

**PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND  
EVALUATION, POWER DYNAMICS AND  
STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION**

*ANALYSING DYNAMICS OF PARTICIPATION BETWEEN WORLD  
VISION AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS IN THE THUSALUSHAKA AREA  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PM&E*

*By*

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## ABSTRACT

Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E) is a concept meant to ensure the extensive involvement of project beneficiaries in all stages of the project or programme cycle. It is a means of empowering project beneficiaries by developing their skills and abilities to enable them to monitor and evaluate the progress, impact, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and effectiveness of the different projects that are implemented by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and negotiate and make appropriate decisions concerning their own development. Just like any development concept, participatory monitoring and evaluation is not without its challenges. The concept is undertaken by stakeholders within the stakeholder groups in participatory monitoring and evaluation and there are different dynamics that shape the nature in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted and which stakeholders have more influence. Non-governmental organisations are expected to design an evaluation of the projects and programmes that include the input of all stakeholders. The challenge, however, is that different stakeholders have different perspectives, including claims and interests that are shaped by their different backgrounds and motivations.

The general aim of this study is investigate and understand the participation and negotiation process, particularly of how organisations reconcile and accommodate different stakeholder interests and positions. The precise focus of the study is to shed light on these dynamics using World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka area development programme in the Limpopo province as a case study. It seeks to understand how the organisation conducts its participatory monitoring and evaluation process, the power relations inherent in the process, and the extent to which project beneficiaries participate in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. The study adopted an interpretive and social constructivist view. Qualitative research methodology was used. The sample groups were World Vision actors and key informants.

The study revealed the nature of the World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation which echoes the criticisms of the participatory development paradigm. In as much as most of their programmes are theoretically deemed to be participatory, the practicality of the level, knowledge and engagement of project beneficiaries especially if their views/opinions have to be weighed with those of other stakeholders remains questionable. This study carries important

lessons for World Vision and other organisations that practice participatory monitoring and evaluation by highlighting the fundamental areas that are key in the process and determining the level involvement of other stakeholders. It is recommended that key strategies which look at capacitating project beneficiaries and decentralising decision making are implemented in the organisations.

**Keywords:** Participation, Participatory monitoring and evaluation, Stakeholders, Power relations, Project beneficiaries.

## **DEDICATIONS**

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving parents without whom I would not have had the strength, courage, and means to see this dissertation through. To my mother, thank you for your earnest and heartfelt support throughout my academic years. To you I will always be grateful.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AA</b>	Audience Analysis
<b>ADP</b>	Area Development Programme
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organisation
<b>FBO</b>	Faith-Based Organisation
<b>IK</b>	Indigenous Knowledge
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Government Organisation
<b>LEAP</b>	Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>ODA</b>	Overseas Development Agency
<b>PA</b>	Participatory Assessment
<b>PRA</b>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<b>PM&amp;E</b>	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>RBM</b>	Results Based Management
<b>SAMEA</b>	South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association
<b>SMART</b>	Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant and Time Bound
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>SPICED</b>	Subjective Participatory Interpreted Communicable Empowering and Disaggregated
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

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---

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This study looks at an international non-governmental organisations and the participatory monitoring and evaluation of projects in developing countries. It is an analysis of how non-governmental organisations conduct the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and an assessment of how local stakeholders, or project beneficiaries, participate and view their role in the system. It uses the case of World Vision and its projects in the Limpopo Province in South Africa to present environment-specific dynamics that lead to a departure from the principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation as laid down and understood in literature. It will help to explain the dynamics of interaction between World Vision and its project stakeholders and will improve our understanding of a process that has for so long been taken for granted. In this respect, it carries significant lessons for non-governmental organisations and other donors with an interest in poverty reduction and empowerment of the poor through active engagement and ownership of development projects by project beneficiaries. It should add to existing literature on grassroots participation and participatory monitoring and evaluation.

#### **1.1.1 Background**

In the 1970s the development model, designed and adopted by the major donors and lending agencies, began to show visible signs of failure (Haynes, 2010). The modernisation development project, also known as Rostow model which was the main vehicle of post-World War II development was increasingly being questioned and the search for alternatives was on (Pieterse, 2010). For bilateral donors, the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions, and development agencies of all kinds, the alternative was a shift towards financing development projects in developing countries, particularly Southern non-governmental organisations, Community-Based Organisations (CBO's), and Faith-Based Organisations (FBO's) (Werker & Ahmed, 2007). Since the mid-1970s, these donors and agencies channelled billions of dollars to non-governmental organisations in the North to execute the humanitarian aspects of their foreign aid programmes through these institutions that operate in the developing world. (Smillie, 1994).

With increased allies in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and increased interest and funding to non-governmental organisations, they expanded their operations and increasingly became overly dependent on donors to finance their operations (Kilby, 2012). As non-governmental organisations became the subject of attention, a host of literature came to the fore, focusing on factors that affect non-governmental organisations, including scaling-up their operations, their efficiency, and sustainability (Edward & Hulme, 1992; Fowler, 1997). Other pertinent issues included managing relationships between non-governmental organisations and between non-governmental organisations and donors (Groves & Hinton 2004; Banks, 2015), issues of effectiveness (Edwards & Hulme, 1995; Riddell & Robinson, 1995), and the emerging tendency of non-governmental organisations to “employ ‘radical’ methods of empowerment such as participation as technical means rather than political ends” (Mitlin *et al.* 2007: 1700).

The key to managing the non-governmental organisations-donor relationship was seen as resting with both these institutions understanding each other’s interests and expectations and working towards achieving the same goals. On the other hand, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness could be achieved through the implementation of results-based management (RBM) systems. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) came to be seen as a central component of a results-based management system, and has become central to donors’ efforts to ensure the quality of aid given to non-governmental organisations and other agencies for project support. To ensure the quality of aid and that donor demands on aid recipients are met, there was an increasing need for evidence, and monitoring and evaluation was the tool that provided such evidence.

Monitoring and evaluation is a mechanism that is often conducted by external stakeholders. It tends to be less participatory and often does not include the inputs of the actual beneficiaries of the projects (Guijt, 1999). This technique is focused on palpable and quantifiable outcomes of the project at the expense of the inputs from the local people and their culture (Mtshali, 2000).

The donor funds that are received are targeted at improving social developmental problems and by making use of top-bottom management approaches such as monitoring and evaluation, some qualitative information might be excluded from the final evaluation as the monitoring and

evaluation method produces quantitative information (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). This gap in the monitoring and evaluation mechanism led to growing interest in evaluation that incorporates the interests of various interest groups (Matsiliza, 2012). Since the mid-1980s interest in bottom-up approaches to research, development, and accountability emerged, and among these approaches participatory monitoring and evaluation became a donor preoccupation (Hilhorst & Guijt, 2006). Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves the monitoring and evaluation of development projects and programmes by all stakeholders, not only the donor agencies and the various organisations that are accountable to the non-governmental organisations, but also the local participants that are beneficiaries of the projects (Njuki *et al.* 2006).

According to Sartorius (1991), participatory monitoring and evaluation is a method used to empower local people and to learn from them. According to Estrella *et al.* (2000: 1), the process exerts more emphasis on who is measuring and how different concerns and interests are negotiated and represented. While the benefits of such participation are invaluable, a substantial amount of participatory monitoring and evaluation-oriented scholarship has shown that stakeholders always have different perspectives, interests, and claims, as they all have different motives for being part of the evaluation process. One of the leading works of the time was that of Natascha Mueller-Hirth (2012) and Marisol Estrella (2000).

### **1.1.2 Statement of the problem**

The search for development alternatives in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in a range of approaches that have dominated the post-impasse era development (Schuurman, 1993), particularly in the area of project/programme implementation and management. The criticism of the top-bottom approach that had long characterised development intervention gave birth to bottom-up approaches, including participatory monitoring and evaluation as an alternative method to evaluate projects and programmes. Participatory monitoring and evaluation has been used by several organisations as a method for creating accountability and transparency to various stakeholders (Vernooy *et al.* 2006). Literature has shown that much emphasis with regards to participatory monitoring and evaluation deals with the history of the mechanism (Aubel, 2004), how to conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation (FAO, 1990), why it is considered a more effective way of evaluating than the conventional monitoring and evaluation

method (Esterella *et al.* 2000), the reasons for including different stakeholders in the evaluation process (Sartorius, 1991), and the benefits to local stakeholders in terms of them learning and being empowered to make their own decisions (Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management, 2018)

Within the stakeholder groups in participatory monitoring and evaluation, there are different dynamics that shape the manner in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted and that determine which stakeholders have more influence. Non-governmental organisations are expected to design an evaluation of the projects and programmes that include the input of all stakeholders. The challenge, however, is that different stakeholders have different perspectives, including claims and interests that are shaped by their different backgrounds and motivations. While these issues suggest the need for critical reflection on the stakeholders' participation and interaction processes, the available research on how organisations negotiate and respond to different stakeholder interests and motives, especially when faced with the mandate of providing accountability and transparency to the donor agencies and to the local people who are the beneficiaries of the development projects, tend to be insignificant and inadequate.

Estrella *et al.* (2000) argue that how these stakeholder interests are negotiated and resolved when other parties are powerless remains a critical question in building participatory monitoring and evaluation. A pressing research concern, however, is to understand precisely the participation and negotiation process, particularly how organisations reconcile and accommodate different stakeholder interests and positions. This is precisely the focus of this study as it seeks to shed light on these dynamics using the case study of World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka area development programme (ADP) in South Africa's Limpopo Province. It seeks to investigate how the organisation conducts its participatory monitoring and evaluation process, the power relations inherent in the process, and the extent to which project beneficiaries participate in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

### **1.1.3 Research questions**

This study is framed into one broad question and four specific research questions which will assist in understanding World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka Area Development

Programme's participatory monitoring and evaluation process and the place of local stakeholders in the whole process.

*Main Question:*

How does World Vision South Africa conduct the PM&E process in its Thusalushaka Area Development Project in the Limpopo Province, South Africa?

*Research Questions:*

1. Who are the major actors in World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka Area Development Programme's participatory monitoring and evaluation process? What role(s) do they play?
2. To what extent do these actors use power and influence to achieve their interests and motives in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process? How does World Vision negotiate and respond to different claims of the beneficiaries and the donors?
3. How does World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka area development programme gather and collate different views and needs of different interest groups through a participatory monitoring and evaluation process? How does it reconcile these different views and interests?
4. How involved are local stakeholder and project beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation? Do they think their views, opinions, interests, and needs as being valued by World Vision?

#### **1.1.4 Objectives of the study**

*General Objective:*

To understand how World Vision South Africa conducts participation monitoring and evaluation in its Thusalushaka area development programme.

*Specific Objectives:*

1. To identify who the major stakeholders in the World Vision South Africa Thusalushaka area development programme participatory monitoring and evaluation process are and what roles they play.
2. To determine the extent to which the different actors use power and influence to achieve their interests and motives in the participation monitoring and evaluation process and how World Vision reconciles these different views and interests.
3. To investigate how World Vision gathers and collates different views and needs of different interest groups through the participation monitoring and evaluation process and how it reconciles these different views and interests.
4. To ascertain the involvement of local stakeholders and project beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation and to find out if they think their views, opinions, and needs being valued by World Vision.

## **1.2 Definitions of Significant Terms**

This section briefly outlines some of the key concepts that are integral to understanding this study and the analytical framework adopted in chapter two. These concepts will be treated briefly here and expanded in chapter two.

**Participation:** This section will treat this concept superficially and will only adopt a working definition of the word since it is dealt with in-depth in the following chapter. Participation is the process through which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policy making, resource allocations, and access to public goods and services (Tikare *et al.* 2001). According to Cooke & Kothari (2001) the ostensible aim of participation is to make people central to development by encouraging beneficiary involvement in interventions that affect them and over which they previously had limited control or influence. Vernooy *et al.* (2006) are of the view that participation has both functional (to increase the usefulness, relevance, and effectiveness of the process) and empowering (to strengthen local people's capacity to make decisions and their ability to create an environment for change) aspects. Within participation there are variations of the type and degree of participation, depending on who is participating. The main two types of participation are passive participation and rights based participation, within these types there are also varying degrees of participation such as manipulative participation, functional participation, interactive participation, and partnership participation, the definitions of these can be found on appendix 1

**Participatory monitoring and evaluation:** a process in which project beneficiaries are active participants in all the stages of the programme cycle, including the identification, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project intervention (Mariga, 2012). The distinguishing factor between participation monitoring and evaluation and conventional monitoring and evaluation is that in participation monitoring and evaluation local stakeholders or project beneficiaries take the lead in determining what has to be monitored and also evaluate if the intervention was effective and impactful (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). Over the years literature has highlighted that participation in participatory monitoring and evaluation is the supposition that the articulation of people's knowledge can transform conventional monitoring and evaluation processes (Chambers, 2000). Kibukho *et al.* (2015) note that participation monitoring and evaluation is mostly implemented in communities that seek to achieve empowerment outcomes because the process is considered an indispensable means to local stakeholder empowerment.

**Participatory development:** Participatory development is the '...process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over their own development initiatives and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves.' (Ondrik, 1994: 4) Participatory development emerged in an era of state failure and panic over top-down modernisation approaches. The ineffectiveness of externally imposed, expert-oriented forms of research and planning became increasingly evident in the 1980s when major donors and development organisations began to adopt participatory research and planning methods (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). The broad aim of participatory development is to increase the involvement of socially and economically marginalised people in decision making in their lives (Kanji, 2004).

**Stakeholders:** Stakeholders are entities with a declared or conceivable interest, or stake, in a policy concern (The World Bank Group, 2001). They can be in any form, size, and capacity and they include individuals, organisations, and unorganised groups. In most cases stakeholders fall into one or more of the following categories: international actors, civil society, national and political actors, and community members (World Bank, 2002). Stakeholders will always come from different backgrounds and, as result, they have different claims, interests, and motives. According to Barn *et al.* (2004), capacity building is of paramount importance in any setting where stakeholders are present.

**Power dynamics: Power refers to the ability of a person, members of a particular group to impose his or their will upon others despite their opinions and resistance Chamber (1997).** According to Williams (2004), power dynamics refer to the way power or influence works in a particular setting which involves groups of different individuals with contrasting views. Power dynamics takes place at institutional levels, managerial levels, and community levels. The issue of power dynamics has always been debated to counter the understanding of levels of participation. Scholars argue that the misunderstanding of power underpins much of the participatory discourse. White (1996) states that no matter how much an intervention or development process is said to be participatory it cannot escape the limitations imposed by the various power dynamics that are inherent in any group setting that involves stakeholders with different interests. Chambers (1997) asserts that whenever power dynamics are present there will always be powerful “uppers”, which include important outsiders such as donors, and local “lowers” who are the beneficiaries or subjects of development programmes.

### **1.3 Organisation of the Dissertation**

This study is organised into six chapters. Chapter One, which is the introduction chapter, serves to outline the research paper, its aims, and its purpose. This chapter also presents the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, definitions of significant terms.

Chapter Two constitutes the literature review and consists of the conceptual and theoretical framework. This chapter begins with a discussion of key concepts which are linked to participatory monitoring and evaluation, namely: the development paradigm, non-governmental organisations, grass roots development, empowerment, participation, participatory monitoring and evaluation, conventional monitoring and evaluation, accountability, stakeholders, and power relations. This chapter ends with presenting the theoretical framework which contextualises participation monitoring and evaluation within the participatory development theory.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology. In this section the philosophical foundations of the study as well as the research design and strategy are described: the study area, sampling, data collection instruments, and data collection procedures. This chapter also

describes the data analysis process and ends with a description of some ethical considerations, anticipated problems, and the chapter summary.

Chapter Four provides a broad overview of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and World Vision's activities. The chapter is more of a background chapter which seeks to situate World Vision South Africa's participatory monitoring and evaluation process within this larger context.

Chapter Five provides an assessment of the participation monitoring and evaluation process in World Vision's Limpopo Province projects. It considers the extent to which project beneficiaries are involved in the participation monitoring and evaluation process and explores their understanding of their roles in the whole process. Consequently, the aim of this chapter is two-fold. First, it examines the power and position of World Vision South Africa in its projects and the participation monitoring and evaluation process. Second, it explores the way in which the organisation spearheads the process in the absence of a donor, whose guidelines often influences the participation monitoring and evaluation process.

Finally, Chapter Six summarises and discusses the main findings of the study in relation to the objectives. This chapter also covers conclusions and proposes policy implications for World Vision based on the findings of this study.

Outlined below are the chapter headings:

- **Chapter 1:** Introduction
- **Chapter 2:** Literature Review and Framework of Analysis
- **Chapter 3:** Methodology
- **Chapter 4:** Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation and World Vision International
- **Chapter 5:** World Vision and Stakeholder Participation in PM&E Processes
- **Chapter 6:** Conclusion

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

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#### 2.1 Introduction

Participatory monitoring and evaluation has a long pedigree in the field of development and draws from 20 years of the participatory research traditions (Estrella, *et al.* 2000:3) while the concept itself has a history that is parallel to grassroots development (Banks, 2012). In development studies, the participatory paradigm is often associated with the alternative development paradigm and its composite elements – grassroots development, participation, empowerment, and other people-centred approaches – that emerged after the development theory impasse in the 1980s following disappointments with mainstream development and its focus on top-down development approaches (Sanyal, 1998; Bank, 2012; Pieterse, 1998).

In this chapter, an outline of the long decades of post-World War II development will be presented with the intention of providing a historical context for the alternative development paradigm and to allow us to situate participatory monitoring and evaluation within this broad historical context. The chapter is based on an extensive and broad overview of literature relevant to the topic of study. The review draws from selected concepts and attempts to pull these together in order to construct a framework through which this study can be understood. The chapter begins by looking at the various concepts that guide the study: development paradigm, non-governmental organisations, grass-roots development/people-centred development, empowerment, participation and participatory paradigm, conventional monitoring and evaluation, accountability, stakeholders, and power relations. It then discusses the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation before presenting a framework of analysis as adopted by the study.

#### 2.2 The Development Paradigm

The main development paradigm, also known as the top-down/trickledown approach, gained prominence after the Second World War when various theories and policies came to the fore and “oriented emerging nations in their journey through post-war history” (Escobar, 1995: 45). Post-World War II development was driven by several theoretical perspectives of which the

modernisation and dependency approaches were the most prominent and widely adopted by countries of the Global South from both sides of the ideological divide (Matunhu, 2011). These theories were synonymous with their endorsement of the state as a vehicle of development and embodied a trickle down/top-down ideology (Haynes, 2010).

The results of the four decades of state-centred, top-down development are well known and have been highly publicised. They include the increasing gap between the “haves” and “have nots”, declining living standards, and increased unemployment (Kelly, 2012). While millions in development funding were channelled to governments in the Global South, it has been noted that, together with their erstwhile development partners, Third World governments put faith in development projects, which, as Scott (1998) argued, turned into major development fiascos (see also, Ferguson, 1994; Escobar, 1995). The blame was laid squarely on the institutions that were created to facilitate development from the top, which had, in themselves, become the greatest impediment to development (Sanyal, 1998). This influenced and shaped reasoning about development as well as all the subsequent efforts adopted and implemented by Third World countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty (Haynes, 2010). It is against this background that alternative development was born (see Pieterse, 1998; Koop, 2014; Rahnema, 1997).

Alternative development is one of the critical approaches to mainstream development that emerged in the 1980s, although it shares certain elements with post-development in its radical critique of post-WW II development (Pieterse, 2000; Pieterse, 1998). It exerts much focus on participation in the development project. According to Cornwall (2006: 70):

*A host of the United Nations reports, studies, projects, and programmes heralded participation's possibilities and redefined its parameters. The 1969 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution laid out what was to become the basis for 1970s participation efforts, stating that participation requires the democratic involvement of people.*

The alternative development paradigm is particularly critical of the role of the state in development and advocates for alternative agents such as non-governmental organisations and civil society as the main implementers of the alternative development practices (Banks, 2012; Ulleberg, 2009).

### **2.2.1 Non-governmental organisations**

A major component of the alternative development discourse was non-governmental organisations. Non-governmental organisations are private, self-governing, non-profit organisations that operate independently from the state or international governments and are characterised primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial, objectives (Davids *et al.* 2009; Werker & Ahmed, 2007). Non-governmental organisations promote people-centred development and are among a group of players that are active in international development efforts and in improving the welfare of poor people in poor countries and communities (Davids *et al.* 2009).

These organisations operate at the international, national, and local levels, and since they penetrated the world of development in the 1980s (Krut, 1997), their operations have straddled various sectors such as community/rural development, gender and women empowerment, human rights and children development, and humanitarian aid and relief (Ulleberg, 2009). Their operations are mainly project-based and are usually of short-term duration since project life is highly dependent on funding (Branczik, 2004). It was the massive reductions in public expenditure and state-provided services alongside displeasure at the perceived failures of top-down development that opened up new spaces for non-governmental organisations' growth and expansion in the 1980s and 1990s. With time, these efforts became so popular with some scholars celebrating them as the "sweethearts of development" (Banks, *et al.* 2015: 708). They came to be seen as the solution to most development challenges and an alternative to both the state and the market in facilitating development for a range of reasons.

They were termed the "magic bullet" (Willis, 2005: 99). As such, their emergence was partly founded on their assumed capability to fill gaps in service delivery as well as on their ability to challenge unequal relationships and pursue transformative agendas through their people-centred approaches (Willis 2005: 98). There are a number of reasons that explain the rapid

growth and development of non-governmental organisations. According to Davids *et al.* (2009: 70):

*Non-governmental organisations are more capable of reaching the poor and marginalised locals than government and private agencies; they exhibit an ability to mobilise large sums of money for development projects from donors; they have displayed the expertise to advocate and start projects on a national level; and they influence central government policies and institutions. As such, government is being forced to search for more cost-effective alternatives to the orthodox state development programmes because of a rapid decrease in government resources.*

Non-governmental organisations are considered to be agents of micro development, which engage in participatory and bottom-up approaches in projects cycles. The adopted “people first” orientation emanates from the fact that they operate at a grassroots level and are effective in helping the poorest of the poor to participate in situations affecting their lives and, thus, have ownership and control over the development projects in their communities (Davids *et al.* 2007; Nelson *et al.* 1995). These organisations asserted to be innovative, flexible, and promoters of sustainable development since they are not constrained or restrained by bureaucratic government organisations (Nikkhah *et al.* 2010).

The advantages of non-governmental organisations indicate that their approach complements the emphasis on participation. Theoretically, non-governmental organisations appear to be better than government development initiatives. However, the reality of the implementation of the non-governmental organisations’ approaches has been under scrutiny for several decades and is considered by Nelson *et al.* (1995: 182) as “articles of faith rather than accurate representations”. According to Banks *et al.* (2015: 710), comparative advantages such as grassroots linkages and close proximity to the project beneficiaries enable non-governmental organisations to provide targeted aid that ensures that programmes are designed in a participatory manner reflecting local context needs and realities; and are not subject to commercial capture.

However, this is contradictory to non-governmental organisations' survival and growth strategy, especially in a field influenced by extensive dependency on donor funding. Just as in the private sector, non-governmental organisations are faced with competition to deliver expected outcomes and outputs, as most of them are funded by similar international donors. This in itself creates a complexity with regards to accountability between the actual beneficiaries and the donors. Due to the desire to remain in the field, non-governmental organisations are at times forced to comply with donor regulations and objectives that do not necessarily represent the local context or involve the full participation of beneficiaries as they are often incentivised to chase their service delivery mandate at the expense of their civil society functions (Banks *et al.* 2015; Neff, 2009). The manner in which donor financial resources are channelled to non-governmental organisations is a significant concomitant for non-governmental organisations' performance, accountability, and autonomy (Chaplowe *et al.* 2007). The *modus operandi* of these organisations is embedded in local communities and they make use of various alternative development practices in all their projects and programmes (Hsu, 2011). These practices may include, among others, indigenous knowledge, empowerment, and participation.

### **2.2.2 Grass-roots development or people-centred development**

Like all practices covered under the auspices of alternative development discourses, grassroots development is a relatively new concept and a new emphasis in development. It was born out of the dissatisfaction of top-bottom development approaches that economically benefitted the richer countries and groups as well as the subsequent rethink of development strategies that followed (Sen, 1997; Banks, 2012). The United Nations (2008) defines grassroots development as:

*The assertion and reaffirmation of individual sovereignty over both production and consumption, it involves shifting control over decision making and resources in development concerns to the individuals and members of the community so that their basic needs can be met, thus the beneficiaries themselves are involved in the process as decision makers and contributors of relevant local knowledge.*

The emphasis on grassroots development was to reduce state control, shift policy making from central government to alternative development agents, shy away from central government activities, and to allow decisions to be decentralised and taken at a lower level. The logic for choosing decentralisation was both economic and political (Willis, 2011). In economic terms, it was contended that taking away decision making from a top management view would lead to greater efficiency and would be cost effective. In political terms, it was argued that by shifting decision making to the local beneficiaries of the projects, they would be able to own their development projects and have a greater say in issues and decisions that concern their communities (Willis, 2011).

While grassroots development approaches have been applied to various development projects as a means of decentralisation, much emphasis on grassroots development also related to the emphasis on the value of indigenous knowledge in the development process (World Bank, 1998). Indigenous knowledge (IK) refers to the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. This knowledge is considered the basis for the local level decision making in various activities in rural or local communities (World Bank, 1998). According to Sillitoe *et al.* (2002: 9):

*Indigenous knowledge in development relates to any knowledge held more or less collectively by a population, informing understanding of the world. It is community-based, embedded in and conditioned by local tradition. It is culturally informed understanding inculcated into individuals from birth onwards, structuring how they interface with their environment. It is also informed continually by outside intelligence.*

The characteristics of indigenous knowledge are: locally it is grounded in a specific set of experiences that are known by people in that community, it is composed of knowledge from previous generations, and it is shared to a much greater degree than other forms of knowledge such as global science and technology science (Environmental Management Agency, n.d.).

Indigenous knowledge is considered to be important on three levels in the development process, namely: for the local community, for the development agents, and for global knowledge (World Bank, 1998). According to Gorjestani (2004: 1):

*Indigenous knowledge is employed at the local level by communities as the starting point for decisions concerning food security, human health, education, natural resources management, and other vital activities.*

It constitutes a fundamental aspect of the social capital of the underprivileged and their central asset in their endeavour to obtain control of their own lives, and such information is deemed necessary in any people-centred development process (Dada, 2016).

Indigenous people and indigenous knowledge increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of development programmes because the resources used in development projects are locally owned. Indigenous knowledge helps to reach the poor because in the project cycle, the information they share is the only asset they control and are very familiar with (Gorjestani, 2004). The advantages of the nature of an indigenous knowledge integration process include the provision of mutual learning between the indigenous people and the non-governmental organisations and the adaptation by both parties to what works well. In addition, it empowers the local community, especially the poor (Gorjestani, 2004). However, as with other alternative development bottom-up approaches, there are critics that contend the practicality of indigenous knowledge in a world that is clouded with Western knowledge and ideologies.

This criticism stems from the uncertainty of parity, cultural differences, material or epistemological basis, and power relations between the different knowledge systems (Bicker *et al.* 2004; Sillitoe *et al.* 2002). There should always be mutual understanding between the different knowledge systems. While scientific and Western ideologies perceive indigenous knowledge as beliefs that are not always appropriate for development and are not the right standards of legitimate knowledge, indigenous knowledge bearers themselves view scientific knowledge as “truth” and the appropriate vehicle for development (Sillitoe *et al.* 2002: 164).

The problem of knowledge integration between the different knowledge systems and bridging the unequal power between the two is not always transparent (Sillitoe *et al.* 2002).

The empowerment of the poor in the community is normally exhibited through the impact of their efforts, the implementation of their own knowledge through indigenous knowledge systems used to tackle dire problems, their fruitful interactions with assistance from donors and authorities, and the safe space and platform that are provided to take initiative and discuss issues as a community (Bicker, *et al.* 2004; Gorjestani, 2004; Pottier, *et al.* 2003).

### **2.2.3 Empowerment**

Another composite element of the alternative development paradigm and one related to grassroots development is empowerment. Luttrell *et al.* (2009: 1) describe empowerment as:

*A multidimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives, this is a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities, and their society, by being able to act on issues that they define as important.*

Similarly, Nikkhah (2010: 86) defines empowerment as:

*The ability of individuals to gain control socially, politically, economically, and psychologically through access to information, knowledge and skills, decision making, and individual self-efficacy.*

The concept of empowerment emerged in the late 1970s when it began to dominate development conversations. By the 1990s, it had become a buzzword in development. The concept “originated with social movements and liberation struggles, and was advanced by civic and political actors seeking collective responses to deeply entrenched structures” (Petit, 2012: 6). Empowerment is also in harmony with a liberal approach to democracy and highlights

individual rights and involvement in decision making (Oxaal & Baden, 1997). While the term has gained widespread usage, it is very ambiguous and is often used differently in different situations. Empowerment falls within the alternative development paradigm because it advocates for the inclusion of the local community in development projects and is one of the bottom-up approaches adopted by non-governmental organisations to deliver alternative development to the poor people by ensuring that they gain control over their lives (Banks, 2012).

There are various dimensions of empowerment: economic empowerment, political empowerment, cultural empowerment, and human and social empowerment. Petit (2012: 4) defines these as:

- Social empowerment is about changing society. For instance, gender norms look at ensuring that women's place within society is respected and recognised on the terms on which they want to live, not on terms dictated by others.
- Economic empowerment is about one's capacity to contribute to and benefit from economic activities on terms which recognise the value of their contribution, respect their dignity, and make it possible for them to negotiate a fairer distribution of returns. It is also about changing institutions and norms that inhibit women's economic participation.
- Political empowerment concerns the equity of representation in political institutions and the enhanced voice of the least vocal so that everyone engages in making decisions that affect their lives.

The Human Development Report of 1995 states that empowerment is about participation. It further explains that development must be by people, not only for them, but that the people must participate fully in decisions and processes that shape their lives, thus empowering themselves (UNDP, 1995). An important aspect of empowerment is the kind of interventions that lead to the empowerment of individuals. There is a misconception that development agents such non-governmental organisations empower communities and individuals. These organisations cannot be perceived as the direct route for empowerment. Instead, they assist with setting up "conditions within which individuals and groups can empower themselves" (Willis, 2005: 103). At the core of empowerment is the idea of power. This can be understood

as operating in several ways, including “power over, power to, power with, and power within” (see appendix 9) and the notion of having greater power and, in turn, having more ownership over one’s life (Oxaal & Baden, 1997:1; Willis, 2005). Most organisations that aim to empower individuals and communities adopt and emphasise a “power within” approach.

In order to have meaningful empowerment, there must be significant changes in power relations between the beneficiaries and agents of development. Petit (2012) contends that there is still a huge gap between the understanding and practice of empowering approaches. He further argues that empowerment is normally interpreted and supported in ways that silently compliment the interests of powerful actors or dominant norms. He calls this approach “cherry picking” because it does not pressurise the status quo (Petit, 2012: 6).

### **2.3 Participation and the Participatory Paradigm**

While participation has acquired the status of “buzzword” in development and among development agents, the concept has, over the years, proven rather problematic in both definition and use. Despite its widespread adoption by non-governmental organisations, there is little clarity on the intention and level to which projects are participatory: the level of inclusion and involvement of the local has always been questioned in the majority of projects, as there are various power relations involved in the process (Bass *et al.* 1995). White (1996:143) states that “sharing through participation does not necessarily mean sharing in power”, adding that “participation has become a ‘hurrah word’, and its seeming transparency appealing to the people, masks the fact that participation can take on multiple forms and serve many interests”.

Duraiappah *et al.* (2005: 3) define participation as a “process through which stakeholders influence and share control over priority setting, policy making, resource allocations, and access to public goods and services”. In development terms, it can be seen as the involvement of local people in the actual agenda setting of development organisations (Willis, 2011). Willis (2005: 104) sees participation as a process where the “development agenda [is] being set by the communities involved rather than external agencies deciding on the priorities to be addressed and then working with local people to achieve them”.

Over the past years, there have been debates on the meaning and understanding of what the term participation means. According to Duraiappah *et al.* (2005: 4), there are two broad perspectives on the rationale and objectives of engaging in participatory processes, which are:

- Functional or passive perspective participation is seen as a means of accessing information from a variety of stakeholders to support more effective implementation of a project, policy, or programme.
- Rights Based or Proactive Perspective participation is seen as a means of enabling and empowering less powerful groups in society to engage in decision making and exercise their democratic rights. The objective of participatory development is to transform society and achieve more equitable access to and distribution of resources.

These perspectives are seen in the different degrees of participation in the development process. Degrees of participation range from manipulation to self-mobilisation (Duraiappah *et al.* 2005). Refer to appendix 1 which elucidates the different degrees and levels of the participation process. The different types of participation can be grouped into two groups, namely public participation and active participation. Public participation is seen as a *means to an end* and passive participation is seen as an *end in itself*. The Cambridge Dictionary (2017) defines a “means to an end” as something that is done with an expectation that something else will be achieved; and an “end in itself” is defined as something that is done because it is desirable and not because it is likely to lead to something else. Appendix 2 provides a comparative analysis of these concepts.

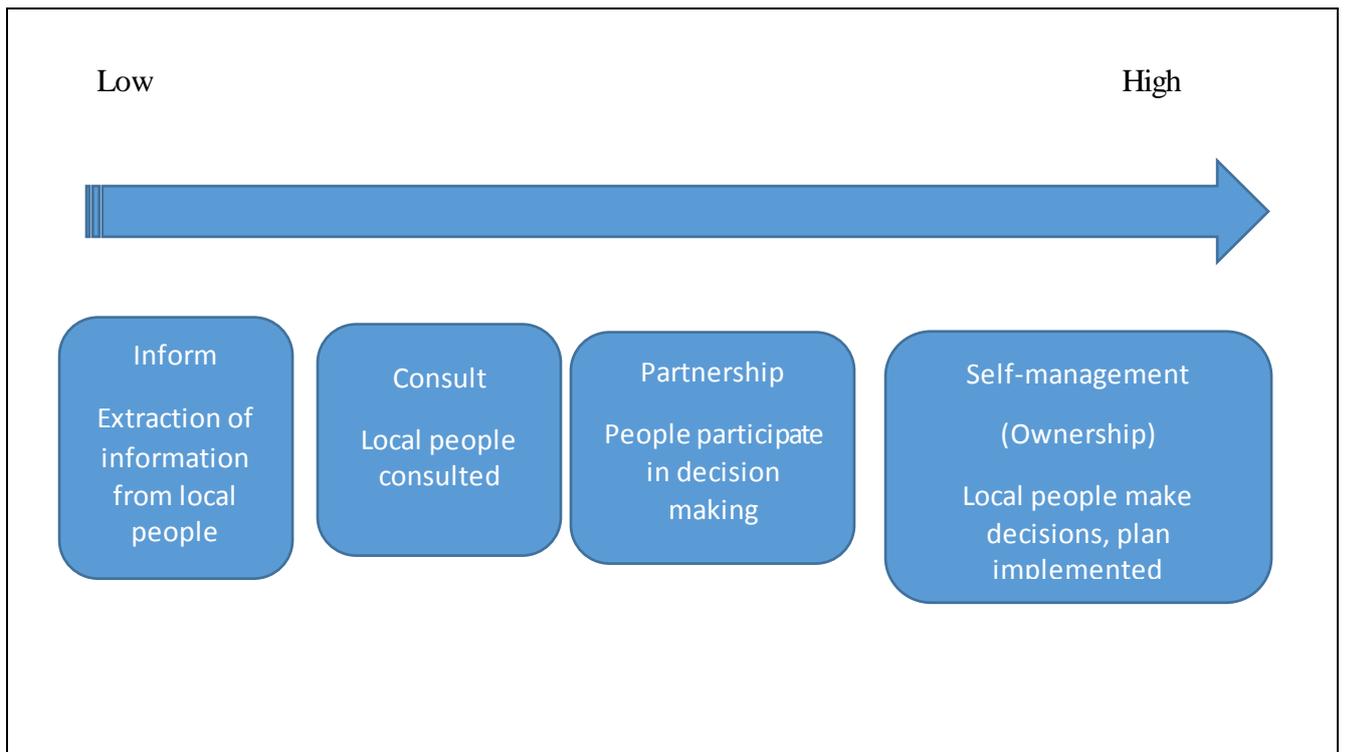
Most non-governmental organisations have adopted participation as an end in itself. They strive to provide an opportunity to the beneficiaries to be empowered through their involvement and engagement as agents of change or improvement in their areas. However, the adoption of participation as an end in itself, instead of as a means to an end, is not the only requirement in ensuring successful participation of the locals or other stakeholders.

In order for effective participation among stakeholders to take place there are a number of key principles which can be used. These principles are identified by Cornwall (2008), Rowson (2013), and Duraiappah *et al.* (2005:4) as:

- Inclusion: inclusion of all people, or representatives of all groups, who will be affected by the results of a decision or a process such as development projects.
- Equal partnership: recognising that every person has the skill, ability, and initiative and has equal rights to participate in the process regardless of their status.
- Transparency: all participants must help to create a climate conducive to open communication and the building of dialogue.
- Sharing power: authority and power must be balanced evenly between all stakeholders to avoid the domination of one party.
- Sharing the responsibility: all stakeholders have equal responsibilities for all decisions that are made, and each should have clear responsibilities within each process.
- Empowerment: participants with special skills should be encouraged to take responsibility for tasks within their speciality, but should also encourage others to be involved in order to promote mutual learning and empowerment.
- Cooperation: cooperation is a very important as sharing everybody's strength reduces everybody weaknesses.

In contemporary development discourse, the concept of participation has been promoted as a way of giving people greater decision making power and influence (Banks, 2012). However, within the context of participation there are different levels of participation. Many non-governmental organisations make use of a participation continuum and a participation matrix to determine the level and role of each stakeholder. Below are examples of the participation continuum and participation matrix.

**Table 2.1: The Participation Continuum**



**Source: World Bank (1976)**

**Table 2.2: Participation Matrix**

Steps in the research cycle	Inform	Consult	Partnership	Self-management
Problem identification		X	X	
Research planning and design		X		
Data collection proper		X	X	
Data analysis and interpretation		X	X	
Result dissemination			X	X

**Source: World Bank (1976)**

The participation matrix is a tool used by non-governmental organisations or any other community-based group planning to initiate any participatory projects. According to Rifkin

and Kangere (2002: 40), organisations promote the involvement and engagement of local people because: they have in-depth knowledge, experience, and insight into what works, what does not work and why; involving local participants in planning projects can increase their commitment to the projects; involving local people helps to increase the resources available for the programme; engaging local recipients can assist them to develop technical and managerial skills, thereby increasing their opportunity for employment; and involving locals is a way to bring about social learning for both planners and beneficiaries.

### **2.3.1 Participatory development**

Participatory development gained prominence in the 1970s as a result of the discontent and unsuccessful development initiatives that came from the acutely bureaucratized and top-down development programmes introduced by the West (Osikhena, 2014). The main concern with the traditional approaches to development was that the gift bearers were repeatedly excluded from the various development initiatives which were aimed at transforming their situation. After the World Conference of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) of 1979 declared that people's participation in institutions that govern their lives is a basic human right, a number of development and humanitarian agencies abandoned top-down approaches and were in favor of an all-inclusive development approach (Osikhena, 2004). A number of scholars have shared their theory and understanding of participatory development since its emergence. A few scholars have defined participatory development as follows:

Participatory development is the process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over their own development initiatives and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves (Ondrik, 1999: 4).

Participatory development is the process through which project beneficiaries can be involved in their own development, with an end goal of transformation taking place (Hickey *et al.* 2004).

Participatory development maintains that people ought to be the center of the development process and must be involved in decision making about the initiatives aimed at the progress (Osikhena *et al.* 2014: 521).

Participatory development implies discarding mainstream development neocolonial tendencies, western-centric values, and centralised decision making processes (Kapoor, 2005: 1203).

Participatory development has become the new “truth” or mainstream, so much so that every donor agency, non-governmental organisation, international non-governmental organisation, and development institution has cohesively adopted it into programming. Although participatory development became the savior of development initiatives, in the past it has gone through immense scrutiny and criticism. Kapoor (2005) and Osikhena *et al.* (2014) argue that in as much as participatory development has become a cliché in development terms and initiatives, it remains the least understood. Participatory development’s definition and execution, in the theoretical and practical sense, have been considered a challenge in many ways (Osikhena *et al.* 2014).

### **2.3.1.1 Criticism of participatory development**

The main criticism against participatory development revolves around issues of power, community understanding, empowerment, and knowledge. The internal critique of participatory development is evident in the work of Chambers (1994, 1995). Participatory development professionals, development practitioners, and other facilitators are entrusted to transfer power to the local beneficiaries of projects so as to empower them. However, in as much as this appears to be noble, participatory development is undertaken by individuals and places an expectation on them to pass on the yard stick to the beneficiaries. Whether this is done to the fullest remains questionable as Osikhena *et al.* (2014: 26) noted:

The fact is that this anticipated personal self-critique is placing too much trust in development facilitators to altruistically change their attitudes towards the development process. Hence it has been cast away as simplistic.

Kapoor (2005) argues participatory development is an ideological phenomenon which is publicised as accommodating, but forecloses different complexities and desires. The pitfalls of participatory development are evidently seen in the various participatory approaches which have been adopted by non-governmental organisations, namely participatory rural appraisal (PRA). In participatory rural appraisal the facilitator is believed to portray an image of being neutral and fair. However, the fact remains that the facilitator manages and oversees the whole activity at every step deciding on the need for and purpose of the meeting, selecting whom to include or exclude on the invitation list, setting the agenda, and shaping the meeting output (Kapoor, 2005; Parduhn, 2011).

Power is left in the hands of the facilitator and as such there is a probability of this power being abused (Parduhn, 2001). Power relations within the community – amongst the elites and marginalised poor – have turned to be one of the areas in which participatory development has received many critics. Scholars have argued that powerful local elites who do not have the rest of the community's interest at heart are normally the most influential in making decisions. This group of people look out for their own interests and do not hesitate to manipulate information gaps that exist between rural communities and donors so as to influence non-governmental organisations to channel development aid towards what they aspire in the community (Osikhena, 2004; Platteau, 2008).

The pitfalls of participatory development do not only occur at the community level but also between various stakeholders, including the donors and non-governmental organisations. Issues of power and the process of interaction are not clearly defined in participatory development. This criticism of participatory development will specifically relate to the process of interaction between donor agencies and non-governmental organisations.

In participatory development the community is taken to have an active role in the identification of challenges, gaps, and prospective solutions in the community. This responsibility allows the community to decide what development projects they want to see in their community and gives them an active participation role in decision making (Irvin *et al.* 2012). When donor funds penetrate the community through non-governmental organisations they are normally allocated

towards a certain umbrella of items of concern, for example livelihoods project, the building of infrastructure such as a dams or bridges, HIV/AIDS and health, or education. The problem arises when community leaders are aware of the key concern areas of the donors and when the resources are limited and only certain projects can be financed.

Confronted with this dilemma, communities are pressured not to disclose their true preference, so as to choose a development project that is in line with what the donor wants (Platteau, 2008; Quadir, 2013). These instances of local community members deciding to be quiet about their practices and aspirations and opting for a hegemonic project as controlled by the donor are evident in a number of studies. According to Tembo (2003: 23) in his work on non-governmental organisations' intervention in rural Malawi, the local population and communities tended to profess the objectives and adopt the style, methods, and language of the non-governmental organisations to obtain access to their support.

The interest in participatory monitoring and evaluation was influenced by the shift in management circles towards performance-based accountability; the need to exert emphasis on achieving results and objectives and not only financial reporting; the increased lack of funds which leads to a demand for greater accountability and demonstrated impact or success; and, lastly, the move towards decentralisation and devolution of central government responsibility and authority to lower levels of government. Within participatory monitoring and evaluation, the problems associated with the participation discourse generally remain unsolved. Stakeholders have different motivations, interests, claims, and power. Mediating power relations between different stakeholders and issues of accountability can pose serious challenges and impede on participation. It is this social setting, yet, significantly, contextualised by a long history of participatory development that informs the framework adopted by this study.

### **2.3.1.2 Participatory approaches**

Over the years, a number of participatory approaches – from participatory assessment (PA), participatory rural appraisal (PRA), participatory action research (PAR), participatory learning and action (PLA), and participatory monitoring and evaluation – have dominated the participatory discourse and have been tested and used in development projects (Chambers, 1994).

Participatory rural appraisal emerged in the 1980's and involves the control of community members in the complete cycle of development initiatives. Participatory rural appraisal promotes local community empowerment. Mukherjee (1995: 1) defines participatory rural appraisal as an approach and a way for grasping rural life and conditions from, with, and by rural people. It is one of the bottom-up approaches and methods to empower rural people to share their local knowledge and analyse their own realities without the development facilitators dominating or lecturing the development process (Chambers, 1997; Duraiappah et al. 2005; Mukherjee, 1995).

Participatory assessments are normally undertaken by a number of United Nations organisations. The objectives of these assessments is to promote community-based involvement of the persons of concern in the projects that are implemented in the communities, to empower local communities, and to provide better protection and planning activities (UNHCR, 2016). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2017) defines participatory assessments as:

A process of building partnerships with refugee women and men of all ages and backgrounds by promoting meaningful participation through structured dialogue. Participatory assessments involve holding separate discussions with women, girls, boys, and men of concern, including adolescents, in order to gather accurate information on the specific protection risks they face and the underlying causes, to understand their capacities, and to hear their proposed solutions (UNHCR, 2015):

Participatory assessments are done through spot checks, participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, household discussions, and focus group discussions. Participatory action research is a systematic qualitative research methodology which amalgamates procedures and skills of “observing, documenting, analysing, and interpreting characteristics, patterns attitudes, and meaning of human phenomena under study” (MacDonald, 2012: 34). Chambers (2008: 298) defines participatory learning and action as:

Part of the family of approaches, methods, attitudes, behaviours, and relationships which enable and empower people to share, analyse, and enhance their knowledge of their life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate, and reflect.

These participatory approaches have dominated the development paradigm and, as a result of these inclusive diverse approaches, non-governmental organisations are able to highlight areas in which they are accountable to all stakeholders

## **2.4 Project Accountability**

### **2.4.1 Conventional monitoring and evaluation**

Over the past decades monitoring and evaluation has become one of the main tools used by organisations to measure development progress and impact. According to Mebrahtu (2002: 501), in an era in which accountability and cost effectiveness are at their peak, development and humanitarian organisations are under pressure not only to improve their performance, but need be able to demonstrate this improvement. The visibility of this improvement is normally achieved by monitoring and evaluating the various projects.

In order to understand monitoring and evaluation, these two concepts need to be unpacked and understood separately. Monitoring is the continuous review of programme implementation to confirm whether planned activities are on track in order to deliver the expected outputs and contribute to the expected impact (UNHCR, 2015: 183). According to Holland *et al.* (2012), monitoring is a continuous function which uses systematic collection of data through applying specified indicators to provide management and main stakeholders of an ongoing development or humanitarian intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives within the use of allocated funds.

Evaluation, on the other hand, refers to the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme, process, policy, its design implementation, and results (Holland *et al.* 2012). Mtshali (2002: 68) defines evaluation as a periodic assessment of the relevant performance, efficiency, and impact of the project in the context of its stated objectives. The emphasis on evaluation is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, and to devote more attention to the assessment of outcomes and impact rather than the actual delivery of outputs (IFRC, 2011).

Monitoring and evaluation is not considered to be one component. Evaluations can take place while the project is not yet complete and this process is interlinked. Refer to appendix 3 which indicates the key distinguishing aspects between monitoring and evaluation.

#### **2.4.1.1 Purposes of monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation work attempts to keep track, record, as well as report on the progress and overall impact and effectiveness of an intervention. Mtshali (2002: 68) states that the purposes of monitoring and evaluation are:

- *Planning and management*: decision makers need to obtain information about the strength and weakness of the project as well as its relevance to the beneficiaries. This information will assist them in taking necessary action concerning various aspects of project management.
- *Improvement of performance*: monitoring and evaluation assists participants to assess whether the project is going according to plan and whether it is making progress towards their goals in term of set objectives.
- *Personal evaluation*: monitoring and evaluation alerts project staff of gaps and areas that need improvement and enables them to find solutions to problems.
- *Allocation of resources*: monitoring and evaluation can assist project staff and other stakeholders to prioritise and utilise limited resources efficiently.
- *Programme justification*: the impact of the project on the quality of life of local communities should be assessed so that stakeholders can make judgements concerning the project's value.
- *Determination of policy*: policy makers need to learn about the effects of a project to be able to determine whether or not to continue with it as is, or to modify or abandon the approaches being used. Monitoring and evaluation helps them to make informed decisions regarding methods which might be tried elsewhere.

#### **2.4.1.2 Types of monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation is used by development, humanitarian, and relief aid organisations. These organisations, however, do not use the same type of monitoring and evaluation. The kind of monitoring and evaluation approach adopted depends on the description of the project or programme, the information they want to obtain, and their capacity. There are different types of monitoring and evaluation approaches which include: results monitoring, compliance monitoring, formative evaluations, and final evaluations. Appendix 4 and 5 provides a description of the other monitoring and evaluation types.

#### **2.4.1.3 Criticisms of conventional monitoring and evaluation**

Scholarly contestations of the conventional monitoring and evaluation methods have dominated project and programme management literature. Dissatisfaction with this method of monitoring and evaluation emanates from the rationale of why it is conducted. Chaplowe *et al.* (2007) argue that civil society organisations conduct this practice just to impress donors and to solicit for more funding. Mtshali (2000) argues that conventional monitoring and evaluation methods are founded on the experimental methods developed by the natural sciences. Such methods devote much attention to financial and economic returns with very minimal regard or consideration to the actual social impact.

Conventional monitoring and evaluation research employs large samples, tries to obtain random samples of subjects, and seeks statistical generalisation. Such data does not illustrate the impact of a development or humanitarian intervention, hence these methods are considered inadequate for monitoring social or people-orientated programmes and projects because of their qualitative goals and objectives (Mtshali, 2000).

According to Chambers (1997: 28), conventional monitoring and evaluation is conducted by external evaluators who make use of their own criteria and measurements. They concentrate more on tangible and quantitative outcomes of projects and neglect people's culture and what they value. It serves the needs of project implementers and donor agencies but neglects the concerns of other stakeholders involved in the development efforts (Vernooy *et al.* 2017). Conventional monitoring and evaluation is costly and ineffective in assessing real project

achievement. It fails to involve project beneficiaries in the process and has become a donor-driven tool to control projects and development (Almazaan, 2009).

### **2.4.2 Accountability**

Accountability is a term that has dominated the private sector and civil society organisations. The most outstanding attribute of the concept is the responsibility to give an account of what you were obligated to carry out. Jordan (2005: 11) defines accountability as the fundamental principle of responsible practice for any institution, whether it be public, private, or a non-governmental organisation. It is the duty to report on one's activities to a set of legitimate authorities. An entity becomes accountable when acknowledging that they have made a promise to do something and have accepted a moral and legal duty to do its best to deliver on that promise (Moore, 2001: 750). This concept gained prominence and became a hotly discussed topic in the development arena during the 1990s. Since then, several treaties such as The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action have been signed. These treaties have been recognised as the international standards that regulate the actual performance and accountability of organisations (Moore, 2001).

Non-governmental organisation accountability emerged as one of the hottest topics because of the expeditious growth and increase of non-governmental organisations that flooded the development sector. These organisations received funds from various donors and the work they did grew. As a result, there were demands for greater transparency and accountability among the donors, government, and public (Lee, 2004). Due to the increased numbers of non-governmental organisations that claimed to be assisting the poorest of the poor, there were issues and scandals of legitimacy among the actors. This also escalated the debate on the need for accountability and transparency among non-governmental organisation actors. Non-governmental organisation accountability is an ongoing process between two or more stakeholders. Each of the stakeholders expects the non-governmental organisation to be transparent about its activities. There are number of benefits for non-governmental organisations that are holistically accountable to their stakeholders as demonstrated in the next sub-section.

#### **2.4.2.1 Benefits of accountability**

Part of the benefit of non-governmental organisations being held accountable by stakeholders is that it increases the legitimacy of the organisation and shows that it is being honest and transparent in all its operations. The legitimacy of the organisation can also increase if the non-governmental organisation focuses on being accountable to the beneficiaries (Laybourn, 2012: 4). When non-governmental organisations are accountable, it increases their chances of receiving more funding from donors. Accountability also increases organisational effectiveness since the organisation receives feedback from the stakeholders and can re-design the project cycle in order to achieve the set objectives.

Authors such as Tblisi (2009) and Jordan (2005) argue that accountability has the ability to build trust and increase dedication and continued support of stakeholders. It also increases the organisation's performance and learning, and proves wrong the judgement that non-governmental organisations are unforthcoming, undemocratic in their decision making process, and have adopted mediocre standards of governance (Brown *et al.* 2001; Lee, 2004:7; Laybourn, 2012). Non-governmental organisations have adopted a participatory stakeholder approach in their accountability activities which promotes shifting accountability to those who hold managerial positions over an organisation to those affected by the activities of the organisation (Lee, 2004: 6).

The main stakeholders identified in the stakeholder approach are the donors, government, beneficiaries, the general public, and those internal to the organisation such as staff and board members (Lee, 2004). Non-governmental organisation accountability is not a fixed process. As such, there are two non-governmental organisation accountability types that are used among the various stakeholders, namely, upward and downward accountability. Upward accountability refers to the process whereby non-governmental organisations solely focus on giving account of their activities to donors, government, top management, and other stakeholders that fund and provide resources and other support to the organisation. Downward accountability refers to non-governmental organisations also realising their obligation to account for their activities to the actual beneficiaries of the projects (Agyemang *et al.* 2009). Within these two types of accountability approaches there are different mechanisms that have been developed for use in non-governmental organisation accountability implementation and verification processes. Refer to appendix 6 which summarises the non-governmental organisation accountability mechanisms.

#### **2.4.2.2 Challenges within non-governmental organisation accountability systems**

The challenge with downward accountability is that among the different stakeholders there are “attributes of the relationship such as power differences or degrees of trust that affect the extent to which the stakeholder can hold the non-governmental organisation accountable” (Brown *et al.* 2001: 573). When the expectations and claims of different stakeholders are different, the non-governmental organisation will have to choose which stakeholders’ claims will be honoured. Authors such as Estrella (2011) and Chambers (2010) note that the most powerful stakeholder’s claims will be perceived as the principal claims to be honoured.

The problems associated with non-governmental organisation accountability emanate from the issue of different stakeholder interests and claims. This is also an issue within participatory monitoring and evaluation. However, to address the issue of non-governmental organisation accountability, Brown *et al.* (2001) describe a strategic triangle analysis which is used to arrive at a level where stakeholder claims will be valued. However, in practice this process is not straightforward. Lee (2004: 10) argues that non-governmental organisations have adopted what is called a “survival strategy” which occurs when they prioritise their relationships with donors instead of project beneficiaries.

#### **2.4.3 Participatory monitoring and evaluation**

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a bottom-up approach adopted by non-governmental organisations as a way of strengthening learning and change at community, project, and institutional levels (Chambers, 1997). According to Pant (2007: 2), “Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves local people, development agencies, and policy makers deciding together how progress in development should be measured and results acted upon.” From another perspective Lawrence (2002: 1) defines participatory monitoring and evaluation and as:

A powerful approach that empowers beneficiaries, enhances equity of benefit distribution, strengthens organisational capacity, and improves effectiveness of information gathering, transparency of decision making, and implementation of policy.

The advantages of using participatory monitoring and evaluation and are that it permits sharing of skills and knowledge through methodical documentation and analysis based on broad-based

participation, it enhances all stakeholders' understanding of the development process, it improves the sustainability and effectiveness of the project execution, it increases the reliability of findings that are locally relevant, it traces the progress of the development initiative with all stakeholders, it allows for efficient allocation of resources, and it allows for necessary changes to be made if the findings indicate that some of the indicators will not be met (Almazan, 2009; Lawrence, 2002; Sartorius, 2002). However, this progress monitoring and evaluation approach, which is favoured by many bottom-up development scholars, has challenges at both community and institutional levels. Participatory monitoring and evaluation is time-consuming and requires genuine commitment from the all stakeholders involved, especially the local beneficiaries. There are varieties of power, gender, and group dynamics that can affect the representation of the local participants. Lastly, participatory monitoring and evaluation is an expensive process that demands many resources (Dillion, 2018)

The difference between participatory monitoring and evaluation and other conventional monitoring and evaluations is that participatory monitoring and evaluation involves stakeholders who are directly and indirectly involved in the programme in selecting the indicators to measure changes, in collecting information, and in evaluating findings (Estrella *et al.* 2000). It focuses on five main aspects which are not the key elements in other conventional participatory monitoring and approaches: participation, learning, negotiation, flexibility, and information produced. Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves the input of various stakeholders such as the local beneficiaries of the projects, donors, researchers, project or programme staff, management, local communities, central government, and technical staff, among others (Estrella *et al.* 2000). In addition, conventional monitoring and evaluation is most likely be conducted when the programme or project is nearly complete, and does not permit opportunity for improvement during early and mid-term evaluation (Vernoy *et al.* 2017). Appendix 7 provides a summary of the differences between participatory monitoring and evaluation and conventional monitoring and evaluation.

#### **2.4.3.1 Stakeholders**

The term “stakeholder” has become vogue over the past years. It has dominated the participatory development era with the view that there needs to be a participatory platform on which stakeholders can engage on any development initiatives. Zimmermann *et al.* (2007) note that the term stakeholder has a variety of meanings which includes the notion of “recipient” and “responsible party” in the context of development interventions. According to the World

Bank (2010), stakeholders can be individuals, organisations, or unorganised groups. These groups have a declared or conceivable interest or stake in a particular concern. Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves a range of stakeholders from top management actors to lower grassroots levels.

The key step in participatory monitoring and evaluation is to engage with all users that are involved in the process either directly or indirectly. These users can include donor agencies, research institutions, government departments, local municipalities, policy makers, and communities. The roles of these users differ according to the intention of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. For instance, the key role of donor or funding agencies is to inject capital to run the projects and to provide expert information and analysis of the project, while the role of the non-governmental organisation is to manage and coordinate the implementation of the project while taking into consideration all stakeholders' needs (Emtage, 2004: 10).

In a scenario where the process is fully participatory the users should be involved from the beginning to the end of the process. Authors such as Estrella (2000), Mtshali (2000), and Mckenzie *et al.* (2006) argue that stakeholders should be involved in defining the problem, collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data for project development and analysis. Jobs (1997: 2) states that stakeholders in participatory monitoring and evaluation are involved in defining what will be evaluated, who will be involved, when each stage will take place, the various participatory methods for collecting information, the analysis to be used, and how the findings will be consolidated.

#### *Stakeholder Analysis*

In any development intervention that includes several actors, a stakeholder analysis needs to be conducted. A stakeholder analysis is a kind of methodology used to facilitate institutional and policy reform processes by incorporating the needs of those who have a stake or an interest in the reforms under consideration (World Bank, 2010). The facilitator normally conducts stakeholder analysis of a non-governmental organisation. The main purpose of the exercise is to reveal and potentially assist in reducing the power imbalance among weaker stakeholders, to identify the strengths and weakness of the group, and to gather detailed information and understanding of the various actors.

#### **2.4.3.2 Power**

According to Gaventa (1980), the purpose of power is to prevent individuals or groups from participating in the decision-making process and to obtain the passive agreement of these groups. Many scholars have contributed to the academic understanding of power and have defined power in different ways. Simpson *et al.* (2014) identify the following major power theories: social power theory, resource theory, independence theory, dyadic power theory, power within relationships, and power approach theory. Refer to appendix 8 for detailed definitions of the different power theories. There are different dimensions of power which include power over, power to, power with, and power within. These dimensions have different implications in practice. Refer to appendix 9 which explains the different dimensions as well as the implications in practice. Having power is generally either perceived as having power *over* something (dominant or sovereign power) or having the power *to do* something (Barton & Duvell, 2005).

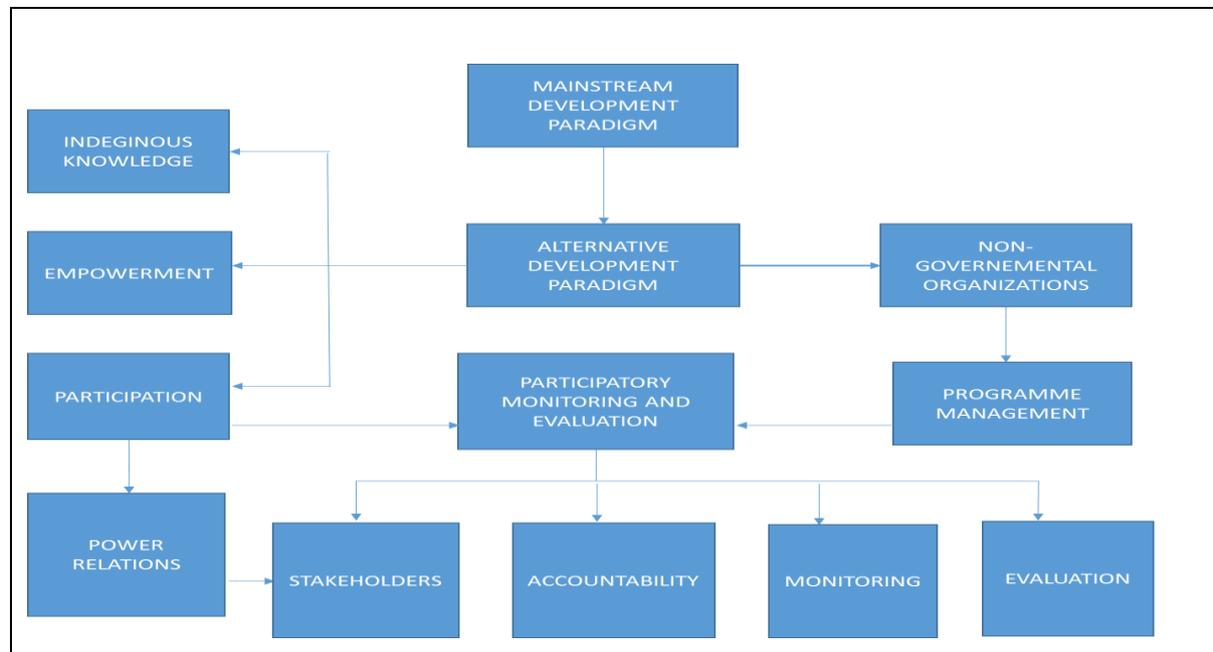
#### *Power relations*

Power relations are eminent in settings where there are different types of groups or stakeholders. Donor agencies have been understood to be the most influential and powerful group of stakeholders because of the funds they inject in any particular project. Academic donor critics' view of donor relations is that the donor can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor. They are also of the view that there is a lack of equality that no amount of well-intentioned communication can remove (Lister, 2000; Lukes, 1974). Furthermore, existing literature has shown that funding agencies tend to yield more power than the rest of the stakeholders in participatory monitoring and evaluation because of their ability to withdraw funding if they are of the view that the non-governmental organisation is not complying with their requirements or if they desire to stop sponsoring the project for various reasons. World Vision International is a victim of the above. Two of their top donors from Australia and Germany decided to withdraw funding after there were allegations that the World Vision International director had siphoned funds to the Islamic military group, Hamas, in 2016. Refer to appendix 10 for the case study of World Vision International.

Power relations are also eminent at all levels of engagement within the community. Power relations between project beneficiaries are expressed through age, gender, group status, social class, education level, and affiliations to prominent figures such as local chiefs and traditional leaders in the community. Current studies have also proven it is increasingly recognised that power can still be at work within gender homogeneous groups (Holte-Mckenzie *et al.* 2006).

## 2.5. Analytical Framework and Chapter Summary

**Figure 2.1 Analytical Framework Diagram**



**Source: Author (2016)**

The analytical framework of this study comes from the different concepts indicated in the analytical framework diagram. These are fundamental concepts which elucidate the alternatives to the development paradigm. The concepts are interlinked and provide clarity around implicit assumptions, especially on issues of the level of engagement of stakeholders and power issues. The framework begins by presenting the shift in the mainstream development paradigm to the alternative development paradigm based on the downfall of the latter, and then presents the buzzwords which took over the development paradigm, namely, participation, empowerment, and indigenous knowledge. It presents the favoured new agents of change in development discourse, which are non-governmental organisations, and outlines how they manage their programmes. The remaining concepts are the pillars which define participatory monitoring and evaluation. The main concepts which are of importance in framing the analysis of this study are participation, empowerment, stakeholders, and power relations. This analytical framework informed the data collection and analysis of this study. This was done by assessing and measuring the relationship between World Vision and the various concepts, for instance after defining and discussing participation as a whole, the researcher was able to position and

detect the level of participation within the organization, and this approach was used for all the other concepts.

While it is important to note that the PM&E frameworks in general encompass other elements such as effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, impact and sustainability, the conceptual framework of this study did not directly include these elements, however, some of these elements were dealt with holistically under certain concepts. Elements such as sustainability, impact, and efficiency were not included in the framework because the objectives of the study was not examine the influence, impact or duration in which World Vision can conducted PM&E but instead to analyse the dynamics of participation with a focus on power relations.

## **2.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the different perspectives embedded in the idea of participatory monitoring and evaluation. In an attempt to obtain more information about the process, various concepts that are linked to participatory monitoring and evaluation were examined and discussed. These concepts all highlighted the importance of project beneficiary involvement in decision making as well as the complexity of adhering to the principles of each concept in reality. Furthermore, the chapter situates participatory monitoring and evaluation within the participatory development theory. This theory captures the general challenges and downfall of participatory approaches, including participatory monitoring and evaluation. In addition, it stipulates the power dynamics that affect stakeholders. The theory further confirms the motivation of this study: that issues of power and the process of interaction among stakeholders are not clearly defined in participatory development or in the development paradigm. Overall, the nature of this study was rooted in the desire to evaluate and understand participatory monitoring and evaluation, the extent to which non-governmental organisations handle the power imbalances of stakeholders, and how they conduct the process. Consequently, the research utilised qualitative research approaches as discussed in the next chapter to obtain the findings.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

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#### 3.1 Introduction

The study set out to investigate how World Vision South Africa conducts the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and how they reconcile and accommodate the interest of the different stakeholders throughout this process. The study was motivated by concerns that donors are not an equal actor in projects they sponsor, and may have undue influence on a non-governmental organisation that conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation (Tortajada, 2016). The main objective of the study was therefore to identify the manner in which organisations conduct, negotiate, reconcile, and accommodate the different interests and positions of stakeholders in the presence of power dynamics using World Vision as a case study. The study asked specific questions related to the conduct of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and the position and role of stakeholders. To provide answers to these questions, the study developed a methodology that would provide appropriate answers.

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted by the study as informed by the research problems and research questions. The chapter begins by describing the philosophical foundation of the study, before outlining the research design, research strategy, and data collection methods that were employed in the research. This is followed by a description of the sample, sampling strategy demographics, biographic data, and ethical considerations of the research.

#### 3.2 Philosophical Foundation of the Study

All forms of research are influenced by philosophical theories, which provide the reasons as to why a researcher chooses a specific research approach. The philosophical theories can also be referred to as epistemologies, ontologies, paradigms, or broadly conceived research methodologies (Creswell, 2013). The epistemological orientation of this study is inclined towards social constructivism since it seeks to explore power relations between entities in positions of power, such as World Vision in this case, and those who are recipients of aid, who

are in the majority of instances vulnerable and consequentially powerless. By definition, “Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and is concerned with the question of what counts as valid knowledge” (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002: 4). Four main epistemological orientations exist, namely, the transformative approach, pragmatism, positivism, and the interpretive approach which is also known as social constructivism.

This study adopted an interpretive and social constructivist view. According to Bryman (2001), the origin of the interpretive approach is found in the human science, philosophy, history, and anthropology. The methodology focuses on the way human beings conceptualise their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. A social constructivist view enables the researcher to rely more on the participants’ view of the situation being studied (Creswell, 2013). The goal of the social constructivist view is to interpret the meaning others have about the world. This epistemology is suited to this study because it seeks to understand and interpret the respondents’ and other key informants’ opinions in order to determine the manner in which World Vision South Africa negotiates, reconcile, and accommodates the different interests and positions of stakeholders in situations where one stakeholder wields more power than other entities.

### **3.3 Research Design**

Research design is very important in research as it determines the success or failure of a research study. The research study undertaken is not new per se, but it is one that still seeks to identify and clarify issues of participation in monitoring and evaluation, particularly the role and voices of the project beneficiaries. As indicated in chapter one, the study focuses on participatory monitoring and evaluation, in particular the level of involvement of project beneficiaries in the process, which is an area that remains unclear. Babbie *et al.* (2009) are of the view that explorative studies examine new interests and the research findings help determine future research. It also enables the development of new hypothesis. Hence, the study sought to understand the level of involvement of this particular group of stakeholders.

The study mainly employed a qualitative research design although quantitative data was used to rank the level of power relations between stakeholders. Qualitative research is a form of a

social inquiry also referred to as an “umbrella term” because it comprises of different approaches (Atkinson *et al.* 2001). These approaches seek to explore the perspectives, feelings, and experiences of people and what lies at the core of their lives (Molloway & Whoder, 2002). The study intended to obtain in-depth information on the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, which can be better served through qualitative methods.

### **3.4 Research Strategy**

Research strategy refers to the step-by-step action plan employed to obtain findings to a study. The researcher used three research strategies to obtain information: the case study was the primary strategy followed by key informants and, lastly, the review of relevant literature.

#### **3.4.1 The case study**

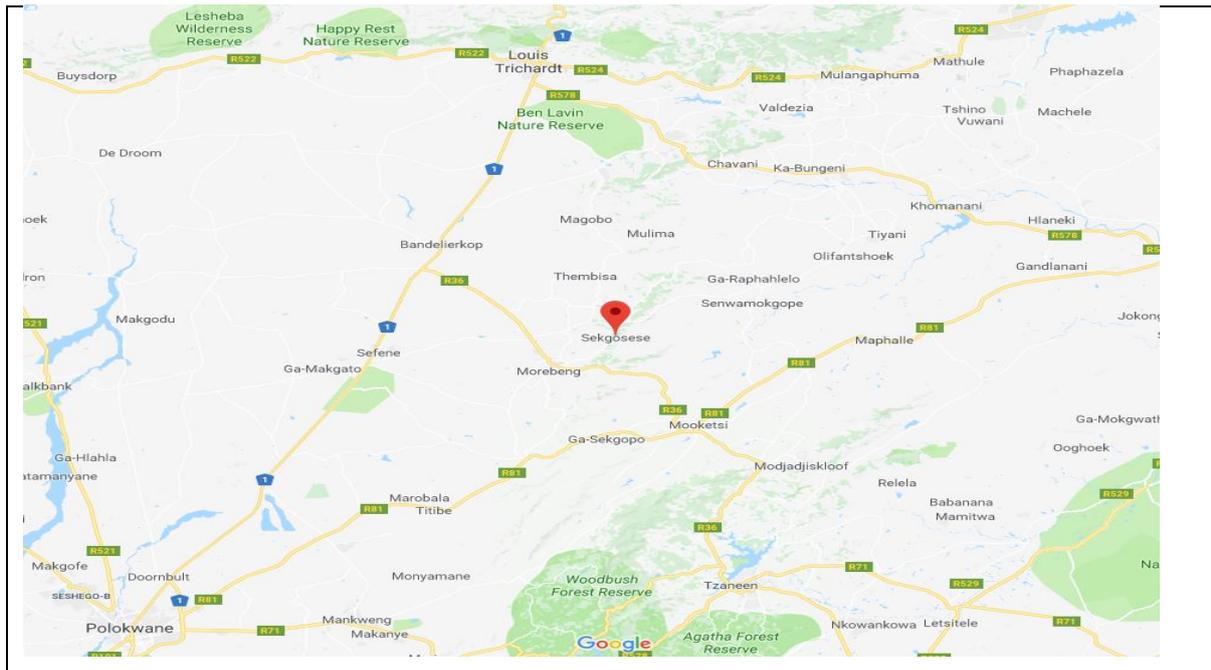
Rowley (2002) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident. The study made use of an exploratory case study, which, according to Baxter & Jack (2008: 548), is a technique used to investigate those conditions in which intervention being evaluated has no clear single set of outcomes. Using a case study enabled gathering of insights that would not have been obtained from other research approaches. The case study focused on how the participatory monitoring and evaluation process works in practice, and the role of project participants in the process.

#### **Study area- Limpopo**

The World Vision South Africa Thusalushaka project was used as a case study because World Vision is one of the development organisations that engage in participatory monitoring and evaluation. In South Africa, World Vision has different development projects in different provinces. The choice of the project was guided by recommendations from the organisation head office in Johannesburg. Furthermore, their office in the Limpopo province where the World Vision Thusalushaka area development is situated was accessible to the researcher. Thusalushaka is vernacular for “helping the nation”, and the project is under the World Vision offices in Sekgosese that cover the Makhado and Greater Letaba Municipality in the Limpopo

province. In Limpopo, World Vision has a number of different projects which target different beneficiary groups and involve a number of stakeholders that share the same vision of development in the community which suited the purpose of the study. Below is a geographical map of the area development programs.

**Figure 3.1: Map of Sekgosese in the Limpopo Province**



**Source: Google maps (2016)**

### 3.4.2 Sampling

The sampling procedures used in the research study determine the confidence people have in the information collected. Polansky (1995) defines a sample as a group of subjects that are chosen from a larger group. For this research study, the sampling procedures used were purposive and random. A total of 30 World Vision actors were engaged with through different data collection methods comprising five World Vision staff members at the Thusalushaka area development program, one World Vision staff member from the Johannesburg National office, 20 project beneficiaries of the organisation’s Evoke literacy programme which were selected randomly from the list which was provided by World Vision, and four other project beneficiaries from other projects. The other four project beneficiaries were chosen to be part

of the sample in order to provide insights of how World Vision conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation from a general perspective when looking at other projects. The study utilised purposive sampling in recruiting the nine key informants that were interviewed. The key informants were purposively chosen because they are all part of South Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Association and were able to provide deeper insights on participatory monitoring and evaluation, especially with regards to the power dynamics of different stakeholders.

According to Maree and Pietersen (2014), purposive sampling is used in situations where sampling is done with a specific purpose. The study made use of this sampling technique because it had no interest in engaging with general World Vision project beneficiaries, only those beneficiaries that were directly involved in monitoring and evaluation of the projects. As a result, the researcher only engaged with the project beneficiaries that were pointed out as being involved in monitoring and evaluation by the World Vision Thusalushaka area development programme officials.

Silverman (2014), states that purposive sampling gives the researcher room to choose a case because it illustrates some features or processes that they are interested in. Babbie, Mouton, Vorster, & Prozesky (2009) assert that it is important to select a sample based on the researcher's judgment and the purpose of the study. The study also utilised purposive sampling in order to choose the project site because, according to the national office, the Thusalushaka area development programme had an active participatory monitoring and evaluation programme in their projects.

The researcher employed the following research techniques within the case study: individual interviews with World Vision key actors and project beneficiaries, focus group discussions, participant observational techniques, and a review of the available literature.

### **3.5 Research Techniques**

#### **3.5.1 Review of World Vision literature**

In any study that investigates contemporary development issues that have attracted scholarly interest, research organisations, the media, and involves organisations with a history in research, a review of published sources of material is always a logical starting point (Gaborone, 2006). To obtain information on how World Vision operates and how the organisation conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation, the researcher made use of the organisation's internal and external documents. The documents clearly stipulated the step-by-step process of how the organisation operates, especially at a community and national level. The following World Vision documents were used to collect data on World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation and project beneficiary involvement. Some of these documents were obtained from the internet.

- World Vision International and South Africa annual reports
- Child Protection community engagement tools.
- Community Engagement tools
- Baseline guides
- Learning through Evaluation and Accountability Planning (LEAP) tools

During fieldwork in Limpopo, the researcher also had access to World Vision's monthly and quarterly reports of community meeting and other engagements with other stakeholders.

### **3.5.2 Individual interviews**

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with six World Vision staff members and four project beneficiaries. The benefit of semi-structured interviews is that they are flexible and give an opportunity for the interviewer to probe the participant in order to gain more in-depth information (King & Horrocks, 2010). The six World Vision staff members who were interviewed included five staff members who were from the Thusalushaka area development programme and one staff member from the national office. The semi-structured interviews with World Vision staff members were meant to elicit information on how the organisation includes and negotiates the interest of all stakeholders in practice, how it deals with power dynamics, and how they conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation. Interviews with World Vision staff members took place at the Thusalushaka area development programme and the national office in Johannesburg.

The second set of semi-structured interviews was done with the other four beneficiaries. The researcher conducted semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the local beneficiaries of the projects that are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation at the Thusalushaka area development programme. These semi-structured interviews were undertaken to collect data to provide an understanding of how the project beneficiaries understand participatory monitoring and evaluation, levels of participation, and how they participated in participatory monitoring and evaluation. For this study, the face-to-face semi-structured interviews also made it possible for the researcher to understand the extent to which these local beneficiaries were involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation and how they perceived World Vision as an actor of participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Interviews were conducted in English, in a private setting, and lasted between 20-35 minutes. In all the interviews the researcher took a leading role and guided the conversation to cover selected themes. The researcher also allowed each interviewee to explain their point of view and express their opinions (Niuwenhuis, 2014). The researcher made use of an interview guide. Data collected was recorded with both hand-written notes and an audio recorder, subject to the participants' consent.

Interviews are the most common qualitative data collection method. An interview is a conversation between the interviewer who is the researcher and an interviewee, it is a conversation that is less open and undirected than everyday chitchat, but less structured than a questionnaire (King & Horrocks, 2010). Qualitative interviews make it possible to view the world through the eyes of the participant and also for the researcher to listen and probe the participants view first hand (Niuwenhuis, 2014; Winston, 2003; Mudavanhu, 2008; Hammersley, 2013)

### **3.5.3 Focus group discussion**

Focus group discussions were carried out with participants that were selected through random sampling. Two focus group discussions were done with 10 participants in each group. Focus group discussions enabled the researcher to obtain a substantial amount of data within a short period of time, generate a hypothesis based on the perception of the participants, and gather information about participants' perceptions about their involvement and contribution in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Through data collected via the focus group the researcher managed to interpret the information obtained from the participants and analysed how World Vision conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation (Freitas *et al.* 1998). Focus group discussions were conducted with the project beneficiaries at Thusalushaka area development programme. The discussions were held with the youth that were part of the Evoke literacy programme. The participants comprised of both 10 girls and 10 boys between the ages of 17 and 22 years. Due to the number of youth that form part of the programme, only two focus group discussions were conducted in order to make the data manageable. The researcher followed the focus group discussion guide. Some of the questions asked during these discussions were:

- To what extent are you involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation?
- What roles do you play in the process?

The researcher used open-ended questions to facilitate the gaining of in-depth information from the participants. The rest of the questions used during the discussions can be found in appendix 17. The groups were focused, as the members were involved in World Vision projects. The researcher attempted to create a tolerant environment in the focus groups that encouraged participants to share perceptions, points of view, experiences, and concerns without pressurising them to reach a consensus. The only challenge the researcher faced while facilitating the discussions was that some participants reported that they did not understand English properly. As such the researcher was assisted by a volunteer who interpreted some of the questions and answers that were not clear. The volunteer and researcher maintained a favourable atmosphere. When there were some disagreements they were resolved amicably by allowing each participant to air their views. One example of the disagreements was that each participant had a different date of when the Evoke project started and the number of meetings they attended before it was implemented.

A focus group is a type of in-depth interview accomplished in a group, whose meeting presents characteristics defined with respect to the proposal, size, composition, and interview

procedures, the focus or object analysis is the interaction inside the group (Freitas *et al.* 1998: 2). An advantage of using focus group discussion is that the method is socially oriented it involves studying participants in an atmosphere more natural than artificial experimental circumstances and this method is also more relaxed than one-to-one interview, and allows them critically engage with their peers.

#### **3.5.4 Participant observation**

Marshall *et al.* (2006: 98) states that participation observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting. The researcher employed participant observation techniques to a limited extent by sitting as an observer in the weekly meeting of one of the project participatory monitoring and evaluation activities with the youth in Thusalushaka. This was done as a way of observing the nature and manner in which the organisation obtains the data from the local beneficiaries and further reconciles it in order to come up with a monitoring report. Being a participant observer enabled the researcher to identify and be actively involved in the practice and this positively influenced the nature of the data obtained. The immersion within the meeting permitted the researcher to see, hear, and begin to experience reality as the local participants do (Marshall 2006: 100).

#### **3.5.5 Key informant interviews**

Key informant interviews are qualitative, in-depth interviews with people who have extensive knowledge or experience in particular field. Key informants are individuals who are “handpicked” to be interviewed specifically because of criteria such as their knowledge, age, experience, or reputation, and who provide information about a particular field from a very specific point of view (Aral & Douglas, 2007). As a second strategy of obtaining data, the researcher made use of key informant interviews as the individuals were considered to be “experts” on a subject and therefore allowed maximum opportunity to tell their stories. This research technique targeted experts from different organisations. The respondents were purely those people who were able to provide answers to the questions that the researcher posed.

According to Gillham (2000), these “experts” are likely to be “privy to the information that is likely to be withheld by others” and should have a particular comprehensive understanding of participatory monitoring and evaluation. Key informant interviews allowed the researcher and

the respondents a great deal of flexibility as the researcher was able to follow interesting avenues that emerged in the interview and the participants were able to give a fuller picture of what they were trying to put across. Key informants were selected from the following organisations: the United Nations Development Programme (one selected), the South Africa Monitoring and Evaluation Association (five selected), the United States Agency for International Development (one selected), the Department of Telecommunication and Postal Services, (one selected), and the Australia Awards Alumni South Africa (one selected). As a member of the South African Monitoring and Evaluation Association (SAMEA), the researcher made use of the communication platform and requested key informants for the study. During interviews with key informants from the SAMEA's, they also directed the researcher to other people that they considered to be experts in the field.

The researcher was guided by an interview schedule which was developed by the researcher and approved by the researcher's supervisor. De Vos *et al.* (2005: 296) noted that interviews should be guided by the schedule, not dictated by it. Through the use of semi-structured interviews participants were able to introduce new issues that the researcher might have not focused on.

The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that such interviews are a useful way of gathering large amounts of data quickly. However, this method also has the following limitations: the informant will tell the researcher what they think the researcher wants to hear and some participants are unwilling to share the information they have (De Vos *et al.* 2005). Interviews with the key informants were done either face-to-face or telephonically. Refer to appendix for a detailed breakdown of key informants.

### **3.5.6 Literature review**

In addition to the primary data collection tools, the researcher also relied on secondary information obtained through a literature review. According to Bryman (2008), secondary analysis involves the review of existing written work. The approach to the literature review employed a focus on academic literature, reports, media articles and reports, and commissioned studies which focused more on the key elements of the framework of the study. The researcher

drew selectively on this literature by extracting material specific to the study from a wider range of topics which yielded relevant literature on participation and power relations and other group dynamics in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

The researcher made use of relevant journal articles, reports, e-resources, training manuals, and textbooks on participatory monitoring and evaluation. By using this technique the researcher was able to obtain in-depth information on the general overview of participatory monitoring and evaluation and how it should be conducted. In addition, this method was cost-efficient and it was less time consuming because the literature was easily accessible from the internet and the university library.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

According to Creswell (2008: 139), qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. This process involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting significance from trivia, identifying patterns and themes, and developing a framework for explicitly communicating the essence of what the data reveals. The researcher used both a thematic and content analysis. Braun & Clark (2006: 79) define a thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting on patterns within data. By identifying the re-occurring themes the researcher was able to analyse the data and come up with answers for the posed research questions.

A content analysis refers to any systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information (Wimmer & Dominick, 2010: 156). This approach was chosen because content analysis simplifies very large documents into enumerative information and it can identify participants' intentions, attitudes, and emotions as well as revealing any inequality, power, and propaganda issues (Grbich, 2013). Content analysis was also employed for most of the information obtained from the case study and from the focus groups. The researcher constantly compared the information on the transcripts with that of the voice recordings in order to come up with an accurate analysis.

Data analysis in this study was done manually. In line with qualitative data analysis procedures the researcher analysed the data as it was obtained during the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. This analysis was facilitated through participant observation wherein the researcher would note any non-verbal behaviours, poses, and exclamations made by the participants. As the data collection was in process the proceedings were being recorded and later transcribed and analysed. The researcher thoroughly read through all the transcripts in order to establish patterns and themes that kept re-occurring and sieved through World Vision's documents. The transcripts were analysed after the interviews. Data analysis in this study was done manually. After all the data had been put together the researcher identified gaps and went back to the transcripts to fill these gaps.

The explanations and responses from the participants as well as the organisation's documents were grounded in themes in order to answer the different research questions in this study. The themes were also drawn and identified from some of the concepts discussed in the literature review. The main themes that emerged from the analysis were World Vision and its PM&E process, other stakeholders and participation in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, and power relations among the stakeholders. These themes were used to achieve the objective of this study. Within the themes, use was also made of raw data in the form of quotations and cases to further emphasise specific findings.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations and Challenges Encountered**

When conducting research it is important to identify and evaluate ethical issues that will be involved. According to Bryman (2012: 130), ethical considerations are significant because they directly relate to the integrity of a piece of research and the discipline involved. According to Beach *et al.* (2013: 15), some ethical responsibilities are:

- To protect the rights of the participants in the research process
- To report results fairly and accurately
- To ensure safety of participants
- To cooperate with colleagues and share research data

In engaging with local participants, key informants and World Vision actors, the following are ethical considerations that were applied in this study:

The researcher made sure that no damage to the public perception of the organisation or loss of public trust was caused by the research by making sure that all documents, reports, and findings from the organisation were kept safe. Only the researcher had access to the files and ensured that no questions asked during the focus groups or in interviews raised suspicion of World Vision not conducting accurate participatory monitoring and evaluation. The researcher sought permission from World Vision to obtain data as a participant observer. To request this permission, a letter of request was sent to World Vision South Africa's national office in Johannesburg, indicating the purpose of the study, its goal, objectives, and the need to collect data from their project beneficiaries, as well as how information obtained will be used. An approval letter was obtained from the organisation to conduct fieldwork in the area development programmes in Limpopo. The letter is included in the appendices.

The local participants and key informants signed a consent form to show that they had willingly decided to participate in the research. Henning *et al.* (2004: 73) mention that participants' informed consent is required at two levels, namely: the utilisation of the research findings and their privacy and sensitivity and how these will be protected. All stakeholders that were likely to be involved in the research were informed that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the research. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from participating at any stage of the research, if they so wished. As a method of promoting anonymity among the stakeholders, use was made of alphabetic letters to be specific acronyms of the individual's title or role. Babbie (1998: 441) recommends that the researcher should undertake not to reveal information that might expose the identity of a respondent. Lastly, the researcher only reported results that were fair and accurate and not biased towards any stakeholder involved in the research.

The preparation for data gathering as well as the data collection process and analysis were the most demanding parts of the study. During the data collection process the researcher had to search by referral for other community members who did not live close to the World Vision offices who also participated in the projects and this was time consuming. Some of the community members were illiterate in the English Language and others were very slow to

answer the questions and this caused the researcher to explain further or ask the World Vision volunteer to interpret ,which was likewise time consuming.

### **3.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the methodology chosen and followed by the author of this research study. The steps within this chapter and the subsequent information formed the greater majority of this research paper, informing the themes identified, arguments of the selection of the methodology put forward, and conclusions drawn. This chapter began by presenting the philosophical background of the study which was adopted. The epistemology used was a social constructive and interpretative view. The following sections of the chapter unpacked the study area, which was in Limpopo, the research design, research strategy, and sampling techniques used for this study.

The research design used in this study was qualitative in nature, although quantitative data was used to rank the level of power relations between stakeholders. Random and purposive sampling techniques were used to identify the different informants that were engaged with during data collection. This chapter also described in detail the research strategies that were employed to gather data, namely, a case study. Within the case study the following techniques were used to obtain data: focus group discussions, interviews with World Vision staff and project beneficiaries, participant observation, and a review of organisation documents and literature on the topic. The last sections of the chapter presents detailed information of the data analysis procedure which involved a content and thematic analysis and ethical considerations and anticipated problems of the study. The next chapter discusses the outcomes of the methodology, presenting and analysing the data collected.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND WORLD VISION**

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#### **4.1 Introduction**

Modern jargon uses stereotype words like children use Lego toy pieces. Like Lego pieces, the words fit arbitrarily together and support the most fanciful constructions. They have no content, but do serve a function. As these words are separate from any context, they are ideal for manipulative purposes. ‘Participation’ belongs to this category of words (MajidRahnema, 2010: 267).

The above quote signals the complexity of the concept of participation and how it has been used in many contexts, sometimes for manipulative purposes. This is particularly true of participatory monitoring and evaluation, which as a process has been manipulated by donors and non-governmental organisations to justify certain interventions. In order to understand how the participatory monitoring and evaluation process works, it is crucial to establish the principle behind Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation and the main actors involved, and the roles they play. Participatory monitoring and evaluation has been presented as a bottom-up approach which empowers project beneficiaries who are the custodians of the development initiatives. As such, like all processes that are centred on people’s development, it has been presented as a process where the expert learns from the locals who are seen as knowledgeable. Very few have dared to look deeper into the process and to interrogate the participation process.

This chapter provides a broad overview of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and World Vision’s activities. This background chapter seeks to situate World Vision South Africa’s participatory monitoring and evaluation process within this larger context. Section 4.2 looks broadly at the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, focusing on how it should be conducted, when it should be conducted, and who should conduct it. Section 4.3 is an analysis of World Vision International, its global activities, and its basic principles.

## **4.2 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in Principle**

Participatory monitoring and evaluation comes across as a bottom-up approach adopted by non-governmental organisations and other development and humanitarian organisations as a way of strengthening learning and change at the community, project, and institutional levels (Chambers, 1997). In 2004, during the World Urban Forum, it was declared that a shift from marginalisation to consultation to participation should be encouraged among development

interventions (United Nations 2007). The shift towards more people-centred development and less state- and other authoritarian development cushioned the increase in demand for alternative methods of planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating of development projects.

The United Nations (2007) adopted Resolution S-24/2 on 1 July, 2000 with the aim of strengthening structures for participation for all project beneficiaries. The key feature of majority of the amendments and resolutions passed at various development summits was that a more inclusive and participatory approach had to be adopted in order for sustainable development to occur. Thus, as Pant (2007: 2) noted, “Participatory monitoring and evaluation involves local people, development agencies, and policy makers deciding together how progress in development should be measured and results acted upon.”

Authors such as Chambers (2001), Njuki (2004), and Estrella (2000) have pointed to the fact that, despite this argued participatory development paradigm dominating the fore of current and modern development initiatives, the crux and core element of the alternatives to development methods, which include participatory monitoring and evaluation, is the immense involvement of project beneficiaries throughout any development project that is targeted towards them.

As an approach, participatory monitoring and evaluation is mostly used in programmes and project management to monitor and evaluate their progress and effectiveness. It has been used for various purposes, including organisational strengthening and learning, understanding and negotiating stakeholder interests, as well as the assessment of project outcomes and impacts (Njuki *et al.* 2006). Generally, the purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation is to allow project beneficiaries to be agents of change and not just bearers of change. This is explained by Estrella (2000: 131):

*In participatory monitoring and evaluation, the voice of the project beneficiaries or local citizens should be loudest to be heard, out of all the other voices of other stakeholders. The project beneficiaries should take charge of the change they want to see and make primary decisions.*

This approach also helps in the assessment of the impact of the intervention, involves all key stakeholders in the project planning and management, provides a platform for the organisation to learn from the community and from past mistakes, understands the perspectives of the

different stakeholders, and increases public and beneficiary accountability (Almazan, 2009; Vernooy *et al.* 2006). It is perhaps from this perspective that Lawrence (2002: 1) sees it as:

*...A powerful approach that empowers beneficiaries, enhances equity of benefit distribution, strengthens organisational capacity, and improves effectiveness of information gathering, transparency of decision making, and implementation of policy.*

This process is generally guided by certain principles. Almazan (2009), Chambers (2010), and Pant (2007) have identified four broad principles that should guide the participatory monitoring and evaluation process:

- Participation to open the design of the process to include those most directly affected by the programme and agreeing to analyse data together.
- Negotiation to reach an agreement about what will be monitored or evaluated, how and when data will be collected and analysed, what the data actually means, and how findings will be shared and acted upon.
- Learning for subsequent improvement and corrective action.
- Flexibility is essential since the number, role, and skills of stakeholders, the external environment, and other factors change over time.

In order for participatory monitoring and evaluation to be successful, a joint decision by all stakeholders needs to be taken concerning the initial and longer-term objectives to ensure that an achievable process of participatory monitoring and evaluation yields multiple initiatives. Thus, according to Hilhorst *et al.* (2006: 8), these four aspects of the process need to be elucidated right at the beginning of the process:

- Required time frame – Should efforts be invested in establishing longer-term monitoring mechanisms or is a shorter tracking initiative sufficient?
- Related type of decision-making – Who or what does the information need to influence, and therefore into what decision-making space should the information be fed? What different priorities, processes, and calendar of activities govern these spaces that need to be understood if information is to inform decisions?
- Degree of participation of stakeholders –Who is essential to have involved and why? (refer to the literature review chapter to understand the different degrees of

participation) What would their role ideally be? What support do they need for their participation to be meaningful and not window dressing?

- Depth of analysis and degree of rigour – To achieve the purpose with those identified as key stakeholders, what degree of rigour and depth of analysis should be aimed for?
- To empower citizens to monitor local service providers may require less scientifically rigorous data.

In addition to the principles that guide participatory monitoring and evaluation, this process can only be effectively undertaken by organisations that have adopted participatory approaches.

#### **4.2.1. Understanding and conceptualising PM&E**

As indicated above, one of the purposes of participatory monitoring and evaluation is to assess the impact of a project or intervention. This assessment has to be done by reflecting on the initial objectives set at the beginning of the project and progress made throughout the project cycle. The tools used to measure this are called indicators. Njuki *et al.* (2006:10) define indicators as “pieces of information that help one understand where they are, which way they are going, and how far they are from where they want to be”. The process of identifying indicators is not always a smooth one because the non-governmental organisation needs to strike a balance between the different proposed indicators by the stakeholders. There is generally no fixed method of how stakeholders are supposed to choose indicators but there are criteria which may be used.

The most favoured technique has been to use the acronym “SMART” for selecting indicators. Indicators should be *Specific*, meaning that activities should specifically aim at the things that the project intends to change. They should be *Measurable*, meaning that the measure should be sharply designed. *Achievable* implies that the project should be able to achieve the indicators. *Relevant* means the measure should be applicable to the intervention and *Time Bound* means indicators should have a time frame (Glahn *et al.* 2007). This technique is convenient for conventional monitoring and evaluation because it focuses on the selection of quantifiable indicators. For participatory monitoring and evaluation, indicators are discussed by using graphics, mapping, and familiar community stories. The recently-emerged acronym for selecting indicators for participatory monitoring and evaluation is “SPICED” which stands

for *Subjective, Participatory, Interpreted, Communicable, Empowering, and Disaggregated*. This approach focuses on obtaining qualitative information which is useful for interpreting and learning about change (Lenie *et al.* 2001:4).

#### 4.2.2 PM&E tools and steps

There is no one set way for conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation; the manner in which this process is undertaken by different organisations depends on the need of the evaluation, the interest of its stakeholders, and which approach the organisation prefers. However, there are common participatory tools which are used by organisations to facilitate and gather participatory monitoring and evaluation data. These tools are used for collecting data from the different stakeholders. The table below provides examples of the different tools used in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

In principle, the stakeholders decide which tools should be used to gather data on which indicators, how sampling will be done, who should collect and analyse the information on which indicators, how frequent this will be done, and how the information will be shared (Njuki *et al.* 2006). The manner in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is structured requires that all stakeholders identify and agree to participatory tools that they are all comfortable with and will be able to make use of. If a particular group of stakeholders do not agree or understand the tools which are being used, this negatively affects the level of participation of the stakeholder group.

**Table 4.1: PM&E Tools**

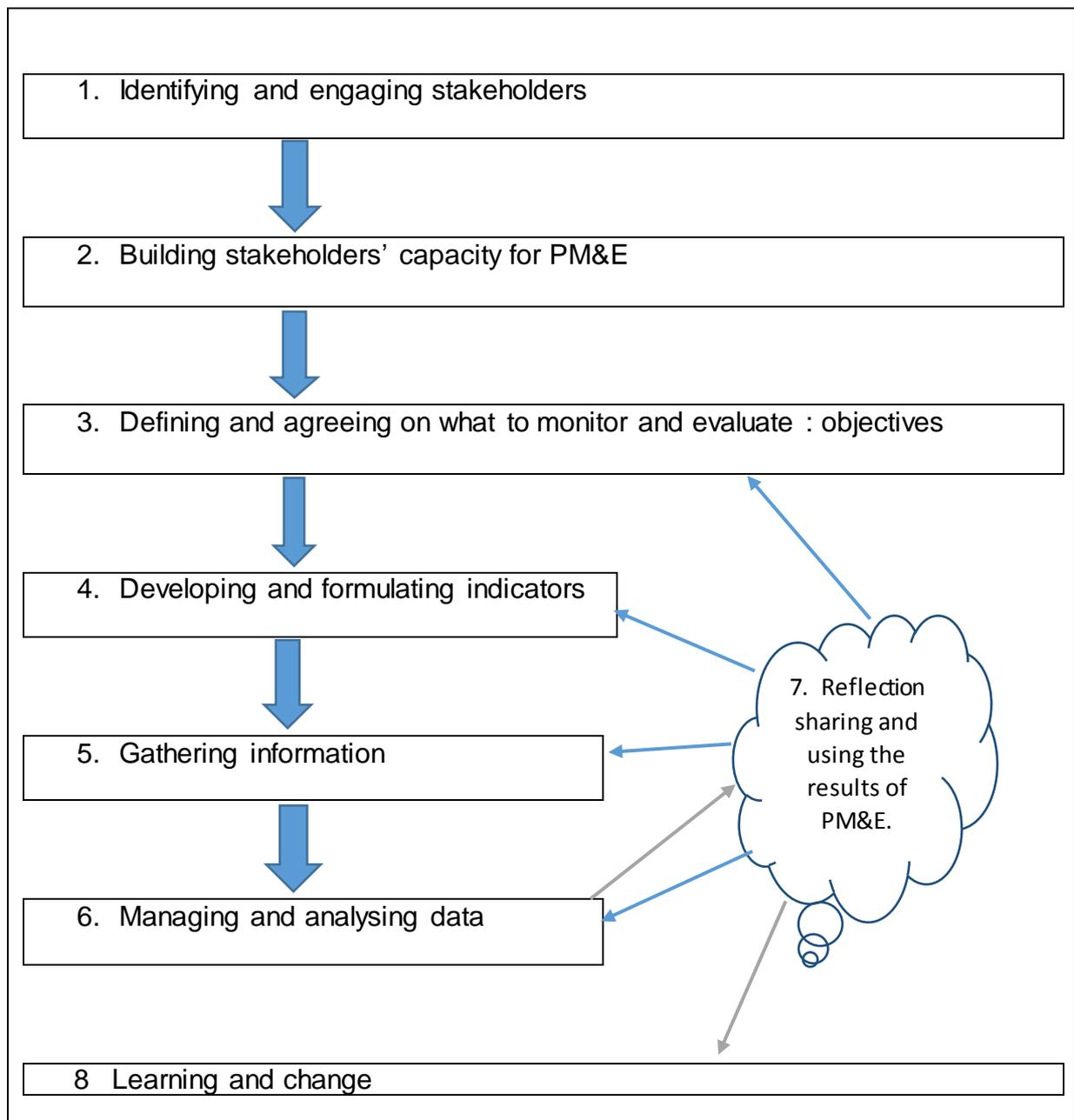
<b>Method</b>	<b>Benefits and output</b>
Visualised forms that give a score or rank	Provoke reflection and discussion, inclusion non literate simple
Semi-Structured interviews	Provides more in-depth information through confidentiality
Household livelihood strategies	Provides baseline information
Story telling	Helps researcher and participants to switch roles, is a familiar tradition of information exchange
Questionnaires	Data collection

Focus group discussion	Provides in-depth shared views of participants
Participatory approach tools such as: participatory impact diagrams, resource maps, social map	All stakeholders are extensively involved in providing data

**Source: Adapted from Sokol-Osman (2015)**

As indicated at the beginning of this section, stakeholder involvement in participatory monitoring and evaluation is key in all the steps of participatory monitoring and evaluation. The table below illustrates the steps in participatory monitoring and evaluation which are normally presented in a cyclical format because the process is circular in its nature. At all stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation the facilitators have to ensure that there is an effective communication flow of information.

**Table 4.2: Steps in PM&E**



**Source: Njuki (2006:8)**

Dominant authors of participatory monitoring and evaluation provide diverse information on how the mechanism should be implemented. However, the above table also illustrates the key steps which are to be followed when conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation. Keller (2008) is of the view that good planning is the starting point for participatory monitoring and evaluation. The author further goes on to elaborate that planning entails a situational analysis and defining of expected changes or outcomes.

#### **4.2.2.1 Situation analysis**

This is a short-term exercise which is not comprehensive in its nature. It permits the facilitator to develop an in-depth understanding of the situation in need of change and also allows them to obtain shared understanding of the main stakeholders. The activities carried out during a situational analysis are not limited to following: stakeholder mapping; wellbeing assessment of stakeholders; analysis of power balance among groups in terms of categories such as age, ethnicity, sex, gender, and level of education; and interests in the projects.

#### **4.2.2.2 Defining expected changes/outcomes**

This is also known as the Theory of Change (ToC) which comes after a situation analysis. Key informants of this study reported that this is one of the determining factors of the level of participation of donors. This process looks at obtaining a holistic understanding of the problem on the ground and tries to come up with a solution for change. It should be undertaken by all stakeholders, not just donors.

The next critical stage after conducting a situational and a stakeholder analysis is to develop the capacity of the stakeholders. One of the most important aspects in participatory monitoring and evaluation is capacity building. Capacity building refers to some kind of external intervention or support to develop capacities with the intention of catalysing change (PRIA, 2014). According to Njuki (2006: 9), capacity building involves the following: developing a common understanding of participatory monitoring and evaluation, identifying local vocabulary and local terms that are equivalent to technical terms, using methods and tools that encourage participation of all stakeholders, and discussion on why participatory monitoring and evaluation is important to them. Capacity building is important in participatory monitoring and evaluation because it enables all the stakeholders involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation to have a common understanding and local vocabulary of the concept and principles of participation, monitoring, and evaluation. The stakeholders are trained using different participatory tools, such as individual or group interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires and surveys, direct observation, and participatory rural appraisal techniques (Vernoy, 2006).

While other authors combine the third and fourth step when describing participatory monitoring and evaluation, it is important to note that these two can be done interchangeably. Step three is focused on deciding what to monitor. During this process stakeholders develop a common vision and identify the data and information needed to answer the participatory

monitoring and evaluation questions. According to Njuki (2006), this process can imply an impact chain which includes deciding on the appropriate approaches, strategies, and methodologies that can be used to attain results. This step mainly looks at identifying the objectives of the project that will be monitored. Step four for extensively looks at developing and formulating the indicators that will be used to monitor and to track the progress of the intervention. (Neef, 2003) states that indicators are a way to check progress towards achievement of results over time as compared to targets, and to measure stakeholder satisfaction. The notion of indicators for participatory monitoring and evaluation at a community level is discussed using story telling approaches, graphics, and visual tools.

The next step of gathering data should be undertaken by all stakeholders. Data can be gathered by making use of the different tools highlighted above and during this process stakeholders decide who or which group will be the focus when gathering the data and analysing it.

The final stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation are just as crucial as the planning and implementation stages because it is at this point that stakeholders provide feedback on the whole process by collectively reflecting on the process and identifying where they could have gone wrong or why they did not achieve their set objectives. At a community level it is important for the project beneficiaries to be part of this process because it informs whether the project beneficiaries were fully participating in participatory monitoring and evaluation and if they learnt and became empowered throughout the process.

Existing literature emphasises that all stakeholders who have an interest in the particular invention should conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation. Research has shown that there is a possibility that some stakeholders are merely involved at certain stages of the process and not throughout the entire planning, implementation, and reflection stage. As previously outlined, the key stakeholders are the project beneficiaries as they are the recipients of the intervention and their involvement throughout all the stages is of paramount importance.

From the analysis in this section, participatory monitoring and evaluation is key for project success and is therefore necessary for organisations involved in projects that benefit communities and have a donor component. World Vision has been involved in a number of

projects in poor countries and this study looks at World Vision and its projects in South Africa's Limpopo Province. The following section therefore looks at World Vision and provides a broad overview of the organisation and its different areas of involvement.

### **4.3 The World Vision International Profile**

World Vision International is one of the international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) that dedicates efforts in line with the United Nation's sustainable development goals of eradicating poverty and empowering poor communities. World Vision International is defined as a global Christian relief, development, and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families, and communities to overcome poverty and injustice (World Vision, 2017). The distinguishing factor of this organisation is that it is a purely Christian organisation that incorporates Christian and biblical values in all that they do.

World Vision International operates in more than 100 countries and has different programmes ranging from Child Participation, Child Protection, Child Rights and Equity, Church and Interfaith, Clean Water and Sanitation, Development Disaster Management, Education and Life Skills, Food Assistance, Gender, Health Justice for Children, Natural Environment and Climate Issues, Nutrition, Peacebuilding, and Resilience and Livelihoods.

The organisation's vision, values, and mission are centred around the well-being of children and on biblical principles. John the Apostle, who was the youngest of Jesus's disciples, inspires the vision statement of the organisation which can be found in John 10:10 and reads: "I have come that you might have life, life in all its fullness." The overall approach that World Vision International believes in is that they are faithful messengers of God's love, trusted partners in lasting change, powerful motivators of caring, courageous promoters of justice and peace, and inspiring models of co-operation (World Vision, 2017).

The core values of World Vision International illustrate to a significant extent the organisation's and stakeholder's involvement in participatory monitoring and evaluation, how the organisation values the involvement of the project beneficiaries and that of other stakeholders by creating participatory and open-ended spaces that allow facilitation of

engagements between the poor and the affluent, and also how they handle the diversity of the different actors involved in their projects.

One of World Vision International's core values reads: "We are committed to the poor." This positions the organisation in a state of authority which depicts it as having a significant influence and say towards what development initiatives take place and how they are conducted. The following statement: "We are called to serve the neediest people of the earth, to relieve their suffering, and to promote the transformation of their condition of life," indicates that the organisation holds itself responsible for fostering change in poor communities and does not rely on immense involvement of the poor to be the change agents in the development process. This core value is built around the following:

- We regard all people as created and loved by God.
- We give priority to people before money, structure, systems, and other institutional machinery.
- We act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness, and intrinsic worth of every person: the poor, the donors, our staff and their families, boards, and volunteers.
- We celebrate the richness of diversity in human personality, culture, and contribution.
- We practice a participative, open, enabling style in working relationships.
- We encourage the professional, personal, and spiritual development of our staff.

This single core value statement of the organisation is a clear indication of the extent to which project beneficiaries are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Such an indication is also visible from core value number six, which states that:

We are responsive to life-threatening emergencies where our involvement is needed and appropriate. We are willing to take intelligent risks and act quickly. We do this from a foundation of experience and sensitivity to what the situation requires. We also recognise that, even in the midst of crisis, the destitute have a contribution to make from their experience (World Vision, 2017).

The organisation relies on their foundation of experience in a certain field and then, lastly, acknowledges the contribution of destitute. However, in principle World Vision International's core values show that the organisation does acknowledge the involvement of other stakeholders such as the church, sponsors, and donors and respects their roles. This is evidenced in core value number three which reads:

We regard all people as created and loved by God. We give priority to people before money, structure, systems, and other institutional machinery. We act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness, and intrinsic worth of every person – the poor, the donors, our staff and their families, boards, and volunteers. We celebrate the richness of diversity in human personality, culture, and contribution (World Vision, 2017).

The core values of the organisation do not show or illustrate the significance of the other stakeholders' involvement or decision making; what they explicitly display is how World Vision International promptly acts and responds to situations affecting the poor by making use of the expertise of the organisation and its resources which they claim to be a sacred trust from God through donors and sponsors.

### *A Christian Organisation*

World Vision is an International partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God. World Vision International pursues this mission through an integrated, holistic commitment to:

- Transformational development that is community-based and sustainable and focused especially on the needs of children;
- Emergency relief that assists people afflicted by conflict or disaster;
- Promotion of justice that seeks to change unjust structures affecting the poor among whom they work;

- Partnerships with churches to contribute to spiritual and social transformation;
- Public awareness that leads to informed understanding, giving, involvement, and prayer

The organisation pledges to bear witness to Jesus Christ by life, deed, word, and sign in order to encourage people to respond to the gospel. This is captured in the World Vision International value “We are Christians”:

- We acknowledge one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Jesus Christ the love, mercy and grace of God are made known to all people and us. From this overflowing abundance of God's love, we find our call to ministry.
- We proclaim together, "Jesus lived, died, and rose again. Jesus is Lord." We desire him to be central in our individual and corporate life.
- We hear his call to servanthood and see the example of his life. We commit ourselves to a servant spirit permeating the organisation. We know this means facing honestly our own pride, sin, and failure.

From the organisation’s mission statement it is evident that World Vision International in principle upholds an approach that seeks to be inclusive of different stakeholders and promotes the needs of their project beneficiaries by employing participatory and community-based initiatives that address challenges within the community. Largely, World Vision International relies on existing social, religious, and municipal structures that they find in place when they undertake a development initiative in a particular area. Globally the organisation envisages the success of any development project to be accredited the partnerships they engage with different stakeholders available to them. This is captured in one of their values: “*We are partners*”:

- We are partners with the poor and with donors in a shared ministry. We affirm and promote unity in the Body of Christ. We pursue a relationship with all churches and desire mutual participation in ministry. We seek to contribute to the holistic mission of the church.
- We maintain a co-operative stance and a spirit of openness towards other humanitarian organisations. We are willing to receive and consider honest opinions from others about our work.

### 4.3.1 History and overview of World Vision International

In 1950 Reverend Pierce of the evangelical Christian denomination officially founded World Vision, although his charity work had begun much earlier. According to Stafford (2005):

Reverend Pierce was regarded as a radical kind of post-WWII evangelical: entrepreneurial, energetic, independent, and out to evangelise the world youth, who was full of compassion and empathy for the poor.

He is often remembered by his famous quotation which he wrote in his Bible: “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God.” (Stafford, 2005) World Vision was born out of his charity work which began in 1947 after an encounter captured in Box 1 below:

#### Box 1: Beginning of Rev. Pierce’s Charity Work

*In 1947, Rev. Pierce met Tena Hoelkeboer, a teacher, while on a trip to China. She introduced him to a battered and abandoned child named White Jade. Unable to care for the child herself, she asked, "What are you going to do about her?" Rev. Pierce gave the woman his last five dollars and agreed to send the same amount each month to help the woman care for the girl.*

*This encounter was a turning point for Rev. Pierce. He began building an organisation dedicated to helping the world's children, and in 1950 World Vision was born. The first child sponsorship programme began three years later in response to the needs of hundreds of thousands of orphans at the end of the Korean War.*

*Over the next several decades, we expanded our work throughout Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe.*

*In the 1970s, we embraced a broader community development model and established an emergency relief division. We also attempted to address the causes of poverty by focusing on community needs such as water, sanitation, education, health, leadership training, and income generation.*

*We began the 21st century by strengthening our advocacy efforts, particularly on issues related to child survival. We became more active in working with governments, businesses, and other organisations in addressing issues such as child labour, children in armed conflict, and the sexual exploitation of women and children.*

**Source: World Vision International (2017)**

#### **4.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter began by providing a detailed discussion of participatory monitoring and evaluation and then moved on to presenting a profile of World Vision International. Over the years the concept of participation has dominated the development paradigm, however, this concept has proven to be complex because of power issues that are inherent when there are different stakeholders. Just like all the other participatory approaches, participatory monitoring and evaluation has come to be understood as a process that is manipulated by donors and non-governmental organisations to justify interventions.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is mostly used in programmes and project management to monitor and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of interventions. The purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation is to allow project beneficiaries to be agents of change and not just bearers of change. Project beneficiaries should be involved throughout the project cycle and not just at the beginning. There is no standardised approach of practicing participatory monitoring and evaluation, however, the common participatory tools are used to facilitate and gather data throughout the eight key steps in the process.

The second section of the chapter introduced World Vision International. The organisation was formed in 1905 by Reverend Pierce who was regarded as a radical evangelical. Over the years the organisation has grown and operates in more than 100 countries. It has different programmes that range from development to humanitarian interventions. At the heart of this organisation lies its Christian and biblical foundations. The mission and vision of the organisation is to follow the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God. This chapter has paved the way for the next chapter which discusses World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme participatory monitoring and evaluation programme and the level of involvement of stakeholders in the process. This chapter

will be important for demonstrating the power dynamics inherent in the World Vision Thusalushaka area development programme.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WORLD VISION AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

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#### 5.1. Introduction

In Chapter Four, the principles and the process involved in conducting project participatory monitoring and evaluation was examined. It looked at general principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation and the role played by stakeholders in the whole process. However, in the World Vision Limpopo Province project, the process to a large extent adhered to the normal principles but deviated from the norm when it came to donor expectations. This was mainly because of the specific environment in which World Vision operates in South Africa, and the actors involved in the process determined how it actually evolved. Similarly, in the case of South Africa, the donors are different from the regular donors in participatory monitoring and evaluation processes whose donations or aid is often attached to certain conditions. In these cases, the donor has the power of determination. Accordingly, the non-governmental organisation is more responsible and accountable to the donor than the project beneficiaries. In the South African Limpopo Province projects, the funders are mainly sponsors who have no conditions for the utilisation of their sponsorship.

Although the ideal situation is one in which donors have expectations and demands, the diversion from participatory monitoring and evaluation principles in the case of the organisation's South African projects is not entirely problematic since the process still follows familiar pathways. World Vision runs different projects in the Limpopo Province. Each project has its own objectives, target population, and a certain life span. Furthermore, different projects are characterised by different dynamics and include a range of stakeholders with a different power basis.

This chapter provides an assessment of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process in the World Vision's Limpopo Province projects. It considers the extent to which project beneficiaries are involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and explores their understanding of their roles in the whole process. Consequently, the aim of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, it examines the power and position of World Vision South Africa in the

projects and the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Secondly, it explores the way in which the organisation spearheads the process in the absence of a donor, whose guidelines often influences the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, the manner in which World Vision conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation is described. Furthermore, the power of the organisation in the process is highlighted. In the second section, the other stakeholders and the extent to which they are involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process are examined.

## **5.2 World Vision**

World Vision South Africa started operating in South Africa in 1967. Their office in South Africa was one of the first in Africa. Since its inception, the organisation has been primarily involved in childcare projects through local churches. The health, happiness, overall well-being, and education of all children, especially those growing up in poverty, is at the heart of World Vision South Africa's activities (World Vision South Africa, 2016). Besides child protection issues, the organisation is involved in responses to disasters that call for humanitarian emergency aid in various areas in Africa. According to World Vision South Africa (2017), the operation has a number of key areas of interest:

- Child Protection/Child well-being
- Economic Development
- Gender and Development
- Health and Nutrition
- HIV and Aids

World Vision South Africa's mission and vision reads:

World Vision South Africa is called to promote human transformation that contributes to the wellbeing of children through partnerships with churches, families and communities, civil society, donors/sponsors, government, and private sector. We are inspired to see no child without (World Vision South Africa, 2016).

According to Statistics South Africa (2017), income disparity in South Africa is one of the highest in the world. Over 30.4 million people (almost 55.5% of the population) live in dire poverty. Against this background World Vision South Africa has thus been able to act on behalf of this disadvantaged population, including children, and has taken a role as the voice of children and poverty-stricken communities against deepening poverty, diseases, abuse, and injustice (World Vision, 2014). According to the organisation's officials, it has done this by advocating and lobbying for the rights of children with the national government, and also by providing relief assistance to those in need (int., Johannesburg, November, 2017).

In addressing the complexities of poverty and its effects on the lives of children, World Vision South Africa has addressed the root causes of poverty in a holistic way by focusing on three main areas in its countrywide operations, namely: advocacy, community development, and disaster management (World Vision South Africa, 2017). Currently, World Vision has reached more than one million people through its various projects. Furthermore, over 54,000 children have been sponsored within its many programmes (World Vision South Africa, 2012).

World Vision is engaged in area development programmes within South African communities. Depending on the needs of a particular community, the organisation has implemented a variety of programmes to ameliorate conditions of the poor. Currently, World Vision operates a total of 18 area development programmes in six different provinces in South Africa: Gauteng, Limpopo, Free State, Kwazulu-Natal, Western Cape, and Eastern Cape. The area development programmes as well as the focus of the projects in various regions in South Africa are presented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: World Vision Area Development Programmes**

Name of ADP	Province	Local Municipality	ADP project
Nkonkobe	Eastern Cape	Nkonkobe	Agriculture and food security, health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS, education, sponsorship
Mbhashe	Eastern Cape	Mbhashe	Agriculture, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Umzimvubu	Eastern Cape	Matatiele	Agriculture, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Altantis	Western Cape	Atlantis	Advocacy, early childhood development, HIV and AIDS, programme and project management, supporting management
Mbekweni	Western Cape	Drakenstein	Health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship, economic development
Umvoti	Kwazulu-Natal	Umvoti	Health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Kwamaphumulo	Kwazulu-Natal	Maphumulo	Food security, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Okhahlamba	Kwazulu-Natal	Okhahlamba	Economic development, health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Ixopo	Kwazulu-Natal	Ixopo	Food security, education, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Umzimkhulu	Kwazulu-Natal	Umzimkhulu	Food security, education, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Thusalushaka	Limpopo	Makhado and Greater Letaba	WASH, health, nutrition, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship, education.
Kodumela	Limpopo	Maruleng	Food Security, education, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship.
Giyani	Limpopo	Greater Giyani	Health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship, education, food security
Orange Farm	Gauteng	Vaal	Economic development, health nutrition, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship, child protection and advocacy, education and life skills.
Orlando East	Gauteng	Johannesburg	Economic development
ThabaNchu	Free State	ThabaNchu	Food security, health, HIV and AIDS, sponsorship
Khauhelo	Free State	Botshabelo	Economic development, health, HIV and AIDS, food security, sponsorship
Mangaung Urban Learning Site	Free State	Mangaung	Advocacy and peace-building

**Source: World Vision (2017)**

All the efforts of World Vision in the different communities in which they operate are dependent on support and sponsorship from individuals, businesses, and organisations who share their single-minded commitment to improve children's lives. The program focus areas were selected after conducting needs assessments and research on the challenges that the communities were facing

### 5.2.1 World Vision's Thusalushaka programme

World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka programme, which is the focus of this study, began in 2009 and falls under World Vision's Limpopo area development programme portfolio. This area development programme focuses on a number of projects which are meant to provide support and assistance to the communities. According to one of the officials:

One of the goals for the Thusalushaka area development programme is for the whole community to benefit from the efforts of the organisation. In fact, as an organisation, we would be happy if our projects change the poverty rates and standards of living for the people living in this particular area of the Limpopo province (int., Thusalushaka, June, 2017).

The area development programme serves two municipalities in Limpopo, namely Makhado and Greater Letaba. Limpopo has a high rate of poverty. According to the Limpopo Community Survey (2016), poverty has increased in Limpopo in all districts from 10.1% in 2011 to 11.5% in 2016. Sekgosese, one of the areas where the area development programme operates, is characteristically poor. There are no decent jobs or sustainable livelihood options available. Most of the residents in this area do not have access to water; they need to walk to the nearest borehole pump or well to get water. A significant number of youth that have completed their matric are not able to pursue their education because their families cannot afford to pay for their university tuition. Sekgosese is an area that has suffered from a lack of government development initiatives for a long time. According to one World Vision development facilitator:

Sekgosese is an under-developed rural area in the Limpopo Province. It is in this position precisely because of lack of funding and financial support and the failure to develop and implement feasible policies. There are over 10 policy documents such as the National Development Act, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy, and Vision 2014, etc. that have been drafted in the past but have failed to bring about the desired changes (int., Sekgosese, July 2017).

Sakuneka (2016) noted that the area has one of the worst transport infrastructures, poor housing, and experiences poor service delivery such as a lack of adequate water supply and

electricity. The nearest town to the area development programme where the inhabitants of Thusalushaka get their amenities is Modjadjiskloof, which is a distance of approximately 40 kilometres. The World Vision offices are located in an expanding area of Sekgosese, adjacent to the Department of Agriculture and Department of Water affairs. Four villages, namely, Roerfontein, Phooko, Raphahleo, and Chabeleng are near the area development programme offices. Across from the World Vision offices, there are a number of small supermarkets and bottle stores in dilapidated buildings, street vendors, and a taxi rank. People have become accustomed to cohabitating with other living species; it is not strange to find livestock living near people.

World Vision Thusalushaka facilitates development projects in 24 communities in the Thusalushaka area. The area development programme works in partnership with two government departments which are the local municipality and the Department of Agriculture as well as community-based organisations, and local community members. Each of these have a different role but the similarity between all of them is that they all work together to ensure that the lives of the people living in Sekgosese are improved. World Vision conducted participatory community assessments and also consulted and engaged with the other different service providers that were in the area before deciding on what projects to implement in the area. The projects run by World Vision Thusalushaka fall broadly within the following areas (World Vision, 2016):

- Education
- Water and Sanitation
- Health, HIV and AIDS, Nutrition
- Sponsorship

The activities conducted within each project are thus listed:

- a) Education
  - Training of teachers
  - Training school governing bodies
  - Providing resources to schools
  - Assisting crèches

- Career support for youth
- b) Water and Sanitation
  - Drilling of boreholes
  - Conducting awareness campaigns on water usage
  - Conducting health and hygiene lessons in schools and drop-in centres
  - Constructing toilets
- c) Health, HIV and AIDS, and Nutrition
  - Supporting orphans and vulnerable children
  - Providing food parcels in emergencies
  - Supporting drop-in centres
  - Conducting awareness campaigns
  - Supporting projects (piggeries, layers, broilers, gardens, bakeries)
- d) Sponsorship

World Vision Sponsorship is a programme that caters for children in the community. Furthermore, as a method to promote the active participation of the children, some children are identified as “ambassadors” for the community. This was revealed by a World Vision Sponsorship supervisor:

The involvement of local children in the programme is very important and has become a request of most of the sponsors. Currently, there are more than 5,000 children registered with the area development programme (int., November, 2017).

According to World Vision (2016), sponsorship is more than just kind acts of charity; rather, sponsorships are acts that empower children, families, and the community at large. Furthermore, it has the potential to create real and lasting changes, and affords the community the opportunity to enjoy small blessings such as cleanliness, food, and health care. While it would have been beneficial to examine each of these projects in-depth, the focus of the study was primarily on the education projects which involved the youth. However, a few beneficiaries from other projects were interviewed during the study to provide a rough understanding of the process.

In this section, World Vision South Africa and the Thusalushaka area development programme were introduced. Furthermore, the different area development programmes in the country as well as the main projects undertaken in the Thusalushaka area development programme were reviewed. This was done to provide a foundation for understanding the World Vision Limpopo participatory monitoring and evaluation process. This process and the dynamics of interaction are the subject of the next section.

### **5.2.2 World Vision Thusalushaka PM&E**

The manner in which World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation is examined in this section. Data is drawn from in-depth interviews with World Vision key stakeholders within the Limpopo Province programme and World Vision documents, namely, Learning through Evaluation and Accountability Planning, World Vision Facilitation Guidance, Child Protection tools, Baseline Guide, and World Vision Guidance for Integrated Programming.

In order to understand the broader framework of World Vision's participatory monitoring and evaluation, it is imperative to first outline the key elements and principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation which were discussed in chapters two and four, before explaining the implementation of the process in this study. Scholars such as Guijt and Gaventa (2007), Estrella (2000), and Mtshilazi (2012) have noted that what differentiates participatory monitoring and evaluation from conventional monitoring and evaluation is not merely the introduction of participatory approaches in conventional methods, but rather the radical rethinking of the whole process in relation to who initiates ideas, who is part of each stage of the process, and who learns and benefits from the outcomes of the process.

Literature has shown that there is no single method or approach to conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation. Rather, the approaches to participatory monitoring and evaluation are immensely diverse. The manner in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is undertaken largely depends on the interest of the stakeholders and for what purposes it is being conducted. According to Oxman (2014: 7) and Njuki *et al.* (2006), there are at least four

common steps that should be identified when establishing a participatory monitoring and evaluation process:

- Planning the framework for the participatory monitoring and evaluation process;
- Determining the objectives and indicators;
- Gathering, analysing and employing data by taking action and documenting; and
- Reporting and sharing information

Other key elements when conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation include the notion that facilitators are meant to perform triangulation, involving the community when conducting data analysis, finalising decision making, and reflecting on and improving the process (Jobes, 1997:7).

It is the norm for all World Vision national offices, including South Africa, to adopt the World Vision International indicators which are stipulated in the organisation's compendium. These indicators are normally guided by the operations programme design (World Vision International, 2017). World Vision Thusalushaka upholds a participatory and community-based approach in all programming efforts. This is evident in the organisation's guiding documents and manuals, which stipulate that all the tools that they use ensure that project beneficiaries are involved in the identification and mapping of the various activities that take place in the community. In essence, the area development programme ensures that whatever engagements are being planned are in line with the national strategy.

Furthermore, as discussed in chapter four, there are four broad principles that epitomise participatory monitoring and evaluation. In order to enable an understanding of how World Vision negotiates and reconciles the different interests of stakeholders, it is imperative to focus on two principles, namely, negotiation and flexibility. These principles are the cornerstone of World Vision's participatory monitoring and evaluation. In the words of one of the organisation's officials:

The most important aspect for us as an organisation is to be in a position where we are flexible in terms of how we engage with stakeholders and also to engage with stakeholders

that we know we will be able to negotiate with. We normally identify these groups of people through audience analysis (int., October, 2017).

The crucial exercises conducted by World Vision Thusalushaka during participatory monitoring and evaluation were audience analysis and stakeholder power analysis. These two exercises are thus explained.

### **5.2.2.1 Audience analysis**

In addition to the participatory monitoring and evaluation steps, which were highlighted in chapter four, the area development programme also conducted an audience analysis (AA). This is the process in which the office conducts a survey to come to an understanding of the different groups of individuals that are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation (World Vision, 2014). Conducting an audience analysis affords the area development programme facilitator knowledge and understanding of the different categories of stakeholders. Furthermore, it assists with the design of questions and tools that will be utilised in participatory monitoring and evaluation. According to Sarsby (2017), the tools used in an audience analysis include an interest/influence matrix, a stakeholder characteristics and roles matrix, fast arrangement mapping, and problem tree analysis.

Existing literature on stakeholder engagement and analysis has revealed that although power relations in participatory monitoring and evaluation will be always be present, an audience analysis may act as a mitigation measure to power dynamics. A fundamental aspect of audience analysis is the ability to identify key and relevant actors that will provide the type of information required. An organisation official explained how the organisation deals with issues of powers dynamics:

From my understanding when conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation one cannot for instance ask a security guard or an uneducated farmer the same question as the CEO of funding agencies or an expert. Audience analysis assists you with framing the same question in a different way to allow you to obtain the answers you are looking for.

So World Vision does not necessarily worry about reconciling the data between different stakeholders because we always strive to get the views on the same subject from different audiences but using different methods of obtaining information (int., December 2017).

After the audience analysis has been conducted, the organisation has to conduct a stakeholder power analysis by creating a continuum. The World Bank (2010) noted that during this process, a rating scale of 0 to 100 from low (far left) to high (far right) is created. The scale rates the degree to which each stakeholder has power to influence other stakeholders' decisions.

#### **5.2.2.2 Stakeholder analysis**

In the present study, World Vision Thusalushaka identified the relevance of stakeholders as well as what is important to the area development programme during the stakeholder's analysis. A consideration of the interview quotation in the preceding section reveals that area development programme is very selective when choosing stakeholders. To support this observation a Thusalushaka World Vision development facilitator noted:

A stakeholder analysis is done as a measure to curb power dynamics that arise among different stakeholders. Once we manage to identify the relevant stakeholders, we create spaces for further engagements among the different groups (int., November, 2017).

As soon as the area development programme has identified the relevant stakeholders, the different stakeholders meet to discuss the issues and changes they may want to see in their community. These discussions may take place in the form of either focus group discussions, community-mapping engagements, meetings with government departments, and/or through field and site visits.

After each stakeholder group has identified its key concerns, the area development programme organises a formal stakeholders' meeting/dialogue to allow the different

stakeholders to present their issues and agree on the set indicator or objective of the project. According to LEAP (2016), during the dialogue, World Vision presents its roles and, subsequently, presents the results and views of the different stakeholders that were identified during the stakeholder analysis. Furthermore, it is in this setting that the different stakeholders engage with each other and stipulate their reasons for prioritising particular objectives. Subsequently, the stakeholders engage with each other until they reach a consensus on which initiative or indicator they want to prioritise (LEAP, 2014). Thereafter, World Vision collects the information that emanated from the dialogues, conducts an analysis, and produces a report of the stakeholders' information.

In Table 5.2, the procedure World Vision Thusalushaka's area development programme employs to gather different views and interests of stakeholders is presented.

**Table 5.2: World Vision Stakeholder Engagement Process**

Steps	Notes on Step	Duration
1. Check alignment with national strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National strategy describes the context, including relevant definitions.</li> <li>• Provides set indicators.</li> <li>• World Vision's specific contribution to change in the community is defined.</li> <li>• Before beginning an assessment for any new programme/project, alignment with national strategy is checked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted at the outset.</li> </ul>
2. Hold initial discussion with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First, with each stakeholder group on its own.</li> <li>• The purpose is to identify the perceived root cause or challenge through stakeholders.</li> <li>• Identify what needs to change in the community and how to monitor it.</li> <li>• Stakeholders include local government departments, faith-based organisations, local beneficiaries, and the municipality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is on-going as discussions with stakeholders will take place throughout the PM&amp;E process.</li> </ul>
3. Stakeholder/power analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate stakeholders' roles, interests, and capacity to address identified challenge.</li> <li>• Identify who has power at local and national levels to make change happen in the community, especially for issues highlighted in Steps 1 and 2. What power does each partner possess?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This normally happens at the beginning of the process.</li> <li>• Findings of the power analysis affect the</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the extent of co-operation or conflict in relationships between partners.</li> <li>• Interpret analysis findings and define how this should be incorporated into programme or project approaches. Preliminary power analysis is especially useful at this stage to understand who is in a position to address poverty and injustice. What is the government's role as duty bearer? How far are communities empowered to demand their rights?</li> <li>• This is an important part of the design process because it can identify existing or potential collaborative strengths or conflicts, and show how communities can best use influence and relationships to address injustice.</li> </ul>	manner in which PM &E will be conducted.
4. Collect and review information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is collected from a macro level and community level.</li> <li>• Information is collected and interpreted concerning the agreed programme cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is an on-going process as monitoring is done continuously throughout the process.</li> </ul>
5. Analyse the data and write the report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report includes product findings, interpretations, and recommendations.</li> <li>• Before writing the assessment report, analyse sufficiently to have a good overview of the situation (major issues and causes, partners, power and capacities).</li> <li>• If the assessment is carried out properly and with partner involvement, the analysis that follows is an expression of their priorities. Partners focus on core issues and causes they would like to tackle in their communities.</li> <li>• Recommendations summarise opportunities for collaboration and can be presented by identifying main issues and possible objectives or strategies that could address these issues. This begins to document overall cause-effect relationships that will form the basis of a design.</li> <li>• During programme assessment, consider relationships between assessment findings and World Vision's strategic ministry objectives.</li> <li>• Communities and local partners that participated in assessment activities either as subjects or actors are the primary owners and users of the knowledge gained.</li> <li>• World Vision and other partners are secondary users of these reports. Therefore, reports will need to be presented in various ways for different audiences. They must be made available in the appropriate media for communities so that people can continue to influence change and address poverty issues in their own area</li> </ul>	
6. Reach agreement to proceed with design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the assessment activities and report are complete, stakeholders make a decision on whether to proceed with plans. If the decision is not to proceed with a programme or project, then the process ends immediately.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• However, if the decision is to proceed with a design, then the design process will proceed along different timelines for different programmes.</li> </ul>	
7. Reflect on the process/design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completeness of partner and power analysis: roles and responsibilities in relation to design.</li> <li>- Completeness of monitoring and evaluation planning process at this stage.</li> <li>- The process of design, who was involved, how it evolved.</li> <li>- Extent to which partners maintained programming integrity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection takes place during and at the end of the process</li> </ul>

**Source: Author (2016); World Vision (2007)**

The role that World Vision Thusalushaka assumes is of interest. World Vision key actors reiterated that they have no desire to play the role of “big brother” in any of the community engagements or stakeholder dialogues. They literally permit the stakeholders to engage and reach favourable solutions. One worrying observation is that some of the stakeholders that are left out from the stakeholder analysis are left out of the entire process and this questions the level of participation. Thus, World Vision does not make decisions on behalf of stakeholders alone. A World Vision development facilitator stated:

World Vision does not take a leading role in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Our approach to development initiatives as an organisation is a facilitation role, that’s why we are even titled ‘development facilitators’ instead of development leaders. We aim to facilitate initiatives as well as engagements and not to impose our role as an organisation. As a result, we hardly reconcile the differences of stakeholders based on our own judgement. We literally absorb what the stakeholders would have agreed to the national strategy (int., November, 2017).

It is important to note that World Vision does not take the leading role during lower-level stakeholder engagements, but later convenes with other World Vision area development programmes as well as various stakeholders at other national dialogues where critical issues are discussed and annual monitoring indicators are agreed upon. When questioned on the participation and involvement of stakeholders in the 2017 national workshop, the World Vision Development Facilitator said:

It is unfortunate that even though stakeholder dialogues take place annually at the national office in Johannesburg, very few selected stakeholders and local representatives, if any, attend these dialogues because of budget constraints (int., December, 2017).

The fact that final decisions of stakeholders' engagements are taken at national workshops in which few stakeholders can participate is indicative of a contrary element in the level of participation in participatory monitoring and evaluation. This also illustrates and confirms that World Vision is the most powerful actor in the process and has the ability to finalise the participatory monitoring and evaluation process at a national level. This has the potential of relegating other actors to the periphery or for the participation process to degenerate into a pseudo process where World Vision takes the leading role. The roles of the actors involved in the World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation process is discussed in the next section.

### **5.2.3 World Vision and its staff**

As revealed in chapter two, the rise of non-state led development initiatives has been welcomed profusely. These actors have become known as the “sweethearts” of development because of their bottom-up approaches which have focused on the recipients of development projects. Like other non-governmental organisations, World Vision South Africa occupies a complex position; they are perceived more like a middleman between sponsors and the people in need. In South Africa in areas like Thusalushaka and Giyani where child protection risks and associated HIV and AIDS challenges exist and where there is need for development assistance, World Vision has assumed the position of the saviour of poor communities because of the assistance they provide to communities. The presence of the organisation and the programmes that it has implemented are greatly valued by the community. A project beneficiary of the Evoke programme highlighted this sentiment:

World Vision has truly changed our lives for the better, we are very grateful for the work that they are doing. Because of World Vision, I now know how to use a computer and the rest of the community is benefiting from the different projects (int., January, 2018).

Such sentiments are not unique to the Limpopo Province project but are common in most areas in Africa where World Vision has operated, including programmes of food relief. In Zimbabwe, the World Vision response intervention programmes in response to the humanitarian crisis which was caused by political and economic turmoil between 2003 and 2009 improved the lives of many and provided support to those who were in dire need of assistance (Beseda & Moyo, 2008). World Vision Zimbabwe provided three million people with food relief, water and sanitation services, health care provision, educational, and micro-finance support (World Vision Zimbabwe, 2017).

Apart from assisting third world countries, the work conducted by World Vision International has also met the needs of Syrian refugees from the Middle East. The organisation has assisted more than 15,000 Syrian refugees residing in Turkey with food relief, hygiene packs, and non-formal education programmes to help them integrate into their new environment (World Vision, 2018).

Philips (2013) asserted that non-governmental organisations must transform themselves from wanting to “develop” people and do things “for” them to doing it “with” them. Given the dynamics of this relationship between non-governmental organisations and poor communities, the donor will often have a more superior position to that of the beneficiary. Therefore, World Vision is respected and has automatically assumed a superior role to that of the community purely because they are perceived as the community’s saviour.

The interest of World Vision in conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation is to first track the progress of the development intervention against the agreed objectives and indicators; in other words, to ensure that the agreed activities are being implemented in accordance with the project cycle. Second, World Vision needs to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the

project. The organisation should be accountable to its sponsors, other stakeholders, and project beneficiaries. As noted in chapter two, non-governmental organisations have been pressurised to emphasise both upward and downward accountability, and not just be accountable to their funders.

While all actors involved in a participatory monitoring and evaluation process are expected to be transparent, World Vision's motive is to be transparent to all actors, especially the project beneficiaries and the general public. In order to achieve this, the organisation disseminates its financial statements and reports annually to the public for scrutiny. A World Vision source shared:

The organisation operates as an open book. In terms of its funding and modus operandi, it is important for everyone, especially stakeholders that are funding the projects and those that are beneficiaries of the projects, to see how the organisation operates (int., November, 2017).

Apart from the organisation's annual reports, their guiding documents and manuals of how they conduct their projects have also been made widely available to the public through the internet. The researcher obtained World Vision's annual reports and manuals from their website. These documents highlight the organisation's position, roles, and responsibilities in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

The roles and responsibilities of World Vision are stipulated in the community engagement tools:

Community conversation in participatory monitoring and evaluation builds awareness about the purpose of an activity. The community conversations should not be seen as a means to an end, but as a way to build momentum, understanding, buy in, and ongoing participation from different stakeholders. This is a key opportunity to lay a good

foundation for structured participation and community ownership in participatory monitoring and evaluation (World Vision, 2016: 2).

As an organisation with its own mandate and key priority areas, World Vision is expected to and successfully plays a leading role in the participatory monitoring and evaluation of its projects in the Limpopo Province. The World Vision Thusalushaka development facilitator explained, “World Vision is the main stakeholder that brings together all the other actors that are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation” (int., January, 2018).

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is virtually a communication process which requires the creation of an information sharing system. Furthermore, the primary role of World Vision is to act as a middle agent and devise a communication system that all stakeholders will experience as effective. The development facilitator also stated:

As the main stakeholder, World Vision is the intermediary. If I may say, we often assume the role of a mediator. During stakeholder engagements, which we organise, we allow stakeholders to present their issues of interest and try to ensure that each stakeholder understands what the other stakeholder is communicating (int., January 2018).

In order to maintain a flow of communication that is suitable for all stakeholders during engagements, the point should be explained in another language or other methods such as drawing boards and smaller plenary groups are employed to ensure that recipients receive the message.

The other roles which World Vision plays as an organisation include determining the tools that are used in participatory monitoring and evaluation and providing accountability, training, and capacity building. Most of these roles are executed by development facilitators who represent the organisation in area development programmes.

### 5.2.3.1 Determining the PM&E tools

In 2005, World Vision International resolved to develop and adopt “common global standards” for project design, monitoring, and performance measurement for national and regional offices so as to enable World Vision to achieve best practice and meet the expectations of its constituency (World Vision International, 2004). World Vision Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning is the common global standard guiding principle and approach adopted by World Vision to design, monitor, and evaluate different projects (World Vision International, 2005). Evaluation with Accountability and Planning provides tools for the six components involved in programme and project cycle management, namely, assessment, design, monitoring, evaluation, reflection, and transition. In Table 5.3, the tools of each component are outlined.

These tools are employed by the different World Vision offices to report on the projects they implement. According to officials that deal with the projects, the tools also provide guidelines that detail what steps to take at each stage of the project or programme cycle management. One of the World Vision officials described it as such:

Evaluation with Accountability and Planning virtually makes my life and our lives as World Vision staff very easy. It is more like a guardian angel which keeps us in line with the organisation’s programme management principles (int., December, 2017).

Since the inception of Learning through Evaluation and Accountability Planning, it has undergone reviews and revision. Reviews of this approach are done on a continual basis to ensure that the mechanism can still be adapted for all the World Vision projects. World Vision Thusalushaka submits mid-year Evaluation with Accountability and Planning and annual programme management reports to the national office. It is the responsibility of staff in the national office, regional offices, and support offices to review this approach.

**Table 5.3: World Vision LEAP Tools**

LEAP Component	LEAP tools
Assessment	- LEAP programme assessment tool

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LEAP assessment plan review tool</li> <li>- LEAP assessment report review tool</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compendium of indicators</li> <li>- LEAP programme design document</li> <li>- LEAP project design document</li> <li>- LEAP programme design document review</li> <li>- LEAP budget template</li> <li>- LEAP budget review tool</li> </ul>
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Programme monitoring guidance</li> <li>- LEAP mid-year programme management report</li> <li>- LEAP annual programme management report</li> <li>- Review tool for LEAP programme management report</li> <li>- LEAP programme management report quality checklist</li> <li>- Annual community review and planning guidance</li> </ul>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LEAP evaluation terms of reference (guidelines and template)</li> <li>- LEAP evaluation design (guidelines, template)</li> <li>- LEAP evaluation report (guidelines, template, and review tool).</li> <li>- Programme effectiveness review tool</li> </ul>
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning and discernment resources</li> </ul>
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interim programme transition guidance</li> </ul>

**Source: World Vision (2017)**

The role of each office in determining and revising the Learning through Evaluation and Accountability Planning approach is presented in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4 World Vision Roles in PM&E**

Key Teams in LEAP	Roles in LEAP Products
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National Offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the quality and content of programming.</li> <li>• Provide definition, minimum standards, project models, benchmarks, and guidance notes.</li> <li>• Ensure that sponsorship requirements are met.</li> <li>• Advise on integration of sponsorship.</li> <li>• Engage in community engagement and sponsorship plan.</li> </ul>
Regional Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for quality assurance across the region by providing coaching and technical support to national offices and determining resolutions when issues are escalated.</li> <li>• Provide definition, minimum standards, project models, benchmarks, and guidance notes.</li> <li>• Ensure alignment to regional and national office strategy.</li> <li>• Ensures a LEAP 3 transition plan exists for each office and provides technical support.</li> </ul>
Support Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expected to collaborate and have knowledge about the detailed local plan before they approve their programming portfolio and commit funds.</li> <li>• Seek grants and other funding opportunities for technical approaches.</li> <li>• Keep producing donors with the appropriate information generated from technical support.</li> </ul>

**Source: World Vision (2017)**

An examination of Table 5.4 reveals that most managerial decisions are taken at the regional office and are then sent to the support offices. This ensures that the framework of the monitoring and evaluation, learning, and accountability mechanism is implemented in all projects.

### **5.2.3.2. Providing accountability**

Another role of World Vision within the participatory monitoring and evaluation process is to provide accountability to the different stakeholders. World Vision has adopted an upward and downward accountability structure. A great deal of effort is devoted towards ensuring that downward accountability is evident in all community engagements. World Vision (2007) defined accountability as the ability to demonstrate responsibility in order to provide evidence to all partners that a programme or project has been conducted in accordance with the agreed design.

World Vision demonstrates its upward accountability by producing the relevant documentation and annual reports of the different programmes to upward management including donors. The organisation is also expected to show the local beneficiaries that they have implemented the programme according to their set objectives. The responsibility of World Vision to provide evidence to all stakeholders is referred to as social accountability. Social accountability is a method of civic involvement that builds accountability and transparency through the joint efforts of citizens and civil society organisations to hold non-governmental organisations and governments accountable for their obligations with responsive efforts (UNDP, 2013).

### **5.2.3.3. Training and capacity building**

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is an active and interactive process which requires all stakeholders to keep abreast with what they are expected to know. Thus, it is important for all stakeholders to be trained through capacity development. A fundamental role of World Vision is to provide training and capacity building for all actors involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. World Vision Thusalushaka provides training to project beneficiaries and other local government departments. A World Vision Development Facilitator explained:

World Vision aims at training and capacitating all of their stakeholders so that they all have in-depth information on the projects. The training that is mainly conducted with the project beneficiaries focuses on project monitoring and evaluation, different methodologies, and engagements. The training provided to local government actors focuses on the different projects and monitoring and evaluation (int., November, 2017).

The organisation's development facilitators are trained by the national office to conduct and facilitate Participatory monitoring and evaluation with project beneficiaries and other actors. Subsequently, the development facilitators provide training to the locals and other stakeholders involved in Participatory monitoring and evaluation at their area development programme. The training provided at the area development programme is conducted through workshops and several project group meetings. Furthermore, the project beneficiaries reiterated that training is an ongoing aspect of all World Vision projects. Project beneficiaries further noted that they are trained on the different ways to identify problems through different matrixes as well as to identify children at risk. The training also comprises how to monitor projects, how to engage with other stakeholders, and the different methodologies of obtaining information from the community. The responses of those involved in the Evoke Educational Project revealed that they received training on the overall project so that they would be able to monitor its effectiveness, identify any gaps in the project, and implement it. They also reported that World Vision's training includes general skills such as computer literacy and general literacy, including how to read and write.

This is in accordance with the World Bank's (2008) core principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation which involve building capacity of local people to analyse, reflect, and take action. During this process, joint learning of stakeholders takes place at various levels. The findings of the study revealed that capacity building training and workshops is an important aspect of World Vision South Africa. The organisation ensures that such training takes place quarterly. However, it is not purely directed towards participatory monitoring and evaluation.

#### **5.2.3.4 Development facilitators**

A development facilitator is an individual that oversees community interventions and ensures that these interventions are carried out according to the agreed guidelines. Development facilitators serve as catalysts, community mobilisers, community change agents, encouragers, partnership brokers, builders of the capacity of village community organisations, and local partners. They facilitate the emergence and strengthening of community-led initiatives/innovations to improve and sustain the well-being of children and their families

through educational, livelihood, food security, and health activities (World Vision International, 2017).

World Vision Thusalushaka development facilitators have been involved in the projects as well as in participatory monitoring and evaluation since the inception of the area development programme. Their roles as the representatives of World Vision in participatory monitoring and evaluation are evident in most of their engagements with different stakeholders. This is revealed in the following excerpt by one of the organisation's development facilitators:

I have in-depth knowledge and experience of different communities and stakeholders' engagement dynamics. I understand the importance of always allowing stakeholders to resolve their disputes among themselves and not take a side of any stakeholder. As a representative of World Vision, my role is to remain neutral and not pick a side among the different stakeholders (int., November, 2017).

The overall and general responsibilities of a World Vision development facilitator are detailed in Appendix 12.

The primary role of World Vision development facilitators in participatory monitoring and evaluation is to oversee and facilitate the engagements of stakeholders and to ensure that the plans of the projects are executed accordingly. The study shows that the organisation's development facilitators do not work in isolation, but take instructions from the national office. As such, their roles involve implementing what is in the World Vision Development Implementation Plan (DIP) and utilising the assigned resources including the budget for deserving project beneficiaries. This was explained by one of the organisation's development facilitators during an interview:

My role is to develop monitoring and evaluation tools for the different projects with relevant stakeholders and also to conduct capacity building workshops with all stakeholders. I also represent the organisation, especially in joint workshops or meetings

with stakeholders and ensure that the voice and opinions of the organisation are aired for all stakeholders to be abreast of World Vision modus operandi (int., November, 2017).

As such, facilitators have come to play a critical role in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, operating as both middlemen and drivers.

### **5.3 Other Stakeholders' Participation and the PM&E Process**

The success of projects is still dependent on the interaction between the various stakeholder groups. In this section, various actors, with both a direct and indirect interest in the World Vision projects in Limpopo, are examined. The actors in question represent a broad spectrum of organisations and entities of various sizes with different motivations and needs. Besides these actors, World Vision and its management and development facilitators, project financiers, local government institutions, local traditional leaders, and the communities that benefit from the projects make up the project stakeholders. This section provides profiles of these stakeholders as well as an in-depth analysis of their roles and dynamics of interaction.

In accordance with the principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation, these stakeholders have an interest in the projects and, consequently, in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Some of these stakeholders are involved throughout the participatory monitoring and evaluation process while others are only involved in some stages. In addition to the actors involved in World Vision, there are several other actors that are engaged in the projects and are central to the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. An analysis of the following actors is provided: World Vision and its staff, traditional authorities, project beneficiaries, and others not classified. Because World Vision drives the participatory monitoring and evaluation process as well as its operations, it is examined in-depth. As highlighted earlier, the projects have no conventional donor, which means that the analysis will not include donors.

#### **5.3.1 Financers of the project**

Generally, donor agencies of development interventions are very influential stakeholders in participatory monitoring and evaluation because of their need for transparency in the use of the funds that they give to organisations. These stakeholders are interested in the impact of projects; they wish to be recognised as effective in their distribution of resources and they want and need to be perceived as supporting successful organisations because their reputation is dependent on the positive impacts of the non-governmental organisations' work (Groves, 2008). A general overview of power dynamics when conventional donors are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation is provided in appendix 13. A review of the literature as well key informants of this study argued that conventional donors will always have more influence in participatory monitoring and evaluation than other stakeholders.

Unlike most non-governmental organisations or international non-governmental organisations that rely on funding solely from well-known donor agencies such as the US Agency for International Development, the United Nations, the Department for International Development, the German Agency for International Development, and the European Union, the case of World Vision South Africa is different. World Vision South Africa's Limpopo Province Thusalushaka projects are not funded through the conventional donor funding mechanism. The programme relies on two types of funding mechanisms. The first type of funding is granted when World Vision responds to an expression of interest that would have been advertised. If their proposal is successful, they receive funding from the donor agency or private donors such as Vodacom, Qhubeka Education, and individuals for that particular project. The process is captured in the following excerpt:

World Vision Thusalushaka does not depend on this kind of funding as it is not always available, neither is it sustainable. The organisation only receives this grant if their application for a call of expression for interest is accepted by the funding agencies, and this grant is usually for short-term projects. Less than 20% of the projects are funded through this model and for the past year the Thusalushaka area development programme has not received any of these grants (int., November, 2017).

The second and main source of funding for Thusalushaka area development programme projects is obtained from sponsorship. Sponsorship is when an individual or an organisation sponsors, or makes a donation, towards the well-being or development of a child in a poor community (World Vision, 2014).

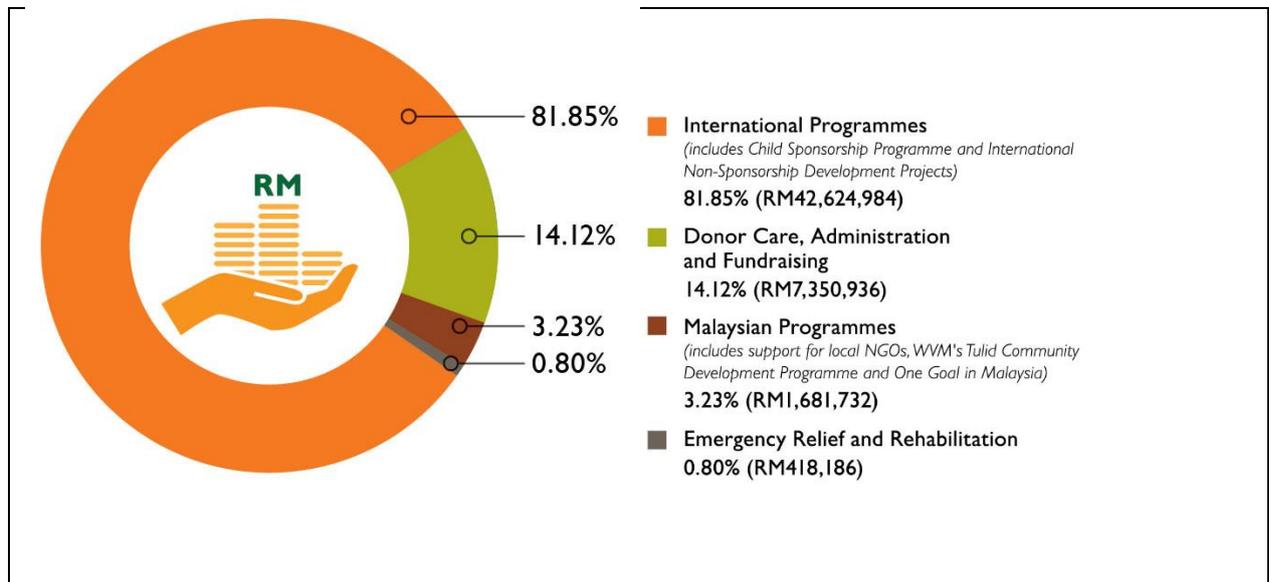
World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme receives its funding from the World Vision Malaysia Support Office. Support offices provide funding based on a needs assessments conducted by national offices. The support office is responsible for ensuring that they obtain, manage, and distribute donations from sponsors. Furthermore, they determine how much each national office will receive. Thusalushaka's area development programme sponsors are usually individual overseas partners of the community who care for children and express an interest in community development through their donations. The sponsors are seen as partners who contribute to the community's development, and through their relationship with children, share the joys of the community's progress. It was revealed:

Manly philanthropists believe in supporting humanitarian causes. These sponsors are based all over the world and they also come from different religious backgrounds such as Christianity, Muslim and non-believers (int., November 2017).

While some sponsors prefer to remain anonymous and only have a desire to donate their funds and not be involved with the project beneficiaries, others do not remain anonymous and have an interest in engaging with the project beneficiaries, especially the children.

Like other World Vision offices, the support offices strive to be transparent and accountable. These fundamental aspects are the cornerstone of the organisation. The Malaysian support office proportionally distributes its funds to International programmes, donor care administration and fundraising, Malaysian programmes, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. This is illustrated in Figure 5.1. Based on this figure, Thusalushaka area development programme is Part of the 81.85 % of funds given to international programmes.

**Figure 5.1: World Vision Malaysia's Distribution of Funds**



**Source: World Vision Malaysia (2016)**

The sponsors of the World Vision Thusalushaka programme do not have an interest in and are not involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Rather, they have an interest in building relationships with the project beneficiaries. This case presents a disparate view of how the sponsors do not influence or play a role in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Their interests are aligned towards building relationships with project beneficiaries instead of determining how their money is spent.

World vision sponsors who contribute 80% of the organisation's funding are not directly involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation. All they require from the organisation is information about the well-being of the children and community, and not how their funds have been utilised. The sponsors' expectations involve knowledge about the results and impacts made through their contributions. Furthermore, they wish to be recognised by name and to obtain information from and about the children they are sponsoring. They receive this information through various correspondence such as reports, letters, and cards (World Vision Community Engagement, 2009).

### **5.3.2. Local actors**

All project actors have an important role to play in participatory monitoring and evaluation even though they do not all have the same responsibilities. In World Vision, traditional leaders and project beneficiaries are the primary local actors that have a role in participatory monitoring and evaluation. In this section, the term “local actors” is used as an umbrella term for all types of actors and project beneficiaries that are directly involved in and are recipients of the projects. Before outlining their roles and responsibilities and power dynamics, a profile of the local beneficiaries and the poverty situation in Limpopo is outlined.

The Thusalushaka area development programme has a population of more than 66, 900 in 15 villages. The ethnicity of the local beneficiaries is either Pedi or Venda. The four main languages spoken in the area are Sepedi, Xitsonga, Venda, and English. Most of the beneficiaries are Christian and attend churches close to Thusalushaka. In as much as World Vision is a Christian organisation, it also extends its services to the minority of non-Christians in the area.

As outlined above, the area development programme undertakes different projects. These projects also aim to empower women as 64% of the local beneficiaries are women. World Vision’s local beneficiaries are not formally employed, although some hold casual employment in local enterprises including local supermarkets and bottle stores. Others are vendors that sell fruits and vegetables.

World Vision’s local beneficiaries rely on the assistance and support provided by the organisation for their livelihood. The majority of local beneficiaries were either students in matric or had completed high school, but had not gone any further. The rest of the beneficiaries did not have any formal qualifications. There is a dynamic and complex relationship between the beneficiaries and World Vision as an organisation. In this context, the local beneficiaries represent a poor community in dire need of assistance. World Vision is privileged to be able to answer the cries of the community. The general sentiment of the local beneficiaries was that they were all vulnerable and would accept any form of assistance as highlighted in the following excerpt:

World Vision is very helpful. When they see a need they assist us. As a community we accept whatever it is that they offer us because without their assistance we would be suffering (int., November, 2017).

It was evident that in such a setting the interest of local beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation was to accept all the assistance they could receive from World Vision. Their motives were not related to the decision making of what they received or how the programmes were implemented, but to agree to what World Vision was offering or proposing so that they could remain the recipients of the projects.

### **5.3.2.1 Local stakeholders' participation in the PM&E process**

As noted previously, World Vision upholds a community-based approach. Therefore, the organisation strives to involve all relevant stakeholders throughout participatory monitoring and evaluation. World Vision's manuals, toolkits, and guidelines stipulate the importance of the maximum participation of all local stakeholders, especially the project beneficiaries. In this context, local stakeholders refer to traditional leaders, project beneficiaries, churches, and other state actors. As noted in chapter two, the most significant difference between conventional monitoring and evaluation and participatory monitoring and evaluation is that the stakeholders enjoy a greater level of participation within the latter than in the former. The local beneficiaries are not just perceived as information providers, but as essential role players who, during the process, have the opportunity to learn and become empowered and are afforded ownership and control in the decision-making process and the change that may take place.

An examination of World Vision's documents reveals that its mandate and approach is to develop a structure in which the organisation does not take a leading or supervisory role. Therefore, the influence it has on decision-making and on other stakeholders is limited. Rather, much emphasis is devoted towards empowering the project beneficiaries in order to educate them and inform them of their rights in participatory monitoring and evaluation. The

empowerment is achieved through capacity building workshops. A World Vision development facilitator reported:

Our project beneficiaries are empowered with knowledge and as a result of the knowledge they obtain during capacity building training and workshops, they are able to fully participate at every stage of participatory monitoring and evaluation (int., December 2017).

The organisation's documents provide step-by-step procedures which should be followed to afford the local beneficiaries extensive participation. However, the extent of the involvement of Thusalushaka's local stakeholders, especially the project beneficiaries, reveals the discrepancy between theory and practice. The responses of the project beneficiaries in relation to their extent of participation are subsequently discussed.

### **5.3.2.2 Traditional leaders**

Traditional leaders are also referred to as local chiefs. These appointed individuals are chosen by the community to represent them. Traditional leaders' general responsibilities differ according to each country's constitution and legislation. However, according to Chigwata (2016), traditional leaders have the following responsibilities:

- To promote and uphold the cultural values of their communities and, in particular, to promote sound family values;
- To take measures to preserve the culture, traditions, history, and heritage of their communities, including sacred shrines;
- To facilitate development and protect the environment;
- To resolve disputes amongst people in their communities in accordance with customary law; and
- To exercise any other functions conferred or imposed on them by acts passed in parliament.

The traditional leaders also have authority, jurisdiction, and control over areas for which they have been appointed and over persons within their community. The Sekgosese community is under the leadership of Chief Mamaila Khudugane Solomon. Chief Phoko and Chief Raphahlelo are also close to the area development programme offices. In this community, traditional leaders are selected by royal blood. Traditional leaders are chosen because they are believed to be influential individuals and are dominant males.

The traditional leaders in Thusalushaka were all men. Traditional leaders in South Africa are customary representatives of the people and, accordingly, play an important role in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process as intermediaries between World Vision and the rest of the communities which they represent. This is mainly the consequence of the inability of the organisation to communicate and reach out to each individual in the community. However, the traditional leaders are able to achieve this and disseminate the communication from World Vision to the community. Traditional leaders are respected individuals in the community because of their undisputable position and status. Accordingly, they are given supervisory roles within participatory monitoring and evaluation. A traditional leader explained:

In 2011, myself and other leaders started our own project of cutting wood and selling it to the community for firewood and when we heard about World Vision we approached them and informed them of the project we were doing and asked World Vision to assist. World Vision agreed to assist and actually expanded the projects to include other livestock rearing projects, which in turn benefited the rest of the community (int., November, 2017).

The other roles of the traditional leaders in participatory monitoring and evaluation include conducting regular monitoring of the different projects in the community. One traditional leader reported that although he conducted monitoring in conjunction with World Vision sometimes, he also did it on his own and subsequently reported the project's progress to World Vision (int., November, 2017). The traditional leadership's office in the community also provides secretarial services and captures and keeps a record of proceedings during meetings between World Vision and community members.

### 5.3.2.3 Project beneficiaries

World Vision local beneficiaries benefit from area development programme projects. As noted previously, the area development programmes have different projects in which the participants include children, youth, and adults. In the Limpopo project, very few elderly people are involved in the project; consequently, the results are skewed in favour of the other groups. The beneficiaries' levels of education were noteworthy: most of the youth had finished writing their matric exams, most of the adults were informally employed and no one had obtained a tertiary qualification. This could be attributed to the fact that, at the time of the interviews, the youth were still waiting for their matric results and none of the adults had any form of formal qualification.

World Vision emphasises the need to consult project beneficiaries at the inception of any activity. This is done in order, first, to obtain local knowledge from the people as they know best what form of interventions they need and how they want the implementation to take place and, second, to empower the project beneficiaries so as to afford them a sense of ownership within the different activities. Matshilazi (2012) cautioned that participatory monitoring and evaluation is more successful if the knowledge and experience of project beneficiaries is systematically included into the process. As noted previously, World Vision has a number of projects which form area development programmes. These projects focus on different groups such as children and youth. Furthermore, all these groups have similar roles to play in participatory monitoring and evaluation. It is important to note that the involvement of project beneficiaries should begin at the initial brainstorming stages of the project and not merely at the beginning of participatory monitoring and evaluation.

#### *The Children*

The researcher did not engage with any children at the World Vision Thusalushaka offices, because the World Vision staff encouraged to me rather engage with the youth instead of children. However, the World Vision child protection tools highlight the roles of the children in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Before embarking on a discussion of the target group, namely the youth, it is deemed important to highlight and provide theoretical information of how children who are the centre of World Vision's work are involved in

participatory monitoring and evaluation. This information was extracted from the child protection community mapping tools.

Normally, children are involved in the sponsorship programme. Their role in participatory monitoring and evaluation is to identify and communicate through visual stories what is being done, what can be done, and what will be done in their community so as to improve the well-being of children. This process is known as community mapping (World Vision, 2017). The children are separated according to gender to enable each gender group to express themselves freely. Subsequently, they brainstorm and prepare answers to any questions the development facilitators may ask them about what they want to see in their community. The children's pictures and drawings are then used as a project baseline to assist with monitoring and evaluation. During evaluation cycles, the children are asked to repeat the same activity to determine how things have changed in their community, and how their ideas and attitudes about what is important to them may have changed. However, children are only involved in the evaluation cycle if resources are available (World Vision International, 2011).

### *The Youth*

The group of youth that were part of the Evoke programme resided in the different villages that are close to the World Vision office. They were between 18 and 21 years of age. Although the language they communicated with one another was Xitsonga, they spoke various languages. Not all were Christians. All of the youth that were part of the programme were post-matric students who had not yet enrolled for tertiary education and were also not working. They spent most of their time at World Vision office making use of several facilities that had been made available to the community such as computers and the Internet.

### *The Extent of Youth Beneficiaries' Involvement in PM&E*

The material provided in this section is mainly drawn from focus group discussions that were conducted with the youth who were involved in the Evoke project in Thusalushaka. The study revealed that their role in participatory monitoring and evaluation was primarily limited to

identifying the challenges within the community, brainstorming ideas on the changes they wanted, and monitoring the progress of the project once it had begun. One noted:

It was identified that there was an English literacy challenge in the community and, as a result, a number of the people are unemployed because they cannot speak English. So, World Vision and us as the youth decided to come up with a project that will be launched in the different schools in the community to assist with English literacy. We have already identified the school in which we want the project to start and we will be involved with monitoring the progress of the project (int., November, 2017).

Many scholars have agreed that because the mechanism is classified under participatory development, local beneficiaries must participate in all stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation actively. As noted in chapter two, the most important aspect of participatory development is that project beneficiaries are the centre of development initiatives and should be extensively involved in decision making. In participatory monitoring and evaluation, local beneficiaries identify their goals, monitor indicators, determine the direction of their projects so as to improve their levels of development, and evaluate the projects.

All project beneficiaries from Thusalushaka agreed that they were involved in the development projects at the implementation stage. However, there were discrepancies on how beneficiaries responded to their participation during the different stages of the participatory monitoring and evaluation cycle. Respondents felt strongly that they were involved in the project design and that their opinions were valued by World Vision. The following responses emerged from discussions with Evoke beneficiaries:

World Vision consults with us to get information on what change needs to be seen in the community. After consulting with us, we then discuss how we are going to implement the ideas. Sometimes we are involved in setting the monitoring plan and indicators to monitor (int., November, 2017).

World Vision does ask us questions regarding what change we want to see in the community. I think they do incorporate our ideas and opinions in their programme though some of our ideas are rejected by World Vision development workers. We also do not get feedback on some of the ideas we would have proposed (int., November, 2017).

These responses show that there is a form of engagement at the early stages of the project design with project beneficiaries. Estrella (2002) stated that participatory monitoring and evaluation is conceptualised to constitute four processes which form the indicators, namely, project design, participation in reflection during monitoring, participation in implementation of activities, and participation in monitoring and evaluation. The findings revealed that the project beneficiaries felt that they participated in the project design.

However, it would appear that such participation and engagement was not extended to the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. When project beneficiaries were asked about their involvement in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, they reported that they were mainly consulted at the beginning of the project and their involvement was restricted to brainstorming what initiatives they wanted to see in the community. They were not asked for ideas related to developing project management structure of the intervention or other participatory monitoring and evaluation processes as identified by Estrella. These findings are ironic because World Vision has a number of toolkits that stipulate project beneficiaries are engaged throughout all the stages of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

Contrary to what most respondents noted, a few respondents reported that, in some instances, they have conducted monitoring spot checks so as to update World Vision on the progress of their projects. The responses revealed that this group of project beneficiaries appeared to be the only group that attended World Vision meetings and capacity building workshops. However, the findings showed that these capacity building workshops were not participatory monitoring and evaluation training, but workshops on how to run community projects well. One of the informants recalled:

Twice a year I attend capacity building workshops with other stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture. In these workshops we are taught how to better manage our projects and we are provided with tips on how to grow vegetables. I have never received training on monitoring and evaluation (int., January, 2018).

In as much as World Vision conducts capacity building with local beneficiaries, the beneficiaries are not empowered enough to participate in participatory monitoring and evaluation actively because they do not have knowledge on the mechanism itself. Chouinard (2013) stated that project beneficiaries' involvement in participatory monitoring and evaluation is highly dependent on capacity building that encompasses data collection and data analysis. Further steps are required to curb power dynamics with other stakeholders. The stakeholders' skills will ultimately influence the level of participation in any evaluation. Thus, it was deduced that World Vision project beneficiaries were not extensively involved in the entire participatory monitoring and evaluation process. However, there may have been a lack of understanding as to what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails.

#### *Lack of Understanding of PM&E*

In chapter two, there was a broad discussion of what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails and why and how it is conducted. In order for all stakeholders to be actively involved in the process they need to have a thorough understanding of this. The study findings revealed that the project beneficiaries had little or no understanding of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process and their role in it as highlighted by the following excerpts from project beneficiaries:

I do not know what participatory monitoring and evaluation is and I have never heard of it. However, I know what monitoring is, it is checking if something is going according to plan. I have not yet started monitoring any of our projects. But I was involved in identifying the challenges in the community and coming up with proposed solutions. This

exercise of identifying challenges is normally done in groups and we present our ideas through drawings (int., November, 2017).

I do not know what monitoring and evaluation is. World Vision gave me my first stock of the chicken to start my business and as from then I have been doing my own thing. When I make profits I do not go back to report on how much I have made, I just tell them that the business is going well. I am my own manager so I monitor how the poultry business is doing. I feel empowered because this is my own project and I run it the way that we want and it also helps the community (int., November, 2017).

World Vision comes to our community and they do spot checks to see what we do not have, then they provide us with the assistance. For example, they came and saw that we did not have a hall and boreholes and they then decided to give the community boreholes and build the hall. So from my understanding World Vision does the monitoring of the community (int., November, 2017).

The lack of understanding of the process and expectations seem to extend to key community individuals like traditional leaders who are expected to have an in-depth comprehension of the process since they are the leaders of the people. This lack of understanding was revealed in discussion with one of the traditional leader who reported his involvement as:

I am involved in identifying the challenges in the community and informing World Vision of the challenges. My role in participatory monitoring and evaluation is to provide World Vision with information and monitor what World Vision is doing because there is a possibility that World Vision can spend the money which was meant for beneficiaries on other things (int., November, 2017).

It is evident that even though World Vision engages in a robust community engagement approach, project beneficiaries are not extensively involved in the whole participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Their involvement seems to end at problem identification

and proposing feasible solutions. Some of the beneficiaries did not know or understand what monitoring and evaluation was even though they were of the view that World Vision valued their inputs and information. Another key aspect that emerged from the findings is that it appears project beneficiaries are merely information providers and are not involved in decision making or evaluation of the projects at a project or programme level. In essence, the project beneficiaries of World Vision projects are mainly involved in the identification of the project to be monitored and evaluated.

### **5.3.3 Other stakeholders**

The other stakeholders involved in the World Vision projects, and therefore the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, include faith-based actors such as pastors and the church, the local municipality, government departments, and donors. While some of these stakeholders are directly involved throughout the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, others play indirect roles.

#### **5.3.3.1 Pastors and local churches**

Since World Vision is an international Christian organisation that promotes the inclusion of religious and biblical values in all that it strives to do, it is expected that interested parties in the World Vision projects and participatory monitoring and evaluation process would include Christian religious actors. There are six churches near the Thusalushaka area development programme, four of which work with the World Vision offices. These include Moratabatho church, led by Pastor Mamaila Peter; the Apostle church, led by Bishop Baloyi; the United Pentecostal Christian Church, led by Bishop Mahlaba; and the ZCC.

The general roles of this group include teaching the community, and in particular the children, the Bible, preaching the word of God during spiritual nurturing camps, and hosting child protection campaigns in conjunction with World Vision. While this group is regarded as an important World Vision stakeholder, they only play a small role in participatory monitoring and evaluation. The pastors of the local church ministries also assist with the identification of the improvements that need to be seen in the community and they are

involved in judging whether the intervention has brought about change or was implemented according to plan. According to one of the World Vision officials:

Pastors and local churches are very important to us. Their involvement in identifying and monitoring the children in need of care can never be taken for granted (int., November, 2017).

It is evident that this group of stakeholders is primarily involved in the first stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation which comprise identification and situation analysis.

#### **5.3.3.2. State actors**

The Greater Letaba local municipal offices, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Water Affairs are located right next to the World Vision offices. These stakeholders play a similar role in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Their roles are to ensure that the set of identified indicators concur with those agreed at the national government departments' offices. World Vision works together with the government. During stakeholder meetings, representatives from the local municipality and government department are always present to ensure that the interventions being proposed or implemented are in accordance with the national strategy.

The government department is also expected to provide training to the project beneficiaries on how to monitor the success of the project. The Department of Agriculture used to provide training to the project beneficiaries involved in agriculture and livestock rearing activities. The findings revealed that the main involvement of these stakeholders is similar to those of the pastors and the local churches: the group is not involved throughout the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, but only plays a role in imparting information during the project cycle and ensuring that national plans and objectives are included or taken into consideration when World Vision is designing their project.

## 5.4 Power Relations

In this section, a brief generic overview of how other non-governmental organisations display their power in participatory monitoring and evaluation is reviewed. Furthermore, World Vision's power dynamics are outlined. In order to support existing literature on non-governmental organisation power relations and to understand the different power dynamics involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation completely, the researcher also obtained information from independent participatory monitoring and evaluation experts who are not linked to World Vision. Even though they provided information in the context of conventional donors, some of the opinions they expressed concurred with World Vision's practices of participatory monitoring and evaluation. The information obtained from the independent experts are highlighted and discussed in subsequent sections and chapters.

Many scholars agree that the issues involved in power dynamics at all levels are contentious in any developmental aspects that involve the participation of a variety of stakeholders. As noted in Chapter Two, power dynamics are eminent in any participatory approach, including participatory monitoring and evaluation, because of the involvement of different actors who may want to exercise their authority and further advance their own interests. Power dynamics and power relations can be distinguished at an institutional level as well as a grassroots community level. Chambers (2010) expressed the view that when examining power dynamics and power relations at an institutional level, management is referred to as the uppers and the recipients of the development are referred to as the lowers. Furthermore, because management has an upper and superior role in facilitating development, they are deemed to have control over the "lowers".

Non-governmental organisations may be referred to as project implementers because they receive funds from donor agencies and become the direct implementers of projects. Donors tend to conduct extensive research and profiling of non-governmental organisations before they invest or fund their projects. An imbalance of power between the chosen non-governmental organisation and the rest of the middle- and lower-level stakeholders is automatically created due to the fact that a donor chooses to fund a particular non-governmental organisation from the pool of other organisations. When donors fund non-governmental organisations they basically entrust the organisation to manage the projects and deliver the expected results. As a

result of the mutual agreement between the donors and the non-governmental organisation, it is expected of the latter to be transparent and accountable to the donors. However, this does not mean there is an equal relationship between the two entities.

The power that non-governmental organisations have in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process is the consequence of the non-governmental organisation being the middle agent between the project funders and project beneficiaries. The manner in which the organisation negotiates and reconciles the differences between the two stakeholders is largely influenced by the non-governmental organisation's strategy and organisational interests. Many scholars have argued that non-governmental organisations, in essence, have adopted strategic behaviour in as much as they are not profit-driven, but are forced to please their donors as a survival strategy so as to secure additional funding to continue pursuing their normative objectives (Guet *et al.* 2014; Groves, 2008). Therefore, non-governmental organisations have come to be known as strategic and instrumental when defining their objectives. Various scholars have also argued that they indirectly employ the tactics of profit-driven businesses just to continue receiving funding. A monitoring and evaluation specialist from the Department of Telecommunication and Postal Services reported:

The above is a common thing. Normally, donors get away with their claims, interests, and set indicators. Little is done by non-governmental organisations to compromise on the donor interests, and donors always get the lion's share of the process (process of negotiating the different stakeholder's interest). The beneficiaries always have to compromise their interests or claims for the donors. In other words, they do not have much say because they are getting free services from the donors through non-governmental organisations (they are the gift bearers). This is because projects are directed from the top – it is normally a one-way communication/directive from the top to the locals (int., November, 2017).

Studies have revealed that a significant number of non-governmental organisations have tailored participatory monitoring and evaluation reports to suit the needs of their donors just to obtain or secure additional funding. In other words, if the views of the stakeholders are

different, the non-governmental organisation is likely to do what the donor requires and ignore the rest of the stakeholders (Groves, 2008). This is mainly attributed to a quest for survival and further funding.

The findings of the study revealed that World Vision South Africa, as the middle agent among all the stakeholders, has influence over how participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted to a greater extent. This is evident from the roles that the organisation plays in the process as well as the fact that the organisation has the final say on what is implemented. In as much they engage with different stakeholders once or twice throughout the stages of the programme/project cycle, they still have control over the process and play a managerial role in deciding on the key indicators and objectives.

World Vision South Africa does not tailor their participatory monitoring and evaluation reports to suit the needs of their sponsors or private donors. Rather, their reports project information that suits the manner in which the organisation itself intends to conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation. This may be deduced from information obtained from World Vision key actors who reiterated that the national office informs the development programme on how to conduct certain activities and whatever the different stakeholders agree on should be in line with what has been set out at the national office. When asked how the organisation negotiates and reconciles the different stakeholders' interests and claims, a World Vision key actor who co-ordinated the sponsorship programme stated:

During stakeholder engagements with parents, children, community members, and local government departments, each stakeholder is allowed to share their idea, or suggestion. However, if the inputs are not in line with what was agreed at the World Vision national office it would not be taken further; only suggestions that are in line with what is in the Development Implementation Plan can be deliberated on (int., December, 2017).

Another World Vision key actor stated that during stakeholder engagements, World Vision clearly states and ensures that all stakeholders understand that they will only consider inputs that are in accordance with the World Vision framework.

Such comments indicate and reflect the level of power that World Vision has in the final process of participatory monitoring and evaluation even though the motivation behind how they deal with other stakeholders' input is not purely to please their sponsor, but to ensure a standard uniform approach in all World Vision operations.

### *Power Dynamics among Project Beneficiaries*

The general power dynamics that are present at a community level are in most instances the result of political influence, gender inequality, and the social class status of the individual in the community. Certain power dynamics among community members or project beneficiaries were identified during the study. Such power disparities exist because of the political status and hierarchies of individuals in Thusalushaka. Judging from the roles performed by local beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation, it is evident that the traditional leaders have more influence and say than the ordinary community members do because they represent the rest of the community and act as the middle agent in terms of relaying information to the other stakeholders. In addition, this power can also be ascribed to the relations which the traditional leaders have with the local chiefs in the community.

The traditional cultural belief that men should represent the community marginalises indigenous women who may want to express themselves fully and be completely involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation. This was seen in the responses that were provided by some of the women project beneficiaries. They all alluded to the fact that they are not involved in the monitoring or decision making of the projects. The traditional leaders, who are mostly men, are in a position to use their power and influence to advance their interests but they do not fully represent the interests of every individual in the community. For instance, the traditional leader pointed out that when World Vision came to Thusalushaka and they asked the organisation for assistance with their projects which included cutting down trees to sell firewood and livestock rearing, women were not involved in this process or in the projects.

Among the Evoke project beneficiaries, the youth that appeared to be from a different social class tended to be more outspoken and seemed like they were ahead or in charge of the Evoke programme. This particular group was comprised of the youth that had the latest smart phones, were fashionable, were able to articulate in English, were self-confident, and spoke of how they will be attending university the following year.

## **5.5 Chapter Summary**

The analysis in the chapter began by profiling World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme and revealed how World Vision Thusalushaka conducts participatory monitoring and evaluation. It mentioned the guiding documents and manuals that the area development programme uses to ensure a global standardised way of undertaking participatory monitoring and evaluation, namely, Learning through Evaluation and Accountability Planning, World Vision Facilitation Guidance, Child Protection tools, Baseline Guide, and World Vision Guidance for Integrated Programming. The chapter also identified and outlined the different actors involved in World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation processes and their roles. These actors are World Vision and its staff, project beneficiaries of the Thusalushaka area development programme Evoke literacy programme, sponsors, and other actors such as religious organisations and local state actors.

The research findings have demonstrated that World Vision's power relations and stakeholders' involvement is not the same as that which extensive literature has shown to be the norm. The usual expectation is that the interests and claims of the funding agency is what determine the manner in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted. The case of World Vision Thusalushaka deviates from this as the funders, also known as the sponsors of the project, have no interest in the monitoring and evaluation of the projects. These actors do not directly inform the indicators or the participatory monitoring and evaluation process; what is of interest to these actors is the overall well-being of the children who are benefiting from the funding and being able to communicate with them regularly.

The project beneficiaries are only involved in the early stages of the process and their involvement is limited to providing information to World Vision. This group of actors, which should be the most important in determining the impact and progress of the projects and programmes, is not involved in the entire process. In fact, the findings revealed that these actors are not cognisant of what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails and because of their lack of knowledge of the process they do not fully participate in the process. The other actors involved in World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation are also involved at the early stages or at different stages of the project cycle.

Judging from the different roles of the actors involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process, it is apparent that World Vision is the most influential actor in the process because it facilitates and is present throughout the project cycle. Final decisions are made at the national offices, at times without the involvement of the rest of the stakeholders. Consequently, by using these research findings as a base, the study findings are discussed, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations made in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

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#### **6.1 Introduction**

This study was motivated by the growing popularity of the participatory monitoring and evaluation tool in development, particularly in donor-sponsored projects. Donors have particularly emphasised the tool as necessary for project success. Monitoring and evaluation as a tool derives its popularity from the premise that it gives project beneficiaries complete ownership of the project through their participation in the monitoring and evaluation process, which then leads to a project that caters to their needs. Using a single-site and actor-oriented approach grounded in the interaction of various stakeholders, the contention was that simply basing our understanding of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process on principle is not enough, and for a better understanding of how participative participatory monitoring and evaluation is, we need to move beyond principles and focus on the dynamics of interaction between the stakeholders. The assumption was that the participatory monitoring and evaluation process represents an arena of contestation between various actors with different power and, therefore, the roles cannot not be equal.

While non-governmental organisations are expected to design an evaluation of the projects/programmes that include the input of all stakeholders, the challenge, however, is that the different stakeholders have different perspectives, including claims and interests that are shaped by their different backgrounds and motivations. These issues suggested the need for critical reflection on the stakeholder participation and interaction process. The available research on how organisations negotiate and respond to different stakeholder interests and motives tends to be insignificant and inadequate., especially when faced with the mandate of providing accountability and transparency to the donor agencies and to the local people who are the beneficiaries of the development projects, tend to be insignificant and inadequate.

Basing the analysis on a case study of World Vision South Africa's Thusalushaka area development project in South Africa's Limpopo Province, the study set out to identify who the major stakeholders are and what roles they play in participatory monitoring and evaluation; to investigate how World Vision negotiates and responds to different stakeholder interests in order to come up with an effective participatory monitoring and evaluation model; to identify the factors that influence their decisions on whose position to consider in participatory monitoring and evaluation; to determine the extent to which the local beneficiaries of the projects are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation; and to ascertain whether the participatory monitoring and evaluation that World Vision employs includes and accommodates the positions, views, and aspirations of stakeholders.

The research drew insights from three themes: World Vision and its participatory monitoring and evaluation process, stakeholder participation in participatory monitoring and evaluation, and power relations. The conclusion aims to pull these themes together to discuss the manner in which World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation is participatory, especially for the project beneficiaries, as well as some implications on broader policy issues. The conclusion also reflects on the research, briefly commenting on the limitations of the study and potential areas for further research.

## **6.2 Discussion**

This section begins by drawing on an excerpt from Majid Rahana that was used as an introduction to Chapter Four:

Modern jargon uses stereotype words like children use Lego toy pieces. Like Lego pieces, the words fit arbitrarily together and support the most fanciful constructions. They have no content, but do serve a function. As these words are separate from any context, they are ideal for manipulative purposes. 'Participation' belongs to this category of words (MajidRahnema, 2010:267).

Participation has indeed become a buzzword and everyone: government, agencies, public institutions, and non-governmental organisations, continuously strive to embrace the concept. Yet, participation is not without its own complexities. What exactly is participation and how participative is it? These questions are revealed in this study, and this section engages with these issues in-depth.

### **6.2.1 World Vision and its PM&E process**

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a bottom-up approach which seeks to strengthen learning and change at community, project, and institution levels (Chambers, 1997). While it is agreed upon that there is no standardised way of conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation, the main purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation is to allow project beneficiaries to be agents of change and not just bearers of change. This study has revealed that World Vision has Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for implementing this process, however, it has been identified that this process is somehow skewed and deviates from the general and fundamental principles/concepts linked with participatory monitoring and evaluation. This section of the discussion will zero in on the following concepts: training and capacity building, empowerment, and accountability

#### **6.2.1.1 Capacity building**

As illustrated in the table in chapter four which outlines the steps in participatory monitoring and evaluation, the second and most important step of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process after identifying stakeholders is building stakeholder capacity. The World Bank (2008) notes that capacity building for participatory monitoring and evaluation involves building the capacity of local people to analyse, reflect, and take action. During this process, joint learning of stakeholders takes place at various levels. While World Vision Thusalushaka

upholds a theory of capacity building for participatory monitoring and evaluation which was supported by the below quote from the development facilitator:

World Vision aims at training and capacitating all of their stakeholders so that they all have in-depth information on the projects. The training that is mainly conducted with the project beneficiaries focuses on project monitoring and evaluation, different methodologies and engagements. The training provided to local government actors focuses on the different projects and monitoring and evaluation (int., November, 2017).

The responses from the project beneficiaries do not present a holistic view of this capacity building. Judging from the responses they provided, this group of stakeholders do indeed undergo capacity building in the different projects they are involved in, but not specifically in participatory monitoring and evaluation. To support this view reference is made to one of the quotes which came from the project beneficiaries highlighting the skills that he has learnt from World Vision.

World Vision has truly changed our lives for the better, we are very grateful for the work that they are doing. Because of World Vision, I now know how to use a computer and the rest of the community is benefiting from the different projects (int., January 2018).

While the capacity building of project implementation is essential within participatory monitoring and evaluation the capacitating of project implementation is essential, the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and gain substantial knowledge of the participatory monitoring and evaluation processes is equally important because this enables project beneficiaries to be fully involved in the process, make final decisions, and empower themselves.

#### **6.2.1.2 Empowerment**

Empowerment refers to the ability of individuals to gain control socially, politically, economically, and psychologically through access to information, knowledge and skills,

decision making, individual self-efficacy community participation, and perceived control (Nikkah, 2010:86). One of the objectives of participatory monitoring and evaluation is to empower the project beneficiaries and once they have been empowered they are able to make decisions on their own. Firstly, it is important to note that in any participatory monitoring and evaluation process the project beneficiaries should be the ones leading the process; the development facilitators are supposed to hand over the yard stick to the community members to make decisions within the process. However, in the case of World Vision development facilitators and World Vision as an organisation, handing over of the yard stick to the project beneficiaries does not occur. Instead, the organisation assumes an intermediary role, meaning it still facilitates, coordinates, and manages the process. By spearheading the participatory monitoring and evaluation process the project beneficiaries are not empowered and capacitated to make concluding decisions in the process. This is evident from the fact that final reports on participatory monitoring and evaluation are generated by World Vision staff and, in most cases, at the national offices where project beneficiaries are not present.

Secondly, as discussed in the literature review chapter, there must be significant changes in power relations between the project beneficiaries and agents of development in order for empowerment to be meaningful. Otherwise, empowerment will normally be interpreted and supported in ways that silently fit with the interests of powerful actors or with dominating norms. A World Vision development facilitator highlighted that:

Our project beneficiaries are empowered with knowledge and as a result of the knowledge they obtain during capacity building training and workshops, they are able to fully participate at every stage of participatory monitoring and evaluation (int., December 2017).

This particular quote substantiates what Petit (2012) calls “cherry picking” because it does not pressurise the status quo of power relations. This study revealed that World Vision interprets the level of empowerment of project beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation in a way that silently fits their interests and *modus operandi*.

### **6.2.1.3 Accountability**

Another responsibility of World Vision is to be accountable to all its stakeholders through the downward and upward accountability mechanism. World Vision (2007) defined accountability as the ability to demonstrate responsibility in order to provide evidence to all partners that a programme or project has been conducted in accordance with the agreed design. This study has revealed that World Vision seems to devote much of its attention to upward accountability. It demonstrates this by producing and publicising the relevant documentation and annual reports of the different programmes it undertakes to higher-up management, including sponsors and short-term grant donors. However, when it comes to downward accountability the World Vision project beneficiaries do not have a say on the budget, report templates, or indicators used in participatory monitoring and evaluation as there is an existing World Vision Compendium of Indicators which informs all World Vision area development programmes.

Secondly, in as much as World Vision strives to be accountable and transparent to all stakeholders the findings of this study have revealed that there are blurred lines of transparency because the annual reports, which they publicise, are not monitoring reports. Furthermore, based on the lack of understanding of project beneficiaries of participatory monitoring and evaluation it is safe to conclude that they do not receive monitoring and evaluation reports from World Vision.

### **6.2.2 Stakeholder participation and PM&E**

Who exactly are World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme stakeholders and which ones have the most influence in participatory monitoring and evaluation? The stakeholders of World Vision's Thusalushaka area development programme are World Vision and its staff, sponsors of the development programmes, project beneficiaries, and other local state actors such as churches, local municipalities, and government departments.

According to Emtage (2004), the roles of stakeholders differ according to the intention of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. For instance, the key role of funding agencies is to inject capital to run the projects and to provide expert information and analysis of the project, while the role of the non-governmental organisation is to manage and coordinate the implementation of the project while taking into consideration all stakeholders' needs. In a scenario where the process is fully participatory, the users should be involved from the

beginning to the end of the process. Authors such as Estrella (2000), Mtshali (2000), and Mckenzie *et al.* (2006) argue that stakeholders should be involved in defining the problem, collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data for project development and analysis.

### *World Vision*

The most influential stakeholder in World Vision's participatory monitoring and evaluation is World Vision itself. The sponsors of the projects have no interest in the organisation's participatory monitoring and evaluation, automatically leaving the non-governmental organisation as the most powerful actor and allowing it to manage and coordinate the different activities that are implemented.

Just like any other development or humanitarian aid organisation that was characterised as the "sweetheart" of development during the shift towards alternative development paradigms, World Vision South Africa Thusalushaka is also perceived as such. It was revealed that in the eyes of the Thusalushaka area development programme project beneficiaries World Vision is understood to be a saviour because they have positively influenced the lives of the beneficiaries through the diverse projects they implement.

From this perspective World Vision automatically yields more power over the beneficiaries as the saviour of development. According to the different dimensions of power explained in chapter two this kind of power referred to as "power over" has the ability to dominate. This form of power is finite and the implication it has in practice is that the other group becomes powerless. Furthermore, referring to the donor power scale described in chapter five, it was identified that in the absence of conventional donors, World Vision Thusalushaka is the most powerful actor that spearheads and has the final say in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

### *Funding Agencies*

As discussed in the previous chapter, World Vision does not receive its funding from conventional donor agencies but from sponsors. World Vision sponsors contribute 80% of the organisation's funding. The sponsors of the World Vision Thusalushaka programme do

not have an interest in and are not involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation. Rather, they have an interest in building relationships with the project beneficiaries.

This case presents a disparate view of how the sponsors do not influence or play a role in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Their interests are aligned towards building relationships with project beneficiaries instead of determining how their money is spent. All they require from the organisation is information about the well-being of the children and community, and not knowledge of how their funds have been spent. The sponsors' expectations involve knowledge about the results and impacts made through their contributions. Furthermore, they wish to be recognised by name and to obtain information from and about the children they are sponsoring. They receive this information through various correspondence such as reports, letters, and cards.

### *Project Beneficiaries*

Participatory monitoring and evaluation falls under the participatory development theory. This school of thought contends that the local people who are the beneficiaries of the development projects are involved in the project cycle and are fully capable of making a change in their communities based on their indigenous knowledge. In an era where project beneficiaries ought to be the main decision makers about development initiatives that take place in their community as well as the monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives.

This study has revealed that World Vision project beneficiaries are not involved in all the stages of the participatory monitoring and evaluation project cycle; they are mainly involved in identifying the problems that need to be solved and they are kept informed of the different activities that the organisation undertakes. The following quotes from project beneficiaries support the view that they are only involved in the first stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation:

World Vision consults with us to get information on what change needs to be seen in the community. After consulting with us, we then discuss how we are going to implement the ideas, sometimes we are involved in setting the monitoring plan and indicators to monitor (int., November, 2017).

World Vision does ask us questions regarding what change we want to see in the community. I think they do incorporate our ideas and opinions in their programme though some of our ideas are rejected by World Vision development workers. We also do not get feedback on some of the ideas we would have proposed (int., November, 2017).

According to the World Bank's participation continuum, the level of participation ranges from low to medium because World Vision beneficiaries are used as a source of information through various consultations and, to a certain extent, they participate in decision making at the early stages during stakeholder engagements, but they do not have complete ownership of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

As discussed in chapter two, involvement by project beneficiaries is what many authors such as Duraiappah *et al.* (2005:6) and Norad (2013) describe as functional participation which entails the participation of people in groups to meet predetermined objectives related to initiatives. However, the involvement of local people normally occurs after major decisions have been made rather than during an early stage in the project cycle. Participation by consultations constitutes a two-way flow of information in which local people are consulted and external agents listen to their views. The inputs of the local people may or may not be used. Such a consultation process does not concede any share in decision-making and professionals are under no obligation to adopt the people's views. According to David *et al.* (2009), a comparative analysis of participation reveals that the local beneficiaries of World Vision participate in participatory monitoring and evaluation as an end in itself instead of as a means. Participation as an end in itself is relatively more active and promotes a degree of ownership among the project beneficiaries.

#### *Lack of Understanding of PM&E*

Through the capacity building which World Vision asserts to be conducting, the project beneficiaries are expected to have knowledge about participatory monitoring and evaluation. However, this study revealed that the project beneficiaries did not fully comprehend what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails. The general responses from all the participants shared the same sentiments. This lack of understanding of participatory monitoring and

evaluation was evident among all participants, including traditional leaders who believed they worked closely with World Vision:

I do not know what participatory monitoring, evaluation is, and I have never heard of it. However, I know what monitoring is, it is checking if something is going according to plan. I have not yet started monitoring any of our projects. But I was involved in identifying the challenges in the community and coming up with proposed solutions. This exercise of identifying challenges is normally done in groups and we present our ideas through drawings (int., November, 2017).

This lack of understanding of participatory monitoring and evaluation was evident in all participants including traditional leaders who believed they worked closely with World Vision.

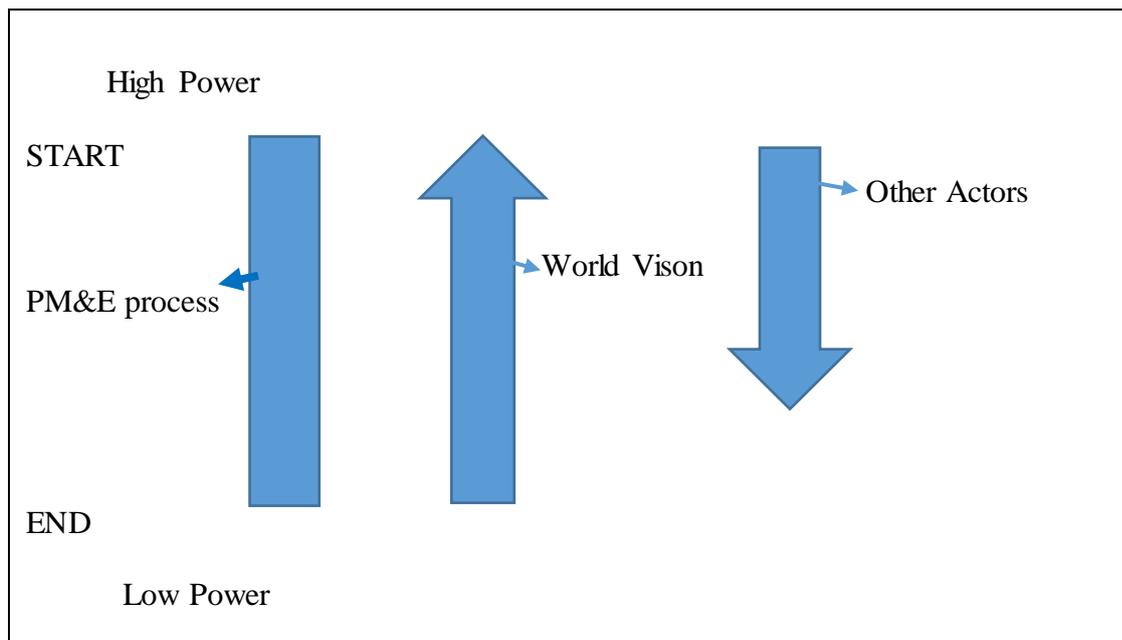
The other stakeholders in the World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation include state actors and churches. These stakeholders are not influential actors; their main role is to provide information at the early stages of the project cycle. According to the different degrees of participation this group would be identified under the participation in information giving category which refers to a one-way approach to participation whereby participation is by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using research methods. Participants are not given the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings are neither shared nor checked for accuracy. Passive participation is participation based on information provided, shared, and assessed by external experts. Participation is by being told what is going to happen or what has already happened. This group of participants is not given the opportunity to influence any participatory monitoring and evaluation proceedings.

### *Power Relations*

Just like any other participatory approach, there are also power dynamics within participatory monitoring and evaluation. These are mostly found among the different stakeholders involved in the process. In order to clarify and understand the level of power that World Vision

stakeholders have, a power matrix is used to explain the sequence of power in World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation.

**Figure 6.1: World Vision Stakeholder Power Matrix**



**Source: Author (2016)**

The power matrix highlights that at the beginning of the World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation process other stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, have high levels of power and influence. This is evident in Chapter Five, as most project beneficiaries noted that World Vision consults them on the change they want to see. However, as the participatory monitoring and evaluation process continues, their level of power reduces and by the time the process reaches an end and reports are finalised the project beneficiaries are not actively and

directly involved anymore. On the other hand World Vision is involved in the entire process as the organisation's power increases towards the final stages of participatory monitoring and evaluation. Here the organisation takes the final decision with the input from the other stakeholders but the end goal of World Vision is to ensure that the process is in line with national and global standards of the organisation.

The findings of the study revealed that, as the middle agent among all the stakeholders, World Vision South Africa has influence over how participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted. This is evident from the roles that the organisation plays in the process as well as by the fact that the organisation has the final say on what is implemented. In as much they engage with different stakeholders once or twice throughout the stages of the programme/project cycle, they still have control over the process and play a managerial role in deciding on key indicators and objectives.

World Vision South Africa ensures that their reports project information that suits the manner in which the organisation itself aspires and intends to conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation. This may be deduced from the information obtained from World Vision staff who reiterated that the national office instructs the area development programme on how to conduct certain activities and whatever the different stakeholders agree on should be in line with what has been set out at the national office. The below quote from the development facilitator supports this argument:

During stakeholder engagements with parents, children, community members and local government departments, each stakeholder is allowed to share their idea, or suggestion. However, if the inputs are not in line with what was agreed at the World Vision national office it would not be taken further; only suggestions that are in line with what is in the Development Implementation Plan can be deliberated on (int., December, 2017).

Because of the absence of conventional donors World Vision is seen as the most powerful stakeholder in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

### 6.3 Conclusion

Participatory monitoring and evaluation plays an important role in any form of development initiatives. This component of programme or project management is understood to measure, assess, monitor, and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of any contemporary development project. The most important aspect of this concept is the involvement of project beneficiaries. The involvement of project beneficiaries should begin at the early stages of the project and continue throughout the project cycle. In participatory monitoring and evaluation the voice of the project beneficiaries or local citizens should be loudest. The project beneficiaries should take charge of the change they want to see and make primary decisions. However, over the years the level of participation, especially that of project beneficiaries, has been questioned. One of the objectives of this study was to understand the manner in which participatory monitoring and evaluation is conducted by World Vision and how participatory the process is.

This chapter began by discussing the key findings of this study which were influenced by the analytical framework explained in chapter two. The study revealed that World Vision asserts to be conducting participatory monitoring and evaluation theoretically, but in reality there seems to be a contrasting view. While World Vision has several training documents and manuals that should guide their participatory monitoring and evaluation process, this study has also revealed that there are fundamental issues that have been neglected by World Vision Thusalushaka's area development programme and these issues result in the participatory monitoring and evaluation being skewed.

Issues of capacity building, accountability, empowerment of project beneficiaries, participation of stakeholders, and power relations were not coherent with what they claim to be doing. It was shown that other stakeholders, especially project beneficiaries, are not extensively involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Their involvement only matters at the early stages of the project cycle. Overall the participatory monitoring and evaluation conducted by World Vision highlights and resonates with scholarly criticisms of participatory approaches and practices. In as much as participatory development has become a buzzword in modern development initiatives, the level of participation of project beneficiaries is still questioned.

The following section of the chapter outlines the policy implications and suggestions and the limitation of the research.

#### **6.4 Policy Implication and Suggestions**

This research has consistently raised policy questions about the level of participation of project beneficiaries in World Vision participatory monitoring and evaluation. This research was also able to reveal how skewed this process is. Specific policy lessons emerged within the research and this concluding section discusses these lessons.

**Increase the level of participation of project beneficiaries** – Results from this study have shown that project beneficiaries are not extensively involved in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process. Their involvement is limited to problem identification. It is recommended that World Vision should develop strategies that increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community participation and engagement processes, especially towards the last stages of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process; this will enable project beneficiaries to have a sense of ownership and also make final decisions concerning the implementation of the development initiatives.

**Participatory monitoring and evaluation capacity building and training** – While World Vision Thusalushaka conducts capacity building for all stakeholders, the findings of this study have revealed that project beneficiaries have a lack of understanding of what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails. It is recommended that, in addition to the various general skills development that World Vision provides, the organisation should develop and design ways in which they educate the community on what participatory monitoring and evaluation entails, how it is conducted, and report writing. Although building awareness, skills, and capacity for project beneficiaries takes time, these steps are crucial and beneficial for long-term success and participation in the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

**Decentralising decision making to the local level** – The key distinguishing factor between participatory monitoring and evaluation and the conventional monitoring and evaluation is the

fact the project beneficiaries make the final decision concerning any development initiatives in their community. This study has disclosed that World Vision makes the final decision based on the organisations pre-designed guidance manuals and agreements that take place at the national offices. It is suggested that the organisation identifies strategies to decentralise decision making to the local level. This way, project beneficiaries will be involved in all stages of the participatory monitoring and evaluation process.

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## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1. Table 1.1: Degrees of Participation**

1.	<b>Manipulation</b> – participation is undertaken in a way contrived by those who hold power to persuade the public that a predefined project or programme is best.
2.	<b>Passive participation</b> – participation is based on information provided, shared, and assessed by external experts. Participation by the local people is carried out by being told what is going to happen or has already happened.
3.	<b>Participation in information giving</b> – a one-way approach to participation whereby participation is carried out by answering questions posed by extractive researchers using research methods. Participants are not given the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings are neither shared nor checked for accuracy.
4.	<b>Participation by consultations</b> – a two-way flow of information in which local people participate by being consulted and external agents listen to their views. The inputs of local people may or may not be used. Such a consultations process does not concede any share in decision-making and professionals are under no obligation to take on people’s views.
5.	<b>Participation for material incentives</b> – people participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash, or other material incentives, much work on farm research falls into this category. People have no stake in prolonging activities once the incentives end.
6.	<b>Functional participation</b> – people participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the initiatives. Local people’s involvement, however, occurs after major decisions have been made rather than at an early stage in the project cycle.
7.	<b>Interactive participation</b> – people participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formation of new local institutions or the strengthening of existing ones. Local people take control over decision making processes. A

	common drawback is that individual and groups tend to remain silent or passively acquiesce.
8.	<b>Partnership</b> – power is redistributed between local people and power holders in an equitable manner through negotiation. There is mutual responsibility and risk sharing in the planning and decision making process.
9.	<b>Self-mobilisation/active participation</b> – people participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice that they need, but retain control over how resources are used.

Source: Duraiappah *et al.* (2005:6); Norad (2013)

**Appendix 2. Table 2.1: Comparative Analysis of participation as a Means and Participation as an End**

<b>Participation as a means</b>	<b>Participation as an end</b>
Implies the use of participation to achieve some predetermined goal or objective	Attempts to empower people to participate in their own development more meaningfully
Attempts to utilise existing resources in order to achieve the objective of programmes/projects	Attempts to ensure the increased role of people in development initiatives
Emphasises achieving the objective rather than the act of participating itself	Focuses on improving the ability of the people to participate rather than just achieving the predetermined objectives of the programme/project
More common in government programmes/projects where the main concern is to mobilise the community and involve them in improving the efficiency of the delivery system	Finds relatively less favour with government agencies, NGOs in principle agree with this viewpoint
Generally a short-term process	Generally a long-term process

Appears to be a passive form of participation	Relatively more active and dynamic than participation as a means
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Source: Davids *et al.* (2009: 118)

### Appendix 3. Table 3.1: Difference between Monitoring and Evaluation

Factor	Monitoring	Evaluation
Timing	Monitoring is a continuous function that takes place throughout the implementation of a project/programme.	Evaluation assesses the entire project cycle.
Depth and Purpose	Monitoring is a regular part of the project or programme management. It focuses on the implementation of the project, comparing what is delivered with what was planned.	Evaluation reviews the achievement of the project and considers whether the plan was the best one to achieve the outcomes.  Evaluation measures achievements, as well as positive /negative and intended /unintended effects.  Evaluation looks for lessons to be learned from both success and lack of success and looks for best practices, which can be applied elsewhere.
Who conducts it	Monitoring is usually done by people directly involved in implementing the project /programme.	Evaluation is best conducted by an independent outsider who can be impartial in consulting with project/programme staff.

Source: Tools4dev (2014)

### Appendix 4. Table 4.1: Types of Monitoring

Types of Monitoring	Definition

Results Monitoring	This tracks effects and impacts. This is where monitoring merges with evaluation to determine if the project/programme is on target towards its intended results (outputs, outcomes, impact) and whether there may be any unintended impact.
Process activity monitoring	Monitors the progress of activities and the delivery of outputs. It examines how activities are delivered – the efficiency in time and resources. It is often conducted in conjunction with compliance monitoring and feeds into the evaluation of impact.
Compliance monitoring	This ensures compliance with donor regulations and expected results, grant and contract requirements, local governmental regulations and laws, and ethical standards.
Context situation monitoring	Tracks the setting in which the project/programme operates, especially as it affects identified risks and assumptions, but also any unexpected considerations that may arise.
Beneficiary monitoring	Tracks beneficiary perceptions of a project/programme. It includes beneficiary satisfaction or complaints with the project/programme, including their participation, treatment, access to resources and their overall experience of change.
Financial monitoring	Accounts for costs by input and activity within predefined categories of expenditure. It is often conducted in conjunction with compliance and process monitoring.
Organisational monitoring	Tracks the sustainability, institutional development and capacity building in the project/programme and with its partners. It is often done in conjunction with the monitoring processes of the larger, implementing organisation.

Source: IFRC (2011: 12)

#### Appendix 5. Table 5.1: Types of Evaluation

Types of Evaluation	Definition
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Formative evaluations	Occur during project/programme implementation to improve performance and assess compliance.
Summative evaluations	Occur at the end of project/programme implementation to assess effectiveness and impact.
Midterm evaluations	Are formative in purpose and occur midway through implementation. For secretariat-funded projects/ programmes that run for longer than 24 months, some type of midterm assessment, evaluation, or review is required. Typically, this does not need to be independent or external, but may be according to specific assessment needs.
Final evaluations	Are summative in purpose and are conducted (often externally) at the completion of the project/ programme implementation to assess how well the project/ programme achieved its intended objectives.
Internal or self-evaluations	Are conducted by those responsible for implementing a project/programme. They can be less expensive than external evaluations and help build staff capacity and ownership. However, they may lack credibility with certain stakeholders, such as donors, as they are perceived as more subjective (biased or one-sided). These tend to be focused on learning lessons rather than demonstrating accountability.
External or independent evaluations	Are conducted by external evaluator(s) outside of the implementing team, lending it a degree of objectivity and often technical expertise. These tend to focus on accountability.
Real-time evaluations	Are undertaken during project/programme implementation to provide immediate feedback for modifications to improve ongoing implementation. Emphasis is on immediate lesson learning over impact evaluation or accountability.
Meta-evaluations	Are used to assess the evaluation process itself. Some key uses of meta-evaluations include: take inventory of evaluations to inform the selection of future evaluations, combine evaluation results, check compliance with evaluation policy and good practices, and

	assess how well evaluations are disseminated and utilised for organisational learning and change.
Participatory evaluation	Are conducted with the beneficiaries and other key stakeholders and can be empowering, building their capacity, ownership, and support.
Impact evaluations	Focus on the effect of a project/programme, rather than on its management and delivery. They typically occur after project/programme completion during a final evaluation or an ex-post evaluation. However, impact may be measured during project/programme implementation during longer projects/programmes and when feasible.
Thematic evaluations	Focus on one theme, such as gender or environment, typically across a number of projects, programmes or the whole organisation.

**Source: IFRC (2011: 15); Williams *et al.* (2008)**

#### **Appendix 6. Table 6.1: NGO Accountability Mechanisms**

<b>Accountability Mechanisms</b>	<b>Accountability to whom</b>
Disclosure statement and reports	Upwards to donors and oversight agencies
Performance assessments and evaluation, M&E	Upward to donors and oversight agencies
Participation	Downwards from NGO to NGO beneficiaries
Social auditing	To NGOs themselves
Self-regulation	To NGOs themselves as a sector
Rating Systems	Upward to donors and oversight
Certified systems	Upward to donors and oversight
Participatory monitoring and evaluation	Upwards to donors and downwards to beneficiaries. Much emphasis is placed on beneficiaries input.

**Source: Author (2016); Agyemang *et al.* (2009: 11); Lee (2004)**

**Appendix 7. Table 7.1: Differences between Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation and Conventional Monitoring and Evaluation**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>Conventional Monitoring and Evaluation</b>
Who	Local beneficiaries, project staff, project facilitators	External Specialists
When	More frequently when there is a need for an assessment for programme improvement; merging of monitoring and evaluation, hence small scale evaluations	Midterm and upon project completion
Why	To empower project beneficiaries to begin, control, and take corrective action	Accountability, usually summary judgements about the project to determine if funding continues for future projects
How	Self-evaluation, simple ways adapted to local culture, open immediate sharing of results through local involvement in evaluation processes	Focus on scientific objectivity, standardised process complex, limited access to results (results are not shared widely, sometimes only shared with donors and project management or board of directors)
What	Stakeholders define their own indicators and objectives of success	Predetermined indicators of success (normally determined by donors or external stakeholders), principally cost and production output

Source: Author (2016); Almazan (2014: 39); Sartorius (2008: 2)

**Appendix 8. Table 8.1: Major Power Theories**

<b>Scholar and power theory</b>	<b>Definition of power</b>

Social power theory (French & Raven, 1959)	The potential for influence
Resource theory (Blood & Wolfe, 1960)	The ability of an individual to change the behaviour of other members in the social system
Interdependence theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959)	The ability of one person to directly influence the quality of outcomes of another person
Dyadic power theory (Rollins & Bahr, 1976)	The ability or potential to influence or control the behaviour of another person
Power within relationships (Huston, 1983)	The ability to achieve one's goal by intentionally influencing the partner
Power approach theory (Keltner <i>et al.</i> 2003)	An individual's relative capacity to modify others internal states

Source: Simpson *et al.* (2014)

#### Appendix 9. Table 9.1: Dimensions of Power

Dimensions of Power	Implications in practice
<b>Power over</b> – the ability to dominate. This form of power is finite, so that if someone obtains more power then it automatically leads to someone else having less power.	Conflict and direct confrontation between powerful and powerless interest.
<b>Power to</b> – the ability to see possibilities for change.	Capacity building, supporting individual decision making, leadership.
<b>Power with</b> – the power that comes from individuals working together collectively to achieve a common goal.	Social mobilisation, building alliances and coalitions.
<b>Power within</b> – This power refers to self-confidence, self-awareness, and assertiveness. It relates to how individuals can recognise, through analysing their experience, how power operates in their lives, and gain the confidence to act to influence and change this.	Increasing self-esteem, awareness, or consciousness raising, confidence building.

Source: Simpson *et al.* (2014)

#### Appendix 10. Box 10.1: Case Study of World Vision International

##### ***Christian Charity Loses Two Top Donors After Israel Charges Director With Funding Hamas.***

*After giving World Vision over \$3.8 million dollars, Australia suspends funding to projects in the Palestinian territories; Germany freezes payments totalling \$1.66 million*

*DPA — Humanitarian aid group World Vision lost two major donors on Friday, one day after Israel charged the charity's head in Gaza [with funnelling money to Hamas](#) fighters and buying weapons.*

*Australia suspended funding to World Vision projects in the Palestinian territories, while Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) said it had indefinitely frozen payments totalling \$1.66 million dollars (1.5 million euros) to the Christian charity.*

*The moves came after World Vision official Mohammad El Halabi appeared in court in Be'erSheva on Thursday, facing charges of using charity funds to support the Palestinian extremist group Hamas.*

*Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs said the allegations were "deeply troubling," adding that officials were seeking more information from World Vision and Israeli authorities.*

*"We are suspending the provision of further funding to World Vision for programmes in the Palestinian Territories until the investigation is complete," the department said in a statement.*

*Germany's BMZ said in a statement "that there will be no disbursements until further notice."*

*"Should the allegations turn out to be correct, Hamas is deliberately putting the humanitarian aid security of its own population in jeopardy," a ministry spokesman said.*

*"Providing for the Gaza Strip is not possible without international support," he added.*

*Halabi, director of the Gaza branch of World Vision, was arrested on June 15 at the Erez Crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip, Israel's security agency Shin Bet said on Thursday.*

*More than 7 million dollars a year, or 60 percent of the annual budget for World Vision's Gaza branch, was diverted to Hamas by El Halabi, according to the Shin Bet press release.*

*But Hamas' spokesman in Gaza, Abdulatif al-Qanou, said in an emailed statement on Thursday that Halabi is not in contact with Hamas nor connected to the movement.*

*The Gaza Strip has been under a tight blockade since 2007. The isolated territory has one of the highest unemployment rates worldwide, according to the World Bank.*

*A Foreign Ministry spokesman welcomed Australia's decision on Friday, urging all donors who aid projects in the Gaza Strip to scrutinize their local partners' activities.*

*World Vision said on its website that it [denied any involvement](#) in political, military or terrorist activities and that it hoped that Baradi would receive a "fair legal process."*

*World Vision is a worldwide Christian humanitarian aid charity set up in the U.S. in 1950 and is active in nearly 100 countries. In 2015 it had an annual revenue of just over a billion dollars.*

*The Australian government has given World Vision more than \$3.8 million (5 million Australian dollars) over the past three years for aid projects in the Gaza Strip, Australian broadcaster ABC said.*

**Source: Walker (2016)**

## **Appendix 11. Demographics and Biographic Data of Respondents**

The demographics and biographic data of the participants that were engaged with during data collection are very important, as this information feeds and informs the findings that the researcher will communicate. Below is the breakdown of the key informants and World Vision demographics and biographic data.

### **Table 11.1: Key Informants Biographic Data**

The table below shows that all key informants that were interviewed have obtained degrees; five of the key informants have post graduate qualifications, while the other four have undergraduate degrees. All the K.I reported that they are involved in monitoring and evaluation and majority (89%) have more than five years' work experience and knowledge on

participatory monitoring and evaluation. There were more female K.I than male. 86% of the K.I were above the age of 30.

<b>Key Informant (K.I)</b>	<b>Highest Qualification</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>
K.I.1	PHD degree	Evaluation specialist	Male	>35
K.I.2	PHD degree	M&E specialist	Female	>35
K.I.3	PHD degree	Performance evaluation officer	Female	>35
K.I.4	PHD degree	Executive M&E specialist	Male	>35
K.I.5	Masters degree	M&E officer	Male	>30
K.I.6	Bachelors degree	Programme associate	Female	>30
K.I.7	Bachelors degree	Community development officer	Female	>30
K.I.8	Bachelors degree	M&E office	Male	>30
K.I.9	Bachelors degree	M&E assistant	Female	>25

**Table 11.2: World Vision Actors**

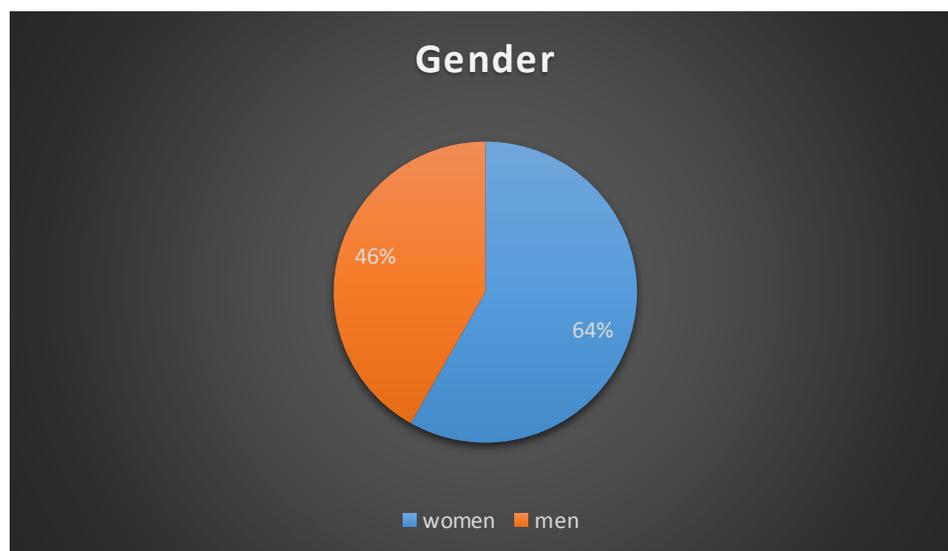
As indicated, the researcher engaged with different World Vision actors. Below is a table which highlights the different World Vision actors engaged with in the study.

<b>World Vision Actors</b>	<b>Number</b>
World Vision key actors (Development facilitators, Sponsorship coordinator, key informants from the national office)	6

World Vision Evoke Youth Participants 10 girls and 10 boyes	20
Other Project beneficiaries (traditional leader, livestock projects, community members)	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

**Figure 11.1: Gender**

From the 30 World Vision participants that were interviewed, 64% were women and 46% were men. The distribution of gender among the participants was not equal, however, this gender imbalance revealed that most women were not fully involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation but in the projects themselves.



**Figure 11.2: Educational Background**

The table above shows the educational background of the participants that informed the research. 11% of the participants had no formal qualification, majority (85%) of the participants who are involved in World Vision projects had completed their matric certification, while 4% had a university degree. The participants that had degrees were mostly World Vision key actors

and a few local beneficiaries. The educational background of the participants played an important role in providing answers to interview questions. Having 11% of the people with no educational qualification gives a particular perspective about what they understand about participatory monitoring and evaluation as well as their involvement in the process. Consequently, this impacted on their participation. This finding concurs with Theron's (2005:65) view that illiteracy and not having a formal educational qualification is an inhibiting factor in community participation engagements or activities.



#### **Appendix 12. Box 12.1: Roles and Responsibilities of Development Facilitators**

- *Communicate World Vision's identity, mission, vision, and value effectively and understand the social networks, including the functions various stakeholders fulfil, the power dynamics, potential for partnership, and capacity building needs.*
- *Build strong and diverse relationships within village communities and partner communities, actively learning and understanding their realities.*
- *Enable and facilitate community organisation to network and connect with relevant stakeholders and partners in an integrated and efficient manner.*

- *Contextualise the churches' role in Transformational Development in different communities – identify and act on capacity gaps.*
- *To clearly understand the donor/community environment and be an effective facilitator of interventions or innovations that involve both parties.*
- *Facilitate community development in food security, livelihood, Health/HIV & AIDS, and education activities.*
- *Build community capacity in networking, partnership, resource mobilisation, management, sponsorship, and technical skills at the community level.*
- *Build community capacity & partners in prioritise projects, project planning, and implementation, monitoring, and reporting processes relevant to assigned areas.*
- *Raise awareness and facilitate critical analysis of community issues and opportunities.*
- *Facilitate visioning and planning processes with community members – especially the most vulnerable, and within community based groups.*
- *Assist stakeholders and community partners to identify and mobilise community resources needed for project implementation.*
- *Actively participate in feedback, reflection, and learning activities.*
- *Work closely with the programme team leader, sponsorship operations staff, sponsorship volunteers, registered children, their parents, and village community organisation and local partners.*
- *Facilitate assessment of feasibility, risk management, and community organisation readiness for sponsorship in the context as well as explore possibilities of “sub granting” sponsorship to community-based organisations.*

**Source: Chigwata (2016)**

### **Appendix 13: Overview of Power Relations with Conventional Donors**

Before discussing the issue of donors or financial providers in the World Vision Thusalushaka projects, a general overview of the power dynamics when conventional donors are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation is provided. A monitoring and evaluation specialist explained:

*Funding agencies influence participatory monitoring and evaluation to a greater extent because they provide the main resource, which is funding for the intervention to take place; hence, their interests and objectives are always highly considered by non-governmental organisations (int., Johannesburg, November, 2017).*

Some of the views and opinions of key individuals on the influence of funding agencies is illustrated in figure. 5.1. These individuals were asked to rate the extent to which donors use their power to influence participatory monitoring and evaluation on a scale of 1 to 10, ranging from the lowest to the highest. Results revealed that 89% rated the involvement of donor agencies to be above 7; thus, indicating the chances are very slight for the rest of the stakeholders to advance their interests or be as influential as funding agencies. This evidence is not surprising as most academic critics are of the view that the donor-recipient relationship is not reciprocal and is characterised by a lack of equality that no amount of well-intentioned communication can remove (Lister, 2000; Lukes, 1974).

**Figure 13.1: Power Relations Rating Scale**



Research has also shown that funding agencies tend to yield more power than the rest of the stakeholders in participatory monitoring and evaluation because of their ability to withdraw funding if they are of the view that the non-governmental organisation is not complying with their requirements or if they desire to stop sponsoring the project for various reasons.

Responses from key individuals echoed the fact that the amount of power that donors have as a whole can influence participatory monitoring and evaluation through development models such as theory of change and by providing key instruction for the purpose of the evaluation. The following were worth noting:

*When donors conceptualise an intervention, they have their own perspective in mind. Whenever they design their programme or their intervention, they do so according to their own knowledge. The theory of change that they come up with is normally different from what the project beneficiaries will be experiencing or envisaged (int., November, 2017).*

*Majority of the donors provide non-governmental organisations with reporting templates. These templates normally have checklists and it is the responsibility of the non-governmental organisation to ensure that they submit reports that are in line with the donor's preference (int., November, 2017).*

*If the evaluation is being commissioned by the donor of the programme, their interests will be driving what the evaluation looks like. Non-governmental organisations are subject to doing what the donors prescribe and delegate them because they have an interest in the way the project is implemented (int., November, 2017).*

These responses verify that donors are the most influential in participatory monitoring and evaluation. From the inception of the of the process to its conclusion, their interests always have to be upheld, even if they are not physically or regularly present during monitoring or stakeholder meetings or workshops. Lister (2000) also argued that sometimes the strict donor requirements of how projects should be conducted for non-governmental organisations to exclude other stakeholders, especially project beneficiaries in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

#### **Appendix 14: Consent Form**

Place:

Study: MSocSci Development Studies

Informant's Name:

Functional Title:

#### **CONSENT FORM**

**Title of Project:** Participation Monitoring and Evaluation, Power Dynamics and Stakeholder Participation: *An analysis of the dynamics of participation between World Vision and other stakeholder in PM&E process.*

**Name of Researcher:** Vongaishe T Mujuru

#### **Please tick where applicable**

1. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

2. I understand that the information obtained during the study will be treated with confidentiality and will not be revealed to any unauthorised person.
  
3. I understand that my identity will not be revealed to anyone, and that pseudonyms will be used as a form of identification.
  
4. I agree to take part in the above study.
  
5. I agree to have my identity and functional title disclosed in the final report.

Identity of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

**Appendix 15: Interview schedule with local beneficiaries**

**Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, Power Dynamics and Stakeholder Participation: *An analysis of the dynamics of participation between World Vision International and other stakeholders in PM&E Process***

**Interview with local project beneficiaries.**

Information for identification:

Location (District) \_\_\_\_\_

Informant Name & Title (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Opening: Introduction**

Introduction: My name is Vongaishe Mujuru, I am currently enrolled on a Masters in Development Studies at the University of Pretoria. I am conducting research on Participatory monitoring and evaluation, power dynamics and stakeholder participation.

Purpose: the purpose of this interview is to get insights from the local beneficiaries on their knowledge and involvement in PM&E and to determine the extent to which the beneficiaries of the projects are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Motivation: I aspire to use the information obtained from these discussions to get a broader understanding of participatory development and power dynamics, in order to answer my research questions.

Time line: The interview session will take a maximum of 30 minutes. Are you able to respond to the questions at this time?

### **Body:**

1. Were you or do you know any of the local community members were involved in PM&E
2. Could you describe your experience with being involved in PM&E?
3. What roles have you played in the process?
4. How would you describe your engagement/involvement in PM&E?
5. Where you involved in identifying monitoring indicators and would you say the indicators chosen were agreed by all stakeholders?
6. What has been your experience with working with the rest of the stakeholder? And who have they been?
7. In what ways/methods have you provided information to the NGO? Do you think the information was helpful?
8. How has the organization responded or communicated to you with regards to your involvement?

9. Would you say the rest of the community including yourself have been actively involved in PM&E?
10. What is your view on the idea of other stakeholders yielding more power than the local beneficiaries?
11. As a local beneficiary of the projects devised would you say your involvement in monitoring and evaluation of this project has been valued by the NGO?

**Closing:**

The closing part of the interview will involve thanking the respondent for their participation in the study. Additionally, they will be asked if there is any more information that they think would be beneficial to the research. Participants will also be asked for the names and details of any recommended people to be interviewed.

**Appendix 16: Interview Schedule with World Vision staff**

**Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, Power Dynamics and Stakeholder Participation: *An analysis of the dynamics of participation between World Vision and other stakeholders in PM&E Process***

**Interview with key actors of the World Vision.**

Information for identification:

Location (District) \_\_\_\_\_

Informant Name & Title (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Opening: Introduction**

Introduction: My name is Vongaishe Mujuru, I am currently enrolled on a Masters in Development Studies at the University of Pretoria. I am conducting research on Participatory monitoring and evaluation, power dynamics and stakeholder participation.

Purpose: The purpose of this interview is to get insights from the key actors involved in PM&E on their knowledge, involvement and modus operandi of PM&E.

Motivation: I aspire to use the information obtained from these discussions to get a broader understanding of participatory development and power dynamics, in order to answer my research questions.

Time line: The interview session will take a maximum of 30 minutes. Are you able to respond to the questions at this time?

### **Body:**

#### **Theme: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

1. As a key actor in PM&E, how involved are you in the process?
2. What roles do you have in PM&E?
3. How do you normally select the indicators to be monitored?
4. How do you gather and collate the different views and ideas of the stakeholders in PM&E?
5. To what extent are local beneficiaries involved in PM&E, how often are they involved in plenary meeting?
6. Would you say the involvement (views/opinions) of local stakeholders in PM&E is valued by the NGO?
7. In your view, would you say PM&E fully includes the local beneficiaries of the project at every stage?

#### **Theme: Power relations and Stakeholder Participation**

1. Who are other stakeholders involved in PM&E and what roles do they play
2. As the intermediary between stakeholders, how do you reconcile the different views and interests of stakeholders?
3. In your view, would you say other stakeholders yield more power than the others?
4. To what extent can one group/stakeholder use their power/influence to achieve their interest in PM&E.?

5. What is your view on stakeholder participation and power dynamics in PM&E?
6. Would you PM&E includes and accommodates the positions, views and aspirations of all stakeholders?

### **Closing:**

The closing part of the interview will involve thanking the respondent for their participation in the study. Additionally, they will be asked if there is any more information that they think would be beneficial to the research.

### **Appendix 17: Focus Group Schedule with World Vision local beneficiaries**

**Participation Monitoring and Evaluation, Power Dynamics and Stakeholder Participation: *An analysis of the dynamics of interaction between World Vision and its stakeholder in the Thusalushaka Area Development Programme PM&E.***

#### **Focus Group Discussion Guide**

Selection Criteria: local beneficiaries of the World Vision projects that have been used for PM&E, these are not limited to the community leaders.

Copies of informed consent and confidentiality forms will be provided to each participant and read aloud for the benefit of those who cannot read. Participants will be provided an opportunity to any questions.

#### **Opening: Welcome and Introduction**

I would like to thank you for agreeing to be part of the focus group. I appreciate your willingness to participate.

My name is Vongaishe Mujuru, I am currently enrolled on a Masters in Development Studies at the University of Pretoria. I am conducting research on Participatory monitoring and evaluation, power dynamics and stakeholder participation.

Purpose: the purpose of this group discussion is to get insights from the local beneficiaries on their knowledge and involvement in PM&E and to determine the extent to which the beneficiaries of the projects are involved in participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Motivation: I aspire to use the information obtained from these discussions to get a broader understanding of participatory development and power dynamics, in order to answer my research questions.

Before we start, I would like to remind you that there are no right and wrong answers to the focus group discussions questions. I am interested in hearing many different viewpoints and would like to hear from everyone. I hope you can be honest even when your responses may not be in agreement with the rest of the group, feel free to express your views. Before we all introduce ourselves the following ground rules should be observed during the group discussion:

- I want you to do the talking and would like it if everyone would participate
- There are no right or wrong answers
- What is this said in the discussion stays here.
- I will be tape recording the discussions, because I want to capture everything that is said, however in my reporting you will remain anonymous.

### **BODY: Questions and Discussions**

#### **1. What do you think of the following concepts**

- Stakeholder Participation
- monitoring and evaluation
- Power dynamics

#### **2. What are your views and interests in participatory monitoring and evaluation**

- What role do you play in PM&E
- According to you has, World Vision incorporated your thoughts and ideas in PM&E
- How important are your interests, views to World Vision, how many does the organization normally take seriously?
- How long are you involved in this process? Is it from the start to end of a project or at a certain stage?
- Have you been involved in discussing key objectives to monitor with the World Vision and other stakeholders?

#### **3. A number of stakeholders are involved in PM&E**

- Do you monitor identified objectives with other stakeholders?

- How often do you engage/ meet with other stakeholder?
- Are there things are dissatisfied with, and that you would like to see change?
- What is your thought with regards to power issues with other stakeholders
- How does World Vision normally get information from you regarding the monitoring of project?
- How do you feel about yourself/involvement at the end of a PM&E process

**4. Is there anything you would like to say about PM&E, your involvement in the PM&E process or World Vision?**

**Closing:**

The closing part of the focus group will involve thanking the respondent for their participation in the study. Additionally, they will be asked if there is any more information that they think would be beneficial to the research.

