

# The effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task: a practical theological perspective

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### DECLARATION

I solemnly declare that ***The effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task: a practical theological perspective*** is my own work and that I indicated and acknowledged all sources referred to in this dissertation.



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## PREAMBLE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To God my Creator in whom I live, move, and have my being, be all glory and honour. I dedicate this study to my wife, Agness, and children, Lydia, David, and Favour Mutemwa.

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## ABSTRACT

This research examines the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task from the inception of the task in 2007. Throughout the study the researcher seeks to answer the following questions: (1) what is the current church praxis in Sesheke area with regard to transformation as illustrated through a descriptive empirical investigation?, (2) what is the contribution of existing research to our understanding of the Sesheke Church's transformational task, according to the interpretive task?, (3) what principles from Scripture can be normative guidelines to the church's transformational task?, and (4) which guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task will address the effectiveness of the church's transformational task? In order to answer the foregoing questions, Osmer's (2008) four tasks of practical theological interpretation have been employed. These are descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic tasks.

The outcome of the descriptive-empirical task is that the Sesheke Church failed at its task and participants in the interviews gave several reasons for the failure. There were some transformational attempts by the church, but they could not be described as sufficient to transform the local community. The interpretive task shows, inter alia, that community transformation requires holistic deep change and the impetus for the change must come predominantly from within the local community itself.

The hermeneutic research was done from a Reformational perspective whereby the Bible is believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit according to 2 Timothy 3:16, and, therefore, accepted as the authoritative Word of God (De Klerk & De Wet, 2013:300; De Klerk & Van Rensburg, 2005:3). Therefore, the Sesheke Church should also understand, from Scripture, principles that can be normative guidelines to the transformational task. In the final pragmatic task the researcher proposed practical guidelines which were derived through critical reflection of the research findings. These guidelines address the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

The researcher believes that the study will contribute to the discourse of practical theology with regard to church and community transformation from the unique context of the Sesheke Church and the effectiveness of their transformational task. Burns and Grove (2009:29) observe that by understanding the meaning of a phenomenon in its context, it becomes easier to understand phenomena in other similar contexts.

Key words: church, transformation, transformational task, transformational development.

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## CHAPTER 1

### OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1. PROPOSED TITLE AND KEY WORDS

##### 1.1.1. Proposed title

The effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task: a practical theological perspective.

##### 1.1.2. Key words

Church, transformation, transformational task, transformational development.

#### 1.2. BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

##### 1.2.1. Background

With a population of about sixty-six thousand (66,000), at least thirty (30) different church denominations, and the country's highest timber revenue collection from seventeen (17) out of forty-six (46) national forest reserves in Western Zambia, Sesheke town still remains among the poorest and least populated towns in the country (Vinya et al., 2012:4). It is in response to such a situation that the Pastors Fellowship of Sesheke, which is referred to as Sesheke Church in this research, formed a new sub-committee that would engage the church, government, and all other stakeholders in a transformation process for local communities to benefit from their God given natural resources. The overall aim of the Sesheke Church was to bring about socio-economic transformation for the local community. The Pastors Fellowship consisted of fourteen (14) pastors from fourteen (14) different church denominations of mainly evangelical and Pentecostal persuasion, with the exception of one from Seventh Day Adventist Church. The researcher served as chairperson of the sub-committee for seven years from its inception in July, 2007. Several challenges arose, however, among which were political resistance, intra-congregational apathy, and inter-congregational divides along lines of affiliations to some church mother bodies. This might be similar to what is going on in other parts of the country and the outside world, particularly Africa.

A case study on the church's advocacy for economic rights in Zambia reveals tensions and differences not only among umbrella church bodies and with their constituent churches, but also among member churches themselves (Gibbs & Ajuja, 1999:80). Similarly, in Kenya, the democracy process of a human rights ministry from a Catholic parish in Kibera slums was restrained by violent political retaliations, apathy, ethnic divisions, limited resources, and restrictive church protocols (Bodewes, 2010:547). Gibbs and Ajuja's (1999:54) case study on the National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK) indicates that human rights democracy advocacy was inhibited by tensions between the NCCCK and its constituent members as well as between the constituent churches themselves. In Malawi, during 1964 to 1994, when the Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted for their faith beyond constitutional jurisdiction, mainline and protestant churches showed serious apathy and some made political alliance instead of defending the human rights of people (Kaiya, 2013:41-52). The study by Gibbs and Ajuja (1999:67-68) on the role of the churches in Malawi's democratic transition, indicates divisions not only between the church and political system, but also among churches themselves, and that the churches needed to examine their structures and the way they related to the state. It is against such a backdrop that the researcher is prompted to ask what is going on, why is this going on, what ought to be going on, and how might one respond (Osmer, 2008:4) with regard to the task of the church in Sesheke to bring about transformation, including, *inter alia* economic and social transformation, for the local people.

### **1.2.2. Problem Statement**

In view of the foregoing background, it is evident that the Sesheke situation is not happening in a vacuum, but involves both local and global concepts. Stetzar and Putman (2006:5) rightly coined it as the emerging "glocal concept" to signify the interplay of global and local concepts in a given situation. This complicates the situation at hand more than what is seen on the surface as the researcher also has to deal with the root of the problem in order to understand and deal with the problem effectively. It even becomes more complicated when one views it from the open systems model where particular systems are seen to be nestled within other systems in the web of life according to Osmer (2008:200). This sort of complex "glocal" web of life can be summed up in Bhaskar's (2013) analysis that the world is in a complex of crises involving ecological problems, social interactions among people, unequal distribution of wealth and resources, and the negligence of social justice.

The fact that the local situation is part of a bigger web of life does not, however, imply that it can only be understood in global terms because each case is still unique. Korac-Kakabadse et al. (2002:166) state that insights from social sciences portray the world as an individual whole and web of relationships in which every action has complex, non-linear and unpredictable effects. The authors also make reference to modern physics' assertion that "we are part of an interconnected larger whole of life, though experiencing ourselves separately from each other and from nature itself". Woodhead et al. (2009:22-23) note that it is still possible to study religious groups individually while being aware also of the global influence in the group because of the new social, political, and religious global context. Hence the theme of this research will have to deal with the uniqueness of the church's transformation task in Sesheke while being aware of the global influence within the local situation.

The question of poverty alleviation, equal benefits and just distribution of resources that the Sesheke church strives to address could be much broader than cursorily viewed. Waruta and Kinoti (2005:29) observe that the problem with poverty, especially in Africa, is its rapid increase despite developmental efforts. The authors also point to other forms of poverty in Africa such as oppressive justice, corruption in government, and terrorism which hinder others from living as fully humans as God intended for them (Waruta and Kinoti, 2005:32). In his work entitled "Understanding Political Philosophy", Thompson (2010a:70) states that the issue of balance between rights of the individual and the need for decisive action on the part of government has been a more relevant question today as ever before. As such, it can be argued that any person or organisation undertaking a transformational task that includes poverty alleviation will be faced with these challenges. It is, therefore, evident that there is more to the question of poverty alleviation and equality than the church in Sesheke is trying to address.

Equality and fairness are as cardinal to the work of the church as elsewhere for real socio-economic transformation to take place. In the discourse of his work, Thompson (2010a:107-110) stresses that equality and fairness are foundational values for political philosophy, but again notes that success is not a political feature but an economic one. On the other hand, he writes that whether economics should be the only consideration for success is also a political question. In his other work entitled, "Understanding Ethics", Thompson (2010b:129) states otherwise that equality is not possible because people never agree on what each deserves and that naturally people have unequal abilities. Further, political, economic, and equality views may differ not only among

religions, but even within a single religion when one attempts either to conform to, or distinguish between lifestyle and community religious ethics (Thompson, 2010b:168). As such, there is a real scope of problems of commitment and acknowledgement of ethical norms to be encountered in the pursuit of equality, which is evident from the background of the Sesheke case.

Therefore, the theme of this study is also driven to deal with connected relevant contextual issues when it comes to aspects of lifestyle and community religious ethics. Firstly, there are only men in the Pastors Fellowship of Sesheke, a situation that can be described by Jule's (2005:12) observation as written in her book on "Gender and the Language of Religion" that Christianity itself has been perceived to be patriarchal for centuries. This poses reasonable doubt concerning the effectiveness of such a transformational task, especially as it targets equality and poverty alleviation. Secondly, benefiting from natural resources should not override responsibility towards environmental ethic. Notwithstanding the need for human consumption, Thompson (2010a:107) is of the view that moral thinking should also focus on environmental preservation because human survival depends on the entire ecosystem to a larger degree. For instance, negligence of environmental protection has already resulted into life-threatening conditions such as global warming. Commenting on Genesis 2:15 both Adeyemo (2006:14) and Bergstrom (2014) observe that man should benefit responsibly from the environment by taking good care of it. Hence the focus of the Sesheke Pastors Fellowship on human benefit and its masculine characteristic appear to threaten the success of their transformational task. Zamudio's (2010) work on "Indigenising the Catholic Church" rightly reveals that the church itself would need to be transformed if it will enhance transformation in others and the environment.

The researcher will accept, for the purpose of this study, that the church has a significant role to play in transforming the whole person, but it is not the primary goal of this research to review the role of the church, theologically or theoretically, in the discussion of transformation as such debates are well articulated elsewhere in practical theology (Delph, 2005; Du Toit, 2013; Osmer, 2008:44). Rather, this study is aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the local church's transformation task in Sesheke town in transforming their community. Said another way, this research will endeavour to investigate the praxis and impact of the transformational task by the local church in Sesheke area in transforming the lives of the local people and the community as a whole. By default, the researcher will endeavour to decipher how the challenges and

lessons from this particular case are connected to, or isolated from, similar situations globally, especially in Africa. Transformation in this case will involve alleviating the plight of the poor and less privileged people of Sesheke area as contained in the background. This is in accordance with the Biblical instruction in Matthew 25:35-40 to attend to the needs of the vulnerable and less privileged people in society. Commenting on the just mentioned Scriptural portion, Adeyemo (2006:1164) ultimately states that Christians are called to respond to all human needs. Hale (2000:121) comments regarding the same portion of Scripture that we serve Christ by attending to the needs of others, especially the poor and less privileged. Effectiveness will thus be seen as a definite or desired effect of the efforts of the church in Sesheke area.

In view of the background and problem statement, the task of the Sesheke church to bring about social and economic transformation to the local community, in essence, entails a total transformation. Consequently, it requires a holistic approach to other relevant contextual issues such as poverty alleviation, lifestyle, religious ethics, justice, and politics.

A NEXUS search by North-West University shows that no research has yet been conducted on the theme of this study. Muller (2013) conducted similar research but focussed on the conflicts within the Dutch Reformed congregation in South Africa, while Adams' (2007) work on local church strategies for poverty alleviation focussed on church based projects using human scale development. Muvengi's (2011) work on poverty, church, and development in Kenya with focus on the Kibera slums in Nairobi may be seen to come close to this study, but it is a different setting and a single denomination's (Roman Catholic) ministry process whereas the case of Sesheke consists of interdenominational church leaders at local level. Closest, geographically, is Ngoma's (2013) recent study on enhancing sustainable development in the Reformed Church in Zambia which has a perspective on the empowerment and participation of local communities in Matero Presbytery. But this, too, is a single denomination's effort and does not cover environmental issues as is the case for the Sesheke Church. More to that, Matero is located in the country's capital city while Sesheke is a semi-rural boarder town with cross section of lifestyle and challenges. Hence there exists a lacuna for which this research is purposed to make a positive contribution.

### **1.2.3. Central Research Question**

The central research question is: How effective is the Sesheke Church<sup>1</sup> to bring about social and economic transformation within their local community?

In order to deal with the foregoing question successfully, the following questions must be answered:

- i. What is the current church praxis in the Sesheke area with regard to transformation as illustrated through a descriptive empirical investigation?
- ii. What is the contribution of existing research to our understanding of the transformational task of the church?
- iii. What principles from Scripture can be a normative guide to the church's transformational task?
- iv. Which guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task will address the effectiveness of the church's transformational task?

## **1.3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.1. Aim of the study**

The aim of the study is to determine the effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task.

### **1.3.2. Objectives**

The objectives of the research are:

- i. To understand the current church praxis in Sesheke area with regard to transformation as a result of a descriptive empirical investigation.
- ii. To determine the contribution of existing research to the understanding of the transformational task of the church.
- iii. To understand, from Scripture, principles that can be normative guidelines to the transformational task of the local church.
- iv. To develop specific guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task to be employed in the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area.

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<sup>1</sup>Sesheke Church refers to the Pastors Fellowship of Sesheke, which consisted of fourteen (14) pastors from fourteen (14) different church denominations as earlier indicated under section 1.2.1 of this document.

#### 1.4. CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

The central theoretical argument is that when the Sesheke Church perform an effective transformational task that consists of a good understanding of the target community and principles of community transformation, they would be instrumental in bringing about economic and social transformation within their community because they would have engaged in a responsible and organized process that empowers the community to be self-sustaining.

#### 1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will be based on a Reformational perspective whereby the Bible is believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit according to 2 Timothy 3:16, and, therefore, accepted as the authoritative Word of God (De Klerk & Van Rensburg, 2005:3; De Klerk & De Wet, 2013:300). The four tasks of practical theological interpretation according to Osmer (2008:4) will be employed and these are: descriptive-empirical (Osmer, 2008:31), interpretive (Osmer, 2008:83), normative (Osmer, 2008:139), and pragmatic (Osmer, 2008:176) tasks.

There are different methodologies, as will be discussed in chapter two. The researcher will make use of Osmer's (2008) research model because it is better suited to studying a small number of people, groups, or communities in depth (Osmer, 2008:50). Apart from being one of the most widely used methodologies for doing research in practical theology currently (Woodbridge, 2014:2), this model was decided upon because it also deals with the practical theological interpretation of the research question (Osmer, 2008:4). This is accomplished by means of:

- i. gathering information that will help to discern patterns and dynamics within the area of this research (2008:4).
- ii. drawing on existing theories within the neighbouring sciences to better understand and explain the existing patterns and dynamics (2008:4)
- iii. using theological perspectives to interpret specific context to guide the response of this research (2008:4)
- iv. determining strategies of action to reach the aim and objectives of this research (2008:4)

Through its combination of descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic strategic perspectives, Osmer's (2008) model can contribute to all dimensions of human

action and wellbeing (Heitink 1999). According to Browning (1991:9) the “rhythms of descriptive, historical, systematic, and strategic practical theology” all form part of the theological reflection on religious practice.

The multidimensional nature of practical theology can function as a framework that provides sufficient breadth to engage relevant interdisciplinary discourses, while allowing for thick descriptions of transformation in different contexts, thus providing sufficient depth also to allow for the rich texture and contextual understanding of community transformation (Dreyer, 2008:10). As it were, practical theology does not only consider what it can contribute to interdisciplinary discourses regarding transformation, but also what lessons can be learnt through these discourses (Dreyer, 2008:14; Osmer, 2008:164-166). Therefore, this research will also contribute to the understanding of practical theology with regard to community transformation in the unique context and situation of the Sesheke Church’s transformational task.

### **1.5.1 Descriptive-Empirical Task**

The descriptive-empirical task will focus on an empirical investigation of the present praxis in relation to the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area whereby the present praxis can be observed and explained. The researcher notes with caution that the study will be one of medium risk because it touches on the economic reality of the participants and may thus be perceived as threatening, although it is not the intention of the study. The researcher takes note of this potential threat and will, therefore, address it with the sensitivity and respect that it demands. Therefore, the specific ethical requirements for qualitative research set out by the North West University as outlined later under section 1.6 of this proposal will be strictly adhered to. To ensure that the ethical route is strictly followed, the North West University Ethics Application Form will accompany the submission of this research proposal. Moreover, the application of ethical norms will not only occur at the end of the research, but be present from the beginning and influence it throughout (Browning, 1991:39). The project head as well as the associate and assistant study leaders have at their disposal the necessary background and experience to direct the study along ethical and professional lines.

The empirical research will be conducted by means of qualitative research and according to the guidelines and ethical principles that govern qualitative research. The interview method in particular will be used because the aim of interviews in qualitative research is to get a description of the lived experiences of the participants with due

attention to the interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomenon (Kvale, 1983:174; Omery, 1983:50). According to Atkinson and Silverman (1997), interviewing is currently the central resource through which contemporary social science engages with issues that concern it. It is also logical that the best way to find out the culture, mind-set, and lifestyle of a people is to talk to them (Warren, 1995:66).

Personal interviews will be conducted with individuals who qualify according to the following requirements: (1) a church leader who has been involved with the transformational task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007, or (2) a local community leader in a specific area where the Pastors Fellowship has carried out transformational activities for the past seven (7) years. No fixed sample size will be determined beforehand, as interviews will be conducted until the data is saturated (Borg et al., 1993:101; Parse et al., 1985:18). The sample selection will allow for gender representation. The research question to be asked to the participants is: How can you describe your experience of the Sesheke church's transformational task during the past seven years?

Participants will be expected to tell the researcher their personal experiences of the Sesheke church's transformational task since its inception in 2007. It is expected that participants may feel uneasy and suspicious, especially that the interviews will be audio recorded and the specific focus area of the research is a semi-rural border area. It is also probable that no research has ever been conducted with recording devices in the area before and this may contribute to participant's uneasiness and scepticism. The researcher will build on his good will with the church leaders and community leaders in Sesheke area where he also lived for a long time (thirteen years). The church and community leaders also happen to be the target informants in the interviews who signed the consent forms to participate in the research interviews. This will assist in helping participants to feel relaxed and safe.

To ensure the welfare and comfort of participants, the researcher will explain fully the research purpose and process to each participant prior to the interview and participation in the interviews will be completely voluntary. He will also assure participants of confidentiality and anonymity from the outset. Moreover, the scheduled interviews will be conducted with participants in their geographical or naturalistic settings where they are most comfortable (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:306).

Personal notes of the researcher's experience during the interview process, observational notes of the participants' verbal and non-verbal expressions, and methodological notes concerning the research process will be made. The interview time is estimated to be thirty minutes per participant.

Responses of participants will be recorded and transcripts of the recorded interviews will be handed over to an independent coder for coding to avoid researcher biasness with regard to data interpretation and the bigger research process.

The type of sampling that the researcher will use is purposive sampling as participants will be selected on the basis of their relevance to the research (Gibson and Brown, 2009:56). Inclusion and exclusion of participants will, however, be completely voluntary with fully informed consent of each participant in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the North West University outlined later under section 1.6. Moreover, participants will be selected from within Sesheke area because the context where the research takes place must be acknowledged in order to understand the surrounding dynamics and systems (Schurink, 1998a:281). As such, the researcher will not include participants from outside Sesheke area because research must be contextual if it is to be intelligible and relevant (Schwandt (2001:37).

Reporting and dissemination of research findings will be carried out in a responsible manner which is accurate and honest. Peer review and member checking during the data collection process will also serve as preludes to ensure honest disclosure of the research findings. Peer review is the critical review by colleagues and external experts to bolster credibility and prevent researcher biasness with regard to data analysis and the bigger research process (Bamberger et al., 2012:138,300; Krefting, 1991:219). Member checking is the review of data and interpretations by participants who represent the relevant stakeholders in order to validate the accuracy of the recorded data and the reasonableness of the interpretations drawn from them before submitting the research document for examination (Bamberger et al., 2012:139). After completion of the project, the researcher will arrange for a meeting with all the participants available to make the research findings and guidelines known to them and to thank them for their participation. To ensure future reliability of the information disseminated and for the sake of those who may not be present, the Pastors Fellowship will be entrusted with a copy of the results and guidelines for all other participants to access. The researcher

will also give a copy of the research findings and guidelines to each participant who will be present.

It is expected that the study will be of value to the participants in the sense that an effective transformational task by the Sesheke Church will bring about social and economic transformation to the local community.

### **1.5.2 Interpretive Task**

This task will, in accordance with Osmer (2008:83), research the praxis according to existing research that has already been conducted on transformation tasks by local churches, particularly in Africa. It will be conducted by means of literature research within various disciplines of neighbouring sciences like psychology, sociology, and economics. In this process, the data obtained during empirical research will be placed on a framework to determine themes or tendencies that can be identified or isolated. Then such themes or tendencies will be critically discussed, with deliberate emphasis on the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area as earlier identified in the research.

### **1.5.3 Normative Task**

The aim of the normative task is to establish a Biblical basis regarding the transformation task of the Sesheke church. Osmer (2008:135-161) grounds the normative task in a spirituality of prophetic discernment which he approaches from three perspectives, namely theological interpretation, ethical reflection, and good practice. In the context of this particular study, the researcher will investigate the theological aspects concerning transformational tasks by local churches by means of Biblical exegesis. Two Scriptural portions that will be employed to comply with this task are Matthew 5:13-16 and Matthew 25:35-40 because of their relevance to the topic under investigation as will be discussed in detail in chapter four. Exegesis of these portions of Scripture will be done in accordance with the grammatical-historical hermeneutical method based on a literature study of Bible commentaries and other theological books which relate to the specific Scripture portions (Geisler, 1984:61; Kulikovsky, 2005:8; Radmacher and Preus, 1984:54).

#### **1.5.4 Pragmatic Task**

At this stage the researcher will attempt, according to the pragmatic task, to formulate guidelines which will address the transformational task by the church in Sesheke area (Osmer, 2008:176).

#### **1.6. ETHICAL ASPECTS**

This study is of medium risk as earlier stated. As such, the researcher will guarantee participants confidentiality and anonymity right from the start (Punch, 1998:175), that is prior to the interviews, and this will be highlighted in the consent form to be signed by each participant before the actual interview. The audio recorded responses of participants will be used only for research purposes and transcriptions of the recorded data will be sent to an independent coder for coding and safe keeping. Information obtained from participants will not be made available anywhere without their informed consent (Sheridan and Kisor, 2000:122).

The researcher will treat all information as strictly confidential. No verbal or written references will be made alluding to any personal information of a participant. The researcher will personally handle all collected data. Interviews will be recorded on an audio recording device with permission from each participant. Each recording will be provided with an identification number and only the researcher will know the personal details regarding each number. The researcher will personally transcribe all the interviews verbatim on his personal computer. All data will be kept in safekeeping in a locked cabinet for this purpose at Auckland Park Theological Seminary, under the curatorship of the registrar.

North West University rules for keeping and destroying of research data after project completion will apply. As a general rule, data should be stored for at least seven years after project completion. The researcher hereby claims that all copies of data sent to North West University both hard and electronic, that remain with him will be kept in his strict personal privacy and not made available anywhere without permission of the said university.

The researcher will adhere to specific ethical requirements for qualitative research set out by North West University in the ethics application form accompanying this research

proposal. The ethics application form is available on the university website (<https://intranet.nwu.ac/opencms/export/html/en/in-im-rs/researchethics/index.html>).

Among others, the following will be adhered to during research:

- i. The researcher will explain to the participants the aims and outcomes of the research.
- ii. Participation will be completely voluntary.
- iii. The fact that they may withdraw from and terminate the interview at any time will be explained to the participants.
- iv. A consent form will be signed, whereby participants will indicate that they understand the interview process, and that the interview may be recorded and that the content may be used for research purposes only.
- v. The participants will remain anonymous.
- vi. There are no financial benefits or implications for either the participants or the researcher.
- vii. The qualitative research will be registered with the North West University Ethical Committee and the registration number will appear on all qualitative research documents.

## **1.7. THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **1.7.1 Provisional Classification of Chapters**

- i. Chapter 1 will contain the introduction, background, problem statement, aims and objectives, research methodology, and an overview of the research structure.
- ii. Chapter 2 will be devoted to the descriptive-empirical task whereby the Sesheke Church's transformation task will be explained and discussed. This will be done by means of qualitative research.
- iii. Chapter 3 will address the interpretive task. The Sesheke Church's transformational task will be explored by means of literature research into existing literature, as presented by various neighbouring sciences like theology, psychology, and sociology.
- iv. Chapter 4 will, in accordance with the normative task, provide a Biblical understanding of the Sesheke Church's transformation task. This will be done according to exegesis of Matthew 5:13-16 and Matthew 25:35-40 by means of a literature study of Biblical commentaries and other relevant theological books.

- v. Chapter 5 will, in accordance with the pragmatic task, provide guidelines whereby the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task will be enhanced.
- vi. Chapter 6 will contain the summary, an explanation of limitations experienced in the research, and recommendations for further research pertaining to the topic.

## CHAPTER 2

### DESCRIPTIVE-EMPIRICAL TASK WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SESHEKE CHURCH'S TRANSFORMATIONAL TASK

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter one the problematic praxis with regard to the transformation task of the Sesheke Church was discussed to present the contexts that call for this investigation. The study seeks to find answers to specific questions that flow out of the current praxis (theory and practice) of the Sesheke Church and subsequently lead to research objectives, all of which was described in detail in chapter one. The discourse of chapter one served to highlight the importance and contribution of this particular research. The design and methodology of this research was also briefly described in the first chapter.

In chapter 2 the focus will be on the descriptive-empirical task of practical theological interpretation as presented by Osmer (2008:31-78) with regard to the effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task. Practical theology begins with episodes, situations, or contexts that call for interpretation (Osmer, 2008:33). As such, practical theology requires interpreting the texts of contemporary lives and practices which may be seen as living human documents. The question that lies at the heart of the descriptive-empirical task is "what is going on?" (Osmer, 2008:33). This is the first part of the descriptive-empirical task.

The descriptive-empirical task is grounded in terms of "a spirituality of presence" according to Osmer (2008:33-34). It is a matter of attending to what is going on in the lives of individuals, families, and congregations. He refers to such attending as priestly listening. It is important to state that priestly listening is, first and foremost, an activity of the entire Christian community, not just leaders (Osmer, 2008:35). In a congregational or community setting, priestly listening can be informal, semiformal, or formal.

The problem that prompted this research is that Sesheke area has not transformed despite efforts by the Sesheke Church's transformational task for a period of seven years. It is still among the poorest and least populated districts in Zambia despite the presence of abundant forestry resources and having the highest timber revenue collection in the whole country (Vinya et al., 2012:4). Some of the challenges

experienced by the Sesheke Church include political resistance, intra-congregational apathy, and inter-congregational divides along lines of affiliations to some church mother bodies. As such, the researcher is prompted to ask the question, what is going on? (Osmer, 2008:4).

The Sesheke situation is, however, not happening in a vacuum, but involves both local and global concepts, which Stetzar and Putman (2006:5) rightly coined as the emerging “glocal concept” to signify the interplay of global and local concepts in a given situation. This can be summed up in Bhaskar’s (2013) analysis that the world is in a complex of crises involving ecological problems, social interactions among people, unequal distribution of wealth and resources, and social justice. Insights from social sciences portray the world as an individual whole and web of relationships in which every action has complex, non-linear and unpredictable effects (Korac-Kakabadse et al., 2002:166). Hence the theme of this research will have to deal with the uniqueness of the church’s transformation task in Sesheke while being aware of the global presence within the local situation. Burns and Grove (2009:29) observe that by understanding the meaning of a phenomenon in its context, it becomes rather easier to understand phenomena in other similar situations. As such, this research will contribute to the understanding of practical theology with regard to community transformation in the unique context and situation of the Sesheke Church’s transformational task.

As mentioned in chapter one, the researcher accepts, for the purpose of this study, that the church has a significant role to play in transforming the whole person. In this study, however, the focus is to investigate the praxis and impact of the transformational task by the local church in Sesheke area in transforming the lives of the local people and the community as a whole. By default, the researcher will endeavour to decipher how the challenges and lessons learnt from this particular case are connected to, or isolated from, similar situations globally, especially in Africa. Transformation in this case will involve alleviating the plight of the poor and less privileged people of Sesheke area. This is in accordance with the Biblical teaching in Matthew 25:35-40 to attend to the needs of the vulnerable and less privileged people in society. Commenting on the just mentioned Scriptural portion, Adeyemo (2006:1164) ultimately states that Christians are supposed to respond to all human needs. Hale (2000:121) also comments concerning the same portion of Scripture that Christians should serve Christ by attending to the needs of others, especially the poor and less privileged. Effectiveness in this case will be seen as a desired effect of the efforts of the church in Sesheke area.

In view of the background and problem statement to this research, the Sesheke Church's task to bring about social and economic transformation to the local community, in essence, entails a total transformation. Therefore, it requires a holistic approach to all other relevant contextual issues such as poverty alleviation, lifestyle, religious ethics, justice, and politics. The normative task in chapter four will elaborate further on the role of the church in community transformation

A NEXUS search by North-West University shows that no research has yet been conducted on the theme of this study. Hence there exists a lacuna for which this research is purposed to make a positive contribution.

In this chapter, the researcher will present a comprehensive description of the research design and methodology that addresses the research problem in such a way that the research findings may be considered to be trustworthy. The research design and methodology is based on the descriptive-empirical task of practical theological interpretation as presented by Osmer (2008:31-78). As earlier indicated in chapter one, the process involves gathering information by means of individual, semi-structured interviews that helps to discern patterns and dynamics within the area of this research (Osmer, 2008:4). The collected empirical data are interpreted with regard to the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task and an analysis of the results is given. Mouton (1996:107) and Wilson (1993:14) write that the objective of a well-formulated research design is to structure the research project in such a way that the research problem is addressed and the research findings may be regarded as authentic. Accordingly, the research will follow Osmer's (2008) model which offers a clear procedural methodological movement from an existing praxis to a new praxis based on proper situational, theological, and theoretical analyses.

## **2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The researcher will follow the elements of research design as outlined by Osmer (2008:48). These are: purpose of the research, strategy of inquiry, research plan (methods) and reflexivity (reflection on the meta-theoretical assumptions informing the study).

All decisions about research design, that is its strategy of inquiry and plan, are determined by the nature of the problem and general purpose of the research (Leedy, 1993:136; Sheridan and Kisor, 2000:3; Osmer, 2008:48) and the respective theoretical framework (Anfara and Mertz, 2006:23-36). In this case, the guiding purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task and the theoretical framework thereof is to be found in the field of practical theology. Therefore, the researcher will draw on applied summative evaluation because the study is being conducted in a real world situation and is concerned with the effectiveness of a program (Osmer, 2008:49). Empirical research is the second part of the descriptive-empirical task.

The strategy of inquiry that the researcher will follow is qualitative research. There are basically two strategies of inquiry in research, namely, qualitative research and quantitative research (Osmer, 2008:49). Silverman, (2006:9) writes that qualitative research tends to work with relatively small numbers or cases and finds detail in the precise particulars of such matters as the people's understandings and interactions. As such, the nature of the problem and general purpose of this study implies that qualitative research methodology will be followed. Quantitative research, on the other hand, cannot address the nature of the problem and guiding purpose of this research because it is not the goal of this research to gather and analyse numeric data to explore relationship between variables as embraced by quantitative research (Berg, 2004:2; Osmer, 2008:49). Rather, this study aims at determining the effectiveness of a program by a specific small group of people in a specific situation and location. Therefore, an in-depth investigation into the Sesheke Church's transformational task and personal lived experiences of the people involved is hereby required. It is for this reason that qualitative research is preferred because it is better suited to studying a small number of people, groups, or communities in depth (Osmer, 2008:50).

The methods that will be used to collect data are interviews and field notes of the researcher's observation as befitting of qualitative research (Bamberger et al., 2012:301; Osmer, 2008:61). Decisions will be made concerning the person (Sesheke Church), program or setting to be investigated (transformational task), specific methods that will be used (interviewing), and the researcher (Osmer, 2008:53). According to Seale et al. (2010:13), methods are research techniques that acquire meaning in the context of broader decisions involving how one defines the research problem, database, methods of data analysis, and the researcher's relationship to the subject of his or her

study. In this particular case, the research problem is about the effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task and the data source comprises of human subjects (church and community leaders in Sesheke area). It is, therefore, imperative that interviews be conducted. Warren (1995:66) writes that the best way to find out the culture, mind-set, and lifestyle of a people is to talk to them.

Reflexivity in the research will involve literature review in neighbouring social sciences like theology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology in order to establish the meta-theoretical assumptions pertaining to the transformational task by the church in Sesheke area. This is important for two reasons according to Osmer (2008:57-58). First, it helps the researcher to read the research of other scholars critically, allowing him to spot background assumptions that influence the way he carries out research and the findings. Second, it helps him to become more reflexive about his own research. The just quoted author writes that research conducted in a congregation or community setting requires moving beyond simply getting the information needed to answer the research question. The researcher needs to determine his own stance on meta-theoretical issues in dialogue with perspectives currently available.

### **2.2.1 Qualitative Research**

The study will have explorative, descriptive, and contextual foci. The qualitative research design allows for participant's perspectives and understandings of a phenomenon to be revealed as both Merriam and Patton (cited by Anfara and Mertz, 2006:34) write. The key concepts in qualitative research are reflexivity, thick description, and naturalism (Gibson and Brown, 2009:8).

Qualitative research is complex and diverse in nature according to Bryman (1988, 1992, 2000) and Hammersley (1998). A key aspect implied here is that every qualitative research design will be different because qualitative research in essence invites the unexpected (Holliday, 2010:8). Therefore, the rigour is in the principled development of strategy to suit the situation being investigated. As such, the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area will be explored in its totality and context so as to understand the what, why, and how of the respective phenomenon according to the four tasks of practical theological interpretation presented by Osmer (2008:4).

As a strategy of inquiry, qualitative research in this case renders special attention to the exploration of human beings and situations in their uniqueness (Streubert and

Carpenter, 1995:50). This aspect of qualitative research is especially important because it is built on the assumption that each individual, group, culture, and setting is unique and, therefore, it caters for the diversity of human beings in their own settings (Borg et al., 1993:198; Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:3). Therefore, it is imperative to study the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task in its uniqueness and naturalistic setting in order to determine the effectiveness thereof. Such ontological and epistemological assumptions and theoretical considerations are relevant to the choice of research methods according to Seale, et al. (2010:283).

The research plan involves the four critical elements as outlined by Osmer (2008:53). First is the people, program or setting to be investigated which is determined by the purpose of the study. In this particular case this will involve the Sesheke Pastors Fellowship which is herein referred to as Sesheke Church as the purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of their transformational task. Secondly, the specific method that will be used to gather data is interviews as it is anchored in qualitative research design (Seale et al., 2010:15-62). Third is the individual or team that will conduct the research. In this case the researcher will personally conduct the research as he has to be involved at every step of the qualitative research process as Fink (2000:8) writes. Holliday (2010:20) also states that the qualitative researcher is accountable for every part and action of the research process.

The researcher notes with caution the risk of fixing a restrictive timeframe to the project at this stage since it is not yet known how long the interviewing process will take. As indicated in section 1.5 of chapter one, no fixed sample size will be determined beforehand because interviews will have to be conducted until the data is saturated. This is further inhibited by the availability of the informants which cannot be guaranteed at first approach. According to Bamberger et al. (2012:6-10), budget, time, data, and political constraints are not uncommon in real world evaluation and can affect a research in many ways including uncertainty in project duration or affecting projected project period. The sequence of steps to be followed in executing the research, however, is hereby given according to the general pattern presented by Osmer (2008:55-57): data collection, data transcription, data analysis and interpretation, and performing research findings.

As earlier indicated, the qualitative research employed exhibits three focal dimensions (explorative, descriptive, and contextual) which will now be discussed.

### **2.2.2 Explorative Approach**

An explorative research is undertaken when very little is known about the subject being investigated or about the context in which the research is to be conducted. This implies that the topic may have never been investigated at all or never in that particular context (Blaikie, 2000:73). The aim of exploratory study is to uncover relationships and dimensions of a phenomenon (Talbot, 1994:90). In this study the need to explore arises from a lack of documented information regarding the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. The study is considered to be explorative because it seeks to understand the local people's individual experiences of the transformational task by the church in Sesheke and the meaning that they ascribe to it. Since very little or probably nothing is known about this topic, in-depth personal interviews with qualifying informants will be used as the principal method of gathering information (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000:601-603). Accordingly, the researcher's initial venture into the social setting of the church's transformational task in Sesheke area will inform the study on what should be further probed for as themes and focuses emerge. As Borg et al. (1993:195) and Mouton (1996:103) write, the explorative research will endeavour to establish facts and collect new data in order to determine if there are any interesting patterns or regularities in the data.

In this case, the study aims to explore the effectiveness of the transformational task by the Sesheke Church and determine whether the data collected reveals certain common patterns and regularities as well as if they disclose some specific relationships that attract research attention.

### **2.2.3 Descriptive Approach**

As a descriptive study, the process involves attending to the words and actions of others without filtering them through interpretive and normative judgements (Osmer, 2008:59). The descriptive research process is considered to be flexible, iterative, and naturalistic and results in thick descriptions that are flexible in ways in which the research data is constructed (Gibson and Brown, 2009:7). Although many a study do portray descriptive elements, some research designs deliberately endeavour to break down the whole into smaller segments that can be studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:53; Sheridan & Kisor, 2000:102).

The aim of the descriptive study in this case is to provide an in-depth or thick description of the Sesheke Church's transformational task and develop guidelines to enhance the effectiveness thereof based on findings of the data that is collected.

#### **2.2.4 Contextual Approach**

Fundamentally, it is preferable that research of a phenomenon takes place within the specific context of the phenomenon. The context where the research took place is acknowledged in order to understand the surrounding dynamics and systems (Schurink, 1998a:281). "Context" means the physical, geographical, cultural, historical or aesthetic setting within which action takes place as Lawrence-Lightfoot (cited by Patton, 2002:63) writes. According to Schwandt (2001:37) human nature is only specified and made intelligible by the particular context in which it is found. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task is investigated within the context where it exists. Accordingly, the study will gather detailed data pertaining to the transformation task by the church in Sesheke as revealed in its unique and naturalistic context. The researcher will then develop and describe guidelines for enhancing effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task.

Although the research findings are hereby valid within the specific time, space, and value context (Botes, 1991:22), Burns and Grove (2009:29) observe that by understanding the meaning of a phenomenon in its context, it becomes rather easier to understand phenomena in other similar situations.

### **2.3 RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method that will be used is interviews. Based on the interview method, the researcher will employ several methodological steps in order to come up with a rich and meaningful description of the Sesheke Church's transformational task in accordance with Leedy and Ormrod (2001:147). These will include sampling, pilot study, and data analysis (Gibson and Brown, 2009:9-11). McLeod and Thompson (2009:66) write that qualitative research requires applying many waves of approach on one or fewer cases in order to come up with rich and meaningful description of the subject under investigation. The researcher ensures adherence to the relevant ethical

issues and ensure trustworthiness of the research process as will be discussed in detail in the respective sections later.

The specific methods to be used in the research are determined by the research strategy chosen for the study in accordance with Osmer (2008:54-56). Therefore, the problem is not so much with gathering data as with coming up with meaningful data that are relevant to the research problem, research question, and the research purpose (Richards, 2009:33). In accordance with Creswell (2003:29-30), appropriate methods should be used in order to present data that are relevant to the subject being studied. As such, the researcher will endeavour to employ appropriated methods that will assist to generate data that are relevant to providing a rich and meaningful description of the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area. The particular research methods to be employed will now be discussed in detail.

### **2.3.1 Data Collection**

Empirical data will be collected by the researcher with due attention to empirical evidence guidelines in order to gain knowledge on the effectiveness of the church's transformational task in Sesheke area. According to Bamberger et al. (2012:301), qualitative research involves three hallmark data collection methods: (1) observation, (2) interview, and (3) review or analysis of documents or artefacts. Consequently, the data collection process in this study will include in-depth interviews with qualifying informants as well as field notes of the researcher's observations in order to provide a thick description of the phenomenon being studied (Hall, 2014; Holliday, 2010:60-88; Osmer, 2008:54; Seale et al., 2010:2016).

In order for the data and research to be considered as credible, the researcher will triangulate both data sources and data collecting methods (Gibson and Brown, 2009:58-59; Lincoln and Guba, 1985:305). To triangulate is to examine a phenomenon from multiple perspectives and multiple pieces of data in order to enrich the understanding of the phenomenon (Jick, 1979:604; Wilson, 1993:84). Gibson and Brown (2009:8) rightly observe that Lincoln and Guba (1985) provide a useful paradigm for thinking about naturalism that draws attention to the multiplicity of perspectives in social life, their negotiated character, and requirement for contextual explanation and understanding.

The different sources of data for this research are scheduled interviews with different participants at different times in their geographical locations or naturalistic settings

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985:306). The different data collecting methods to be employed are in-depth interviews with qualifying informants and field notes of the researcher's observation.

The researcher will also triangulate data sources throughout the study by means of literature review of various disciplines within human sciences as well as reviewing of Scriptures. This will help to establish the meta-theoretical assumptions and Biblical basis informing the study respectively. Such triangulation of data sources as this is in accordance with Osmer's (2008) interpretive and normative tasks of practical theological interpretation respectively. Furthermore, the researcher will ensure that the influences of theoretical constructions explored in the literature review do not prescribe the theoretical construction for this research because the theory must be developed from the research itself (Bamberger et al., 2012:301; Bryant and Charmaz, 2008:523).

### **2.3.1.1 Sampling**

Sampling is taking a portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000:164). 'Representative' in this case means to be typical of a population or to exemplify the characteristics of a population (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000:165). Therefore, participants will be carefully sampled from the population within the area covered by the church's transformational task in Sesheke. Informed decisions will be made about participant involvement, settings of the sample, and actions to be taken in the process so that the sample can be representative (Burgess, 1982; Burgess, 1984).

The importance of sampling in the research process is that it provides the research with a defined focus (Seale et al., 2010:405). Therefore, it is of great importance to define sampling units clearly before choosing cases in order to avoid messy and empirically weak research. Since qualitative research is complex in nature, it would not be practical, however, to approach the whole process of sampling strictly sequentially and thus plan the whole process before starting. Part of the sampling plan will have to exist in dialogue with field incidents, contingencies, and discoveries in order to have representativeness (Seal et al., 2010:406).

The type of sampling that the researcher will use is purposive sampling as participants will be selected on the basis of their relevance to the research (Gibson and Brown, 2009:56). Inclusion and exclusion of participants will, however, be completely voluntary

with fully informed consent of each participant in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the North West University outlined under section 1.6 of chapter one of this research. Purposive sampling describes the process of selecting participants on the basis of their relevance to the research question and concepts that have proven theoretical relevance to the evolving theory (Gibson and Brown, 2009:37-38). 'Relevance' in this respect means that concepts are regarded as significant because they are repeatedly present or notably absent when comparing one incident with another, and are of sufficient importance to be given the status of categories according to Strauss and Corbin (1990:94).

Purposive sampling will also allow for detailed exploration and understanding of central themes and puzzles that need to be studied as they are being revealed (Mason, 2002; Patton, 2002). These may include demographic characteristics, specific experiences, behaviours, or roles (Ritchie and Lewis, 2004). The researcher will think critically about the population being studied (the population covered by the church's transformation task in Sesheke) and choose the sample carefully on this basis and in accordance with Silverman (2006:129). Seale et al. (2010:418) write that purposive sampling implies identifying cases within extreme situations as for certain characteristics or cases within a wide range of situations in order to maximise variations. In other words all possible situations are taken into account when deciding on the sample in order to have a comprehensive picture of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. Therefore, the sampling of participants will be based on their relevance to determining the effectiveness of the transformational task by the church in Sesheke area.

Participants will be selected from within Sesheke area because the context where the research takes place must be acknowledged in order to understand the surrounding dynamics and systems (Schurink, 1998a:281). An excellent participant, according to Bryant and Charmaz (2008:231), is one who has been through, or observed, the experience under investigation. Therefore, the process of selecting participants will focus on church and community leaders who have been directly involved in the Sesheke Church's transformational task or have lived in the specific areas where the church has carried out transformational activities.

Qualitative samples should always include processes of purposeful selection according to the specific parameters identified in the study and should be evaluated according to certain demographic factors (Bryant and Charmaz, 2008:234). Therefore, the following

criteria will be used to identify relevant individuals to participate in the interviews as earlier mentioned in chapter one:

- i. A church leader who has been involved with the transformational task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007 or
- ii. A local community leader in a specific area where the Pastors Fellowship has carried out transformational activities for the past seven (7) years.

In addition, the researcher will ensure that the sample exhibits the following characteristics:

- iii. Participants who give consent that the interview be audio or video recorded
- iv. Participants who are able to express themselves in English directly or through an interpreter.
- v. Gender balance and representative of a cross section of age groups, tribes and culture.

The actual size of the sample will be determined by the stage at which data saturation becomes evident (Borg et al., 1993:101; Parse et al., 1985:18). As such, interviews will be conducted until participants begin to reveal patterns, themes and values already expressed by others in earlier conversations. It is therefore incumbent on the researcher to handle data accurately in order to have correct judgement of the point at which data saturation occurs (Richards, 2009:144; Silverman, 2000:154).

### **2.3.1.2 Pilot Study**

A pilot study is of value as it seeks to explore whether the methods and procedures that the researcher intends to employ in the research process will actually work as Magnus (2009:45) and Turner (2005:63) write. It is also referred to as a “trying out” or “feasibility study” (Teijlingen and Handley, 2001:1). Turner (2005:53) writes that a pilot project is necessary for testing whether the proposed data collecting methods will deliver the required data and if the data to be gathered will be a true measure of the subject being studied. Therefore, carrying out a pilot study will help indicate that the data collection methods, namely interviews and field notes of the researcher’s observations as well as the interview question, do indeed deliver data that shed light on the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church’s transformation task.

As such, conducting a pilot project is crucial to the research process and a prerequisite for the successful implementation and completion of the research project (Strydom,

1998:178; Teijlingen and Handley, 2001:1). For example, Marshall and Rossman (2006:79) observe that possible barriers like resistance to recording of interviews can be discovered during the pilot project and attended to. The researcher notes with concern, however, that carrying out such a feasibility study does not make the success of the bigger project obvious, but will increase the probability of the success (Marshall and Rossman, 2011:96; Teijlingen and Handley, 2001:1-2). In this particular case, the pilot project will help to test if the research question is relevant. Should the pilot study prove successful the data obtained with this study will form part of the research data.

A preliminary interview will be conducted with a church or community leader who has been directly involved with the Sesheke Church's transformational task or lived in the specific areas where the church carried out transformational activities in in Sesheke area. If the process is successful, further interviews will be done on a wider scale. The following is the detailed explanation of the nature and method of interviewing to be employed.

### **2.3.1.3 Semi-Structured Interviews**

The aim of interviews in qualitative research is to get a description of the lived experiences of the participants with due attention to the interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomenon (Kvale, 1983:174; Omery, 1983:50). According to Atkinson and Silverman (1997), interviewing is currently the central resource through which contemporary social science engages with issues that concern it. As a primary source, one-on-one, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the Sesheke Church and community leaders in order to get more textured and authentic data concerning their experiences of the church's transformational task and the meaning they ascribe to it (Heck, 2006:380). Semi-structured interviews are neither restrictively structured nor incautiously informal conversations (Osmer, 2008:63).

An initial open-ended, non-directive interview question will be asked to everyone who will be interviewed with follow up questions which will be adapted to the emerging flow of the conversation. The initial question to be asked is: Describe your experience of the transformational task by the church in Sesheke during the past seven (7) years? This is in accordance with the overall aim of qualitative research as presented by Osmer (2008:49-50), that is, to understand the actions and practices in which humans engage in everyday life and the meaning they ascribe to their lived experiences. Gibson and Brown (2009:86) write that the aim of asking direct questions to research participants in

interviews is to create an analytically focussed discourse that provides insight into specific research questions.

The researcher will give priority and focussed attention to what each participant has to say in order to get what is important to the participant rather than to the researcher (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:118). This respondent focussed dimension will maximise opportunity for both focused and emergent information gathering, which is typical of qualitative research (Bamberger et al., 2012:308). Focussing on participants in interviews can help to explain the actions of participants as they are observed and such observations can also help the researcher to understand the extent to which their statements of intent and beliefs actually inform their behaviour regarding the subject being studied (Bamberger et al., 2012:307).

The researcher will endeavour to observe and capture both verbal and non-verbal expressions so as to gain a deep and rich understanding of the participant's lived experience (Osmer, 2008:61-63). Since interviewing embraces symbolic interactionism (Neuman, 2000:71), the probability of getting more textured and authentic data regarding the Sesheke church's transformational task is increased.

#### **2.3.1.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews**

The researcher takes note of the fact that the interviews, just like any other research method, will have both advantages and disadvantages. Whereas Sapsford and Jupp (2006:99) cite the interviewer's having more control over the interview as a key advantage of interviewing, Welman and Kruger (2003:158) highlight the researcher's being fully in-charge of the interview as its major drawback.

By implication, the researcher will have to guide the interview but without controlling it as Osmer (2008:62-63) writes. This will allow him to grasp both verbal and non-verbal responses of the interviewee (Osmer, 2008:63-64). Summerfield (2000:92) writes that interviewing enables the researcher to have greater awareness of psychic dimensions such as significances of silences and subjectivity, fabulation, and trauma.

On the other hand, the researcher takes note of the possible disadvantages with regard to time taken in setting up appointments and conducting the actual interviews (Botha, 2001:17). There is no guarantee, whatsoever, that participants will be available as planned and then interviews must be conducted until data is saturated, which makes it

difficult to manage and budget timescales and costs respectively (Bamberger et al., 2012:2; Gibson and Brown, 2009:58). In some cases, research participants may not be interested in the research explanation jargon according to Holliday (2010:148-149).

The researcher will endeavour to meet the prospective participants in their relaxed naturalistic settings to maximise results (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:306).

### **2.3.1.5 Guidelines for Interviewing**

The overarching guiding principle in interviewing that will be observed by the researcher is to be an active listener who attends carefully to both verbal and non-verbal responses of the interviewee and guides the conversation without controlling it (Osmer, 2008:61-62; Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:117-118). Accordingly, the basic rules for conducting direct interviews according to Berg (2004:110) will be adhered to as hereunder outlined.

*Never begin an interview cold* – Make some small talk.

*Remember your purpose* – Keep the participant on track.

*Present a natural front* – Ask questions as if they just popped into your head.

*Demonstrate aware hearing* – Offer appropriate non-verbal responses.

*Think about appearance* – Dress appropriately.

*Interview in a comfortable place* – Where the participant will feel comfortable.

*Don't be satisfied with monosyllabic answers* – Probe with responses.

*Be respectful* – Participant must feel integral part of research.

*Practice, practice, and practice some more* – The Pilot Study.

*Be cordial and appreciative* – Thank participant when finished.

The researcher will conduct the interviews with the sole purpose of investigating the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task without prejudiced ideas. In order to maintain consistence, interviews will be conducted in the same manner as much as possible and the same question will be asked to all interviewees with due allowance to probe for further explanation if need be (Barbie and Mouton, 2001:253; McLeod and Thompson, 2009:66-67; Osmer, 2008:62-63).

### 2.3.2 Data Analysis

The success of a research project largely depends on the analysis of the respective data to achieve something interesting or perhaps even important in relation to the substantive focus of the research project (Gibson and Brown, 2009:1). According to Bamberger et al. (2012:272, 314), Gibson and Brown (2009:6), and Sapsford and Jupp (2006:246), the research problem, question, and purpose do form a general framework for data analysis, but the substance must still come from the data themselves, which should be transcribed, coded, and interpreted.

The researcher will start by familiarising himself with the data by listening to the recorded interviews and transcribing them verbatim. To transcribe is to turn a recording or notes into a written text (Osmer, 2008:55-56). A detailed recording of the process of discourse will be involved such that every pause will be timed, overlaps between speakers clearly marked, and verbal and non-verbal features included (Babbie, 2007:383; Struwig and Stead, 2001:169). The process will also involve organising the notes from participant observation in fully legible and logical manner data.

After transcribing, the data will be coded. To code is to place data into categories that represent thematic concerns (Gibson and Brown, 2009:133). In qualitative research, to code is to create a category that is used to describe a general features of data which also pertains to a range of examples (Gibson and Brown, 2009:130). The coding process will involve gathering together segments from different parts of the data record that are relevant to specific categories (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:251). According to Barbie (2007:384) and Charmaz (2005:210), this is an important process in taking an analytical attitude toward data. The researcher will closely examine the specific segments of data so as to form categories that capture similarities and differences (Marshall and Rossman, 2006:154; Wolcott (1994:24). This will help to get the researcher off the empirical level through fracturing the data, then conceptualising the pattern of a set of empirical indicators within the data as a substantive theory that explains what is happening in the data (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007:256). This will also enable the researcher to say something through engagement with the data and using it to reflect on the effectiveness of the transformational task by the church in Sesheke area.

In order to discipline the researcher's subjectivity to possible biases in this regard, an experienced coder will also code the interview transcriptions independently.

The qualitative data will be interpreted for the purpose of understanding rather than explanation (Bamberger et al., 2012:293). As patterns emerge, the most important themes will be identified. This will involve both macro and micro examination of the data as well as identification of patterns and themes, both broad-brush and fine-grained (Bamberger et al., 2012:314). At this stage the researcher will compare and contrast all items of data assigned to the same category and across categories for the purpose of clarifying what the categories that will have emerged mean, as well as identifying sub-categories and relations among categories (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:253; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In accordance with Marshall and Rossman (2011:161), the interpretation of data will therefore give meaning and coherence to the themes, patterns, and categories and thereby developing a storyline that makes sense.

In order to establish what the patterns and combinations of data relationships are, Dikoff et al.'s (1968:434-435) survey list of seven questions as listed hereunder will be useful:

- i. Who is responsible for the activity?
- ii. Who is the recipient of this activity?
- iii. What is the contextual reference wherein the activity has taken place?
- iv. What are the techniques, procedures and/or protocol associated with the activity?
- v. What is the aim of the activity?
- vi. What is the source of energy that provides motivation for this activity?
- vii. When will the activity be terminated?

## 2.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Trustworthiness is of utmost importance in any given research process (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). As such, Lincoln and Guba's (1985:294) fourfold criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the research process will guide this study as outlined hereunder with the corresponding and subsequent questions.

**Truth value:** How can we establish confidence in the truth about the research findings?

**Applicability:** To what extent can the research findings be applicable to other contexts or other respondents?

**Consistency:** Can the research findings be replicated if the inquiry is repeated:

**Neutrality:** To what degree are the research findings determined by the participants’ experiences instead of the researcher’s biases?

In order to ensure that the above criteria are adhered to, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability will be employed as identified corresponding strategies or control measures (Gibson and Brown, 2009:8; Krefting, 1991:214 – 222; Lincoln and Guba, 1985:294; Marshall and Rossman, 1995:143 – 148; Polit and Beck, 2007:540).

**2.4.1 Criteria and strategies to for trustworthiness**

Table 2.3 below shows the relationship between the criteria and strategies for trustworthiness in qualitative research according to Lincoln and Guba (1985).

**Table 2.1 – Criteria and Strategies for Trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)**

Strategies	Explanation
Truth value – Credibility	Inquiry must be conducted in such a manner that the subject will accurately be identified and described.
Applicability – Transferability	One set of findings can be applied to another context through multiple cases, multiple informants, or more than one data-gathering method.
Consistency – Dependability	Accuracy or precision of an instrument or the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of findings.
Neutrality – Confirmability	Findings of the study are confirmed by another and data helps confirm the general findings.

The following tables 2.2 to 2.5 are detailed explications of how the above criteria and strategies will be implemented to ensure trustworthiness.

2.4.1.1 Table 2.2 – CREDIBILITY

CRITERIA	APPLICATION
Prolonged and varied experience	The researcher has twelve years of experience as a pastor and was leader of the Sesheke Church's transformational team for seven years from its inception.
Authority of the researcher.	The researcher also holds a bachelor of theology degree from Auckland Park Theological Seminary and an honours degree from North West University where he also did training in qualitative research methodology.
<p style="text-align: center;">Reflexivity</p> <p>This is a key concept in qualitative research and involves the way in which the researcher comes into terms with and capitalises on the complexities of his or her presence in the research setting in a methodical way (Holliday, 2010:138). Hence the researcher becomes the research instrument par excellence as he uses his presence to effect revealing change (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:18; Osmer, 2008:58; Sapsford and Jupp, 2009:256-257).</p>	<p>Field notes to be taken during interviews will indicate personal, methodological, and observational notes.</p> <p>The researcher's background, that is his authority and prolonged and varied experience, will be taken into consideration because it informs the framework from which he will organise, study and analyse the research findings (Holliday, 2010:127; Krefting, 1991:220; Toma, 2006:414)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Triangulation</p> <p>Crucial to protecting credibility and involves deliberate attempts to confirm, elaborate, and disconfirm facts and</p>	<p>In this case the different sources of data are scheduled interviews with different participants at different times in their geographical locations or naturalistic settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:306),</p>

<p>interpretations through reference to multiple data sources and multiple methods of data collection (Bamberger et al., 2012:139,298; Gibson and Brown, 2009:58-59; Krefting, 1991:218).</p>	<p>literature review.</p> <p>Data collecting methods will include in-depth semi-structured interviews with qualifying informants, observation/field notes and literature control study (Bamberger et al., 2012:301; Bryant and Charmaz, 2008:523).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Peer review</p> <p>This is critical review by colleagues and external experts to bolster credibility and prevent researcher biasness with regard to data analysis and the bigger research process (Bamberger et al., 2012:138,300; Krefting, 1991:219).</p>	<p>In this case, two course leaders with experience as study leaders and in the field of qualitative research supervise the research project.</p> <p>An experienced coder will independently analyse the data.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Member-checking</p> <p>The review of data and interpretations by participants representing the relevant stakeholders in order to verify the researcher's findings (Bamberger et al., 2012:139).</p>	<p>A provisional write-up of the interviews will be presented to selected participants representing relevant informants and stakeholders to validate the accuracy of the recorded data and the reasonableness of the interpretations drawn from them (Bamberger et al., 2012:299-300; Geertz, 1973:29; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). These participants will be charged with confirming or disconfirming the sufficiency and accuracy of the data from the selections they review so that corrections will be made if need be.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Structural coherence</p> <p>Structural coherence means that there has to be consistency between the data and the interpretation thereof,</p>	<p>The researcher will follow the stipulated methodology framework and focus on the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task in order to maintain structural coherence.</p>

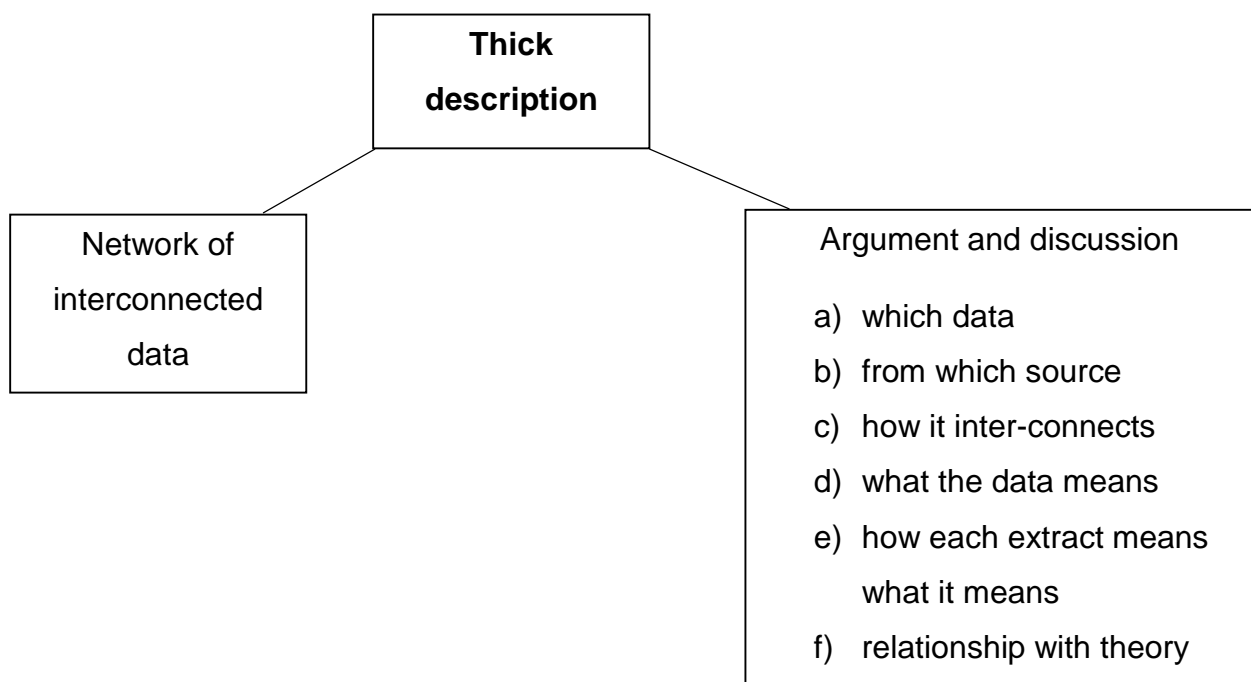
<p>even if there happens to be apparent contradictions among the data, so long such contradictions can be interpreted by the data themselves (Krefting, 1991:220).</p>	
<p>Interview techniques</p>	<p>Multiple semi-structured interviews will be conducted with different participants until data saturations occurs (Borg et al., 1993:101; Parse et al., 1985:18). The guidelines for interviewing stipulated in 2.3.1.3.4 above will be applied.</p>

**2.4.1.2 Table 2.3 – TRANSFERABILITY**

<p><b>CRITERIA</b></p>	<p><b>APPLICATION</b></p>
<p>Purposive sampling</p> <p>This is based on the theoretical notion of selecting participants on the basis of their relevance for the research question being posed (Gibson and Brown, 2009:37-38). Qualitative samples should always include processes of purposeful selection according to the specific parameters identified in the study and should be evaluated according to certain demographic factors (Bryant and Charmaz, 2008:234).</p>	<p>Purposive sampling of participants who qualify according to the following requirements: (1) a church leader who has been involved with the transformation task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007 or (2) a local community leader who has lived in Sesheke area for the past seven (7) years. No fixed sample size will be determined beforehand, as interviews will be conducted until the data is saturated (Borg et al., 1993:101; Parse, et al., 1985:18).</p>
<p>Thick description</p> <p>A key concept in qualitative research which involves the production of rich</p>	<p>Detailed descriptions of the demographic details of participants, research methodology and findings, and direct</p>

<p>descriptions that outline the contexts of people's actions and practices so that they become intelligible in their own terms (Geertz, 1973; Gibson and Brown, 2009:8). Conrad and Serlin (2006:415) write that thick description will also generally enlighten theory and practice.</p>	<p>citations from interviews with participants will thus be given. Holliday (2010:10) notes that a major theme of thick description is the separation of data, discursive commentary, and argument. Hence the researcher will give a detailed description of the transformation task of the church in Sesheke area as well interpret such data against the rest of other data in this research as illustrated in figure 2.2 below. In this way, the thick description will also help to come up with the corresponding disciplinary base and its literature from where particular concepts, models, and theories that structure the study are found (Anfara and Mertz, 2006:23).</p>
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The following constituents of thick description by Holliday (2010:103) in figure 2.1 below will be adhered to:



2.4.1.3 Table 2.4 – DEPENDABILITY

CRITERIA	APPLICATION
Coding and scrutiny of the research	Coding will be done by an independent expert and the researcher will adhere to continued scrutiny of the study by expert course leaders as well as literature study (Bamberger et al., 2012:138).
Thick description of research methods	A thick step by step description of research method, data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation will be presented to ascertain the quality of the decisions made in the research process (Bamberger et al., 2012:138; Krefting, 1991:221).
Triangulation	Triangulation will include multiple semi-structured interviews with qualifying participants as stipulated in 2.3.1.1, field notes and literature control.
Stepwise replication	The detailed description of the research methods and findings will allow for replication of the study if it were to be repeated with comparable respondents in the same or similar context.
Peer review	Critical review of the research methods and findings by colleagues and external experts will bolster the trustworthiness of the study (Bamberger et al., 2012:138).
Coding and independent coder  The most important thing researchers have to do is to record what they see, usually in field notes, but sometimes on tape or film, because whatever is not recorded is lost (Seale et al., 2010:213-214)	The researcher will, therefore, document the coding procedure and the discussion with the independent coder.

**2.4.1.4 Table 2.5 – CONFIRMABILITY**

CRITERIA	APPLICATION
<p>Confirmability audit</p> <p>The researcher must make available an audit trail so that interpretations, recommendations, and conclusions made can be traced back to their sources and proven if they are supported by the inquiry (Houser, 2012:467)</p>	<p>An audit trail will be made available in terms of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The research proposal.</li> <li>• Record of raw data, transcribed interviews, and field notes.</li> <li>• Record of data preparation and analysis product.</li> <li>• Records of data reconstruction</li> <li>• Process notes.</li> </ul>

## 2.5 ETHICAL NORMS

The researcher recognises that all research involving human subjects is increasingly subject to ethical scrutiny and this includes research done by both undergraduate and post graduate students (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:294). Even if there are rarely wrong or right answers, nor one clear-cut answer regarding ethics in research (Bamberger et al., 2012:170-179; Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:293; Seale et al., 2010:221), research ethics has become an area of much greater concern in recent years with most universities, research funders, and professional associations demanding that research receives ethical approval before it is carried out (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:293). The reason for such an increasing critique as this is to minimise the negative consequences of social science research to individuals and societies according to Bamberger et al. (2012:170). As such, the researcher will endeavour to conduct the research in a way that is ethical and feasible (Marshall and Rossman, 2006:82).

Although contributing to organisational or social value is the aim of social research (Yarbrough et al., 2011), clients can misuse or ignore research results while researchers can be irresponsible in two serious ways: insensitivity and/or incompetence (Bamberger et al., 2012:170; Chelimsky, 1999; Morris and Cohn, 1993). Therefore, the researcher will, in accordance with Sapsford and Jupp (2006:293), have to make ethical decisions throughout the life of the project, not just at the outset.

Ethics in social research mainly revolve around voluntary participation, no harm to participants and anonymity and confidentiality (Babbie, 2007:62; Ray, 2006:323). The ethical requirements for qualitative research as set out by North West University and outlined in chapter 1.6 will be strictly observed in this study. The researcher will uphold scientific standards, comply with the law, and avoid social and personal harm to participants (Dench et al., 2004; Sapsford and Jupp, 2006:292-294). Hammersley (1998), Punch (1994), Seale et al. (2010:221-222, and Thorne (1998) write that some of the generally accepted ethical principles that guide social research are codes and consent, confidentiality, and trust.

In conducting this research, the researcher will, therefore, adhere to the following ethical norms:

### **2.5.1 Informed Consent**

The researcher will inform the participant about the purpose of the research and explain to them that they are free to decide whether or not to participate in the interview, including the right to withdraw from the interview after starting if they so feel. This is necessary because persons can be injured in ways researchers cannot anticipate nor compensate afterwards (Erikson, 1967). Therefore, informed consent will be obtained from all participants and a sample of the consent form will be attached to this empirical research as an appendix.

### **2.5.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

All data in this study will be treated with appropriate confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher recognises that this can be problematic in some cases where some societies or donor organisations legally accept that interviewees' names and titles be given in the appendix. This, however, does not rule out the issue of confidentiality in view of voluntary participation and informed consent from the outset. The researcher will, in accordance with Sheridan and Kisor (2000:122), assure the church and community leaders to in Sesheke that the information shared will not be made available anywhere without their informed consent.

Confidentiality and anonymity also entails the handling of data in the research process in a way or ways that will ensure privacy (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:523; Boeije, 2010:46) because participants have the right to privacy according to Walsh (2001:70).

The researcher will, therefore, assure the participants of their right to privacy by guaranteeing them confidentiality (Punch, 1998:175).

### **2.5.3 Respect and Trust**

Respect in this regard refers to the avoidance of social and personal harm. According to Hugman (2010:152), there are limitations on the extent to which any “need to know” creates a “right to know”. Trust in this case refers to the relationship between the researcher and the participants. It also includes the researcher’s responsibility not to spoil the field for others in the sense that potential research subjects become reluctant to research. Hence trust also applies to the report of the discursive practices defining the standards for presenting both the researcher and the work as trustworthy.

Therefore, the researcher will rely on his existing long relationship with the Sesheke Church and community to enhance respect and trust with the participants.

### **2.5.4 Honest Disclosure of Research findings**

The research findings will be reported accurately and honestly. Reporting and dissemination of research findings will be carried out in a responsible manner. Member checking and peer review during the data collection process will also serve as prelude to ensuring honest disclosure of the research findings.

### **2.5.5 Qualitative Research Report**

Reports based on qualitative data should reveal the complexity of the phenomenon or program being studied in terms of multiple perspectives, overlapping contexts, and various conditionalities, criteria, and values. Bamberger et al. (2012:316-317) write that these detailed and multifaceted descriptions are necessary to present sufficient data to show the evidentiary basis for findings, to avoid oversimplification in representation of phenomena or programs, and to promote valid findings. Atkinson (1990:7) writes that the writing of the research should construct its own reality.

Therefore, the qualitative research report in this case will not only reveal the findings, but will also show the workings of how the findings were arrived at (Holliday, 2010:42-43). Direct citations of the participants will be used where necessary in order to understand the particular, rather than merely explain the general (Bamberger et al., 2012:317). Such details will help bring to the fore the insider or emic view of how the

participants describe their lived experiences as individuals. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984:144) the emic view is a detailed description of how a participant reflects his or her culture, beliefs, values, and experience. As such, the qualitative report will endeavour to represent all details required to reveal the complexity of the phenomenon regarding the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

## **2.6 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION**

The research design, methodology and strategies of inquiry have been discussed in detail concerning the empirical research with regard to the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. Strategies to ensure trustworthiness of the research and ethical aspects received particular attention as well. The qualitative research report will finally elucidate the complexity of the phenomenon being studied and give an emic view of the research subjects with regard to the effectiveness of the transformational task by the Sesheke Church.

The next part of this chapter will give a detailed feedback of the data analysis of the interviews with church or community leaders who have been directly involved with the church's transformational task in Sesheke area during the past seven years.

## **2.7 RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **2.7.1 Introduction**

This section will give a detailed discussion and interpretation of the research findings from the interviews and field notes of the researcher's observation. The research is conducted in its contextual uniqueness and will help the church to come up with a model that aspires to enhance the effectiveness of the transformational task. According to Burns and Grove (2009:29), this will also help to understand and similar phenomena in other contexts.

Interpretation in this respect will be for the purpose of understanding rather than explanation. According to Bamberger et al. (2012:293), a deep contextual understanding of the particular is the goal of qualitative inquiry. It is, therefore, not merely abstract understanding but such as is "deeply, personally felt" (Bamberger et al.,

2012:293). Hence Struwig and Stead (2001:552) observe that interpretation is the most important part in research. As such, this section will focus on providing an analysis of the data collected by presenting a sufficient and accurate thick description of the personal experiences of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of the church's transformational task in Sesheke area. The method of operation will be discussed first in order to ensure transparency and then the research results will be explored. Theory regarding sampling (2.3.1.1), pilot study (2.3.1.2), and semi-structured interviews (2.3.1.3) has already been discussed. Therefore, only the empirical results established will be reflected and discussed under the following headings:

### **2.7.2 Results of the pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted for the purpose of testing the relevance of the research question and to reveal whether the data from the interview would be part of the research findings (2.3.1.2). The researcher found no problem with the response, but had problems with the abruptness of the research question during the conversation which by default compelled on to add the necessary preceding words in order to have a natural front and flow of the conversation (Berg, 2004:110).

The research question was: Describe your experience of the transformational task by the church in Sesheke during the past seven (7) years. The question stimulated free-flowing conversations and allowed interviewees the opportunity to move in unanticipated directions (Bamberger et al., 2012:308). In other words, the question was relevant to the purpose of the interview but it also allowed for productive digressions.

As such, the research question was found to be relevant and the data gathered for the pilot study is integrated with the rest of the research findings.

### **2.7.3 Discussion of the Sample**

The sample of participants was purposively chosen according to the criteria described in paragraph 2.3.1.1. As Gibson and Brown (2009:56) write, participants were selected on the basis of their relevance to the research. The following criteria were thus observed:

- i. A church leader who has been involved with the transformational task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007 or
- ii. A local community leader in a specific area where the Pastors Fellowship have carried out transformational activities for the past seven (7) years.

In addition, the researcher ensured that participants exhibited the following characteristics:

- iii. Participants who give consent that the interview be audio recorded.
- iv. Participants who were able to express themselves in English directly or through an interpreter.

The researcher did not have a prefixed sample size, but rather conducted interviews until data saturation occurred (Borg et al., 1993:101; Parse et al, 1985:18).

### 2.7.3.1 Representation of participants

Both the researcher and independent coder agreed that the participants were representative, which gives a balanced interpretation of the current situation. Table 2.6 below shows the representation of participants from all nineteen interviews conducted by the researcher personally.

**Table 2.6 Representation of participants**

<b>SEX</b>	<b>CHURCH LEADERS</b>	<b>COMMUNITY LEADERS</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

- i. Female pastors: It is expected that there will be no female pastor respondents as female pastors are culturally discouraged. There were no female pastors in the Pastors Fellowship or in the district.
- ii. The five pastors who were interviewed were directly involved with the church's transformational task for the past seven years. Other pastors, who were also involved in the beginning, were later transferred out of town and those who replaced them are staying less than seven years of stay in town and therefore the researcher chose not to involve them in the research.
- iii. Three of the seven male community leaders were directly with the Sesheke Church's transformational task as part of the task part of the inner group that worked with the Pastors Fellowship.
- iv. Female community members were also seven and four of those were directly involved with the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

## 2.7.4 Analysing the Interviews

Data collection was the sole responsibility of the researcher and all interviews were audio recorded using the researcher's phone as a recording device and then saved on the researcher's laptop computer. Written consent to participate in the interviews and for the interviews to be recorded was obtained from all respondents who participated in interviews to ensure that the interviews with their emotions were fully captured (Appendix 1).

The interviews were then transcribed verbatim by the researcher (Appendix 3). To ensure dependability, coding was done separately by the researcher and an independent coder who has a doctorate degree in the field of practical theology. Thereafter, the researcher and independent coder compared notes so as to avoid prejudices that would influence the researcher's judgements concerning the research findings.

### 2.7.4.1 Comment from Independent coder

All the interviews were semi-structured. The feedback from the independent coder noted that "using semi-structured interviews require a certain level of expertise". Some questions presented a problem in that the researcher asked contradicting questions in one question, which in some cases prompted unusable answers. For example, in an interview with a participant (p6) the researcher asked, "*Hmm. How has the community benefited socially and uuh also in terms of uh economic justice of course but especially the social aspect of it it covers everything*" and the participant answered, "*Hmm, I also can't answer that one*". The independent coder is of the opinion that the majority of questions were, however, acceptable and that the data can be used. "The majority of questions were however acceptable" (Independent coder).

### 2.7.4.2 Credibility of One Respondent

Credibility is an important factor in qualitative research (Toma, 2006:413). It became apparent from the content of the first interview that the respondent is not a credible one because his answers were exaggerated and could cause reasonable problems concerning the credibility of the research. In contrast with all other participants, all his answers pertaining to the Pastors Fellowship were positive. Many of the comments made by him are in direct contradiction with all the other participants. One such

example is the following: he speaks of projects conducted at “*prisons*”, “*hospitals*” and “*schools*” (in the plural form), but all the other participants referring to this activity indicate “*prison*”, “*hospital*” and “*school*” in the singular, conducted during the Independence Day celebrations.

It is also evident from the researcher’s field observational notes that from the outset the researcher “*Felt somehow uneasy about the prolonged time before the interview*” and that the participant was “*rather critical initially with rare eye contact*”. The “*Researcher had to gather courage to get participant relaxed and confident*” (Researcher’s field observational notes).

The respondent in question is apparently the acting chairperson of the Pastor’s Fellowship. It may, therefore, be seen from his position that he wants to present a positive image of the Pastors Fellowship, no matter how unrealistic and far removed from reality his answers are.

Due to the claim for credibility, this interview is discarded by both the researcher and the independent coder and is not employed in this research.

#### **2.7.4.3 Responses from interviews**

Responses from interview participants were divided into four (4) main themes with twenty five (25) sub-themes as illustrated in table 2.7 below.

**Table 2.7 Synopsis of themes and subthemes**

<b>No</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
1	Reasons the church failed at its transformational task	1.1 Lack of participatory transformation practises. 1.2 Church politics/personal gain. 1.3 Oversimplified approach to transformation 1.4 Underlining dualism, namely spiritual opposed to physical 1.5 Lack of skills & understanding of the

		<p>transformational task</p> <p>1.6 Non-sustainable interventions</p> <p>1.7 Lack of resources</p>
2	Church impact	
3	Expectations regarding the transformational task of the church	<p>3.1 Church should impact the community holistically</p> <p>3.2 Church should liaise with the government on behalf of the people</p> <p>3.3 Church should empower the people</p>
4	Transformational challenges	<p>4.1 Challenges related to the particular community characteristics.</p> <p>4.1.1 Poverty</p> <p>4.1.2 Position of the ex-employees of the sawmill</p> <p>4.1.3 Education across all sectors of the community</p> <p>4.1.4 Cultural and language barriers</p> <p>4.1.5 Accessibility of communities</p> <p>4.1.6 The vulnerable members of the community are suffering</p> <p>4.1.7 Farming</p> <p>4.1.8 Water</p> <p>4.2 Challenges related to operational practice.</p>

		<p>4.2.1 Cooperation with government departments</p> <p>4.2.2 Financing transformation projects</p> <p>4.2.3 Establishing community participation</p> <p>4.2.4 Engage social institutions</p> <p>4.2.5 Effective planning and implementation</p>
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### 2.7.5 Description of the Results

The identified themes as shown in table 2.7 above will now be discussed in detail. These themes are the results of the analysis of the phenomenological interviews and personal observations recorded in field notes. Direct citations from the interview transcriptions will be made to motivate and illustrate the themes that emerged. The citations will be indicated in italics. For academic purposes, the researcher will maintain relevant confidentiality and anonymity, although only few (15.8%) of the participants chose to remain anonymous. Mention of the rest of the participants who opted for their names and occupations to be revealed will be made in the acknowledgements of the final complete document. All interviews were conducted in English as all available participants could express themselves in English and there are, therefore, no translations to be made.

Only the interviews will be discussed at this stage, conclusions will be made later. Hereunder is a detailed discussion of the themes and respective sub-themes where applicable.

#### 2.7.5.1 Theme 1: Reasons the Church Failed at its Transformational Task

An overwhelming opinion of the participants was that the Sesheke Church had failed at its transformational task. Even though participants acknowledge that there are no shortages of churches in the area (*Uh there're so many churches within and each church has got its belief*) they are of the opinion that this fact does not necessarily bring about improved quality of life or solution for survival. Some of the comments of the

participants may be interpreted that the church is viewed as important when it comes to transforming people's lives.

- i. *(P10: I feel the church didn't do enough).*
- ii. *(P14: Uuh, I've not the, I've not seen the effectiveness of that).*
- iii. *(P8: Us as leaders we're not doing it, what we're supposed to do. We're sleeping on duty I could say).*
- iv. The church is not doing much for transformation *(P11: That way I can say the church for transformation they have not done anything, because people still remain the same they have never changed!).*
- v. There are many churches in the community, but there is little help forthcoming from the churches *(P12: Uh there're so many churches within and each church has got its belief. Though we say povery poverty, but I don't know help their se, others in their churches I'd say like that). (P13: No help I've seen from the government or even from from church members, whether from Sesheke BOMA to come here, no... Children are suffering, widow, widowers, are suffering... while the churches are there, who can help those people!).*
- vi. There is nothing happening regarding transformational projects. *(P6: Ha as at now, there's nothing happening... Completely nothing).*
- vii. The projects are not effective *(P5: I wouldn't say it's it is effective because eeh, there's nothing tangible which is seen here, locally).*
- viii. Cannot see any change taking place *(P11: Hmm but from the time when they came up to this time, there's no change that I've seen in the compound. People are still doing the same thing, there's no change).*
- ix. *(P19: during the for the past seven years, not much is going on).*
- x. *(P:18: we haven't really, reached our target, uuh, convincingly due to certain, uuh things that were maybe not in place).*
- xi. *(P9: But then, would say, nothing much has done because, at the beginning people has got, had the plans, tooo come up with and then we don't know where we lost our track as the group as well).*

- xii. Churches are not fulfilling their obligation to transform communities (*P7: It's like we've forgotten what we're supposed to do.*).
- xiii. (*P16: The social and economic justice, the church still has to, speak out more. Uuh, because – that is where – the life of a person is centred on, and if the church cannot be a mouth piece on a number of social issues that the people would be demanding, if they can't speak out then, we we stop being relevant to the community*)
- xiv. (*P16: - In my observation, th the poverty has increased*)

Contrary to the majority view, one participant stated that the church was successful in its transformational task. From the participant's motivation, however, it seems that this conclusion is based on the fact that at least the Pastors forum is entrusted with the task of community transformation.

- xv. [*P4: Ye es*], *uhm, I, I, I can say that here in Sesheke to start with is uh, we have uh a committee, and that committee, it is involves the Pastors Fellowship committee and that Pastors Fellowship committee at least we have a committee which is specifically on transformation, or on something like advocacy, so to say*).

That the Pastors forum is however not successful in fulfilling its transformational task was clear from the interviews of the majority of participants, as already noted above.

- xvi. If the Pastors Forum is still involved in transformational projects, nobody is aware of it (*P7: At the moment I cannot say yes or no because I don't know whether the program, has come to an end but, I've not seen the results. I've not been notified whether the program, has been suspended, oor, it is still coming may be resources have run out, I don't know*).
- xvii. (*P2: So to myee, to my knowledge since that time, I don't think there'ssee, unless I'm not told, but I don't think that there's something that is going on to my knowledge*)

In the interviews the participants identified numerous reasons, which they believe, were responsible for the failure of the church's transformational task in Sesheke. These reasons are categorised and discussed in seven sub-themes.

**a) Lack of Participatory Transformation Practises.**

The participants are of the opinion that the implementation of programmes aimed at transforming the community, was done in a top-down style that did not allow the community to play an active role in their own transformation. The community was not given the opportunity to be the primary actors in their own transformation. The opinion held is that the Sesheke community was passive recipients of projects and programmes designed elsewhere. This is further highlighted by the fact that the transformation program aimed at changing undesirable behaviour of the community, without acknowledging that these behaviours were in fact desperate survival strategies and, therefore, they needed to present a workable alternative. None of the interviewees indicated that the church in the target community was involved in the planning of the project.

- i. The origin of the vision seems to have come from the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) (*P4: through organisations such as EFZ, eeeh, there was a program which where they were concerned the use of natural resources in the area of Sesheke*).
- ii. Targeting survival means without providing workable alternatives (*P16: if you'd want to, them to stop that, what is it that you will provide that will sustain their lives because they're doing it for their livelihood? And if that is not the case, then it becomes a non-starter.*).
- iii. EFZ was the driving force for the outreach to the two communities (*P8: That was under the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia ... together with the Sesheke ee, Sesheke ee, Pastors Fellowship.*).

The Pastors Fellowship on the other hand showed evidence that they were aware of the needs of the communities but could not go against the program of EFZ, probably because the funding was from EFZ and for that particular program of nature preservation. The fact that EFZ is the church mother body of Pentecostal and Evangelical churches in Zambia could have also made the Pastors Fellowship to feel inferior to alter the program.

Not only were the Pastors Fellowship not given the opportunity to participate but at the same time they also did not give the rest of the community an opportunity to participate.

- iv. The Pastors Forum is now functioning in isolation – before church members were also part of the forum (*P9: The Pastors Fellowship, we're working with them but, I would say not effectively because they don't oftenly involve us*).
- v. (*P10: Nothing is happening due to the leadership's attitude of excluding church members*).
- vi. No pre-community research resulted in community members' opposing the project (*P3: When you go there, discuss with the people, yes. Make even a PRA survey (R: what is a PRA) [eh he he] or community assessment (R: okay, community assessment) community assessment ... But that one had not come out*)

Asset-based community development is based on the belief that everyone has “capacities, abilities and gifts and that the quality of an individual's life depends in part on the extent to which these capacities are used, abilities expressed and gifts given” (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). The participants seem to think one of the reasons the church failed at its transformational task is that it did not harness the assets of the community.

#### **b) Church Politics/Personal Gain**

The success of the community transformation actions was impeded by the self-centered actions of churches and leaders that were aimed at improving their own status, position or to achieve greater power. The participants described the aspirations, of the different roles players, to achieve personal gain or individual agenda as a reason for the failure of the church with regard to its transformational task. In understanding this destructive actions and aspirations one needs to note that the lack of planning, leadership and understanding of transformational development (as will be explained in a later theme) could greatly have contributed to a situation where role players pursue their own agendas. A lack of strong leadership and a clear direction especially in conditions of great poverty and needs might further motivate people to “take” what they can.

- i. There is too much in-fighting for positions which makes a positive contribution impossible (*P7: And where there're churches, you may find there's conflict as, at the same time because, eeh, no you see those are doing this, no those are doing this and so on and so forth and so forth.*).

- ii. The focus has shifted to church numbers (*P16: – Ehm, if I may put it in this way, for some would do it for the sake of how many numbers when have done this and that will my church have, and I as a pastor reap out of that?*).
- iii. After a crusade, the pastors were fighting over which new converts must go to which church (*P: 18: Eehm, then there was another issue, those time those days if you have to put up a crusade, uh the main reason was to to reach out to the people, ... and, eeh, but then it came to a point where, after a you you have gathered, uuh, those that, the the the new converts, and then some people start choosing who they want in their church. Aand, I thought no, uuh I'd rather fight for something else than fighting for the, eh for who should be in the church*).
- iv. The churches are too divided between themselves to effectively bring about transformation change (*P2: But the the church has not been very effective, especially in terms of coming together like it was in EFZ. If they do it then they do it as churches*). *Not really coming together to see the ways in which they can help the communities out there*).
- v. (*P16: - It may not be happening in the church because – uuh – we may have – different rather diverse, eeh aims to achieve as a church*).
- vi. The church at Sesheke is more interested in quantity than in quality church members (*P16: Uhm, here I mean we look so much on the quantity than the quality life this Christian member of our church might have. So when it is more of just a quantity without the quality, hence the problem*).
- vii. (*P7: That's the reason you find when there're too many churches you end up quarrelling amongst yourselves ... which is not supposed to be ... the case!*)
- viii. (*P7: But you find each group wants to work on its own in isolation*).
- ix. (*P3: ... when it comes to involvement, that's when you find each church now is trying to – to to separate fro, doing their work on their own not involving the others because sometime you find maybe the support is coming from their church*).
- x. Pastors are more concerned about their personal income to be obtained through involvement in the transformational projects (*P16: Will I have a stable income when I have this number?*).

- xi. The focus has shifted to personal gain. (*P16 – Ehm, if I may put it in this way, for some would do it for the sake of how many numbers when have done this and that will my church have, and I as a pastor reap out of that?*).
- xii. (*P3: ... we have tried to raise the income of our church. This failed so the church started a garden project at the church. The vegetables were sold and the money went to the church itself and the money was used to build a house for the pastor*
- xiii. Churches are not prepared to give of their money for projects (*P19: The, for whatever project you have to come up, they'd want some, know, contribution from somewhere. They can't do it on their own ... So even in churches there it's failing*).
- xiv. I feel very embarrassed since I am anxious to be involved and I was pushed out of the program without any explanation from the Pastors Forum (*P6: Well, I feel very embarrassing, since I was very anxious to be involved in this program, but at the end I found that I was out of that program*) (*P19: It's only that, I it it was not well explained*).

### **c) Oversimplified Approach to Transformation**

The transformational efforts of the church are seen as oversimplified and inadequate as it did not provide a holistic solution to the needs of the community. It seems that a single aspect was focused to the detriment of the survival and well-being of the community. Only the aspect of forest preservation was addressed and without addressing the underlying reason that people were cutting down trees for, namely for their survival. Planting trees is providing trees for the next generation, but without food now there will be no next generation to profit from the trees planted today. Additionally, certain sections of the community were not part of the process as individual churches tended to single out their members when doing transformational projects in the target communities.

- i. (*P7: But if we want just to talk about no the church went to that community, they talked to them about deforestation and the badness, but if their source of life is from that forest, you tell somebody stop! Don't get your meal from there, while him is eating, that is not, that is ungodly*).
- ii. The people understood why they should not chop down trees for charcoal or for farming, but no alternatives to replace these practices was presented. (*P7: When*

*we left, all the people returned to their former way of living, as survival is bigger than nature preservation).*

- iii. People came to tell us about nature preservation (*P11: they told us that we had to stop cutting down trees*).
- iv. (*P17: Eeh, at Silolo Primary School where I reside, they gave us approximately thirteen plants*).
- v. The projects are not successful because no replacement was given for what was to be taken away (*P16: you have to give something as a replacement for what you are taking away from them*).
- vi. The people wanted more information on how they can benefit from stopping deforestation (*P2: the people wanted more information on the same, wanted more information on how they can benefit*).
- vii. (*P7: They said fine, we're not raising any objection, give us an alternative!*).
- viii. There is no success because only sections within communities was targeted (*P3: So instead of one church going to segregate their people, you you leave the other people, then the the program will not work out because you're se you're doing it only to your church*).

**d) Underlining Dualism, namely Spiritual Opposed to Physical**

An underlining dualism – spiritual guidance opposed to physical well-being - with regard to the task of the church is also seen as a reason why the church is not successful in its transformational task. The church's task is seen as attending to the spiritual needs of the people opposed to their physical well-being. This dualism leads to an "either or" attitude rather than embracing both these areas as part of the church's task.

- i. The church sees its task as only preaching and addressing spiritual issues. (*P11: Uh I think the onl the only thing, is only spiritual, that's all. Only spiritual!. ... Only spiritual. Spiritual, so that, preaching to the people so that they have they serve from they move away from ev from evil they have to do good. [Only spiritual, that's all] ... yes only spiritual*) (2).
- ii. Many pastors come to the area, but only to conduct healing services and then they leave again (*P12: There're so many pastors who came to this area ... but all*

*e most of the pe pastors I've experienced, they're those those pastors who are healing people) (1)*

**e) Lack of Skills and Understanding of the Transformational Task**

A lack of skills and understanding of the transformational task is mentioned as a reason for the failure of the church. This shortfall is further associated with lack of effective planning on behalf of the church which is met by failure to implement the projects. It also became evident that the church in Sesheke did not have the skills to work with external experts to ensure that the transformation addresses the basic needs of the people in the communities (P3: ... *Make even a PRA survey ... or community assessment ... Eeh the community themselves come ou out with their own needs or their own activities. When you come back, for those people to implement, if you ask, make a request to any organisation, after going to the communities, I don't think any organisation will refuse because you have already started on the ground. What you need is just support ... But that one had not come out).*

- i. It is apparent that not all of those interviewed understand what transformation entails. One person understands community transformation as collecting money to build a house for the pastor (P3 ... *and also from that money it would maybe add up to the amounts that people brought to build a pastor's hou house).* Another equates community transformation to church planting. (P8: *The transformational projects is very successful because I planted 6 churches in 17 years)*
- ii. It is also apparent that some perceive the single outreach to the two communities as community transformation. (P6: *The other uuh, the other time they ha they ha they had gone to, ah what's this place there? Si, Makusi ... yah I heard of that one... From there I heard ab of oo, Mangamu ... yah, where I was not sure if they had gone there but I heard the information that they were there).*
- iii. The Pastors Fellowship should always re-evaluate what they are doing to re-plan for the way forward, but this is not happening (P16: *As the past chairperson if I may put it that way ... of the the Pastors Fellowship ... I think every step that one carries, there must be a moment of reflection and re-evaluation, so that you're able to redesign your ori your approach or the next*

*step you would want to. ... I think it would be prudent to sit down, re-evaluate and see the way forward).*

- iv. *(P3: Implementation is the major challenge – yes, it is a major problem)*
- v. *(They did not dispute that fact but they said, how do we survive if we stop doing what we are doing?).*

The Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) co-joined with the Pastors Fellowship of Sesheke without understanding the communities' basic needs.

- vi. *(P7: The ee, the leadership of the church in Sesheke that came together through eeh, eeh, Pastors Fellowship ... So, they worked together with the EFZ that is Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia who came to Sesheke, it was one of the areas that was identified because of the timber that was being extracted from there.).*
- vii. *(P3: Hmm, through the support of EFZ, because EFZ was on the deforestation, but these other churches within that denominational they carrying out activities of food production).*
- viii. *(P10: when something is from high up there you you can't stand up to oppose it you just have to look I could see a problem and as at now I don't know, but I'm not seeing anything I'm not hearing anything).*

#### **f) Non-Sustainable Interventions**

Sustainability refers to medium to long-term viability and longevity of changes brought by the transformational task. In this case, it's like the entire transformational project by the church could not be sustained because no replacement strategies were put in place and there were no follow-ups or planning meetings. As a result, the process seems to have been fleeting and did not produce long-term positive changes.

Another reason the participants evaluated the interventions as not sustainable was because it was dependent on resources from outside the community for its survival and success.

- i. They held a few workshops but never returned *(P11: the people from the church came once and after that I never saw them again) (P5: After the workshop uuh, there was not other meeting where, uuh, people wanted [attended that meeting], or rather workshop, were briefed.).*

- ii. There are no more meetings to plan and discuss transformational projects (*P9: Like those days when we usually, when we, we met we could say no we have this meeting, we used to update each other. But these days those things are not happening.*)
- iii. The start was very good but the entire project was not sustainable (*P10: I'm saying from the beginning this went very well, but as the, the the the what? The committee or whatever the term grew, expectations, eh mixed feelings uuh, then things like, as if you can say things started falling apart).*)
- iv. (*P2: Uhhh, eeh, since the last time we went there, we didn't make a follow up to check on eeh, to check on the outcomes of our meeting there.*)
- v. (*P7: But then, as I'm saying, the program was started and left hanging without really going into its conclusion).*)
- vi. People revert to their old ways if no replacement strategies are in place (*P16: UHhh, they still go back, the reason is, in as much as the alternative is provided, eeh, the transition itself is a bit hard, because it has some implications and certain requirement that are needed for them to move to that point, and that's where the issue of empowerment comes in.*)
- vii. The projects were not effective due to the withdrawal of EFZ and their finances (*P2: But, eeh from that time, I've not heard EFZ, carrying out the the the the same program, yes. I've not heard EFZ coming to Sesheke, unless I was not told but I've not heard whe whether the program still continues up to now, whether it stopped, whether we're waiting for funding).*)
- viii. A problem for transformation lies in the dependence on funding and planning by outside organisations. (*P3: And then for the group, they'll wait for that, likeee, [EFZ if it doesn't come], they'll also not meet to do things together, because there's not support from that organisation that brought them together).*)

#### **g) Lack of Resources**

Lack of resources in terms of transport and funding for the Pastors Fellowship was seen to be among other reasons why the church failed at its transformational task. This was further associated with non-existence of roads in some areas which made accessibility to the communities difficult. One community even seems to be living in isolation from

other surrounding communities. This makes continuous outreach to the community difficult.

- i. The church must secure finances and sponsors to establish the required changes (*P14: – uhm, asking from the donors. I hear the the this Pastors Fellowship you're being funded. Can't it beee, also, go down to the grathroo grassroot, to help the those who are, who cannot afford, eeh to improve their livelihood?*).
- ii. The church is hindered by a lack of funding to bring effective transformation (*P19: I don't know maybe but on my own what I saw was we used to meet, but now going in the ee, there was some kind of no funding no good funding... Sooo, we're failing to go out there*).
- iii. (*P18: if there are no roads, you do not know of the existence of communities*).
- iv. (*P7: How do we raise transport, to go out to the community?*).
- v. The community is living in isolation from surrounding communities (*P12: Now on that issue, uuh, we feel to be very isolated from every party. Whatever is done at the district there, we're not very much eh informed or being ff, we're not even fed something from there to here*).

#### **2.7.5.2 Theme 2: Church Impact.**

The participants did identify interventions of the church that are beneficial to the community. These interventions addressed a range of needs, from school fees, food packages, to HIV/AIDS assistance. From the interviews, it seems that these are not necessarily coordinated proactive efforts to transform the community. It is rather an individual assembly that encounters a need and then responds to the need in accordance with the available. The issue that seems to come to the fore is that of temporary relief versus permanent change. It is correct for churches to provide assistance such as food, clothes, and groceries to the needy people, but this is not community transformation. Keeping people dependent on contributions is to keep them captive in poverty. Independence opens the door to sustainable freedom from poverty. Someone once said: give a person a fish and you will always have to give him a fish; teach him to catch fish and he can provide for his own needs. Someone however said: teach him to develop a fish factory, and he will change a community (*anonymous*).

It is also apparent that the church was involved in transformational projects through an external organisation that focused on a single activity.

- i. There were some attempts by the church form Sesheke (*P2: Uuh, to my experience, the church is doing what it what it can to transform the lives of people in, in different areas such as poverty alleviation, and, eeh in terms of human rights, it is doing what it can to educate the people, yees*).
- ii. (*P17: - Uhmm, in terms of the church, eehm, one group that I saw, eeh, the Catholic Church, a practical example of what they did, they came to Silolo School, identified, eh vulnerable pupils, that is orphans and those who come from, eeh, eh broken homes. They identified those pupils, then they provided school uniform, eh they provided eh school fees, for those who are in grade eight and nine*).
- iii. (*P17: In terms of giving out clothes to the poor people and the like yes some churches have done that. Some churches have hav have given food, eh to to the villages, those who can*).
- iv. (*P8: we teach them about the importance of trees and why trees that are chopped down are to be replaced*).
- v. The people understood the message concerning deforestation (*P3: - On the program of deforestation because it was singled out as a particular program (R:Okay), then – the members visited different areas, and it was effective because from the discussions that they had with the communities, the communities, they – they understood and – at least followed what the, the the group at least advised them*).
- vi. One church is involved in a HIV/AIDS project giving physical and spiritual support (*P8: In our church we have HIV/AIDS squad. We're helping people spiritually and physical*).
- vii. Some churches will when they have it available, provide members with clothes and food as part of poverty upliftment (*P14: Like the Roman Catholic they used to bring relief maize, some clothes to give to the poor people, and even other churches they should do that*).
- viii. (*P8: And we also came up with ii, during the Independence Day, we came up with a program of assisting the people in the prison, (R: okay) so we bought*

*some meal meal, some sorted items I could say. (R: Okay). Then we helped the people in the hospital, the people at the prison).*

- ix. The church is involved in transformational attempts with EFZ (*P8: For the past seven years, eeh like where the churches were involved with EFZ).*

### **2.7.5.3 Theme 3: Expectations Regarding the Transformational Task of the Church**

In general the participants expected the church to be involved in transformation of the community and do more than what it was currently doing to empower the local communities.

- i. The church should be involved [in transformation] (*P13: Of course they, cou sh the church should help the people).*
- ii. The church can however do more than what it is doing (*P2: the church can do much more than what it has done up till now).*
- iii. The church should empower people to transform (*P16: Empower them, and the church has to come in in some way...).*

The expectations that participants have with regard to the transformational task of the church are discussed in the following themes:

#### **a) Church Should Impact the Community Holistically**

Even though an underlining dualism regarding what is seen as the task of the church was identified, there is ample evidence that the participants expected the church to be part of a holistic transformation of the community by attending also to the physical needs of the community. Should the church fail in this regard the feeling is that the church has then become irrelevant to the community.

The participants also expected the church to get involved in training people in the responsible use of natural resources.

- i. (*P18: Our main problem is not to raise the dead. Our main problem is not top bring in the lost. Our biggest problem currently is to sustain our lives. If we can bring back the church into farming, into livestock, I am sure we will make a big difference).*

- ii. Find ways to alleviate poverty when presenting the gospel (*P7: You see, as a church, eeh, you can not only talk about spiritual issues, - because the spirit is living in the human body which requires food on daily basis... Because hunger, if you are not able to sustain your liv your livelihood by getting some reasonable amount of food that is supposed to be taken by your family, you resort to anything because you become to a sl, you become a slave, slave of hunger, slave of poverty ... Find the food for the body, when you have the food, then you're able to speak about spiritual matters to the body that is health!*).
- iii. Training people in the responsible use of natural resources (*Uhmm, I think the church should eh work hand in hand with the government departments ... it should work hand in hand in sensitising the people, yes they should be coming up with strategies on how the people can can benefit from from their natural resources around*).
- iv. (*P16: If the church not speak out on social and economic transformation, it loses its relevance within a community*).
- v. The church must provide members of the community with food and clothing (*P14: They should come to our aid, eeh, you know previously, uh we used to get some, hm help from other churches. Like the Roman Catholic they used to bring relief maize, some clothes to give to the poor people, and even other churches they should do that*).

Some of the expectations the participants had with regard to the transformational task of the church seem to be unrealistic. The participants probably do not understand the concept of transformation or the church has misrepresented the concept of community transformation by attempting to provide incentives like food and clothing to the poor and needy. These unrealistic expectations therefore seem to be exaggerated misconceptions of the church's transformational task.

- vi. Repair the three dilapidated class rooms at the school (*P14: Our school, uuh, we ho we have only one permanent class, that one by three classroom block. These other two they're dilapidated... We've been trying tooo ask money to be funded whether to put houses for teachers, classroom blocks but nothing*).
- vii. Build houses for the school teachers teaching at the primary school so that they do not have to travel that far to school each day (*P14: So even staff*

*houses, we have only two permanent structures here at school. Most of the teachers from here Mangamu they come from eh Sesheke BOMA, every morning, and transport is costly).*

- viii. Provide the farmers with tractors (*- By providing even tractors... for ploughing).*
- ix. Provide farmers with cattle (*P15: and the animals the cows... The cows, the bulls, how do you call them? The bull? ... [oxen aha ha ha] oxen... for ploughing).*
- x. Solve the water crisis by providing boreholes across the community, there are only two functioning boreholes in the community (*P14: ...So also the church should come in to help us, by putting some boreholes – uhm, asking from the donors...).*

***b) Church should liaise with the Government on Behalf of the People***

The government is identified as a key resource and success factor for transformation of the community. Yet, at the same time the government seems unapproachable and/or unresponsive to the community. Furthermore, the government seems to have a different focus from that of the church. The opinion is held that the church does have influence with government and should act on behalf of the community. In contrast, however, the church is suspected to be government informants instead of people's advocates to the government. Lack of communication seems to be a reason for this suspicion.

- i. Government departments are trying to address social and economic justice (*P8: Even justice just was it yesterday it was yesterday, when the social whatever ati, this one, Legal Resource Centre people (R: yah) they're here in Sesheke (R: oh they're here!). Yah what they want is just to, tooo, bring all the stakeholders so that they can discuss with them about the social justice aspect within the the district).*
- ii. Using government community projects to ensure transformation (*P2: So the church should do more, eeh by simply eh getting involved in government eh programs to educate the church, to educa sorry to educate the people, eeh on what they can do to to uplift their standards of living).*

- iii. Government aid was requested for the ex-employees of the sawmill, but there is no response from the government (*P11: Yes so now we're me we even tried we wrote some letters to the MPs and the letter is saying no we want the government, to degazet this place so that they give us, so that we we'd become a settlement because since there's no more timber. But from that time when Mabenga was an MP but there's no change up to this time*).
- iv. Government aid was requested to establish a community school closer to the community, but there is no response from government (*P16: We have a typical example of a community school which today as we speak, the government has even come in after seeing to say, oh, these people have persisted to wanting this community to have a community school. And it started, the community around then were failing to pay for a teacher. My predecessor went out of his way and started paying for that teacher.*).
- v. Farmers requested the government to intervene, but there has been no response from the government (*P13: Where we are ploughing, where we're trying to have food, the government itself, is refusing us to have some fields there. Right up now as I'm talking here, they are saying no one should make a field there, no. After all the government itself is the one which is trying all th in fact trying not to help us*).
- vi. (*P8: poor people do not have a voice to speak to the government and the church should be their voice to government*).
- vii. The government has its own agenda, which is not necessarily aligned to that of the church. (*P10: Now if you bring in like government worker someone is not even a church goer, eh you tell that person that no we need to sacrifice we need to do that they'll tell you aaha, it's not time to sacrifice me I'm a government worker*).
- viii. The church did not inform the community members that they were not acting on behalf of the government, which led to the church being seen as informants of government on illegal charcoal production and illegal farming which prevented success (... *I'll take a typical example of oo, those that sell charcoal. Uuh before the sensitisation, the seminars and the workshops and the likes, people were that free to come along with a bag of charcoal and sell anyhow... This time around, you have, to be a known person that you're not connected with the ff forestry*

*department or else, if you ask is there charcoal here, a place where you you know for sure you can find charcoal, they'll not tell you we have charcoal... They'll suspect you to be an informer).*

### **c) Church should Empower the People**

The participants understand the importance of empowering people as part of the transformation task of the church. The understanding is that people themselves should assume responsibility if the transformational projects are to succeed. They should be the primary actors in their own fight for transformation and therefore people must be equipped by the church in order to help themselves. The church should make available the training, information and resources needed for people to succeed in their own environment.

- i. To transform a community people must buy into the projects (*P16: ... people must take ownership of a program to be able to change*).
- ii. Community members must be empowered to be less depended and more self-sustainable (*P17: So, they need empowerment in terms of I think ii, eeh, in terms of agriculture, maybe new farming skills, eeh, encouraging them to buy, eeh certified seed. Then for those who involve themselves in timber production, maybe if they can be given tuma small loans, yes so that they can actually sustain themselves instead of depending on people, who come from very far away*).
- iii. Educating the people on how they can uplift their standard of living without depending on others to do it for them (*P2: So the church should do more, eeh by simply eh getting involved in government eh programs to educate the church, to educa sorry to educate the people, eeh on what they can do do to to uplift their standards of living*).
- iv. (*P18: How can you give someone a Bible if they cannot even read*)
- v. (*P2: Uhm... First of all, eeh – the the community should received our laws in our local languages... yes they should receive our our the constitution in their local languages because you find that's where most of our that's where our life is base on, our day to day life... yes, once they know the the constitution in their local language, it simply means even their their rights won't be hindered, yes even*

*their rights they won't they won't be eeh, they'll know their rights and they'll know the dos and and the don'ts).*

- vi. *(P4: – because us as church here we're looking, we're main on transformation, that at least at the end of the day the people themselves can able to identify the local resources and can able at least to help themselves).*
- vii. Educating community members on how they can access government support *(P18: my coming in here makes it easier for some to to see, uh the other side of life and to benefit even form what the government uuh, uuh, is offering).*

#### **2.7.5.4 Theme 4: Transformational Challenges**

It is expected that there would be challenges with the transformational task of the church. Both community leaders and inner members of the Pastors Fellowship who participated in the interviews expressed several challenges that need to be overcome in order for the transformational task of the church in Sesheke to be effective. The challenges that the participants expressed can be grouped into two (2) sub-themes. The first will relate to challenges that are specific to the context of the Sesheke community. The second group will be in relation to the operational implementation of the transformational task of the church. The second group of challenges is, however, influenced by the first group.

##### ***a) Challenges Related to the Particular Community Characteristics.***

The Sesheke populace is characterised by poor living standards and lack of empowerment and access to basic social amenities. Furthermore, the town plays host to cultural diversity which includes people from the neighbouring country of Angola and this creates reasonable cultural and language barriers for the church's transformational task. The church must address these challenges in order to be effective in its transformational task. The following challenges are thus related to the particular community characteristics of Sesheke.

### **i. Poverty**

Poverty is identified as a major problem to an extent that members of the community cannot afford acceptable living standards. People cannot afford decent meals, accommodation or to pay school fees for their children to attend school.

- Poverty is a major problem (*P18: Poverty levels are real and are high, and uh we really need to, eh to to to do something*).
- Parents cannot pay school fees resulting in children not attending school (*P14: But most of the ee parents, they've failed to take their pupils to high school, because of being poverty*).
- Due to poverty, housing is not up to standard (*P16: amidst the privileged few you'd find the masses wallowing in poverty ... uuh, cannot afford decent accommodation*).
- Poverty results in a lack of food (*P16: Uuh, where some ... cannot afford, eh decent meals or three meals if we may put it that way, in a day*).
- Find ways to alleviate poverty when presenting the gospel (*P7: people are slaves of hunger and slaves of poverty*).

### **ii. Position of the ex-employees of Zambezi Sawmills**

Unique to the Sesheke community is the history and relationship with the Zambezi Sawmill that have been liquidated in recent history (*P: Since ninety nine up to this time. Yes, since ninety nine up to this time*). The Sawmill provided work opportunity to the community but also caused an influx of people from other communities and when the Sawmill was abruptly closed (liquidated) it was a severe blow to an already vulnerable community. Worse still the company closed without paying workers their dues, causing great hardship to workers and their families living from hand to mouth.

- (*P14: They were workers, former Sawmills workers*).
- The sawmill was liquidated (*P15: it has been liquida, alo! ... liquidated yes*).
- “The ex-employees did not receive all their salaries due to the liquidation (*P13: We haven't yet received our money*).

- *(P12: Uuh, I'd say just after the company was closed, we have been suffering heavily).*
- Workers from the Sawmill cannot return to their homes of origin due to not receiving money when the mills were liquidated *(P14: They now live in poverty without the possibility of returning to their homelands).*

### **iii. Education Across all Sectors of the Community**

Knowledge is power and lack of knowledge is lack of empowerment. A major vulnerability of the community is being identified as the lack of skills, knowledge and training of the community members. Be it because of lack of funds to pay for schools, long distances to travel to schools and the availability of vocational training, this vulnerability renders them ill equipped to creatively and strategically confront their many challenges. The lack of good and appropriate education contributes to the fact that the people are not the primary actors in their own transformation. As long the people are not the primary actors the transformation of the community, it cannot be sustainable. Participants also alluded to the negative way people in the community perceived transformation with the view that there was need to change this mind-set.

- *(P18: According to me tha – the need, hha, well to start with I think, education is part of it. Uh in all aspects I think uuh education is needed... even if we bring that money, when, people don't know what to do with money there'll still be a very big problem)*
- Educating people how they themselves can transform their lives without being dependent on others *(P2: So the church should do more, eeh by simply eh getting involved in government eh programs to educate the church, to educate sorry to educate the people, eeh on what they can do do to to uplift their standards of living.*
- *(P14: We've produced a lot of pupils to high school. But most of the ee parents, they've failed to take their pupils to high school, because of being poverty).*
- Educating people in human rights so that they can stand up for themselves *(P2: yes, once they know the the constitution in their local language, it simply means even their their rights won't be hindered, yes even their rights they*

*won't they won't be eeh, they'll know their rights and they'll know the dos and and the don'ts... by so doing, eeh, of the people would have known their rights and improve the st the standards of living because most they would have known the rightful channels to take when they, when they are in need).*

- Children walk very far distances to school (*P16: It is in Sesheke in my observation, where we still have places where a grad one child still has to cover a long distance to access this education).*
- Promoting community schools to make schools more accessible for children due to the school being within the community itself (*P4: Uh I mean as a church where possible, put up a community school and sponsor.*). (*P16: So the church has to play role where at least in advocating for such social amenities. Distances between schools and villages in the communities is is reduced).*
- There are no post-school training centres (*P16: No tertiary institution ii uh which I would,, point to say now we have an institution, apart from the primary, the preschool, primary and secondary schools tha we we may have around*) (1)
- Finding means to overcome the illiteracy rate (*P18: How can you give someone a Bible if they cannot even read... Illiteracy keeps people bound in poverty).*
- Training people in the responsible use of natural resources (*P2: uuh to my realisation, eh the people do not know their rights on the how on on their natural their own natural resources can benefit them...).* (*P10: ... people were told, were educated on how to reserve their natural resources for their betterment of tomorrow).*
- Educating community members on how they can access government support (*P18: my coming in here makes it easier for some to to see, uh the other side of life and to benefit even form what the government uuh, uuh, is offering*) (1)
- Transforming peoples' thinking and perceptions that hinder transformation (planting trees is providing trees for the next generation, but without food now there will be no next generation to profit from the trees planted today) (*Hm –*

*it's thee, the community, the outlook, the community's outlook, the way they perceive things ... The, for whatever project you have to come up, they'd want some, know, contribution from somewhere).*

#### **iv. Cultural and Language Barriers**

The cultural diversity and practices found in Sesheke pose reasonable challenge to the transformational task of the church. One participant notes that apart from the internal cultural diversities, Sesheke has also become home to people from the neighbouring country of Angola, which has an effect as well on the transformation process.

- Understanding and overcoming cultural challenges that hinder transformation (*P8: So you cannot expect those people to have transformation, no, because they still believe in their traditional they still believe in their culture whatever).*
- Addressing the cultural tradition whereby most of a community member's income is paid over to the area induna (*P2: most of the money that is supposed to benefit the people is paid over to the area induna).*
- (*P18: We are, Sesheke has a few people from, uh from Angola, aand and and when we talk about the the different cultures, uuh also that also has an effect to a certain eh level ...).*

#### **v. Accessibility of Communities**

Accessibility of communities is made difficult not only by the lack of transport, but also the non-existence of roads to many communities. The church should resolve the problem of transport to reach the communities.

- How to resolve the problem of the accessibility of communities due to the non-existence of roads to many communities (*P18: if there are no roads, you do not know of the existence of communities... continuous outreach to communities that are not accessible is difficult).*
- Finding transport to reach communities (*P7: How do we raise transport, to go out to the community?).*

**vi. The vulnerable Members of the Community are Suffering**

Children, youth, and widows in the communities are suffering and there is need to address their plight. The deviant behaviour of the young people in the community may be as a result of frustration and there is need to create employment and other youth programs for them to obtain living skills and create a meaningful life.

- *(P13: Children are suffering).*
- *(P13: widow, widowers, are suffering).*
- *(P15: ... Uuh the community, especially the youth they're a problem. They drink too much).*
- *Young people go around insulting adults (P15: they use bad language, insults during the night you find that they, they insult adults in the night).*
- *(P7: let's get the living skills to the people. The young stars we're seeing them they have no employment. Let us get back into our drawing board. Let's come up with a carpentry project).*

**vii. Farming**

Asset-based community development is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities that builds on the strengths, resources and potentials within a community (Kretzmann and MacKnight, 1993). The participants view farming as an "asset" within the Sesheke community. For many of the community members it is a last survival measure. At the same time the utilisation of this survival measure seems to be an illegal activity. The community seems to be in a predicament as they are fighting for survival yet their actions are illegal. Aggravating this survival attempt is the lack of knowledge and resources available to them.

It is also interesting that the Sesheke Church's transformational attempt played directly to this contradiction. They taught the community "*about the importance of trees and why trees that are chopped down are to be replaced*" (P4) and send them home to die of hunger as one might add?

- *(P11: ... so what can we do? The only thing we can do is to go into farming! And cut trees so that we can find a living. Do farming so that we can get*

*something to eat. Without doing that, then you're dead or you go and steal... and then the law will visit you!)*

- *(P11: The main activities is farming).*
- *(P2: ... as the company was closed so people are basically based basing their lives on farming and livestock rearing).*
- *(P14: People of Sawmills ... anyway they're good farmers).*
- *The farmers are farming illegally on forest soil that does not belong to the farmers (P14: So they have no their own, eeh, fields to farm apart from the illegal place where they're supposed to get their food).*
- *They are illegally cutting down trees to create farming land (P11: So, when I talk of farming that means they have to go into the illegal cutting of trees and then make their farms in the bush).*
- *(P11: There's no way they can survive than farming. Just because the company was liquidated).*
- *Farmers do not plan for the future – they use all the produce without saving for the in-between seasons and this leads to poverty (P14: And then you find, I don't know whether it carelessness of them, whereby they'd finish their maize wi, before the next farming season comes. And, some of them, they start – eeh, they become poverty).*
- *Farmers should be trained in sustainable farming (P16: But that aside, we also deal with sustainable, conservation kind of agriculture).*
- *There is a lack of resources & equipment available to farmers (We we don't have equipment we only depend on other, on other uuuh – comrades... They go to our fields and plough there but we ni we pay them).*
- *(P15: the largest portion of our income is paid out to those who provide us with farming services).*
- *(P17: So, they need empowerment in terms of I think ii, eeh, in terms of agriculture, maybe new farming skills, eeh, encouraging them to buy, eeh certified seed).*

### **viii. Water**

Clean and safe drinking water is a necessity to human existence. Apparently the water supply in Sesheke is described both as unclean and inadequate by the participants.

- *(P16: Water – is an issue. Right here in town the water we drink is iii, is not that, that good... you can check in your bottle or if you put in a glass, let the water settle, right away you'll find residuals).*
- *(P14: Meanwhile, we rely upon two boreholes, here in Mangamu we have this one at the school, one in the compound ... We need about three or four more boreholes).*

#### **b) Challenges Related to Operational Practice.**

The challenges related to the particular context of Sesheke community require that the church be strategically positioned in order to effectively bring about community transformation. Among other things the church should strategically cooperate with government departments and also find ways to finance its transformational projects. One of the most important strategies the church should do is to establish community participation. Participants also noted that the church should include social institutions and make effective plans that can be implemented.

##### **i. Cooperation with government departments**

Government projects are either a positive contribution or a hindrance. The government has its own agenda, which may not necessarily be aligned to that of the need of the community. Careful planning and consideration of involving government projects and aid is required. In one interview, it became apparent that some of the community members saw the church as informants of the government regarding illegal farming and charcoal production as earlier quoted under paragraph 2.7.5.3b *(P16: ...They'll suspect you to be an informer).*

- Understand how to work around restrictions set by government that tend to inhibit transformational projects conducted by the church *(P7: pastors are always invited to higher government committees meetings on district level. They are saying that pastors are important role players... So the politicians will have very little, actually, eeh, to make us fail to achieve our objectives. If properly*

*disseminated, if properly given to the politician to say no, we have seen abcd bra bra bra bra, if we work together tha, kaili that would be complementing the work that government is supposed to do! Can they refuse that? Noo! I don't think so, pastor...).*

- *(P 2: Uhhh, I think the church should eh work hand in hand with the government departments, such as forests, uhm, such as eeh, say the office of the DC, yes, eeh, it should work hand in hand in sensitising the people, yes they should be coming up with strategies on how the people can can benefit from from their natural resources around.).*

## **ii. Financing Transformation Projects**

Part of the transformational process is to transform the mind-set of the church, namely that finances must come from outside donors rather than from the church itself. Participants note that the church has the capacity to finance transformational projects but the problem is the belief that such funds should come from an outside organisation.

- Finding ways to change peoples' mind-set that finances must come from outside the church and not from the church itself *(P3: [They could do], but [what they don't want is to get something from their pockets], and donate and, to do that activity from their own pockets. They prefer getting money from an organisation). (P7: Suppose the churches were coming up to say no, were the sho, there's shortage of, eeh, essential drugs... We as a church we're coming together, we work together in this program. We will raise funds to buy the drugs for TB which is common here so that we give it ti the health in our locality here, so that we diffuse eeh the shortage. But that is not forth coming.)*
- *(P14: the church must secure finances and sponsors to establish the required changes).*

## **iii. Establishing Community Participation**

Putting the last first or putting people first represent recognition of the need to give priority to the basic element in development, the local people themselves (Gabriel, 1991:4). It is apparent that the general populace of the local community was not involved in the planning of the projects. None of the interviewees indicated whether the church in the target community was involved in the planning of the project. Cooperation

creates a higher change for success. It is important not to move into an area as “the saviour of the community” but rather as the “partner of the community”.

It also became apparent from some interviews that the church itself needs to be transformed to effectively transform the community.

- To understand the community through community research before moving in with transformational projects (*P3: When you go there, discuss with the people, yes. Make even a PRA survey... or community assessment. Eeh the community themselves come ou out with their own needs or their own activities*).
- Defining what each community’s resources comprise of to begin transformation with (*P4: ...that at least at the end of the day the people themselves can able to identify the local resources and can able at least to help themselves*).
- (*P16: I think it would be prudent to sit down, re-evaluate and see the way forward. But as you see the way forward, who do you invite on board? You don’t work in isolation*).
- To raise up a person from within the community to initiate and drive the transformational process, instead of relying on outsiders or outside organisations. (*P18: Eeh, now, if we had worked together, uuh, th there’s power if all the churches came, all the congregations, or the denominations came together and identified something, for example, is there, eh anything wrong, for us as congregations, cong congregations or denominations, to donate some money in sending somebody to go for the training? Certain training or colleges are very expensive. Uuh but if we do it as a a together as co as as denominations and congregations, uuh, we’ll really have a big big a bigger imp impact.*).

#### **iv. Incorporating the Pastors Fellowship**

The participants also identified the lack of corporation within the Pastors Fellowship and the local churches in Sesheke as a challenge facing the church’s transformational task. It is assumed that the Pastors Fellowship is key to bringing harmony amongst the different churches. Infightings and dissensions amongst churches and church leaders characterised the internal affairs of the Sesheke church’s transformational task. The opinion is held that the church itself would have to be transformed in order to transform the community.

- Finding ways to first transform the church before transforming the community (*P7: a changed church will be an example for others in the community to follow suite*).
- Ensuring that churches cooperate for the sake of transformation and not for personal gain (*P7: churches presently end up quarrelling with each other*). (*P3: each church wants to work on its own*). (*P16: churches want to work in isolation so that they can gain for themselves*).
- Finding ways to bring the Pastors Fellowship again to a point to function, plan and act in unity regarding transformational tasks (*P9: ... I think we have to revisit our work we have to evaluate go back to our roots, see our goals, see where we our failures and then we can uplift we can still do better than this*).

#### **v. Engage Social Institutions**

The other challenge facing the operational practice of the church's transformational task includes the accessibility and support of social institutions such as schools, hospitals, and prisons. Most of the target communities live far away from schools and health centres and can therefore hardly access the needed services of these institutions. The church is thus faced with the challenge of engaging these social institutions to make their services available to the people in the target communities. The church is also concerned with the poor living conditions of the people in prisons which need to be attended to.

- Addressing the needs of hospitals (*P17: but if they help the school, or the clinic that is there, I'm sure the they'd have helped almost everyone, because a school is a public place and a clinic is equally a public place, where almost everyone goes*).
- Addressing the needs of schools (*P18: some communities live 100 – 150 kilometres from the closest school*).
- Addressing the needs of prisons (*P7: To prisons, what do we do? Do we help those souls for, to transform them, so that when they come out the prisons, they're acceptable in the societies where they come from? How much programs have we put as a church in Sesheke? Do we plan for those people in prisons, and so on and so forth?*)

## **vi. Effective Planning and Implementation**

An important element of planning is to include a practical and measurable implementation strategy in order to ensure success. Implementation forms the practical part of the planning process. In the case of the transformational task of the church in Sesheke, it is evident from the interviews that the planning and implementation are some of the challenges they felt needed to be addressed in order to achieve successful transformation. Planning and implementation are inherent requisites for success anywhere, but the fact that the participants mentioned it testifies to their self-reflection as well as an understanding of what is needed, although they did not implement it successfully with regard to the transformational task of the church.

- *(P3: Implementation is the major challenge – yes, it is a major problem).*
- Ensuring that promises made to communities are kept and delivered upon *(P7: But we're saying there's nobody who has come forward again, (R: yah) to fulfil what they promised).*
- Move away from the theory of transformation to the practical side of transformation *(P7: I think the church must move away from theory to practical).*
- To keep the programs active when it is threatened to become dormant due to obstacles that are not immediately overcome *(P3: but may be initiative, who will initiate that program? That's where people are reluctant).*
- Determining measurable instruments to determine truthful success. *(P7: To this day there's nothing that we came up, a program that was ii, eeh fruitful tangible enough to support that community by them diversifying from the forestry, has not been created, has not been ee, you know, eeh, eeh secured so that they can actually concentrate on that one. So I'm saying there hasn't been much impact, on a number of community that we went, we visited them.).*
- Finding ways to accommodate the high rate of change in church membership *(P18: Uuhm first of all I think the issue of uuh, the country itself, uuh you know, for example the workers in Zambia, uuh the very fact that they cannot stay in one place for a period long period, so that brings a lot of transfers in,*

*uuh, in and out...\_This results in a high rate of employees transfers causing constant change of church members and community members).*

- Presenting workable alternatives for present practices (*P7: So the best would be may be to come up with an alternative).*

### **2.7.5 Conclusion**

The empirical research in this chapter has endeavoured to investigate the praxis and impact of the transformational task by the local church in Sesheke area in transforming the lives of the local people and the community as a whole. Transformation in this case involves alleviating the plight of the poor and less privileged people of Sesheke area, which is also in accordance with the Biblical teaching in Matthew 25:35-40 to attend to the needs of the vulnerable and less privileged people in society. The participants unanimously agreed that the Sesheke Church had failed at its transformational task and identified a number of reasons for the failure. These include lack of participatory transformational practices, church politics and interests for personal gain, oversimplified approach to transformation, and an underlying dualism of spiritual verses physical. Lack of skills and understanding of the transformational task, non-sustainable interventions by the church, and lack of resources are equally identified as reasons for the failure of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. The participants did identify interventions of the church that are beneficial to the community, but such interventions could not be described as sufficient to bring about community transformation. With regard to the transformational task of the church, the participants expected the church to have a holistic approach to the community's transformation, to liaise with the government on behalf of the people and to empower the people. They acknowledge that the transformational task of the Sesheke Church is being hampered by several challenges, some related to specific community characteristics and other to general operational practices.

### **2.7.7 Member Checking**

Member checking is the review of data and interpretations by participants representing the relevant stakeholders in order to verify the researcher's findings (Bamberger et al.,

2012:139). The participants are therefore charged with confirming or disconfirming the sufficiency and accuracy of the data from the selections they review so that corrections can be made if need be.

The above discussed research findings (themes and sub-themes) were presented to a panel of seven community representatives for the specific purpose of member checking in form of a focus group discussion in accordance with Gabriel (1991:110). Eight people were invited but one did not turn up. Two were pastors, five were community leaders of which three were females. One of the females was a youth. The conversation was audio recorded with the consent of all the participants.

During the focus group discussion of the themes and results derived from the analysis and synthesis of the interviews, the participants generally confirmed that the research findings were true. They, however, undeniably disagreed with the researcher's observation under section 2.7.5.3a that participants' expectations that the church should among others provide classrooms, houses for teachers, tractors, oxen and boreholes as part of the holistic approach were unrealistic. They all were adamant that these expectations are indeed part of the transformational task of the church.

The participants are of the opinion that if they could find a solution for church politics, do thorough planning and have appropriate strategies and involve other stakeholders such as the government, these expectations can and should be addressed by the church.

P1 (Member checking): *"Yeah, well, I I have a different understanding. Some of them could be realistic (Researcher: okay) because when you talk of the church coming in where there is maybe a deficit of accommodation at a school, because we as a church we're the parents of those children whose teacher has no house, how do we expect them to learn? ... Would we call that unrealistic? I don't think so! Yes, if there's no accommodation at a school, or if it's classroom block of three by one, then the community says as part of you know the churches, we're part of the community, churches are the community, we're the people who have the children, then we say all of us let's mobilise ourselves..."*

Researcher: *"Okay, that is fine. My other question in connection with that would be, how practical is that, or how achievable is that, in terms of the current capacity of the eh Sesheke Church Pastors Fellowship?"*

P3 (Member checking): *"I I I think it it can be practical or achievable,... But when the church politics is is is is harmonised, all is possible ... for the Pastor's Fellowship to sit together and uh come up with the strategies ... eh involving other stakeholders, it is possible ... Maybe the structure or other few things like what we're talking of lack of skills of how to go about certain things to achieve some certain things."*

P2 (Member checking): *"And actually sir these are expectations. This is like a dream. One time maybe whether it's through the Pastors Fellowship, if we can at one time if we can build a teacher's house, this expectation, then at least we shall say we have reached somewhere. So to me it's it's it's it's these expectations they're realistic they're realistic."*

P5 (Member checking): *"Maybe I'll can come in. They can be realistic yes if they use this 3.2 [The theme numbered as 3.2 is: Church should liaise with the government on behalf of the people]. As if the ee Pastors Fellowship effective, it can be realistic, coming into this 3.2. The government can help, through them, they'll be heard more than an individual person."*

The participants are of the opinion that if they could find a solution for church politics, do thorough planning and have appropriate strategies and involved other stakeholders such as the government, these expectations can and should be addressed by the church.

In conclusion this opinion is in contrast to the underlining dualism that was identified during the interviews. P11 (initial interviews): *"Uh I think the onl the only thing, is only spiritual, that's all. Only spiritual!. ... Only spiritual"*. During the member checking focus group discussion all participants agreed that this dualism was indeed present and was one of the reasons why the Sesheke Church Pastors Fellowship had failed in their transformational task. The strong support of the notion, however, that the church needs to provide classrooms, houses for teachers, tractors, oxen and boreholes may be interpret as a change in the dualistic view of the church's transformation task. One might ask to what degree did the research aid in this amendment? Could the discussion and the reflection of the processed research results have contributed to a change? Especially if one keeps in mind that the participants use the identified themes to point out which challenges they need to focus on in order to handle these "unrealistic" challenges. *"They can be realistic yes if they use this 3.2.." and "But when the church*

*politics is is is is harmonised, all is possible" and "and uh come up with the strategies ... eh involving other stakeholders, it is possible".*

## **2.8 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION FROM CHAPTER 2**

The descriptive-empirical task in this chapter endeavoured to discover, understand and describe relationships among a set of concepts and in so doing, present a systematic view of the transformational task of the Sesheke Church. The researcher personally collected all the data according to the qualitative research process and thus personally interviewed the participants with fully informed consent until data saturation occurred. The raw data was analysed by the researcher and an independent coder to ensure credibility and prevent researcher biasness with regard to data analysis and the bigger research process. The data was grouped into four (4) themes and twenty-six (26) sub-themes as presented in table 2.6. According to the empirical research carried out by the researcher, the transformational task by the church in Sesheke has not been effective.

The analysed data also revealed various reasons why the church failed at its transformational task. Although some of the interventions by the church were seen to be positive, they could not be described as having transformed the community. The church was expected to transform the community holistically. It also became apparent that there was a lack of skills and misunderstanding about the transformational task on the part of the church as well. Finally, both community leaders and inner members of the Pastors Fellowship expressed several transformational challenges in relation to the Sesheke community characteristics in particular and also to operational practice.

## **2.9 FINAL REMARKS**

The research process has been thoroughly discussed in this chapter and it included the research design, research methods, and research results. All participants were either church leaders who had been involved with the transformational task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007 or local community leaders in Sesheke area where the Pastors Fellowship had carried out transformational activities for the past seven (7) years. The researcher followed a multi-method approach in order to come up with a rich and meaningful description of the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's

transformational task. All respondents expressed dissatisfaction at the effectiveness of the church's transformational task and that there was need for a practical and holistic approach by the church in order to effectively transform the community.

The next chapter will address the interpretive task with regard to the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

## CHAPTER 3

### INTERPRETIVE TASK WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SESHEKE CHURCH'S TRANSFORMATIONAL TASK

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The interpretive task in this chapter is, in accordance with Osmer (2008:83), to research the praxis pertaining to existing research that has already been conducted on transformational tasks by local communities and churches, especially in Africa. This will be accomplished by means of literature research within various disciplines of neighbouring sciences. The researcher will endeavour to draw on existing theories within the neighbouring social sciences to better understand and explain the existing patterns and dynamics (Osmer, 2008:4). These insights and tendencies will be critically discussed, with deliberate emphasis on the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area as earlier identified in the research. This involves identifying major cognitive paradigms and schools of thought that are represented in both the theoretical frameworks and the emerging theories from the empirical research (Paterson et al., 2001).

#### 3.2 THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION

Theoretical interpretation is the ability to draw on theories of the arts and sciences in order to understand and respond to particular episodes, situations, and contexts (Osmer, 2008:83). In the words of Silverman (2006:99), "theory provides a footing for considering the world, separate from, yet about, that world". Accordingly, theory provides a framework for critically understanding a transformational task of the church and a basis for considering how what is unknown might be organised.

The researcher takes into consideration what Osmer (2008:83) refers to as the fallibilist and perspectival understandings of theoretical knowledge. "Fallibilist" here means an awareness that theories constructed by human reason offer an approximation of the truth, not the truth itself. As such the researcher will remain open to the complexity and particularity of the Sesheke church's transformational task and refuse to just fit it into a theory (Osmer, 2008:81). "Perspectival", on the other hand means that theories construct knowledge from a particular perspective, or position. Therefore, "no one

perspective captures the fullness of truth and that, often, many perspectives are needed to understand complex, multidimensional phenomena” (Osmer, 2008:83). Furthermore, not every theory will be good for the purpose of this research and this necessitates wise judgement to discern the most helpful theory(s) with regard to the subject being investigated. As such, the researcher will, in accordance with Wolcott (1990:17), draw upon the theories selectively and appropriately for the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area.

Due to the complexity of qualitative research, the research has to employ a multidisciplinary form of approach and dialogue where necessary (McLeod and Thompson, 2009:66; Osmer, 2008:119). This is the use of theories of several disciplines to interpret a complex, multi-layered system that is multidimensional.

### **3.3 UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

A common definition of community transformation is not simple to attain, nor is it universally agreed upon because community transformation is both process and product oriented (University of Wisconsin, 1998). The practice of community transformation is not one focused solely on material resource development, nor is it devoted exclusively to systems for addressing community needs. Jones and Silva (1991) rightly consider an integrated model of community development that includes problem solving, community building, and systems interaction. Community transformation requires a truly integrated approach that assesses the problem, goes on to build community capacity, and more importantly, addresses the problem.

In general, the concept of community transformation refers to the change of a society's systemic characteristics, that is, technology, economic, political, and cultural restructuring (UNESCO, 2014). According to the just quoted source, the term social transformation is increasingly used in social scientific literature to describe societal changes and generally indicates a critical stance toward the older notion of development which attempted to achieve economic development with little or no emphasis on the rest of the society's systemic characteristics that affect economic growth.

The meaning of a community transformation is, however, tied to the concrete felt needs of the particular community. According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:47) community transformation can be described as a human activity with a goal to transform the lives of the poor, not on a grand scale or in action leading to glory, but bit by bit through small and simple activities of humans. The dual elaborate further that community transformation is a collective grassroots action that tackles concrete felt needs, not individual action or action by a few individuals with some personal interests for personal gain. As such, an analysis of community transformation requires analysis of macro-social forces and traditions, experiences, and identities that are at play within a community.

In Africa, for instance, community transformation can be defined as improving the living standards of the mass of the low-income population residing in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining (Gabriel, 1991:58). According to Collier's (2007) work on why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it, economic growth is key to transformation of the poorest communities, which are concentrated in African countries. As such, failure of economic growth should be the central concern and curing it the challenge of community transformation (Collier2007:11).

### **3.4 THEORIES OF COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION.**

Scholars identify the professional practice of community transformation as a post-Second World War development (Batten, 1957; Cawley, 1989; Sanders, 1970; Vidal, 1997). While the basic concepts and underlying principles were already known as capitalism and Marxism or neo-Marxism (University of Wisconsin, 1998:2; Vengroff, 1977:613), theorists of the 1950s and early 1960s viewed the process of development as a series of successive stages of economic growth through which all countries must pass (Rostow, 1960:4-16; Todaro and Smith, 2003:2). It was primarily and indeed an economic theory of development whereby the right quantity and mixture of saving, investment, and foreign aid were all that was necessary for developing countries to proceed along an economic growth path that historically had been followed by the more developed countries. Therefore, development or transformation became synonymous with rapid and cumulative economic growth.

The linear-stages approach to development mentioned above was largely replaced in the 1970s by two competing economic and indeed ideological schools of thought according to Todaro and Smith (2003:2). The first, which focused on theories and patterns of structural change, used modern economic theory and statistical analysis in an attempt to portray the internal process of structural change that a typical developing country must undergo in order to succeed in generating and sustaining a process of rapid economic growth. Second, the international dependence revolution, was more radical and political in orientation. It viewed underdevelopment as a product of unequal international and domestic power relationships as well as institutional and structural economic rigidities, which resulted in the creation of dual economies and dual societies of rich and poor both within and among the nations of the world.

In view of the above theoretical discussion, the two classical theories that have emerged since the Second World War, modernisation and dependency, will be discussed. Thereafter, alternative approaches will be evaluated.

### **3.4.1 Modernisation Theory**

The modernisation theory stems out of the capitalist theoretical orientation towards the concept of development which assumes that development is matter of accepting and implementing western forms of political and economic organisation, and of people internalising modern attitudes and values (Vengroff, 1977:613). According to Hussain and Tribe (1981) and Lenin (1964), this theory which developed in the 1950s and 1960s incorporates a full package of the transition and drastic transformation that a traditional society must undergo in order to become modern. Modernisation in this sense implies Africa following the development footsteps of Europe, and more so of its former colonial masters.

According to modernisation theory, societies can be regarded as modern when they display certain new characteristics. For instance, in agriculture, modernisation implies abandoning older agricultural practices and adopting something more recent (Smith, 1973:61). As such, the level of modernity a society reaches is in this case indicated by the extent to which the particular society exhibits certain modern characteristics. Coetzee et al. (2007:31) succinctly cite the characteristics of modernisation as follows:

- i. Readiness to accommodate the process of transformation resulting from changes.

- ii. Continuous broadening of life experiences and receptiveness to new knowledge.
- iii. Continuous planning, calculability, and readiness towards new experiences.
- iv. Predictability of action and the ability to exercise effective control.
- v. High premium on technical skills and understanding of the principles of production.
- vi. Changing attitudes to kinship, family roles, family size, and the role of religion.
- vii. Changing consumer behaviour and acceptance of social stratification.

The form of Africa's development strategies has nevertheless been changing in the light of the changes in technological and ideological views of the developed world (Matunhu, 2011:66). Consequently, the task of transforming Africa seems to be placed in the custody of the developed countries of Western Europe and America. Since their arrival in Africa, the European settlers tasked themselves with the responsibility of modernising the continent which they labelled as the "dark continent" that needed to be enlightened. According to Allen and Thomas (1992:6), the presidential inaugural address of the then United States of America President Harry Truman on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 1949 captured the following sentiments: "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans ...". The foregoing quote has two major implications. First, it confirms that the preceding imperialist regime had a deliberate agenda to impoverish Africa through exploitation for foreign profits. Second, the agenda for Africa was still at the helm of the western world, whatever the motive.

The West assumes that for Africa to develop it has to pass through certain distinct stages as succinctly outlined from Rostow (1960:4-16):

- i. Primitive society: the stage is characterised by subsistence farming and barter trade.
- ii. Preparation for take-off: the characteristics of the stage are; specialisation, production of surplus goods and trade. Transport infrastructure is developed to support trade. The stage encourages savings and investment.
- iii. Take-off: at this stage industrialisation increases and the economy switches from agriculture to manufacturing.
- iv. Drive to maturity: at this stage the economy diversifies into new areas and there is less reliance on imports.

- v. Period of mass consumption: at this stage the economy gears on mass production and service sector becomes increasingly dominating.

The above strategy suggests that Africa's development was lagging far behind that of other regions of the world because of the obvious 'innate' inferiority of black people to master the socio-economic and technological environment in order to improve their social and economic conditions (Matunhu, 2011:66).

The foregoing depiction of the development strategy for Africa as held by Rostow (1960) and other exponents of modernisation has since been criticised as malicious and misleading by other scholars (Matunhu, 2011). Rodney (1972) in his book "How Europe underdeveloped Africa" demonstrates that in the fifteenth century, the period of first encounter between Europeans and Africans, there were already established empires in the East, Central, West, and South of the African continent. The empires of Mali and Songhay in West Africa, Tshaka in Zululand (South Africa), Mossi to the East of Mali and the kingdom of Dahomey in the central part of Africa were some of the most powerful in wealth and territorial expansion. According to Samir et al. (1987) and Rodney (1972), Africa had already established its path to development at that stage before the encounter with the Eurocentric ideas as the economies of the above states were characterised mainly by agriculture, trade, and manufacturing. The entrance of the Western world triggered by the arrival of the Portuguese in Africa in 1444, however, had an influence to alter the development path of Africa in favour of theirs (Matunhu, 2011:66). The West claimed that Africa had to pass through the distinct stages of development such as those listed in the Rostowian theory already mentioned.

The modernisation theory is criticised for obvious reasons according to Matunhu (2011:66-67). First, it is not easy to classify economies into neat categories since most economies in Africa invest in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism, which cannot be measured distinctively on a linear scale in direct comparison to the Western economies. Second, it does not consider the poor as the focal point of poverty reduction initiatives. Third and even more detrimental is its oversimplified view of social change as fighting poverty in Africa and elsewhere in the world involves much more than just the displacement of traditional society by a modern one (Coetzee et al., 2007:101; Matunhu, 2011:67). Another weakness of modernisation theory is that it is based on deterministic reason which maintains that within the linear model of socio-economic development, changes are initiated externally.

The theory's emphasis on the supremacy of Europe and America in the development of Africa is a cause of concern in contemporary discourse on Africa's transformation. It is this supremacy of the metropolis that altered Africa's superstructure of beliefs and value system. According to Rodney (1972), the colonial conquest that followed the 1884 to 1885's Berlin Conference on the partition of Africa established a comprehensive economic and political domination of Africa by the West. Africa's endogenous development path was discarded in favour of an externally driven development path which was and still is manipulated by the developed world. Today China is one of Africa's biggest trade partners because it has arranged aid at conditions that are more favourable to Africa than those of the West, but the issue still remains the same that China is interested in exploiting Africa's resources ahead of Europe and America. There has to be a paradigm shift if Africa is to reclaim its right to chart a new way to development.

The modernisation of Africa in essence entailed the abandonment of the culture and change in broader values, norms and attitudes of the larger contexts in which African people found themselves. Incorporation of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia since independence in 1964) into the modern world began with the mining activities of the British South African Company throughout its southern African territories in the early years of the 20th century. Northern Rhodesia attained British protectorate status in 1911, and at first the territory served as a mere labour reserve for Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa. During the 1920s copper mining was intensified in Northern Rhodesia's Copper Belt Province and the territory became an important mining economy (Chiwele 1996, 211). Colonial policies apparently discouraged the development of agriculture and manufacturing which resulted in the very high dependence on revenues from copper exports at Zambia's independence (Klepper 1979; Seidman 1979). Economists refer to this kind of dependence on primary export commodities as "Dutch disease" (Collier, 2007:39-40) and it will be briefly explained in the next section.

Typical of a peripheral economy the wealth generated by copper mining did not stay in the country. According to Andreasson (2013:190), Northern Rhodesian economy had recovered from the Great Depression by 1935 and the mines boasted a profit well above 4 million British Pounds by 1937. Of these profits Northern Rhodesia kept only about 13–14 percent by way of taxation while the rest of the wealth went to Britain, the British South African Company and overseas shareholders. At the same time Northern

Rhodesia's African population (approximately 97 percent of the total population) had not one secondary school as the territory, according to colonial authorities, was too poor to afford one (Davidson 1994, 50).

Currently, Zambia exhibits characteristics of a periphery state (Dutch disease) with copper as a primary export commodity. As mentioned in the introduction to chapter one, Sesheke town, on which this study is focused, has the largest forest resource base in the province and the highest timber revenue collection in the country, but is also among the poorest districts in Zambia. The economy of this small town is characterised mainly by the production of raw timber for carpentry work and exportation to outside markets like South Africa via Namibia and Botswana. Maser (1997:121) particularly cites such dependence on primary export products like raw timber to developed countries as a typical example of dependency on outside markets and their influences. It can therefore be argued that the dependence on timber as a primary export commodity is a critical epitome of an underlying influence of modernisation.

### **3.4.2 Dependency theory**

The dependency theory came as a critical reaction to the conventional approaches to economic developments that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War (Matunhu, 2011:68). According to the just quoted author and Abiche (2004:17), discontentment with the modernisation theory in the 1950s precipitated new patterns of thinking that resulted in the development of the dependency theory at the beginning of the 1960s. The hope that modernisation would foster economic growth in developing countries had not been fulfilled and as matter of fact, development based on modernity had ultimately failed (Brandt, 1980). It is this realisation that gave impetus to the development of the dependency theory.

Dependency theory is also referred to as the Marxist theory of development which argues that underdevelopment is both created and maintained by international economic systems (Vengroff, 1977:613). The theory is used to explain the failure of non-industrialized countries to develop economically in spite of investments from industrialized countries. The central argument of this theory is that the world economic system is highly unequal in its distribution of power and resources and places most nations in a dependent position in relation to the industrial powers (Crossman, 2015). According to Cooper et al. (2002:26), this trend can also lead to government officials and other development facilitators not being held responsible for effective service

delivery by the target communities because they are the providers. Frank (1967) long argued that classical theories such as modernity are misleading because they fail to articulate the true relationship between the developed world and the poor regions of the world.

According to social anthropology, the dependency theory is both pessimistic and structural (Matunhu, 2011:68). Frank (1969) writes that at its macro level, the main premise of the structural dependency theory is that it would not be possible to understand the processes and problems of Africa without taking into account the wider socio-historical context of Western European expansion and the colonisation of these places by the Western economies. Colonialism was not only a system of exploitation, but one whose main purpose was to repatriate profits made in Africa to Europe and the Western world (Rodney, 1972). Therefore, from a dependency point of view, repatriation of profits represents a systematic expatriation of the surplus values that were generated by African labour using African resources. For five consecutive centuries Europe capitalised on its encounter with Africa and organised herself, accumulated capital gained from her colonies in Africa, shrewdly invested the surplus value in productive economy, and steadfastly increased national wealth and riches for its people (Rodney, 1972:149).

Africa was and still continues to be economically and politically dependent on external powers (Hyden, 2006:3). Herbert (2011:3) writes that “Africa has been little more than an after-thought, or at best the passive object of other nations’ foreign policies” on trade relations, strategic military balances, and other global economic and political issues. Samir et al. (1987:2) once analysed the situation in Southern Africa as follows:

“Imperialists partitioned the countries in Africa and then forced the African peasantry into reserves, deliberately planned to be inadequate for the purposes of ensuring the failure of subsistence in earlier traditional forms. The discovery of the mineral riches of Southern Africa (such as gold and diamonds in South Africa, copper in Katanga in Zambia) just when capitalism was entering a new stage of monopolistic expansion inspired a particular form of colonisation of the economy of the reserves.”

Just like Europe and America once exploited Africa, so do the urban areas within African countries exploit their own rural areas (Matunhu, 2011:68). The poverty and underdevelopment in most rural areas in African countries can be attributed to inhibiting relationships between urban and rural areas. There seems to be a structural

dependency syndrome that extends downwards to the grassroots. “If one takes dependency from a world systems viewpoint, there is an unequal economic relationship whose origins are global and which is replayed at the local level” (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002). As such, the basic message of the dependency school of thought is that the development of the so called metropolis or urban areas was, and may still be, as a result of the active underdevelopment of the none metropolis or rural areas.

The Zambian economy is a typical case of dependency and underdevelopment (Ingle, 2012:1-4). The just quoted author writes that despite having gained political independence in 1964, Zambia is still fatally “wedded to the vagaries of the commodity markets” and thus effectively held hostage by global capitalism and by its own “inability to diversify its economy fast enough and wide enough”. Dependency on the export of copper and neglect of the agricultural sector has mounted a dominant class with obvious external alliances. Alongside other African countries like Angola, and DRC, Zambia is a resource-rich but economically poor country (Matunhu, 2011:68).

The dependence structures that have developed since the country’s independence still tend to negatively affect rural community transformational development in Zambia to date. This is because the dependence theory in essence exhibits a top-down approach as it assumes that the local people do not have the expertise to fight out of their poverty (Matunhu, 2011:69). According to the data informing this study in the previous chapter, it is evident that one of the reasons why both the church and community did not alter the funding organisation’s (EFZ) inaccurate program was because they are dependent on them for funding to implement transformational activities.

Despite Sesheke being resource-rich in timber and other forestry products, this semi-rural border town of Western Zambia is among the economically poorest towns in the country (Vinya et al., 2012:4). The poor underdeveloped state of Sesheke town can be attributed to the broader modernisation and dependence theories that are also inherent in the Sesheke community. Marx-Neef (1991:38) argues that “Development geared to the satisfaction of fundamental human needs cannot, by definition, be structured from the top downwards. It cannot be imposed either by law or decree. It can only emanate directly from the actions, expectations, and creative and critical awareness of the protagonists themselves. Instead of being the traditional objects of development, people must take a leading role in development.

Suffice it to state that the theories that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War were based on the Western concept of development and proved ineffective in dealing with African problems of poverty and underdevelopment (Frank, 1967; Abiche, 2004:15-16). Transformation of particular communities and systems is a task requiring extraordinary depth and breadth of change to address people's concrete felt needs. As needs most likely differ from one community to another, so do the approaches. Maser (1997:124) states that local communities are more effective in defining and meeting their own needs. It is for this reason that community transformation cannot be restricted to externally designed theories that do not address local barriers to transformation as earlier stated. The local communities are supposed to identify their needs and design their path to economic growth and transformation with minimal external influence and support where needed

### **3.5 BARRIERS TO TRANSFORMATION IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT**

In his award winning book, "The bottom billion: why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it", Collier (2007) reflects on key issues that trap the poorest billion of the world's population in extreme poverty and humanitarian crises. By using statistical evidence to prove his case, he writes that seventy percent of the bottom billion lives in Africa and most Africans are living in countries that have been in one or another of development traps (Collier, 2007:7), making such traps very relevant to this study.

Collier's (2007:17) work on the development traps of the bottom billion is derived from years of research by economists, political scientists and development economists. The traps he discusses are conflict, natural resource abundance, being landlocked with bad neighbours, and bad governance traps (Collier, 2007:17, 38, 53, and 64). He notes that these traps are not inescapable as over the years some countries such as China and India, who were at one time even poorer than many of the current bottom billion countries, have broken free and started to catch up with the rest of the world (Collier, 2007:10). The problem with the bottom billion countries is that they seem to be stuck in these traps, with some of them even falling apart and behind the rest of the world.

For at least forty years the economies of these countries have been at best stagnant, with minimal growth or worse declining, resulting in their people now being poorer than

they were in the 1970s (Collier, 2007:9-10). Statistical evidence according to the just cited source shows that the rest of the developing world is diverging at a rate of 2% growth per year from these bottom billion countries. The portion of children with symptoms of long term malnutrition is 36% in the bottom billion compared to 20% in other developing countries. The average person living in the bottom billion now has an income of about only one-fifth that of the average person in the other developing countries, a gap that is increasing with time. Being poor is not the real issue, not if people have hope that they are steadily progressing toward a better future, but decades of low growth or worse decline in growth means hopelessness for the people (Collier, 2007:20). Despair overwhelms them as they are slipping away from the rest of the world. Collier believes that the failure of the growth process within these societies has to be our core challenge of development. "We cannot make poverty (and all its associated despair) history unless the countries of the bottom billion start to grow..." (Collier, 2007:11-12).

Before going on to discuss what is required for community transformation to occur, it is imperative at this stage to discuss the development traps in detail.

### **3.5.1 Conflict Trap**

All societies have or have been through conflict, but some are, nevertheless, stuck in a pattern of violent internal conflicts at the expense of economic growth (Collier, 2007:17-22). The just quoted author identifies three main causes of civil wars. First is low income in the sense that young people recruited for rebel armies come very cheap in poor environments. Slow growth means hopelessness and therefore makes young people prone to join rebel groups in the hope of getting quick economic boost should they rise to the top or the rebel movement gain victory. Moreover, rebellion is not difficult if the economy is weak because a weak economy means a weak state. Thirdly, dependency on primary commodity products can cause civil war as natural resources help to finance conflict and in some cases even motivate it.

Internal conflict or civil war is development in reverse which, according to research, reduces economic growth by 2.3 percent per year on national scale (Collier, 2007:27). Hoeffler (2008:27) writes that countries are poorer after civil wars and their populations suffer enormous health consequences that continue long after the fighting stops. The just quoted author further states that there is also evidence that countries continue to spend more precious resources on post-conflict security interventions than on economic

development projects. According to Hillier's (2007:3) research on behalf of the International Action Network on Small Arms, Oxfam International, and Saferworld, Africa in general loses approximately eighteen billion United States Dollars per year due to wars, civil wars, and insurgencies. The just quoted author is of the same view as Collier (2007:27) that a typical seven year war leaves a country about fifteen percent poorer than it would have been.

Localised violence over access to livelihood resources, such as land and water, is also on the increase and this includes farmer–herder conflicts (Straus, 2012:181). According to Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (2011:4), there is evidence that resource competition at community level is relatively prone to violence. For instance, in 2010 and 2011, conflicts over natural resources accounted for approximately thirty five per cent of all conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa and fifty per cent of conflicts in all the Americas (Cilliers & Schünemann, 2013:4).

There is yet another form of conflict that has come to the fore in recent years. According to Woodhead et al. (2009:24), religious identity and politics of identity has been recognized as a significant contemporary phenomenon which has come to the fore as identity groups seek to find ways of recognition, competing for resources, gaining public voice, arguing for their rights, and, in some cases, winning converts and friends. Such a situation can become a breeding ground for recurrent civil wars and insurgencies.

It is important to state that the end of a civil war is not usually the end of the conflict and this makes the eruption of another war likely. Collier (2007:27) writes that even the very experience of having been through a civil war roughly doubles the risk of another conflict. For some societies such conflicts even become normal. Since conflict is costly and in most cases repetitive, it becomes a trap that impedes economic growth and consequently hinders transformation (Collier, 2007:17).

### **3.5.2 Natural Resource Abundance Trap**

It is logically expected that the discovery of natural resource wealth ought to be a catalyst for economic growth and this true in some rare cases. The discovery of valuable natural resources in the context of poverty, however, tends to weaken political restraints and thus worsen governance (Collier, 2007:42-51). Recent research reveals that over time more countries with large resource discoveries can end up poorer

(Collier, 2007; Frankel, 2010; Polterovich et al., 2010). The just quoted sources give as examples countries like Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and The Democratic Republic of Congo among other countries that are stagnant or even deteriorating respectively despite the presence of large natural resource deposits. Botswana is an example of the few countries that has managed to escape this trap because of adherence to the due process (Collier, 2007:50). Statistically, twenty nine percent of the world's approximately one billion poorest people live in countries where natural resource wealth dominates the economy (Collier, 2007:39). The question is how can natural resource abundance be a barrier to economic growth and transformation?

The heart of the natural resource abundance trap is that resource rents<sup>2</sup> worsen governance and induce autocracy (Collier, 2007:42, 51). As earlier mentioned, natural resource rents can be used to finance or even motivate conflict, which is inimical to economic growth, but there are other reasons that can be cited for the economic failure of many resource-rich countries even in the absence of conflict. According to Frankel (2010) and Collier (2007:40-42), there are at least six lines of argument for this paradoxical relationship, apart from proneness to internal conflict. First, most resource-rich countries underinvest because of undue reliance on natural resource rents. In the meantime, prices of primary commodity exports could be subject to secular decline on the world markets and this in turn affects negatively the economies of the countries that depend upon such export products. It is in this regard that Maser (1997:121) cites exportation of raw materials such as timber to developed countries as an example of short-term economic sustainability which, on the other hand, simultaneously fosters local communities' dependency on outside markets and their influences. Second, natural resources could be dead-end sectors in the sense that they may crowd out manufacturing, and other agricultural products, which might be the ones to offer dynamic benefits and spill overs that are good for economic growth. Economists refer to this as the Dutch disease, a term derived from the effects of the North Sea gas discovery on the Dutch economy in the 1960s and now used as an economic concept that explains the negative consequences caused by an unnatural focus on a specific sector, to the detriment of all other sectors (Collier, 2007:39-40).

Third, the volatility of world prices of energy and other mineral and agricultural commodities, which is known to be especially high, could be problematic to handle, especially if the governance of the country is unstable. Fourth, countries where physical

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<sup>2</sup> In economics **rent** is a surplus value after all costs and normal returns have been accounted for (Collier, 2007:38).

command of oil deposits or other natural resources by the government or a hereditary elite automatically confers wealth on the holders may be less likely to develop the necessary checks and balances such as the rule of law and decentralization of decision-making, which are conducive to economic development than in countries where moderate taxation of a thriving market economy is the main way to finance the government.

Fifth, natural resource rents undermine democracy, and what gets undermined is not electoral competition but the political restraints on how power is used (Collier, 2007:40-43). Accordingly, without resource surpluses, democracies outgrow autocracies, while in the presence of abundant surpluses from natural resource revenue, autocracies outperform democracies, and the effects are negative. Sixth, swings or shocks and bursts in commodity prices could cause excessive macroeconomic instability through real exchange rate and government spending, imposing unnecessary costs instead of fostering investment. For instance, Collier (2007:40) writes that one government ministry in Kenya unrealistically raised its proposed budget thirteen times more than usual during the coffee price boom between 1976 and 1979.

The theoretical reasoning and statistical evidence above suggest that possession of natural resource abundance such as hydrocarbons, minerals, and perhaps agricultural endowments, can confer negative effects on the governance of small economies and thus hinder economic growth, which is cardinal for transformation. Auty (1993, 2001) rightly coined the phrase “natural resource curse” to describe this paradoxical reality.

### **3.5.3 Landlocked with Bad Neighbours**

Landlocked countries often lag behind their coastal neighbours in overall development and external trade. The inland parts of Africa and Asia particularly are known to be the least economically developed areas of the world for at least two hundred years (Smith, 1776; UNDP, 2002). Nine of the twelve countries with the lowest human development index (HDI) scores are landlocked, thirteen landlocked countries are classified as ‘low human development’ and not one of the non-European landlocked countries is classified as ‘high human development’. According to Collier’s (2007:54) findings, thirty eight percent of the people living in what he calls “the bottom billion” societies are in countries that are landlocked and it is overwhelmingly an African problem. The question is why do landlocked countries in Africa face persistent economic challenges? There

are at least seven reasons that hinder economic growth in landlocked African countries according to Collier (2007:53-63) and Snow et al. (2003:6-11).

First of all, many landlocked countries in Africa are also surrounded with countries that are also stuck in one or more of the traps. All countries, landlocked or not, do benefit from the growth of their neighbours because growth spills over (Collier, 2007:56). As such, it matter what is going on in the countries that surround a landlocked country. For instance, in Southern Africa, countries that border South Africa, except Zimbabwe, are performing significantly better than those that do not (Faye et al., 2004:39). On the hand, the just quoted co-authors and Collier (2007:57) cite Uganda's neighbours of whom Kenya and Tanzania have been stuck in poor governance for more than three decades by now while the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Somalia are stuck in conflict. Rwanda is also landlocked. Uganda cannot easily access the global market due to high transit costs through neglected Kenyan roads and can neither reorient its economy to its neighbours because they are also stuck. Therefore, being landlocked with bad neighbours hampers the economic growth of landlocked countries, especially that of the resource-scarce landlocked countries who must totally depend on their neighbours.

Secondly, the high transportation costs typically place landlocked countries at a distinct disadvantage relative to their coastal neighbours when competing in global markets (Collier, 2007:6; Faye et al., 2004:32). Landlocked countries not only face the challenge of distance, but also the challenges that result from a dependence on passage through a sovereign transit country, one through which trade from a landlocked country must pass in order to access international shipping markets. Collier (2007:55) writes that in this regard transportation costs depend on how much the coastal neighbours had spent on transport infrastructure. Another way of conceptualising this is that landlocked countries are hostages to their maritime neighbours.

Third is the political relationship between the landlocked and transit nations. Snow et al. (2003:7-8) observe that developing landlocked countries usually have little negotiating power over their coastal neighbours when negotiating transit routes. Whereas most landlocked countries are highly dependent upon their transit neighbour to access other countries and world markets, in most cases, the coastal neighbours rely little upon their landlocked neighbours and may see their demand for transit rights as an infringement on their own sovereignty.

The legal basis for rights of transit are contained in Article 125(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) which state as follows:

*“Land-locked States shall have the right of access to and from the sea for the purpose of exercising the rights provided for in this Convention including those relating to the freedom of the high seas and the common heritage of mankind. To this end, land-locked States shall enjoy freedom of transit through the territory of transit States by all means of transport.”*

In practice, however, this right of access must be mutually agreed upon with the transit neighbour as follows (Article 125(2) and (3)):

*“The terms and modalities for exercising freedom of transit shall be agreed between the landlocked States and transit States concerned through bilateral, sub regional or regional agreements. Transit States, in the exercise of their full sovereignty over their territory, shall have the right to take all measures necessary to ensure that the rights and facilities provided for in this Part for land-locked States shall in no way infringe their legitimate interests.”*

Seen from the international legal perspective above, a right of access to and from the sea is given to the landlocked countries, but such a right is conditioned by the need for the transit nations to grant such a right. Whether a transit nation can legally deny the right of access or not is discussed in detail in the legal literature (Pechata 1973), but Snow et al.’s case studies (2003) show that transit access is in practice determined by the relationship between the landlocked countries and their transit neighbours.

Fourth is the issue of vulnerability to civil conflicts within transit nations. Even if a country has the required good relations with its transit neighbour, it is still vulnerable to civil conflict within the transit nation and consequent border closures. According to Snow et al. (2003:9) such conflict not only results in the closure of the affected corridor, but also severely weakens the transit infrastructure, thereby limiting its future use.

Fifth is the huge administrative burden to be borne in transiting neighbouring countries. In order to transit a country, there are a host of direct transit and customs charges to be incurred, some of which must be paid upfront and some en route. The direct costs, however, are only a small part of the story. International transits also require burdensome paperwork and bureaucratic procedures that are costly to deal with, which

all place a high administrative burden on shippers and other cross border traders. In almost all cases, the number of documents needed and the different authorities that must be dealt with are high and can only be negotiated by using companies that are experienced in transit operations such as clearing and forwarding agents. The need for such services adds significantly to the overall cost of transit. The cost of bribes and corruption is also considered to be very significant, although it has not yet been fully estimated.

Moreover, the direct fees and other costs of high administration for passing through border points of foreign nations impose long delays and inconveniences on transit traffic. It is regularly noted that the time delays and the variability of time in transit are a greater concern to traders than direct costs, as they hinder the ability to meet delivery contracts in good time and without large inventory stocks. These delays impose a large burden on trade. For instance in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) alone, delays are estimated to impose a burden of forty eight million United States dollars annually (InfraAfrica 2001). According to Anyango (1997), the cost of delays is estimated to be between two hundred and five to four hundred and forty United States dollars on a ten thousand United States dollars cargo consignment from Rwanda or Burundi. Other border inconveniences like payment of border fees in hard currency where often there are no facilities to convert local currencies also hamper cross border trade.

The sixth reason is that most of Africa's landlocked locked countries are also resource-scarce. According to Collier (2007:57), thirty percent of Africa's population lives in landlocked, resource-scarce countries. The just quoted author further observes that apart from Africa, nowhere else on earth do areas that are far from the coast and without resources become countries. The challenges associate with being landlocked discussed in this section do validate why such areas should not become countries. Notwithstanding the natural resource curse or Dutch disease discussed the previous section, resource-rich landlocked countries relatively have chances of making a success of the opportunity like what Botswana did (Collier, 2007:56).

Seventh, even the few African landlocked countries that have good neighbours are not oriented toward their neighbours (e.g. Zimbabwe to South Africa and Zambia to Namibia), with the best exception of Swaziland in Southern Africa. According to Snow et al. (2003:28), the local focus of Swaziland's trade on South Africa limits the effects of

being landlocked on trade cost. The just cited source reveals that ninety-three percent of Swaziland's total imports come from South Africa and sixty percent of her total exports are going to the same neighbour. Elsewhere in the region and on the continent, Collier (2007:57) writes that both the infrastructure and policies of the landlocked countries are either completely inward looking or toward the world market, which exposes them to all the challenges associated with landlockedness.

### **3.5.4 Bad Governance Trap**

The fourth trap that Collier (2007:64) identifies is bad governance. He notes that whereas there is a feasible ceiling of at most ten percent economic growth rate brought about by good governance and policies, bad governance and policies on the other hand can destroy an economy with an alarming speed of up one thousand percent, as is the case with Zimbabwe. The estimated total cost of a failing state over its entire history of failure, to itself and its neighbours, is at least one billion United States Dollars (Collier, 2007:74).

It is both critical and imperative to find out why bad governance is so persistent in some countries. According to Collier, (2007:66-67), one of the reasons is that not everybody loses from it. The leaders of many of the poorest countries in Africa and other parts of the world are themselves amongst the global super rich. They prefer to keep their citizens uneducated and ill-informed. For instance, in 1991, the United Nations estimated that the ruling elites in Africa drained more than two hundred billion United States dollars out of the continent (Owoye and Bissessar, 2015:2). Both Ayittey (2002) and Lawal (2007) agree that this sum was more than half of Africa's foreign debt and that it also exceeded the amount of foreign aid to Africa. Second, economic reforms also need technical know-how and support, but in the bottom billion countries there is a chronic shortage of people with the prerequisite knowledge and skills. And so the brave, who want to turn around a failing state, are often overwhelmed by the odds stacked against them. Broadly viewed, bad governance in Africa is manifested by its long list of dictatorial leaders, non-free media, and undemocratic elections (Owoye and Bissessar, 2015:1). This is most probably why the continent is now characterised by low growth rates, declining agricultural production, stagnating manufacturing, rising imports, and rapidly expanding external debts as Jespersen (1992) observes.

Given that the statistics probability of a sustained turnaround is 1.6 percent, it will take an average of fifty nine years for a country to get out being a failing state (Collier,

2007:70-71). According to the just quoted source, the preconditions for a successful turn-around from a failing state are a larger population, a high percentage of the population having attained at least secondary education, and, surprisingly, if a country had recently emerged from a civil war. Although post-conflict countries typically start off with terrible governance and policies, their first decade after civil war, however, sees substantial improvement because the politics are usually fluid and the old interests have been shaken up. As such, it becomes relatively easy to get change. The just cited author also states that of great importance still is the fact that the impetus for change must come from within the society and the chances of success depend on the capacity of those in the society.

Although reverse causality has always been problematic in growth regressions, there is no doubt that per capita income and the quality of governance are strongly and positively correlated across countries. Empirical evidence reveals that there is a strong relationship between bad governance and poor growth performance (Collier, 2007:64-65; Khan, 2006; Kraufmann and Kraay, 2003). Collier (2007) throughout his book cites several examples of such countries as Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Kenya, Bangladesh, etc., whose growth performances could have been better without bad governance.

Suffice it to mention that some scholars, however, are of the view that the causal link between governance and economic growth is unsure. With due respect to the need for good governance and the merits of democracy, Glaeser, et al. (2004) conclude on their findings by stating that existing research does not show that political institutions rather than human capital have a causal effect on economic growth. Their findings are consistent with a perspective on institutions outlined by Djankov et al. (2003), according to which each community faces a set of institutional opportunities determined largely by the human and social capital of its population. Most importantly in that framework is that institutions have only a second order effect on economic performance. The first order effect comes from human and social capital, which shape both institutional and productive capacities of a society.

Although exploring the causal link between governance and economic growth has proved difficult from the perspective of some scholars (Glaeser, et al., 2004:285), empirical evidence still reveals that bad governance can destroy an economy with unprecedented rate (Collier, 2007:64; Everett et al., 2007; Krastev, 2004; World Bank,

2008). Owoye and Bissessar (2015:1) openly claim that “bad governance sands the wheels of development in Africa”. Therefore, the unsure causal link between governance and economic growth expressed by some scholars does not explain away the effects of bad governance on an economy, but may necessitate qualifiers such as restraints, which could be more important than the mere promotion of government effectiveness (Collier, 2007:64-65). As such, the vice of bad governance is a clear trap that can keep a nation or community from growing and transforming.

### **3.6 PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

The following principles of community transformation are based on the work Collier (2007), Kretzmann & McKnight (1993), Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:41-44), as well as other authors cited in the respective texts.

#### **3.6.1 Action at Grassroots**

A key feature of community transformation is action at grassroots where the affected people themselves take the leading part, with external experts and organisations playing a facilitating role (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). “Change in the societies at the very bottom must come predominantly from within” (Collier, 2007:9, 71). This means that the initiative, drive, and ownership of the transformation process must come predominately from within the affected community. The just quoted author, however, later explains that there is still need for technical and physical resources (aid, NGO, international policies) from outside to assist and strengthen inside initiatives (Collier, 2007:99-123).

It is correct for churches and other well-wishers such as Christian and non-government organisations to be involved in welfare activities such as providing food, clothes, groceries and the like to the needy people, but this is not community transformation. Blackman (2007:32) writes that the danger with welfare approach is that it creates community dependency. Community transformation requires productive use of local resources, including the human resource. As indicated in the previous paragraph, outside resources have only second order effect on community transformation, which is to strengthen inside initiatives. The first order effect must come from within the affected community itself. Therefore, the local community must pay attention to the incentives

and governance regimes that enable rural households to adjust their production systems and livelihoods in order to guarantee both welfare and sustainable community transformation (Pender et al., 2001a:1).

### **3.6.1.1 Place for Aid**

Aid alone is not likely to bring about community transformation because it is subject to the law of diminishing returns (Collier, 2007:100). That is to say the more you keep on increasing aid, the less returns you get back on your money. According to the just quoted author, for at least thirty years aid has been at best a holding operation in the bottom billion, preventing them from falling with a meagre one percent annual growth rate. Ayodele et al. (2005:1) too observes that “The more aid poured into Africa, the lower its standard of living”. Another reason aid seems not to work is because it has been so politicised as to be used for non-economic growth interventions (Collier, 2007:100).

Research by Collier’s (2007:102), however, reveals that in the past aid was more beneficial than were the natural resources such as oil in achieving growth because aid agencies had added a whole lot of value to the financial transfer. Projects, procedures, conditions, and the like have been beneficial overall in enhancing the value of the money transferred rather than just sending the money and hoping for the best. According to the just cited author, aid also tends to be more effective where governance and policies are already reasonable.

It is important for organisations such as the church to understand the complexity of aid from a broader perspective when engaging in community transformational projects. If not used properly and at the proper time, aid can breed corruption, dependency, and even encourage coups (Ayodele et al., 2005:1-2; Collier, 2007:106).

It is also imperative to briefly look at how aid can or cannot work within the individual development earlier discussed (Collier, 2007:6-8). On average, aid has no direct effect on the conflict trap, although it has indirect effect such as encouraging coups. It can, however, make things better by raising growth which cumulatively raises income and thereby reducing the risk of a coup. On breaking the natural resource trap, aid is fairly impotent except in moments of an incipient turn around as indicated later in connection with the bad governance trap. The key role for development aid, as opposed to direct support for consumption, in the landlocked countries is to improve their transport links to

the coast. Finally on the bad governance trap, aid can potentially help turnarounds in terms of incentives, skills and reinforcement.

Whereas “Aid in general is a ‘dole’, tending to erode or sap attitudes and beliefs conducive to self-reliance, thrift, effort, and enterprise” (Goldthorpe, 1990:279), some of the community transformation tasks, however, might require funding and other resources that are beyond the capacity of the local communities (Blackman, 2007:30). Collier (2007:62) also boldly states that even with a government’s best efforts, some societies, especially within a landlocked community, are likely to remain poor for a long time unless they try to be as attractive as possible to donors. There is, therefore, a place for external support to supplement local efforts and resources. The local community and other direct stakeholders such as the local church must have the skills to effectively partner with Christian organisations and NGOs to source for support from outside organisations such as donor agencies (Collier, 2007:17, 42). For instance, one of the sources of funding for the compassionate ministries of the Church of the Nazarene in Orlando East (South Africa) is a child sponsorship program that links children with sponsors in Europe or United States of America (USA) to raise monthly contributions for children who are connected to them through the church (Maphosa, 2014:81).

Suffice it to state that external support should be managed in a way that will not disempower local initiatives and cause dependency. The focus should be on increasing self-reliance, such as through income generation initiatives (Blackman, 2007:30). In this regard, the local community is expected, with the help of partners, to help individuals and communities to attain sustainable transformational development through technical, physical, and financial support to enhance bigger and long term transformational projects (Van Hoek and Yardley, 2009:6). Collier (2007:100-112) also underscores that aid is subject to the law of diminishing returns, but tends to more effective where good governance and policies are already reasonable, especially in the area of local capacity building in the target communities. In the same context, the just quoted author further observes that aid should not be too little and too soon, but huge enough and at a time when the governance, institution, and policies of a society have improved to a level at which aid can be of much help.

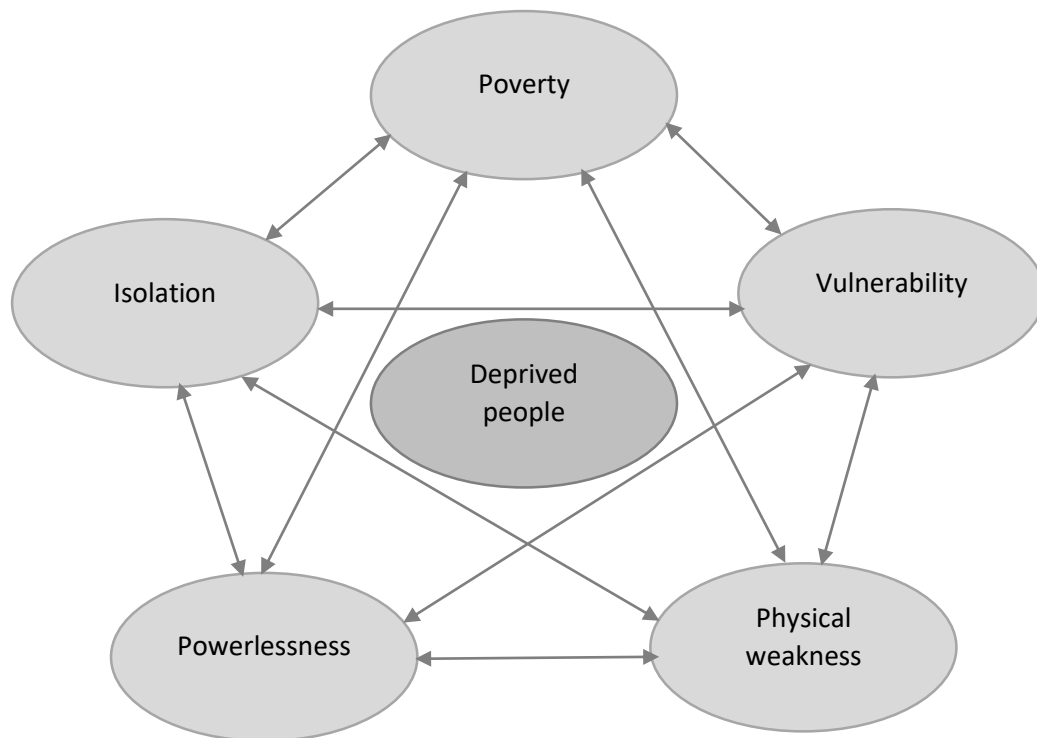
### 3.6.2 Holistic and Integrated Approach

The nuance between holistic and integrated approaches is that a holistic approach focuses more, but not exclusively on the person and community as a whole rather than at specific risk sectors, while an integrated approach focuses more, but not exclusively on programme co-ordination (ILO, 2002). A holistic and integrated approach to people and their environment is one of the key factors for effective community transformation because systems are nestled in other systems within the web of life (Osmer, 2008:93,119).

A “holistic” approach means engaging and developing the whole person (Defriend, 2012). One can think of this in different dimensions, physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. It is the concept that the human being is multi-dimensional. We have conscious and unconscious, rational and irrational aspects. As human beings, we are a body-mind. Not just intellect, but emotion, instinct, intuition, as well. A holistic approach will support people in using all of their multiple intelligence, which means insight, rationality, logic, emotion, hunches, gut feel, creativity, a sense of harmony and rhythm. In his book, “Walking with the poor: principles and practices of transformational development”, Myres (1999:135) states that people as individuals are inseparable from the social systems in which they live. Therefore, effective community transformation should address people’s needs in a holistic or multidimensional way (Blackman, 2007:10). There can be no meaningful transformation that only addressed human beings apart from their relationships with community and environment because systems are nestled within other systems in the web of life. Human problems are interconnected and cannot be addressed apart from one another.

The most fundamental characteristic of community transformation is that it follows an integrated approach to the problems of poverty and transformation in an attempt to eradicate poverty (Mohaneng, 2000:127). According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:41), this characteristic has two major implications. Firstly, problems of transformation are multifaceted and should thus be tackled together in a co-ordinated fashion. The emphasis here is that social, political, and cultural aspects should be treated together with the economic aspect because they intertwine. For instance, Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:6) observe that deprived people are trapped in a web of poverty, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness as shown in figure 3.1 below.

**Figure 3.1** Adapted from Deprivation Trap of Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:6).



In order to transform the lives of the deprived, all the links that interconnect and form up the trap must be broken, not just one.

Suffice it to mention that poverty is a strong determinant of other human problems (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:111). According to the just quoted author, poverty contributes to several human problems such as physical weakness through lack of food, small bodies, malnutrition leading to low immune response to infections, and inability to reach or pay for health services. It also contributes to isolation due to inability to pay the cost of education, recreation, travelling to find work, to live near the village centre or main road. The lack of assets to pay large expenses or to meet contingencies leads to vulnerability. Poverty also contributes to powerlessness because lack of wealth goes with low status: the poor have no voice. It therefore becomes inevitable that an interactive integrated approach be employed for effective transformation to take place.

Another reason why an integrated approach is fundamental to community transformation is that different role players should co-ordinate their efforts in order to optimise their impact and avoid duplication.

In many cases, the task of the church in the world has been understood to include transformation of the world through social, economic, or even political involvement. According to Asamoah (2013:189) and Francis (2008:19), the church is supposed to attend to the problems of poverty, disease, illiteracy, and all other social and economic challenges to ensure society's upliftment. For example, Waruta and Kinoti (2005:30) ask what practical steps the church has taken to respond to the increasing demands of unemployment. They also argue that the church should actually be an employer and a job creator. Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:21), too, consider the church to be one of the major stakeholders in community development. It can, therefore, be expected of the church to play an active part in the holistic and integrated transformation of the community.

On a broader framework, an integrated approach seems inevitable in addressing the problems of the bottom billion such as the effects of globalisation (Collier, 2007:79-96). Accordingly, the effects of globalisation on the bottom billion countries are threefold – trade in goods, capital flows, and migration of people – and these need to be tackled together in an integrated fashion in order for these countries to grow and transform.

### **3.6.3 Identification of Community Needs**

Needs identification is a prerequisite for action. According to Adejunmobi (1990:226) and Jeppe (1985:28), it is the first step to be taken before a project commences. An important aspect stressed here is that these must be concrete felt needs by the community, not only by some external expert. A common problem with transformation is who determines what the needs are. Gabriel (1991:4) writes that the momentum towards another development depends upon knowledge of indigenous power structures and their effects upon developmental efforts. Outsiders assuming responsibility for planning, funding, and implementation of developmental activities usually display scant knowledge of how their target communities live (Gabriel. 1991:1). It is, therefore, important that indigenous knowledge of human thought and behaviour is taken into consideration when identifying needs in rural transformational development. As such, the local community must be involved in identification of their needs from the outset.

### **3.6.4 Asset-Based**

Another critical aspect of needs identification has to do with the mind-set of the community. Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:43) write that identification of needs has to

do with changing of the community's negative self-perception to positive self-perception. The authors further observe that deprived people more easily enumerate their needs than identify their own assets. This aspect involves identifying and making use of assets that are locally available to enhance transformation. No community project can go without identification of local assets along with concrete felt needs (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). These assets include the talents and skills of individuals, organizational capacities, political connections, buildings and facilities, and financial resources (Page-Adams and Sherraden 1997). As the assets are used, they also improve, especially humans, who also are the most important resource (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44).

### **3.6.5 Clear Objectives**

Each identified concrete need must be addressed by a corresponding concrete objective. Transformational projects are by definition activities or sets of organisational measures aimed at or associated with clear objectives (Morgan, 1983:330). Accordingly, the objectives of a transformational project must be first of all precise, not broad, and concrete, not vague, and must address community problems.

### **3.6.6 Empowerment**

Empowerment is defined differently by different authors. According to Wallerstein (1992), empowerment is a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice. In a similar vein, Whitmore (1988:13) defines empowerment as an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live. While Whitmore (1988) consents with Lord and Hotchison (1993:5) that the concept of empowerment is complex and needs to be more clearly defined, she states that there are some common underlying assumptions as hereunder listed.

- i. Individuals are assumed to understand their own needs better than anyone else and therefore should have the power both to define and act upon them.
- ii. All people possess strengths upon which they can build.
- iii. Empowerment is a lifelong endeavour.
- iv. Personal knowledge and experience are valid and useful in coping effectively.

Apparently, many local churches that attempt to do community transformation follow a welfare approach (Blackman, 2007:23). According to Raistrick (2005:9-10), hand-outs by churches and other development agencies can reinforce a strong culture of dependency among communities. Such welfare approaches as this may be useful in addressing immediate needs like in times of crises, but, as Blackman (2007:23) writes, long term development and empowerment issues cannot not be achieved and sustained by simply acts of welfare by the church or development agencies. They require full community participation from the outset and need to be tackled step-by-step. Community transformation requires simplicity, avoids complexity, and lies at the micro-level of society (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). Said another way, it is practical.

Empowerment takes place in a milieu that emphasizes community knowledge, resources, self-reliance, initiative, and decision making (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:27). In order for people to be empowered, McClelland (1975) writes that they need to gain information about themselves and their environment as well as be willing to identify and work with others for change. The local people themselves should assume full responsibility and participation from the outset if the transformational projects are to succeed (Dodge and Bennette, 2011:5; Gabriel, 1991:1-7; Myres, 1999:147-149; Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). According to Myres (1999:148), this is a form of making a systematic local autonomy or self-direction real. It involves the local community's full participation in research, analysis, planning, implementing, and evaluating of transformation projects, with the church, government, and other external experts playing a minimal facilitating role.

Without empowerment there is no sustainability.

### **3.6.7 Sustainability**

Sustainability refers to medium to long-term viability and longevity of changes brought by the transformational task. According to Abiche (2004:27), sustainability is the maintenance and continuance of economic and social development projects in various communities. Therefore, sustainability of any community project depends on community participation in the project planning, implementation, and decision-making.

Community development works are based on the belief that through collective action people can resolve their problems as well as organise and implement change (Maser, 1997:102). According to Korter's (1991:1-20) conclusion after studying more than one

hundred organisations that intentionally initiated processes of transformation, most transformation efforts fail due to two lessons that he drew from his study. First, transformation involves deep change (Quinn, 1996) and it passes through a series of phases that require considerable time and effort. Skipping necessary steps to speed up the process usually does not pay off in the long run. Second, critical errors in any of the steps can have devastating impact on the entire process. For instance, Goodall (2012:27) cites woodland as an example of a much more difficult issue because increasing demand for food increases the economic incentive to cut down forests to create new fields to grow crops. Therefore, the achievement of sustainability requires people to meet two deceptively simple conditions: (1) the use of natural resources must not reduce the resources available for present and future generations and (2) our management of the planet must avoid pollution, disruption, or degradation that makes sustainability more difficult (Goodall, 2012:15).

Efficient use of available resources is a precondition for attaining sustainable livelihood, especially in less favoured rural area where resources are of poor quality, restricted availability, high variability, and uncertain (Lopez-Ridaura et al., 2005b:73). It is important for the local community to participate primarily in their transformation and start with what they have before asking for support from any external organisation (Blackman, 2007:78). This is what Ketzmann and Mcknight (1993) refer to as asset-based community development (ABCD), which is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities that builds on the strengths, resources and potentials within a community. According to Pender et al. (2001a:1), sustainable community transformation requires the identification of suitable pathways that allow rural households to develop production systems and livelihoods that respond to local conditions.

### **3.7 INFLUENTIAL FACTORS ON COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

Transformation of each community has also local specifics related with natural characteristics, internal structures, local history and tradition, some social-cultural or social-economic background, political manifestations, as well as religious background and influence (Milojevic, 2012:1). It should be stated that these factors do influence community transformation in one way or another as will be seen from those highlighted hereafter.

### 3.7.1 Religion

Religion is a fundamental and perhaps the most important influence in the life of most Africans (Awolalu, 1996:1). As such, community transformation can also be framed within a religious narrative that appeals to beliefs and values in conceptualising the process and end of development (De Wet, 2011:7-8). As with most value systems and ideologies, religion is also concerned with matters of human wellbeing, the good life and good society, and transformation of the world. It is intrinsically connected with and involved in transformation works according to the just quoted author.

Seen from the above perspective, a religion influences concepts of transformation and provides resources to its adherents which may be mobilised in pursuing the required transformational development. Ter Haar and Ellis (2006: 356) identify four such religious resources as outlined below.

- i. **Religious ideas**, or people's beliefs, contribute to shaping the values and assumptions people hold as individuals and collectively as a society. According to Clarke (2011:4), these religious ideas influence the moral base of society, which in turn influences a people's perception of the concept of development and their response to circumstances of poverty or deprivation, impacting what is considered legitimate or meaningful development. Christians, for instance, believe that Christianity is responsible for the way our society is organized and the way we currently live and contributes extensively to our laws, economics, politics, arts, calendar, holidays, as well as moral and cultural priorities (D'Souza, 2008). Hence Sackey (1999) underscores that religious values and understandings of the good life should orient discussions of the means and ends of development. As such, conceptions of transformation and the means of achieving it cannot be formulated in exclusively material terms, but should draw on religious resources as well (Ter Haar 2011:11).
- ii. **Religious practices**, including ritual behaviour, may contribute significantly to development. Practices such as welfare activities or caring for the poor have direct developmental results. Church services, including sermons and prayers, may also be mobilised in the service of developmental objectives, as is the case in World Vision's "Channels of Hope" HIV/AIDS stigma interventions which operate through church services (De Wet, 2011:9).

- iii. **Religious organisations** can be mobilised for development as church denominations and their congregations or faith-based development organisations (FBDOs), function as important agents, partners and vehicles in transformation processes.
- iv. **Religious or spiritual experiences** such as the subjective experience of inner change or transformation serve as resources within the development process and an avenue of empowerment (Ter Haar and Ellis 2006: 356). Seen from this perspective, inner transformation is a necessary dimension of and an antecedent to community transformation because access to spiritual empowerment creates impetus for action that can transform the material world of a person or community.

This researcher's Christian Pentecostal theological perspective, which might be different from the perspectives of other religions, will be discussed further in the chapter on guidelines. Suffice it to highlight at this point that Pentecostal theology's unique contribution to transformation is in the baptism and working of the Holy Spirit in a person's life. In a sermon way back in 1921, John G. Lake (cited by THE ATS TEAM, 2016) states that the greatest manifestation of the Holy Spirit baptized life ever given to the world was not in the preaching of the apostles nor in the wonderful manifestations of God that took place at their hands, but it was in the unselfishness manifested by the church. The just cited authors write that the Holy Spirit baptized Christians in Jerusalem from the day of Pentecost onward loved their neighbours' children as much as their own. As result they were so mindful that their brethren did not have enough to eat that they even sold their estates and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet to be distributed according to each person's need. That showed what God had wrought in their hearts. "Oh, I wish we could arrive at that place where this church was baptized in that degree of unselfishness", exclaims Lake (cited by THE ATS TEAM, 2016).

Almost a century later, American sociologist Berger (cited by Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, 2015) echoes the above statement of Lake in the following quote: "Pentecostal people's behaviour is one of independence, entrepreneurship, good behaviour, discipline, rational outlook on work and social activities. This leads to economic growth and poverty relief." He further emphasizes the importance of considering Pentecostals as social capital because of their entrepreneurial spirit and emancipatory towards the role of a woman. In another

interview, Berger (cited by Mathewes, s.a.) states that Pentecostalism is a modernizing force and says that his argument is based on a good deal of data. It is from the foregoing perspectives that Pentecostal theology considers the Baptism in the Holy Spirit to be an integral influential factor on community transformation.

Transformational development builds on the premise that “there is no separation between religion and development” (Deneulin and Bano, 2009:4). According to Myres (1999:211-212), our understanding of religion ought to be as transformational as our understanding of development as we develop our thinking about our religious witness in the context of transformational development.

### **3.7.2 Culture**

Culture is another strong influence on community transformation. According to Gabriel (1991:4), the urgent need to understand social and cultural organisation is clearly demonstrated at present by the growing demand for adequate local participation in the design and implementation of transformational projects. The aspects of cultural values and norms most relevant to the concept of transformational development relate to the conception of the person, conceptions of ownership and wealth and appeal to spiritual power and influence (De Wet, 2011:28).

One of the core principles of traditional African culture is the principle of “humanness” commonly referred to as ubuntu; this concept is well expressed through the Xhosa saying, “Umntu ungumntu ngabanye abantu – a person is a person through other persons” (De Wet, 2011:28). Identity among Africans is understood not in relation to individuated selves and ownership, but through interaction with other persons who all participate in each other’s identities (Akrong 1999:8). As such, ownership of objects and spaces is not individuated, but held in commonwealth with others. Accordingly, this norm and value of communal ownership is strategically linked to the importance of community ownership, which is fundamental to community transformation.

The influence of culture on communities is also increasingly becoming complex as migrations of people have led to important ethnic and cultural changes in many societies (Woodhead et al., 2009:10). Maser (1997:113) too reckons that the influence of cultural diversity within communities is a force to reckon with in effective community transformation.

### 3.7.3 Population

Population is one of the most influential factors in shaping the outlook of a community. According to Milojevic (2012:2), it directly affects the size of communities, cultural pattern, and character of community activities, which directly reflect on the outer community life. The just quoted author further observes that the educational structure of population, through its working potential, is directly related to the form of economic activity and social superstructure of a community.

On a broader framework, Collier (2007:70-71) writes that along with secondary education, a society with a larger population is more likely to achieve a sustained economic turnaround. Some of the reasons cited by the just quoted author are, the larger the population the more human capital and probably higher proportion of people with the prerequisite knowledge such as have attained at least secondary education. Said another way, communities need a critical mass of educated people in order to work out and implement a transformation strategy. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2013:9), improving the health and education of the population is vital for enhancing the human capacities for implementation of the transformation agenda. Seen from the foregoing perspective, the size of the population does influence significantly the economic growth and consequent transformation of a community.

Population increase is also associated with various transformational challenges. As a practical example, Kirk (2016) writes that Africa is currently the world's fastest growing continent, with GDP expected to grow by at least six per cent annually until 2023. The just quoted source, however, observes that while nations such as Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt enjoy relative wealth, the continent is home to three quarters of the world's poorest countries. Clos (cited by Kirk, 2016) states that "The overarching challenge for Africa in the decades to come is massive population growth in a context of widespread poverty that, in combination, generate complex and interrelated threats to the human habitat." Such an increase in population will pose significant challenges like poverty, conflict, disease, and access to education. It is, therefore, critical for a society to be able to translate its population growth into economic development and improved quality of life, otherwise, the influence of population on community transformation can be out rightly negative.

In view of the foregoing theoretical reasoning and practical illustrations, it becomes evident that the size of population can have either positive or negative influence on the

economic growth and transformation of a society, depending on circumstances and characteristics of the society's populace.

### **3.7.4 Politics**

According to the discussion on the bad governance trap, good governance and policies can help economic growth, but there is an asymmetry in the process in the sense that there is a ceiling to feasible growth rate of about ten percent, no matter what a government can do (Collier, 2007:64). By contrast, bad governance and policies can destroy an economy with shocking speed. As such, the influence of politics on community transformation is positively minimal, but can be more damaging in the negative aspect. Said another way, politics cannot do much to bring about community transformation, but it can do much more to not bring it about. According to the just quoted author, good governance and policies can help a community to realise its opportunities, but they cannot create any where none exist. As an example, he cites that even the best governance and policies cannot turn a country like Malawi into a rich country because it just does not have the opportunities such as access to the sea, good neighbours, and valuable natural resources. Therefore, good governance and policies matter, conditional upon opportunities (Collier, 2007:65).

Bad governance and policies, on the other hand, are a huge problem in the bottom billion communities as already discussed. For instance, Collier (2007:44) writes that politics of patronage can sabotage both government and community resources when political parties, especially ruling parties, try to woo voters in the most cost effective way to them. Instead of focussing on service delivery such as infrastructure and institutional development, some politicians bribe the electorate with money and other public resources meant for economic development and not political campaigning. He further notes that the key instrument of intervention in breaking the natural resource trap in the bottom billion societies is likely to be our own laws and international norms (Collier, 2007:178). As such, community transformation can be derailed in the process.

On a broader framework, Milojevic (2012:3) writes that political decisions have changed the state borders, led to armed conflicts, displacements of demographic, economic transformation and a number of other processes that could lead societies to economic growth. Zuern (2011:137) takes a rather narrow focus of community based politics where those who frame their demands in protest often begin with and emphasise basic material necessities, but their demands also include the right to be heard, to have a

voice, to be consulted and to become full members of the political community. Such community based politics as this also tend to have a bearing on the overall outcome of a transformation process, whether negative or positive. On the other hand, a fairly favourable political situation can be a useful environment for growth and transformation (Collier, 2007:65).

It becomes apparent in the light of the above discussion that politics has a significant influence on community transformation, either positively or negatively.

### **3.8 RELEVANT ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

Since the focus and goals of the community development field have adversely changed over the past four decades or so from bottom-up and internally driven to top-down and externally driven, the need for restructured alternative approaches has become evident (Silverman, 2001a, 2003; Stoecker 1997a). Accordingly, relevant alternative approaches that are considered to be widely used at the moment are evaluated hereafter.

#### **3.8.1 Participatory Approaches**

Participatory approaches are widely accepted and used in action research for community transformation currently (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:174). It is within the participatory concept that Chambers (1992) refers to rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA), while Bhatia (1995) refers to the same concept as empowering rural appraisal (ERA). Participatory learning and action (PLA) is a related approach within participatory school of thought with the ultimate form of participation being people taking the initiative independent of outside agencies or change systems (Pretty et al., 1995:61). It is said that PLA is closer to what many practitioners of PRA believe and do, yet PRA remains the usual label (IDS, 1997:1). In what they call asset-based community development (ABCD), Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) propose a methodology that engages and builds on the strengths within the community. Facilitated participatory planning (FPP) is a more recent exclusive contribution to the participatory school of thought which involves the local community and an outsider specialist (Dodge and Bennette, 2011). Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:168) opt for

participatory rapid appraisal and planning (PRAP), which is in essence a multidimensional approach to community transformation and the methodology of which embraces all other methodologies mentioned above. As such, what applies to PRAP will generally be treated as participatory approaches in this study because that is how its duo architects actually treat it as well (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:174).

Out of the extensive range of participatory approaches that are widely accepted, the researcher will give preference to those that are relevant to this study. It is, nevertheless, imperative to highlight the general guiding principles as well as advantages and limitations of participatory approaches before going on to evaluate the preferred approaches for this study.

### **3.8.1.1 General Guiding Principles for Participatory Approaches**

The guiding principles for community development facilitators who engage the community in participatory approaches include informed and voluntary consent, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, and do no harm (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:168-169). Chambers (1992:7) identifies the following principles as also pertaining to participatory practices:

- i. *Optimising trade-offs*: this has twofold meaning: optimal ignorance – knowing what is not worth knowing, and appropriate impression – not measuring more precisely than needed.
- ii. *Offsetting biases*: by being relaxed and not rushing, listening, etc., biases are neutralized.
- iii. *Learning from and with rural people*: having first hand access to technical, physical, social knowledge of a community will give clear insight into local perception.
- iv. *Learning rapidly and progressively*: not to allow blueprint program but rather a learning and adaptive approach.
- v. *Triangulation*: verifying data by cross-checking.
- vi. *Planning with people*: strengthens collaboration with outside agencies and affirmation of community ownership.

### **3.8.1.2 Advantages of Participatory Approaches**

Participatory approaches have several advantages. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:27) observe that empowerment in this case takes place in a milieu that emphasizes

community knowledge resources, self-reliance, initiative, and decision-making. The following are equally significant advantages of participatory approaches according to Selener et al. (1999:4-5):

- i. *Community mobilization*: empowers communities to solve identified problems.
- ii. *Use of visual techniques*: the techniques used assist in information gathering in a way activates and gives control to the community.
- iii. *Participatory community analysis*: identifying problems and potential solutions.
- iv. *Promoting grassroots development*: ensures that development takes place among the neediest.
- v. *Strengthening collaboration between community and external organisations*: resultant strategic partnerships contribute to sustained problem solving and community ownership of project.
- vi. *Realistic proposals*: formulation of realistic proposals must be allowed for.
- vii. *Promoting integration*: diverse groups, including women and children, become part of the process.
- viii. *Speed and low cost*: Prior training of a facilitator is probably the most expensive part of the exercise. The field work can be done in three to four days per group with insignificant resources once the initial contract is made with local power structures and their cooperation is ensured.
- ix. *Facilitators (or community development workers) wake up to a new reality*: first-hand community-based information is gathered that reduces the risk of desk-based designs and increases workability of designed projects.
- x. *The community has control over the project*: contributes to community ownership of the project.
- xi. *First-hand information*: since it is carried in and with the community, it is based on first-hand information.
- xii. *It encourages a sensitisation process*: collective memory and oral tradition of community is used as a source of information that can be systematised for future reference.

### **3.8.1.3 Limitation of Participatory Approaches and Possible Remedies**

It would not be justifiable, however, not to mention that an approach as comprehensive and flexible as participatory has its own limitations. Selener et al. (1999:6-7) list thirteen limitations of participatory approaches, but also suggests possible remedies as contained in table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 Limitations to Participatory Approaches and Possible Remedies (Selener et al., 1999:6-7)**

<b>No</b>	<b>Limitation</b>	<b>Remedies</b>
1.	Raising false expectations in communities, especially concerning financial aid.	Be open with the power structures and community members from the outset on the aims and limitations of the implementing agency
2.	Correct identification of problems and the design of feasible solutions do not automatically guarantee successful action.	The implementing agency must provide dedicated and well trained staff that can provide the motivation through proper communication with participants
3.	Some information gained can be superficial and even false.	A variety of participatory techniques must be used in order to validate information. Prior knowledge can also be used as a benchmark.
4.	The speed of the participatory the process can leave insufficient time for establishing the necessary trust between the facilitator-researcher and the community.	Openness and honesty from the implementing agency generating goodwill and political commitment from the power structures must be aimed at from the start.
5.	Individual interpretations and analysis may be lost during group discussions.	A selected number of open-ended interviews with key members of the community will overcome this limitation.
6.	Lack of experience by the facilitator-researcher may result in him/her doing the participatory process for, and not with the group.	Selection of staff with the correct empathetic attitude and intensive training.
7.	Very little experience exists in replicating the success achieved at community level at regional and	Phased implementation, starting with a pilot project.

	provincial levels.	
8.	Language and cultural differences can result in communication problems.	Facilitators should be from the area, understanding the language and culture. Trainers of the facilitators will include individuals with knowledge of local language and culture.
9.	Speed of the process can affect the quality of participation and inputs from the community.	Qualified and experienced facilitators will know when to halt the process and review proceedings to catch up if any 'losses' in quality.
10.	Some communities are simply not interested or have other more pressing issues to address.	The 'target' communities have something to gain from success. This will be communicated to them in dear terms.
11.	An 'outsider' (agency or person) may 'steal' the information and use it for their benefit (e.g. for writing thesis).	The implementing agency must make a specific decision on this issue and negotiate the need for further use of the information with the power structures
12.	Uneven representation or lack of representation of some groups in the community may occur.	The facilitator should actively endeavour to include all identified groups.
13.	Using several methods of analysis or indicators may confuse the understanding by community members of the issues at stake.	The issues are clearly focused and should not contribute to misunderstanding. The facilitator should be sensitive to the groups' reaction and 'body language'.

Action research through participatory approaches is used in various types of projects according to Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:174). In Botswana, for instance, the Kuru Development trust uses this approach to establish a rural finance scheme under the

participant San communities (Dekker, 2002). According to Light-foot et al., (1994:22), “dramatic results” were achieved in rural biological resource recycling exercise in the Philippines using PRAP approach. The utilization of PRA in a Ugandan primary health care project resulted, inter alia, in the local people being able to assess their own situation and mapping out strategies for improvement (Osuga and Mutayisa, 1995).

The importance of action research using participatory methods can be illustrated by the case study of the failed immunization project aimed at infants in Somalia earlier mentioned under section 3.5.2 of this chapter. According to La Fond (1992:22-26), no effort was made throughout the program to assess community needs or attitudes towards immunization. As a result, the project failed because the local people participated in the program not as the subject but as the object of development efforts.

The central theme of all participatory approaches is participation.

#### **3.8.1.4 Participation**

Participation is the central concept and foundational principal of community transformation (Tesoriero, 2010:144). Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985:223) write that “before action can take place, it must be approved or legitimated by those holding such power in the village, or the group, or the local system, whatever we may call it”. To bypass such leaders may cause opposition and may result in the failure of the program. Research undertaken in the reasons for the failure of an immunisation program aimed at infants in Somalia revealed that one of the main reasons for the failure was that no effort was made throughout the program to include the local people (La Fond, 1992:6-7). In other words the community participated in the program as the object rather than the subject of transformation.

The meaning of participation is, however, difficult to readily understand or identify (Bryson and Mowbray, 1981; Pateman, 1970; Plant, 1974). Uphoff and Cohen’s (1979) emphasis on participation is people having a role in decision-making, whereas Pearse and Stifel (quoted by Kannan, 2002) focus on the inclusion people who are usually excluded from having control over resources and institutions. Paul (quoted by Kannan, 2002) argues that it must include the ability for people to influence activities in ways that will enhance their well-being. Gahi (quoted by Kannan, 2002) takes a rather apologetic stance by framing participation as an empowering process undertaken by the excluded in recognition of power differentials among groups in society. The various meanings of

participation are, therefore, attached to the different interests and agents at play in the life of the community and political decision-making according to Tesoriero (2010:145).

Without community participation, the transformation process usually takes a top-bottom or hierarchical approach instead of a bottom-up process, making transformation impossible or creating what Dodge and Bennette (2011:5) refer to as the “closed loop”.

Excluding the local community from planning means that the people who are directly affected by, and implementers of, the plan are left out of the process and do not own the decision. Dodge and Bennette (2011:5) refer to this as the “own-do gap” caused by failure to involve the people who will implement the program. In more direct terms it simply means that the one who owns the decision will do the project. Consequently, the own-do gap breeds resistance from the community and the entire project is ultimately stalled. “Putting the last first” (Chambers, 1983) or “putting people first” (Cernea, 1991) means recognition of the need to give priority to the basic element in any development activity or community transformation, that is, the local people themselves.

Features of any definition of transformational development must include the questions for whom the change or growth is intended, and how it is to be implemented (Gabriel, 1991:7). Therefore, the local people should be given priority in the planning and implementation of transformational projects in order to maximise transformative potential. This is an ideal model participation that can lead to effective community transformation.

The ideal model of participation ensures that all stakeholders are involved in the planning and that the people directly affected by the plan and those who will implement it also participate in its formulation. All stakeholders come together to brainstorm ideas that are progressively and systematically consolidated into a plan. In the process, conflicts are dealt with and problems and potential solutions are also identified (Selener et al., 1999:4-5). The facilitator or external expert is in this case an outsider specialist who is involved to enable the stakeholders to maximise their performance and optimise results.

### **3.8.2 Preferred Approaches for this Research**

The preferred approaches for this study are facilitated participatory planning (FPP) and asset-based community development (ABCD) because of the reasons given in the discussions of respective approaches.

#### **3.8.2.1 Facilitated Participatory Planning (FPP)**

With due respect to other participatory approaches, FPP is a preference for this study because it simplifies a task like that of the Sesheke Church with three distinctive features (Dodge and Bennette, 2011:8). First, it maximises brain power by involving all stakeholders in the planning process. Second, it gets the best out of them by engaging a professional facilitator (external specialist), and third, it reveals and resolves complex issues by asking incremental questions.

Facilitated participatory planning (FPP) occurs when a participatory transformational practice involves an outsider specialist in order to maximise the performance of local people in their own transformation as above (Dodge and Bennette (2011:8). Central and fundamental to FPP is asking incremental questions, that is, to approach, to guide, to focus, to develop, and to resolve through questions (Dodge and Bennette, 2011:45). One question at a time. Eventually, the group develops a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and log-frame without jargon or high-powered terminology. This in turn assures greater understanding, easier implementation, clearer monitoring, and sustainability. All of these aspects are spread across the whole group rather than concentrated with a consultant or someone trained in log-frame preparation.

#### **a) Limitations to FPP and Possible Remedies**

One of the major weaknesses of FPP is that it can bring out power relations in a very immediate way and places the external expert in a position to determine what information is being sought, from whom and what it will be used for, while the informants decide how much information to disclose (Jabeen, 2006:4). If the aim is to foster socio-economic intervention, then the investigation should always seek to “empower those providing the information by prompting them to reflect and analyse their own experience” (Woodhouse, 1998:127). Many other participatory methods like participatory rural appraisal (PRA) are often used with groups in a public forum with the

aim of assisting all members of the group to contribute to a consensus of responses to the research question posed (Woodhouse, 1998:143), which moves towards the people's empowerment.

In the case of Sesheke Church's transformational task, the external expert, EFZ seems to have played a central and predetermined role. Not only did the Sesheke church not experience the opportunity to participate in the planning, but at the same time they also did not give the rest of the community an opportunity to participate. The question is whether this could be one of the major reasons for the unsuccessful nature of the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

### **3.8.2.2 Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach**

Asset-based community development (ABCD) is equally preferred for this research because it is custom designed for small communities such as Sesheke community and with great detail (Kretzmann, 2009; United For Sight, 2015). ABCD is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities that builds on the strengths, resources and potentials within a community (Kretzmann and MacKnight, 1993). It is an alternative approach to community development that starts with what is present in a community, such as the capacities and assets of local individuals, associations, and institutions, rather than with what is deficient in a community and what a community's needs are (Keeble, 2006:13). "Asset" in this case means any factor or resource which enhances the ability of individuals, communities and populations to maintain and sustain their well-being (Foot and Hopkins, 2010). These assets can operate at the level of the individual, family or community as protective and promoting factors to cushion against life's challenges. It is necessary at this stage to highlight some key community assets as follows (Foot and Hopkins, 2010:7):

- i. Practical skills, capacity and knowledge of local residents.
- ii. Passions and interests of local residents that give them energy for change.
- iii. Networks and connections – known as social capital – in a community, including friendships and neighbourliness.
- iv. Effectiveness of local community and voluntary associations.
- v. Resources of public, private and third sector organisations that are available to support a community.
- vi. Natural and economic resources of a place that enhance well-being.

Asset Based Community Development is an approach based on the principle of identifying and mobilising individuals and community assets, rather than focusing on problems and needs. According to Frost (2011:2), using an ABCD approach enables communities to build on what assets they have in order to gain what they need and make improvements to their community, thereby improving their own individual and community levels of health and well-being. In their publication "A Glass Half Full", Foot and Hopkins (2010:7) argue as hereunder quoted:

"...as well as having needs and problems, our most marginalised communities also have **social, cultural and material assets**. Identifying and mobilising these can help them overcome the health challenges they face...The more familiar '**deficit**' approach **focuses on the problems, needs and deficiencies in a community** such as deprivation, illness and health-damaging behaviours. It designs services to fill the gaps and fix the problems. As a result, **a community can feel disempowered and dependent**; people can become passive recipients of services rather than active agents in their own and their families' lives."

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) respond with ABCD approach and discuss the downfall of a needs-based approach to community development. They observe that a needs-based approach to community development gives way to environments of service and client neighbourhoods where people are dependent on outside sources in order to sustain themselves. They discuss the inability of local people to overcome the deficiency-oriented model because the focus of service providers and institutions is on maintaining that model for their own benefit. The deficiency-oriented model causes local people to begin to view themselves in a deficient manner and leads simply to survival, not to change or development.

ABCD is a set of values and principles which promotes community development or transformation using local resources. According to Foot and Hopkins (2010) this set of values and principles comprises of the following:

- i. Identifies and makes visible the health-enhancing assets in a community
- ii. Sees citizens and communities as the co-producers of health and well-being, rather than the recipients of services
- iii. Promotes community networks, relationships and friendships that can provide caring, mutual help and empowerment
- iv. Identifies what has the potential to improve health and well-being

- v. Supports individuals' health and well-being through self-esteem, coping strategies, resilience skills, relationships, friendships, knowledge and personal resources
- vi. Empower communities to control their futures and create tangible resources such as services, funds and buildings

Each community should boast of some unique combination of assets upon which to build its future. For instance, the Christian faith community also has such assets and values as will be discussed in detail later, but can now only be summarised in Ferguson's (2005:76) statement that "God planted his reason in the universe, giving rational order to creation, and the minds of human beings, thereby inspiring philosophy, art, literature, ...". From this statement and in accordance with Grigg (2006) and Smith (2016), it can be inferred further as follows:

- i. God the creator has blessed man and the earth with possibilities and creativity.
- ii. Christians are blessed with a positive faith orientation towards the future.
- iii. Christians exhibit a loving value system that motivates toward friendship with, as well as support and appreciation of, all people.
- iv. The Christian network already has, at grassroots level, infrastructures, organisations, and influence.

All community assets in terms of values, strengths, and opportunities should be taken into consideration when undertaking a community transformation project. According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993:4), a thorough map of a community's assets should begin with an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of the community's residents. In what they refer to as capacity map-making, the dual write that an inventory conducted on household by household, building by building, block by block, will lead to the discovery of a vast and often surprising array of individual talents and productive skills, few of which are mobilized and utilised for community transformation. This basic truth about the giftedness of every individual and community is important to persons and communities that often find themselves marginalized and deprived.

#### **a) Strengths and Weaknesses of ABCD Approach.**

Just like any other approach, ABCD not only has strengths, but also weaknesses. Mathie and Cunningham (2003) identify several weaknesses in the successful implementation of ABCD principles, ideas, and strategies. Firstly, ABCD fails to address clearly what exactly the role of external organisations and agencies should be

in the community development process and how their role can avoid encouraging dependency among community members. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) briefly discuss the role of outside organisations, but the topic requires more elaboration and thought according to Mathie and Cunningham (2003). Second, the ABCD fails to deal effectively with unequal power relations such as those that negatively affect women and low-income individuals (Foster and Mathie, 2001; Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). By not addressing the disparities among community members that prevent empowerment among them, groups like women and low-income individuals are left out of the democratic process. According to the just cited authors, this approach does not also adequately address how to foster community leadership in varying settings or how to approach a situation in which there is a lack of a favourable environment in which to enact ABCD strategies.

The above critique proposes valid questions for and weaknesses of the ABCD approach in a clear format. Keeble (2006:16), however, states that the above critique rather eliminates biases than devalues ABCD as the critiques' support for ABCD approach is evident throughout the rest of their article. The critique should be seen as a positive one because it is meant to provide a well-rounded article. For instance, Peterman (2000) also talks about power issues in the community development process. He discusses race issues in relation to community development and revitalization. Poor minority households are often stuck in neighbourhoods plagued by discrimination, disinvestments, increasing levels of poverty, and decreasing opportunities, which makes it harder for these communities to foster and promote action and change. Such communities are often overlooked in discussions about community development. Mathie and Cunningham (2003) discuss areas of research and practice that have similar ideas to ABCD as well as challenges that ABCD faces in implementing its practices successfully. By talking about different community development approaches that have similar views as ABCD, readers are able to see how ABCD principles are effectively applied in different situation in somewhat different manners. As Keeble (2006:17) writes, this strengthens the reliability and validity of ABCD approaches.

From a global perspective, some critiques of ABCD have challenged that it is a "militantly localist set of ideas" which fails to address the macro challenges of distributive justice or power lodged in bigger systems (United for Sight, 2015). In response to this critique, Kretzmann (2009) admits that ABCD approach is a necessary but not sufficient approach to address larger-scale issues. He nevertheless states that

the process of strategizing with an inclusive outlook involving representatives on the block or village level in the decision-making process is what needs to be integrated into projects and policies of larger magnitudes. His defence is supported by Woodhead et al. (2009:22-23) and Burns and Groove (2009:29) as cited in chapters one and two respectively. Accordingly, understanding a phenomenon in its context makes it rather easier to understand phenomena in other similar situations. While it may be admittedly difficult to demonstrate clearly how ABCD can be implemented on a broader spectrum such as in breaking the development traps earlier discussed, it is obviously in agreement with Collier's (2007:9, 71) view that change in the societies at the very bottom must come predominantly from within the affected societies themselves.

Identification and development of local resources such as discussed in this section can create great potential for positive and sustainable long term community transformation.

### **3.9 INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER THREE**

This chapter has dealt with the interpretive task with regard to the transformational task of the church in Sesheke. Accordingly, the researcher conducted detailed literature research in the relevant fields in order to understand what an interpretive research in a larger framework can contribute with regard to the transformational task of the church in Sesheke. Community transformation is about meeting the affected people's concrete felt needs and, therefore, the local people should participate fully in their transformation process, with external experts and organisations playing a minimal facilitating role. It is a process that requires deep change and the impetus for this change must come from within the local community itself. The local church is a major stakeholder in community transformation because Christianity itself is responsible for the way society is organised and religion as a whole is concerned with matters of human well-being, the good life, and good society. The Holy Spirit also empowers Christians to be selfless and care for those in need and this leads to economic relief.

Two classical theories have been evaluated on the basis of their relevance to this research and understanding of community transformation. Modernization theory focusses on an internal process that a typical African community must undergo in order to succeed in generating and sustaining a process of economic growth and also entails the abandonment of culture and change in broader values of the African people.

Dependency theory in essence exhibits a top-down approach as it assumes that the local people do not have the expertise to fight out of poverty. Of great importance is the observation that these classical theories have not been effective in resolving African problems of poverty and underdevelopment. The key to transformation of the poorest communities is economic growth and the key to economic growth is investment.

Two alternative approaches – FPP and ABCD – were preferred for this research because FPP distinctively simplifies a task like that of Sesheke church, while ABCD is also designed for small communities like Sesheke and builds on what is present in the local community in order to bring about growth and transformation. Participation is central to all the relevant alternative approaches to community transformation. Empowerment as well as effective planning and implementation are equally prerequisites for sustainable community transformation.

The most fundamental characteristic of community transformation is that it follows an integrated approach to the problems of poverty and underdevelopment in an attempt to eradicate poverty. Any analysis of community transformation should take into consideration the macro-social forces and traditions, experiences, and identities that are at play within a community. Three of the four barriers to transformation in the African context identified by the interpretive task in this chapter relate directly to the country of Zambia and consequently to the Sesheke Church area. These are, natural resource abundance, being landlocked, and bad governance. Without demeaning the negative effects of all other barriers to transformation in the African context, it is worthy highlighting that the real issue with the bottom billion communities, of which Sesheke is one, is bad governance because it can destroy an economy at unprecedented rates.

As part of the solution, external aid should supplement local efforts and must be handled in such a way that it does not disempower the local community and cause dependency. It is important for organisations such as the church to have the necessary skills and understanding of working with donors from a broader perspective when engaging in community transformational projects. Development aid is preferred to direct support for consumption.

The next chapter will look at the normative task with regard to the Sesheke church's transformational task.

## CHAPTER 4

### NORMATIVE TASK WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SESHEKE CHURCH'S TRANSFORMATIONAL TASK

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The normative task in this chapter is to understand from Scripture, principles that can be used as normative guidelines for the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area. The researcher will, therefore, investigate the theological aspects concerning transformation that can be applied by churches and Christian organisations, especially in Africa. This will be done by means of exegesis and research of relevant theological literature. As earlier indicated in chapter 1 (1.5) the two Scripture portions that will be employed to comply with this task are Matthew 5:13-16 and Matthew 25:35-40. Hermeneutics of these portions of Scripture will be done in accordance with the historical-grammatical exegesis model. The Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on semantic domains of Louw and Nida (1988), Bible commentaries and other theological books which relate to the specific Scripture portions will be used.

The normative task in this case will be considered in the relevant aspects of its three basic dimensions, namely theological interpretation, good practice, and ethical reflection (Osmer, 2008:161).

#### 4.2 THE THEORY AND PURPOSE OF THE NORMATIVE TASK

The theory of the normative task dates as way back as the prophetic era of the Bible. Hence Osmer (2008:129) refers to this task as prophetic discernment. He argues that while it is absolutely true that the prophetic office is grounded in divine disclosure, it is also clear that the prophets played an active role in shaping the message they delivered by drawing on particular theological traditions in Israel to address specific social conditions, events, and decisions (Osmer, 2008:133). His argument seems to stem directly from Heschel's (1962:2) long time observation that "The prophets ... did not simply absorb the contents of inspiration, they also claimed to understand its meaning, and sort to bring such meaning into coherence with other knowledge they possessed." In the New Testament, Christ is portrayed similar to the prophets of old, announcing God's word to the people. Moreover, he is not merely a messenger of God's word, but

he is God's Word himself. Therefore, the purpose of the normative task is to listen to this Word and interpret it in ways that address particular social conditions, events, and decisions (Osmer, 2008:135).

#### **4.3 THE AUTHORITY AND USE OF THE BIBLE**

As earlier stated in chapter one, the conceptual framework guiding this study is based on a Reformational perspective whereby the Bible is believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit according to 2 Timothy 3:16 and, therefore, accepted as the authoritative Word of God (De Klerk & De Wet, 2013:300; De Klerk & Van Rensburg, 2005:3). The early Christian church recognised the thirty nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty seven books of the New Testament as we now have them as inspired by God and thus authoritative (De Klerk and Van Rensburg, 2005:4). Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 3:16,17 in this regard is particularly cited that "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (Revised Standard Version – RSV).

The Bible is first of all the book of God, but also the book of man (Hattingh, s.a.:5-6). It is the book of God because it is inspired by the Holy Spirit and concerned with God's word and the things he has done for man. It is also the book of man because God inspired people through the Holy Spirit and thus made them co-authors with himself. It is also about people grappling with life's problems as they are portrayed not only in their weakness and sin, but also in their spiritual victory. Although inspired by God, the Bible writers also wrote from the vantage point of their own background and experiences, which is God's own preferred way of working with humans. According to the just cited source, it is prudent to adhere to this bipolar nature of the Bible for its full understanding and benefits.

In view of the above nature and authority of the Bible, the researcher will not act as if he were the first person to read the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but will consult written accounts of other gifted people who have earlier committed themselves to the same endeavour in order to validate his own understanding. It is equally prudent to prayerfully study the whole Bible to determine whether other portions of Scripture do shed light on the pericope that is being studied. Therefore, the following conditions for

the practical recognition of the authority and use of the Bible according to De Klerk and Van Rensburg (2005:9) hereby apply:

- i. Try one's level best to clearly and logically establish and state his own presuppositions regarding the authority of Scripture.
- ii. Acknowledge that he stands in a particular theological tradition and that his interpretation is influenced by such a tradition.
- iii. Consciously take into consideration that a particular portion of Scripture was written in a particular time, and that there were concrete factors on which human level necessitated and influenced its writing.
- iv. Constantly recognise that our own time with its problems tend to influence our reading of the Bible and that portions of Scripture for specific problems in the earlier times can now also shed light on other problems, though often in a completely different way.
- v. Keep on professing that God uses the Bible to reveal himself and his will to us.

It is against the foregoing backdrop that the authority and use of the Bible is obligatory in this research.

#### **4.4 THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION**

Theological interpretation is the use of theological concepts to interpret episodes, situations, and contexts, informed by a theory of both divine and human actions (Osmer, 2008:161). Accordingly, the researcher will do exegesis of the two selected portions of Scripture for this study using the historical-grammatical exegesis method.

##### **4.4.1 Social-Historical Background of the Gospel According to Matthew**

The book of Matthew is one of the four Gospels together with Mark, Luke, and John and among the three synoptic gospels alongside Mark and Luke (Adeyemo, 2006:1105). Although some scholars express anonymity concerning its authorship (Douglas and Tenney, 1987:630), most scholars and commentaries, however, attribute the authorship of this book to Matthew himself (Adeyemo, 2006:1105; Douglas and Tenney, 1987:630-632; Hale, 2000:67; Manser, 2010:1389). Matthew's dependence on Mark for about one third of his account (Hale, 2000:66) and failure to mention the destruction of

Jerusalem, especially in connection with Jesus' prediction of that event in chapter twenty four, suggests that the book was written shortly before A.D. 70.

Matthew was a Jew by birth and tax collector by profession until Jesus Christ called him to be his disciple and became one of those who accompanied him all throughout the time that the Lord Jesus travelled about with his disciples "beginning from the baptism of John until the day Jesus was taken up ... to heaven" (Acts 1:21-22 – RSV). He is, therefore, a credible witness of what he recorded. According to the Africa Bible Commentary (Adeyemo, 2006:1105) and the New Matthew Henry Commentary (Manser, 2010:1139), Matthew is concerned with Jesus' teaching and his Jewish background and his target readers are the Jewish community. Hale (2000:67) writes that throughout this gospel Matthew shows how the prophecies of the Old Testament, the Jewish Scriptures, were fulfilled in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

As with other parts of the New Testament, the Gospel according to Matthew was undoubtedly written in Greek, a language that was not distinctive to the Jews, whose church and state were near an end, but one that was common to the world and in which the knowledge of Christ would be most effectively transmitted to the nations of the earth (Manser, 2010:1389). According to Adeyemo (2006:1105), Mathew's Gospel is a teaching gospel par excellence comprising five great blocks that are divided by narratives about the ministry activities of Jesus. These are: the Sermon on the Mount or the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-7:29), the mission of the Twelve (Matthew 9:35-10:42), the community of the kingdom (Matthew 13:1-52), the parables of the kingdom (Matthew 18:1-35), and finally the woes of legalistic religion and the signs of the end (Matthew 23:1-26:25). The just quoted source also points out that Matthew's Gospel has many lessons to teach Africa today including leadership, the importance of Christian mission, community life, Christian values, and the cost of discipleship.

#### **4.4.2 Background and Context of Matthew 5:13-16**

The foregoing pericope is part of Matthew's first teaching block containing the beatitudes or the Sermon on the Mount. According to the New Matthew Henry Commentary (Manser, 2010:1407), chapters 5 to 7 of the Gospel according to Matthew are a sermon, the Sermon on the Mount. After the circumstances of the sermon are explained in verses 1 and 2, the sermon itself follows. Hale (2012:159) writes that on this occasion Jesus spoke mainly to his twelve disciples, but crowds of other people

listened and were amazed at his teaching (7:28). In the sermon Jesus sets out guiding principles of how his disciples should live. According to the Africa Bible Commentary (Adeyemo, 2006:1117) the beatitudes do not imply a passive reception of God's approval. They are congratulatory exclamations of the blessedness that results from the cultivation of certain attributes that are approved by God.

The scope of the Sermon on the Mount is not to fill our minds with ideas, but to guide and regulate our practice (Manser, 2010:1407). Accordingly, Jesus proposes blessedness as the purpose and shows the character of those who are eligible to blessedness in eight beatitudes, which may justly be called paradoxes (verses 3-12). Then he prescribes duty as the way to blessedness and establishes rules for the desired duty. He does this by directing his disciples to understand who they are – the salt of the earth and the light of the world (verses 13-16) and that they have to be governed by moral law. The disciples who possess and exhibit the qualities described in Chapter 5:1-12 do play an important role in shaping society toward moral uprightness and godliness (Adeyemo, 2006:119-1120). Newman and Stine (1988:121) also observe that there is a formal connection between this passage and beatitudes by the continuing use of “you” introduced in verses 11-12.

#### **4.4.3 Exegesis of Matthew 5:13-16**

*“You are the salt for the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden underfoot by men.*

*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”* (RSV).

##### **4.4.3.1 The Use of Metaphors**

Salt and light are herein used as metaphors or figures of speech. “All language is governed by law; but, in order to increase the power of a word, or the force of an expression, these laws are designedly departed from, and words and sentences are thrown into, and used in, new forms, or figures.” (Bullinger, 2010:1). Shortt et al. (s.a.:2) write that it is the case of “seeing as”, rather than simply “seeing”, which can

deepen our understanding and enhance our practice. The representation referred to in the metaphor may not lie upon the surface and sometimes not be at all apparent in the language itself, but might be in the uses of the thing represented, or in the effects which it produces (Wallace, 2016:2). Accordingly, metaphors in the Bible are never used except to add force to the truth conveyed, emphasis to the statement of it, and depth to the meaning of it.

Applied to God's word or divine truths, no other branch of Bible study can be more important or offer greater promise of substantial reward than the conceptualisation of metaphors because it is "in the use of these figures that we have, as it were, the Holy Spirit's own markings of our Bibles" (Bullinger, 2010:2). Hence the just cited author is of the view that conceptualising the use of metaphors lies at the very root of all translation and is key to true interpretation.

In order to understand the metaphors of salt and light as used in Matthew 5:13-16, it is important to precede by discussing the relevant key words.

#### **4.4.3.2 Verse 13: ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς**

The possible semantic meaning of the above Greek words is: you are the salt of the earth (Louw and Nida, 1988:52). 'ἅλας' is salt . According to Newman and Stine (1988:122), the most likely meaning of the salt metaphor in this context is that the disciples are supposed to preserve or save the earth as salt preserves food. The just quoted co-authors offer a more comprehensive three stand deduction of this metaphorical admonition as follows: First, it is better to regard the figure of salt as referring to preservation of food than to improving the taste, although both may apply. Second, Jesus is saying that his disciples are the people who possess the spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and way of life required to preserve this world in a proper condition, not the religious leaders or government officials. Third, he is warning his followers against useless discipleship, one that is weak or diluted so that it is no longer ineffective.

This effectiveness and impact which is express by the metaphorical use of salt cannot be separated from Jesus promises of empowerment made to these "salt" followers before he left according to Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is an integral part of being salt of the earth and light of the world.

The Greek form for salt in the context of Matthew 5:13 is also metaphorically used to mean wisdom – "the salt of wisdom and prudence" (Black and Rowley, 1982:776;

Perschbacher, 2001:14). Commenting on the same text in his work on the Africa Bible Commentary as general editor, Adeyemo (2006:1119-1120) writes that Christians, like salt which purifies, preserves, and enhances flavour of food, should preserve society and make the earth a better and more wholesome place.

#### **4.4.3.3 Verse 13: μωρανθῆ**

The above Greek word found in the Bible text in relation to the salt metaphor means “lost its taste” (Louw and Nida, 1988:122). It stems from ‘μωραίνω’, a causative derivation of ‘μωρία’, which literally means ‘foolishness’ (Louw and Nida, 1988:388). By implication, it is to cause the content of certain thoughts to be devoid of meaning or “to cause to become nonsense”. Perschbacher (2001:280) also writes that the metaphorical use of salt that has lost its taste in this context means “to be foolish”.

It is admittedly difficult to establish how salt can lose its taste because salt that is used for food (sodium chloride) as we know it does not lose its taste or saltiness even if unused for a long period of time (Louw and Nida, 1988:52; Newman and Stine, 1988:122; Adeyemo (2006:1120)). It is, therefore, important to explain the basis for this biblical statement concerning salt losing its taste, otherwise, the parable may appear to be either meaningless or misleading (Louw and Nida (1988:52). The just cited co-authors explain that what was often sold as salt in the ancient world was highly adulterated and the sodium chloride could leach out in humid weather, in which case the residue (normally a form of lime) would be useless. Adeyemo (2006:1120) also writes that ordinary sodium chloride or common salt as we know it cannot lose its taste or saltiness, but the salt used in the first century Palestine could. He likens it to the cibwa salt produced in the villages of Mpika District in northern Zambia, which is made by burning a special kind of grass that grows in the Lwitikila Salt Pans. Then water is filtered through the ashes and the compound is left in the heat of the sun to dry. If the resultant ball of salt is exposed to water such as rain, the salt can leach out and the ball would lose its saltiness and become worthless.

The expression of salt losing its taste must refer to the salt being diluted or somehow mixed with other substances in such a way that it becomes ineffective (Newman and Stine, 1988:122). Douglas and Tenney (1987:658) also write that under any condition salt would remain salt, but if it is contaminated with other salts such as magnesium chloride or sulphate, these salts would attract moisture which in due course would leach away the salt, leaving behind less soluble contaminants. The remaining salt in this case

would be of much poorer quality. According to the just quoted co-authors, Jesus hereby uses the analogy of salt losing its taste to warn his disciples against losing that which makes them relevant and distinct.

#### **4.4.3.4 Verse 14: ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου**

The possible semantic meaning of the above Greek statement is “you are the light of the world” (Louw and Nida, 1988:343). “τὸ φῶς” is “the light”. The statement is used idiomatically and literally pertains to being known widely. Hence the association of “A city set on a hill cannot be hid” in the contextual biblical text. According to Newman and Stine (1988:123) and Manser (2010:1410), the disciples are set up as lights to illuminate the world and show others the way to God. The Greek lexicon (Perschbacher, 2001:434) records that the meaning of the Greek word for light ‘φῶς, φωτός, τό’ (phōs, foce) in the context of Matthew 5:14-16 is not only reflection, but also “a source or dispenser of spiritual light”. As the disciples are enlightened by Jesus Christ the true light, they are also expected to be initiators or sources of divine influence, guidance, and wholesomeness in the world because it is the nature of light to illuminate and give guidance in darkness (Adeyemo, 2006:1120).

It is evident that the aforementioned implications for the disciples to be like salt are also possible for the disciples being like the light for the whole world (Black and Rowley, 1982:776; Manser, 2010:1410). The just cited sources hypothesises that Jesus actually construed a double parable here to emphasise the same thing.

#### **4.4.3.5 Verse 16: τὰ καλὰ ἔργα**

The above Greek term for “good works” according to Louw and Nida (1988:129) might mean “good (moral), good (value), advantageous, fitting, beautiful”, or “important”. Here in verse sixteen the focus shifts from the character of the disciples as salt and light to their good works which result from this good character. According to Newman and Stine (1988:125), the Greek noun construction for “your good works” in the Revised Standard Version can also be represented as a verb construction in Today’s English Version: “the good things you do”. The duo further highlight that these good things expected to be done by the disciples may be characterised as deeds of mercy and reconciliation. They state that this conclusion is supported by both the Gospel of Matthew itself according to chapter 5:38-48 and chapter 25:31-46 and the Jewish conception of good works.

The concept of good things in the Bible is linked to what is good for God, especially that which is good in God's revelation in Christ Jesus. In James 1:17 the Bible states that "Every good endowment and every perfect gift" is from God (RSV). According to Manser (2010:2212), it means that God is the source of all good things. We have nothing good, therefore, except that which we receive from God. Commenting on the same portion Scripture, Hale (2012:936) states that God only draws people to do good. Jesus the Good Shepherd (John 10:11-12) lays down his life for the sheep because he is concerned about their well-being (Hale, 2012:405). It is only in him that we receive all the good things from God and have all our needs met in accordance with Roman 8:32 and Philippians 4:19 respectively.

In Matthew 6:11 Jesus taught his disciple to ask God for their daily bread. Commenting on this Scripture portion, both Manser (2010:1418) and Adeyemo (2006:1122) are of the opinion that we are supposed to ask God for the necessary supports and comforts of this present life as well because our natural existence is necessary for our spiritual well-being in this world. In the same context Manser goes on to say that the term "Give us" implies giving not only to a single person, but also to others and that this teaches us kindness and a compassionate concern for the poor and needy. Matthew 25:40 clearly reveals that doing such good things to others equals do so to Christ himself.

#### **4.4.3.6 Verse 16: δοξάσωσιν τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς**

δοξάσωσιν – give glory, from δόξα, ης – splendour, brightness, amazing might, praise, honour, greatness (Louw and Nida, 1988:66). 'δοξάζω' is another related word and it means "to speak of something as being unusually fine and deserving honour, to praise, glorify, praise" (Louw and Nida, 1988:430). Newman and Stine (1988:125) write that the expression clearly means "give praise to" and by implication "men will see the good things you do and therefore praise your Father in heaven". The duo further state that if there is not a good way of saying "give glory to" or "praise" in a language, it may be necessary to say "so that men will say good things about (or, honour) your Father in heaven".

It was a general concept in the Old Testament that God's people would live in such a way that nations would see it and come to glorify him. For instance, Newman and Stine (1988:125) observe that the thought in Matthew 5:16 is parallel to that which is found in Isaiah 49:3 where God is to be "glorified" because of his servant Israel. With obvious reference to Psalms 112:9 and Isaiah 55:10, Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:8-12 emphasises

the point that good works done to other people, that is material good, will cause thanksgiving to God. Commenting on Paul's statement, both Adeyemo (2006:1407-1408) and Hale (2012:716) are of the view that God is to be glorified because of the practical outworking of the gospel in the generosity of his people towards the needs of other fellow humans. Said another way, we are to be God's helping hand, doing good works to other fellow humans on his behalf so that the broader world will give him thanks and glory.

Like the salt metaphor, the metaphor of disciples being the light of the world refers to discipleship (Newman and Stine (1988:121). The disciples are the true light and will raise admiration which belongs to the true Israel, the church of Christ, when the name of God is glorified among the gentiles (Black and Rowley, 1982:776). The New Matthew Henry Commentary (Manser, 2010:1411) states that the glory of God is the greatest thing we must aim at in everything we do in our religious faith, and the sight of Christians' good works will accomplish this by proving the world with a matter for praising God.

#### **4.4.3.7 Conclusion on Mathew 5:13-16**

Matthew 5:13-16 speaks of true discipleship. By using the metaphors of salt and light, Jesus Christ construed a double parable to illustrate and emphasise how the disciples ought to be his effective witnesses in the world. The working of the Holy Spirit is a prerequisite for effective witness of the Risen Christ. As the disciples are enlightened by Jesus Christ the true light, they are also expected to be initiators or sources of divine influence, guidance, and wholesomeness in the world by doing good works. Such good works may be characterised as deeds of mercy and reconciliation. God's goodness as revealed in Christ Jesus is the motivation for the disciples to do good works in the world and thereby glorifying our Father in heaven. As such, the two metaphors should be understood as implying a complete package of the spiritual and physical interventions by Christians in the world as centred on Jesus Christ. Glorifying God is the greatest thing Christians must aim at in everything they do, and the sight of their good works will accomplish this by proving the world with a matter for praising God. It is the calling and hallmark of Christianity and it is, therefore, normatively correct for the church, as in Sesheke, to engage in community transformation works that seek to make the lives of people more meaningful and wholesome with the overall aim of glorifying God.

#### 4.4.4 Background and Context of Matthew 25:35-40

This pericope is part of the parable of the sheep and the goats, which is strategically positioned as part of Matthew's fifth teaching block comprising of the woes of legalistic religion and the signs of the end (Adeyemo (2006:1105). According to the New Matthew Henry Commentary (Manser, 2010:1536) and Peake's Bible Commentary (Black and Rowley, 1982:794), the function of this eschatological parable is totally in the framework of what has preceded it, viz. the parables of the ten virgins and the talents which give instructions to the disciples about what is expected of them while waiting with the church for the second coming of Christ.

In the parable of the ten virgins, the church, herein represented by the ten virgins, is expected to be prepared for the return of her Bridegroom, Christ, by keeping their lamps burning with oil. Hale (2012:218) writes that "Only by the Holy Spirit will our lamps burn; only by the oil of the Holy Spirit can we be lights in the world" and he makes particular reference to Matthew 5:14 where Jesus tells his disciples that they are the light of the world. Similarly in the parable of the talents, when Christ returns, we all will be required to show how we utilised our talents and what good we have gained for our souls and done to others (Adeyemo, 2006:1163; Manser, 2010:1534). The next parable of the sheep and the goats contained in Matthew 25:31-46 is the climax of Jesus' teaching on the final judgement (Adeyemo, 2006:1164). According to Manser (2010:1536), it is actually an explanation of the foregoing parables. Jesus gives a description of what the final judgement will be like. Here again after the circumstances are explained in verses 31 and 32, the process of judgement itself follows. Christ the Judge will be like a shepherd who separates sheep, (the righteous) and goats (the unrighteous) (Manser, 2010:1536; Adeyemo, 2006:1164; Hale, 2012:220). According to the just cited sources and Newman and Stine (1988:807-808), the sole criterion for judgment in this context are the physical acts of kindness rendered to those in need. Based on this criterion, the righteous will receive their eternal inheritance while the unrighteous will receive their eternal damnation.

#### 4.4.5 Exegesis of Matthew 25:35-40

*"for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will then answer*

*him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcomed thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee? And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me'.*" (Revised Standard Version).

#### **4.4.5.1 Verse 37: οἱ δίκαιοι**

This above Greek word translates as "righteous" can have several related meanings according to Louw and Nida (1988:64). It can mean to "be put right, show to be right, acquit, set free," or "obey righteous command". Newman and Stine's (1988:808) translator's handbook on the Gospel of Matthew translates the word "righteous" as "just" and state that its clear meaning in this context is "those who have done God's will". The righteous are hereby rewarded on the basis of their physical works of love to persons in desperate need (Newman and Stine, 1988:807). The "righteous" are those people who are in a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

#### **4.4.5.2 Verse 40: τῶν ἐλαχίστων**

This Greek word means "pertaining to the lowest status, lowest, least important, last" (Louw and Nida, 1988:740). The word "least" in this context does not necessarily stand for members of one's family, but all who are like family to Jesus, even the least important ones (Newman and Stine, 1988:809). According to the just cited source, Matthew hereby clearly identifies Jesus with those persons who are suffering for whatever reason. Hence the duo cite that not only "anyone who obeys his word and does the will the Father is Jesus' brother, but also anyone who suffers and is in need". Similarly, Manser (2010:1537) writes that just as Christ makes the most of the disciple's corporal works of mercy, even so he makes the best of the weaknesses of the poor and needy, even those considered to be least important.

It is important to understand the translations of the phrases used for acts of kindness mentioned in this pericope. According to Newman and Stine (1988:807-808) the phrase "I was hungry" may be rendered more naturally as "when I was hungry" and "you gave me food" as "you gave me to eat". The phrase "gave me drink" is significant considering this text's background of a dry and hot Palestine. Giving water to a thirsty person was a special act of kindness. "Stranger" stands for anyone unknown to a person or a foreigner and "welcomed" means welcoming someone as a guest or more appropriately accepting someone as one of your own. "Naked and you clothed" me refers to giving

clothes to someone who does not have enough clothes to wear, not necessarily putting clothes on someone who is naked. “Visited” or “came to me” in this context embodies the idea of taking care of or going to see someone in need such as in hospital or prison.

The ministry of the basic needs of one’s fellow man is the only canon of judgement mentioned here according to The New Matthew Henry Commentary (Manser, 2010:1537). The just quoted source clearly states that “what is rewarded here is the relieving of the poor for Christ’s sake” and the good acts of kindness done in the name of the Lord will, therefore, be acceptable. In that case, it can be argued that a person is judged on account of his/her behaviour towards fellow humans. This pericope shades light on the significance of the corporal works of mercy rendered to fellow humans. It is through service to those who are in need that Christ himself chooses to be served.

This parable, however, should not lead us to conclude that demonstration of love to those in need will alone be enough to bring us to salvation. Adeyemo (2006:1164) rightly states that other portions of Scripture such as Matthew 10:32-33 and John 6:28-29 clearly indicate that belief and trust in Jesus Christ are also significant determinants in the judgement. The seemingly elusiveness of the text from faith in Jesus Christ and the rest of the judgement criteria found in the wider context of Scripture is justified by the fact that human behaviour towards other fellow humans is in this case regarded as the same behaviour towards Christ. Hence the emphasis, “*Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me*”. Faith in Christ should also be evident by outward actions towards fellow humans because “... we are called to respond to all human needs” (Adeyemo (2006:1164). James 2:14-17 teaches that faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by physical works of kindness to the poor and needy, is dead. As such, this eschatological portion of Scripture does not negate faith in God and the rest of judgement criteria. It rather emphasises the equivalent significance of Christian response to the plight of the poor and needy in society at the Judgement Day. It emphasises the fact that righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ results in a change of living, a definite lifestyle of love to all people in need.

#### **4.4.5.3 Conclusion on Matthew 25:35-40**

The abovementioned text emphasises that the corporal works of mercy rendered to alleviate the plight of the poor and needy are Christian distinctives, a proof of the authenticity of the grace of God through Jesus Christ and partnership in God’s kingdom. They are an extrapolation of being righteous in God’s sight. Therefore, it is normatively

correct for the church to address the plight of the poor and needy by engaging in community transformation activities that lead to a liberation praxis. By so doing they are serving Christ himself among his people.

#### **4.4.6 SUMMARY OF EXEGESES OF MATTHEW 5:13-16 AND 25:35-40**

Matthew 5:13-16 is a call to the spiritual and physical intervention by Christians in the world with an initial emphasis on their ideal character that is like salt of the earth and light of the world. Towards the end of the pericope, there is, however, a shift of focus from the good character of the disciples to the good works resulting from their good character, and this is what brings out praise to God from among other people. The good works are characterised as deeds of mercy and reconciliation. Matthew 25:35-40 poses a strong emphasis on the corporal works of mercy rendered to the poor and needy, even to the least important, as done so to Christ himself and thus as an important criterion for judgement and admission into God's kingdom.

There is a visible and direct correlation between the two pericopes, especially with regard to the good things expected to be done by the disciples in the first pericope and the corporal works of mercy emphasised in the second pericope. In fact, they are one and the same thing. Newman and Stine (1988:125) also postulate that the interpretation of the good works done by the disciples in Matthew 5:16 as deeds of mercy and reconciliation is also confirmed by Matthew 25:31-46, which is the immediate context of the second pericope. As the true preservatives (salt) of the earth and guide (light) to a lost, dying and hurting humanity, Christians are also expected to respond to all human needs as unto Christ himself as much as they wait for his return. The overall aim of Christian engagement in works of mercy and reconciliation is to glorify God

Those who are reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit are expected to do good works that glorify God and transform lives of people for the better. Myers (1999:3) writes that transformation should follow salvation of the soul in the sense that there should be transformation from, (1) lost souls to saved souls with God, (2) unjust social systems to just social relationships with community and others, and (3) a decaying creation to a sustaining world with environment. Coleman (1993:17) writes that the influence of the good news must always be on the increase in society and the church should seek to transform the total person and environment to the glory

of God. Hence Osmer (2008:161) writes that the church should also focus on good practice which involves deriving norms from good practice by exploring models of such practice in the present and past or by engaging reflexivity in transforming practice in the present.

#### **4.5 ETHICAL REFLECTION**

It is important to develop ethical principles, guidelines, and rules in the normative task of practical theological interpretation because ethical reflection with universal ethical principles allows moral communities to test their practices and norms against universal ethical principles (Osmer, 2008:49). Ethical reflection is the use of ethical principles, rules, or guidelines to guide action toward moral ends (Osmer, 2008:161). This comes close to developing the normative perspective on boundary issues that cannot be crossed by our discourse of episodes, situations, and contexts. Thompson (2010:107) writes that “when thinking about any problem it is important to start by establishing own foundational values, that is principles which you are unwilling to compromise”. Suffice it to state that this is not a matter of importing ethics into the research or problematic situation, but rather the recognition that norms and values already are a part of the research (Osmer, 2008:149). According to Browning (1991:39), the application of such norms does not only occur at the end of the research, but is present from the beginning and influences it throughout.

The basic premise of this chapter is that the most effective tool we can wield in our efforts on behalf of the needy is Biblical truth (Allen, 2004:9). When God’s Word is driving our actions, everything else will come fittingly in its time. On the other hand when we are plagued by false ideas, our best-laid plans will inevitably come to naught, for it is ideas that have the most powerful consequences. According to Vorster (2004:19) right hermeneutics of Scripture produce right answers while wrong hermeneutics produce wrong answers to ethical problems.

A critical overview of Biblical sources as discussed under 4.4 (theological interpretation) and works of renowned scholars like Calvin (1864), Coleman (1993:17), Warren (1995:221), Taylor (2000:1), etc. reveals that the propagation of the gospel does not happen in a vacuum or aside social, economic, environmental, and political situations of the people involved. Rather, it reveals that such factors as highlighted above are part

and parcel of the gospel proclamation. As such, there is need to apply Christocentric ethics in the propagation of the gospel as well. Osmer (2008:151) writes that there is an ethic of equal regard grounded in the narratives of creation and the ministry of Christ that point to the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. In the creation narratives, human beings are portrayed as created in the image of God, and are, therefore, worthy of respect in personal relationships and fair treatment in social institutions. In the narratives of Christ's ministry, he is portrayed as telling his disciples more than eight times that they ought to love their neighbours as themselves and follow the golden rule. Osmer (2008:152) concludes his section on ethical interpretation by stating that general principles like equal regard and more concrete guidelines and rules can orient leaders to the moral issues at stake in episodes, situations, and contexts. This framework forms general norms and principles that may be applied in this research as well as the criteria for selection or goals that can be attained by an acceptable alternative (Anon., 2009).

Ethical propagation of the gospel must, therefore, address both the spiritual and physical dimensions of persons and communities which, by implication, are affected in one way or another by the prevailing social, economic, environmental, and political conditions. Suffice it to mention that human life, however, is not to be equated with the abovementioned factors that affect it. For instance, environmental protection should not be done at the expense of human survival, especially in cases of extreme moral conflict (Pinstrup-Adersen and Pandya-Lorch, 1996). The higher value placed on human life and rights can be seen from the fact that God equates the corporal works of mercy rendered to fellow humans as done to himself according to Matthew 25:35-40. This is an important guiding principle for this research because it has potential to enhance or even restructure the concept of church and community transformation in Sesheke area.

#### **4.6 NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER FOUR**

The normative task of practical theological interpretation with regard to the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task has been discussed thoroughly in this chapter. Under theological interpretation, the exegeses of the two texts of Scripture guiding this research show that the church has a Biblical mandate to do good works, which may be characterised as deeds of mercy and reconciliation with God and man in Jesus Christ. By implication, the church has the mandate to engage in community

transformation activities that seek to alleviate the plight of the poor and needy with the overall aim of glorifying God. As such, the church should also focus on good practice which involves deriving norms from good practice by exploring models of such practice in the present and past or by engaging reflexivity in transforming practice in the present. It is equally important for the Sesheke Church to acknowledge the working of the Holy Spirit as an integral part of community transformation.

Ethical reflection has shown that there is an ethic of equal regard grounded in the narratives of creation and the ministry of Jesus Christ that point to the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. This is an important premise in many respects as ethical propagation of the gospel must address both the spiritual and physical dimensions of persons and communities, which are affected in one way or another by the prevailing social, economic, environmental, and political conditions. Therefore, it is correct for the church in Sesheke to engage in a community transformation task, but should establish relevant Biblical and moral basis in order to be effective.

The next chapter will deal with the pragmatic task with regard to the Sesheke church's transformational task.

## CHAPTER 5

### PRAGMATIC TASK WITH REGARD TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SESHEKE CHURCH'S TRANSFORMATIONAL TASK

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to develop specific guidelines, through critical reflection of the pragmatic task, which will be employed in order to enhance the effectiveness of the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area (Osmer, 2008:176). The guidelines result from a synthesis of the three previous tasks, namely descriptive-empirical, interpretive, and normative tasks.

#### 5.2 SPECIFIC GUIDELINES TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS OF SESHEKE CHURCH'S TRANSFORMATIONAL TASK

The results of the synthesis of the preceding three tasks of this research are divided into four (4) themes with thirty one (31) sub-themes as contained in table 5.1 below. These themes and sub-themes are the specific guidelines that will enhance the effectiveness of Sesheke church's transformational task.

**Table 5.1 Synopsis of the Guidelines**

No	Theme	Sub-theme
1	Understand community transformation	1.1 Ensure full community participation throughout.  1.1.1 Emphasise change from within  1.2 Identify community concrete felt needs  1.2.1 Human survival is the real need  1.3 Employ a holistic and integrated approach

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.4 Empower local communities</li> <li>1.5 Ensure sustainability of transformational projects</li> <li>1.6 Effective planning and implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.6.1 Community research</li> </ul> </li> <li>1.7 Ethical implications</li> </ul>
2	Identify local barriers to transformation and possible remedies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 A larger part of the population without the necessary education</li> <li>2.2 Cultural and language barriers</li> <li>2.3 Accessibility of communities</li> <li>2.4 Natural resource abundance trap (Dutch disease or natural resource curse)</li> <li>2.5 Being landlocked</li> <li>2.6 Bad governance</li> </ul>
3	Identify areas of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Church and other faith based organisations</li> <li>3.2 Cultural linkages</li> <li>3.3 Politics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.3.1 Government politics</li> <li>3.3.2 Community based politics</li> <li>3.3.3 Church politics</li> </ul> </li> <li>3.4 External aid agencies or donors</li> </ul>

4	Utilise local resources	5.1 Community audit 5.1.1 Local capacity building 5.1.2 Farming 5.1.3 The local church 5.2 Place for aid 5.2.1 Education across all sectors of society 5.2.2 Access to health services for all communities 5.2.3 Transport and communication
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Hereafter is a detailed discussion of the tabulated guidelines and respective sub-guidelines.

### **5.2.1 UNDERSTAND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION**

One of the main reasons the Sesheke Church failed at its transformational task as illustrated through the descriptive empirical task is lack of skills and understanding of the transformational task. Said another way, the church ventured into what they did not understand yet. This need for proper skills and understanding of the transformational task is further validated in the interpretive and normative tasks accordingly. The interpretive task shows that the meaning of a transformational task is tied to the concrete felt needs of the particular community (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:47). It is a process requiring deep change in a society's systemic characteristics, that is economic, cultural, technological, and political restructuring to meet ongoing challenges (UNESCO, 2014).

As contained in the problem statement of this study in chapter one, transformation for the people of Sesheke involves, among others, alleviating the plight of the poor and less

privileged people. This is in accordance with the Biblical instruction to attend to the needs of the vulnerable and less privileged people in society as revealed by the normative task. Christians are called to respond to all human needs (Adeyemo, 2006:1164).

The church in Sesheke will need to understand the following principles of community transformation in order to be more effective in performing their transformational task.

#### **5.2.1.1 Ensure Full Community Participation Throughout**

The descriptive-empirical task identified the lack of community participation as one of the reasons the Sesheke Church failed at its transformational task. Participation is the central concept and foundational principal of community transformation (Tesoriero, 2010:144). As Dahama and Bhatnagar (1985:223) write, “before action can take place, it must be approved or legitimated by those holding such power in the village, or the group, or the local system, whatever we may call it”. To by-pass such leaders may cause opposition and may result in the failure of the program.

External experts working with communities should see to it that the local people participate fully in identifying their own needs. It became evident under section 2.7.5.1e of the descriptive-empirical task that the church in Sesheke did not have the skills to work with external experts to ensure that the transformation addresses the basic needs of the people in the communities. According to the interpretive task under section 3.8.2.1, it is advisable to engage a professional facilitator or external specialist to help get the best out of the local people. It must be restated that the external specialist should play a minimal role of guiding the transformation process without actually controlling it.

Community participation starts with identifying with the people’s true pressing need or needs. If you identify the real pressing need of a people then you will also get the buy-in of the community. But more importantly than getting the buy-in, if the church in its transformational task does not address the true need, then it is giving false hope.

##### **a) Emphasise Change from Within**

Community participation entails change from within. A key feature of community transformation is action at grassroots where the affected people themselves take the leading part, with external experts and organisations playing a facilitating role

(Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). “Change in the societies at the very bottom must come predominantly from within” (Collier, 2007:9, 71).

### **5.2.1.2 Identify Concrete Community Felt Needs**

Community transformation is about meeting the affected people’s felt needs. Therefore, needs identification is a pre-requisite for action and local people must be involved in identifying their own needs (Adejunmobi, 1990:226; Jeppe, 1985:28). These must be concrete felt needs by the local people themselves, not only by a specialist external consultant. It is, therefore, imperative to conduct community research for concrete felt needs before moving in with a transformation agenda. This might be one of the biggest mistakes the Sesheke Church has made in its previous transformational efforts.

#### **a) Human Survival is the Real Need**

The perceived need in the project investigated in this research was forest preservation, but this was an inaccurate perception. It is evident from the interviews that the need is survival. The prevalent state of poverty in which the people of Sesheke find themselves is a strong determinant of other human and environmental problems according to Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:111). The people are cutting down trees, not with the ill-intention to destroy the environment, but as a desperate survival means. This is the real issue at hand. According to the Biblical injunction, the church will tarnish its God given light and salt resemblance when it does not address the true need of the people of Sesheke.

### **5.2.1.3 Employ a Holistic and Integrated Approach**

As seen from the empirical research, the transformational efforts of the church are seen as oversimplified and inadequate as they did not provide a holistic solution to the needs of the community. They focused on a single aspect to the detriment of the survival and well-being of the community. Only the aspect of forest preservation was addressed without addressing the underlying reason that people were cutting down trees for, namely for their survival. Also some sections of the community were not part of the process as individual churches tended to single out their members when carrying out transformational projects in the target communities.

According to the interpretive task (chapter 3.3), an analysis of community transformation requires analysis of macro-social forces and traditions, experiences, and identities that

are at play within a community. In other words, a transformational task must address all aspects of human life and environment as revealed also by the normative task under ethical reflection.

The most fundamental characteristic of community transformation is that it follows an integrated approach to the problems of poverty and transformation in an attempt to eradicate poverty (Mohaneng, 2000:127). The emphasis here is that social, political, and cultural aspects should be treated together with the economic aspect because they are intertwined. The contribution from the normative task in this regard is that transformation should follow salvation of the soul. According to Myers (1999:3), transformation should be from (1) lost souls to saved souls with God, (2) unjust social systems to just social relationships with community and others, and (3) a decaying creation to a sustaining world with environment. In short, effective transformation is an integrated whole approach.

#### **5.2.1.4 Empower Local Communities**

One of the expectations of the participants regarding the church's transformational task is that the church should empower the local people to determine their own transformational course. Empowerment takes place in a milieu that emphasizes community knowledge, resources, self-reliance, initiative, and decision making. The local people themselves should assume full responsibility and participation from the outset if the transformational projects are to succeed (Myres, 1999:147-149; Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44; Dodge and Bennette, 2011:5; Gabriel, 1991:1-7). According to contributions from the interpretive task, empowerment is defined differently by different authors. Wallerstein (1992), defines empowerment as a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice. In a similar vein, Whitmore (1988:13) defines empowerment as an interactive process through which people experience personal and social change, enabling them to take action to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live. While Whitmore (1988) consents with Lord and Hotchison (1993:5) that the concept of empowerment is complex and needs to be more clearly defined, she states that there are some common underlying assumptions as hereunder bulleted.

- i. Individuals are assumed to understand their own needs better than anyone else and therefore should have the power both to define and act upon them.
- ii. All people possess strengths upon which they can build.
- iii. Empowerment is a lifelong endeavour.
- iv. Personal knowledge and experience are valid and useful in coping effectively.

Without empowerment transformation cannot be sustained.

#### **5.2.1.5 Ensure Sustainability of Transformational Projects**

All of the above sub-themes do in one way or another contribute to sustainability of the transformational task. The Sesheke Church was, however, found lacking in these aspects and hence the failure of the transformational task. According to the descriptive-empirical task, there were transformational efforts by the Sesheke Church, but they could not be described as sufficient because they could not transform the target communities. In other words they were not sustainable.

Sustainability refers to medium to long-term viability and longevity of changes brought by the transformational task. According to Abiche (2004:27), sustainability is the maintenance and continuance of economic and social development projects in various communities.

The issue of forest preservation in Sesheke, like everywhere else, is much more difficult to handle because increasing demand for food increases the economic incentive to cut down forests to create new fields to grow crops (Goodall, 2012:27). Therefore, the achievement of sustainability in this case requires people to meet two deceptively simple conditions: (1) the use of natural resources must not reduce the resources available for present and future generations and (2) our management of the planet must avoid pollution, disruption, or degradation that makes sustainability more difficult (Goodall, 2012:15).

Efficient use of available resources is a precondition for attaining sustainable livelihood, especially in less favoured rural areas like Sesheke where resources are of poor quality, restricted availability, high variability, and uncertain (Lopez-Ridaura et al., 2005b:73). It is, therefore, imperative for the Sesheke Church to employ sustainable interventions in

order for the transformational task to be effective. The foregoing discourse is a summary of the issue of sustainability as discussed under section 3.6.7 of chapter 3.

### **5.2.1.6 Effective Planning and Implementation**

The need for effective planning and implementation is seen also from the outset in the descriptive-empirical task (2.7.5.4b). The planning and implementation was not effective because the people's real needs were not addressed. It is evident that all the people in the specific communities returned to their deforestation practices once the team left the area. *"People are still doing the same thing, there's no change... They still cut trees they do whateee cut poles sell, for their livelihood"* (p3). The reason behind their return to deforestation practices is that their real need – survival – was not met or even addressed.

According to the interpretive task, features of any definition of transformational development must include the questions for whom the change or growth is intended, and how it is to be implemented (Gabriel, 1991:7). Therefore, the local people should be given priority in the planning and implementation of transformational projects in order to maximise transformative potential. Effective planning should ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the planning and that the people directly affected by the plan and those who will implement it also participate in its formulation. It should also include practical implementation strategies for meeting concrete objectives or felt needs. For instance, Swanepoel and De Beer (2015:204-206) state that implementation should take place according to plan because it is a plan that is to be implemented. Implementation forms the practical part of the planning process. Just like in planning, all participants, especially the affected, should participate in the implementation. The following is a practical example of a helpful checklist to ensure effective planning and implementation as directly quoted from the just cited co-authors:

- i. Does the plan address the real issues? We can just as well check whether the plan will lead to the objective that will mean the end of the need or problem.
- ii. Have tasks been identified and written down? Planning is about what to do and if this task is not done properly, implementation will meet with a lot of problems.

- iii. Is there somebody responsible for each task? Neither the angels nor the fairies will do the implementation. Implementation is a human activity and from the members of the group people must take responsibility for the various tasks.
- iv. Do the people understand the finer details of the plan? There is no question of being empowered if people do not understand what they are doing. Explaining the finer points of the plan is the task of the facilitator or community development worker who in this case is the Sesheke Church.
- v. Is the implementation done step by step? There is no other way than taking small steps. One cannot take giant steps when implementing a plan. Either the implementation will go skewed or participants will miss out on the learning process.
- vi. Have all tasks been completed? One cannot start with a new batch of implementation tasks before the previous tasks have been done. If this rule is not adhered to, chaos will ensue and this is usually the end of the project.

In view the foregoing disposition, effective planning and implementation can also serve as a tool for measuring success. Success markers not achieved, require re-planning of the process. In the case of the transformational task of the church in Sesheke, it is evident that the planning was not effective as the implementation proved to be an unresolved major problem. As such, it is of great necessity for the Sesheke Church to ensure that their planning and implementation strategy is effective in order for the transformation task to succeed.

#### **a) Community Research**

As part of planning and implementation, the Sesheke Church should include community research in order to determine real needs and local resources that are available. It is evident from the empirical research that the Sesheke Church moved into the community with a transformational agenda without first understanding the community through community research. According to contributions from all three previous tasks of this research, it is important to understand the community through community research before moving in with transformational projects. *“When you go there, discuss with the people, yes. Make even a PRA survey... or community assessment. Eeh the*

*community themselves come out with their own needs or their own activities”* (P3). As earlier stated, local people are more effective in defining and meeting their own needs. Under normal circumstances, no pre-community research can result in community members opposing the project.

The contribution from the interpretive task in this regard is to practically engage key community members in some open ended interviews and get the best out the people by engaging a professional facilitator. Local communities are more effective in defining and meeting their own needs (Gabriel (1991:4). In Matthew 25:35-40, one of the two pericopes guiding this study, the righteous are rewarded for meeting people’s own identified concrete needs. “for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, ...”

#### **5.2.1.7 Ethical Implications**

Throughout the transformational projects the Sesheke Church should test its transformational practices and norms against Biblical and universal ethical principles. As earlier indicated, the issue of woodlands and agriculture is very delicate because of the dire need for human survival. In the empirical research one of the participants made the following serious remark: *“But if we want just to talk about no the church went to that community, they talked to them about deforestation and the badness, but if their source of life is from that forest, you tell somebody stop! Don’t get your meal from there, while him is eating, that is not, that is ungodly”* (p7).

The Sesheke Church should establish proper ethical and moral boundaries to guide transformational actions toward Biblically and morally sound ends. Three points come to the fore resulting from the previous three tasks. First is that environmental protection should not be done at the expense of human survival. The normative task in particular under section 4.5 reveals that the higher value placed on human life and rights can be seen from the fact that God equates the corporal works of mercy rendered to fellow humans as done to himself according to Matthew 25:35-40. Concern for the poor and needy, especially those considered to be least important in society, should be the top priority of the church’s transformational task. Second, the use of natural resources must not reduce the resources available for present and future generations or cause pollution and disruption. Third, general principles and concrete guidelines such as equal regard should orient the church about moral issues at stake in the discourse of their transformational task. These are important guiding principles for this research because

they have potential to enhance or even restructure the concept of church and community transformation in Sesheke area.

## **5.2.2 IDENTIFY LOCAL BARRIERS TO TRANSFORMATION AND POSSIBLE REMEDIES**

As mentioned in chapter three (3.7), transformation of each community has also local specifics related with natural characteristics, internal structures, local history and tradition, some social-cultural or social-economic background, political manifestations, as well as religious background and influence (Milojevic, 2012:1). These factors do influence community transformation in one way or another and it would, therefore, be prudent for the Sesheke Church to address and strategically incorporate them in the transformational projects. The descriptive empirical research revealed some of the local barriers to transformation in Sesheke as hereafter outlined.

### **5.2.2.1 A Larger Part of the Population without the Necessary Education**

As seen from the descriptive empirical research, a major vulnerability of the community is being identified as the lack of skills, knowledge and training of the community members. The research revealed that a larger part of the population had difficult or no access to secondary education. *(P14: We've produced a lot of pupils to high school. But most of the ee parents, they've failed to take their pupils to high school, because of being poverty). (P16: It is in Sesheke in my observation, where we still have places where a grad one child still has to cover a long distance to access this education). (P18: some communities live 100 – 150 kilometres from the closest school).*

The need for an educated community population is further strengthened by contributions from the interpretive research. First, the educational structure of a population is related to the economic activity and superstructure of a community. Second, economic reform and implementation of a transformation agenda require technical know-how and support or a higher proportion of people with the prerequisite knowledge such as have attained at least secondary education (Collier, 2007:71). Like the rest of the bottom billion communities, there is a critical shortage of people with the pre-requisite knowledge for economic reforms in Sesheke as evidenced by the lack of

skills, knowledge, and training among community members. This condition poses an obvious barrier to transformation in Sesheke.

A community with larger part of its population having attained at least secondary education is more likely to achieve a sustained economic turnaround and transformation. Accordingly to Milojevic (2012:2), the educational structure of a population, through its working potential, is directly related to the form of economic activity and social superstructure of a community. An uneducated population means hopelessness and economic disaster while an educated population is a good indicator for economic growth and transformation.

Therefore, it is important for the Sesheke Church to work at enhancing human capacities for implementation of the transformation agenda by improving the education of the local population (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2013:9). Said another way, the Sesheke Church should work at translating the population growth of Sesheke into economic growth and improved quality of life with the help of education.

#### **5.2.2.2 Cultural and Language Barriers**

The cultural diversity and practices found in Sesheke pose reasonable challenge to the transformational task of the church. One participant notes that apart from the internal cultural diversities, Sesheke has also become home to people from the neighbouring country of Angola, which has an effect as well on the transformation process. *(P18: We are, Sesheke has a few people from, uh from Angola, aand and and when we talk about the the different cultures, uuh also that also has an effect to a certain eh level ...).*

One of the core principles of traditional African culture is the principle of “humanness” commonly referred to as ubuntu; this concept is well expressed through the Xhosa saying, *Umntu ungumntu ngabanye abantu* – a person is a person through other persons (De Wet, 2011:28). As such, identity among Africans should not be understood in relation to individuated selves and ownership, but through interaction with other persons who all participate in each other’s identities (Akrong 1999:8). Accordingly, ownership of objects and spaces is not individuated, but held in commonwealth with others. This norm and value of communal ownership is strategically linked to the importance of community ownership, which is fundamental to community transformation.

### 5.2.2.3 Accessibility of Communities

Accessibility of communities is made difficult not only by the lack of transport, but also the non-existence of roads to many communities. *(P18: if there are no roads, you do not know of the existence of communities... continuous outreach to communities that are not accessible is difficult)*. The church is expected, by the community, to resolve the problem of transport to reach the communities, but this is a project of bigger capacity than the church resources. This calls for external aid and government lobbying, the aspect of which will be dealt with later under the section on place for aid.

Three of the four barriers to transformation in the African context identified in the interpretive task relate directly to the country of Zambia and consequently to the Sesheke Church area. They are macro factors that influence the micro context of Sesheke. These barriers are natural resource abundance, being landlocked, and bad governance.

### 5.2.2.4 Natural Resource Abundance Trap (Natural Resource Curse or Dutch Disease).

The natural resource abundance trap (natural resource curse or Dutch disease) in Sesheke is highlighted by overdependence on timber production as a primary economic activity and export product. As seen from the empirical research, the majority of economic activities in Sesheke revolved around timber production and other forestry products with little or no emphasis on other sectors. As a practical case study, when Zambezi Sawmills was liquidated, everything collapsed and the people became destitute. After that the people of Sawmills, however, emerged to be good farmers who just needed empowered. *“People of Sawmills ... anyway they’re good farmers... And then you find, I don’t know whether it carelessness of them, whereby they’d finish their maize wi, before the next farming season comes. And, some of them, they start – eeh, they become poverty”* (p14).

In view of the foregoing, it becomes rather clear than obscure that overdependence on natural resources like timber is a dead-end sector in that it crowds out manufacturing and other agricultural products, which might be the ones to bring about economic growth and transformation as Collier (2007:40-42) also writes. Maser (1997:121) particularly cites such dependence on primary export products as raw timber to developed countries (and communities) as a typical example of dependency on outside

markets and their influences. As remedial measures, the Sesheke Church and community should consider alternative livelihoods such as export diversification and orientation towards good neighbours as well as agriculture. Good neighbours are the developing or developed neighbouring countries which are not stuck behind the transformation barriers being discussed, especially those with direct access to the sea. Namibia and Botswana can be considered good neighbours to Sesheke. These aspects will be addressed in details in the remedy to the next barrier and the specific sub-theme on agriculture under “utilise local resources” respectively.

#### **5.2.2.5 Being Landlocked**

Sesheke is landlocked by virtue of being part of a landlocked country. This causes it to lag behind in overall growth and trade as it is subjected to the problems of landlocked areas of Africa discussed in chapter three (3.5.3). It is, however, less landlocked, so to say, than the rest of Zambia because it is located right at the border of Zambia and Namibia, a good neighbour. The Katima Mulilo Bridge across the Zambezi River completed in 2004 and the paved road from Sesheke to Livingstone have made Sesheke an important transit point or link for the so-called Trans Caprivi Corridor – a two thousand five hundred kilometers long tarmac road which links the Port of Walvis Bay with Zambia, the southern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe (Walvis Bay Corridor Group, 2016). As a direct result of this development, the amount of road freight traffic has greatly increased. An investment and construction boom is rapidly transforming both Sesheke and the neighbouring Namibian town of Katima Mulilo, as well as surrounding areas. Sesheke is also connected by road to Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Notwithstanding all the problems of being landlocked, Sesheke’s location can offer some opportunities in terms of cross-border trade and linkage to the sea. Furthermore, the people of Sesheke also should export other products as well that have proven market such as agricultural products, preferably to good neighbouring countries like Namibia and Botswana. Instead of relying on raw timber as a primary export product, the community of Sesheke should be encouraged and empowered to process their timber to meet standard export quality. In an interview, one respondent expressed sentiments that agricultural products had ready markets in Namibia. *“So, you can see. What I’m trying to put across is that eeh, if the church, had maybe a program, say maybe like ee, come up with ii, eeh, some gardening aspect by the river since the*

*community lives along the river... You come up with a gardening program, raise some generators for them so that they do the, irrigation. Then they make a lot of vegetables, we sell in eh Namibia, who have got the big shops they get there vegetables from South Africa all the way it's a long way ... You see it's a long way. Us, the community that is Manyekanga that I'm referring to, it's nearer to Namibia. So they'd shh, eeh they would be surplying shoprite, they would be earning a lot of money.” (p7).*

One of the things that resource-rich landlocked areas like Sesheke ought to do is to make their more fortunate coastal neighbours markets for their products, not just transit ways to bigger markets overseas in order to avoid huge transit costs as discussed under 3.5.3 (Collier, 2007:55). Instead of making Namibia and Botswana transit routes to South Africa the bigger global markets, the small community of Sesheke would do well to orient its economy towards Namibia by making it the target market for its forestry and agricultural products. Expert knowledge would be very helpful in this regard.

#### **5.2.2.6 Bad Governance**

As earlier indicated, bad governance relates directly to Zambia as a country and consequently to Sesheke as a part of the country. The poor economic growth performance in Sesheke area can also be attributed to bad governance because there is a strong relationship between poor growth performance and bad governance as revealed in chapter three (3.5.1 and 3.5.4; Collier, 2007:64-65; Khan, 2006; Kraufmann and Kraay, 2003). Moreover, the physical command of natural resources by the government or hereditary elite such as is the case in Sesheke is less likely to develop necessary checks and balances and, as a result, economic growth and transformation are hampered (Collier, 2007:40-42). Slow growth also means hopelessness and causes some people to take what they can through abuse of power.

Sesheke is a resource-rich but economically poor area. As seen from the interpretive task, the real issue with the bottom billion communities, of which Sesheke is one, is bad governance and this can destroy an economy at unprecedented rates. Asymmetrically, good governance and policies can only help economic growth so far. As such good governance also requires necessary qualifiers such as the promotion of checks and balances, which could be more important than the mere promotion of government effectiveness (Collier, 2007:64-65). For instance, checks and balances should apply to the transparent use of natural resources and the respective revenues accrued from there, budget and expenditure tracking, national and local or private media coverage,

social justice, and distribution of power. According to the normative task (4.5), all human beings are portrayed as created in the image of God, and are, therefore, worthy of respect in personal relationships and fair treatment in social institutions. This also speaks of the need for checks and balances to caution bad governance

Seen from the foregoing perspective, checks and balances are more likely to be effective in cautioning the vice of bad governance than the mere promotion of good governance and the church should get involved. It is clear right from the descriptive empirical task that the church should speak to the government on behalf of the people. According to the interpretive task, the task of the church in the world has been understood to include transformation of the world through social, economic, or even political involvement. This means that that church should both lobby and hold the government accountable for the wellbeing of the people and use of resources. This too is an integral part of being salt of the earth and light of the world in accordance with the normative task.

### **5.2.3 IDENTIFY AREAS OF INFLUENCE**

The influential factors discussed in chapter three (3.7) are the key areas of influence to be addressed and incorporated by the Sesheke Church in its transformational task as hereafter outlined and explained.

#### **5.2.3.1 Church and Other Faith Based Organisations**

Churches and other religious organisations such as faith based organisations (FBOs) have very strong influence on society and should, therefore, be mobilised for community transformation (Awolalu, 1996:1; Ter Haar and Ellis, 2006: 356). Findings from the descriptive-empirical task show that the Sesheke Church already has a group of people around them who are willing to listen to them and trust them. This is basically proven by the wide range of expectations the people of Sesheke had with regard to the church's transformational task in the area as revealed by the descriptive-empirical task (2.7.5.3). Therefore, it is easier for the Sesheke Church to extend its influence in the area towards the achievement of transformation goals.

It is inevitable to reckon with church politics and the negative impact it can have on the transformational task as revealed by the descriptive empirical task under section

2.7.5.1b. In order to curb these destructive actions and aspirations, it has also revealed that the church needs to take note of the need for planning, leadership and understanding of transformational development. There is need for strong leadership and a clear direction, especially in conditions of great poverty and needs where people might be motivate people to “take” what they can. According to the interpretive task (3.7.1), Christianity or the church is responsible for the way society is organised and religion as a whole is concerned with matters of human well-being, the good life, and good society. This is in line with the Biblical expectation in the normative task (4.4.3) for the church to have positive influence as the salt of the earth and light of the world.

### 5.2.3.2 Culture

Culture has strong influence and cultural diversity within communities is a force to reckon with when considering effective community transformation (Maser, 1997:113). In accordance with the principle of humanness (Ubuntu) as already discussed under the section on cultural and language barriers, the Sesheke Church should promote unity in diversity and use this principle as strength for the transformational task. Based on the word of God as revealed by the normative task (4.4.5.2), Christians should love, support, and appreciate all people regardless of their sex, race, or language. This is a strong influence that can be utilised to strengthen the church’s transformational task. For instance, research in the developing world shows that the church has played a role in bringing about important cultural changes. Sociologists such as Ann Bernstein, David Martin, Bernice Martin and Peter Berger (Attanasi and Yong, 2012:94; Berger, 2015; Mathews, s.a.) note that the result from their work shows that Pentecostalism is a **modernising force** within a community, that it is basically **emancipatory toward the role of a woman** and that the data had highlighted the **entrepreneurial spirit** among Pentecostals; namely “The future’s going to be better and we’re going to help shape it because God is on our side”.

### 5.2.3.3 Politics

In view of the preceding three tasks, politics can be categorised in three forms, namely government politics, community based politics, and church politics. All of these forms of politics have direct influence on community transformation.

### **a) Government Politics**

From the descriptive-empirical task, government projects are either a positive contribution or a negative hindrance as the government has its own agenda, which may not necessarily be aligned with that of the needs of the community. Careful planning and consideration of involving government projects and aid is required so as to optimise its influence in a positive way. Inappropriate government political decisions and politics of patronage can sabotage both government and community resources necessary for economic growth and transformation. It is, therefore, imperative for the church's transformational task to critically strategize how to harness political influence for effective community transformation as will be discussed latter under corresponding interventions.

In the descriptive-empirical task the government is identified as a key resource and success factor for transformation of the community. The participants, however, felt that as individuals they did not have influence in government and at the same time the government seemed unapproachable and/or unresponsive to the community needs. Furthermore, the government seems to have a different focus from that of the church. The opinion is held that the church does have influence with government and should act and speak to the government on behalf of the community.

When cooperating with government departments, it is important for the church to understand and critically define the role of government. According to the interpretive research (3.4.2; 3.5.2; 3.5.4; 3.6.6), the highly unequal distribution of power and resources inherent in the world economic system can also lead to government officials and other development facilitators not being held responsible for effective service delivery by the target communities. For instance, the physical command of natural resources by the government and a hereditary elite such as in Sesheke automatically confers wealth on the holders of such command and may, therefore, be less likely to develop the necessary checks and balances such as the rule of law and decentralization of decision-making, which are conducive to economic growth and transformation. If unchecked, government spending can also imposing unnecessary costs instead of fostering investment, which key to economic growth.

In view of the foregoing observations, checks and balances are more important when working with government departments than the mere promotion of government effectiveness (Collier, 2007:64-65). According to the just cited author, the government

should, play a minimal facilitating role, while the local community fully participates in research, analysis, planning, implementing, and evaluating of transformational projects. Therefore, the church should cautiously and clearly define the role of government in the transformational task. The biblical stand point in the normative task under section 4.2.3.2 is that the church possesses the spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and way of life required to preserve this world in a proper condition, not the religious leaders or government officials.

### **b) Community Based Politics**

This is a rather narrow but very important focus on politics brought about mainly by the desperate competition for resources at community level. Those who frame their demands in protest often begin with and emphasise basic material necessities, but their demands also include the right to be heard, to have a voice, to be consulted and to become full members of the political community (Zuern, 2011:137). Such community based politics as this also tends to have a bearing on the overall outcome of a transformation process, whether negative or positive as revealed under section 3.7.4 in the interpretive task.

Equality should be the guiding principle with regard to community based politics in accordance with the normative task. Osmer (2008:151) writes that there is an ethic of equal regard grounded in the narratives of creation and the ministry of Christ that point to the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. In the creation narratives, human beings are portrayed as created in the image of God, and are, therefore, worthy of respect in personal relationships and fair treatment in social institutions. In the narratives of Christ's ministry, he is portrayed as telling his disciples more than eight times that they ought to love their neighbours as themselves and follow the golden rule. If the church understands this dynamic, it can play a vital role in handling community based politics positively and successfully.

### **c) Church Politics**

It has been revealed by the descriptive-empirical task that the success of the church's transformational task was impeded also by the self-centered actions of churches and leaders that were aimed at improving their own status, position or to achieve greater power. According to the interpretive task (3.5.1) religious identity and politics of identity have been recognized as a significant contemporary phenomenon which has come to

the fore as such identity groups seek to find ways of recognition, competing for resources, gaining public voice, arguing for their rights, and, in some cases, winning converts and friends (Woodhead et al., 2009:24). If not checked, this can have immediate devastating effect on the transformational task of the church.

Community transformation is about meeting people's needs and not personal gain or glory as revealed by all three preceding tasks. "Putting the last first" (Chambers, 1983) or "putting people first" (Cernea, 1991) means recognition of the need to give priority to the basic element in any development activity or community transformation, that is, the local people themselves. Here again equality ought to be the guiding principle in cautioning these destructive vices. All people are created in the image of God, and are, therefore, worthy of respect in personal relationships and fair treatment in social institutions. This also entails equal distribution of wealth and resources, and social justice.

### **5.2.3.7 External Aid Agencies or Donors**

External aid agencies or donors can have either positive or negative influence on a transformational task of a community, depending on how the church and local community handle them. One of the striking discoveries in the descriptive empirical task is that the origin of the vision and funding for the Sesheke Church's transformational task appear to have come from an external organisation, namely Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ). *(P4: through organisations such as EFZ, eeh, there was a program which where they were concerned the use of natural resources in the area of Sesheke). As already mentioned under section 5.2.1.2a of this chapter, their perceived need of forest preservation proved to be inaccurate because the true pressing issue with the people of Sesheke is survival. The Pastors Fellowship on the other hand showed evidence that they were aware of the needs of the communities but could not go against the program of EFZ, probably because the funding was from EFZ and for that particular program of nature preservation. As a result, the transformation projects were not effective due to the withdrawal of EFZ and their finances (P2: But, eeh from that time, I've not heard EFZ, carrying out the the the the same program, yes. I've not heard EFZ coming to Sesheke, unless I was not told but I've not heard whe whether the program still continues up to now, whether it stopped, whether we're waiting for funding).*

The interpretive task has revealed that it is important for organisations such as the church to have the necessary skills and understand of working with donors from a broader perspective when engaging in community transformational projects. If not used properly and at the proper time, donor agencies can have negative impact on the transformational task and even cause dependency and corruption (Ayodele et al., 2005:1-2; Collier, 2007:106). This aspect of working with external aid will be further discussed under the section on place for aid.

#### **5.2.4 UTILISE LOCAL RESOURCES**

Unlike local barriers to transformation, local resources are strengths, resources, and potentials within a community that can be utilised to bring about change and development. The participants in the interviews seem to think that one of the reasons the Sesheke Church failed at its transformational task is that it did not harness the assets of the community (2.7.5.1a). Asset-based community development is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities that builds on the strengths, resources and potentials within a community (Kretzmann and MacKnight, 1993). It is based on the belief that everyone has “capacities, abilities and gifts and that the quality of an individual’s life depends in part on the extent to which these capacities are used, abilities expressed and gifts given”.

From the interpretive perspective, no community project can go without identification of local assets along with concrete felt needs (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). These assets include the talents and skills of individuals, organizational capacities, political connections, buildings and facilities, and financial resources (Page-Adams and Sherraden 1997). As the assets are used, they also improve, especially humans, who are the most important resources (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44). According to the normative task, Christians also possess spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and way of life required to transform the community. Therefore, each community should boast of some unique combination of assets on which to build its future.

In view of the above, the Sesheke Church should also work at changing of the communities’ negative self-perception to positive self-perception and realise that efficient use of locally available resources is a precondition for sustainable community

transformation as revealed by the interpretive task under section 3.6.4. The chances of success depend on the capacities of those in the society – the local people.

#### **5.2.4.1 Community Audit**

This is inextricably linked to community research but more focussed on conducting a detailed inventory of community assets than identification of needs. All community assets in terms of values, strengths, and opportunities should be taken into consideration when undertaking a community transformation project. According to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993:4), a thorough map of a community's assets should begin with an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of the community's residents. In what they refer to as capacity map-making, the dual write that an inventory conducted on household by household, building by building, block by block, will lead to the discovery of a vast and often surprising array of individual talents and productive skills, few of which are mobilized and utilised for community transformation. This basic and Biblical truth about the giftedness of every individual and community is important to persons and communities that often find themselves marginalized and deprived like the Sesheke community.

Community audit leads to local capacity building

#### **5.2.4.2 Local Capacity Building**

Capacity building is inextricably linked to the concept of asset-based community development, which is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities that builds on the strengths, resources and potentials within a community (Kretzmann and MacKnight, 1993). It is also relates to change from within and empowering local communities as earlier discussed under sections 5.2.1.4 and 5.2.1.5 respectively. Like earlier mentioned, as the assets are used, they also improve (Swanepoel and De Beer, 2015:44).

Capacity building is central to the quest for sustainable transformation according to Simpson (2002:10). The just quoted author further states that capacity building has recently become a co-goal of technical assistance, not just a mere component or by-product of development programs. According to Agenda 21 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (cited by Simpson, 2002:11), capacity building specifically

encompasses a community's human, scientific, technological, organisational, institutional, and resource capabilities.

There is need for a change of mind-set with regard to the Sesheke Church's transformational task that resources should come from outside organisations instead of from within the community itself. Foot and Hopkins (2010:7) write that "...as well as having needs and problems, our most marginalised communities also have **social, cultural and material assets**..." Identifying and mobilising these resources can help a community to overcome its challenges, economically grow, and ultimately transform.

### 5.2.4.3 Farming

The participants identified farming as an asset and alternative livelihood within the Sesheke community. This view can be supported by the broader contribution of the interpretive task and long-time held perspective on rural development for Africa. For instance, in the interpretive task Matunhu (2011:66-67) observes that most economies in Africa invest in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. Gabriel (1991:52) writes that agricultural concerns are central to rural development activities and, as such, rural agricultural development requires high priority in national and local development planning.

The main positive factor for farming in Sesheke is its proximity to the Zambezi River, which can be used for irrigation in case of a draught. One participant in the interviews had the following to say in this regard: *"Our land we have the water which we are just swimming in. We have the, the, we can we're supposed to utilise that water to, to do some vegetable gardens, uuh in order to sustain our lives... Our main problem is not to raise the dead. Our main problem is not to bring in the lost. Our biggest problem currently is to sustain our lives. If we can bring back the church into farming, into livestock, I am sure we will make a big difference"* (p18).

For most community members in Sesheke area agriculture is, however, a last survival means as their agricultural activities seem to be illegal because they have to farm in a forest protected area in search of more fertile and sufficient agricultural land. The Sesheke community seems to be in a predicament as they are fighting for survival and yet their actions are considered illegal. This predicament needs to be understood from a holistic perspective. As noted in the interpretive task (3.6.7), the issue of woodland is

very difficult to handle because increasing demand for food increases the economic incentive to cut down forests to create new fields to grow crops (Goodall, 2012:27).

The people of Sesheke are cutting down trees not with the ill intension of damaging the environment, although that is inevitable, but to survive. Therefore, the difficulty and solution then lie in the trade-offs inherent in agricultural development and environmental protection. This should be addressed corporately by all affected parties so that a win-win solution is found. Here again the church should play the central role to bring all the parties to a point of dialogue and resolve the matter in the most amicable way.

#### **5.2.4.4 The Local Church**

In all the three tasks of practical theological interpretation for the subject under investigation in this research, it has been revealed that that the church is a major stakeholder in community transformation. The normative task has revealed strongly that the most effective tool we can wield in our efforts on behalf of the poor and needy is Biblical truth (Allen, 2004:9). Accordingly, Christians are supposed to make the earth better and more liveable by being initiators of divine guidance, influence, and wholesomeness. The word of God causes inner transformation which serves as a resource and avenue for empowerment and outward transformation. As seen from the interpretive task under section 3.8.2.2, “God planted his reason in the universe, giving rational order to creation, and the minds of human beings, thereby inspiring philosophy, art, literature ...” (Ferguson, 2005:76). From this statement and in accordance with Grigg (2006) and Smith (2016), it can be inferred further as follows:

- i. God the creator has blessed man and the earth with possibilities and creativity.
- ii. Christians are blessed with a positive faith orientation towards the future.
- iii. Christians exhibit a loving value system that motivates toward friendship with, as well as support and appreciation of, all people.
- iv. The Christian network already has, at grassroots level, infrastructures, organisations, and influence.

Exegeses of the two portions of Scripture guiding this research have shown that Christians are supposed to do good works to other fellow humans, especially the poor and needy, as they wait for the second coming of the Lord Jesus. These good works

can be classified as works of mercy and reconciliation. Good in this case is what is good for God as revealed in Christ Jesus. Therefore, Christian faith in God must be evidence also by corresponding physical good works towards fellow humans, even those considered to be the least in society humanly speaking because all people are equally important to God. God is the source of all good and, therefore, the ultimate aim of good works should be to glorify God and also give the world a matter for which to glorify God. As stated in the interpretive task under section 3.7.1 the church should also be concerned with matters of human wellbeing, the good life and good society, and transformation of the world.

### **a) The Working of the Holy Spirit in Community Transformation**

The interpretive task mentioned Pentecostal people's contribution to community transformation. Accordingly, the Holy Spirit empowers Christians to be selfless and care for those in need. American sociologist Berger (cited by Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, 2015) notes that "Pentecostal people's behaviour is one of independence, entrepreneurship, good behaviour, discipline, rational outlook on work and social activities. This leads to economic growth and poverty relief." He further emphasizes the importance of considering Pentecostals as social capital because of their entrepreneurial spirit and emancipatory attitude towards the role of a woman. Berger (cited by Mathewes, s.a.) states that Pentecostalism is a modernizing force and says that his argument is based on a good deal of data.

It is stated in the normative task that the disciples of Jesus are the people who possess the spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and way of life required to preserve this world in a proper condition, not the religious leaders or government officials. According to the normative task, these spiritual qualities attributed to the disciples cannot be separated from Jesus promises of empowerment made to these "salt" followers before he left as recorded in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8. The empowerment of the Holy Spirit is an integral part of being salt of the earth and light of the world. The following anecdote from Zambia itself may illustrate this fact:

*"Annakie Hattingh and Antoinette Erasmus used to go to Kasupe Bible College to conduct empowerment workshops for the AFM of Zambia's woman in ministry. En route to Lusaka, Zambia (they travelled by combi) Annakie, while witnessing the poverty and need of the people, felt that the Holy Spirit prompted her to talk to the women about starting and managing their own entrepreneurial businesses. Having little knowledge on*

*this subject herself she tried to prepare as best as possible while they were travelling. At the workshop she talked to the women and gave them the little she knew. In her final comment she, however, told them that they were born-again people who were baptized in the Holy Spirit and should ask the Holy Spirit to give them wisdom and guidance.*

*When they went back one year later there were at least twenty women who testified of how, after hearing her talk, have started a business and now a year later, they are able to support their families (some with big extended families) with their new businesses. Of importance is that they testified of how the Holy Spirit strengthen and motivated them and guided them in this new, unfamiliar venture they took.”* (From an interview conducted with Annakie Hattingh in Johannesburg on 21 October 2016)

The Sesheke Church would be well advised to understand the resources available to them through the working of the Holy Spirit in people.

#### **5.2.4.5 Place for Aid**

The descriptive-empirical task revealed that the church must secure finances and sponsors to carry out bigger long term transformational projects (*P14: – uhm, asking from the donors. I hear the the this Pastors Fellowship you’re being funded. Can’t it beee, also, go down to the grathroo grassroot, to help the those who are, who cannot afford, eeh to improve their livelihood? ... So also the church should come in to help us, by putting some boreholes – uhm, asking from the donors...).*

The pros and cons of aid have been discussed in detail in chapter three (3.6.1.1) and it must be restated that aid alone is not sufficient to bring about growth and transformation, but can be part of the solution (Collier, 2007:107-116; Sachs, 2015:33-34). Whereas “Aid in general is a ‘dole’, tending to erode or sap attitudes and beliefs conducive to self-reliance, thrift, effort, and enterprise” (Goldthorpe, 1990:279), some of the community transformation tasks, however, might require funding and other resources that are beyond the capacity of the local communities (Blackman, 2007:30). Collier (2007:62) also boldly states that even with a government’s best efforts, some societies, especially within a landlocked community, are likely to remain poor for a long time unless they try to be as attractive as possible to donors. There is, therefore, a place for external support, which is to supplement local efforts and resources. The local community and other direct stakeholders such as the local church must have the skills

to effectively partner with Christian organisations and NGOs to source for support from outside organisations such as donor agencies (Collier, 2007:17, 42). The following skills are helpful in this regard (Collier, 2007:100-123):

- i. Understand the complexity of aid. If not used properly, aid can breed corruption and dependency
- ii. Attract aid by promoting good governance and policies. Aid tends to be more effective where governance and policies are already reasonable.
- iii. External support should supplement local efforts and resources.
- iv. Development aid is preferred to direct support for consumption.
- v. Strengthen collaboration between the community and external organisations.

It is very important to restate that external support should be managed in such a way that it will not disempower local initiatives and cause dependency. The focus should be on increasing self-reliance, such as through income generation initiatives (Blackman, 2007:30). In this regard, the local community is expected, with the help of partners, to help individuals and communities attain sustainable transformational development through technical, physical, and financial support to enhance bigger and long term transformational projects (Van Hoek and Yardley, 2009:6).

Hereafter are the bigger transformational projects that require external support as identified in the research tasks.

#### **a) Education Across all Sectors of the Community**

A key area of intervention that is also identified as a bigger challenge requiring external aid is education across all sectors of society. It is imperative for the Sesheke Church to incorporate an educational campaign program for all community members – children youth, and women inclusive – to have access to education up at least secondary level. In order to accomplish this task, the church will definitely need external aid because it does not have the capacity to carry out a project of that magnitude.

### **b) Access to Health Services for All Communities**

According to the empirical research findings (2.7.5.4b), most of the target communities live far away from schools and health centres and can therefore hardly access the needed services of these institutions. The interpretive task under section 3.6.2 also echoes a very similar statement that poor people such as those who form most of the Sesheke population are also crippled with inability to reach or pay for health services. A direct quote from Matthew 25:35-40, one of the Biblical texts guiding this research, implies that sick people should be accorded the necessary health care: “... *I was sick and you visited me ...*” It is therefore incumbent on the Sesheke Church also to promote, in whichever way possible, access to health services for all community members in order to enhance effective community transformation.

### **c) Transport and Communication**

The target communities are farther from the nearest schools or health centres and the state of the roads leading to those communities is extremely bad, making accessibility to such communities extremely difficult too.

In order to ensure accessibility of the target communities and accessibility of basic social services to all people, the Sesheke Church should also strategize for transport and communication in terms of road infrastructure in its transformational task. Since transport and communication is an expensive venture, they will most likely need external support.

## **5.3 CONCLUSION ON CHAPTER FIVE**

A critical reflection of the pragmatic task in this chapter has led to the formulation of specific guidelines to enhance the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. The process involved carrying out a synthesis of all the three preceding tasks in this research. Results of the synthesis were grouped into themes and respective sub-themes which became the specific guidelines which the Sesheke Church should adhere to. Among others, it is important to highlight that community transformation is about meeting the affected people's concrete felt needs and, therefore, the local people should fully participate in their transformation process. Change at the very bottom must come predominantly from within. Of significance is the

realization of the most effective tools that we can wield in our efforts on behalf of the poor and needy. This is the Biblical truth of our mission to be salt and light and the empowerment of people through the working of the Holy Spirit.

This study makes a contribution to practical theological discourse in that it provides a perspective on how the church can perform an effective transformational task that consists of a good understanding of the target community and principles of community transformation that are built on Biblical norms. It provides guidelines on how to engage the community in a responsible and organised process that will empower the community to become self-sustaining and to benefit from their God-given resources. In this regard the study supports the view, referred to in chapter two, that the church has a significant role to play in transforming the whole person.

The next and last chapter will deal with the summary, limitations, and recommendations for further reading pertaining to the topic of this study.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the final chapter that brings the current study to a close. The chapter provides an opportunity to demonstrate whether the aim and objectives of undertaking this study as stated in chapter one have been achieved (Coughlan et al., 2007). The researcher will therefore give a summary and evaluation of the study, limitations experienced, make recommendations and suggest areas for further research as emerged from the findings.

#### 6.2 SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

A comprehensive summary and evaluation of the study is hereby given.

##### 6.2.1 Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

The overall aim of the research was to determine the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. The researcher's interest in undertaking this study was triggered in 2013 when he still served as chairperson of Sesheke Pastors Fellowship Sub-committee that engaged the church, government, and all other stakeholders in a transformation process for local communities to benefit from their God given natural resources. In the process, several challenges arose, among which were political resistance, intra-congregational apathy, and inter-congregational divides along lines of affiliations to some church mother bodies. This prompted the researcher to probe further into the effectiveness of the transformational task that the church had embarked on. The researcher then realised that there was need to develop and implement strategies that would enhance the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task.

The research topic was introduced in chapter one and contextualised by doing a background and problem statement. The researcher gave an overview of the Sesheke town in terms of its population, presence of church denominations, and poor state in

spite of its vast natural resource base. Local, national and global trends that had resulted in a renewed interest in community transformational tasks by local churches were discussed in this chapter. The purpose of undertaking the study was spelt out; the objectives, research questions and the research design to be used were all introduced.

The research question was: How effective is the Sesheke Church to bring about social and economic transformation within their local community?

The following research questions were posed to deal with the research question successfully:

- i. What the current church praxis in the Sesheke area with regard to transformation as illustrated through a descriptive empirical investigation?
- ii. What is the contribution of existing research to our understanding of the transformational task of the church?
- iii. What principles from Scripture can be a normative guide to the church's transformational task?
- iv. Which guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task will address the effectiveness of the church's transformational task?

The conceptual framework guiding this study is based on a Reformational perspective whereby the Bible is believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit according to 2 Timothy 3:16, and, therefore, accepted as the authoritative Word of God (De Klerk & Van Rensburg, 2005:3; De Klerk & De Wet, 2013:300). Osmer's (2008) research model based on four tasks of practical theological interpretation was chosen for this research because it deals with the practical theological interpretation of the research question (Osmer, 2008:4). The four tasks of practical theological interpretation – descriptive-empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic – according to Osmer (2008:31, 83, 139, 176) were introduced in chapter one. The researcher has used the words “community transformation”, and “community development” interchangeably throughout the research after consulting the dictionary definitions and practical functioning of these terms in transformational literature cited in this research.

Throughout the study the researcher sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

- i. To understand the current church praxis in Sesheke area with regard to transformation as a result of a descriptive empirical investigation.
- ii. To determine the contribution of existing research to the understanding of the transformational task of the church.
- iii. To understand, from Scripture, principles that can be normative guidelines to the transformational task of the local church.
- iv. To develop specific guidelines through critical reflection of the pragmatic task to be employed in the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area.

The extent to which each objective has been achieved will now be discussed under the following respective chapters.

### **6.2.2 Chapter 2: Descriptive-Empirical Task with regard to the Effectiveness of Sesheke Church's Transformational Task**

Chapter two provided a thick description of the descriptive empirical task with regard to the Sesheke Church's transformational task. The research process was thoroughly discussed and it included the research design, research methods, and research results. All participants were either church leaders who had been involved with the transformational task in Sesheke area since its inception in 2007 or local community leaders in Sesheke area where the Pastors Fellowship had carried out transformational activities for the past seven (7) years. The researcher followed a multi-method approach in order to come up with a rich and meaningful description of the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task. All respondents expressed dissatisfaction at the effectiveness of the church's transformational task and that there was need for a practical and holistic approach by the church in order to effectively transform the community.

The descriptive-empirical task in chapter two endeavored to discover, understand and describe relationships among a set of concepts and in so doing, present a systematic view of the transformational task of the Sesheke Church. The researcher personally collected all the data according to the qualitative research process and thus personally interviewed the participants with fully informed consent until data saturation occurred. The raw data was analysed by the researcher and an independent coder to ensure credibility and prevent researcher biasness with regard to data analysis and the bigger

research process. The data was organised under four (4) themes and twenty five (25) sub-themes as presented in table 2.6. According to the empirical research carried out by the researcher, the transformational task by the church in Sesheke has not been effective.

The analysed data also revealed various reasons why the church failed at its transformational task. Although some of the interventions by the church were seen to be positive, they could not be described as having transformed the community. The church was expected to transform the community holistically. One of the major contributing factors to failure of the Sesheke church's transformational task is the lack of community participation in the planning and implementation of transformation projects. It also became apparent that there was a lack of skills and misunderstanding about the transformational task on the part of the church as well. The community members were rather passive recipients of externally designed projects than partners in and owners of the transformational projects. Said another way, the church moved in as a saviour rather than a partner of the community.

Finally, both community leaders and inner members of the Pastors Fellowship expressed several transformational challenges in relation to the Sesheke community characteristics in particular and also to operational practice.

### **6.2.3 Chapter 3: Interpretive Task with regard to the Effectiveness of Sesheke Church's Transformational Task.**

Chapter three dealt with the interpretive task with regard to the transformational task of the church in Sesheke. Accordingly, the interpretive task shows that an analysis of community transformation requires analysis of macro-social forces and traditions, experiences, and identities that are at play within a community. It is a process requiring deep change in a society's systemic characteristics, that is economic, cultural, technological, and political restructuring to meet ongoing challenges. The impetus for change must come from within the local people themselves. The interpretive task also shows that the meaning of a transformational task is tied to the concrete felt needs of the particular community because community transformation is about meeting the affected people's concrete felt needs. The most fundamental characteristic of community transformation is that it follows an integrated approach to the problems of poverty and transformation in an attempt to eradicate poverty

The interpretive task in chapter three revealed that classical theories such as modernization have not been effective in resolving African problems of poverty and underdevelopment because they are externally designed and do not take into account the local barriers to transformation (Frank, 1967). Therefore, there is need to develop local strategies to handle these barrier because existing research shows that community transformation is a collective grassroots action that tackles concrete felt needs and requires a truly integrated approach, with external experts and organisations playing a minimal facilitating role. Existing research also revealed that the key to community transformation is economic growth and the key to economic growth is investment.

Principles of community transformation discovered in the literature research are action at grassroots, holistic and integrated approach, identification of community needs, asset-based, clear objectives, empowerment, and sustainability. Influential factors on community transformation include religion, culture, population, and politics.

Another significant contribution of existing research is that most transformational tasks fail for several reasons. This is appropriately summed up in Korter's (1991:1-20) conclusion after studying more than one hundred organisations that intentionally initiated processes of transformation that most transformation efforts fail due to two lessons that he drew from his study. First, transformation involves deep change (Quinn, 1996) and it passes through a series of phases that require considerable time and effort. Skipping steps to speed up the process usually does not pay off in the long run. Second, critical errors in any of the steps can have devastating impact on the entire process. Korter's observation is applicable to the failure of the Sesheke Church's transformational task and other transformation efforts by local churches in Africa.

The foregoing contributions from existing research necessitate the engagement of alternative approaches to effective community transformation in the African context and Sesheke in particular. Accordingly, participatory approaches have been preferred in this research because participation is central to all the relevant alternative approaches to community transformation. In particular, two alternative approaches – FPP and ABCD – were preferred for this research on the basis of their relevance. FPP distinctively simplifies a task like that of the Sesheke Church, while ABCD is also designed for small communities like Sesheke and builds on what is present in the local community in order to bring about growth and transformation.

#### **6.2.4 Chapter 4: Normative Task with regard to the Effectiveness of Sesheke Church's Transformational Task**

The normative task of practical theological interpretation with regard to the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task was discussed thoroughly in chapter four. Under theological interpretation, the exegeses of the two texts of Scripture guiding this research – Mathew 5:13-16 and 25:35-40 – show that the church has a Biblical mandate to do good works, which may be characterised as deeds of mercy and reconciliation with God and man in Jesus Christ. By implication, the church has the mandate to engage in community transformation activities that seek to alleviate the plight of the poor and needy with the overall aim of glorifying God. The most effective tools that the church can wield in its efforts on behalf of the poor and needy are Biblical truth and the working of the Holy Spirit. The church should also focus on good practice which involves deriving norms from good practice by exploring models of such practice in the present and past or by engaging reflexivity in transforming practice in the present.

Ethical reflection has shown that there is an ethic of equal regard grounded in the narratives of creation and the ministry of Jesus Christ that point to the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings. This is an important premise in many respects as ethical propagation of the gospel must address both the spiritual and physical dimensions of persons and communities, which are affected in one way or another by the prevailing social, economic, environmental, and political conditions. Therefore, it is correct for the church in Sesheke to engage in a community transformation task, but should establish relevant Biblical and moral basis in order to be effective.

#### **6.2.5 Chapter 5: Pragmatic Task with regard to the Effectiveness of Sesheke Church's Transformational Task**

The pragmatic task with regard to the Sesheke Church's transformational task was explored in Chapter five. The process involved a synthesis of the preceding descriptive-empirical, interpretive, and normative tasks in order to develop specific guidelines that would enhance the effectiveness of Sesheke Church's transformational task. The results of the synthesis were grouped into themes and respective sub-themes which became the guidelines that the Sesheke Church should adhere to. The four main themes that emerged out of the synthesis are: understand community transformation, identify local barriers to transformation, identify areas of influence, and utilise local resources.

It is important to restate, inter alia, that community transformation is about meeting the affected people's concrete felt needs and, therefore, the local people should fully participate in their transformation process. Change at the very bottom must come predominantly from within. Echoing the normative task, the pragmatic task concludes with the emphasis that the most effective tool we can wield in our efforts on behalf of the poor and needy is Biblical truth and empowerment by the Holy Spirit.

### 6.3 LIMITATIONS

Although the study succeeded in attaining its stated objectives, it is inevitable to highlight that there are limitations that were experienced as outlined below.

#### 6.3.1 Resistance to Participate in Interviews

One of the limiting factors to the research was resistance by some community representatives to give information. Two reasons appear to have contributed to this resistance.

First, not only was this study the first one to be conducted on this topic, it was also the first qualitative research involving interviews and audio recordings to be conducted in the area. *"Eeeh, it's a pleasure to see somebody, to research in the, Sesheke I've never seen them... We because we jus we even a a a book written in Sesheke I've never seen it... But we need something to, you see coming from Sesheke, written by one of our members in Sesheke to me it's a pleasure. It's good. Please wish you good luck."* (P11). As such, some of the people the researcher approached to participate in the research were rather sceptical and refused to be interviewed. It took a great deal of effort and time for the researcher to build rapport and get the participants' full consent to be interviewed and audio recorded.

Second, the researcher belonged to the same ethnic group, spoke the same language and had lived in the same geographical area as the participants, that is, in Sesheke long before the inception of the transformational task. He was also chairperson of the transformational task from its inception up to the end of 2013. Although these factors should have acted as advantages, they became limitations in some instances as some participants seemed to wonder what else the researcher wanted to know since he had also been part of the community and chairperson of the transformational task. *"You*

*know this is your area” (P4); “... pastor, you know I’m walking through because this is your field... Take an example may be E, EFZ, they they have a lot of resources that they get may be from other partners... may be their expenditure you have been with them. You have actually had a privilege and honour to look at maybe their expenditure, but look at, what impact does it give to the community? It’s not there!” (P7). Most probably some of these participants could have shed more light if the researcher had been from a different background as they would not have expected him or her to know much about the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area.*

### **6.3.2 Availability of Participants**

Not all the church and community leaders who were involved at the start of the transformational task were interviewed because some of them had been transferred out of the district. Others were either out of reach or temporarily out of the district when the researcher tried to contact them and it was not possible for the researcher to follow or wait for them because of time and budget constraints. As such, he had to conduct interviews only with those who were available until data saturation occurred. It is, therefore, not known what the views of those who were not present would have been had they been available to participate in the interviews.

### **6.3.3 Representation of Participants**

No female pastors participated in the interviews because there were no female pastors in the Pastors Fellowship or the district. Female pastors are a cultural issue in Sesheke. It is therefore expected that there would be no female pastor respondents as female pastors are culturally discouraged in the Sesheke area. The researcher relied on the views of the female community representatives to achieve representativeness of the research process. It is still not known, however, what impact the views of female pastors would have had on the church’s transformational task.

### **6.3.4 Specific Literature Pertaining to the Area of Study**

No community transformation literature based on Sesheke area was available to the researcher because no prior study was ever conducted either on the topic of this research or on any transformational task in Sesheke area. The study by Vinya et al. (2012) on the forest sector in Zambia only hinted on the role of the church in environmental protection, but it was not the focus of their research to address the topic of this research or community transformational tasks by churches. The researcher relied mainly on the gathered data themselves and other relevant literature concerning

transformational tasks by churches and community transformation in general to achieve the research objectives.

The researcher speculates that the foregoing limitations could have inhibited valuable contributions to the research process and transformational task of the church in Sesheke area.

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations are based on the research findings:

- i. There is need to do develop an implementation strategy for the guidelines to enhance the effectiveness of the Sesheke Church's transformational task as emerged from this research.
- ii. The cultural issue with regard to women and church leadership should be addressed by the Sesheke Church because there were no female pastors in the Pastors Fellowship. The church's transformational task leadership should be representative.
- iii. The church, community, and government should liaise on matters pertaining to community transformation in order to avoid unnecessary frictions and setbacks such as have been identified in the research.
- iv. Whereas classical theories can be of some help, the church and all other stakeholders in the Sesheke Church's transformational task should remain open to the complexity and particularity of the Sesheke community in order to be effective.
- v. The church should establish proper Biblical and moral basis when dealing with human and environmental problems. This can be aided by an appropriate integration of the worldly knowledge of the arts and sciences with the word of God.

### **6.4.1 Implications for Further Research**

The researcher hereby makes no absolute claim whatsoever that the research is exhaustive. Only data that are relevant to achieving the research objectives have been presented in this document. There is need for further research in the following areas, based on the research findings:

- i. Understanding community transformation
- ii. The role of women in church leadership and community transformation.
- iii. Church mobilisation and community transformation
- iv. Transformational challenges and how to overcome them.

## **6.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This study has dealt with the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task from inception in 2007. The research findings revealed that the church's transformational task had not been effective and existing research also shows that many transformational tasks fail for several reasons. Of great significance is the realisation that community transformation is a process that requires deep change and the impetus for this change must come from within the local community itself. Classic theories have not been effective in resolving problems of poverty and underdevelopment in Africa because they are externally designed and do not address local challenges. Community transformation is a collective grassroots action that tackles concrete felt needs and requires a truly integrated approach, with external experts and organisations playing a minimal facilitating role.

There is need to develop alternative practical approaches that can also be applicable to the transformational task of the church in Sesheke area. Among others, the Sesheke church also needed to establish proper Biblical and moral basis in dealing with human and environmental problems in order to be effective at its transformational task. The most effective tools they can wield their efforts on behalf of the poor and needy is Biblical truth and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. In view of the research findings from the preceding three tasks of practical theological interpretation, the researcher suggested practical guidelines for the enhancement of the Sesheke church's transformational task.

Finally, the researcher has given a summary and evaluation of the study, limitations experienced in the process, recommendations, and implications for further research.

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**APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT**



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
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**Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee**

Tel: +27 18 299 4849  
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**ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT**

Based on approval by **Research Ethics Committee of Theology (TREC)** after being reviewed at a meeting held on **31/10/2016**, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby **approves** your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

<b>Project title:</b> The effectiveness of Sesheke church's transformational task: a practical theological perspective.																															
<b>Project Leader/Supervisor:</b> Prof WJ Hattingh & Prof F Kruger																															
<b>Student:</b> D Mutemwa																															
<b>Ethics number:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>5</td><td>0</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Institution</td> <td colspan="5">Project Number</td> <td colspan="2">Year</td> <td colspan="5">Status</td> </tr> </table> <p><small>Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small></p>	N	W	U	-	0	0	5	0	5	-	1	6	-	A	6	Institution			Project Number					Year		Status				
N	W	U	-	0	0	5	0	5	-	1	6	-	A	6																	
Institution			Project Number					Year		Status																					
<b>Application Type:</b> N/A																															
<b>Commencement date:</b> 2016-08-30	<b>Expiry date:</b> 2018-08-30																														
<b>Risk:</b>	<b>Minimal</b>																														


**Special conditions of the approval (if applicable):**

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the TREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the TREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

<p><b>General conditions:</b></p> <p><i>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC via TREC:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project</li> <li>- without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.</li> <li>- Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the TREC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.</li> <li>• The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC via TREC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.</li> <li>• In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC and TREC retains the right to:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;</li> <li>- to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.</li> <li>- withdraw or postpone approval if:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,</li> <li>· it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the TREC or that information has been false or misrepresented,</li> <li>· the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,</li> <li>· new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• TREC can be contacted for further assistance via <a href="mailto:Nadine.Havenga@nwu.ac.za">Nadine.Havenga@nwu.ac.za</a> or 018 299 1600.</li> </ul>
---

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC or TREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof LA Du Plessis  
 Digitally signed by Prof LA Du Plessis  
 Date: 2016.11.08 10:55:47 +02'00'

**Prof Linda du Plessis**  
 Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE OF CONSENT FORM

1

David Mutemwa,  
P O Box 12,  
Sesheke, Zambia.

10<sup>th</sup> December, 2014.

Dear MR. M. LUBINDA (SABELO)  
SESHEKE

**Re: Interview for Master's Studies**

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct an interview with you. The interview is a requirement for my master's degree in pastoral studies at North West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa. The purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task.

The interview will take approximately thirty (30) minutes of your time and will focus on your experience of the Sesheke church's transformational task during the past seven years. An audio recording device will be used to record the interview so that it can be studied along with interviews of other church and community leaders to identify key themes and concepts.

I will guarantee confidentiality if you choose to remain anonymous and feedback on the research findings will be presented to you. You also reserve the right to withdraw from the interview anytime you so feel and decide. The study leaders are Dr Rene Hattingh-Rust and Prof W.J. Hattingh. I am an ordained pastor under the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zambia and possess the following academic qualifications: Dip. Th., B.Th., and Honours B.A. Theology. Your participation will help to determine the effectiveness of the Sesheke church's transformational task.

Once again I thank you for your kind consideration in this regard.

Yours Sincerely,



David Mutemwa

+260 966 944039 / +254 728 486994

2

**Option 1: To participate in the research anonymously**

I \_\_\_\_\_, holder of NRC (i.e. ID) Number \_\_\_\_\_  
do hereby freely and willingly consent to participate in the above mentioned interview and  
that the interview can be recorded and used in the research.

I choose to remain anonymous.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date and Place

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Option 2: To participate in the research and have my name disclosed**

I MATOMOLA LUBINDA holder of NRC (i.e. ID) Number 127984/85/1  
do hereby freely and willingly consent to participate in the above mentioned interview and  
that the interview can be recorded and used in the research.

My name and occupation may be disclosed

CATERER - SELF EMPLOYED 10/12/14 HOME SESHERE  
Date and Place

*[Signature]*  
Signature

## **APPENDIX C: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS**

The researcher is bound by the ethical research code as set out by the NWU Health and Research Ethics Committee, regarding anonymising of participants identity within the entire research. Some of the information revealed during the interviews is of such a nature that the identity of some of the participants could be compromised.

Based on the ethical requirements and the researcher's conscience, the researcher prefers not to add the transcribed interviews in the dissertation. All transcribed interviews will be made available to any examiner who wants to examine the transcribed documents.