desired outcome or goal. One sense of the latter may be captured by when an entity takes on the aura and personality of an individual e.g., CIM with the bishop, or when, in another sense, an entity cannot be fully understood by divorcing it from its affiliation with a denomination e.g., the development arm of the African Brotherhood Church (ABC) or the Anglican Development Services (ADS) and its affiliates in development work. These factors, I contend, affect how thorough an accounting of their work can be done.

Organizational Identity

In this first sub-section on identity, I will be exploring these points of interest: how the organizations define themselves through the organizing rudiments of mission, vision, and purpose; how they are understood from the inside and outside; and their internationality and funding i.e., the scope of their work (localized, regional, or international). The second sub-section will focus on how the work gets done. This will highlight the kinds of programming, the models of operation, the role of women in development, resource maximization, power, and authority; and how the benefits/lessons are enshrined and perpetuated.

Overview: Self-understanding

'We are a Christian faith-based non-profit organization...We rescue and support orphans, abandoned children; homeless, vulnerable teens from the streets, and less fortunate widows.'[126] "World Relief stands with the vulnerable, partnering with local churches to end the cycle of suffering, bringing transforming lives and building sustainable communities."[127] African Brotherhood Church's mission: "To preach to the whole world, to all creatures in a holistic manner for the purpose of transformation of the whole person and his environment."[128] "The organization strives to work with the marginalized communities in the area of economic and social empowerment through a participatory approach aimed at lifting themselves out of poverty and vulnerability."[129] These and "… we are a Christian organization that likes to honor God in everything we do …"[130] are but a small sampling of the ways that the different organizations that I studied identified themselves. The first three have websites that contain these identifiers while the last quotation is from one of the founders of a community organization.

As is clear from the above diversity of mission statements, the ways in which the organizations define themselves informs how they work. World Relief works primarily through partnerships with local churches in units called Church Empowerment Zones (CEZ) as does the African Brotherhood Church (ABC) through its development

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[126] "Ebenezer - Life Centre Children's Home, Rescue And Rehabilitation, Charity Organization," Ebenezer, accessed February 24, 2017, http://ebenezerlifecenter.org/home.html.
[127] "About," World Relief, accessed February 24, 2017, https://www.worldrelief.org/about/.
[128] "Our Mission," Africa Brotherhood Church, accessed February 24, 2017, http://www.africabrotherhoodchurch.org/our-mission.html.
[129] "Homepage * Hand in Hand EA," Hand in Hand EA, accessed February 24, 2017, http://handinhand-ea.org/.
[130] Peter describing the nature of Makuyu Economic Community Development Organization, a successor to World Vision in the area.

department. ABC has a large network of its own churches but also works with other churches where no ABC church exists. Notably, ABC is a free-standing denomination which explains why it works primarily through its network of churches.

Also consider these observations: "I would say that we are faith-based because our main support comes from churches."[131] "I am the chairman of this community and this is our community group, and even though *it is a women's group*, it is open to men like myself…"[132]. The two statements offer us another view of organizational identity, not from self-declaration, but from an insider observing the organization he/she is part of. The observations offer a lens that is important in understanding the organization itself. For example, because Utooni Development Organization (UDO) gets the bulk of its support from churches, can we expect its programs to be heavily influenced by the donor churches? Can we also reasonably expect the women's group to implement a feminist agenda even though men are welcome to join?

I now turn for a closer look at the points of interest about organizational identity highlighted above.

Organizational Mission, Vision and Purpose

The ways in which the organizations I studied defined or understood their mission in large part determined how they went about doing their work. Church Missionary Society Africa (CMSA) identifies itself as existing to "envision, equip and mobilize

[131] Paul describing Utooni Development Organization
[132] Tarcisius speaking as the community chairman and leading a women's group meeting at his home.

leaders in and of the church towards holistic mission".[133] It also sees its mission as being that of "equipping and multiplying leaders in the church and society to transform nations".[134] From these two statements, CMSA sees itself, not as an on-the-ground development actor, but as a facilitator with a specific focus on leadership development. Interestingly, CMSA does not limit itself to working in the church only but is open to developing and multiplying leaders that can bring about societal transformation. With close to 40 partners and operations in seven African countries at the time of conducting this research, it makes sense that CMSA would play a facilitative rather than an implementing role. Indeed, a quick glance at the list of partners and the areas of cooperation shows that most of CMSA's work is in training.[135] This is the niche it has identified to discharge its mission. It makes a lot of sense for CMSA to operate this way because its vision is renewing mindsets to transform societies i.e., seizing on education which has a lot of power to change societies. I find the willingness to work beyond the church boundaries fascinating. This illustrates the delicate balance between the sacred/secular divide that can arise with such forays for a Christian organization.

Compassion International (CI) exists to serve children by "releasing them from poverty in Jesus' name".[136] In yet another display of balancing the sacred and the secular, CI's conception of poverty embraces both the popular economistic and impact understandings of poverty; the World Bank's definition of extreme poverty as income

[133] "Who We Are - CMS Africa," accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.cms-africa.org/about-us/who-we-are.html.
[134] "Who We Are - CMS Africa."
[135] "Partners - CMS Africa," accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.cms-africa.org/partners.html.
[136] "Sponsor a Child - Compassion International," accessed February 27, 2017, https://www.compassion.com/.

below $1.90 per day and the poor's understanding of their poverty in terms like dependence, scarcity, marginalization, incapacity, and suffering relationships.[137] The suffering relationships part clearly draws a theological understanding arising from God's work of reconciling everything and restoring all broken relationships. That CI also conducts most of its work through churches is another indicator of its religious bias, although as I will show, it has no problem adapting to seemingly secular platforms to be effective.

According to Ollie, my main CI contact, where a church partner is unavailable to work with and a clear need has been identified, CI will engage the available structures-local authorities or otherwise-to gain the foothold necessary to operate. This is especially so in Muslim majority areas. For example, CI decided to forgo 'business as usual' to address a particularly thorny issue in a famine ravaged Muslim stronghold where the local leadership was recalcitrant about welcoming a Christian organization in the community. CI decided to solely focus on setting up a community farm to demonstrate the power of shifting from subsistence farming to commercial farming. This involved laying aside, temporarily, the evangelistic emphasis of their engagement to deal with a more pressing issue of hunger and starvation.[138] It is not unusual for CI to approach its work this way, perhaps as testament to its commitment to be holistic in tackling childhood poverty. In fact, as Ollie illustrated for me at our meeting, CI's integral focus on development covers four areas: evangelism (developing children to become

[137] "Sponsor a Child - Compassion International."
[138] "Kenya," Compassion International Blog, accessed February 28, 2017, http://blog.compassion.com/tag/kenya/.

responsible Christian adults), cognition (formal education), health, and social-emotional wellness.[139] Holism here comes across as quite dynamic and alterable as conditions on the ground demand.

This mode of operation where a faith-based development actor pauses, even momentarily, the proclamation faith aspects to be presently more effective brings into sharp focus, for me, the tension between the sacred and the secular. In some people's eyes, this shift from proclamation to demonstration may appear like an abandonment or a bifurcation. The tension exposes two blind spots in the practice of development: the lack of reflection on the development practitioner on the need of self-development which yields the view that only 'the other' has to be developed; and, the playing down of religious dimensions that should be inherent in development practices.[140] The result of this is the emergence of the 'secularized missionary' who may not be as spiritually effective like he/she would have been if he/she did not suspend the evangelistic dimensions in the first place. If religion, as it is now widely acknowledged, has an "intrinsic value as people's well-being in the way it conceives development"[141], then it would be ill-advised to relegate it to a secondary or tangential role while still hoping to be effective in realizing spiritual impact. An approach like this tends to hierarchize the importance of the 'good or goods' being sought in a given endeavor. In the end, as the CI example shows, "real development"[142], the kind that satisfies essential needs (in this case

[139] Interview with Ollie at CI Kenya offices in Nairobi.
[140] Oscar Salemink, Anton van Harskamp, and Ananta Kumar Giri, eds., *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development* (Delft: Eburon Publishers, Delft, 2005), 4.
[141] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 3.
[142] Richard Peet and Elaine Hartwick, *Theories of Development, Third Edition: Contentions, Arguments, Alternatives*, 3rd edition (The Guilford Press, 2015), sec. 219.

food and income) that are presently not being met, is given precedence over the 'unseen-but-present' (spiritual) needs.

How organizations identify themselves influences their approach to mission. For example, CMSA identifies itself as 'autonomous' and in the business of developing and multiplying leaders while CI sees itself first as an advocate for children before anything else. To live up to these identities means that the organizations must conduct themselves in decidedly different ways; CMSA is engaged in an ambitious plan to put up a multi-story commercial building in an up-market suburb of Nairobi to become financially independent, and CI is aggressively pushing the child sponsoring model (willing donors are paired with needy children for the long-term). By following the respective approaches, CI has a greater potential to directly impact the spiritual lives of the children who come along unlike CMSA whose impact may be realized much further down the road.

Both organizations are similar. They overtly identify themselves religiously or as being faith-based; CMSA explicitly with 'Church' in its name and CI with the mission statement of doing its work in Jesus' name, but I was curious about what distinction, if any, I could surmise from a comparative study of two dissimilar organizations working in the same space and often with some of the same people. This opportunity presented itself in HIH and ADS. I was eager to find out what the differences were in how either of the organizations approached their work, and more importantly, if the impacts on the beneficiaries were any different.

My examination of both organizations started with a study of their respective websites to see how each defined itself and its mission. The first observation was how uncharacteristic the websites appeared; if I did not know the difference between the two organizations, the websites might have convinced me that HIH was the religious organization and not ADS. HIH's website listed its guiding values like 'integrity' and 'respect for all'[143] while ADS's was a flat motto listed as "wholesome dignified living"[144]. In this regard, it was not true that "religious organizations frame their purposes and work fundamentally differently from their secular counterparts."[145] Since it was not clear from these documents how different the organizations were oriented, I wondered if I, together with other scholars, have unwittingly inserted "a strict and impermeable separation"[146] between what we consider sacred and secular that in practice is at best fuzzy and quite permeable. Indeed, the beneficiaries, many of whom had memberships in both organizations, did not seem to be encumbered by the ideological differences of the organizations. Most importantly, in my view, was the finding that there was little to no distinction in the beneficiary impacts because of participating in either organization.

In all cases, especially for an organization that has a decidedly evangelistic approach to its work like CI, I discerned a readiness to work across religious bounds, temporarily 'mute' the proclamation phase of evangelism, and emphasize the witness face (pun intended) as a matter of pragmatism. A Muslim community suffering in famine

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[143] "Our Story * Hand in Hand EA," *Hand in Hand EA* (blog), accessed February 28, 2017, http://handinhand-ea.org/our-story/.
[144] "About Us," Ebenezer, accessed February 24, 2017, http://ebenezerlifecenter.org/about-us.html.
[145] Michael Barnett and Janice Gross Stein, *Sacred Aid: Faith and Humanitarianism*, 1 edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 211.
[146] Barnett and Stein, 211.

and draught was more receptive of the gospel after it was demonstrated to them in service; a borehole sunk, and irrigation farming taught.

Identity: inside and outside the organization

In an attempt to clarify this appearance of impermeable separation, I decided to pay close attention to two things; one, how the beneficiaries themselves alternated between the two worlds (secular and sacred), and two, how the "noncredentialled 'lay' developers and non-experts"[147] navigated the divide. Generally, the only distinction that the beneficiaries drew between the two types of organizations was not in their sacredness or secularity, but in the kinds of services they received from each. HIH's emphasis was on micro-enterprises and savings mobilization and ADS's was no-till cultivation, mostly, and improved animal husbandry. In their minds, I did not get the impression that they were too strongly wedded to the ideological leanings of one organization over the other, but only to the 'goods'[148] accruing from each. Unmistakably though, was the dedication the beneficiaries showed to conducting their meetings almost like church services irrespective of what organization was holding court. All meetings began with a chorus or two to call people to attention followed by a reading from the Bible and an interpretation of the reading led by one member. All meetings closed with a prayer and 'communion' (sharing a cup of tea with toast) if the meeting took place in a member's home. If it happened on the farm, they would pray and disperse. The above illustration, demonstrated to my mind, the constant local appropriations these beneficiaries were

[147] Tara Hefferan, *Twinning Faith and Development: Catholic Parish Partnering in the US and Haiti* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, 2007), 2.
[148] Cathrine Brun and Piers Blaikie, *Alternative Development: Unravelling Marginalization, Voicing Change*, ed. Cathrine Brun Dr, Michael Jones Professor, and Piers Blaikie Professor (Ashgate, 2014), 2.

making of wider organizational themes. Further, these appropriations of overtly religious practices had 'forced' the hands of secular organizations like HIH to work inside the formulas.

From these observations, I would offer that the identity that was prominent was the spiritual one nurtured in the organizationally sponsored groups (a savings or a farming one) and not the global organizational identity. The amalgamation or subsuming of the two dissimilar identities to constitute one spiritual identity may be a factor of familiarity and kinship (many beneficiaries were neighbors and relatives), similarity in situatedness, or simply a shared religio-spirituality that predated the developmental organizations. Many of these beneficiaries were already Christian and members of different churches before the developmental organizations came into the picture and in no doubt already shared cultural-religio rituals like burials and weddings. Additionally, it was quite common for villagers to attend together, any number of the numerous open-air gospel crusades that are still common in Makuyu.

Further, what was not in doubt was the spiritual duty for each other these people displayed towards one another and their teachers. In other words, the Christian identity of the beneficiaries appeared to be more important than that conferred by belonging to one social group or another. This is true also if one considers the ease with which these beneficiaries seemed to weave into the fabric of their daily routines particular elements of their religious beliefs that they obviously deemed important. The elements included praise and worship, prayers and breaking of bread together which they variously equated to the holy communion. On the whole, these practices indicated a level of agreement with

"a number of orthodox tenets of the Christian faith"[149] among these beneficiaries, and that "there is, to some degree, an observable and measurable life pattern that is distinctively Christian"[150].

I observed similar appropriations of Christian modes of behavior by project beneficiaries in all the organizations. On many occasions, the people would introduce themselves first as born-again Christians followed by their affiliation with one or another group. I was pleasantly surprised when several devout Catholics also introduced themselves as born-again not unlike their Protestant brethren. While I had heard, anecdotally, of born-again Catholics when a charismatic wave swept through Kenya in the run-up to multi-party democracy in the 90s, I had not met any until this study. I also want to draw a distinction between former adherents of Catholic faith who converted to Protestantism, and those who remained Catholic but embraced the charisma and rituals more strongly associated with Protestant groups, especially the Pentecostals.

Internationality and Funding

One of the key foci for this study is how international the organizations under consideration are. This section below addresses that angle as well as the funding sources because money and its sources are significant in comprehensively understanding these organizations and their work.

On internationality, I considered both the organizations' founding and the scope of operation. Six of the twelve formal organizations I studied (Compassion International

[149] Hill and Hood, *Measures of Religiosity / Edited by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr*, 59.
[150] Hill and Hood, 67.

(CI), World Relief (WR), World Vision (WV), Gideons International (GI), LoveInc, and Hand in Hand (HIH) were all founded in the West, with five of the six in the US, and HIH in Sweden. By dint of their origin, these organizations qualify as international for definitional sake. Church Mission Society-Africa (CMSA) grew out of the original Church Mission Society (CMS) of England. Christian Impact Mission (CIM), African Brotherhood Church (ABC), Ebenezer Life Centre (ELC), Utooni Development Organization (UDO) and Anglican Development Services (ADS) were all founded and are headquartered in Kenya. These last five organizations are international in terms of the reach of their work, in direct projects or in consultancy capacities, out of Kenya's boundaries as well as their funding structure. Of note also is the fact that even though these Kenya-founded organizations are also Kenyan-led, they draw significant financial, personnel, intellectual, and material support from the West as well. ABC has long ties with the Canadian Baptists and UDO gets significant funding from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank[151] and the Mennonites of Canada.[152]

The Western-founded organizations have their footprints in many countries where they have national and even regional offices. It is fair to assume that because their funding comes largely from the countries of their founding, their work bears the fingerprints of those nations in many ways. For example, they may have a Country Director and other officers come from the countries of founding even though

[151] Timothy Brinkley, "Partner," Text, Utooni Development Organization, February 26, 2013, http://www.utoonidevelopment.org/get-involved/partner/.
[152] This study will not delve deeply into matters of funding for individual organizations as they may detract from the focus of how they function and account for their work which is the immediate concern. Understandably, funding sources bear heavily on these questions central to the study, but I will only make a cursory mention of funding here.

indigenization processes are rapidly changing the composition of many of these offices. It also follows that founding nations would have a significant say in major decisions and accounting for success/progress.

On the other hand, locally founded and led organizations like UDO and CIM may be able to exercise more latitude in how they operate and measure their success because they are not as beholden to external forces. This is true even in instances where such organizations solicit funding from outside the country. Such external funding may come with 'fewer' strings/conditionalities attached because it is sought to complement or strengthen ongoing work and not to start from scratch. In such cases, the new partners are eager to be enjoined to a success story rather than exposing themselves to the risk of backing something that may not ever take flight. A good example of this is CIM in Yatta, which as a runaway success, has few problems attracting both local and foreign funds.

CIM has been especially deft at creating financial independence through several ways. One of those ways is the creation of value-adding chains. For example, bread that is baked in the on-site bakery is enriched with a secret recipe made from pumpkin seeds and sold at a premium to pre-established distributors. Other value-adding innovations include the use of novel charcoal produce coolers used to store, not only the produce from CIM's own farm, but from local affiliated farmers. This service greatly increases the shelf life of the produce (mostly fresh vegetables like tomatoes, green peppers, kale, etc.) and at the same time increases the earning potential for CIM and these farmers. CIM

also generates additional income from seminars that attract audiences from inside and outside Kenya[153].

There exists also in this mix another type of organization, like CMSA, that nests in between the two types. Although it traces its origin to an organization that was founded in the UK, CMSA characterizes itself as an "autonomous international mission agency".[154] CMSA is a unique hybrid type of organization that, even though inspired and influenced by its mother English organization, it is actively carving for itself a niche where it can still draw on that inspiration and influence (through personnel ties and funding sources) while solidifying its credentials as a truly indigenous African organization in outlook and mission. The organization is wholly African-led and currently involved in a major building project whose aim is to guarantee its future sustainability and independence from 'outside' funding (the 'Footprints Campaign'[155] that I am part of as well).

Other native-born organization like UDO, ABC, ELC and ADS lay claim to internationality in a variety of ways with some overlapping partners and a strong Canadian connection. Both UDO and ADS get some funding and other support from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) but also from other international organizations and governments. For UDO, these include the Mennonite Central Committee of Alberta (Canada), Just a Drop (UK) and the Embassy of Japan in Kenya.[156] Other partners for

[153] Bishop Masika speaking about a recent invitation to speak about CIM's innovations in Arusha, Tanzania, and hosting a delegation from Uganda and Southern Sudan.
[154] "CMS Africa Home - CMS Africa," accessed February 24, 2017, http://cms-africa.org/.
[155] "Footprint Campaign - CMS Africa," accessed February 27, 2017, http://www.cms-africa.org/footprint-campaign.html.
[156] Brinkley, "Partner."

ADS include World Renew, Transform Aid International, TEAR Australia, and the Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference (Alberta, Canada).[157] Among ABC's international partners are Canadian Baptist Ministries, Discipleship International (Canada), and Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (US).[158]

While the work of UDO extends to other countries on a consulting basis, ADS's work is within the Kenyan boundaries. On another level, ELC and ABC share a commonality on this: both have strong denominational ties; ELC to the mother church, Voice of Salvation and Healing (VOSH), and ABC is the denomination itself. The one difference between them is that VOSH has branched into other East African countries[159] while ABC is indeed a localized entity within the wider Ukambani (eastern Kenya).

At this point, I would like to relate my findings, especially pertaining to internationality, to the theory of 'extraversion' as espoused by Jean-Francois Bayart and Paul Gifford. Merriam-Webster defines extraversion or its variant 'extroversion' as "…the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from what is outside the self."[160] To distill this concept to fit with the general thrust of this study, extraversion may be understood in two illustrative ways: one, in the shadow of popular Pentecostalism that focuses on the prosperity gospel of success, victory and wealth.[161] Two, an acceptance that the material world of the West and

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[157] "Partners," Anglican Development Services Mt. Kenya, accessed February 27, 2017, http://ads-mtkenya.or.ke/partners/.
[158] Interview with Nduku at ABC headquarters, Machakos.
[159] Harold Odhiambo, "Voice of Salvation Church Changes Leadership for First Time in 61 Years," The Standard, 12, accessed February 27, 2017, https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001229975/voice-of-salvation-church-changes-leadership-for-first-time-in-61-years.
[160] "Definition of EXTROVERSION," accessed October 25, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/extroversion.
[161] Gifford, *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 150.

increasingly the developed Asian nations of China, Japan, etc., is better than Kenya. This latter view is fed by a saturated west-centric entertainment media (TV, movies, music, etc.) showcasing opulence and excess while the former is fueled by the successes of prosperity gospel purveyors who have fashioned their art from copying the likes of Creflo Dollar, Bennie Hinn, T.D. Jakes, and others. Their disciples in Kenya include Bishop Allan Kiuna, Bishop Margaret Wanjiru, Pastor James Ng'ang'a, Bishop Pius Muiru, etc. These prosperity gospel preachers have a huge following through personal attendance in their many churches and satellites, and through media platforms like radio and TV. On many occasions during data collection, I found my interviewees listening to sermon broadcasts in their homes or fields while working. One could sense a palpable yearning for the 'good life' epitomized by these preachers and promised to their followers. These preachers will often brag about their overseas trips and vacations, their imported cars, and their western-themed palatial homes designed and/built by foreigners. In other words, the allure of foreignness is a big motivator and a sign of success.

This allure and taste for things foreign is also demonstrated in the choices of dress that are fashionable. Following the collapse of a vibrant local textile industry in beginning in the 80's, Kenya became a dumping ground for second-hand clothes, popularly known as *mitumba*. Consequently, everybody started shopping the best of these used clothes often looking to the entertainment and fashion media world for trends. Today, the blue jeans and t-shirts, commonplace in the streets of America and Europe, are prevalent in every village in Kenya. Such is the penetration of extraversion.

Even though we are far off from when Bayart was writing about sub-Saharan dependency and extraversion with Europe, the elements remain present. For many development agencies, their solutions to local issues borrow from foreign templates (in technology, expertise, examples, etc.) adapted to the local contexts, and critically, financial resources, that as Bayart offered, present asymmetrical relations between recipients and donors (and their conduits).[162] Whereas Bayart related the external environment to becoming a major factor of political influence and patronage for the holders of power, the parallels here are with those who control the purse and may therefore exert influence on what direction needed projects take.[163]

Overall, the contours of both dependency and extraversion were present in the organizations that I examined; however, in the particular cases of CMSA and CIM, there is a decidedly observable trajectory to be free of the funding and intellectual dependency on the West. Let me illustrate.

New Shapes and Molds: Structure, Leadership, and Funding

Curiously and perhaps heartening, was the observation that, even where one organization was identified with a particular denomination (ADS with the Anglican Church of Kenya-ACK, or ABC's development work with the eponymous church), its work did not emphasize those distinctions. In a country where the mainline denominations tend to be by default parochial (the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church have a dominant presence in Central Kenya, ABC is almost exclusively in

[162] Jean-François Bayart and Stephen Ellis, "Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion," *African Affairs* 99, no. 395 (2000): 218.
[163] Jean-François Bayart and Stephen Ellis, 219.

Eastern Kenya, Seventh Day Adventist in Western, etc.) and can acquire an enclave view and mentality, dissolving denominational distinctions is powerful witness. Indeed, my work with the farmer groups under ADS was facilitated by self-identifying Roman Catholic adherents. Similarly, the majority of the farmers seemed to identify with Catholicism based on my observation of the greeting rituals, liturgical scripting at meetings and the vernacular/parlance of social life.[164] Again, even with the organization that succeeded World Vision in Makuyu, the leaders came from both the Protestant and Catholic traditions but working across those lines in the community. I also never got the impression that the beneficiaries, most of who were Catholic, lorded it over those who were of different orientations. Consider this example from one of the ADS field officers,

> "We appreciate that you are Anglican, but you would be surprised to learn that none of us here working in the field as Farming God's Way advocates are Anglican. We are Roman Catholic. But we work hand in hand with the Anglican bishop as well as the churches around here. FGW is non-denominational and does not belong to any church/denomination. We work to transform the heart so that the mind can change behavior".[165]

These cross-denominational arrangements offer a powerful way of rethinking traditional ecclesial and ecumenical templates less fraught with divisions and power struggles.

All the organizations that formed this study, formal and informal, employed an organizational structure that combined centralization and diffusion in varying measures except for CIM. All the Western-founded organizations had national leaders overseeing

[164] In normal interactions, adherents of Roman Catholicism greet each other with the incantation, 'tuyiukie Yesu' which loosely translates to, 'lift Jesus high' followed by drawing in the air across the chest and forehead of the symbol of the cross. Similar rituals can be observed when entering a church or a holy setting, like a group meeting, and before and after reading from the Bible.
[165] Maggie at our first meeting with Anglican Development Services (ADS) officials.

the global organizational sections (operations, mobilization, finance, etc.) as well as a retinue of subsidiary office holders all the way to the village level. It is the village presence that gave these organizations the diffuse nature because of replication in many parts of the country. For example, World Vision has projects in many parts of the country with local village offices where these projects are located like Makuyu before the eventual exit.

CIM on the other hand, was devoid of this character and had the appearances of a one-man show albeit with a handful of underlings. The organization was founded by one person who continues to run all aspects of it. CIM's work is very localized and there are no satellites; instead, people travel from all over the East Africa region to Yatta to have experiential learning of what the founder and head, Bishop Masika, calls a system. On occasions, he accepts invitations to travel to other areas including outside the country to speak about the CIM success, but most of the work is *in situ*. This model allows for great control of all the aspects of the work. Quick responsiveness, experimentation and benchmarking are the great advantages CIM has over other models. It is fully self-sustaining through commercialization of its 'domesticated' solutions and market linkages in addition to income from the boarding and dining facilities it has built to cater for the year-round traffic of visitors eager to learn the CIM magic.

ABC, ELC and ADS employ a variety of funding models that combine both self-generated funds and other partnerships with home and international donors. Both ABC's development wing and ADS have the support of their respective churches and the same is true for ELC which is partly supported through the VOSH church in combination with

revenues generated from fee-paying students in the schools (elementary, primary, and secondary). These streams are complemented by external donor partners, five in all[166]. Additionally, ELC has other income-generating projects that include leasing out land for rice farming, water distribution and a posho mill[167]. The water distribution and posho mill operation are operated for and by widows from the community as an outreach ministry of ELC.

ELC's leadership is all local with many of the teachers having been former students at the school. Other leaders, including the school chaplain and the overseer have deep roots in the community and are especially attuned to the unique needs of the community. Similar leadership models can be observed in the other native organizations where locals fill the organizational ranks. Among the Western-founded organizations, except for the common knowledge that their organizational heads operate from the home countries, it was clear to me that the locals now occupy most of the country-level offices. In fact, at the time of this study, World Relief Kenya (WRK) was in the process of having a Kenyan take over as Country Director from a Rwandese. The head of Compassion International Kenya (CIK) was also Kenyan at the same time. Even in these examples where national leadership of WRK and CIK was in the hands of locals, these locals still answered to organizational presidents in the US. These arrangements betray aspects of 'indirect rule' akin to those seen in post-independence African nations.

[166] Interview with Ebenezer overseer in Ahero.
[167] A posho mill is a machine used to grind grains (mostly maize, but also wheat, millet, sorghum, etc.) into flour used for staple foods.

In terms of the served communities feelings of ownership of the organization, my observation is that the closer the organization is to the end-users of its services, the greater this feeling is. The community around ELC would probably be the one that shares this sentiment the closest because of its actual ownership of the income-generating projects. Here, ELC turned the operations of a commercial potable water service and of a posho mill over to a local community group. Further, because the ELC schools serve first the vulnerable and underserved community children, they have a greater and more meaningful connection to the institution. In fact, several the teachers were themselves graduates of these schools. Another example of the community having real equity in the projects themselves is shown in the arrangement where CIM purchases produce directly from local peasant farmers, preserves it in its charcoal coolers and either sells it directly to existing bulk distributors or uses it for its own value-adding chains.[168]The local farmers thus linked to these value chains do not have to worry about their produce going bad in the sweltering Yatta heat or finding buyers for the produce.

I will now turn my focus on how the work gets done by these organizations. This focus will start with a short look at the organizational objectives, which I offer, provide the direction of the work. Here, I will briefly describe the twin concepts of *maendeleo* and *harambee* which are instructive in understanding development in Kenya.

[168] Bishop Masika spoke of several value-adding chains that he had developed which include the use of pumpkin seed extracts in bread making, and the use of sweet potatoes and cassava flour to enrich bread and other products.

Specifying the Objectives

All the organizations I studied shared one goal: to help make the lives of the people they serve better, but their visions of how to make that happen or what aspects of people's lives to focus on were quite different. All of them, except for Hand-in-Hand (HIH), self-identified as faith-based, and they would agree that they are engaged in development work; however, 'development' meant different things, even if only by degree, to all of them. All of them combined an understanding of development, largely, as "modernization, economic diversification, improvements in human well-being, the creation of equal opportunities, and poverty reduction"[169]. They then picked a core area of focus with a corollary of other lesser but important focuses, for example, UDO's focus was building sand dams, but was consequently also involved in irrigation technologies, soil conservation and afforestation.

The Swahili term *maendeleo* is what every Kenyan understands as 'development'. There is no word in Kenyan vernaculars that translates to development. *Maendeleo* is also quite distinguishable from the Western concept of progress and the attendant scientism. Let me expound. When the government builds a new paved road or brings electricity to a remote rural setting, people speak of *maendeleo* and how these things will make their collective lives better (get produce to the market faster and all the time versus only when the roads are drivable, stop using kerosene lamps for lighting homes at night, etc.) Contrasted to progress' scientism and empiricism that elevate science, technology, and social organization in the service of a destination (a human condition that is improved

[169] Robert Calderisi, *Earthly Mission: The Catholic Church and World Development* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 70.

and can continue to be improved through these factors), *maendeleo* is not anchored in social theories or classical philosophies; it is simply that things are getting better, not towards some utopic human condition, but simply better. The only philosophy in the service of *maendeleo* is embodied in another Swahili term, *harambee*, which like another African collectivist concept of *Ubuntu*, means pulling together. The interplay of the concepts of *maendeleo* and *harambee* were evident from the cooperation that the organizations shared[170] with each other as well as that displayed by individual beneficiaries in collectively working on each other's farms, pooling resources to buy medicines for a sick member, or providing the labor for constructing a sand dam while a partner organization provided the materials and expertise[171]. Any shift from what was once viewed derisively as backward e.g., from living in a round thatched hut to a rectangular structure with corrugated iron sheets for roofing is development. Because these concepts are so ingrained in the Kenyan psyche, I surmised that the development organizations had crafted their objectives around them. Hand-In-Hand's campaign to promote savings through the establishment of piggy banks was viewed as development compared to hiding extra money under the mattress.

These organizations pursued paths that gave them unique expertise in specific areas even though many overlaps exist. In a way, each one of them had engaged in a process of developing its own 'professional' knowledges[172] and corresponding experts

[170] For example, Hand in Hand and Anglican Development Services, perhaps because of serving the same communities, had developed a working relationship where they would coordinate their meetings and share in each other's training sessions with the beneficiaries.
[171] UDO required community members to provide manual labor during dam constructions while UDO and its partners like the Roslyn Academy provided funds, materials, and the technical expertise.
[172] Hefferan, *Twinning Faith and Development*, 2.

that gave it certain advantages. The result of processes like these is the production of knowledge that is "measurable, specific, and calculable"[173] that helps us "shape discourses that define the terms upon which something can be known, spoken about, or experienced…"[174]. It is from these that we can talk about the objectives of the organizations. CI is an advocate for children in poverty and has developed a niche for serving children; UDO's expertise in the construction of sand dams is unparalleled and CIM has honed the expertise of developing value chains where none seem to exist. ELC is devoted to excellence in Christian education, HIH is a leader in small-scale entrepreneurship and micro-loans, and CMSA is unique in developing leaders.

Holistic/Wholistic Programing

At a cursory level, all the organizations I studied seemed to be engaged in or proclaiming to be more exclusively intent on solving *one* community problem; for CI it was the vulnerable child, for UDO it was water shortage, ADS food insecurity, HIH income insecurity, etc. On closer examination however, none of them was doing just the *one* thing that they had become popular for. The one popular competence of an organization, in my opinion, was truly an entry point into a more integrated reality. CI was engaged in irrigation and arid farming initiatives and peacebuilding and CIM was pioneering and showcasing the efficacy of simple yet powerful domestic technologies like the charcoal cooler for preserving produce or using the green house as a large-scale rapid dryer in floor making. This divergence, or more appropriately the taking on additional challenges with some bearing on the original concern, is what led most of

[173] Hefferan, 3.
[174] Hefferan, 3.

these organizations to describe themselves as being involved in 'holistic' development. Although it makes sense to operate in this fashion, my impression was that 'holistic', or in one instance 'wholistic'[175], did not mean the same thing. I am not sure if the two iterations stand for different things or are distinctions without a difference especially when the same organization uses both interchangeably. Here is a case in point: "CMS-Africa exists to envision, equip, … the church towards 'holistic' mission."[176] At another part of the same website, CMSA identifies one of its objectives as envisioning and connecting leaders in and of the church to demonstrate 'Wholistic' transformation mission.[177] Yet another iteration of this multi-fangled approach of solutions delivery is 'integral' mission/development as used by World Relief, for example. At World Relief, integral mission is "obeying both the Great Commission and the Great Commandment in ministering to people's spiritual, physical, emotional and social well-being."[178]

While it is easy to get lost in the terminology, my understanding of the implication is about the comprehensive nature of the solutions offered by these organizations with great emphasis placed on the biblical injunction to not only desire that each person survives, "but thrives and flourishes in every area."[179] While providing food for the starving, we should also extend the help to create educational opportunities,

[175] "Who We Are - CMS Africa."
[176] "CMS Africa - CMS Africa," accessed March 2, 2017, http://cms-africa.org/component/content/article.html?id=185.
[177] "Who We Are - CMS Africa."
[178] "Standing with Vulnerable," World Relief, accessed March 2, 2017, https://www.worldrelief.org/standingwiththevulnerable/.
[179] Arthur C. Brooks, *For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty*, ed. Anne R. Bradley and Arthur W. Lindsley (Zondervan, 2015), sec. 181.

development of individual gifts or talents, and the resources to start small businesses that can provide for the families benefitting and hopefully create jobs for others in the future.

In practical terms, ADS not only teaches farmers about Farming God's Way™ (FGW), but also how to preserve the crop chemical-free and offers market linkages to the farmers with a view of increasing their income potential to be better able to take care of themselves. Where one organization cannot or is ill-equipped to meet all these challenges, I witnessed partnerships (*harambee*) between two or more organizations working in the same area to deliver 'whole' solutions. For example, because both ADS and HIH shared many of their members, it made sense for both organizations to hold joint training sessions with ADS taking the lead on FGW and HIH teaching on entrepreneurship and extending micro-loans. This cooperation also highlights the superficiality of the sacred-secular divide, at least through the eyes of the beneficiaries who need the goods of both sides. I observed the way the beneficiaries, through their faith rituals, 'Christianized 'the ways in which they received services from a secular organization.

The cross-sectionality of approaches is not limited to the areas of concern (water, food, finances, spirituality, etc.) but extends to the targets of transformation as well. Most development interventions target vulnerabilities that exist or are perceived to exist in society. The vulnerabilities may be persons (widows, orphans, AIDS survivors, refugees, etc.) or conditions (food insecurity, water shortage, financial hardship, and so forth). Sometimes the prioritization of the approach gives us insight into how one organization thinks it can best achieve its objectives and at others the organization puts forth the

rationale for operating one way and not another. For example, with CI, the focus on children is grounded in arguments like these[180]: "… children stand the best chance to learn what is true unlike their parents who are already quite enshrined in their belief practices", and "… we understand that when children are healthy and educated, economic well-being follows easily". Again, even for a decidedly faith-based organization, the concern for what may look like secularist aspirations like economic well-being are not far off. This is the cross-section of, I offer, holism and wholism; holism concerns itself with that which is deemed to be profitable to the believing soul, and wholism acknowledges that a hungry and sick person has little appetite for spiritual nourishment until the hunger and disease are mitigated. I offer this opinion because my resource at CMSA was unable to provide an explanation for the use of the different terms almost interchangeably.

CSMA places greater emphasis on leadership development than any other area because it believes that following that route would give it the best opportunity to achieve its objectives. Its mission statement of renewing mindsets to transform communities speaks to the perception that leaders, like teachers, wield enormous capacity to change minds and impart knowledge necessary to change societies. It can be said that most development organizations conduct their business using three general typologies; one, addressing structural deficits (fixing infrastructure like sand dams, drilling boreholes, etc.); two, meeting felt needs (hunger, medical care, etc.), and three, a combination of both. Often though, the 'solutions' presented do not go far enough and are therefore ineffective. In such cases, a different approach is needed, and faith-based organizations

[180] Interview with Justus at CI headquarters in Nairobi.

do this better than secular actors. This is especially useful when encountering personal issues like sickness, childlessness, etc. whose causes are attributed to other-worldly forces like spirits or demons. Here, a matching "religious imagination"[181] and engagement is required.

Power and Authority

I would like to distinguish how I am using these two related terms. Power implies the ability to cause a change or maintenance of behavior often with a coercive connotation. Authority is the ability to inspire change or maintenance of behavior often with a voluntary connotation. The spirit world plays an oversized role, fearfully, in causing people to remain in oppression. For example, a small segment of villagers in Kitini refused to adopt FGW out of real fear of being harmed by the spirit world. in this case the spirit world had power over the villagers that forced them to decline a potentially profitable endeavor. On the same note, champion farmers who had adopted FGW and become successful, had earned the authority to inspire fellow villagers take up FGW with real tangible benefits of increased crop yields.

I also want to bring up the issue of legal and official authority. This is the ability to inspire or cause change in behavior resulting from holding a legal or administrative office or title. Pastors, chiefs, and other leaders wield authority of this kind. Both types of authority were on display during this study.

[181] Paul Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa*, 1 edition (Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.

While conducting research for this study, I was informed of some encounters that had significantly impacted three organizations; Africa Brotherhood Church (ABC), Anglican Development Services (ADS), and Compassion International (CI). All three had to do with witchcraft and how its influence on the beneficiaries affected the organizations' work. In one case, ADS had to abandon[182] its efforts to penetrate an area because the target population was so steeped in witchcraft that serious bodily harm was threatened. In another case, World Relief Kenya (WRK) had to 'accommodate' a good amount of 'syncretism' (wearing of protective amulets, cavorting with the witchdoctor, taking snuff into church, etc.) because the community understood those elements to be integral to its cultural identity.[183] These two snapshots illustrate how an underappreciation of all the forces in play can wreak havoc on the success of a development undertaking, but conversely, how an understanding of the landscape can bestow advantages in such an endeavor.

Even with Christian Impact Mission (CIM), Bishop Masika spoke of 'in the box' mindset as a barrier to effective development. The mentality of a mixture of fatalism, being conditioned to expecting the government to always come with rescue aid, and belief in witchcraft, is what the bishop decried as the anchor that held his community down. On witchcraft especially, he did not discount its power or hold on people's imagination but extolled the greater power of the Gospel as a counterweight. He acknowledged the reality of witchcraft and its power while also rallying the community

[182] Margaret talking about how ADS prospective members banded with their witchcraft-believing neighbors to insist that the crop failed, not because of no rain, but because of witchcraft.
[183] Peter talking about the challenges of working in Turkana.

around the salvific power of Jesus in pastoral ministry to overcome the stranglehold of the devil through the witchdoctors in the community. As a pastor and a success story in this environment, he had the credibility to offer the hope of rescue and to demonstrate the power of the Gospel in his life's achievements.

Models of Operation

Different organizations used different vehicles to engage their constituencies and to deliver on their agenda. Many, like WRK, CI, Church Missionary Society Africa (CMSA) and World Vision used church-centric models while others like Ebenezer Life Centre (ELC) and ABC were embedded within their parent churches and would not operate independent of them. Church-centric organizations chose to work with churches for any number of reasons. One that is quite apparent is the diffuseness of churches and therefore a significant reach, and another is the church's own storied history and influence in development work. Additionally, religion, and the church is certainly vital to Christianity, and "has an intrinsic value as part of people's well-being in the way it conceives development …"[184] Further, we cannot discount the importance of "religious motivations"[185] of people who work in development organizations as well as the "inspiration and guidance"[186] that development organizations derive from the "teachings and principles of the faith."[187] It is no accident then that a significant number, probably a majority, of development organizations have explicit religious foundations or inclinations. All the organizations in this study were either overtly faith-based (either by

[184] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 3.
[185] Deneulin and Bano, 4.
[186] Deneulin and Bano, 4.
[187] Deneulin and Bano, 4.

being directly tied to a church or parachurch organization, by espousing views that align with faith communities) or showed a desire and eagerness to work with faith communities (churches or church-based groups).

Development is essentially about people and therefore must be about values as well.[188] Faith communities, and churches especially, have a long history of "strategic translations of ideas about not only development, but also public interest *like multi-party democracy, voting*"[189] (italics my emphasis), etc. which are often presented in value proposition formats. Because religious communities are fundamental in helping people form and understand the notions of good and evil or morality, it is easy to see why faith-based development organizations appear to take the lead in matters of development which is itself in one way an endeavor of deciding between the "desirable (how people think the world ought to be) and the desired (what they want for themselves).[190]

On this score, I was not surprised that most of the organizations I studied were faith-based or sympathetic to the faith practices of their beneficiaries. It is the reason that most of them worked in cooperation with churches and some like LoveInc exclusively so. Where no church existed, the organizations sought to plant one (VOSH's development arm aimed to plant churches as prerequisites to development[191]). WRK sought to partner with churches with a missionary outreach effort in Northern Kenya like Parklands Baptist

[188] Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi, and Christopher Sugden, eds., *Faith in Development: Partnership between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa* (Washington, DC: World Bank Publications, 2001), 208.
[189] Tomas Sundnes Drønen, ed., *Religion and Development: Nordic Perspectives on Involvement in Africa*, New edition (New York: Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers, 2014), 5.
[190] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 28.
[191] Interview with Mike at VOSH offices in Kisumu.

Church of Nairobi to penetrate an area where no church existed. It is a fair observation that most of the organizations that informed this study had some connection to the church implicitly or explicitly, even the ones that did not identify themselves as faith based. This is important because faith communities have an enduring presence in communities and are therefore easy default organizing bases. Faith communities, by their nature, already gather quite regularly as a matter of course making it easier to disseminate information and to ensure its dispersal. And because faith and religion 'often guide or tend to influence social change'[192], partnering with churches and other faith communities makes a lot of sense for development organizations.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) like UDO, CIM, ELC, the many ADS affiliated groups, and to a larger extent ABC, have a more or less permanent presence in the communities. Others like CI, WR, CMSA, etc. have time-limited commitments inside of which they must 'finish' their work. At the time of this study, WV proper had exited the Makuyu scene following the expiry of its time there and ADS's commitment was coming up for review to determine if it would continue to support the affiliate groups after a five-year contract. ADS's situation was unique in the sense that even though ADS as a national organization of the Anglican Church of Kenya would eventually exit Makuyu (at least in its support of FGW groups), its sponsored farmer groups that came to be synonymous with it would continue in the community. It is entirely possible that it could return to the community to support different initiatives, but it was commonly understood that there was an end-by date.

[192] Emma Tomalin, *Religions and Development*, 1 edition (Routledge, 2013), sec. 593.

By contrast, UDO, ELC, ABC and CIM are permanent fixtures in their communities, and even though their services may extend far and wide, their rootedness in specific locations is firm. UDO's campus in Makueni, CIM's in Yatta, ABC's in Machakos and ELC's in Ahero are hubs from which everything else radiates. Central planning for the respective organizations happens at those campuses and there are no plans, to my knowledge, to relocate or dissolve. While this arrangement is prone to rigidity, that might also be a great strength that comes from their simple structure with a 'strategic apex and direct supervision'[193] by a leader who is often almost always there on the ground. This proximity also allows for greater experimentation and an immediate feedback loop which can help the organization adapt quickly. Not lost to this dynamic is the role of ethnicity and local patronage which are equities that carry much weight. Two snapshots will help illustrate this dynamic. CIM and ELC are 'localized' entities in the sense that they are predominated by Kamba and Luo ethnic communities, respectively. Their prominence and success are in no small measure built on the cult personalities of their founders i.e., Bishops Titus Masika and Adhu Awiti. These two people are legendary in their respective communities, and the projects they champion pack the authority and respectability present in their personal successes.

Regarding the power of partnerships, two examples from UDO and CIM are illustrative. I witnessed a unique partnership between the UDO, the community, and a friend in Rosslyn Academy, a private Christian international school in Nairobi. During the construction of a sand dam, I witnessed the community that was going to benefit from

[193] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 29.

its construction provide all the labor (mixing the concrete, gathering the rocks and gravel to be mixed in with the concrete, fetching water from completed dams, preparing lunch on site for all workers, etc.) while UDO provided the cement, steel, and technical expertise for the job. I later learned that this was always the case; UDO would not undertake to build a dam if the beneficiary community were unwilling to supply the labor. Friends like Rosslyn only helped to make things easier for the community by volunteering labor as a community project necessary for graduation. Students would later write reflection papers based upon this experience. The symbiotic relationship is powerful.

The second example is from CIM's model farm. As mentioned earlier, CIM has been successful in developing water-harvesting technologies as well as innovative farming methods like the moist garden. It has also identified numerous value chains that result in direct benefits for the community. One of these value chains is the incorporation of sweet potatoes and pumpkins into bread making. On its own, CIM cannot meet the demand for its enriched and fortified bread; therefore, it contracts local farmers to supply the deficit which is a win-win situation for both parties; farmers have a ready market for their produce and CIM can meet the market demand for bread. This kind of symbiotic relationship, though not impossible, would be difficult for an organization without the rootedness of CIM or UDO.

The partnerships that these organizations enter bear heavily on how well they achieve their objectives. For example, under the 'Commitment to the Church', CI observes that it partners with local indigenous churches for effective child

development.[194] The main reason for working through the church is the belief that local churches are strategically placed and therefore well suited to meet the holistic needs of children in their communities.[195] The selection of the local church as the locus through which any help to vulnerable children is channeled undoubtedly has significance on the outcomes of the interventions that materially have to look different from those that might be performed in 'neutral' locations like a school. WRK follows a similar model of working through churches with a slight variation; it groups churches in the same geographical area into what is known as Church Empowerment Zones (CEZ) in their parlance. The partnership with LoveInc also follows this model of working through churches that are grouped into a unit.

The three major western organizations (CI, WRK and WV) are overtly faith-based. CI and WRK are also very open about how their primary work flows through the local churches; however, WV which is the largest of the three, is quite vague about its relationship with local churches. In fact, under the banner of 'Church and Interfaith Engagement', the only mention of anything close to the church is 'trusted religious leaders' as partners where government presence is limited.[196] While this study did not cover a direct WV project, it is conceivable that working with 'trusted religious leaders' implies an important engagement with the church. Consequently, it must be inferred that, as a self-identifying Christian organization in the service of and to vulnerable children and their families, spiritual nurture would be an important component of the overall

[194] "Commitment to the Church," accessed March 6, 2017, https://www.compassion.com/about/commitment-to-the-church.htm.
[195] "Commitment to the Church."
[196] "Church and Interfaith Engagement," World Vision International, October 20, 2013, http://www.wvi.org/churchandinterfaith.

effort. In fact, under its 'Compendium of Indicators' that it uses to track and measure outputs, more than six indicators reference faith leaders or faith communities.[197]

In all, regardless of the primary model of operation any one of these organizations employ, the church is writ large. The models are either explicitly church-centric as in the case of CI and WRK or are closely aligned to the church or its appendages. Others like ELC and the development arm of ABC are themselves extensions of their respective denominations, VOSH and the Africa Brotherhood Church.

When I asked different leaders in these organizations about what they desired to see because of their work, to a person, they all spoke of transformed communities. Even though the visions of this transformation differed from one organization to another, there were commonalities. The most prevalent of these commonalities was the hope that the people would be better able to take care of themselves by meeting their basic needs especially food and building for themselves sufficient economic bases to support their families and their ambitions. These commonalities focus on community vulnerabilities that easily divide into two spheres: people and conditions. Vulnerable people include young children, the aged, widows and orphans, and the poor. Conditions that need remedying include food insecurities, lack of clean drinking water or any water at all, disease, marginalization, etc. Comprehensively, the solutions offered are about agency; increasing people's capacities to make choices and pursue their own goals, variously referred to as empowerment.[198]

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[197] "CWBT Output Monitoring Indicators," World Vision International, February 28, 2017, http://www.wvi.org/development/publication/cwbt-monitoring-indicators.
[198] Brun and Blaikie, *Alternative Development*, 7.

The solutions are presented in different formulations some codified through repeat experimentation ala the 'package solutions' offered by CIM; building an ecosystem that maximizes the use of available water. At the demonstration farm, CIM showcases a simple yet complex system that cycles the 'dirty' water (full of fish droppings) from the fishponds to the vegetables growing hydroponically. This water escaping the plants through transpiration is trapped and cycled back to the fishponds and this is endlessly repeated. Further, the urine from the rabbits is collected for use as folia feed and an organic herbicide while the droppings are used to supplement fish food. There is even an area for hundreds of earthworms working on making humus as their droppings are harnessed for additional manure for use on the aquaponics plot.

Agency and Women in Development

The centrality of women and their agency in development was very visible in the planning and execution of the work of the organizations that formed this study. From the head of ABC's development arm to the girl who recited a poem on women empowerment at a village development gathering, women constituted the bulk of the participants for this study.

Women were leading the way in breaking some traditional molds by being household heads[199] and taking on roles that were previously taboo[200] for women. Indeed, they were dealing death blows to the "companions of impoverishment of exclusion,

[199] At least three women had left abusive spouses to start their own homes and separate livelihoods.
[200] It was considered taboo in the Kikuyu community for women to slaughter animals except for chicken

ridicule, and stigma…"[201]. The majority of the non-credentialled development lay workers who helped and guided me in the data collection were women, and many women were office holders in the numerous informal village development groups.

Apart from being in leadership and forming the bulk of those engaged in development, women were also at the forefront of sailing against the current. In one glaring example, the wife of my most important linkage to all the ADS village groups had totally refused to take up FGW despite her husband being an FGW champion. Even when presented with the evidence of greater productivity from her husband's side of the farm, she was adamant about continuing to do things how she had always done them. When asked about her resistance, she responded that she did not want to be viewed as lazy by doing lighter work. The response was at the same time confounding and enlightening. Working hard (as I will show in the 'Values' chapter) is treasured while laziness is scorned. In any case, her attitude was testament to her own agency and more importantly, a strong statement against oppressive patriarchy. She no longer felt the need to be an extension of her husband.

The elevation of the place and voice of girls and women in society was evident and not exactly surprising. Going back to my childhood, informal women groups were a mainstay of village life. In these groups, local women gathered in groups of about ten to pool money, on a round robin basis, to help each household to purchase household wares like utensils, furniture, and even electronics. These groups, that I grew up seeing my mother participate in, were the vehicles through which my family acquired its first gas

[201] Sabina Alkire, *What Can One Person Do? Faith to Heal a Broken World*, ed. Edmund Newell (Church Publishing, 2005), 97.

stove. Such acquisitions were my earliest introduction to the concept of development- we no longer needed to use firewood exclusively for cooking. The popularity of these informal 'development' groups eventually gained national notoriety when the then president, Daniel Arap Moi, co-opted the *Maendeleo Ya Wanawake*[202] (Women Development) movement with the full backing of his government.[203] The offshoot of the shifting traditional roles of women and girls in society evident in the data of this study traces its roots from *Maendeleo Ya Wanawake* (MYW) movement.

Women will continue to be key drivers of development for several reasons: they are a majority in the population and have had a history of organizing for development going back to pre-independence days with the launch of MYW in 1952.[204] Women are also generically much closer to societal vulnerabilities as widows and primary caregivers for orphans and disinheritance in a still patriarchal society as Kenya.

I contend with these observations about the treatment of women above, that they constitute a robust way for accounting for spirituality, especially of those organizational leaders creating spaces, in development, for women to have a voice, standing, and to flourish.

The next section will focus on how to make the benefits of development widespread and permanent.

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[202] Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, "Information on Maendeleo Ya Wanawake and Its Relationship with the Kenya African National Union (KANU) [KEN12003]," November 6, 1992, Kenya, https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/1326015.html.
[203] "History," accessed August 22, 2020, https://mywokenya.org/index.php/about-us/history.
[204] Audrey Wipper, "The Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization: The Co-Optation of Leadership," *African Studies Review* 18, no. 3 (December 1975): 99–120, https://doi.org/10.2307/523724.

Enshrining and Sustaining Change

The domesticated/adapted technologies championed by CIM above are presented as solutions to an area that receives little rain. Instead of planting flowers, Bishop Masika (founder of CIM) plants vegetables to push the practicality of the solution-it is better to use the scarce resource to grow something edible instead of a flower whose utility is only aesthetic. Other organizations like UDO have added other soil and water conservation initiatives to their core business of constructing sand dams. These initiatives include building gabions and terraces, planting community tree nurseries and other water harvesting and use technologies (harvesting rain from roofs and drip irrigation kits, for example).

Other organizations like ADS and CMSA focus their solutions on leadership, albeit of different perspectives. CMSA envisions the development and deployment of organizational leaders as key to achieving its vision of changing mindsets and transforming society. On the other hand, ADS focuses on selected champion farmers who work closely with trainers to deploy better farming practices like FGW with a hope that the success of these pilot programs attract new converts. ELC and ABC are especially invested in the education sector. Both organizations see education as the best vehicle for achieving societal transformation. ELC runs its own school from kindergarten to high school and sponsors its graduates to post-secondary institutions. ABC's model is to sponsor individual kids in different schools based on need, educational aptitude and relationships with partner high schools or colleges.

It could be said that all these organizations, unwittingly or knowingly, are engaged in the business of constructing and developing 'professional knowledges'[205] which, together, form a corpus that helps us to understand development. This process involves a complex interplay between those for whom development is a career (the experts tied to the entrenched institutionalized development apparatus[206]) and the cadres of nonexpert lay volunteers as well as beneficiaries as co-agents in their own self-development.[207] Inadvertently, this interaction fosters the elevation of 'cult of the expert'[208] and my study, in location and focus, examines and compares two kinds of organizations (western-founded and home-grown) as they engage in the development enterprise. The solutions presented by these organizations reflect the amalgamation of ideas and practices from all three classes of players.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine the organizational contours that inform how the organizations in the study worked. I looked at how the organizations self-identified and how others see them. I was especially attentive to those areas that touched on religion, spirituality, and faith because this study is about accounting for spiritual transformation in development.

The chapter also addressed the ways in which the organizations conceived of their work as stated in the vision and mission statements. I looked at organizational objectives

[205] Hefferan, *Twinning Faith and Development*, 2.
[206] Hefferan, 2.
[207] Hefferan, 5.
[208] Hefferan, 2.

which pour out of these statements as well as how the targets of developmental interventions shaped the interventions themselves. This chapter also addressed the different models of development the organizations employed. Most of them identified local churches as vital partners while those that did not indicated an eagerness or willingness to work with churches as a matter of pragmatism.

Other equally significant findings of this chapter included the centrality of women and their agency in development. As a majority of development beneficiaries and practitioners their place and voice cannot be ignored. Equally important to the power of women in development was the oversized influence of the dark forces of witchcraft and evil spirits. On many occasions, these dark forces either catalyzed or impeded development efforts.

On the questions of faith and spirituality, I observed a direct correlation between the increase of faith commitments and increased fruitfulness of development undertakings. In the words of one of the beneficiaries, “When I quit drinking and smoking and started to take my Catholic faith more seriously, I developed more. I could now devote more time and money to my farm and family.” Relatedly, I also observed development organizations as crucibles in which denominational and ecumenical differences were dissolved in pursuit of singular purposes. Beneficiaries set aside their religious differences and ‘forced’ even secular organizations to treat them as unitary faith communities.

Regarding transformation, I saw that it was localized and context specific. Water harvesting through sand dams made great sense in arid Yatta but not in Makuyu. In either

case, I noted that transformation followed a proximal-distal pattern, from centers to peripheries. The transformation continuum was also such that people saw before they knew; transformation was demonstrated before it was digested.

The next section of this study will be a focus on the values that inform these organizations as well as the practices that undergird the values. To set it off, I will relate an experience that I observed one evening as I was uploading the files from my fieldwork on to my computer in the comfort of one of few establishments with a wi-fi connection. The picture I am about to paint will illustrate how the secular/sacred, permitted/forbidden divides continually blur in a seemingly unchoreographed yet fluid dance with multiple partners.

Chapter 4

Values and Practices

A nominally devout couple (we attended the same church and are family friends) is sitting at a corner booth of the restaurant that also hosts a bar and a dance floor with a mirror ball. It is a Sunday late afternoon when everybody has already been to church. They are seated with their backs towards me, the husband enjoying a beer and the wife packaged juice. They are on the side preferred by churchgoers (I recognize and know many of them) although no visible signage is present to indicate this boundary. This is also the non-smoking section and is, by comparison, more sedated than the opposite side from where wild and loud guffaws occasionally emerge. Although smoking is permitted on the other side, the sensitive smokers step outside to smoke perhaps minding not to offend their non-smoking friends and neighbors in the same section.

To the uninitiated eye, these two camps share little apart from their preference for the restaurant and the die-hard support of one of the two English Premier League teams currently playing and televised on the many TVs conveniently hanging from the walls. Their choice of drinks is also strikingly different; those on the quieter side prefer wines, juices and light beer to the almost exclusive brown and dark beers and hard liquor of the opposite side. There are about the same number of women as men on either side all spotting the trendy fashion choices. Those on my side of the restaurant tend to be almost exclusively thirty-five and older while those on the other side display a wider spread of

age; there clearly are many from eighteen (legal drinking age in Kenya) all the way to the sixties and possibly above.

The semblance of unspoken order is suddenly broken when the DJ plays a catchy gospel tune; everybody makes a mad dash for the dance floor and proceeds to both sing along and dance with reckless abandon. A similar reaction occurs when the DJ plays the hyper-trendy, vulgarity-ridden remakes of old Kikuyu songs of the *Mugithi* fame (*Mugithi* is 'train' in Kikuyu and the dance requires participants to be in train formation while aping the train motion while dancing). Nothing pulls more people to the dance floor, irrespective of age, class, gender, religion or level of devoutness) like *Mugithi*. Before long, everybody is feverishly dancing and making merry with arms locked locomotive style.

The picture above presents the dilemma of seamlessly weaving between dichotomous worlds/spheres (sacred and secular) while remaining true to both-as professing/confessing Christians, and embodied locals. These indulgencies into the 'questionable' territories (being in a bar on Sunday, drinking alcohol and enjoying secular music) do not appear to hamper witness. Or do they?

The snapshot above will launch the discussion on values and the practices that undergird those values in development. The last chapter was an exploration of a mix of developmental organizations and the different ways they conduct their work. This chapter will explore how faith, belief systems, and the attendant values and norms inform the practice of development in selected theatres. I will start by casting a theoretical lens on the understanding of development in these terms: why it is necessary and therefore

revolutionary, and the idealism or telos of the endeavor itself. This introductory section will be followed by a brief look-back at the location where most of the data for this study originated to add context. Later, I will also frame the discussion inside the nest of culture where indeed, values and practices find a home[209]. A more exhaustive look at the interplay between culture, values and practices will follow. I will add texture to this exploration by bringing in relevant literature which will be enriched with the voices of the participants in this study. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the main points.

Development: Idealism or Revolution?

"No one has changed a great nation without appealing to its soul, without stimulating a national idealism, as even those who call themselves materalists have discovered, culture is the key to revolutions, religion is the key to culture."[210]

Development, in all its contested understandings (from economic growth and consumption, increasing capabilities and freedoms, to equity and justice, etc.), is idealistic. Development, or its end thereof, (developedness[211]) is a view of how an ideal society or community can look like. The practice of development harnesses the aspirations of a people and appeals to their best wishes for their society where everyone has every opportunity to flourish. Conceptualized this way, development is about affording and allowing people to live more fuller lives that are less weighed down by

[209] Ogbu U. Kalu, ed., *African Christianity: An African Story*, 1st ed. (Africa World Press, Inc., 2007), 456.
[210] Kenneth P. Jameson, ed., *Religious Values and Development* (Oxford New York Toronto Sydney Paris Frankfurt Main i.e. Kronberg-Taunus: Pergamon Pr, 1981), 474.
[211] Kwame Gyekye, *Philosophy Culture and Vision: African Perspectives. Selected Essays* (Place of publication not identified: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2013), 33.

controllable vicissitudes like hunger, disease, or homelessness. The quest for a better life is about meeting basic needs: sufficient food to maintain good health; a safe and healthy place to live; affordable services available to everyone; and being treated with dignity and respect… all basic to human survival.[212] These things are aspirational, pragmatic, and idealistic. One of the interviewees for this study captured this spirit eloquently when I asked him to describe for me how development looked in his eyes. He answered the question by marking out (drawing metrics) his own development: he described how he no longer needed to choose between selling an egg (rich in protein but insufficient to feed a family) to buy maize flour (cheap and more filling but less nutritious) or only eat meat at Christmas. He had enough chickens now to provide both eggs and meat. He also had moved from living in a grass thatched hut to a tin roofed bigger house which allowed him to harvest and conserve rainwater. He could now also afford medicines because he could sell chickens or rabbits to get the money as well as being able to help with school fees for his grandchildren so they could stay in school uninterrupted. He referred to this as an investment into his future. Significantly, he observed that his development was also a product of his faith; by recommitting to his Catholic faith, he was able to re-prioritize his life choices to allow him to better contribute to his development. For example, he quit two vices (drinking and smoking) which allowed him to spend the money that he would otherwise have 'thrown away'[213] in more profitable ways.

[212] Peet and Hartwick, *Theories of Development, Third Edition*, 1.
[213] Tarcisius speaking about his transformation from a village drunkard to champion farmer, village elder and role model.

Development proper is revolutionary in this sense: it calls for great sacrifice and discipline now as a down payment for the desired future, and like any successful revolution, it requires focused leadership that rallies the society steadfastly towards the goal. Examples of this include the oft-cited examples of South Korea and Malaysia, whose economies were the same size as that of Kenya immediately after independence in 1963. South Korea instituted a policy of import substitution before changing to an export-driven economy while Malaysia followed a path of aggressive affirmative action. Today, these two nations are considered highly developed while Kenya is still developing.

The endeavor for development is also cultural-centric in the sense that the development is directed towards those things that the community considers valuable in the context of its environment. An agrarian, communitarian/collectivist society like Kenya prizes a development trajectory that emphasizes the ethos of shareability while an industrialist American trajectory values individualistic pursuit above communitarian ones. Religions, religious faith, and beliefs, all key features of culture, are sources and shapers of values and hence integral to any development. The example of quitting smoking and drinking above makes this case. These are particularly true in the areas of morality and ethics as I will more fully show later in this chapter.

Development is at the same time a comparative and prescriptive endeavor; a process and a destination (goal), at least aspirationally. Nations, societies, or communities compare and judge themselves according to the how they have fared considering the constraints they face[214] in their march towards the desired destination. America is

[214] Denis Goulet, *The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), 225.

perceived to be more developed than Kenya because, proportionally, more Americans live free from the strangleholds of hunger, disease, illiteracy, etc. than Kenyans. The raging coronavirus pandemic has exposed America's societal vulnerabilities to these issues, but overall, America is still a developed nation unlike Kenya which is still developing.

From the foregoing, a working definition of development is the process by which individuals, communities and nations harness the totality of their cultural resources (knowledge, beliefs, materials, rituals, etc.) and other resources (technologies, expertise, etc.) to enhance/improve their living conditions by reducing their vulnerabilities of disease, hunger, ignorance, income and resource poverty, voicelessness, isolation, among others. The development imaginary is localized and global. As I talked to people about their developmental aspirations, they spoke about their personal and local shortcomings (lack of development), and about what they hoped for, clean potable water, available and affordable healthcare and schools, paved roads, electricity, nice restaurants, and even skyscrapers! The latter items are clearly more associated with urbanization and globalization.

From talking to people in different contexts of development, (Makuyu, Yatta, Ahero and Machakos), it occurred to me that 'developments' would be a more apt way to describe their quests. Each context faced different environmental or other constraints; therefore, the solutions sought and applied would be different. They all embraced the poverty identity and saw 'development' as the way out of being poor.

To achieve the goals of development, governments and other players engage in a combination of planning, persuading, coercing, explaining, implementing, evaluating, altering course and so forth. Persuasion is a key component of this process because the buy-in of all the players is essential (although unnecessary where coercion is involved). Persuasion, however, does not happen in a vacuum; it is undergirded by access to information, ability to understand the information, the cost of engaging, cultural perceptions of the intervention, belief systems, values, norms and so forth. I want to examine how faith elements inform the practice of development. Specifically, I want to highlight the interplay of these factors as I have observed them in action in the Kenyan context of my research.

Makuyu, the Slumbering Giant that Never Wakes

Even though the setting is Kenya, this discourse will be informed by observations and contributions from all over the globe, because at any rate, the idea of development, as a process, can be (and has been) applied to nearly *every* social system and *every* social agent, including the human self.[215] The location is rural Kenya in a community about an hour north of Nairobi, the capital city. Makuyu[216], is a farming community combining subsistent farming with agribusiness in animal husbandry as well as growing crops exclusively for the export market (French beans, bitter gourds, etc.). A major north-south highway goes through Makuyu and Thika, one-time Kenya's largest manufacturing city, lies about 15 miles south of Makuyu. Makuyu's position relative to both Nairobi and

[215] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 1.
[216] Makuyu was the primary setting and origin of my data collection; however, I did collect data from other places in the country to add texture and comparative substance to the totality of the research.

Thika is significant because both cities are decades ahead of Makuyu in terms of 'development' despite Makuyu's relative proximity to the cities. Additionally, Makuyu is home to one of the world's largest agricultural conglomerates, Del Monte, yet fruits of its enormous financial success and those of the two cities have not effectively spilled over into Makuyu which appears like it is trapped in the past century. A case in point is the access road from the main South-North highway into the town of Makuyu. For as long as I can remember, the three-mile stretch has been pothole-ridden and quite uncomfortable to drive on. At the same time, the main highway has been resurfaced and expanded many times over. This stretch of road is akin to the blight that Makuyu is in comparison to Thika and Nairobi.

While the state of the access road is by no means the main indicator for development or its absence, it certainly is symptomatic of a situation that is dire. I have been part of numerous conversations with different stakeholders (leaders and ordinary citizens) who unanimously decry the condition of the road and bemoan the fact that it is an impediment to their ultimate development. They cite the road as a turn-off to would-be investors and a barrier that keeps them 'hidden' from view. In a word, 'developing' the road would without a doubt lead to their own development. A good all-weather road in this case is valuable to the community not least in the ways that the community understands and sees itself as getting better. The road's sorry state mirrors the people's feelings about their town and themselves.

In the same way that this dilapidated road stands out as a feature of Makuyu, the abundance of churches and a solitary mosque bespeak the religious environment of the

community. Within a five-mile radius, I counted at least twelve churches and a mosque. This is significant because houses of worship are important locations for organizing and sharing of aspirational messages and development is clearly aspirational. The abundance of churches communicates that the community takes its practice of faith and religion seriously despite the apparent neglect symbolized by the bad road. In fact, a further exploration of these places of worship confirmed for me that they were avenues for development ideas by connecting religion and the development enterprise because, "Religion provides a unique opportunity to mobilize resources for promoting development outcomes like poverty reduction, improved health and education."[217] Several of my own meetings took place in these churches and all the leaders that helped me were directly linked to one or more churches in leadership roles there. One of the Catholic churches (Don Bosco Catholic Church, part of the Don Bosco Development Outreach Network of the Salesian order[218]) is also the venue for a polytechnic that equips young men and women with valuable life skills (carpentry, metalwork, tailoring, etc.) alongside religious instruction. In this case, the development activities of the religious community were not add-ons, but a significant part of how this religious community understood itself and its role in the wider community.[219] Many other churches that I visited were sites of some development undertaking or provided a location for a development group to meet and chart its course, e.g., the Emmanuel Youth Group. Places of worship, as the above examples illustrate, are imbued with community values, not the

[217] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 15.
[218] "About Us | Don Bosco Parish Community - Makuyu, Kenya," accessed May 11, 2020, https://dbparishmakuyu.wordpress.com/about/.
[219] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 73.

least of which is the sense of community threaded together with common aspirations and shared sense of destiny. I also observed churches to be embodiments of the functional morality of their communities i.e., churches were held in high esteem as the places where all that is good was demonstrated. In a sense, these churches were not simply places where the local congregants gathered for common worship, but reservoirs of social capital for the same community.

Culture: Values and Practices

'Culture' is a contested term. For example, when we talk about the American culture as distinctly different from the Kenyan culture, what exactly are we saying? Or when we say that one culture is better than another, often what is implied is that one or two aspects of the preferred culture is judged to be better than its counterpart. It is even murkier when one person or group identifies him/herself or itself as lacking a culture. Ludicrous as this may sound, it has currency in our common parlance. When employed in this latter fashion, culture usually means an exoticized aspect (food, ritual, symbol, etc.) that is held in prominence over other aspects that have been normed. Despite the definitional challenges it shares with development, culture is knowable as the "totality of a people's way of life."[220] As a phenomenon[221], it is knowable from its constituent parts like language, religion, art, rituals, and symbols.

My intention here is not to settle the question of defining culture, but to lay down some markers that will help in the understanding of culture in its complexity and totality

[220] Kalu, *African Christianity*, 451.
[221] Gyekye, *Philosophy Culture and Vision*, 29.

whose isolation of parts cannot do justice. I will borrow from the language of cultural anthropologists like Gertz and organizational theorists like Hofstede, among others. For a start, culture is always and everywhere a collective phenomenon because, at the very least, it is partly shared with a group of people who live or lived in the same social environment (village, city, country, community, etc.) where it is acquired or learned.[222] The resultant social reality consists of socially produced and objectified practices that are imbued with particular meaning.[223] Because of its construction and particularistic orientation, culture is also by nature a comparative reality; it is always *different* from or *similar* to another culture even if only by degree. Language, customs, celebrations and so forth are some of the more defining cultural markers. Anthropologist Michael Rynkiewich sums culture neatly as "…more or less integrated system of knowledge, values and feelings that people use to define their reality (worldview), interpret their experiences, and generate appropriate strategies for living…"[224] This is how I will use the term moving forward.

In Makuyu specifically, I observed the norming of the exclusive use of Kikuyu as the language of conducting meetings (this in spite of Swahili being the national language and the presence of non-Kikuyu speakers as members of the community), the taking off of hats in meetings where an administrative leader e.g., the chief was present, women and men seating separately even where a married couple attended together, all women wearing dresses and no long pants, etc. I highlight these things because they help in

[222] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 6.
[223] Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 6.
[224] Rynkiewich, *Soul, Self, and Society*, 19.

forming a mold though which understanding the people of Makuyu is facilitated. The people's well-being, which is an end for development, is best served when we acknowledge that their "…social traditions, hospitality, reciprocity, rituals, and festivals…"[225] are integral to how they see themselves as humans.

The people of Makuyu are predominantly Kikuyu but border the Kamba to the east. There is a sprinkling of other ethnicities because of Makuyu's proximity to the major metropolis of Thika but also the presence of large-scale plantations that are always in need of manual laborers. The two communities have been in close contact for decades and it is not uncommon to see them speaking both languages and intermarrying. Kambas and Kikuyus do in fact belong the larger Bantu[226] language group. Despite these clear similarities, the Kamba show a particular affection for yellow while their Kikuyu neighbors prefer bright bluish and reddish hues. Legend has it that the Kamba's affinity for yellow has its genesis in yellow maize that the government and development agencies have often doled to famine-stricken areas, but it is quite clear that the Kamba love yellow.

A majority of Makuyu residents are peasant farmers whose way of life is also intricately connected to the influences of large-scale coffee and pineapple farming. Del Monte and Kakuzi, two large-scale farming giants, employ many people from Makuyu as well as other communities, a reality that fosters a communitarian attitude.

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[225] Clarke, *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*, 6.

[226] "The Kamba Community of Kenya - National Museums of Kenya," Google Arts & Culture, accessed May 11, 2020, https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/the-kamba-community-of-kenya/GwJinBc0pHdLIA.

Makuyu people are religiously diverse, tolerant, and very hospitable. These facts are borne out by the large number of churches, denominations, and ethnicity-specific affiliations to certain denominations (Luo community with the Legio Maria, the Kisii with Seventh Day Adventist, Kikuyu with the Anglican and Catholic, etc.). The presence of a mosque of a fairly large size also indicates another level of religious diversity and tolerance.

Culture is complex and multilayered and comprises a system through which we give meaning to our world. As revered anthropologist Clifford Geertz observes, we are compelled to impose meaning on our experiences without which we would lose the ability to understand the experiences and impose order in our world the result of which would be chaos.[227] For example, replacing classroom chairs with bar stools and re-ordering them away from an orientation that directs the attention of students towards the center, teacher, could be very unsettling. He continues to observe that humans are "incomplete or unfinished animals who complete themselves through culture"[228]. The culture is not general but specific like Balinese, American, etc. This way, we can think of and conceptualize the Balinese as a coherent unit because, culture as a shared system of meanings,[229] 'equalizes' everything into a commonality called 'Balinese'. We can then say that, because of sharing the same culture, the Balinese view the world the same way and Americans view the world the same way. These observations are very generalistic, which is an element of culture, but do carry some truth. Makuyu is deeply infused with

[227] Robbins, *Cengage Advantage Books*, 6.
[228] Robbins, 6.
[229] Charles Hampden-Turner and Fons Trompenaars, *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business*, 2nd ed. (McGraw-Hill, 1997), 13.

religionism as borne out by the multiplicity of worship places, the loud blaring of religious programming by vernacular stations[230], the prevalence of god-speak in popular parlance and the prominence of religious symbolism even in political/administrative meetings[231]. It was also quite common for Makuyu residents to eat together at these gatherings in ways akin to how renowned religion sociologist Robert Wuthnow characterized thus, "…a full stomach and a shared table dwell close to the heart and hearth of religious imagery, liturgy and practice".[232] They in fact described these meals as breaking bread, borrowing heavily from the language of communion.

What is true of culture also is that all human beings experience specific life events like birth, death, the quest for food, water, and shelter, the good life as well as the appropriate rules for courtship, child rearing, procedures for exchanging goods, etc. The difference is that, from society to society, the meanings people give to such events vary.[233] These differences are also observable in the different layers of the culture onion[234] from the clearly visible like skyscrapers, leisure parks, dilapidated roads and so on which are pointers to the deeper 'values and norms' that are directly unseen like upward mobility, justice, fairness, etc. These deeper elements are not arbitrary but informed by even deeper more powerful forces like belief systems or an 'acceptance' of the impermeability of structural impediments. Let me expound.

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[230] Inooro and Kameme FM stations are immensely popular and have many dedicated gospel program hours.
[231] All political and administrative gatherings I attended began with scripture reading and/prayers from clergy.
[232] Hefferan, *Twinning Faith and Development*, 120.
[233] Robbins, *Cengage Advantage Books*, 4.
[234] Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, *Riding the Waves of Culture*, 6.

Although these are just the musings of a keen observer of Makuyu, I can say that the people have learned to live with a terrible road, a collapsed hospital, and isolation[235]. It appears to me that "tranquility and peacefulness"[236] are tough choices that Makuyu residents have made, even when their poverty has not changed while their neighbors appear to be prospering.

In neighboring Yatta, I observed how aspirations for upward mobility and material well-being were tempered by strong beliefs in the power of witchcraft to scuttle and even doom such aspirations, and how taboos like prohibition against eating dog meat (even as a last result before death by starvation) colored the practice of development.[237]Here, like Makuyu, I concur with Hefferan that perhaps the practice of development has diverted the attention of poverty eradication from the more intractable structural features (power domination, global wealth disparities, structural inequalities, etc.) to the more technical, and hence quantifiable, features like reducing disease, building roads, sinking boreholes, etc.[238]

Aside from its many layers, culture also manifests itself in different levels with the national and global levels being the highest. Other levels may include corporate and professional with each level displaying unique characteristics corresponding to attendant social environments. These characteristics show up in the form of symbols, heroes,

[235] As a child, I remember coming to the hospital in Makuyu many times following serious bouts of malaria. Both the hospital and the road are in much worse shape now; the potholes are bigger, and the hospital is overgrown with weeds and the roofs are collapsing in some building.
[236] Clarke, *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*, 6.
[237] Bishop Masika's powerful impact in Yatta is well chronicled in the Operation Mwolyo Out (OMO) which was a scathing repudiation of the stranglehold that witchcraft had put on people's imagination about getting out poverty and starvation that had forced people to break taboo and eat dog meat.
[238] Hefferan, *Twinning Faith and Development*, 175.

rituals, and values with symbols being the most superficial[239] and values being the deepest manifestation.[240] Symbols (words, gestures or objects) carry meanings in particular cultural contexts understood only by those who share the culture. Similarly, rituals (collective activities that are technically superfluous to reach desired ends but that, within a culture, are deemed essential[241]), are carried out for their own sake e.g., ways of greeting each other (double hug or the triple kiss on the cheeks, for example) or avoiding eye contact with elders. This display of rituals was evident at different times during this study. The same individuals with membership in different groups practiced different rituals and performed different roles as situations demanded. Women who could not be caught with their heads uncovered when the chief or priest was near, had a playful jolly demeanor with hair unrestrained and uncovered when working with peers on a project. Women who showed serious dexterity at leading by sharing the Word and teaching on it at gatherings that had a younger cohort deferred to elder men when the cohort was older. None of the women wore long pants.

Values, which are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others[242], deal with pairings such as evil/good, proper/taboo, clean/unclean, permitted/forbidden, etc. Values are essential to the moral grounding of a society. I will return to this section later while discussing the role of values in social life. Because this study is about development and values, I will note that the content *of* development (skills, knowledge, and technical expertise) is amoral and politically neutral, and is

[239] Superficial here means visible, obvious, and not meaningless.
[240] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 7.
[241] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, 8.
[242] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, 9.

distinguishable from the motives for the ethics and values to be involved *in* development[243]. For example, the development enterprise is a critical employer in rural communities that often lag their urban counterparts thereby providing lifelines to individuals and communities. Work is valued. Those who can work and pursue careers as development experts should be lauded the same way as others who would pursue other worthwhile careers.

Values guide behavior in a desired direction without determining it; they are general, not specific, universal[244] and applicable to all nature and serve as qualifications of norms- the rules through which we try to implement values.[245] Below is a look of how the values that emanate from or reinforce spiritual practices (stewardship, contemplation, perseverance, worship, hospitality, volunteering, giving, etc.) may become normalized in the larger developmental discourse and practice.

Values and Practices

Development, ambiguous as it may sound, is in certain instances understood as a process and in others as a goal. Either understanding is undergirded by certain practices which afford it the ability to be knowable; when treated as 'a particular type of a social change process, quantitative indicators are used'[246] (income, productivity, output, literacy rates, etc.), as goal, it evokes an 'image of life deemed qualitatively better than its opposite- underdevelopment'[247]. In the second instance, qualitative indicators may be

[243] Thomas, *Global Resurgence of Religion & the Transform of International Relations* (Palgrave Macmilan, Paperback, 2005), 230.
[244] Universal here means, not that all people agree, but that all people have reason to agree.
[245] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 171.
[246] Goulet, *The Cruel Choice*, 85.
[247] Goulet, 85.

more apt (a greater voice in major societal decisions, more equity in gender or ethnic representation in government, a fairer shake in the justice system, etc.). In many cases, both views (as process and as goal) operate simultaneously.

Dominant Assumptions: how Makuyu Residents think about what Development is

In almost every conversation I had with my research subjects, they spoke about their lack of development (no electricity, piped water, etc.) and compared themselves with other places that were recipients of a particular intervention that had drastically changed the lives of the residents. This is to say that they already conceptualized and understood 'development' to mean certain concrete things. For example, Kitini residents sent some of their representatives to Kitui to learn how they could import the sand-dam technologies to Makuyu. In matters of water harvesting and conservation, Makuyu residents saw themselves as less developed than their Kitui counterparts. Although these conversations bespoke of an overtly better economic well-being, one could not miss the nuances that were corollaries to that well-being: other aspects of life (education, health, nutrition, etc.) that would inevitably be lifted by the rising tide of more income. With the success of the proposed interventions, Makuyu residents felt that they would steadily be marching towards what they conceived as a goal of their development while simultaneously reducing underdevelopment in the areas of health, water, sanitation, and others. As renowned African philosopher Gyekye observes, the concept of development has itself acquired significant importance around the world which has in turn given it a special moral quality; it has become a good thing worthy of our pursuit[248]. Makuyu

[248] Gyekye, *Philosophy Culture and Vision*, 30.

residents viewed development as a moral necessity and a duty that the government had neglected.

Religion as an Animator of Development

Religion, like development is an abstract concept and this abstractness is deepened by the "immense variety of rituals, symbols, practices, dogmas, experiences…"[249], etc. that surround the phenomenon. Here, I want to illustrate the link between religion and development. In order to do this, I will adapt the view that religion "expands the visible present in order to endow it with the force of non-visible realities…"[250] by doing these three things: inspiring (giving orientation when choices have to be made), legitimizing (once choices are made), and empowering (carrying on with the choices made).[251]Religion and development are both formidable social change forces- for good or evil- as shown by the re-shaping of the world following the horrific September 11, 2001 terror attacks in New York characterized by anti-Islam fervor, and the sad fact of the economic states of sub-Saharan nations who have been left behind by the development train, respectively.

Similarities between the two concepts do not end there. As earlier noted, development has become a moral pursuit (Gyekye), so both religion and development are interconnected moral systems[252]. At an even closer level, both behave in some eerily similar ways: they are conversionist, can have cultish following (a whole development

[249] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 102.
[250] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, 103.
[251] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, 103.
[252] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, 122.

industrial complex exists globally), are largely voluntary (except where national or other decrees coerce it), are salvific in character (offer paths to different kinds of redemption), have deeply embedded ideologies, foster collective identities, are closely intertwined- willingly or otherwise- with political realities, etc.

The behavior patterns of individuals or groups engaged in development are significant because their values and practices, religious or otherwise, 'influence their orientation'[253] to developmental pursuits like increasing savings, technological adoption, types of labor market participation (like working in a beer factory), education, engaging in physical labor on Sabbath and other economic activities. This orientation may also become a 'source of focus of efforts to resist development'[254] as was the case in one of the reports[255] in my research, as a 'positive impulse for development'[256] and so forth. People are motivated by different things to work in development and one of those things is religion and faith which play a pivotal role in the formation and sustaining of people's values. Concurrently, organizations that derive their inspiration and guidance[257] from the teachings and principles of the faith conduct their affairs in accordance with those principles. For example, I observed ADS staff set aside doctrinal differences as Roman Catholics to work in an Anglican organization because their concern for the poor was greater than the doctrinal differences. In another instance, the Catholic practice of passing *mwaki* (fire) was common and well-practiced even in non-Catholic homes. *Mwaki*, as I remember it, is the practice of rotational home visits to, usually, members of the same

[253] Jameson, *Religious Values and Development*, 476.
[254] Jameson, 476.
[255] A group of local farmers resisted efforts to adopt no-till methods because of fear of witchcraft.
[256] Jameson, *Religious Values and Development*, 476.
[257] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 4.

Catholic community to convey prayers, communion, and care to each other. It is largely a lay-led endeavor that I found had seeped into other denominations.

Practices reinforce values (*mwaki* reinforces solidarity and faith); they are the visible manifestations of the motivation for acting in one way and not another. Similarly, practices shape belief, and "beliefs themselves are often about religious practices"[258]. For example, the practice of no-till farming (farming God's way in ADC parlance) shaped the belief that God blessed those who farmed this way. Comparatively, there was evidentiary proof of better yields for those who practiced no-till against those who did not, even on the same piece of land[259]. In development, people are drawn to participate for a variety of reasons, but for this study, the focus was on those whose motivation to work in development is religious. Specifically, it is about people working in, with and for organizations inspired and guided by the teachings and principles of the Christian faith[260]. Indeed, I witnessed many development participants who remained because of religion/religious practices and some who converted to faith because of participating in a development group that emphasized its faith orientation. The passing of *mwaki* became an integral part of the development groups' core identity; in other words, a formerly religious-only practice became co-opted into a developmental practice as a demonstration of care and togetherness.

[258] Hill and Hood, *Measures of Religiosity / Edited by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr*, 9.
[259] Tarcisius, one of the research participants, practiced no-till farming while his wife continued to till. They separated their harvests, and it was clear that the heads of maize from his part of the farm were bigger than those from her side.
[260] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 4.

Christianity is a strong foundation and source for the moral orientation of a vast number of people in many societies. Because it is a relational faith, Christianity acknowledges that to live well is to do so in relationship that spans two dimensions; a vertical dimension directed towards God and a horizontal dimension that is directed towards neighbor[261]. The confluence of religion and development reveals the 'ambition and idealism'[262] that are the hallmarks of development, but which are tempered by the religious sanctions that limit the intrusion of technology, environmental degradation, prejudice, greed, power, etc. As a constitutive part of people's well-being, religion provides a unique opportunity to mobilize resources for realizing development outcomes[263] like poverty reduction (and its accompanying features of exclusion, ridicule, stigma, early death, etc.[264]), better health and education for all children. In this sense, religion is instrumental to the achievement of developmental goals. The practices employed to achieve these goals are weighed against the 'religious appropriateness' of the context. This will become clearer when I focus on the source of values because religion is one source.

Religion and organizations founded with religious motivations have a lot of credibility in societies. Usually, people do not have a problem volunteering their time and other resources in the service of religious institutions or in endeavors championed by those institutions. This credibility is partly because the organizations have a grounded presence in the communities and are therefore known quantities, but also because

[261] Michael Banner, *Christian Ethics: A Brief History*, 1 edition (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 12.
[262] Calderisi, *Earthly Mission*, 2.
[263] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 28.
[264] Alkire, *What Can One Person Do?* 97.

religious teachings are for many the foundations of moral behavior as well as vehicles through which people pay penitence for their wayward ways. Christian religious teachings are replete with admonitions that not only shape the attitudes towards work and laziness but that cultivate the values associated with gainful work. In other words, religion is 'positively valued as a way of disciplining the soul and using god's gifts in service to fellow humans'[265]. Religious organizations' engagement with development do have significant bearings on individual behavior that pours over into their attitudes about work, money, technology, health and education that also affects how they serve, give, create and lead.[266] In fact, people often observe that their system of values is influenced by their religious faith because "most religious traditions not only prescribe a value system, but provide a set of guidelines for personal character development also."[267] For example, Apostle Paul, in his letter to the church in Galatia, describes the fruit of the spirit as a lifestyle marked by qualities like joy, peace, love, etc. (Galatians 5: 22-23).

Sources of Values

Values, defined as broad tendencies to prefer certain states, must emanate from somewhere. It also follows that there are deliberate efforts to enshrine them and to pass them along to sustain the 'goodness' or desirability of the conditions they create. This section explores the source of values.

For most societies, values are intrinsically connected to morality-right behavior, and set off against the behavior that the society sanctions as immoral. For example,

[265] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 32.
[266] Alkire, *What Can One Person Do?* 90.
[267] Hill and Hood, *Measures of Religiosity / Edited by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr*, 229.

preservation of human life is a universal basic value[268] (although exceptions like ritual infanticide albeit with serious strictures may exist). Similarly, sexual purity before marriage is almost universally lauded as moral while promiscuity, before or even in marriage, is frowned upon as immoral[269]. It is also important to note that the prevailing circumstances in the larger society do bear significantly in the formation and perpetuation of values. For example, the near elimination of infanticide or the sharp reduction of female circumcision the world over are testaments to how bigger and bigger voices against the practices (influenced by any number of forces like religious institutions or the prevalence of more and more pro-girlchild advocacy) can and have shaped values.

The Market as a Source of Values

The predominant world system of our time is the market economy better known as capitalism. The idea that the whole world is like a giant market where people provide goods and services for sale to those who need and want them is inarguable, even for a handful of nations (Cuba, North Korea, China, Laos, and Vietnam)[270] that still ideologically adhere to capitalism's opposite; communism/socialism. These two systems that shape how nations relate with each other, and their citizens with their counterparts, do impact significantly, the ways about how values are formed, sustained, and even exchanged. Development, in all its dominant assumptions, fits quite well in this large

[268] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 172.
[269] This may indeed be a minority view in the US or the larger Western world where sexual freedoms and identities may be more valued.
[270] China and Vietnam are increasingly exceptions to this. China has embraced capitalism in its markets while retaining a Communist way of governing and control. Vietnam has also been increasingly opening up to the global market economy.

discourse. Like any good product or service, development has its own cadre of experts, products, service providers and maintainers.

Capitalism, as championed by the West and spread throughout the world, arose out of specific contexts; the Protestant movements and the attendant ethics of the seventeenth century. As such, it follows that capitalism received its initial support and credence from a religious movement. This leads me to the conclusion, and indeed that of many scholars, that religion and religious teachings are an important source of values. Religion indeed has an "intrinsic value as part of people's well-being"[271] in many parts of the world where it continues to "inspire welfare and humanitarian work"[272]. In fact, religious communities like churches and para-church organizations are critical players in shaping societies. As such, they can no longer be seen or regarded as merely passive non-actors in "macro-sociological processes but as active agents"[273] of social change. Popular development, properly understood, is deeply indebted to a value system and aspirations of the West, even allowing for local flavors, and therefore oozes of not dissimilar values. Some of these are egalitarianism, equality, justice (judicial, gender, environmental, etc.), fairness, democracy and so forth. While these values are universal, the West has been more successful in franchising them than most of the rest of the world.

Capitalism, or even communism, is not a value-free enterprise. Because of space limitations here, I will not fully go into the debate of the merits or demerits of capitalism as system except to mention that, as dominant way of determining the affairs of the world

[271] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 3.
[272] Deneulin and Bano, 15.
[273] Detlef Pollack and Daniel V. A. Olson, eds., *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 1 edition (Routledge, 2012), 11.

by treating it as a giant market, it produces a lot of winners and losers. Producing winners and losers essentially creates oppressive outcomes for the losers which impede their actualization. The market is supposed to be value-neutral, but its consequences rarely are. The "causal mechanisms" inlaid in a market economy do exert their influence on real human lives in ways that, to cite an extreme example, shift most of any new wealth created towards a small group of people who own the means of production (capital) and away from the producers of that wealth, the workers. The result is an ever-widening gap between the super-rich and burgeoning poor. Many people in Makuyu spoke about these very things; wealth and resource extraction, using their cheap labor in the plantations, left Makuyu impoverished and undeveloped. While the absentee plantation owners became fabulously wealthy with a few local cronies, most of the people traded their best working years for a pittance. In this example, development produced negative values of despondency that itself led to alcoholism, family fracture as some members were forced to leave in search of jobs, and so on.

Religion as a Source of Development Values

Many development interventions are geared towards helping the poor participate more fully by reaping greater benefits from the market economy. Extreme poverty which results from the inability to fully participate in, or from being excluded from reaping the benefits of such an economy denies poor people the "outward goods which accord with their dignity"[274] as humans. On the other hand, religions have a storied history of being dignity-affirming especially the dignity of the forgotten, downtrodden, etc. In this regard,

[274] Alkire, *What Can One Person Do?* 91.

religion becomes a critical source of values especially in its efforts against poverty's companions of "exclusion, ridicule, stigma, coercion, or early death."[275] Religious teachings are obviously replete with lessons that explicitly prescribe specific values e.g., among the Ten Commandments, the Bible prohibits murder, adultery, covetousness among other undesirable behaviors. Similar sanctions are present in Islam as well as in other religious traditions. Further, religious teachings encourage moral values such as "sobriety, prompt payment, and avoidance of criminal activity."[276]

Sociality as a Source of Values

Another obvious source of values is the fabric of social life. Clearly, people who live in community have to come up with rules of the road to moderate the shared life. Rules of what constitutes good or acceptable behavior also spell out or intimate the penalties for non-compliance. For example, the value of respecting elders and treating everyone who is one's parents age or older like one's parent in many African societies is supported by the different punishments meted out for showing disrespect. If we accept values to be the "theoretical concepts that guide behavior in a desired direction"[277], we must conclude that the society that determines what course to pursue also establishes the 'markers' of what is proper, good, and so on. These markers often take the form of norms (rules of socialized behavior to implement values[278]). Driving on the left side of the road in Kenya is a norm in the service of order, a value important in matters of traffic.

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[275] Alkire, 97.
[276] Dawid J. Venter, *Engaging Modernity: Methods and Cases for Studying African Independent Churches in South Africa* (Praeger, 2004), 83.
[277] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 171.
[278] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, 174.

Similarly, when my grandfather would spit on his bare chest when seeing me off to school, I understood the gesture to mean he was conferring a blessing on me for my well-being. Offering and receiving blessings are highly valued.

On many occasions during data collection, I observed the delicate but well-rehearsed dance around norms and values. Twice, I witnessed the Kikuyu concept of *gucakaya*-literally means condoling but is more than the offering of sympathies for a departed relative. The ritual of visiting the deceased's family nightly until burial and making both monetary and material contributions is expected lest one gets shunned and isolated. Even where no tangible contributions are possible, one's presence in those gatherings builds solidarity with the bereaved and significantly adds to one's social capital and standing in the community. The same goes for *mwaki* and participating in work on demonstration farms. Women and men still sat separately, and men spoke before women; boys sat with men and girls with the women. The patriarchal order was in display but showing signs of fatigue on the edges quite unnoticeable to the untrained eye. For example, women were increasingly offering and leading devotionals, spouses were openly embracing opposing developmental interventions[279] and women were learning to slaughter animals apart from chicken (customarily, Kikuyu women were not allowed to slaughter animals)[280].

The process of socialization that starts in childhood geared towards preparing children to become responsible citizens of their societies and continues through a person's whole life is the vehicle through which the values deemed important for

[279] Irungu's wife refused to adopt FMGW while Irungu was the local champion farmer.
[280] Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, Vintage Books edition (New York: Vintage, 1962), 62–63.

transmittal and perpetuation are carried forward. Traditional folk wisdom, symbols and rituals are some of the ways through which the values are communicated to a society's newest members and inculcated to all others. Of note too is the fact that values, in their very nature being relational i.e., "defined in terms of human relations"[281], are at once always there yet not static. The norms on the other hand "have to be formulated explicitly under specific conditions" and are therefore relatively more volatile. The 'allowing' of women to slaughter animals is one of those norms that is changing because it makes sense. It would be futile to wait for the husband to come home from the city to slaughter a rabbit so his family can enjoy a nutritious meal erstwhile unavailable before the introduction of rabbit farming. In a nutshell, some values are inherited and passed along from generation to generation while others are "adopted and created"[282] *anew* (my emphasis). As culture evolves and changes because of encountering influences from inside and outside, so do the values that are embedded in it.

Development Writ-large as a Source of Values

In the context of international development that this dissertation is addressing, another source of values is the development world itself. As a comparative undertaking, the endeavor of development, whether seen as a goal or a process, implies a hierarchy that has to be at some level about values or certain desired states/conditions. The journey (process) towards (goal) development is imbued with value assessments. Enabling environments that allow the girl-child to have the same opportunities in education as the boy-child is an undertaking about values. In the same way, ensuring the availability of

[281] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 174.
[282] Deborah Eade, ed., *Development and Culture*, 1st edition (Oxford: Kumarian Press, 2002), 10.

clean potable water to guard against water-borne diseases is also about life-sustaining values. Development then becomes a 'social imaginary'[283], "…a lens through which societies and individuals have come to define themselves and others."[284]

The concept of development connotes a continuum that places some countries on the 'developed' end, usually from the West, and the 'undeveloped' or underdeveloped countries from the rest of the world. The bulk of the latter are found in the Global South (Asia and Africa mostly) but there is a whole host of countries between the two ends all at different stages of development. If we accept that this placement of the countries on the continuum is itself an exercise in comparison, it follows that the assumption that those nations on the developed side are more desirable and offer a 'better' quality of life for their citizens than those on the opposite end is implied.

Since the emergence of the theories of development in the 1950s, its promulgators placed nations on this continuum categorizing some nations as traditional and others as modern with the clear intention of transforming the traditional nations towards modernization.[285] With the emphasis placed on helping the poor (traditional) nations catch up with the developed ones, the values of the developed nations were clearly sold as better than those of traditional nations. The dominance of the developed world on the global arena has not relented even as many erstwhile poor nations have achieved great economic growth to join the coveted club of the developed nations (Malaysia, Korea,

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[283] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Reprint Edition (Cambridge (Mass.); London (England): Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 2018), 171–72.
[284] Rosie Fyfe, "Liturgies of Development:" *Christian Relief, Development, and Advocacy: The Journal of the Accord Network* 2, no. 1 (July 31, 2020): 14.
[285] José C. M. van Santen, ed., *Development in Place: Perspectives and Challenges*, Aksant Imprint edition (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 15.

etc.), and neither have the values they espouse. In fact, the new entrants into the club have to a large extent incorporated those values into their own national fabric. Consequently, developing nations have been left with little choice than to acquiesce if they hope to be integrated into the mainstream. The holdouts like Cuba and North Korea continue to pay a heavy price for staying out.

Because a great proportion of development funding and personnel comes from the developed world, it is not hard to see how the values of their home countries and sending/funding organizations would influence the process as well as the goals of development. Indeed, many observers have noted that "the imposition of the cultural norms of the development institutions and their agents"[286] have been articulated as if they bore some kind of "universal validity"[287]. It is indeed true that much of the development ambition is to reproduce in, say Kenya, the kinds of material and social progress of any given Western nation like the US or Canada. While there is nothing improper or wrong, at least on face values, of development that progresses along this trajectory, my concern here is merely to observe that the values implicit in any development undertaking reflect on the origins of its proponents. The economistic emphases of most development undertakings are obviously the tell-tale signs of the influences of the Enlightenment age and the corresponding ideas of the superiority of "Western socio-economic and political development"[288]. These ideas are rampant in the development industrial complex comprising of donor governments, multilateral global organizations (the World Bank, the

[286] Eade, *Development and Culture*, 2.
[287] Eade, 2.
[288] Eade, 25.

United Nations, and its affiliate organizations, etc.), donor government organizations (USAID, GTZ, JICA, etc.), the experts (both Western and local) and even the locals themselves and their governments. In recent years, the Chinese government and people have taken significant roles in the development of African nations. In Kenya specifically, the Chinese government, corporations and people are involved in major national level development projects like Nairobi-Thika Superhighway and the Nairobi-Mombasa railway line. The infusion of technology, language, architecture, food, etc. from the Orient will obviously add to the cultural cocktail already in existence.

Popular Culture as a Source of Values

Another source of values is what I want to distinguish as the popular culture which manifests itself by way of television, the internet, movies, celebrity encounters, and radio to a lesser extent. The aspirational appeal of the images on television and other popular outlets of popular media is very potent. The influence of the popular media especially on the youth is hard to miss. In the time I was conducting field research for this study, it was not uncommon to encounter young people in churches adapting their singing to popular images and styles straight out of Hollywood. The gestures and items of fashion they chose to employ in their performances bespoke of a borrowing that is global.

The manner of dress and even hairstyles among the youth in Kenya are like what one would encounter in Chicago or Toronto. Similarly, the aspirations of their parents to furnish their homes with flat-screen TVs, microwave ovens and the occasional Christmas tree are all manifestations of a material culture heavily influenced by Western standards. On a lesser seemingly benign yet significant level, I observed a particular affiliation to

my manner of speech which some of my research participants compared to what they had seen on TV from American rappers. I disagreed with their observation but that is beside the point. They saw me as speaking with a 'twang', the slang for the American way of speaking. Many would indeed ask me to leave behind pieces of clothing and shoes that would certainly imbue them with a coveted element of Westernness. In my mind, these things had the cumulative effect of signaling a perceived superiority or desirability of items believed to have originated *not* from Kenya. There is indeed a booming business for people who frequently shuttle between Nairobi and many world cities-in the US and Europe in search of merchandise to cater to the affluent tastes of a growing middle class with an insatiable taste for things Western. In a sense, one of the influences of globalization (global travel) has occasioned great exchanges of elements of culture (clothes, artifacts, gadgets, etc.) which has the net effect of "making *more* places alike"[289] (italics my emphasis).

These elements of dress, style and mannerisms are clearly superficial, but they belie an attraction of a lifestyle of glamour or otherness. They are symbolic[290] of the values these people identify or want to identify with. The aspirations embodied in these symbols, to paraphrase James Ferguson, speak of a desire of their bearers to improve their way of life, their standing, and indeed their place in life.[291] In their totality, the flat-screen TVs, NBA-style sneakers, church-friendly rap, and others may not be anything by themselves, but they are indices of desired life goods that confer a certain concept of

[289] Pollack and Olson, *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 41.
[290] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 7.
[291] James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*, 1/29/06 edition (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press Books, 2006), 32.

worth which squarely falls in the realm of values. The symbols have both "discursive and non-discursive meanings"[292]. According to Bradshaw, the discursive symbols have meanings that are limited to the functional or cultural context of the symbol, for example, the TVs have a function of showing pictures. On the other hand, the non-discursive meanings extend beyond culture but may also have discursive meanings. The flat-screen TV is a status symbol of achievement which does not negate the functional purpose of providing an audio-visual experience.

Types of Values

As I have already observed above, religion, the fabric of social life, the world of development and popular culture are all sources of values. The values arising from each of these sources cannot of course be of equal weight or significance in people's lives. Equally important here is to understand that the source of values influences their receptivity and hence their applicability in people's lives. For example, for a great number of people, the choice of religiously inspired values is not a matter of unencumbered choice. In fact, these people are born into a religious community or raised up in one and the process of their socialization precludes what values are inculcated in them.[293] Certainly this is true of most Islamic societies and many Christian ones. Additionally, by the time the individuals are mature enough to exercise informed judgement in choosing an affiliation, they have "already invested significant resources"[294]

[292] Bruce Bradshaw and Paul Hiebert, *Change across Cultures: A Narrative Approach to Social Transformation* (Baker Academic, 2002), 222.
[293] Pollack and Olson, *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 11.
[294] Pollack and Olson, 12.

into the present membership that leaving would exert "enormous costs"[295] on them. This portion of the study will explore the types of values.

Because values give us the norms that help to moderate social behavior, it is true that certain values have universal appeal. The values of honesty, fairness, dignity of the person and of life, among others fall in this category. Oscar Salemink, et al, identify three basic broad classifications of values that are characterized by a "hierarchical and complex relationship."[296] The basic values identified are the preservation of the human species, enhancement of human capacity, and human identity. Denis Goulet offers a similar classification albeit worded a little differently. Instead of preservation, he speaks of "life-sustenance"[297] which he contrasts with "death control"[298]. The other value he identifies is esteem which mirrors the former classification's human identity. The third value is freedom ("an expanded range of choices…"[299]) which is like enhancing human capacity. The pursuit of these values is not bifurcated; all can be pursued simultaneously.

Outside of these broad classifications, it is also true that values can be further subdivided and classified into many other groupings. For example, political values are not the same as religious values, and economic values are different from sociological values. Further, we can classify values according to function. "Terminal values"[300] refer to desirable end-states like material comforts, freedom, or religious bliss. "Instrumental

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[295] Pollack and Olson, 12.
[296] Salemink, Harskamp, and Giri, *The Development of Religion/The Religion of Development*, 172.
[297] Goulet, *The Cruel Choice*, 88.
[298] Goulet, 88.
[299] Goulet, 91.
[300] Deborah Eade, *Debating Development: NGOs and the Future*, annotated edition (Oxford: Kumarian Press, 2001), 194.

values"[301], as the name implies, are the vehicles or the best ways to employ to achieve the desired end-states. It is also possible to group values according to how they relate to the person who shares them and his/her work i.e., they may be personal values[302] (like honesty and diligence), or they may be task-related[303] (like commitment to diversity in employment or exceeding sales targets).

My interest here is not to be lost in the classifications but to set up a framework that will allow me to focus and highlight what I observed in the interplay between persons who work in and for organizations in development (practitioners) and the beneficiaries of these organizations' interventions. Instructively, I will focus more on both personal and organizational values in this context because both sides are involved in bringing about some social change. Values are important in an undertaking like this because they "have a strong motivational component as well as cognitive, affective and behavioral components."[304] Development is about social change, a change that cannot necessarily happen, or least be sustained, without a cognitive 'acceptance' of its merit, a resonance with the desires of a community, or the matching actions to implement.

In order to achieve this purpose, of showing how values showed up in the practitioners-beneficiaries interaction, I will be guided by Milton Rokeach's treatise on human values, '*The Nature of Human Values*' that assumes that human values share these characteristics: [305]they are relatively small, all humans everywhere have the same values

[301] Eade, 194.
[302] Eade, 195.
[303] Eade, 195.
[304] Milton Rokeach, *Beliefs, Attitudes and Values: A Theory of Organization and Change*, Ex-library/underlining edition (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass Inc Pub, 1968), 157.
[305] Milton Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (New York; London: Free Pr, 1973), 3.

to different degrees, values are organized into value systems, human values trace their antecedents in culture, society and its institutions, and personality; and the consequences of human values are manifested in virtually all phenomena that social scientists might investigate. Whenever possible, I will color the interplay with inferences from the two broad classifications -Salemink and Goulet- above.

Hierarchically speaking, life-preserving values would be at the top of anyone's list followed by capacity-enhancing and at the bottom would be identity issues, according to Salemink. Goulet's classification would have the life-sustenance at the top followed by esteem values and freedom-related values at the bottom. In people's daily lives, there is obviously a similar prioritization, but the demarcations are blurred. This is what Salemink characterized as complex hierarchy above because people do not live their lives in a compartmentalized fashion. Indeed, all three levels are intricately integrated and that is why the consensus is for development to proceed holistically for it to be sustainable. Even where one group of people would benefit more from an approach that emphasized one set of values over another, or where one organization would rather focus on one aspect, the "practicalities of work and life are based on assimilated or 'integrated' values, and not on the ones to which a person or organization consciously aspires."[306]

For a start, most of the people that formed my study sample would be classified as poor, so clearly, they displayed a great desire to escape the grip of poverty most manifestly in the area of food security and access to clean drinking water. These manifestations of poverty are not new to these communities; in fact, clear inter-

[306] Eade, *Debating Development*, 173.

generational poverty was evident most strikingly in the diminishing sizes of family land available for food production, dilapidated housing structures, and the narratives of parents' aspirations for their children to do better than them in life. One of my more constant participants, Tarcisius, easily comes to mind. He shares his two-acre piece of land with his two adult sons, their wives, and their children. When you take out the area occupied by housing, what is left is inadequate to grow enough food crops to satisfy the needs of the extended family. In spite of these obvious challenges, I found his family to be overly generous and hospitable as well as being deeply engaged in numerous community activities (he was chairperson of at least 3 groups, was the de facto secretary for the local chief during his public meetings as well as being the choirmaster of the local Roman Catholic church). Every meeting and every meal we shared was preceded by prayer and often a popular chorus.

Quite clearly, the community and groups that Tarcisius represented are religious, engaged in their communities and concerned about poverty. Their concern for one another was plain to see; for example, I had to reschedule a planned meeting because an elderly lady had suddenly died the night before the meeting and the community needed to go condole with her family as well as start planning for her funeral. Planning and paying for the funeral are the duty of the community. Similarly, the funeral was a community-wide affair which I was asked to attend as well to show solidarity with my research participants as well as publicly demonstrating that I was one of them.

At once, all three dimensions of a culture[307]: the symbolic (values, symbols, religion, etc.), the societal (organizational patterns for family and community linkages and support, systems for decision-making, etc.), and the technological (skills, agriculture, expertise, cooking, etc.) were on full display here. Importantly, each activity was a testament of the value system of the community. From the spiritual values of solidarity, love, burden-sharing, to the political values of leadership, empathy and open-mindedness, the whole panoply of values was hard to miss. And because spirituality is integral to how this community understood the world and its place in it, participating in the condolences-related activities (being with the bereaved and contributing towards the funeral) and the funeral itself (making sure to scoop some dirt into the grave) is tightly woven into the cultural fabric and not optional. More importantly, it is taboo for the deceased's agemates to skip or not participate in the funeral. It is bad omen to sit out.

From just this example, we can see that the community has seamlessly integrated both instrumental and terminal values. On the one hand, standing with the bereaved is an instrumental value that also facilitates the attainment of, on the other hand, a terminal value; the peace of mind for not running afoul of a taboo and thereby warding off bad omen. From Rokeach's characterization of values, I do not think anyone could argue that these two -solidarity and peace of mind- are unique to this Makuyu community. In fact, they are universal and present in every society. What is different here is the tapestry that influences their activation; the cultural context, which it itself unique to this community. It is also true that this community, because of the sudden death of one of its members,

[307] Eade, *Development and Culture*, 10.

prioritized her send-off over any 'development' work that was underway. The shelving of development work does not mean that poverty eradication has less value than a decent funeral, it only means that, at that time, the latter had more significance. This apparent re-ordering is what Rokeach referenced with the consequences of human values affecting all strata of social life. James Ferguson has observed that modernity for Africans has always been about the past and present as well as up and down; "The aspiration to modernity is one to rise in the world in economic and political terms; to improve one's way of life, one's standing, one's place in the world…i.e., about material things and how to meet them."[308] I will add that African modernity is also future-directed especially as it regards the dead. As such, viewed against the backdrop of modernity, funerals are indeed development undertakings. I now turn my attention to what values do.

Functions of Values

Values are evaluative or judgement concepts. As Robin Williams notes, they serve as the "criteria, or standards in terms of which evaluations are made… Values-as-criterion is usually the more important usage for purposes of social scientific analysis."[309] Being honest is always set off against dishonesty and charity against misery, and in both instances, we are making an evaluation, comparatively, of behavior. Values are indeed the foundation upon which we act or do not act in one way or another in the world. in many cases, it is also true that one or more values may be in competition with one another in response to a particular situation. The act of choosing one alternative over another is itself an evaluative exercise that says that acting that way is "personally or

[308] Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 32.
[309] Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values*, 4.

socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence"[310]. The choices can indeed be paradoxical. Let me cite an example.

During research for this study, I encountered a dilemma situation: because of continued pressure to sub-divide family lands continually to cater for ever-growing families and their needs (for constructing homes and for farming), many of the study participants had been forced to lease land from absentee neighbors (town people who have bought land in the countryside but have no plans to cultivate it) to grow food for their growing families. The success of Farming God's Way (FGW) lies in the gradual and sequential conversion of the mulch into topsoil to 'recover' the soil back to what it might be if it was in an untilled forest. Many of the farmers I talked to were reluctant to treat their leased lands with the same care as the pieces they owned because they feared that the absentee landlords would want their land back once it was suitably fertile. The dilemma lay between the need for increased yields (that FGW principles promised if the land was treated as prescribed) and settling for poorer yields by not 'fertilizing' the leased land. While some farmers opted to work the leased land the same way they did the land they owned, the majority allowed their fear of being dispossessed triumph. In both cases, their values were clashing, and the eventual decision demonstrated the prioritization, in context, of deeply held values. Here, the values performed the role of discriminating one course of action against another. It is what Rokeach in his earlier book, *Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values*, described as 'one not being able to behave in a manner congruent with all *his* (sic) values'.[311]

[310] Rokeach, 5.
[311] Rokeach, *Beliefs, Attitudes and Values*, 161.

Closely tied to this function of discriminating between alternatives is the critical role of forming behavior. More specifically for this study, values are important in forming and growing Christians into maturity. As observed by Pollack and Olson, to be Christian is to know "certain things"[312] whose knowledge is largely imparted through formal instruction in the church, reading scriptures, singing hymns, reciting creeds, etc. and in the process, appropriate the values that correspond to a Christian personality. This appropriation is of course made more permanent and given a public aura through rituals like baptism and confirmation. The practices of giving testimony, reading scripture, singing hymns, attending mass, etc. were common when I was conducting field research. In fact, most of the participants identified themselves, up front, as Christian which set them apart from other people who did not identify as such.

Another function of values is related to their relationship with beliefs. In fact, values are often synonymized with beliefs. There are three types of beliefs as summarized by Rokeach[313]: 1. Descriptive or existential (capable of being true or false); 2. Evaluative (wherein the object of belief is judged to be good or bad); and 3. Prescriptive or proscriptive (wherein some means or end of action is judged to be desirable or undesirable). Values are beliefs of the third kind upon which humans act "by preference"[314]. In this sense, values function like beliefs, enabling people to make important decisions about truth, right and wrong, and the desirable against the undesirable. In one instance, there was a debate regarding why FGW had not taken hold

[312] Pollack and Olson, *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 57.
[313] Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values*, 7.
[314] Rokeach, 7.

in one area where witchcraft or belief in it was rampant. The professed Christians in the group tended to believe that witchcraft was unreal (not true) while those who did not profess the faith tended to believe, strongly, that witchcraft had cast an evil spell to the region rendering it unproductive or unsuitable for agriculture. The reluctance of the non-believers to be part of any effort to re-introduce FGW in the said area spoke of their belief that they could be harmed by the evil spirits associated with witchcraft while Christians believed that their faith was a strong enough deterrent against any ill effects of witchcraft.

Values act as "standards to guide behavior"[315] in a variety of ways: they lead us to take particular positions on social issues (like witchcraft), allow us to favor one political ideology over another or to ascertain if we are as moral or competent as others, and even to persuade (influence others about what beliefs, values, attitudes, etc. to challenge, to protest or to argue. These standards help us to find the balance between what is personally and socially unacceptable.

Value systems also help us to develop "general plans for conflict resolution and decision-making"[316]. When confronted with a situation like the one I described above regarding witchcraft, those involved could not react in a way that was compatible with all their values. Consequently, they had to resolve an internal conflict between competing interests of those who genuinely feared going anywhere near witchcraft and those who

[315] Rokeach, 13.
[316] Rokeach, 14.

believed to be beyond its harmful reach because of their faith, but yet remaining members of the same development group.

Finally, values perform an adjustive[317] function. Rokeach notes that certain values directly concern modes of behavior and end-states that are adjustment- or utilitarian-oriented, for example the desirability of compliance/obedience, getting along well with others, being polite, exercising self-control and so forth. All the community groups I worked with were duly registered with the relevant authorities and the members went to great lengths to getting along with each other.

As I have noted, values are multifaceted and have "cognitive, affective and behavioral components"[318] that affect our individual and private lives in profound ways. To have a value is to know right from wrong or what end-state to aim for. Similarly, values enable us to be emotionally invested in the choices we make or not make, and in a behavioral sense, these choices activate behavior in one direction or another. Societies rise and fall because of the value systems they espouse, for example, America is known worldwide as a beacon of democratic values while the hermit nation of North Korea is infamous for its repressive regime.

Conclusion

In this chapter I took a closer look, as an overview, of culture, but more closely, at values and practices in development. I observed that values and practices are constituent parts of culture, and that religion provides a foundation for values as do other aspects of

[317] Rokeach, 15.
[318] Rokeach, 7.

culture like social life and the corpus of development itself. These observations drew out some foundational literature on culture and religion, but also added the voices of the participants in the research. On the whole, religion and religious practices play an oversized role in development in organizing/gathering people, inspiring, instructing on morality and ethics, but also on ferreting out the attitudes- "…the evaluative reactions toward…" all of development or its pieces. The people of Makuyu are religious, tolerant, hardworking[319], pious, long-suffering, and prize solidarity and we-ness.

In the coming section, this study will pivot towards to the evaluative components of values and spirituality in development.

[319] Tarcisius' wife refused to adopt FGW even though he was a champion farmer, perhaps because she believed that the lesser labor-intensive way would not be viewed as 'hard' enough to befit what society expected of her. However, she stood, always, in contrarian solidarity with her husband, even when the fruits of her labor served only as bad examples.

Chapter 5

Evaluation

Towards the end of the data collecting phase of this study, I met with a community development group at Kitini. I grew up hearing of Kitini as a place where witchcraft was rampant and the cause of many fatal road accidents through the years. Kitini also sits on the border between the Murang'a and Machakos counties and is home to a sizeable man-made lake whose ownership is contested[320] by the two counties. Being in a semi-arid area, the waters of this lake are a valuable commodity with communities on either side seeking control and ownership. These issues were, as research interests, intriguing to me, not least in the ways that the communities navigated them and sought to eke out a living despite the differences, but how to come to grips with this world where competing spiritualities (Christianity and witchcraft-influenced lives) co-existed in the people who made up the group I was meeting with.

Upon arrival, I was welcomed by Pastor Njuguna, the chairperson of the group, outside his home on a cleared piece of land. He was alone with his young children who had helped to set up a few wooden folding chairs and a small table. These were reserved for the group leaders, Anglican Development Services (ADS), Hand-in-Hand (HIH) representatives, and me. Group members sat on the ground.

As members trickled in, women sat on one side, and men on the other. The women laid down *shukas* (popular pieces of cloth usually worn around the waist on top

[320] The lake was dug by Del Monte for use in irrigation but was turned over to the community before the new counties succeeded the old provincial system.

of regular dresses/skirts) and sat on them while the men simply sat on the bare ground or squatted for the entire meeting. The *shukas* had various inspirational messages, many of them religious, printed on them. Other religious symbolism was evident, like rosaries worn by both men and women, a cross and a clergy collar worn by the pastor. A Bible and a hymnal were also on the table. A few of the elderly people took snuff.

The meeting started with a prayer offered by one of the women, and this was followed by a scripture reading and short sermon by the pastor following a singing of the timeless hymn, *Amazing Grace*, in Kikuyu. A HIH representative presented on savings and reported on the group's loan repayments; no one was in default. This presentation was followed a report on a recent mission to Machakos to collect information on building sand dams and doing small-scale drip irrigation. Testimonies from individual members about how their lives had spiritually been transformed since becoming members of this group (in the planning for the meeting, I had told the pastor I would be interested in the subject) followed. In the interest of brevity, I will only highlight two testimonies:

Kabaka, an elderly man, looked weak and emaciated. In fact, he arrived for the meeting riding on a motorcycle and had to be helped off by two men. He was assisted to sit on the ground. He spoke about how, even in sickness and declining health, he would not miss the opportunity to 'rest and learn'. He felt it was his duty to meet with fellow believers because they were his family and strength. Having been abandoned by his own kin, Kabaka had come to count on God and these brethren for his survival. This group took care of all his physical needs, made sure he made it to his medical appointments, and raised the money needed for those appointments, medications, and transportation. In his

own words, the two groups in which he had membership (ADS and HIH) became the family that God gave him when his biological family left him.

The second testimony came from Mary, a founding member of the group. She spoke about how her faith and compassion had increased because of being part of the group. She talked about how she 'heard' Jesus talking to her a few days past when one of her neighbors came to her kiosk and asked to get some food although she had no money to pay for it. The voice instructed Mary to let her neighbor have whatever she needed and not to worry if she would ever be able to pay for it. The neighbor was one of Mary's harshest critics for adopting the no-till farming method.

The narrative above sets forth some elements for consideration in evaluating the success of the development endeavors undertaken by these two groups in Kitini. Key to these elements are the people's own understanding of how they have changed because of being involved in development projects conducted in particular ways. Similar stories abound from all the groups that helped with the data for this study.

In the coming sections, I will bring forward more testimonials especially those that speak to the question of taking account of spiritual transformation. These testimonies will further unfurl the many layers of spirituality as understood by my interviewees. Because spirituality is a deeply subjective matter, people's own reflections of their own spirituality cannot be ignored. Further on, I will go over the general terrain of monitoring and evaluation to develop a baseline[321] from which to launch the specific examination of

[321] The baseline here is assumed to be what the participants reported as the starting point of their spirituality when they joined a particular development group.

accounting for spiritual transformation. To aid in this quest, I will address the scientism and empiricism associated with measuring transformation before eventually turning to the nexus between religion and development. Scientism and empiricism provide a base for understanding transformational accounting. Towards the end, I will look at some of the reasons for measuring and evaluating (tracking progress, providing accountability, meeting funding requirements, etc.) before bringing everything together in a proposal for accounting for spiritual transformation in development. This proposal identifies four domains: belongingness, sacraments, duties and responsibilities; and transcedentals.

Testimonials of Spiritual Transformation and Expectations

In the section below, I will present a sampling of responses from different people who participated in providing data for this study. These responses represent a variety of how the people surveyed understood their spirituality as well as transformation that had occurred resulting from their involvement in different development groups/projects.

When asked to account for the success of their different programs, some respondents offered answers like these:

> "…for our Christian faith, the first marker is the decision to accept Christ as Lord in the child's life. After the decision, we monitor growth in the child's spiritual life. One of the things we track is the spiritual approach to their faith and how that changes progressively with time. For example, the confidence they display in talking about their beliefs and the reasons they give for them. We also observe their witness. For example, some will witness to and introduce their unbelieving family members to Christ. They are convinced and persuaded of their faith.
>
> We also pay close attention to the traits they display in their everyday interactions with others. Those who are tasked with taking care of the children also collect certain information that we interrogate to further determine if spiritual growth is taking place. There are many in our programs that, even before they enter college, indicate desire to enter ministry as future pastors.

> In other words, we monitor the children's spiritual development from conversion/confessional statements to the lived life and the evidence of life choices that reflect faith-based criteria."[322]

Another responded thus:

> "I have peace and I rejoice in the Lord for this group, our teachers, and our visitors. This is an answer to prayer because every time we meet, we ask the Lord to make a way for visitors to come because we know visitors always bring a benefit to us".

When specifically asked about spiritual transformation, this is how one respondent answered:

> "Spiritually, I draw a lot of strength from the older members who insist on putting God at the center of all our activities. Just like a marriage with poor communication is like a broken granary, we recognize that we will be broken if we are not in good communication with God. Therefore, we start and close our meetings with prayer. Scripture tells us that even though God dwells in heaven, he steps on earth; therefore, when we gather, we sanctify our meeting place and invite him to step in so we can reap his blessings".

On hospitality, Martha had this response:

> "Proverbs 18:16 says that the gift of someone may allow him to share a meal with the mighty and we equate your visit to us with that. If we tell someone that we have just met with a person from America, they might not believe but we know it to be true. We take great joy in sharing the word together in our meetings for the benefit of those who may not have had the opportunity to go to church or to just uplift each other."

Here are two samples of common Kenyan Christian introduction formulars to illustrate how some people understand and explain their own spirituality:

> "I am born-again and filled with hope for eternal life with Jesus when I pass from this world. I have given over my whole life to him because he has told us that he is the beginning and the end; so, even as we practice FGW, I keep that focus (even my dress says '*urimi mugaciru thiini wa Kristu*'-ideal farming through Christ)".[323]

> "Thank you, I rejoice in the Lord the ruler and savior of my heart. I am born-again and I have seen his goodness in all aspects of my life. I have seen my children

[322] Interview with a Compassion International representative.
[323] Veronica at Kambiti

> also get saved which gives me a lot of peace because I know the same Jesus rules in their hearts, so I do not have to quarrel them. That decision separates them from the evils of this world. To those who are not delivered, evil is their friend.
>
> You can go to my land now and see for yourself the difference between the area that is currently under FGW and that which is under traditional farming. I am hugely impressed at the results and will continue to put more and more of my land under FGW. I am now in the third section of my land. May God bless you as you continue to work with us".[324]

And here is how a renowned Christian development pioneer summarized transformation:

> "Fear of witchcraft was rampant here. Parents feared that if they took their kids to secondary schools, they would be bewitched. To overcome this fear, I mobilized religious leaders to tackle it and within no time, it had dissipated. Consequently, I can tell you that this area now has one of the highest concentrations of university graduates anywhere in the country".
>
> "Another problem was the '*Mwolyo Mindset*' or the donor syndrome. This is a disease that is ravaging the whole of Africa and there is no way of moving forward without removing what has been planted in the minds of our people. There is high dependency syndrome in all our people. No NGO can seriously do the work of development without first ridding the people of this mindset. Where this dependency is high, even with an abundance of resources, the people remain poor".[325]

An Africa Brotherhood Church (ABC) national leader, when asked to say how ABC accounted for spiritual transformation said, "While it is difficult to measure, we can see changes especially in formerly troubled kids who have turned around because of being involved in programs. We know that while the changes in observable behavior are outward, there must be a corresponding internal change as well".[326]

And finally, a response about how success looks like for a Christian development organization:

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[324] Hanna at Gakungu
[325] Bishop Masika in Yatta
[326] Nduku in Machakos

"Testimonials that are difficult to quantify, stories of transformation, changed behavior. People have changed in positive ways. Recently the government went on a nationwide campaign to get rid of killer illicit brews, but we had no need for it because it is not a problem in our community or even the larger neighboring area. We also do not have a problem with prostitution. These things did not happen by themselves; we worked extremely hard in the community to urge people to be godly and uphold Christian values and the hard work bore fruit".[327]

This pivotal part of the study will address the area of evaluation, popularly known as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in development parlance. Here I will distinguish between what a measurement is and the object of measurement, why we measure (for what, what we do with the results), who does the measuring (their positionality, their qualification or skill set, their rationale for the measuring, etc.), and most importantly for the whole study, the kinds of metrics employed to achieve desired results. It is perhaps important to state here that I am using 'measuring' loosely to stand for taking account.

Some Historical Perspective

This section is a look-back at the M&E landscape tracing the evolution of religion's storied association with the development enterprise. Situating religion in development's center is important in establishing its unique role in shaping the social change that development has become. Importantly, to accurately account for people's spiritual transformation in development, understanding how religion has been used/not used is critical.

[327] Makuyu Chief speaking to me in his office before a public meeting to discuss water issues.

Religion and Development

Little research and writing exist around accounting for spirituality in development even when it is widely acknowledged that religion, and its core component at least in Christianity, spirituality, are vital in bringing about and sustaining positive transformation.[328] In fact, until recently, religion had for a long time in international development been treated as marginal if not just plainly ignored.[329] This is despite religion's long and storied history with the development enterprise. Going back to the earliest missionary endeavors like those of William Carey in Serampore India, David Livingstone in East Africa, etc. the spread of Christianity through preaching, conversion and Bible translation was always accompanied by social services that aided that spread by attempting to improve the living conditions of the native people. In those early days, it was almost taken as a given that a successful mission station was one that not only reached out to the community with the gospel, but also served it in the areas of education (mission-founded schools, for example, remain as some of the most prominent in Kenya today)[330] and health care especially (here too, mission-founded hospitals remain as pillars of the communities where they were set up)[331]. The involvement of these early missionaries in the health and education of the communities they were serving was a tacit approval of their understanding or a greater reading of the Great Commission of preaching the gospel and discipling the nations.[332] Even going further back than the

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[328] Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 49.
[329] Katherine Marshall, "Development and Religion: A Different Lens on Development Debates," *Peabody Journal of Education*, 2001, 339.
[330] Alliance High School in Kikuyu, Maseno School in Maseno, Tumutumu Girls' High School in Karatina, and many more.
[331] Thogoto Mission Hospital, Kijabe Mission Hospital, Tumutumu Hospital, Tenwek Hospital, etc.
[332] Thomas, *Global Resurgence of Religion & the Transform of International Relations*, 220.

missionary expeditions of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the values of the Protestant ethic had already been grafted[333] into the fabric of European cultures and were, as articulated by Max Weber in the book of the same title, responsible for launching Europe from the mediaeval era into modernity. The attendant social services and infrastructure projects that accompanied missionary preaching and conversion thus became to be viewed as constituent parts of 'development'. Even now, 'development' is still understood to mean those things that add to a people's quality of life, status, income, etc.

With capitalism as the dominant mode of how the world economy is ordered, Calvinism especially spurred the 'elected' towards enterprise, ascetism, industry and wealth accumulation with the latter becoming the mark of divine favor.[334] The individualistic traits of hard work, sobriety, obedience to law, frugality and investing, and delaying gratification would eventually lead to a good life, the ultimate symbol of god's blessings.[335]

The Politics of Development: scientism, empiricism, progress, and backwardness

It is perhaps helpful to briefly sketch here how the evolution of what we now call development happened. The modern-day understanding of development really came into global common parlance by way of US president Harry Truman in the 'Four Points' speech in 1949.[336] Understandably, the context of this speech was the emergence of

[333] Bradshaw and Hiebert, *Change across Cultures*, 180.
[334] Weber, *Protestant Ethic & Spirit of Capitalism*, 60.
[335] Weber, 172.
[336] Eade, *Debating Development*, 60.

America as a global superpower following a successful/triumphant campaign in the Second World War that also left Europe badly hobbled. In ushering in a new era where America was going to be the de facto leader of the Free World, Harry Truman articulated in this his inaugural address on January 20, 1949 a specific way of conceptualizing development.

As the name of the address suggests, the speech touched on four themes (courses of action). The fourth theme is my interest here. The specific way in which the United States was going to lead the world was by making available to the whole world, "…the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress"[337] for the "…growth and improvement"[338] of "underdeveloped areas"[339]. From these statements, it is easy to surmise that Truman's administration conceived the causes of underdevelopment to be technical problems that could be solved by applying the right scientific knowledge and technical skills. It is also implicit in the statements that the administration also believed these solutions to be transportable to those areas deemed 'underdeveloped'. In the congressional article describing the second year of the launch of the 'Point-4 Program', the author continues to observe that the government believed that it had accumulated enough technical knowhow ("store of technical knowledge", 4), that together with capital investments, would lead to development. Further iterations of this focus led to the Marshall Plan; a gigantic undertaking geared towards the rebuilding of post-war

[337] "Background of Point-4," *Congressional Digest* 31, no. 1 (January 1952): 4.
[338] "Background of Point-4," 4.
[339] "Background of Point-4," 4.

Europe[340]. Parallel programs of economic development in the US Government and the UN soon followed.

The natural progression of this understanding was a new industry that has since morphed into the development industrial complex that seems to have a permanent home of 'practice' in the southern hemisphere. I refer to it as a home of practice because a massive amount of people from the now industrialized world descended on the undeveloped world, many often without the requisite skills and cultural knowledge except for their origin in the developed world, enamored to *investigate, measure, and theorize*[341] (my paraphrase) about the problems they were encountering. A whole corps of authentic development experts now exists (including homegrown ones), as well as academic disciplines and whole schools dedicated to the theory and practice of development.

The Trumanian understanding of development, conceived narrowly in terms of economic development that could be delivered with a combination of scientific and industrial knowledge, continued to carry the day until the emergence of a recognition that "…religion, spirituality, and cultural authenticity"[342] needed to be part of international development. As noted earlier, this shift was clearly in view at the World Faiths Development Dialogue and it continues to gather more steam today. This recognition

[340] Alvin Y. So, *Social Change and Development: Modernization, Dependency and World-System Theories*, 1 edition (Newbury Park, Calif: SAGE Publications, Inc, 1990), 17.
[341] Robbins, *Cengage Advantage Books*, 59.
[342] Thomas, *Global Resurgence of Religion & the Transform of International Relations*, 219.

itself is testament to the fact that development must be a lot more than economic growth and industrialization.

Another outgrow from the emergence of scientism and the emphasis of economic growth as the focus of development was the decline or anticipated decline of religion and its role in shaping the social transformation discourse. The phenomenon of this decline in religion is what is normally referred to as secularization. The flipside of the secularization coin is modernization, and together, they are responsible for the reaction that was epitomized by the World Faiths conference: a rebuke of a social fabric that sought to confine religion to the private spheres of individual life or segregated from the larger public life. The secularization thesis was first promulgated by the fathers of sociology, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber, and it projected an inverse relationship between modernity and religion; as societies modernized, they would rely less on "the sacred to interpret events around them"[343].

There is a rebound of religion in the development scene. Beginning with the World Faiths Development Dialogue[344] that brought together two of the most prominent people from the secular and religious worlds- James Wolfensohn the then president of World Bank and the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, religion and religiously inspired non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are playing an increasingly prominent role. The once "conspicuously underrepresented"[345] groups (religious people and

[343] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 15.
[344] Thomas, *Global Resurgence of Religion & the Transform of International Relations*, 219.
[345] Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Spirituality: A Development Taboo (Spiritualité: Un Tabou Du Développement / Espiritualidade: Um Tabu Na Área de Desenvolvimento / La Espiritualidad: Un Tabú Del Desarrollo)," *Development in Practice*, 2000, 32.

organizations), practices, and research have gained more prominence in development circles.[346] There are many factors that have contributed to this phenomenon, one of them being the significant role that religion and religious organizations play in people's lives. Congregations, and churches particularly, are central and prominent in the lives of many communities in this regard. Significantly, congregations like the ones that most of my research respondents belonged to are "carriers *and depositories* (my emphasis) of a larger tradition called the Christian faith" albeit shaped by the prevailing larger cultural contexts of their locations.[347]Additionally, congregations as sacred places stand for stability, help define community self-image and identity as well as provide a visual and social point of identity for communities that surround and own them.[348]

Going back to the factors that have contributed to the upsurge of the phenomenon, the concept of development implies positive change, and in an analogous way, religions include a "concept of the good life and good society"[349] in their teaching. The shared goal of the good life and creating societies where all people feel that they have a significant stake is clearly important in working together.

What also continues to be true is the role religion plays in "inspiring welfare and humanitarian work"[350] all over the world, most noticeably in moments of crises like natural disasters. Further, religion is instrumental to development goals in the ways it

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[346] Stephen Offutt, LiErin Probasco, and Brandon Vaidyanathan, "Religion, Poverty, and Development," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 55, no. 2 (June 2016): 207, https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12270.
[347] Nancy Ammerman et al., eds., *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 79.
[348] Ammerman et al., 157.
[349] Thomas, *Global Resurgence of Religion & the Transform of International Relations*, 223.
[350] Deneulin and Bano, *Religion in Development*, 15.

helps people form and defend their values, including what they consider to be legitimate development.[351] Deneulin and Bano continue to observe that religion is a constitutive part of people's well-being in the same way as health and knowledge (28). In fact, faith, which emanates from religion, is widely considered to be a balm that helps people cope with extremely distressing situations. Here, faith plays the role of an orienting force, serving as an "integrating and stabilizing force for interpreting traumatic events"[352] *and possibly general suffering including the effects of poverty* (my emphasis). My study was largely informed by individuals and groups of people who clearly identified themselves as believers. Even those who did not identify as such were comfortable with working with religiously inspired organizations. I will now turn to an examination of the evaluative aspects of development, interspersing the examination with elements from my interactions with those who participated in the study.

Comparing Measurements with the Objects of Measurement

It is perhaps true that the reason why scholarly studies in accounting for spirituality or its contribution to development are scant is because it is a difficult and subjective endeavor. The challenge of doing the job well is riddled with many of pitfalls, the least of which is not the whiff arrogance it may exude as perceived by those whose spirituality is the subject of inquiry. The assumption that those doing the measuring know enough about what to measure cannot escape the implied expectation that they must also be subject experts of that which they hope to measure. To put it differently, the comparison is that of a teacher giving his/her students a subject matter test. Here, the

[351] Deneulin and Bano, 28.
[352] Barnett and Stein, *Sacred Aid*, 120.

teacher giving the test is presumed to be a subject matter expert, otherwise, the results of the graded tests may be thrown into serious doubt. Another problem that hampers this kind of exercise is the dearth of "…reliable data concerning…"[353] the accounting of spirituality.

The subject of spirituality interests me a great deal; therefore, I embarked on a comparative study seeking to compare the practices of multiple organizations doing international development and examining how they went about accounting for spirituality in their work. I will also report and analyze the experiences of the development beneficiaries (subjects of these practices) as they interacted with the every-day practitioners (the potential would-be testers/evaluators even though some organizations employ external evaluation experts).

Since development is essentially about people and social change, part of this study's focus was an examination of the changes that had happened in the communities because of particular development practices, and their consequences. This is important in understanding the evaluation process because it is possible for "…the same religion and the same values to produce different economic *and other* (italics mine) consequences because of different understandings of how the agents of causation work in their cultures."[354] It is worthwhile to note here that, from the conversations I had with both practitioners and beneficiaries, spirituality or matters that touch on people's faith were important, *but* my impression was that development work (largely understood in economic growth terms) was the primary focus. As one of my interviewees aptly

[353] Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values*, 26.
[354] Bradshaw and Hiebert, *Change across Cultures*, 181.

observed, "Our focus here is solely about the welfare of the children and especially about their education because we understand that when children are healthy and educated, economic well-being follows easily."[355]

In another instance, when World Relief ran into some resistance led by the traditional healer (witchdoctor) in Turkana, a solution was found in making the pastors patrons of the borehole and agricultural project. The elevated importance of the pastors eventually led to meaningful evangelization where whole households became Christians. In Machakos, ABC distributed blankets and school supplies to needy children and their families before asking about their spiritual welfare. Granted, my observations were only a small slice of time, but I felt like the approach was first to meet felt physical needs before addressing the spiritual ones.

The earlier description of how Compassion International (CI) approaches its work is not unique to CI, in fact, all the organizations that I surveyed were primarily about the business of development understood loosely as economic well-being i.e., improving the physical welfare of the beneficiary communities, before also tending or paying attention to the other important concerns like spirituality, justice, representation, etc. Here, education was seen as a vehicle that could deliver these very ends through a different version of enlightenment. It is important to make this distinction because a special relationship exists between development *per se* and other limiting factors like religious practices. For example, Calderisi and Sugden observe that development must be "measured in its ability to sustain healthy and dignified standards of living without

[355] Justus at Compassion International

excessive destruction or abuse of people and ecosystems."[356] One of the examples of this that I cite is the obstinate refusal of one community to accept the Farming God's Way (FGW) intervention because of the heavy influence of witchcraft. The ability to sustain healthy and dignified living standards are measures that check the unrestrained advance of development against trampling on things that people cherish or revere. It is therefore important to balance this tension in the overall quest to measure the spiritual impact of development projects, both as a significant determinant of effectiveness, and as a limiting factor of that very development. An example of this is the resistance I observed in some Makuyu residents who had refused to sell some of their land adjoining the plantations, for probably higher than market value, because they prized the ability to have their city-dwelling children visit and go home with produce from those lands. Even though such sales would increase their financial standing and afford them ability to purchase 'goods of development', these families valued the benefits they were able to give their children more. In essence, the two sides constitute a certain kind of a hermeneutical dialectic i.e., "… a situation in which two sets of stories interpret each other…"[357].

No unit of measurement is itself the same as the object of measurement; therefore, an accounting of spirituality is itself not spirituality. The very nature of spirituality touches on matters of transcendence that clearly put its empirical apprehension through carnal or other humanly fashioned tools out of reach. Other aspects of spirituality like rituals, taboos, and sanctions do not quite measure up in the logical test simply because they are unusual. For example, I observed many of the older members of the groups I

[356] Belshaw, Calderisi, and Sugden, *Faith in Development*, 207.
[357] Ammerman et al., *Studying Congregations*, 26.

worked with mixing their 'standard' Christian practices with incantations to or references to the traditional Kikuyu god, *Ngai*, without skipping a beat. To the untrained eye and ear, such acts would be condemned as heretical and unbecoming of proper Christian conduct. Similarly, the ritual of spitting on one's chest to confer a blessing on someone may also be classified charitably as untoward, if not outright dangerous. Both examples properly fall inside the confines of what might constitute spirituality because of their directed appeal to the deity. To paraphrase Schneiders as quoted by Park in *Christian Spirituality in Africa*, "… these practices are the way some people understand and live, within their historical context, a chosen religious ideal in sensitivity to the spiritual realm of the transcendent."[358] A proper accounting of spirituality in a scenario like this would be incomplete if it did not seriously consider the import of these practices to those who practice them.

Understanding Spirituality; a Roadmap

Like any academic inquiry, there is a method to approaching the study of spirituality. In this part of the study, I will adopt Sung Kyu Park's model of a historical, theological, and anthropological criterion[359]. The historical lens focuses on the facts of time, space, and the specific cultural contexts. Theologically, the study of spirituality is seen as part of practical theology. The anthropological approach focuses on the interpretations of religious experiences to generate responses to real life questions, separate from history and theology. While my focus will largely be about the

[358] Sung Kyu Park, *Christian Spirituality in Africa: Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Perspectives from Kenya* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2013), 5.
[359] Park, 7.

anthropological dimension, it will be informed by reflections from the other two dimensions.

Historically speaking, most of this study takes place in rural settings in Kenya's Murang'a County not far from the capital, Nairobi, and a major manufacturing city of Thika. Christianity is the predominant religion although Islam is well represented. The other rural sites of the study are Yatta and Ahero. Yatta is about two hours away from both Thika and Nairobi while Ahero is about six hours away. I collected data from four urban locations in Nairobi.

The theological spectrum representative of the organizations, individuals and community groups also spanned many persuasions. My estimation is that most of the interviewees belonged to one of four mainstream denominations: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Africa Inland Church (AIC), and Africa Brotherhood Church (ABC). There might have been other denominations represented in smaller numbers, but the predominant theological inclinations were Protestant and Roman Catholic. Many of the organizations and groups did in fact have members from multiple denominations. In Kenya denominations tend to be localized in regions that also correspond to ethnicity. The exceptions are the Roman Catholic and Anglican denominations which are more nationally diffuse. For example, ABC is predominant in Eastern Kenya and is made up almost entirely of the Kamba people. In Ahero close to Lake Victoria in the west, the VOSH denomination is almost exclusive to the Luo people. Perhaps as an extension of these ethno-denominational specificities, spirituality and its practices reflect the cultural heritage of the predominant ethnicity. For example, I observed a strong inclination with

VOSH to focus on widows and their children as especially vulnerable because the Luo practice of wife inheritance by a brother of the deceased. For a region that had borne the brunt of the AIDS epidemic, the Church as a whole had risen against the practice to curb the spread of the disease. In Ukambani, there was strong emphasis on food security to overcome the 'curse' of food insecurity rampant in the semi-arid region.

A proper reflection of African theology is always incomplete if it ignores the influence of the West on African Christianity. This is no small point because, as noted earlier, development is properly a western construct falling broadly in the realm of modernization. Matter of fact, when you ask regular people about what their understanding of development is, they respond by citing a desire to have 'things' that make their lives easier. These things invariably include the material comforts of motorized transportation, electricity in homes, clean and potable piped water and paved roads, access to health care etc. These things are of course quite standard in the West. Any development conducted by or through Christian organizations will bear some marks of westernization aspirationally or in other ways, especially if the primary funding source is western. The theological reflections of development and its conduct will obviously display the shades of this interaction. In fact, some scholars like Paul Bowers have observed that Africa's most traumatic event was its encounter with the West, and this has continued to color the intellectual endeavors of all fields, theology included[360]. I may indeed add here that Africa's endemic problem with poverty- a lack of things that make life more livable- can be captured in the continent's apparent deficits in matching up with

[360] Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity In Africa*, 125.

what in the West is taken for granted. Africa's peoples' aspirations to develop may be seen as quests to enjoy the comforts of life like those in the West.[361] Theological reflections, being about how faith inspires people to act and conduct their lives in given contexts, must encompass today's realities of globalization and secularization. These reflections then must touch on technology, urbanization, gender equality, liberal democracy, individualism, poverty, and many more that either increase or decrease with secularization[362]. I will show that those who informed this study had much to say about many of these things either directly in response to questions, or in the way they conducted themselves.

Anthropologically, almost all the organizations I worked with found themselves working in those places in response to what is generally accepted as poverty or economic underdevelopment. The overwhelming approach of many of these organizations was to work through local churches or groups founded in churches because of many factors. One of those factors was the prevalence of churches in communities, and relatedly, as locations where communities gathered for many things (weddings, funerals, administrative gatherings, etc.). Another significant factor for going through the churches was because they often are already engaged in meeting some of the felt needs of their communities and were therefore primed for partnering. Additionally, they already had a better pulse on the nature, location, and severity of the needs. On another note, the church leaders are often in many cases also community leaders and therefore already possess the

[361] China is increasingly becoming a dominant player in Kenya and challenging the dominance of Africa's Western extroversion

[362] Pollack and Olson, *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 42.

credibility that is necessary to obtain a foothold in any community. My interactions also revealed that many of the church leaders were themselves poor and were indeed counted on to be the champions of specific development interventions.

One of the most poignant things I observed working with community groups was how overtly and matter-of-factly the participants showcased their religiosity. Every meeting started with prayer and often was followed by a short message from the Bible delivered by one of the members. The common parlance was riddled with god-speak; members spoke of 'god's blanket' to refer to the mulch they were trying to generate akin to that found in virgin forests. Metaphorically and literally, the reference to virgin forests was supposed to remind people that such forests represented how God wanted things to remain. Building up mulch and letting it turn into humus was an invocation to a restoration, a scriptural motif, to a glorious Eden.

Additionally, the use of the term 'farming god's way' (FGW) also hearkens to the scriptural motif of God as a farmer. This is a motif that most of the people who formed this study, especially those above fifty years old, would easily understand from Kikuyu mythology regarding the community's origin with a farmer god.[363] The seeming pre-occupation with material and economic well-being was also a reflection of the amalgamation of remnants of African traditional religions which "…tended to be this-worldly, unitary and instrumental…"[364] with Christian beliefs that are "…other-worldly, dualistic and expressive…"[365]. Scooping of the soil and blessing it, spitting on one's

[363] Kenyatta, *Facing Mount Kenya*, 5.
[364] Thomas Spear and Isaria N. Kimambo, *East African Expressions: Of Christianity*, 1 edition (Oxford: Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1999), 6.
[365] Spear and Kimambo, 6.

chest, not forcing the issue in witchcraft 'strongholds', among other practices, are examples of how this weaving was manifested in the lives of these people in the study. The display of a healthy fear of witchcraft, for me, was not simply a recognition that the spirit world was alive and active in these people's world, but more importantly, they had figured out how to co-exist with the reality. In fact, the rituals of blessing the soil and pouring libation[366] brought home the "…relation of the group to land and the sense of origin…rooted in the location where ancestors are buried and propitiated."[367]

Another example here will help illustrate how religion and religious practices were brought to bear in developmental practice and understanding. I interviewed in and attended *barazas* (meetings) of two administrators. Both men, in our private and public encounters, identified themselves as Anglicans and spoke glowingly about their faith as well as how the faith shaped how they discharged the responsibilities of their office. Our meetings happened in the context of identifying developmental priorities for the area. In both meetings, different community development groups were invited to participate and advise the administrators. Over and over, the administrators and participants implored churches and church leaders to do more. In one instance, the Chief credited the absence of the illicit liquor menace to the spiritual transformation of his community arising from a closer working relationship with churches. I grant here that what the Chief characterized as spirituality may indeed be anything from increased church attendance to behavioral

[366] One of the men informed me of how he would always pour some traditional beer on the ground before the first sip to bless the ancestors without whom he would not be alive.
[367] Patrick Chabal, *Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling*, 1 edition (Zed Books, 2013), 29.

changes easily attributable to religion (quitting smoking or drinking, etc.), but it is, I contend, a valid characterization.

I think the Chief's characterization of the changes he was observing in his community as manifestations of a spiritual transformation is especially important. This is so because, as an administrator whose position in society is areligious even though the Chief himself is a Christian, attaching the label of spirituality to what is clearly a significant change in his community is critical. As a governmental gatekeeper into the community, the Chief's blessing for any developmental intervention cannot be ignored. In fact, the Chief in our private meeting went as far as to contend that the work of faith-based NGOs had far more lasting impact than that of secular organizations. A proper assessment of what is important in such a community must take account of the opinions of such important people as the Chief. A second meeting with a different administrator but in the same county elicited the same kind of raving review of faith-based development players as opposed to secular ones.

Reasons for Counting, Measuring and Evaluating

Because every organization exists for a reason, developing a way for determining if the organization is living up to its stated mission should be obvious. Most organizations do indeed put in place ways of accounting for how they are doing their work. Monitoring and evaluation are the two common concepts associated with efforts to account for the work. Generally, monitoring is continuous while evaluations are often summary exercises. Evaluations may indeed also account for how well the monitoring has taken place. At the basic level, measuring is for purposes of finding out how the organization's

work is progressing (monitoring) and if it achieved the goals it set out to achieve (evaluation).

The whole process of taking stock and accounting is deeply steeped in the ethos of Enlightenment; the belief that what can be counted can be controlled and outcomes determined through science and rational logic.[368] It is little wonder then that much inclination in the development world is to generate reports that reflect this reality. Matters that do not lend themselves easily to this kind of stock-taking are often, at best, given a passing mention, or in the least, completely left out. Accounting for spirituality is squarely in this latter category. Gil Rendle aptly observes that "… data struggles with the social *and the spiritual* (italics my emphasis) …"[369] because emotions, truth, transcendence, and hope elude the apprehension of scientific tools and methods of analysis. Unlike discrete data, emotions, spirituality, and other such phenomena are amorphous and often difficult to characterize accurately. The difficulty of their apprehension using standard tools and methods; however, does not mean that we cannot understand them. We just must employ different analyses.

The second reason for measuring arises from the resource environment[370] itself. This environment consists of donors, stakeholders, and others that provide the organizations with "legitimacy and survival"[371]. Significantly, the donors do bear heavily

[368] Gil Rendle, *Doing the Math of Mission: Fruits, Faithfulness, and Metrics* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 59.
[369] Rendle, 59.
[370] Peter Nunnenkamp, Hannes Öhler, and Tillmann Schwörer, "US Based NGOs in International Development: Financial and Economic Determinants of Survival," *World Development* 46 (June 1, 2013): 45, doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2013.01.024.
[371] Nunnenkamp, Öhler, and Schwörer, 45.

on how development organizations do their work by way of what reporting they demand directly. Indirectly, by first asking to see a breakdown of how an organization spends its resources (on personnel, programs, advertising, etc.), the organization in question is 'forced' to move in a particular direction (emphasizing the attainment of specific outcomes, etc.). These kinds of constraints do bear significantly on what aspects of development work are measured and reported. I might go as far as suggesting that much of the resistance I encountered while gathering data for this study from many western-founded NGOs was the fear of exposure to the powerful donor class. I know for sure that NGOs that receive part of their funding from USAID are prohibited from using such funds to promote or pursue religious ends lest they run afoul of the state-church divide. On the other hand, I found that non-western NGOs that did not have any ties to constrained funding sources like USAID were more willing to aggressively pursue their religious agenda as well as talk about how they were going about it. In order to not offend some donors who could otherwise withhold funding if they suspected or were aware that an organization was emphasizing some aspects that did not align with the donor's liking, I found that many organizations were willing to cede those aspects of their work to secondary organizations. For example, some organizations would only work with churches and let those churches handle the 'problematic'[372] aspects of their work.

The approach of outsourcing seems to lend credence to the understanding that makes accounting for spirituality a rather daunting task. The understanding is that

[372] While organizational representatives showed no qualms about calling people out for their dalliances with witchcraft, they were nonetheless reluctant to engage directly in evangelism, even though it appears like it would be an effective counter to witchcraft.

spirituality, and indeed religion, are seldom viewed through empirical lenses; instead, they are frequently seen as 'unquestionable beliefs not amenable to analysis'.[373] My contention is that they are in fact analyzable, but with the right tools. Development is itself a subject that is much analyzed empirically and otherwise; therefore, it would make sense that spirituality, which is now inarguably a critical part of development or how people conceive it, ought to be much analyzed. This study is an attempt to do just this in the selected contexts of development projects in rural Kenya. Even where the context is not rural, the trajectory is always rural focused.

The study of spirituality is clearly a daunting task, not least because of a lack of a clear-cut definition of what it is. Much of what we know about spirituality is its close kinship to religion, and specifically to Christianity, the faith dimension. Many people think of spirituality as a mystery, a subjective reality not fully knowable under direct study because of its intangibility.[374] As Peter Holmes observes here, this difficulty in studying spirituality directly leads to an indirect approach through "*outcomes, symptoms"*[375], and thick narratives. This is how I approached this study. I asked questions, listened to conversations, participated in community projects, visited homes as a guest and observed very closely how everybody interacted with everybody and how others spoke about the people I was interacting with.

In all of these, it was clear to my mind that the people did not live their lives in a siloed sense where their spirituality was separate from other aspects of their lives. When

[373] Barnett and Stein, *Sacred Aid*, 15.
[374] Peter C. Jupp, *A Sociology of Spirituality*, ed. Kieran Flanagan, 1 edition (Farnham: Routledge, 2009), 23.
[375] Jupp, 23.

a farmer went to his/her field to work the soil, he/she had a clear sense that the physical was always in touch with the metaphysical as well as the supernatural who had a bearing on the work and its outcome itself. In a similar sense, they also understood development, especially its capacity for the salugenic[376] (positively transformative), as a whole undertaking, not a siloed, disenchanted, and separate undertaking. Adopting a new water-harvesting and utilization technology was understood to have a wider meaning beyond the utilitarian and immediate. In short, these people did not suffer from the cliched cognitive dissonance; being pragmatic did not appear to compromise their faith.

My analysis of how to account for what had occurred in the lives of the people who helped in this study will therefore have to be a delicate balance between responses to questions about practical Christian life and how they understood the Christian concept of transformation (becoming better and whole) applied to agriculture, health, sanitation, literacy, etc.[377] Within it, there will be elements of counting (taking stock of metrics like memberships, attendance, number of baptisms, wells dug, etc.), measuring (paying attention to change[378]), and evaluating (taking summative stock).

Bringing it All Together

This whole study is indeed a theological one, and one that must bear significance to the lives of the subjects (perhaps with some application to similarly situated contexts). Considering this, it cannot be written about or for fictional characters; it will be specific to the contexts where the study occurred. I will endeavor to avoid any discordant and

[376] Jupp, 26.
[377] Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity In Africa*, 1131.
[378] Rendle, *Doing the Math of Mission*, 14.

forced symmetry of values that would fit like new shoes to calloused feet that have only known *nginyiras* (sandals fashioned from used car tires).

I propose these key focusses for accounting for spirituality in development: belongingness (memberships), sacraments, duties and responsibilities; and transcedentals. I settled on the four categories, not because they are distinguishable as stand-alone elements, but because they help in the analyzing of the complicated totality of spirituality. Spiritual beings do not take a day off from being spiritual. I also chose these categories to highlight what I call the fixedness of studying Christian spirituality; the essential dimension (elements "intrinsic to Christianity's self-understanding"[379]), and the extrinsic dimension (the lived experience in a specific historical-cultural context of faith in a chosen religious articulation). Accordingly, two of the categories (belongingness and duties and responsibilities) address the extrinsic dimension while the other two (sacraments and transcedentals) relate to the essential (intrinsic) dimension.

Belongingness

Being a Christian presupposes certain things: being a believer and a follower of Jesus Christ, belonging to a community that shares in that belief, identifying of self as a Christian, practicing and living out the dictums of the faith, upholding and abstaining from some things, and so forth. These markers or distinguishing factors serve the opposing purposes of cohering (bonding similarities together) and separating

[379] Park, *Christian Spirituality in Africa*, 5.

(distinguishing the Christians from non-Christians). Belongingness then is a key factor in studying and analyzing Christian spirituality.

Here, I will highlight several factors without which accounting for Christian spirituality could not begin well. As noted above, Christian spirituality is centered on and in the person of the historical Jesus and the movement he ushered into the world. A serious analysis of Christian spirituality then must engage the adjective 'Christian' (to do with Christ) and 'spirit' which points to an encounter with Jesus through the Spirit[380]. Notably, "Christianity implies a relationship to the event that inaugurated it: Jesus Christ."[381] Christianity, as modelled from the life of Jesus, has following as a fundamental motif.[382] Following also strongly implies a sense of direction and a goal as well as an on-going process.

Christianity also implies a pedagogical relationship of a teacher-student with Jesus as the teacher. As a way of life, Christianity is about, "…an observable and measurable life pattern that is distinctively Christian."[383] This must have been what one of the interviewees meant while responding to my question about how to account for spirituality when he said: "spiritually, we are not able to measure tangible things, but we can measure the activities of the people. You see where people are still anti-Christ, where

[380] Lawrence S. Cunningham and Keith J. Egan, *Christian Spirituality: Themes from the Tradition*, 58045th edition (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 7.
[381] Philip F. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality: History, Theology, and Social Practice* (Paulist PressTM, 2014), 5.
[382] Cunningham and Egan, *Christian Spirituality*, 9.
[383] Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood Jr, eds., *Measures of Religiosity*, 1 edition (Birmingham, Ala: Religious Education Pr, 1999), 67.

they are still doing things that are not expected of Christians or they are doing the things that are associated with Christians.[384]

In his mind, being Christian amounted to a way of living, a way of going about everyday life activities in such a fashion that other people could tell the difference. This way of life is often embodied in what David Brooks describes as moral ecologies-systems of belief and behavior that live on after death.[385] These are patterns of life spanning a wide range including manner of dress, speech, choice of food and drink, grooming patterns, and others that fall inside or outside what is considered moral or immoral. For example, at no point during data collection for this study did I see any women wearing long pants except for some of the trainers. Similarly, many of the men spoke about how their faith rescued them from alcoholism and smoking[386]and even how one man no longer could bring himself to beat his wife.[387] The exclusion and embrace of certain things essentially results in community formation, a community knit together by what it excludes and embraces.

Relatedly, being in community is manifested through fellowship which may take many forms but is in the whole about being together, learning together, sharing life together and becoming the body of Christ. This fellowship may be aptly captured by the Duke Religion Index which identifies three dimensions of religiousness: organizational (attendance or participation frequency in church or religious meetings), non-

[384] Kiarie's interview at World Vision in Makuyu
[385] David Brooks, *The Second Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life* (Random House, 2019), 4.
[386] Tarcisius speaking of how faith led him to stop drinking and smoking and how his example had inspired his sons to not becoming alcoholics and smokers themselves.
[387] Wife beating was common even when I was a young boy of ten.

organizational (private religious practices), and intrinsic religiosity (beliefs, doctrines, etc.).[388] Once in fellowship or community, the resultant group develops a collective representation of itself borne out in symbols (words, gestures, artifacts, etc.), rituals (activities that may appear technically superfluous but considered essential within the group), heroes (faith and other leaders), and values (honesty, obedience, moral uprightness, etc.).[389]

Perhaps one of the most easily recognizable features of belongingness is attendance. Attendance is seen plainly in the collections that are denominations, congregations or memberships into groupings or organizations. Being associated with a group is constituent to identity formation and as Pollack and Olson observe, the "…repeated exposure to the institution and its teaching necessarily informs and disciplines belief…"[390] Indeed, the commitment to institutional life (routines, norms, prohibitions, etc.) and, for the sake of religious organizations, their creedal statements[391], is foundational providing a viable basis for spirituality. Every interviewee for this study demonstrated a commitment to each group he/she was part of and its teachings.

The last feature, and by no means the conclusive one, that I want to highlight in belongingness is conversion; the process by which formerly non-Christian people make the decision to become Christian. In my experience collecting data for this study, this was the key identifier for Christians, and was often the second piece of self-identification after introducing oneself. The common Christian self-introduction formula in most social

[388] Hill and Hood, *Measures of Religiosity / Edited by Peter C. Hill and Ralph W. Hood, Jr*, 131.
[389] Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 7–8.
[390] Pollack and Olson, *The Role of Religion in Modern Societies*, 165.
[391] Pollack and Olson, 165.

gatherings in Kenya goes like this, “My name is X, Jesus is my savior and Lord”, or “I am Y and I am born again”. There are other variations of this formula especially among the Roman Catholics for whom it is uncommon, although not completely unheard of, to proclaim they are born again. Often, Roman Catholic adherents will arise, make a gesture of the cross on the forehead or chest, and then proceed to say their name.

How does belongingness relate to evaluation or development? While most people interviewed related being Christian before their involvement with any development group, they invariably spoke about how their faith journeys had intensified because of this involvement. For example, they cited how their faith was strengthened by the examples of the more mature Christians they encountered in these development groups.

Duties and Responsibilities

Kenyan theologian Sakwa Matendechere while commenting on the Bible’s illustration of God’s option for the marginalized, reminds us of the duties and responsibilities[392] that such an orientation puts on all believers. This orientation was present and vivid in all my interactions with the people who provided the data for this study. There was an almost tangible of we-ness among these people that laid bare the fact that they themselves was all they had to navigate and overcome the hardships of their lives. Their solidarity with one another in service was testament to their resilience and ingenuity in the management of their straitened circumstances.[393] A poignant example of this solidarity in service was demonstrated through the care shown to Kabaka, an elderly

[392] Sakwa, *Bible and Poverty in Kenya*, 21.
[393] Chabal, *Africa*, 150.

and sick man who did not have an immediate family. His neighbors, lacking in means themselves, pooled their meagre resources to ensure he was able to make it to his doctor's appointments, fill his prescriptions, and above all else, to spare him from the pangs of loneliness, brought him to group meetings so he would not be home alone.

Reciprocity and obligation are other quite powerful features of duties and responsibilities. Both are opposite sides of the same coin and suggest indebtedness. Reciprocity is the less strict of the two and creates a cycle of mutual indebtedness that is welcome while obligation is stricter and imposes harsh sanctions or penalties when broken. An example of reciprocity that was evident during data collection was the practice of taking turns to collectively work in a member's farm on rotation. If you were the recipient of such help this week, you owed the next member a day's worth of labor in his/her farm next week. Obligations on the other hand are unspoken demands. For example, in the villages that I collected data from, every adult member was expected to participate in funeral wakes to condole the families of the deceased, and to be present and participate in the burial.[394] Failure to do so would be met with ostracization and a loss of the prized, essential we-ness. The we-ness is both a spiritual and cultural phenomenon; spiritual in the building of a faith community sense, and cultural in sharing the burdens of fate that is in the DNA of such village life.

As renowned Africanist scholar Patrick Chabal notes, burials in Africa are supremely important to the public good because they establish the vital link between the

[394] We had to cancel one meeting because the funeral of a local villager fell on the same day. Local funerals are an all-day event.

living and the dead.[395] There is great spiritual capital imbued in participating in burials, not simply because of the finality they signal with the earthly send-off, but more importantly, the beginning of the afterlife that the deceased enters. The belief that the dead can influence matters in the lives of the surviving is deeply rooted in the African psyche hence the great care placed in paying homage to those entering that world. Another reason why burials play such an important role in a people's spirituality is the abiding connection that they have to the land. Land, like the "ever-expanding and overlapping concentric spheres of identity"[396] is constitutive of being[397] and cannot be divorced from the people's identity. This is the reason why most Africans have an ancestral home where they desire to be buried even if they have spent their whole lives in the city or abroad. I knew and understood this phenomenon; therefore, I joined everyone for the burial.

As noted with belongingness, the evaluative value of duties and responsibilities as Christians would be realized, not because it started with individuals' involvement with development projects, but because it was strengthened through associating with other believers in such projects.

Sacraments

Sacraments, especially baptism and the Eucharist, may be the main distinguishing factors between a committed Christian and a nominal one. In this sub-section, I will

[395] Chabal, *Africa*, 49.
[396] Chabal, 43.
[397] Chabal, 28.

briefly describe the sacraments, not as I observed all of them in practice, but anecdotally for some and in common parlance.[398]

In all, I had the opportunity to take a good appraisal of the seven sacraments generally accepted as central tenets of the Christian faith. These are: baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, confession/penance/reconciliation, holy matrimony/marriage, anointing the sick, and ordination/holy orders.[399] Baptism is generally accepted as the new birth of a Christian and is variously symbolized through immersion in water (most traditions), sprinkling of water, and other variations involving water.

The most notable expression of the sacraments was the Eucharist that had been vernacularized to accommodate the multiple Christian traditions represented in the membership of the groups I interviewed or participated with to collect data. When the members of these groups spoke about breaking bread, all understood it to mean the Eucharist and the openness for all who were believers to partake in it.

Even though I did not witness baptisms firsthand, I did observe people that I surveyed speaking about baptisms, most importantly, as distinct first markers of becoming believers. For example, within Compassion International (CI), baptism of youngsters who had matured enough to make the decision was celebrated as an important milestone in the spiritual development of the children in CI's care. Similarly, at Ebenezer Life Centre (ELC) which has an all-campus integrated pastoral curriculum, baptism of

[398] It was common, for example, for people to speak of 'breaking bread' to represent two meanings: 1. The actual sharing of a meal, and 2. Partaking of the Eucharist with the theological understanding of the food and drink to represent the body and blood of Christ.
[399] "The Seven Sacraments - YouTube," accessed July 7, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmfSwi3ZKH4.

pupils is hailed as a significant victory over the devil's designs to capture young minds away from spiritual maturity.

Being as it were that most of those who took my surveys were either Catholic or Anglican, they were familiar with and spoke of the connected sacraments of baptism and confirmation. They spoke of these sacraments in ways familiar to me having been raised in the Anglican tradition: attending catechism classes before being baptized and following more catechism culminating in confirmation and first participation at Eucharist. In both traditions, there is no Eucharist without baptism and confirmation. There were those who were not conversant with confirmation.

When asked to comment about spiritual growth/maturation, everyone spoke about on-going confession of sin and the attendant seeking for forgiveness, and the need to be reconciled with neighbor. In one example, a local administrator spoke about how it had taken great leaps of faith and hearts that sought reconciliation to live in peace with fellow administrators and their families from the Kalenjin community who had evicted the Kikuyu and burned their homes from the Rift Valley Province after the 1992 post-election tribal clashes.[400] Others, especially the Catholic, spoke often about attending confessionals with the local priests for penance.

With the anointing of the sick, I was witness to two distinct manifestations of it. The first one involves an elderly man, Kabaka, that I have mentioned above. It was a widely view that his demise was not too far away. Consequently, there was already an

[400] "Tribal Clashes in Kenya Continue," *Christian Science Monitor*, September 27, 1993, https://www.csmonitor.com/1993/0927/27091.html.

on-going undertaking with his neighbors to 'take prayers' to him on a regular basis until the day came. 'Taking prayers' is the Kikuyu vernacular equivalent of the biblical Pauline practice of taking anointed pieces of cloth to the sick believing in the anointed power to heal (Acts 19: 11-12). In Kabaka's case it literally involved the taking of a shawl that a priest had anointed to him to impart healing. The second instance of anointing the sick was the retelling of a story of a sick young girl with an incurable form of leukemia who had been sent home to wait for her death when the doctors did not have any more remedies to try. Not giving up hope for a miracle, her parents sought the help of a local priest who had healing powers. The priest visited the home with the child near dead, laid his hands on her and she was healed instantly. Although I never had the good fortune of meeting with this priest, I heard of the story in enough places, even from unaffiliated persons, to corroborate its truth. These two examples of anointing of the sick also dovetail with the sacrament of holy orders/ordination. I got the feeling from most people that they took the priesthood to be divinely instituted and the priests to be holy and representative of God. There was a lot of deference attached to the priesthood, especially among the Catholics believing that the papacy was directly descendent from Apostle Peter in the Bible.

Lastly, I observed a healthy respect for marriage and the commitment to its endurance. For example, five of the elder couples that helped a lot with collecting this data had been married for over fifty years.[401]Speaking to each of them about the secret to the longevity of their marriages, they equated their marriages to the Christ's unity with

[401] Kiarie, Tarcisius, Muhoro, Wambutha and Kaari, all in their seventies and above, had been married for over fifty years.

the Church; the Church without Christ is no church, and a marriage not held together with the glue of Christ would soon crumble. In a word, they credited the permanence of their marriages to God's grace.

As with the two preceding facets of accounting for spirituality (belongingness, and duties and responsibilities), the performance or participating in sacraments is not in itself the important evaluative factor; rather, the permanence and 'translation'[402] of the sacraments in development practice.

It is helpful to add here that I observed, in the performance of development rituals, the symbiotic 'formation' of the practitioners and the beneficiaries in a way that Rosie Fyfe calls 'developmentalist liturgies'[403]. In her article *Liturgies of Development: Formation for Working Among the Poor*, she sets forth a practical theology for development practitioners who often find themselves working "within the synergies and tensions…" produced by working in a field rooted in a secular understanding of the world (13). While I agree with a prescription to guard against Christian development practitioners becoming functional atheists, I observed situations where, even secular development workers, agreed and participated in Christian rituals led by the beneficiaries. I refer to the relationship as symbiotic because both sides seemed to benefit: the beneficiaries from the technical and other expertise, the practitioners from still being able to carry on their work.

[402] I observed the norming of biblical breaking of the bread (Eucharist) into sharing a common meal during meetings. Additionally, the marriage between Tarcisius and his wife did not collapse because she refused to adopt FGW despite his being an FGW champion farmer.
[403] Fyfe, "Liturgies of Development," 13.

Transcendentals

The realm of the transcendent in accounting for spirituality is without doubt the most difficult to appraise. As the term itself indicates, transcendence gives off an aura of mysticism, beyond the range of normal, extraordinary, and exceptional. Regardless of our ability to empirically apprehend it, transcendence I believe is the glue that holds all the other three elements together. As Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, transcendence, I offer is the 'thing', the canopy under which faith becomes accessible. The mysticism, mystery, and inapprehensibility of the power that we refer to as the transcendent is the allure that fuels belief and turbocharges faith. The concept of the transcendent is captured in words like sacred, divine, omnipotent, omniscient, supernatural, otherworldly, preternatural, etc. which all describe that which exceeds or is beyond normal/ordinary experience or knowledge.

Barnett and Stein observe that, "For many, faith, which is an orienting force, serves as an integrating and stabilizing force for interpreting traumatic events, *and maybe general or acute suffering including the effects of poverty (*italics my emphasis*)* …"[404]The comfort and eternal peace that the transcendent offers, I grant, is that stabilizing factor described above that anchors belief and faith towards its invincibility against any earthly struggle or power. How do we know that people tap into these anchors to steady them during turmoil? Again, Barnett and Stein offer that, when faced with adversity that tests the limits of personal power and control, people summon the "…language of the sacred-

[404] Barnett and Stein, *Sacred Aid*, 120.

forbearance, mystery, suffering, hope, finitude, surrender, divine purpose, and redemption-and the mechanisms of religion…"[405] This example from survey data will help crystalize this argument. When I asked a focus group of pastoral, lay and administrative leaders to comment on spiritual progression/growth in the life of different projects, a lady lay leader responded thus: "We have been dealt a bad hand here: our land is poor, we have no water, no roads, our schools have no furniture, and yet we still cling on to faith that God put us here for a reason. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years before their rescue, maybe we are in the cusp of our own rescue. Moses did not live to see the promised land, but his offspring did, so if we die before our rescue, we cling to the hope that our children will see the promised land. Keep the faith brethren."[406]

Another example of surrendering to the transcendent that illustrates the element of finitude is one that I have used before: a small kiosk owner, out of very meagre resources, giving away product from the kiosk to a needy neighbor without the expectation of being repaid. When I interrogated that seemingly reckless act of generosity for a businessperson, she responded quite simply and profoundly that God directed her do it, and that she would never be able to live with herself or accept the unseen God's limitless mercy on her, if she had limited her own generosity to a neighbor she knew well and saw every day. In this example, the kiosk owner's Christian business principles were not "…necessarily in the monetary success, but instead in the ethical value measured by assessing how its transactions affect the poorest participants" [407]…and how God sees it.

[405] Barnett and Stein, 120.
[406] Monica speaking at Kiumbu focus group meeting.
[407] Bradshaw and Hiebert, *Change across Cultures*, 56.

A further element of transcendence that I want to highlight is Communitas defined as "…a sacred bond that emerges as people gather to worship in communion with one another characterized by a unity of symbols, through the leadership of a ritual specialist, and transcend the structures that normally characterize human communities."[408] During data collection, I observed something about the groups I worked with that resembles Communitas. There was something more and other about the unity of these groups, being that they were composed of people who also had membership in other different groups and from many religious persuasions. When they came together as a development group, it was clearly under the leadership of their appointed leaders who also doubled as ritual specialists. They always 'broke bread' together and had other well understood common rituals like prayers, but some uncommon ones like pouring libation before taking the first sip of tea or elders spitting on their chests while shaking my hand to confer blessings. The meetings were also characterized by what to an outsider looked like a liturgy with the ritual leader chanting something and the gathering responding on cue. It almost looked like everyone had coopted a Catholic liturgy even though different religious traditions were represented at any given meeting. Prayers, that anchored every gathering, unaffiliated in their nature, cemented this belief that God was an ever-present reality.[409]

Discussing transcendence would be incomplete without also mentioning the power to overcome or re-write negative narratives. In a society where one's identity or standing in the community may be shaped by who one ate with, the act of breaking bread

[408] Bradshaw and Hiebert, 220.
[409] Peter M. Kalellis, *Five Steps to Spiritual Growth: A Journey* (Paulist PressTM, 2014), 155.

together is an act that is at the same time a rebuke/reversal of the understanding of curses, and a celebration of the reconciliation that eating together symbolizes. This is not unlike the feeding of the 5,000 by Jesus who reconciled a crowd of people that were ethnically, religiously, and politically diverse by inspiring them to eat with one another.[410] Specifically for the Makuyu community, devoting meagre resources to celebrate with a meal together is an emphatic reversal of the view of being cursed with poverty. In fact, when I asked one of the leaders why it was important for them to 'break bread' together, he responded that for many members, such a meal together is often the only solid meal they get to have in a day, and because of everyone's generosity, God is pleased when the hungry are no longer hungry. He also added this Kikuyu proverb, *ona ĩkĩhĩa mwene nĩotaga* (literally translates to 'even when a house is fully engulfed in flames, its owner gets to enjoy the warmth of the fire'). The proverb is a rebuke of fatalism that can easily overcome those afflicted with poverty, especially the food poor. Often, it is the rural farmers, the producers of food, who suffer hunger instead of the urbanites who do not produce any food.

A final example of resisting negative transcendent powers relates to witchcraft. On two occasions, I listened to stories about God, in the moment and very practically, had shown his power over witchcraft. In the first example, the Anglican Development Services (ADC) had repeatedly failed to make any in-roads with Farming God's Way (FGW) in Kitini. Kitini is renowned for witchcraft activity whose casualties are the substance of local lore. One small neighborhood where a famous witchdoctor lived, had

[410] Bradshaw and Hiebert, *Change across Cultures*, 207.

been especially resistant to anything to do with this no-till farming method. He had made a significant number of his neighbors to resist as well. No attempt by ADS, even through the power of demonstrated results, was enough to win these people over. In fact, ADS was warned by some who had already adopted FGW to back off further attempts to convert that small group or risk losing converts who feared retribution from the witchdoctor. Here the fear of negative transcendence trumped all positivity. The other example involved an FGW demonstration farm in Karatina on the foothills of Mt. Kenya. Here, all manner of pests and birds were ravaging the maize crop that was nearing harvesting. It had become a huge concern even for the local authorities who seemed out of answers. That is when the ADS organized a day of prayer and beseeched God to show himself powerful against this onslaught of pests and birds. True to the prayer, in broad daylight, the pests and birds ceased attacking the demonstration farm but continued to wreak havoc on neighboring farms. This story became a powerful testimony in subsequent FGW outreach campaigns.

The power of this demonstration of other-worldly influence over practical matters like being able to harvest a crop or not was not just in the transcendent manifestation itself akin to the duel between Elijah and the prophets of Baal chronicled in 1 Kings 18, but in its potential for witness. Indeed, that miracle involved the "…transformation from experiencing faith as a mystical, liminal experience to perceiving God's redemptive relationship with creation expressed in the normal structures of life."[411] For the crowds

[411] Bradshaw and Hiebert, 179.

that gathered and witnessed this spectacle, nothing could challenge the evidence their senses just apprehended.

Lastly, for a people, as we have seen, who continue to straddle a world where multiple spiritualities exists and operate, I must weave in the dimension of culture and spirituality and how they influence life choices. A people's spirituality, especially people like those who formed this study, "…is integral to their understanding of their world and their place in it, and so central to the decisions that they make about their communities' development."[412] The power encounters and Kitini and Karatina no doubt shaped and continued to shape the people's adoption of FGW and, to a greater effect, the kind of social capital they accrued with their neighbors dependent on those very choices. For those fearful of the witchdoctor's influence over their lives, they turned away from FGW while those who believed in God's power over pests and birds, embraced FGW wholeheartedly.

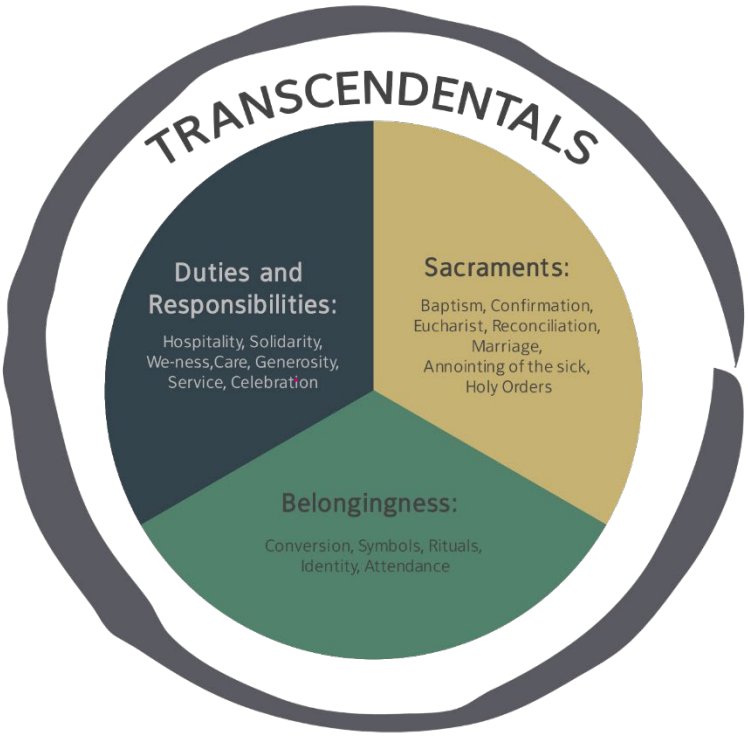
Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to make an argument for accounting for spiritual transformation in the practice of development in light of the 'social imaginary'[413] that it has become "... a lens through which societies and individuals have come to define themselves and others."[414] I started by drawing on the actual voices of a selection of those who provided data for this study describing elements of their own transformation. A true

[412] Eade, *Development and Culture*, 60.
[413] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 171–72.
[414] Fyfe, "Liturgies of Development," 14.

accounting of their spiritual transformation, I offer, must seriously consider how development beneficiaries describe their own transformation.

These voices were followed by an exploration of the general and in-depth Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) landscape including a historical perspective and culminated in my proposal for evaluating spiritual transformation. My proposal identifies four areas of focus which must be understood, not as free-standing, but integrated. The four elements are to be seen as parts of a circle, which without one or the other, fails to be complete. For a visual, I propose a circle divided into three equal parts, each of those parts standing for the elements of Belongingness, Sacraments and Duties and Responsibilities. Transcendentals will form the perimeter within which these three elements are contained. Under each slice will be particularities that can by themselves be metrics of measure.



In my mind, I propose an accounting-for-spiritual-transformation baseline that starts with conversion and is characterized by belonging to a faith community and participating in its life through attendance, membership, rituals, etc. Belongingness is then accorded 'accreditation' in the partaking of the particular faith community's sacraments and the fruit is seen in the shouldering of duties and responsibilities of a believer and a maturing member of a faith community. All these three elements are integrated through the transcedentals domain which provides the telos of all life and history.

In closing, I want to state that I observed these development beneficiary communities as immanently transcendental i.e., their identity as poor and long-suffering people imbued them with an approach to life that was firmly rooted in the contemporariness of now but also keenly focused on the future of the afterlife. As leading

Africanist theologian Paul Gifford observes, rural livelihoods like the ones represented in this study are uncertain[415] for many reasons like rain and crop failure, market fluctuations, brokers, etc., but develop ingenious ways to cope. These coping mechanisms include relations of kinship, exchange, reciprocity, webs of patronage (chiefs, rich men, politicians, among others), AND surrender to divine will.

Because of the shared vulnerabilities resulting from the uncertainty of their livelihoods, the people described in these pages are especially dependent on the quality of relationships they form with each other internally, and with others externally. Indeed, as Michael Banner observes, these people have discovered that living well is to live in relationship, in a society with two dimensions; a vertical one that directs them towards God, and a horizontal one that directs towards neighbor.[416] This sentiment is shared by Peter Kalellis who notes that spirituality is not a lone-ranger effort uniting a lonely soul with the divine, rather, it is a communal effort, an ever-present relationship with one another: God and neighbor.[417]

[415] Gifford, *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 6.
[416] Banner, *Christian Ethics*, 12.
[417] Kalellis, *Five Steps to Spiritual Growth*, 120.

Chapter 6

Findings

The last week of the data collecting phase in Kenya was spent on a meet-the-people tour. I visited all the individual focus groups that I interviewed, the local administrators who gave me their time and access to meetings, and individuals with whom I had grown particularly close to during this exercise. I also made numerous calls to persons in far-flung places like Ahero and Yatta to thank the people who extended me help in gathering the data. For every in-person visit, I brought with me the common staples of sugar, *unga* (maize floor), salt and cooking fat/oil.

To a person, everyone was cordial and positively hopeful that they had done everything possible to help me succeed. Others presented me with small gifts of love for my wife and children and invitations to return with the whole family soon. I was indeed able to return soon and visit some of the people together with my family a few months later. My family was shown great hospitality and generosity of things and time; copious amounts of *chai* (a must-have tea with milk in Kenya) and people stopping from tending their farms or flocks to visit with us.

The two pictures below show one of the women I worked with presenting me with a hand-decorated *shuka* showing farming God's way (FGW) lettering.

Picture of author at a beneficiary's home

Figure 3

Picture of author at a beneficiary's home with a gift blanket

Figure 4

Overview

I describe these encounters to bring to the fore a view of Kenyanness, of generosity (reciprocal gifting),[418] and of hospitality that framed this research while also being sensitive of what James Fergusson describes as the "dubiousness of a description of Africanness or Kenyanness"[419] that may take away from the findings of this study from

[418] It is a common practice in Kenya foe a visitor to bring with him/her common staples to the visit. Often, especially if the visitor came from the city, the recipients of the visit would send the visitor back with a gift or gifts of their own. These gifts often consist of things not generally available in the city without paying a steep price. They include free-range chickens, fresh produce, and grains.
[419] Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 1.

being specific to the contexts I collected the data from. I know that the data will and should have wider applicability, but I want it to reflect the truths of the people and places that provided it.

The practices I describe above have been characteristic of the Kenyan communities I have ever had the pleasure of being part of or visiting. I suspect they will continue and endure for generations. The nature of the gifts exchanged may change with time as urbanization and other influences exert their marks on society and as Kenya continues its march of modernization in the community of nations. It is this last point I want to highlight; that Kenya's standing on the arch of modernization among the community of nations is an aggregate of modernities. With modernities here I take a position that is somewhere between what Gifford rejects as becoming 'occidentalized' and Ernest Gellner's view of a totalizing effect that science and technology impose on how human societies look.[420]

In this concluding chapter, I will start by situating this study in the context of communities and a nation striving to be modern by increasing the efforts that improve the well-being of the poor. I will do this by putting in dialogue, the voices of those who helped in providing the data, scholars, and my own observations. This will be followed by revisiting the research questions to see if they were helpful in soliciting responses that led to new learning or revealed new areas of pursuit.

[420] Gifford, *Christianity, Development and Modernity in Africa*, 152–53.

Importantly, I will also report the findings of the study and organize them by three pertinent categories: transformation, spirituality, and metrics. Findings will be followed by a proposal for new areas of research and a conclusion of the whole study.

Becoming Modern

The communities that formed this study were all engaged in ways of becoming modern at least in the ways that the individuals verbalized their quests. Moving from a grass thatched hut to a four-walled small house with a tin roof- a modern house- was viewed preferentially by a villager in Makuyu. On the same note, while many of these villagers were waiting for the modern good of piped water, their counterparts in Nairobi suburbs were craving for imported washing machines. These quests clearly bear both marks of occidentalization and are products of science and technology.

Fittingly, Ferguson observes that in Africa modernity has always been about the present and past, and also up and down. He continues to say that the aspiration to modernity is about rising in the world economically and politically, about improving the conditions of life (material things and how to meet them), AND (my emphasis) that these aspirations are indexed to such primary 'modern' goods as improved housing, health care, and education.[421] Indeed, as I gathered the data for this study, it was as the people were pursuing these 'modern' goods. They understood the pursuit as seeking development.

[421] Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 32.

And because this study was the examination of Christian spirituality, it is important to present how the tapestry of religion (Christian and African Traditional Religion ATR-influences) interacts with the rest of life- politics, the economy and social networks in Kenya. It has been noted that religion suffuses all facets of life in Kenya. "…Kenyans think about the world today largely through religious ideas…the topics of religion and politics obsess them in bars and bus queues…"[422] While Kenyans are not unique in mixing their politics with religion, (other examples include the political conflicts of Northern Ireland, Iraq/Iran war, the never-ending Israeli-Palestinian conflict,[423] etc.) Kenyan politicians and religious leaders have a storied history of using each other for both good and harmful ways.

Most recently, the current President and Deputy President co-opted the leadership of major denominations in a fervor of nation-wide prayer rallies to aid in their pending cases at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague for their role in post-election violence of 2007-08.[424] When the ICC dropped the cases against the two, they were timely in assigning the 'victory' to the people's prayers.[425] Religious leaders have also been known to align themselves with powerful politicians to advance personal agendas.[426]

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[422] B. Knighton, ed., *Religion and Politics in Kenya: Essays in Honor of a Meddlesome Priest*, 2009 edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 61.
[423] Peter I. Gichure and Diane B. Stinton, *Religion and Politics in Africa: Theological Reflections for the 21st Century*, Ecumenical Symposium of Eastern Africa Theologians (ESEAT): No. 3 (Paulines Publications Africa, 2008), 17.
[424] Ally Jamah, "President Uhuru Kenyatta Tells off ICC Judges on DP William Ruto Prayer Rallies," The Standard, accessed November 16, 2020, https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/the-hague-trial/article/2000180251/president-uhuru-kenyatta-tells-off-icc-judges-on-dp-william-ruto-prayer-rallies.
[425] Matilda Nzioki, "'The Prayer Rallies Worked!' - DP Ruto after the Friday ICC Ruling," Tuko.co.ke - Kenya news., February 13, 2016, https://www.tuko.co.ke/95056-prayer-rallies-worked-dp-ruto-friday-icc-ruling.html.
[426] Okesson, *Re-Imaging Modernity*, 159.

On the connection between ATR and contemporary Christianity, I want to be guided by the words of Okot p'Bitek who noted that African religions are not so much concerned with the beginning and end of the world as they are with the good life of here and now, with health and prosperity, success in life, happy and productive marriages, but also with the cause of diseases, failures, and other obstacles in the path of self-actualization and fulfilment.[427]These words are echoed by Wendy Tyndale who observes that people see signs of the sacred in the pragmatic i.e. when people see the ICC acquittals, when they do better in business and succeed in other facets of life, they are wont to believe more in the divine. When Kamau's grandson did well in his exams and therefore secured a place in a good secondary school, it was interpreted as prayers answered.

To finish the framing I am setting for this section, I want to add that, development, being a process and idea or set of ideas about improving life's conditions and outcomes, exists in an ecosystem of Christianity imbued with images and messages of prevalent success, and victory/wealth programming.[428] There was no shortage of these images and messages during the data gathering phase. Indeed, I often found my informants listening to one of many prosperity preachers on their radios while working and also heard conversations about the material successes of the same preachers. There was at least one giant billboard advertising an upcoming gospel crusade in Makuyu by a popular prosperity preacher while I was there.

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[427] Okot P'Bitek, *African Religions in European Scholarship* (New York; Chesapeake: ECA Association, 1968), 62.
[428] Gifford, *Christianity Politics and Public Life in Kenya*, 150.

The tapestry I describe here above was in plain view during this study and I want to faithfully present it. In the coming section, I will be reporting on the findings and recommendations arising from the research. This process will start with revisiting the four areas of spiritual capital that I identified earlier (organizational, confessional, correlational and processional/structural) and relating them to the research questions. I will then integrate these focuses with the interview questions and report the data that emerged. I obviously cannot engage all the 41 individual survey questions but will engage them on aggregate and by category. Because the survey questions arose out of the broad research questions, I will make sure to frame my engagement of them and the subsequent data within the contours of the research questions.

After revisiting the research questions, I will discuss three main focus areas that I have deemed important in reporting the results. These are transformation, spiritual capital, and metrics. I will then offer a summary of the chapter and suggest new areas of research pursuits.

Revisiting Research Questions

Category 1 Survey Questions: Interview Questions for Organizational Leaders

I developed this set of questions targeting organizational leaders to generate a feel of how organizational leaders with oversight responsibilities over program evaluation understood those responsibilities and how they thought their organizations were faring in those regards. In total, fourteen organizational leaders sat down with me and answered my questions on a variety of topics about how they understood the missions of their

organizations and about what tools and processes existed to make informed decisions. The questions were divided into three general categories. The first concerned the general characterization of the organizations, the second was about work priorities and processes while the latter part concerned assessments and evaluative aspects.

At the onset, I wanted to develop a baseline about how these leaders viewed their organizations in terms of being faith based or secular. Of the fourteen, only two identified their organizations as secular, and even for these two, one was not fully certain about the distinction. The challenge in establishing the distinction was because the organization, Utooni Development Organization, was started by a pastor and continued to draw much support from faith organizations. At the time of my visit, there was a distinct atmosphere of religious influences from the iconography on office wall calendars, a Bible on a staff's desk or the recurring partnership with Roslyn Academy, a Christian private school from Nairobi. My visit coincided with a Roslyn field day at Utooni which was an exchange of free labor by the students during the construction of a sand dam for school credit for doing community service. I was made to understand that this arrangement had been in place for many years.

My key UDO informant first identified the organization as faith-based because of the proportion of support it received from church-affiliated organizations by saying, "I would say we are faith based because most of our support comes from churches. Our major donor currently is from the US and Canada (the Mennonite churches in both countries) who supports about four other organizations in Kenya." When I asked about the absence of that connection from the official registration documents, he was no longer

certain about the characterization. This, and perhaps or because of the general religious aura that permeates much of the Kenyan NGO world I am familiar with, I learned was not a unique dilemma. Indeed, as I interviewed my contact person for the second self-identifying secular organization, Hand-in-Hand (HIH), she observed that HIH was not religiously affiliated and therefore secular, but its conduct of business in the communities I observed mirrored[429] those organizations that were overtly faith based.

On this note of being faith based or secular, I observed that the smaller organizations like HIH and UDO often took on the character of their leaders. This is to say that if their leaders were people who publicly practiced their faith, their respective organizations often mimicked those faith orientations at least in the public conduct of business like in meetings which would notably begin with prayers and/or homily.

The acceptance of public faith even in arenas where it otherwise would not be expected is commonplace in Kenya. The two *barazas* (public meetings) I attended during this research started with a prayer offered by a man who was a constant in most of my focus groups meetings. He followed his prayer with a short exultation from the Bible before the local administrators addressed those gathered.

On the other side, larger multi-national organizations like Compassion International (CI) were very clear-eyed about the nature of their organizations. My informant at CI described the organization this way, "CI is a Christian child development organization. Our core principle is that we are a Christ-centered organization, and our key

[429] In Makuyu, HIH did not have its own community groups, rather, it was doing its business with existing community groups that fell under the umbrella of Anglican Development Services (ADS).

focus is children or child development, and we work in partnership with the church. These 3 C's give us the authority to say that we are a Christian organization." He continued to present the priorities and processes at CI as overtly Christ-centered and shaped around four focuses: developing children into responsible Christian adults, nurturing the cognitive aspects through education, promoting health, and attending to the social-emotional dimensions of life.[430]

WRK is without a doubt a faith based international development organization with a footprint in twenty countries across the globe.[431] Unlike CI cited above whose focus is on children largely, WR's focus is on different vulnerabilities. These span the range of refugee resettlement to proper sanitation, from disaster relief to empowering local pastors in Muslim majority communities.[432] Because WR's range of projects is so wide, I will narrow my reporting to my conversation with a WRK leader about a specific project undertaking and the data that arose from that. I select that conversation because it provided relevant elements of the foci I chose to report here, especially the priorities and focuses, and the evaluative aspects.

WRK's involvement with the Turkana pastoralist community in Northern Kenya was in response to a humanitarian crisis occasioned by a severe famine that was ravaging the Horn of Africa largely, and north eastern Kenya specifically.[433] The initial response

[430] Interview with Justus at CI Nairobi headquarters.
[431] "About."
[432] My conversation with Ollie at WRK offices in Nairobi. Part of the work that WRK had done in Northern in Kenya with the Turkana pastoralist community was empowering local pastors by putting them in charge of identifying the most vulnerable members of their communities who stood to benefit the most from the benefit package WRK was coordinating.
[433] "Africa Famine 2011-2012," *Direct Relief* (blog), April 12, 2018, https://www.directrelief.org/emergency/2011-2012-africa-famine/.

was to alleviate the great human suffering resulting from lack of food. This pastoralist community was also losing its flocks to lack of pasture and water. To meet this immediate need, WRK in partnership with a leading Pentecostal church in Nairobi (Parklands Baptist Church), led two food delivery and distribution trips. Once this immediate need was met, WRK set in place processes intended to bring a longer-term solution to the problem. These processes started with the dispatch of situation survey team from disaster response team in Baltimore and resulted in the deployment of a disaster response mechanism tasked to respond in three areas: nutrition, food distribution and water access. This was achieved through the use of an agency model, working directly in the community but alongside the local church.

Speaking to the evaluative aspects of this engagement, Ollie reported that, after an eight-month period, malnutrition levels dropped from 32 to 13 which were within allowable World Health Organization (WHO) thresholds. At this juncture, WRK was faced with a decision to make, to consider its work done or carry on. The decision was made to stay partly because of the success of using pastors to identify those who needed help most and bringing them into church settings where they would receive food and other interventions. Per Ollie, local churches saw tremendous growth in membership and attendance as well as the unexpected result of elevating the view of pastors in a majority Muslim community. These two developments held the promise of spiritual impacts that would "start the process of transformation".

The decision to stay also meant a change in stance by WRK from disaster relief management to a development one, from food distribution to food production. This

second phase resulted in the sinking of boreholes with the local pastors assuming the roles of borehole patrons where the communities not only came for water, but also witnessed the initial steps of transforming their communities from being solely pastoralist to learning to farm from the demonstration farms set up in the borehole spaces. With pastors as borehole patrons, more opportunities to demonstrate the gospel availed themselves.

The additional opportunities for demonstrating as well as proclaiming the Good News began to bear fruit through some of the metrics that WRK had identified. These include conversions, church attendance (especially for first timers), church plants/sprouts, and other changes that Ollie described as cultural. I want to highlight especially the conversions because I felt they provided a solid baseline for WRK to track spiritual transformation. Indeed, I offer that WRK more than any of the other organizations in this study, was very deliberate about establishing and measuring spiritual capital formation.

Because of the complexity of conversion for people in Muslim majority backgrounds, the conversion described here was of the kind that Paul Gifford spoke of while quoting J.D.Y. Peel; "… the process by which people come to regard themselves, and be regarded by others, as Christians."[434] In the same section, Peel continues to observe,

> "This social identification is what being a Christian most immediately and unarguably *is*, rather than holding certain beliefs or behaving in certain ways specified a priori … By taking social identification as the real thing to be explained we avoid the analytical problems which arise if-as often occurs in practice-Christians maintain or later adopt 'non-Christian' beliefs and practices

[434] J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, Illustrated edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 216. C.f. Gifford.

> but still insist on regarding themselves as Christians and are so regarded by others."[435]

All these elements were present in the picture of transformation that Ollie presented in our conversation. He described a scenario where whole households were converting and starting to attend church in growing numbers. Increasingly as their stay in the churches grew, the new believers started to make other changes in their lives. These changes included cultural mainstays like dropping polygamy (stopping altogether or letting go of subsequent wives), allowing kids to stay in school instead of herding cattle, goats, and camels all day, not bringing charms and amulets into church, and dressing differently for church services. These changes are noteworthy considering that these new believers often reverted to the old habits of wearing amulets and charms, taking snuff, consulting with traditional healers, and chewing tobacco, yet they still regarded themselves and were regarded by their community as Christians.

Other significant changes that happened along the same lines are what I refer to as conversions by 'acclamation'. The Turkana people are very patriarchal, and this orientation was evident in how conversions happened. Ollie related that when a husband converted to Christianity, his whole household was also expected to convert with him. This included his wives (if he was polygamous) and all his children old enough to somehow understand that starting to go to church meant a big change in the household. Per Peel's working definition of conversion, these people were to be regarded as fully Christian, regardless of what they understood their new social identity to consist of.

[435] Peel, 216. C.f. Gifford

Doctrines, dogmas, or theologies did not confer to them the identity of Christian, their accent to self-identify as such and to be regarded by others as such, did.

There were other changes that began to happen as the churches continued to take root. The pastors' social capital was increasing as they gained more recognition for being identified with positive changes in the community. Where they were erstwhile ignored at public meetings organized by local administration, the pastors began getting speaking slots at the same meetings. As their social positions in the community elevated, the pastors started to seek more formal education. WRK and its partners helped to put educational programs together.

As the pastors continued with their own development, WRK was thinking about an empowered church. Part of the continuing training of the pastors involved the raising of a laity that could start taking on duties and responsibilities that were before now all on the shoulders of the pastors. Soon, the congregation was getting more involved in planning and conducting singing, a women's ministry serving widows was started, and the youth started serving other youth. Ollie called these developments spontaneous ministries. These ministries were in line with a vision from WR's Integral Mission for more laity-led than clergy-led church ministries. In good time, these ministries led to church plants and sprouts.

The metrics of conversion, attendance, cultural change, church plants/sprouts, empowered churches, and others were all areas where real spiritual capital could be developed and assessed using the proposal I offered earlier.

Category 2 Survey Questions: Interview Questions for Individuals-FBOs

I developed this set of questions to get a good feel of how individual beneficiaries of faith-based organizations (FBOs) experienced any changes in their spirituality. Like Category 1 questions, I divided these questions into three broad focuses; the first one dealt with general characterization of how the individual understood him/herself religiously and spiritually[436], the second about organizational processes and practices that may have contributed to spirituality, and thirdly, some evaluative probes. The following section will be my report of the data generated from these questions and my analysis of the responses contained therein.

Part of the selection criteria of this study's participants was their ability to express themselves in English. A handful of the respondents were quite fluent in English while the majority spoke English haltingly. On many occasions, this latter group interspersed their responses with a mixture of Kiswahili and Kikuyu to clarify what they felt they could not fully express in English. Fortunately, as a speaker of both local languages, I was able to get to what they intended to say with great accuracy. I preface the coming discussion with these remarks to add texture to how I arrived at the analyses I present.

I conducted five interviews with individuals affiliated with faith-based development organizations to assess what their experiences had been. All of them were involved with Anglican Development Services (ADS) but also with other groups that had

[436] As I observed earlier, spirituality is a difficult concept to translate for the non-English speakers who constituted this study. In fact, the translation for 'spirit' in Kikuyu (the language of most of those who I surveyed) is the same for soul, heart, and even demon.

overlaps with ADS. This section will present data from four of the five because one interview was cut midway due to a family emergency.

Tarcisius, the most constant of all the interviewees, was a retiree from the civil service and had Form Four (equivalent of American 12th grade) education level. His long service in the government allowed him to be fluent in English. This ability was immensely helpful in our one-on-one conversations as well as the many conversations he facilitated as the chairperson of several village development groups and a note-taker for the Chief during public meetings.

When I asked him if he would describe himself as a religious or spiritual person, he answered, "I am a religious as well as a spiritual person. I have been Catholic since I was ten years old. I read my Bible constantly." He clearly understood, in his mind, the two concepts to mean different things. For him, being religious meant belonging to a denomination and ascribing to its teachings and traditions. On the other hand, he expressed spirituality to be the things one does to grow as a Christian.

This view of how he understood his spirituality was further solidified by his response to my question about how his spirituality had grown as a result of his involvement with Farming God's Way (FGW). He said, "I am certainly more spiritual… in Malachi 3: 10 God says to try him, and I am indeed believing it and practicing it by giving of first fruits and tithing. I am deliberate about 'measuring' my crop in order to give back ten percent to the church. I was not previously aware of this mandate from the Bible." He connected his reading of the Bible to real personal behavior change which for him signaled spiritual growth. Importantly, he also linked this change to the 'biblical

keys'[437] that are part of FGW's curriculum. The fifth biblical key is about bringing tithes and offerings to God.

In our wide-ranging conversation, Tarcisius also spoke about transformation both at the internal personal level and externally. Internally, he spoke about how desiring to be closer to God led him to quit drinking and smoking. At the external level, he pointed to the difference in his field and that of his wife who had refused to adopt FGW. The size and shimmer of the heads of maize from his part of their two-acre piece of land was better than those from his wife's. He also had more time to devote to other pursuits like offering religious instruction to his grandchildren and devoting more time to propagating the message of FGW. The reason he had more time for these other interests was because he no longer needed to till and weed his side of the farm because three years of FGW had ensured that his was fully covered with mulch. In contrast, his wife still needed to spend almost all her waking hours tilling and weeding.

It might be tempting to dismiss Tarcisius' wife refusal to adopt FGW to being obstinate and stubborn, but a further dig into the reason uncovered some cultural reservations. A lazy wife is the object of scorn in the Kikuyu community, and the concept of hard work is prized. Further conversations with Tarcisius revealed that his wife's opposition to FGW was because she did not want to seek the 'easy' way out. She wanted to continue to be seen as someone who worked hard, even when that work did not necessarily need to be hard.

[437] "Overview," accessed November 21, 2020, https://www.farming-gods-way.org/overview.htm.

I got the distinct feeling that Tarcisius genuinely believed that how he was running his life was aligned with God's will. He saw 'evidence' of that alignment in the form of blessings that were coming his way. Some the blessings he listed for me were the stellar performance of his two grandsons at school, the better than average crop yields, the confidence of his neighbors[438], and financial success.[439] I sensed that Tarcisius believed that these good things that had happened in his life came about because of his involvement with FGW, and more importantly, his taking to heart the biblical teachings.

The second participant whose story I want to report is Wambui, a retired primary school teacher, farmer, businesswoman and philanthropist. Her and husband Kamau (Kamaus) practice intensive agribusiness in their six-acre farm just outside the Makuyu township. While their profile does not match those of the majority that I worked with in Makuyu, the Kamaus were integral parts of the functioning of the numerous FGW groups. For one, they were immensely successful as FGW champion farmers, but they were also great benefactors of those groups in providing leadership and space for the groups to do business.

Kamaus were a true representation of what FGW leaders called transformation and stewardship. Over the years, they had transformed their land to be a showcase for intensive agribusiness successfully doing dairy zero grazing, poultry farming, goat rearing, and agroforestry. Indeed, it looked like every inch of the six-acre property was in use. Their success was also demonstrated in the zero-waste, maximum resource

[438] His neighbors had elected him chairman of the water project, a feat he says would have been impossible in his drinking and smoking days.
[439] He was able to help pay school fees for his grandson in the amount of 40,000 shillings (about $ 400), not a small amount for an unemployed peasant farmer.

utilization philosophy. All the waste from their animals was put to use in generating biogas for home use and as manure for the farm. Hay for the animals was grown on their property plus they had figured out how to make their own animal feed in-house and no longer had need for commercial animal feed.

In terms of stewardship, Kamaus led by example. They had not only donated a half-acre plot for a new Anglican church plant at Morem but were also funding the construction of the church building with a space to be used as a dispensary to serve the poor local community. At the Ciumbu village center where ADS had local offices, the Kamaus donated the office space which was next to a shop that Wambui ran.

When I asked Wambui about these acts of generosity, she talked about how blessed her and Kamau were. She spoke about how after getting married at twenty-one and working as a P1 teacher (lowest starting level for a primary school teacher), her and Kamau received promotions over the years and were blessed with four children who had given them ten grandchildren. Because they were blessed, she added, they felt compelled by Christian duty to bless others, especially the less fortunate. ADS had presented the perfect opportunity for them to do this duty. Additionally, they had employed two full-time farm hands and had a constant need for casual laborers. At the time of our conversation, the Kamaus had just concluded a successful *harambee* that raised Ksh. 141,000 at their local Anglican church. Ksh. 40,000 was earmarked for the church's diocesan quota[440] while the balance went towards completing the dispensary.

[440] In the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), individual churches contribute money collected through tithes and offerings towards the parish which in turn remits the money to the diocese. Individual churches as well as parishes have quotas, as do dioceses for the national office.

Finally, I want to report my interaction with another FGW adherent who had experienced great transformation in his personal fortunes as well as his spiritual life. When Luke started with one of the FGW's groups three years prior to our conversation, he was not a Christian. He was also a habitual drunkard and chain smoker. Drinking and smoking are seen as vices that good Christians should not engage in.[441] Luke informed me that he had converted to Christianity after his wife started with FGW and subsequently introduced him to it. Significantly, he spoke about how the biblical keys, especially two and four (consider your ways, and you reap what you sow) had convinced him to change his ways and stop throwing away his hard-earned money on booze and cigarettes.

Apart from the very impactful decision to follow Christ, Luke instituted other personal changes to impact his community. He started to tithe regularly and make in-kind donations to his neighbors in worse off conditions than himself. These acts of generosity especially stood out for me because Luke was by no stretch of a man of means. He described his incredible transformation of personal fortunes thus: "…three years ago I had no cows, goats or rabbits. I had two chickens. Today I have three cows, a few goats, many rabbits and about sixty chickens. The chickens also give us eggs for consumption and for selling." Aside from the reticence to give actual counts[442], what Luke was describing was quite remarkable. The whole property was two acres evenly split between

[441] Attitudes about smoking and drinking among Christians continue to evolve. When growing up, it was not uncommon to see White Catholic priests smoking, but as the church indigenized, I saw less and less smoking. Among the Protestants, smoking is still frowned upon.

[442] Although Luke is Kamba, he is a minority in a predominantly Kikuyu community; however, this hesitation to give true counts of what one owns is common among Kikuyu people. It is believed that giving a true count is prideful.

three brothers. When you take out the portion taken up by three households, there was little land left for crops and animals. Even with these significant constraints, Luke was able to fully support his family (wife and three children) and still tithe and make donations to his neighbors.

Interestingly, he had chosen to tithe exclusively in-kind because he needed money more to keep the farming operation going. This kind of tithing and offering was a refreshing flashback to my childhood days where it was common, especially for the aged and unemployed, to bring chickens, fruit, and other produce to church as tithes and for sale to get money for offering.[443]

Another thing that stood out during our conversation was the stark difference between Luke's property and the two adjoining pieces owned by his brothers. Both brothers had refused to take up FGW, and their crops looked bad. Their homes also appeared to be in disrepair. When I asked Luke, himself a former cynic, about why his brothers had not joined him in spite of the proven results, he said, "When I started there were a lot of doubters who openly said that I had lost my mind by not ploughing but I pushed on to let the results speak for themselves. Now some of those people are ashamed, others have started FGW while others cannot bring themselves to adopt this new way."

Luke's story here was emblematic of numerous similar cases where adopting what was by all appearances a good thing was not widespread as one would wish. It

[443] It was common practice for the congregation to bid on, say a chicken, at collection time to help the owner to get cash to put in the collection basket. Because the said chicken went to the highest bidder, its owner collected the amount of the highest bid and gave back a portion of it as tithe or offering. The remainder was retained by the owner. I understood this later to be a way for the church body to help members who had limited ways of obtaining cash for staples and other needs.

spoke to how even in households where everyone attended the same church, some members never made the leap to be born again but continued to participate in all church activities as nominal Christians. This dynamic would be an interesting area of study to pursue.

Category 3 Questions: Interviews with Community Leaders (specific to spiritual transformation)

As the last set of survey questions, I designed them to help me get a broad appraisal from community leaders, about how well or not, spiritual transformation had occurred in their communities following the work of different organizations. Some of these leaders are administrative (Chief and Sub-chief) while others doubled as organizational leaders by dint of having leadership roles in the organizations, and also because the communities they served treated them as leaders because of their success, age, and/or reputation. Leaders in the latter category include Bishop Masika who is the head of Christian Impact Mission (CIM), but also regarded as a leader in the Yatta community where CIM is located, and indeed the whole nation. Others in this class include Tarcisius whose story I covered in Category 1 above, Maggie who was an ADS staff and leader of the Makuyu FGW groups, and Kaara, a FGW champion farmer, but also well regarded in his Karia-ini community as a man of faith and wisdom. Kaara's reputation as a farmer was well established even before FGW came about.[444]

[444] Kaara was a good friend of my dad's and I came to know of him as a young boy from his reputation as a great farmer whose citrus crops were the talk of the village.

I want to first highlight Masika's CIM because his 35-year 'community-based research and demonstration center'[445] has contributed to enormous transformation of the Kenyatta area of greater Yatta. The transformation is notable in its breadth and depth cutting through the spheres of personal responsibility, mindset change to leadership development. During our meeting, the bishop described a formula of transformation that he described as "how things move from the center sideways affecting and impacting everyone and causing mass transformation". With this formula, he detailed a three-step process of how one of his solutions was working out in the community. It started with the deployment of a simple technology employed to aid in organic farming. At the demonstration center, the technology is practiced until it is perfected. Once the technology is perfected, the community is invited for demonstration and training. The last step is adoption in the community. We had the opportunity to observe all three steps during our day-long visit which concluded with a visit to one of bishop's proteges at his thriving farm.

CIM's work in Yatta was a response to a devastating draught that had caused the Kamba people, predominant in Yatta, to disregard a taboo and eat dog and donkey meat to stave off starvation. This desperate act caused a national furor and great infamy for the community.[446] As a consequence, the bishop mobilized a major relief food delivery but was already thinking about a solution to the endemic famines and drought. He was convinced that the solution was within reach but required a wholesale mindset change. In

[445] Bishop Masika's description of CIM
[446] ndungekivuva, "Fighting Famine in Yatta," *Fuatakivuva* (blog), June 4, 2012, https://fuatakivuva.wordpress.com/2012/06/04/fighting-famine-in-yatta/.

his mind, the Kamba people had become used to relief aid and had never experienced leadership bold and big enough to lead them out of this condition that he aptly described as being 'in the box'.

Here is how the bishop described the dearth of leadership in Yatta when he called for a meeting of leaders following the initial relief mission,

> "When I returned a couple weeks later for the meeting, there were about 1000 'leaders' present. In the face of the problems in the community, I doubted the leadership. How can you have a thousand leaders when you are lost? It was clear to me they thought I was bringing more relief food."

He made a mental note to find ways to transform how proper leadership looked like.

At the meeting, Operation Myolyo Out (OMO), an exit strategy from dependence on relief food was born. Noble as it sounded, it was met with immediate resistance especially from those who had exploited the dependence to advance their own causes, political or personal. The bishop characterized these detractors as inciters. In response to the inciters' noise, he mobilized for another relief drive, but this time when he arrived, he challenged the community to make a choice between receiving the needed food or listening to the inciters. "The choice was simple, the inciters gave me room to operate", the bishop observed emphatically. Thus was born a journey into transformation unencumbered by detractors with nothing positive to offer.

Left free to imagine and chart a different Yatta, Bishop Masika identified five areas that were deficient: water, food and financial security, education, and market linkage. He immediately set about tackling all of them. The water problem could be

solved with implementing simple water harvesting technologies (water pans[447]) which allowed people to grow food and therefore tackle food insecurity. Tackling the education piece would proceed on a number of fronts: formal education, cultural and religious education (to overcome the reluctance to send kids to school, and to overcome the influences of witchcraft, respectively)[448], and mindset change. Bishop also went to work capitalizing on the vast network of contacts he had built over the years to find good and sustainable markets for the high value crops that started to come out of Yatta.

The results of these interventions were quite remarkable. OMO was launched on January 14, 2010 and by March of the same year, there were 250 water pans that had even collected water from 'stray' rains in February. By year-end, Yatta was food secure as adoption of simple farming technologies attained critical mass. By June of 2011, there were 600 water pans in the community with the one-acre packaging agriculture practice in place[449].

The educational revolution had other positive impacts as well. While noting that the Kenyatta community now boasts one of the highest concentrations of university graduates, the bishop explained a significant change that had accompanied this outcome: because of the demonstration of how profitable farming could be, more and more college graduates were choosing to stay in the village and farm instead of going into the cities chasing after elusive graduate-befitting jobs.

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[447] Water pans are small, often hand-dug, ponds made to collect rain runoff.
[448] The bishop spoke about how, because of the firm grasp witchcraft had on people, there was widespread reluctance to let children go to school fearing that if they did well the evil forces of witchcraft would descend on the family. Similarly, parents were keeping girls home while sending boys to school believing that girls would eventually be married off and therefore did not need education.
[449] Participating households were expected to set aside one acre for use to grow export-only crops.

A tour of the community with the bishop allowed us to see the transformation he was describing, a community of about six thousand people with each household boasting a water pan. Throughout the day we observed locals delivering produce to CIM for storage in the giant charcoal cooler and for use in the bread factory on site. In the households we visited, we observed how people's sense of aesthetics had changed to become utilitarian i.e., instead of planting flowers around their houses, they had planted onions, carrots, and other edible plants instead (they could eat these and enjoy them for their aesthetics as well).

In other aspects of transformation, the bishop spoke of how a more grounded Christianity had dispersed the spell of witchcraft from the community. Even though crime rates are generally low in rural areas, reports of crime were non-existent here, its commercial village status notwithstanding. The bishop spoke of how church attendance, giving and serving others had increased over his years in Kenyatta.

The second story I want to include in this section, fittingly, is of the Chief[450] of Makuyu (Mr. Mwangi), the location from which most of the data for this study arose. I was able to interview the chief in his office before attending a *baraza* he was conducting to solicit views over some issues with a water project. Aside from the opportunity to listen to the people air their grievances over a matter central to most development initiatives (clean water availability), I was eager to see how religion and politics interacted with development. The chief is appointed to the position but traditionally the role has been more political than the civil servant it was intended to be. Additionally, I

[450] A Chief is a local government administrator in charge of the equivalent of a county in the US.

was grateful to get the interview because this chief had been in the position for twelve years, and a resident of Makuyu for twenty. He had also been involved in the cooperative movement, a key vehicle for development in the 80s and 90s for the eight years prior to becoming chief.

From his perch as an administrator and a man of faith (he was a born-again Anglican), Mwangi was used to making evaluative assessments of varied things like how well development projects were going, who were the most vulnerable people in his jurisdiction, what were the most serious threats to social harmony in the community, and importantly for this study, how his faith was bearing on all the decisions he had to make.

Wearing his administrative hat, Mwangi told me of World Vision's (WV) long involvement in the community as well as other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He observed, "I have coordinated with many NGOs with World Vision being the most prominent one. World Vision has transformed the area quite considerably. Indeed, they have helped us a lot with civic education here in the sub-county for the last ten years." He would go ahead and enumerate a number of accomplishments the community achieved through WV's help. These included civic education following post-election ethnic violence that led to massive dislocations (Makuyu is home to several multinational agricultural plantations that employ people from many ethnicities), agriculture, water, and spiritually through village-based small groups.

Commenting about spiritual transformation in the community, Mwangi offered this response, "I have to say that there is a clear transformation that has happened in the people these last five years. In my meetings, it is now common for them to start with a

short devotion delivered by a local pastor. This was not the case before the involvement of World Vision in our community." Indeed, the meeting I attended opened this same way. He also noted that the mainline denominations (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Deliverance) met regularly to discuss common issues facing the community. The most urgent of these issues were drug use (marijuana) and consumption of cheap illicit brews. There was also a new related problem of counterfeiting liquor with cheap, unvetted, and often dangerous ingredients. Controlling this problem was especially daunting because detecting the fakes was difficult.

Mwangi made a connection between the challenges of curbing the use of marijuana and consumption of illicit brews to another menace that was sundering the fabric of Kikuyu rural communities: the proscribed *Mungiki* gang. Following its ban by the government in 2002[451] and the ensuing crackdown on its members, the young men who filled its ranks had retreated to the villages where they were met with ostracization by the communities and a desperation wrought by lack of jobs. Broke, stigmatized, and on the run from the government, these young men resulted to substance use to numb them. Soon, these young men returned to their criminal ways terrorizing villagers and straining meagre enforcement resources. Consequently, the local authorities started looking for help anywhere they could find it.

Part of the response was championed by local churches that Mwangi described this way,

[451] Reuters Staff, "FACTBOX: Key Facts about Kenya's Mungiki Gang," *Reuters*, March 6, 2009, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-gang-mungiki-sb-idUSTRE52537620090306.

> "In the dark times when the *Mungiki* sect was wreaking havoc in this community, the churches took charge in reaching out to the community to flush out the thugs. Also, as concerns second-generation (illicit) brews, the churches and the groups that remained from World Vision's involvement have been key partners in combatting the vice."

This work involved letting the authorities know who the offenders were and where to find them, deterrent efforts (forming patrol squads of young men from the churches) and ministering. Ministering to the wayward young men, per Mwangi, was easily the most effective way of turning these young men away from criminality and substance abuse. In fact, while comparing the efficacy of faith-based and secular interventions in the community, he noted, "The faith-based organizations seem to have an edge on this score."

Another area where the faiths-led initiatives were having noticeable effect was in rooting out witchcraft. Responding to a question about what in his community would indicate to an outsider that Christian organizations had worked there, Mwangi said, "In my view, he/she would clearly be able to see some differences. One of these arises from the fact that ours is a mixed community with a number of tribal groups living here because of the plantations and closeness to Thika town. These communities co-exist with each other in a healthy way that I can only attribute to spiritual well-being. We do not have cases of witchcraft here also. Another thing that you notice about us is how cosmopolitan we are…you have many tribal groups living here in harmony."

These chief's observations will conclude the section on reporting the data. I will now pivot on to the summary findings of this study and conclude with recommendations for further research.

Summary of Findings

This study sought to explore how organizations involved in international development went about planning for, executing, and measuring if spiritual transformation was happening. In reporting the summary findings, I will focus on the transformation itself, spirituality, and the measurements (metrics).

Transformation

Unlike spirituality which, aside from the translation challenges I addressed earlier, is difficult to define, transformation, I found out, was relatively easier to apprehend. With the exception of 'development' I found the term 'transformation' to have the most usage in development parlance. In all cases, its usage appeared to suggest significant, radical, and discernible change in personal and social life. In other instances, it was used almost interchangeably with development itself. For example, when talking with individuals who had adopted CIM's teachings, they talked about how the transformation at CIM headquarters, from a bereft and arid wasteland to a lush productive oasis, was equal to development. They hoped to reproduce the transformation in their own properties, and hence be equally developed. Even the bishop himself talked about how the CIM campus was a model of transformation, especially when contrasted with the surrounding areas with the same weather conditions but without CIM's methods. There was an unmistakable transformation of the landscape.

There was also the different understanding of transformation offered by the chief when he observed that it was now common practice for his meetings to start with prayers and a short sermon. He tied that change to influences by WV and characterized it as

spiritual transformation, "…ours is a mixed community with a number of tribal groups living here because of the plantations and closeness to Thika town. These communities co-exist with each other in a healthy way that I can only attribute to spiritual well-being. We do not have cases of witchcraft here also."

Additional to the different views of what transformation was, there was also the way that transformation occurred. It was my observation, and indeed that of Bishop Masika, that transformation followed a pattern of from centers to peripheries. To borrow from the language of human development in biology, transformation is proximal-distal in orientation. From the center at CIM campus, transformation was diffusing into the wider community. In the same breath, transformation is also localized and context specific. What amounts to transformation in Yatta may not qualify as such in Makuyu or Ahero. This is true also of spiritual transformation. I observed that different places were dealing with varying spiritual realities at any given time. For example, even in the greater Makuyu, residents in its more northern edges were more concerned with the effects of witchcraft than their southernmost compatriots. It appeared like the fear of witchcraft had an inverse correlation with proximity to urban settings. The further one moved from urban areas, the greater was the fear of witchcraft and its influences.

Transformation is organic (continuous and natural) and self-replicates out of need. The miracle of CIM, transformative and life changing as it were, did not have universal adoption even in Kenyatta; however, those who had taken the challenge were remarkably self-driven and rewarded. When WV Tanzania Country Director and department heads visited Yatta to witness the miracle, he observed, "Bishop you have no donor, yet in the

35 years you have been doing this work, you have more to show for it than World Vision, yet World Vision was the most highly funded NGO in Tanzania for the same period. It must be that the box and *mwolyo* mindsets are the difference. We have to go implement this right away". The implementation resulted in this observation, "When I visited this January, you can see transformation from Tanga to Mwanza. They have dug dams, doing irrigation, and exporting produce. Donors are pouring into Tanzania to see this transformation. I even met Melinda Gates as she toured an area where they have dug about 400 dams after my training."[452]

Another takeaway on transformation is the centrality of women both as the keys to and sustainers of transformation. Without a doubt, women were by far the majority of participants in this study. Even where the leaders of individual groups (or organizations as in CIM) were men, the majority of those carrying out the projects were women. Women were also more likely than men to work in the fields of other women, for example in gathering and laying down mulch. Also notable was how many women had taken on the informal roles of spiritual leadership. In all except three meetings that I attended, the reading and interpretation of scripture was done by women. This, even for me, represented a marked shift from what I saw growing up in these communities. Women would occasionally read scripture, but interpretation or preaching was always done by men.

The final observation I would like to offer on transformation, especially of the physical nature, is how much rural-centric it was, but also directed towards things that

[452] Masika reporting on how the massive adoption of CIM's methods was bearing fruit in far-off Tanzania.

were already more common in the cities and urban areas. Clean potable water, electricity, or health care are examples. Building permanent houses and even adding indoor plumbing are other rural aspirations that are already mainstays in towns and cities.

Spirituality

In examining spirituality, I concede that it is a complex matter to grasp, and even more so where translation difficulties exist. That said, it is still possible to make accurate assessments about where spiritual capital exists by way of what people say about themselves, what others say about them, what activities they engage in, and how these preceding things change over time. This section will summarize how I observed these dynamics.

The first observation to make is that spiritual capital does not exist or build in isolation, but often in concert with social capital. The clout that one builds because of who they know, how they are known, and why they are known (social capital) does have a direct correlation with their spiritual capital. I observed that being with each other, doing for each other, and witnessing with each other were significant moments where the participants of this study demonstrated their devotion to God's word and to each other. Through these moments, they showed that they cared enough about the afterlife to live a life now befitting that desire.

Related to this previous point is the connection between religiosity and spirituality i.e., devotion and obedience to denominational requirements (creeds, dogmas, teachings, proscriptions, etc.). As one of the participants observed, he was Roman Catholic from age eleven, but he was now reading his Bible regularly. He was making the distinction for me

between what he understood to be the difference between being religious and spiritual. It is true that religiosity is deeply embedded in the African cosmological psyche and therefore instrumental to understanding African spirituality. Curses and blessings are everywhere in the African life; consequently, spirituality, even Christian is influenced by these cosmologies. Pouring libation, spitting on one's bare chest, and scooping the soil and saying a blessing before working the land are all examples of how I witnessed in practice during this study.

It is perhaps the influences of this psyche that lends itself to what I characterize as the civil-ecclesial symbiosis where the Church and its organic/innate organizational standing is indispensable to the success of a civil administrator who is often the point person for local development. The local government depends on the Church's existing organization and capacity to gather people who are already constitutionally pliant to obedience and care for one another to educate and disseminate a development agenda. On the other hand, the Church benefits from protection from harassment[453], preferential treatment, and often, the largesse of civil development initiatives. Local authorities contribute to growing spiritual capital and when people are more spiritual, other areas of life see improvement; there is less crime and people have more positive social connections.

[453] At the height of the *Mungiki* menace, local administrators provided armed security to churches so the congregations could gather and freely discuss how to aid the authorities in rooting out the problem.

Metrics

Measuring people's spirituality is a fraught subject but it can be done. I found an unexpected willingness for participants in this study to help in understanding their own spirituality and how it had changed because of their involvement with organizations that cared about it. When the subject was understood, not as a test to point out deficiencies but as a way to show areas of opportunity, there was more candid sharing of individual spiritual journeys.

In developing the schema that I conceived with four areas of focus (belongingness, sacraments; duties and responsibilities, and transcedentals), I found them to be sufficient in assessing the accumulation of spiritual capital in all areas of Christian living. Further, I also observed that positive indices in these areas would correlate with growth in spirituality while negative metrics e.g., a reduction in consulting with witchdoctors or fear of being bewitched would also indicate a growth in Christian spirituality.

Areas for further Research

This study did not propose a conclusive way for accounting for spirituality for all places, but a beginning of doing just that based on a small, focused sample. I did not have the benefit of unlimited time to conduct a longer longitudinal study that would track the participants for a longer time. A longer study of at least one year would be better suited to refine the sharpness of the results. This study also did not benefit from a larger sample of beneficiaries of secular development organizations. Collecting more data from such participants would increase the reliability of the results.

Gathering more exhaustive data from churches and church leaders where development participants belong would also be greatly helpful for an undertaking like this one. This would also help in developing an initial baseline against which to determine changes in spirituality. Such a study would also hopefully provide answers to the question of development ecclesiology first posed by Bryant Myers. Are churches true development partners or just convenient gatherers of people?[454]

I also propose the study of development workers as evangelists, especially those that do the work, not because of the promise of making it a career, but because they are motivated by evangelism. For such people, the work would be their witness and they would be partnering with God who calls out and sends out workers for his mission of redeeming the world.

Revisiting areas where projects were completed as well as their beneficiaries would also be helpful in assessing residual or continuing spiritual capital. I had intended to visit such places and people, but time constraints prevented that.

Another possible area of future research would be an examination of how technology aided or curtailed faith journeys and therefore people's maturation as Christians. In other words, once people figured that a technology still worked without God being part of it, would they still be committed to growing their faith? Concretely, how many FGW practitioners would adopt the technology and forgo the biblical keys?

[454] Myers, *Walking With The Poor*, 50.

Conclusion

I started this study by asking the question, how can Christian NGOs plan for, execute, and evaluate the spiritual impacts of their programs on beneficiaries? Relatedly, I have also been asking myself, do people become better Christians (followers of Jesus) as a result of being involved in development projects conducted in ways that emphasize following Jesus? I proposed a method that can help in answering the first question by focusing on the areas of belongingness, sacraments, transcendentals; and duties and responsibilities. The answer for the second question, as many examples in this study showed, is a resounding yes.

I have confidence in this answer by echoing Leslie Newbigin as quoted by Myers saying that Jesus committed the entire work of salvation to the community of his followers.[455] I saw the community development groups functioning as hermeneutical communities that read the biblical story, found themselves in it, and applied its lessons to their concrete lives. During one of the last meetings that was called by ADS leaders as a send-off for me, the lady who provided the homily read from Micah 6:8, an admonition to be merciful and kind. Reflecting on a member who had been ailing, she observed,

> "The scripture tells us that God is not so much impressed by our generosity as he is by our mercy. When we act out of mercy, he is honored. Even when we do not have anything tangible to offer such a person as our sick brother, God impresses it upon us to consider that our conversation may be the one thing that may truly uplift his spirits and get him on the way to health. In acting this way, God may often surprise us by meeting the very needs that made it impossible to take anything to the person. For example, upon returning from such a visit, I may find that my child decided to come check on me and brought me something that I can share with the person on another visit. Thank you."

[455] Myers, 192, quoted in Leslie Newbigin, *The Household of God*. (New York: Friendship Press, 1954), 21.

As I left that gathering and was alone in my car, I had the distinct feeling that this group understood itself first as a church before a community development group. At that point, I heard Vinay Samuel's question about what would happen if we applied the same principles of community participation to the establishment of the church as we do agriculture, health, and school projects stirring in my heart.[456] I knew then that this group was already answering the question. The members were becoming the community of salvation.

True, this was an academic quest that sought to provide research-based answers, but it also turned out to be a journey in self-discovery. I found Jesus in fresh new ways in the ordinariness of feeding goats and digging post holes alongside fellow believers whose material fortunes were categorically different from mine but believed very much in the same heaven that I did. I pray to never lose that focus.

[456] Myers, 192, quoted in Vinay Samuel, *"A Theological Perspective"*(Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1995), 145.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview Questions for Organizational Leaders-General

1. How would you categorize your organization (faith-based or secular)? Please explain why this is so.
2. In what ways would you say your organization is overtly faith-based or secular?
3. In what ways is your organization less overtly faith-based or secular?
4. What would you identify as the primary focuses of your organization's work in (name of location)? Rank them in order of priority.
5. How does your organization plan for the priorities above? (Approaches, knowledge base, people involvement, methods, etc.)
6. What does success look like for your organization? What is the process that leads to this success?
7. In what ways do you track progress and act on feedback obtained in executing these priorities?
8. What is the purpose of soliciting feedback?
9. How do you use the feedback generated? What channels do you employ to communicate this feedback with all stakeholders?
10. What practices/efforts does your organization have in place to sustain the successes once your work is completed in a particular area?
11. If you have had opportunity to return to areas where projects have concluded, how would you reinforce/change the practices identified above?

Appendix 2

Interview Questions for Organizational Leaders-Specific to Spiritual Change/Transformation

1. How is spirituality viewed in this organization? What is its role and place in overall programming?
2. What specific things does your organization put in place to achieve spiritual transformation?
3. What kinds of spiritual outcomes does your organization seek to achieve? What would you say are the areas of spiritual transformation that your organization lays most emphasis?
4. How does your organization seek to track spiritual changes that result from engaging with beneficiary communities?
5. In your estimation, how do you think these efforts (aimed at tracking progress) have fared?
6. To what level are beneficiary communities part and parcel of the process of identifying, naming, and implementing the key focusses of your organization's programming?
7. What kinds of challenges do you encounter in these endeavors?
8. How has your organization responded to these challenges?

Appendix 3

Interview Questions for Direct Beneficiaries (FBOs)

1. How would you describe yourself in religious and spiritual terms?
2. How do you think being religious and spiritual are the same or different?
3. Trace for me your religious/spiritual journey in the last five years. What are some of the most significant milestones?
4. What are some of the things/practices by NGO X that contributed positively to this journey?
5. Which things/practices were less helpful in your journey?
6. What behaviors/practices did you start or kept doing since NGO X started to work with you?
7. How would you, if at all, describe the changes in your personal and community life since you started engaging with NGO X?
8. If NGO X had never come to this community, how would it be different for you personally and for this community?

Appendix 4

Interview Questions for Direct Beneficiaries (Secular)[457]

1. How would you describe yourself religiously and spiritually?
2. How would you say your engagement with NGO Y has affected you religiously and spiritually?
3. What do you think would have been different if NGO Y had been a Christian organization?
4. As a result of engaging with NGO Y in this community, what would you describe as its most significant contribution?
5. If you had the choice, would you rather engage with a Christian NGO or with one that is not? Why?
6. If you know people who have benefitted from projects conducted through Christian NGOs, how do they characterize the differences between your experience and theirs?
7. Since the project concluded, how would you describe the lingering effects from NGO Y on your personal and community's life?

[457] Participants for this interview would preferably be from a different region.

Appendix 5

Interview Questions for Community Leaders (specific to spiritual transformation)

1. How would you characterize, religiously and spiritually, your community based on what it was before NGO Z came here and what it is now?
2. What would you say accounts for the picture you have described above?
3. In what ways do you think it was helpful/not helpful to have a Christian NGO in your community?
4. What are some of things you would like to see continue/end as a result of NGO Z being in your community?
5. As a complete stranger to your community, what can you point to me as evidence of a Christian NGO having worked here?
6. To your understanding, since the project concluded, what has NGO Z done do ensure the benefits continue?
7. What has been your experience working with both Christian and non-Christian organizations? Which one do you prefer?