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## Chapter I

### BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1. Introduction

Radical global changes became part of the scenery during the last decade of the twentieth century. For instance, the historical balance of power that existed between East and West since World War II became eroded. It is possible that the US and the European Union will for some time yet remain the main exponents of economic and political power because no serious challenges can under present circumstances emanate from Japan, China or latent economic or political blocks. Sudden political and economic changes which took place towards the end of the previous century with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the wide-ranging - almost universal -

adoption of democratic (and neo-capitalist) principles, actually caused a paradigm shift on the global political terrain which had some serious repercussions in a number of fields.

Development cooperation was seriously influenced in a variety of ways, for instance, in respect of international aid, outreach programmes and development cooperation relationships. Each one of these areas has at least become devoid of political thrust, which, as a former important motivator of development programmes and projects, became a dwindling factor. A serious reassessment of the development paradigm became a necessity. This led to extensive renewal of thought and practice regarding development thinking and techniques which is still continuing. It therefore stands to reason that development can no longer be practised in the same way as before the global political reshuffle which occurred during the last decade of the previous century.

The above explanation is very basic. To present a clearer picture of recent expansion on development theory and development thinking, the following table employed by Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 7) to portray the general trend from the 1870s until the previous decade, is utilised here.

Table 1.1 *Meanings of development over time*

<b>Period</b>		<b>Perspectives</b>
1870>	1850>	Latecomers
1870>	1870>	Colonial economics
1850>	1940>	Development economics
1940>	1950>	Modernisation theory
1950>	1960>	

Dependence theory	Human development	Economic (growth) - industrialisation
	Neoliberalism	Growth, political & social modernisation
	Post-development	Accumulation - national, autocratic
Alternative development	<b>Meanings of development</b>	Human flourishing
	Industrialism, catching up	Capacitation, enlargement of people's choices
	Resource management,	Economic growth - structural reform, deregulation.
	trusteeship	Authoritarian engineering, disaster

During the last two decades of the previous century, dynamic change occurred which had a specific influence on development thinking and practice, in that it broke the final negative grip which the so-called impasse period had on development thinking and development studies (please refer to par. 3.2.1 for a detailed explanation of the impasse). The impasse occurred roughly during the 1980s and ended towards the beginning of the nineties, with political and economic changes being dominant factors which had a specific influence on the world. During this impasse, students and scholars of development were generally unable to come up with innovatory contributions to the development field and seemed to specialise in blatant criticism of one another's findings instead of producing practical results. The whole field of development thinking and development cooperation was adversely influenced by this academic slump. As indicated, the end of the impasse more or less coincided with the new dynamics that were unleashed in many fields after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Development studies suddenly experienced the creation of new rules for a totally new ball game which implied that a different approach was needed, for instance, to deal with politics and the economic sector. Pertinent to

the area of development cooperation was the undeniable shift in motivational issues, such as political considerations, which had a positive influence on donor countries in the past. These considerations have meanwhile been taken over by globalisation as driving force. The European Union has, for instance, moulded its latest Partnership policies for future development cooperation on principles which would prepare the way for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (the ACP) to enter the 'global village'. Chapter V deals with this aspect in greater detail.

The general course of debates and interpretations on development since the Second World War originated from perspectives based upon concepts ranging from modernisation and modernity (starting in the mid-1950s but still having an influence), to dependency theory (in the mid-1960s), to political economy (in the mid-1970s), to some kind of ill-defined postmodernism of the mid-1980s onwards (Long 2001: 9). Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 155) improves on this explanation and presents a table which vividly portrays his views on the various stages through which development theory had progressed. The table is included in this study as Annexure III on p. 270.

Norman Long (2001: 9-29), pursues his views on those perceptions that still tend to influence (inhibit) present day development cooperation activities and procedures. According to him, modernisation theory and modernity still jointly remain determining factors (also see para. 2.2 and 3.2.2). True to modernisation principles, development is still considered to be a 'progressive movement towards technologically and institutionally more complex and integrated

forms of “modern” society’ (Long 2001: 10). It stands to reason that such a process would entail the transfer of a series of goods, services, knowledge and expertise from the developed world to the developing countries, which implies a clear top-down approach. As development thinking approached the phases of dependency theory and human development theory, this approach has been increasingly repudiated. This happened even before the impasse, but, even today it is still assumed in prominent development circles that the people of developing countries, through the top-down process, will be catapulted into the globalised world. The later discussion in Chapter V, of the approaches which more prominent institutions like the European Union seem to have, underscores their inclination to perpetuate the top-down approach in development interventions. As a rule, multilateral development institutions still maintain that economic and social adaptations should be made by developing countries to ensure that they will eventually become real and effective members of the ‘modern’ world. This tendency continues in spite of the general acceptance in development thinking of notions such as ‘alternative development’ and ‘human development’, as mentioned and briefly explained in Annexure III, p. 270. Admittedly, it is realised by the followers of modernisation theory that the required transition through development will not be without setbacks. At the same time, however, these foreseen setbacks have been rationalised by them in advance as being ‘social and cultural obstacles to change’, or else, a clear case of ‘resistance to change’. Tangible ‘change’ seems to remain the *leitmotif* in the development approach advocated by the supporters of the modernisation theory. The ‘people in development’ and their improvement or change, have never been sufficiently attended to in this theory.

Marxist and neo-Marxist commentators were of the opinion, according to Schuurman (1993:10), that capitalist exploitation was at the bottom of the drive to achieve effective development. According to them, the inherent expansionist tendency of world capitalism drove the capitalist West to open up new markets, increase the level of surplus extraction and accumulate capital.

For a long time, the Marxist and capitalist macro-perspectives have been in ideological conflict with each other. The capitalist (liberal) theory, on the one hand, based its development work on the principles of a gradual approach and accepted the 'trickle-down' effect without reservations. On the other hand, Marxism and neo-Marxism (also the dependency theory) took a 'radical' view and described development as an inherently unequal process involving the continued exploitation of 'peripheral' societies and 'marginalised' populations.

Yet, both models had something in common. Both, (this time excluding dependency theorists) saw external centres of power as the source from which development and social change would emanate. This gave rise to the fixed idea that individual states, multilateral organisations and other international bodies should be made responsible for development and social change - a belief which gave rise, over several years, to the intricate and predominant top-down role which these institutions have played in almost all practical development efforts. These so-called 'external' forces were wittingly or unwittingly having a visible adverse effect on developing people and their countries. Developing countries' autonomy was increasingly at stake and local or endogenous initiatives, cooperation and solidarity were often jeopardised. Increased socio-economic differentiation and greater centralised control by powerful economic and political

groups, institutions and enterprises ensued from this approach to development. Whether the hegemony of the state is based upon a capitalist or socialist ideology, had become a purely academic question because both systems showed inclinations towards increased incorporation and centralisation to the detriment of the development paradigm as a whole. The role of the people was increasingly ignored and every development effort was concentrated on achieving 'growth', building 'infrastructure', and introducing other focal points which had very little to do with the people themselves. The fact that two opposing lines of thought (the capitalists or neoliberals versus the Marxists or neo-Marxists) for a change agreed on these important principles, could have given rise to the wide and predominant acceptance of the modernisation theory as the only viable way to proceed with development.

None of the records on development that were consulted had made any reference to development before World War II, as confirmed by Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 5). After the Second World War, it would appear as if the early stages of development were undertaken via some form of social engineering, mostly in former colonies. Somewhat later, during the stages of neo-classical economics and neoliberalism, development was set upon transforming the so-called Third World societies by making capital available to them and by transferring bureaucratic principles and technology to them, to help them develop. This modernisation concept lasted in its many forms until somewhere around the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Development as a concept thus became a new addition to the accepted terminology that was used to describe progress.



The post-World War II approach initiated the massive involvement of the industrialised world, (bilateral, multilateral and international) in attempts to develop the newly liberated colonies that later became the 'developing countries'. As more and more former colonies became independent, their votes in multilateral fora were often bought through development projects, which were less effective and more aimed at satisfying the wishes of some president or minister. Prevailing perceptions were such that differences between development cooperation, development as bribes, development aid and the more NGO-based aid industry were seldom acknowledged. In fact, until after the impasse, these approaches were all regarded as being identical, generally for the sake of expedience.

In view of the above, one could safely assume that the development approach up to the end of the previous century, according to most post-impasse writers, (Schuurman 1993, Long 2001, Herschlag 1984, Booth 1993), did not place much emphasis on the human factor in the development equation. As a matter of fact, Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 6), mentions 'human development' as a specific facet which logically flows from alternative development, where the first attention was given to the human potential and probable role in development. Human development elaborated on human potential by enlarging people's choices and increasing their capacity (cf. Table 1.1 above). As illustrated in the discussion of the modernisation approach, one could generally agree with the statement that too many approaches to development cooperation have been driven (and some are still being driven) by a selection of predominantly dehumanised development factors. For instance, factors such as growth, infrastructure, investment, agriculture and others, were (and are often still being) prioritised as the real items

that would stimulate development. The focus still tends to fall constantly upon these factors; an approach that tended to diminish the real and/or the potential role of the people (actors) that are directly involved in - or influenced by - such development projects and programmes. From what has been stated above, one could easily conclude that little serious consideration was given to the actual decision-making roles, receptiveness, knowledge systems and social development of the role-players or actors on the beneficiary side. With the tendency to have a more general focus on the material elements of development, it could also be assumed that little attention was paid to the humanitarian outlook or people-orientation of actors chosen to represent benefactors in interventions. It stands to reason, therefore, that the human element on both sides of development (the donors and the beneficiaries) was grossly overlooked for quite some time - a negative tendency which has not yet been brought to an end.

David Booth refers in *Beyond the Impasse* to the Marxist and Neo-Marxist theories and identifies their severe lack of understanding of factors such as diversity in, and the complexity of, the 'real world of development', which led to very few contributions when it came to 'illuminating the alternatives facing responsible actors in less developed countries' (Schuurman 1993:50).

Because of this identified shortcoming in the development approaches of the past, one of the main points of departure in this study will be an investigation into the applicability of a more actor-oriented approach, as mainly proposed by Norman Long (2001). In essence, the very wide-reaching concept of the actor-oriented approach encompasses a variety of elements as building blocks of the process. One of the most important of these blocks, presenting a special

focus on the human instead of the economic aspects of development, is social development.

Nederveen Pieterse (2001: Chapter 8) produces a totally new perception of social development and states that ‘by adding novel elements,’ he hopes to portray ‘a new overall perspective on social development’ (2001: 113). This exhaustive discussion of social development culminates at the point at which social development is taken ‘beyond poverty alleviation toward a substantive and proactive approach’ (2001: 127). This is where the above mentioned author touches on a subject which can greatly benefit from the application of the actor-oriented approach, as will be discussed further on in various chapters. He expands the regular concept of ‘human capital’ by recommending accommodation of and investment in ‘networking across communities and groups and designing enabling institutional environments - in other words, a social capital or participatory civic society approach’ (ibid.). A major part of this study is devoted to an assessment of how the actor-oriented approach could be utilised in development to achieve social development with a substantive proactive approach.

In-depth and wide-ranging studies are required before a successful actor-oriented approach can be developed. The contents of this study all confirm the initial feeling that a variety of disciplines will have to be brought together to plan a successful launching pad for an actor-oriented approach. The initial reports, plus ancillary investigations along the way, should deliver benefited data for the much-needed and ongoing reassessment of each intervention. In this process, the need for the continual reassessment of development programmes and ancillary procedures was identified in the previous decade, especially after the impasse. The implementation procedures of such regular reassessments and the skills to give effect to this

requirement are still seriously lacking because the linear approach of ‘beginning, application and evaluation’ is often still favoured..

However, the actor-oriented approach appears to be operating in such a wide field and seems to deal with so many observations within the area of an intervention, that it could prove to become an invaluable instrument to ensure proper in-depth reassessment procedures. On the other hand, for instance, the frequently mentioned and apparently very popular tools of contemporary development, namely ‘empowerment’, ‘the role of civil society’ and ‘participatory development’, are some of the first factors that will require in-depth scrutiny and possible redefinition regarding their practical application. (More is said about these factors in par. 4.2.7.5)

## **1.2 A brief overview of this study**

### **1.2.1 Basic definitions and terminology**

After the introductory first chapter, the second chapter addresses terms and definitions that could shed more light on the substance of the whole. It has often been found that different meanings are often accorded to the same subject, for instance, ‘alternative development’ could either mean ‘the utilisation of endogenous development tools and skills’ or it could be, as Nederveen Pieterse puts it in Table 10.1 (2001: 155 and Annexure III on p. 270 below): ‘alternative development should be society-led, equitable, participatory and sustainable’.

This, and similar differences in perceptions, as well as the tendency to accord a reified status to terms such as ‘education’ or ‘empowerment’, all made this chapter necessary.

Because of the consistent role of the modernisation theory in development thinking and practical planning, special attention was given to the modernisation theory as seen by various specialists in the field. Then, as a result of the specific impact which post-modern thinking had had on the development of the actor-oriented approach (for example the emphases on agency, deconstruction, discourse analysis and the knowledge paradigm), a rather wide discussion on post-modern thinking is included, with special reference to the above notions and their utilisation in practice.

### **1.2.2 A broad overview of the development theory**

The following chapter (Chapter III), tries to formulate some concise reply to the question ‘What is development?’ It proceeds with a more specific discussion of the more important stages through which development thinking has progressed up to now and gives some attention to the influence that globalisation and liberalisation have on contemporary development thinking. The need for the design of a development praxis which could address present and future development schemes, programmes, projects and interventions, is raised, and some preliminary thoughts are expressed in this regard.

### **1.2.3 Bringing the actor-oriented approach into context**

In order to present a framework in which the rest of the study is to be interpreted, a full chapter is dedicated to the actor-oriented approach (the *leitmotif*), as explained and elaborated on by Norman Long (1990, 2001 and 2002). The intention is to sketch a proposed system in such a way that a development agreement such as the Cotonou Agreement (2000) between the European Union (EU) and the developing countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions (the ACP) as their partners, can be tested to see whether the basic principles of the actor-oriented approach are being applied therein or not; whether the application of these principles in future would improve their joint development programmes, and whether the application thereof in future would be administratively feasible.

#### **1.2.4 Multilateral development institutions with special reference to the Cotonou Agreement: a recent development agreement attuned to liberalisation and globalisation**

Because of the increasing predominance of multilateral influences and practical involvement in development programmes, it was deemed necessary to reflect on the general framework in which this involvement is taking place. On the other hand, this chapter is therefore, lacking in definition and, on the other, it displays an unfortunate tendency towards generalisation. However, the original chapter was too bulky because it tried to deal with the full range of prominent multilaterals - from the EU-ACP Partnership right through to the Bretton Woods institutions. This presented sufficient data for a new thesis and it had to be abridged by concentrating only on the Cotonou Agreement (2000) entered into between the

EU-ACP Partners. The rationale behind this choice was that the Agreement was the most recent and the most complete document on proposed development cooperation. It was specially up to date because it aimed to address the smooth entry of the ACP countries into a globalised world, to deal with economic liberalisation and eco-development and to apply instruments derived from most recent development thinking. The Compendium, originating from Article 20 of the Cotonou Agreement (2000), receives special attention because it is seen as the instrument which is flexible enough to be utilised as a conduit for renewal of development procedures and application of innovative principles.

All in all, the subject matter is assessed in this chapter in order to establish the amount of contemporary development theory visibly included in it, especially when it comes to 'human development'.

### **1.2.5 Proposed guidelines for the implementation of an actor-oriented approach**

The intention of this study is to see to what extent the actor-oriented approach could enhance the practical application and facilitate the development cooperation of the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium. With the discussion of the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium in place, indications are that an assessment of the actor-oriented approach and all its facets would be required next, before any conclusions or recommendations could be made. This chapter therefore attempts a thorough explanation of the proposed functionalities of the actor-oriented approach in development cooperation. It emphasises the wide reach of the approach and directs the attention to its potential benefits as well as the presumed costliness of the approach in time and labour. Because of a lack of practical examples, where the actor-oriented approach has actually been put to the test, it was

impossible to substantiate the cost factor on the one hand, but also the benefit factor on the other. This will have to remain speculative until the approach is put into practice, although the assessment does augur in favour of the benefits that will accrue from the implementation of the actor-oriented approach.

### **1.2.6 Findings and Conclusions**

This is a summation of the most important conclusions that can be arrived at as a result of the facts contained in the whole study. It is dealt with under four respective headings, each heading covering one of the four objectives, as will be enumerated below. The chapter will, in other words, try to bring objectives, findings and conclusions together.

The conclusive paragraphs contain general perspectives on the subject matter and a projection of how the actor-oriented approach could also be functionally adapted to any new theory that may be developed in future.

## **1.3 Background**

From the above résumé of the respective chapters of this study, it should become clear that contemporary development, especially the growing emphasis on human development, alternative development and reflexive development (Nederveen Pieterse 2001), is used as basis in an attempt to assess whether the actor-oriented approach could play a fruitful role in practical development cooperation today and in future.

Chapter 2 investigates the semantics of the milieu in which the pros and cons are to be dealt with whereas the following chapter explains the development paradigm as it developed through the past number of decades, emphasising the more contemporary development thinking.



Chapter 4 attends to the actor-oriented approach as devised by Norman Long (2001), focusing especially on the holistic nature of the proposed approach. In Chapter 5, some attention is given to the major multilateral instruments for development cooperation, but the Cotonou Agreement (2000) has been made the focal point of the discussion. The second last chapter proposes some practical ways in which the actor-oriented approach could be applied, whereas the last chapter summarises findings and conclusions.

The motivational background to this study originated from practical experience which the author has had during his career in Foreign Affairs, including some fifteen years' practical experience in sections dealing with multilateral organisations and/or development cooperation. The fact that the whole study has been given a multilateral slant, originates from this practical (often frustrating) experience. Table 10.2 (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 156), as reflected in Annexure IV (278) below, outlines development fields and enumerates institutions such as the IMF (International Monetary Fund), the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and the United Nations. However, the author forgets to mention the strong EU-ACP (European Union- African, Caribbean and Pacific) Partnership, which was initiated in the early 1970s as the Yaoundé Convention; which was revamped and broadened in 1975 to become the Lomé Convention, and which was adapted during the turn of the century to the changing demands of the new millennium. The latest instrument of the ACP-EU Partnership is known as the Cotonou Agreement (2000), a progressive document which lends itself to research on whether and how the actor-oriented approach should be utilised in contemporary development cooperation.

From the above it becomes clear that, as its principle role players, global development cooperation may have important but also widely differing bodies such as:

several UN multilateral institutions;

the Bretton Woods Institutions;

the European-African, Caribbean, Pacific (EU-ACP) Partnership, now governed by the

Cotonou Agreement of 2000, and

often even bilateral arrangements between one donor country and a single beneficiary

country, or

one donor country targeting a whole region as beneficiary.

However, amongst them all, the EU-ACP Partnership could be considered (also from the author's own experience) as a prominent leader and trend-setter among the contemporary development cooperation institutions. In short, the EU-ACP Partners started negotiations regarding the possible incorporation of developing countries into the increasingly globalised world just after having signed the Cotonou Agreement (2000), thereby also enabling them to deal fast and effectively with the irreversible process of global liberalisation. These negotiations will possibly last beyond 2010. This sort of initiative still has to, and will possibly be, followed eventually by other development institutions.

To elaborate on the above, it should be noted that what used to be known as the Lomé Convention up to the turn of the century, has been superseded by a totally new agreement after the European Union and the countries of the African, the Caribbean and the Pacific regions (the

ACP) had signed the Cotonou Agreement in 2000. The Cotonou Agreement became a direct successor to the range of Lomé Conventions which were entered into, between 1975 and 1995, by the EU on the one hand and the ACP on the other. Cotonou is the first of a series of agreements envisaged by the Partnership to address the effects of globalisation and liberalisation on the developing countries of the ACP in a positive way. It can be described as an enabling document which will, for some time to come, remain the umbrella document which will govern Partnership relations and through which changes will be introduced into the EU-ACP Partnership as they are being decided on throughout negotiations.

What makes the choice of the EU-ACP Partnership as the main subject even more important, is the fact that, according to Stevens, Mc Queen and Kennan (1998: 2-4), the Lomé Convention had become outdated towards the end of the previous century. The paradigm shift in global politics, triggered inter alia by the fall of the Berlin Wall, did not only influence the political and economic landscape, but it also had a significant effect on most of the formerly accepted principles which used to govern development cooperation. It became clear that some other form of agreement, more compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) regulations and international requirements, should be put in the place of the Lomé Convention. This then gave rise to the negotiations for a subsequent agreement and thus the Cotonou Agreement was signed in 2000, which agreement became the framework for a totally new Partnership approach, an approach which would provide for regional cooperation mainly between the EU and the various geographical areas of the ACP. The envisaged Regional Economic Partnership Agreements or

REPAs became the second objective and were to receive full attention by the Partners directly after the Cotonou Agreement was signed.

This process of change is once again being driven by the European Commission, the actual 'civil service' of the Union, which is governed by the Council of Ministers of the EU and which encompasses all the departments that will be involved with every aspect of the proposed Partnership, including EU-ACP development cooperation and the generation of donor funding. Considering all the above, it was decided that the most practical and most comprehensive framework within which the assessments emanating from this study can theoretically be applied and tested, is this EU-ACP Partnership.

To help the actors of the developing countries to prepare for the radical change which the EU envisages, a publication of the European Centre for Development Policy Management (1996: 65), called upon ACP actors to start using their combined initiative, and to refrain from doing exactly what the European Union prescribes. In other words, the ACP actors were encouraged to take the initiative and to become self-sufficient, empowered and independent. The Centre prepared the ACP for an uphill battle and proposed that facing the new challenges would mean that over the whole period of negotiations research should be done into the effects which trade liberalisation would have on ACP economies. In addition, it was recommended that the ACP should remain informed about the importance of social development and possible ways to achieve the best results here. ACP research would also have to include the identification of possible opportunities and threats which may arise from EU innovations, such as the proposed regional economic agreements as well as the concomitant geographical split of the ACP.

Research into new mechanisms for decentralising aid delivery will also be required. The formation of Regional Economic Partnership Agreements as an extension of the new approach of the EU to its future partnership relations to the ACP countries, will be dealt with at length in Chapter V.

As stated before, the recommendation to ACP actors to work out their own ideas on future cooperation, rather than simply reacting to European proposals, is of the greatest importance because the principle could be implemented by ACP countries to their advantage. In fact, it contains a formidable challenge that can best be accepted by the ACP countries after they have established a greater internal coherence and sense of cooperation, which could result from the consistent application by all of the actor-oriented approach.

Negotiations that follow upon the Cotonou Agreement and that are taking place at the moment, provide the ideal opportunity for an intensive focus on a more actor-oriented approach to development. Time is of the essence in this regard because of the tight schedule of the EU-ACP Partnership regarding the REPA-based negotiations.

To get back to the more practical side of this discussion, it needs to be mentioned that the research pertaining to this study took more or less the following route:

1. The negative perception, namely that the human factor in development programmes was in general either neglected or totally ignored, was substantiated as being correct.

2. The contemporary factors of empowerment, participatory development and the role of civil society were all studied. However, the actor-oriented approach presented itself as a more feasible element to achieve the objective of instituting a more people-oriented development procedure in future development cooperation programmes and thus became the subject for this study.
3. The wide field covered by the actor-oriented approach was thoroughly researched in view of its practical applicability to contemporary development cooperation programmes and projects, such as those emanating from the EU-ACP Partnership. It became clear, for instance, that this approach would require and find actors in development who have patent and/or latent qualities and visionary perspectives in dealing with or executing development projects in their specific fields. A wide range of actors and their communities would be amongst those who would benefit greatly from the application of an actor-oriented approach.
4. Conversely, the populist dogma that is still in vogue during the early years of the new millennium, namely that empowerment and participatory development should be seen as special redeeming factors towards an effective end-result, is subject to increasing criticism. Views are that these often applied principles seem to be questionable and should either be exposed or validated.
5. In view of the above targets, available material on an actor-oriented approach has been scrutinised and is presented here in as much detail available and as clearly as possible.

In order to achieve the best results:

A search was undertaken in several libraries (mainly with the assistance of UNISA) for possible literature which would criticise; throw more light, or which would discuss a case in which the actor-oriented approach was applied in practice. Only a few were found; these other interpretations of the concept of an actor-oriented approach, especially the more practically oriented approaches, were subsequently looked into; next, a discussion was completed of the probability and practicality of an actor-oriented approach as main conduit to ensure the effective focus on the people in development cooperation; (Chapters IV and VI); the question of how one should introduce actor-orientation into development cooperation programmes has been addressed in Chapter VI; attempts were made to establish whether, or to what extent, the actor-oriented approach is being applied in practice in contemporary development research and development programmes, such as those launched by the EU-ACP Partnership, in conformance with the Cotonou Agreement, but the results were negligible; a series of findings and conclusions has been included in a final chapter.

As stated before, it is hoped that the conclusions of the research will benefit the negotiators of both the European Union and of the ACP countries in their present endeavours to develop a totally new set of rules for their proposed Regional Economic Partnership Agreements (REPAs), which they hope to conclude by the year 2010. The primary wish is that the partners will, on both sides, be convinced by this study that none of the REPAs could ever become effective unless the process of negotiation itself is actor-oriented. This process could just

manage to render fully competent actors who could be successfully deployed. Chances are good that these actors would be able to participate in a wide range of joint activities like negotiations, research, reporting back and reassessment of progress, which already form an integral part of the process of constructing the future agreements. Such newly equipped actors should, during and after the negotiations, be able to play a much more dynamic role in development cooperation than was the case in development cooperation programmes of the past, where most of the expertise left the developing country just after the mission was completed.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

The ongoing tendency of donor instances to eliminate the human factor from the development cooperation equation has been identified as being a major problem in development cooperation. This perception will be reinforced during the scrutiny of the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium. Except for a few pioneers in development studies who expressed scepticism (cf. Ekins 1986, Hindness 1986, Korten 1987 and Turner 1978), this tendency only began to face criticism after the impasse. The actor-oriented approach tends to take a wide-ranging (almost holistic) view of development and ties factors of development together that have previously been neglected. A deeper knowledge of the actor-oriented approach should therefore assist one in establishing how far-ranging the human responses to development interventions can be. They affect lifeworlds (see par. 2.4.4) for instance, and cause either defensive or integratory reactions in communities. Then, again, some people could work to help promote the positive aspects of the intervention, while others could do all they can to resist any form of change. According to



Schuurman (1993:26) and many of his contemporary commentators, who emphasise deconstruction as well as Schuurman's perceived need to zero in on the actors, one should now react to and change a system in which, in the past, previous interventions have been treated rather glibly. It will therefore be attempted to prove in this study that the actor-oriented approach aims at giving a rightful place to the people in development and all that surrounds and makes up their respective lifeworlds.

The fact that there was almost no literature available, neither on the theoretical side, nor on the practical application of the actor-oriented approach, gave rise to a theoretical slant in the contents of the study which could unfortunately not be avoided. Long's thorough exposition of the actor-oriented approach, dating as far as is known from 1978 until 2002 or later, has not yet been widely discussed, criticised or dissected. In addition, a proposed methodology of an actor-oriented approach could also not be found and one therefore had to rely on a small selection of publications, of which Long contributed at least 80 percent. Concentrating on the findings of mainly one author is not the best way to write a specialist study. Nevertheless, after the actor-oriented approach had been researched with care, the conclusion was drawn that the application of this system to development cooperation projects and programmes, could have a positive effect. Very important, in view of one of the objectives of this study, was that this approach would be giving the actors and the people a proper place in the development processes of the future.

This conclusion further indicated that the practical findings of this study should be constructed in such a way that the EU-ACP Partners, as co-signatories of the Cotonou Agreement, will want to adapt the actor-oriented approach in their development cooperation interventions. The problem is that, because of the wide ranging and multidisciplinary character of the actor-oriented approach, it was necessary to caution, in good time, that the eventual practical application of the approach would be more difficult than the procedures that were followed in the past. The main objective is to achieve more people-oriented development cooperation. Although one would be dealing with human reactions and their unpredictability once the actor-oriented approach is instituted, a clear set of lines of approach will have to be drawn, albeit often under difficult circumstances. Convincing arguments will have to be produced that the present easier processes of dealing with modernisation concepts such as infrastructure or growth will have to be adapted or combined with the more human aspects, before one could benefit from the extensive qualities of a more people-oriented approach.

Another problem arises from the fact that, because the actor-oriented approach delves into the realm of the humanities and because it deals with the psyche, it can never be concretised. Exact guidelines will be impossible to produce and a certain vagueness as to outcomes of specific proposed actions should be mentioned beforehand.

Concerning this problem statement and in view of what has already been said, compiling the guidelines for an actor-oriented approach seems to be the most arduous task because in many ways new ground will have to be covered to bring the theory of actor-oriented development

and the practical application of this innovatory notion together in a convincing way. To make things worse, the formulation of formal guidelines for an actor-oriented approach in development, and practical advice on their application has, as far as could be established, not yet been undertaken, and such guidelines have therefore not yet been made available to the vast field of practical development cooperation. This study is a pioneering contribution, because even the originator of the actor-oriented approach says:

it has never been my intention to promote actor-oriented analysis as a fully elaborated theoretical model or tool kit of methods and techniques ... (Long 2001 : xii).

Finally, the Compendium to the Cotonou Agreement (Please see Chapter V for a more detailed discussion), as has also been intimated in par. 5.1 below, has been identified as one of the best and most effective conduits through which the eventual findings of this study can be channelled. For this reason, the Compendium will be analysed and discussed in Chapter V (please refer to section 5.2). The Compendium, mooted in Article 20 of the Cotonou Agreement, will, over the years and throughout the negotiations, constantly be adapted to the requirements of the EU-ACP Partnership. It therefore lends itself perfectly well to be utilised for the practical introduction of new proposals and notions into the partnership system.

## **1.5 Objectives**

The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To prove that, for decades, there had been a tendency to concentrate on abstract principles as the real factors that stimulate development, (par. 1.1) and that, in this process, the

actors (the people) were left out of the picture to the detriment of overall successful development programmes.

2. To present the latest research on the actor-oriented approach in a critical but constructive form, thereby laying a foundation to identify further empirical arguments in support of the practical application of the actor-oriented approach (the whole Chapter IV).

- 3. To establish the practicality or otherwise of the ‘actor-oriented approach’ seen as a contributing factor in the Cotonou Agreement as well as other development cooperation programmes and projects of the future (Chapter V).

- 4. To utilise the theoretical and practical data thus collected; to construct specific practical guidelines for possible future application of the actor-oriented approach, and to conclude with specific recommendations (Chapter VI).

The central lines of argument that will be utilised in this study are as follows:

Further exploration into the application of human development needs to be done.

Development as a field can only be successful if, in its planning, it is encompassing as many of the fields in a target area as possible.

The most progressive development instrument of our time, viz. the Cotonou Agreement (2000), is lacking in the attention it pays to human development, and an infusion such as the actor-oriented approach could remedy this shortcoming.

## **1.6 Research methodology**

A literature study such as the one presented herewith, is confronted by various unique problems and this makes it difficult to prove any finding or conclusion. It is dependent on someone to taking the subject matter and applying it in practice, before empirical proof can emanate to confirm the theories presented in the study. A further disadvantage is that new literature is constantly being produced, and often new findings are not discussed and counter-arguments or augmenting facts are still being produced. A cut-off point has to be established in order to prevent one from landing in a never-ending production line. In this respect, publications up to 2001 were considered and more recent publications were scanned, although nothing worthwhile could be found on the actor-oriented approach after 2001.

This study initially intended to assess empowerment and participatory development as factors in development cooperation programmes and projects. This was planned to entail an in-depth study of the role (positive or negative) which was accorded by the EU and the UN development institutions to empowerment and participatory development in their development cooperation activities.

Extensive research made it clear to the author that in most of the development activities of these institutions, empowerment and participatory development were both mentioned as effective development tools, but in all the literature that was consulted (EC Commission 1996, ECOSOC 1995, 1999; OECD-DAC 1997, UNCTAD 1996, 2000, UNDP 1999, UN General Assembly 1997, World Bank 1998), there were hardly any instances to be found where actual utilisation and physical adoption of empowerment principles and participatory development were spelt out

in detail. These valuable factors, which were clear signals of a will to get closer to human development, became reified in the process because they were used as beacons to prove good intentions, without any instructions as to how they should be implemented.

A publication by Ronald F. Wendt (2000: xv-xvii) subsequently came to the author's attention, which maintained that the concept of empowerment is actually paradoxical in that it purports an endogenous acquisition of empowerment by a person on the one hand, but also implies that empowerment should be transferred (top-down) to subjects, on the other hand.

This may be the reason why empowerment could not be applied in practice with the same enthusiasm than with that with which it was proposed in the corridors of the donor society. It seemed (and still seems) to be easier to talk about it than to implement it. Thus it became clear that new avenues of practical development cooperation had to be explored in order to assess the validity of the hypothesis that development is biased in favour of modernisation with less emphasis on human factors such as growth, infrastructure, agriculture, investment and others. On the other hand, very little attention had thus far been given by the organisations studied, to the real improvement and incorporation of human capital into development cooperation programmes and projects.

New literature regarding the actor-oriented approach (initially mentioned in Schuurman 1993) then came to the author's attention (Long 2001) and was studied with growing enthusiasm, although certain problems also arose, even in the early stages of the research. For instance, a dilemma that probably presents itself in every attempt at research into a new and innovative

field, was detected soon after the wide and diversified reach of the actor-oriented approach for future development cooperation was realised. It became clear that available literature on the actor-oriented approach would be limited; that very few reports on the practical applications of the actor-oriented approach were in existence, and that the approach covered a wide field of disciplines which would all have to be attended to in the course of the study (please see par. 1.3). With the assistance of the UNISA Library, attempts were made to obtain a variety of the initial and the most recent sources - all those that were critical to the subject matter and related issues - but the search did not produce many additional sources that could be utilised for comparison or extending horizons on the subject.

Meanwhile, it became clear that development cooperation programmes, entered into by bodies such as the EU (Chapter V), were not yet sufficiently influenced by the contemporary drive to initiate people-oriented development cooperation methods in all development programmes. Having studied, inter alia, the views of Schuurman et al. (1993) and Norman Long (2001) regarding the future of development cooperation, the author became convinced that an in-depth study of the actor-oriented approach would take one (correctly so) into the ambits of several human science disciplines, that presented a very wide field which would have to be covered. It was also realised that such a study would be breaking new ground, because no signs could be found, as yet, of a real attempt at providing practical guidelines for the institution of the actor-oriented approach. Neither was it possible to find any literature which went deeper than Norman Long's (2001) into the role which the people have to play in development programmes and projects before such programmes can be regarded as being successful.

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At the stage at which an attempt was made to substantiate empowerment as an important factor in development, the initial research methodology was based on an evaluation of empowerment in its practical application through fieldwork and questionnaires. This intended approach had to be reassessed and it was decided that the new direction of the study would require a basic approach in the form of a literature study, including a historical background study. This process entailed the following:

studying and portraying the historical background of development;

studying and presenting the accepted procedures over the years, of concentrating on many development factors other than the people-oriented ones;

noting the latest notions in development, especially those that were stressing the importance of participation, empowerment and the role of civil society, and researching the results (or lack of results) that were obtained by the introduction of these factors to development cooperation and integrating them as part of the study;

studying the way in which bodies such as the European Union (EU), the World Bank and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD-DAC) were applying the latest development theories to their development cooperation programmes and projects and commenting mainly on the EU-ACP Partnership;

naturally, as much as possible information on the actor-oriented approach was selected, included and discussed. Such information is to be found in relevant places in this study, right from the first chapter. In addition, the whole Chapter IV was dedicated to a brief but



complete exposition and discussion of the most important aspects entailed in the actor-oriented approach;

the facts presented in each of the phases of this study were used as basis for the compilation of a set of initial and theoretical guidelines, selected for possible future application in the Cotonou Agreement and also in other cases in which the actor-oriented approach is intended for a process in practical development;

the final step was to round the study off with a number of selected findings and conclusions.

Having alluded to the fact that the actor-oriented approach could be a possible contributing agent to improve development cooperation in practice; and that it is a very recent contribution to development theory, it stands to reason that some broad introductory notes on what the proposed system consists of, would at this stage be necessary. A brief definition of the concept is impossible because it covers too wide a field, including factors within the ambit of human relations, politics and the economy, and may even extend to other sectors as well. An acceptable definition could also not be found in the available literature. Therefore it was decided not to endeavour to construct a definition of the actor-oriented approach, but rather to initially present some descriptive notes which could draw rough parameters of the concept, and which would include some of the more important aspects of the actor-oriented approach. The closest that one could come to a definition is included in par.2.4 above, where it is stated what the actor-oriented approach will mean for the purposes of this study.

The actor-oriented approach comes about through the application of the following -

An ethnographic survey, which should include a study on how social differences are produced, consolidated and transformed. That should lead to the identification of the social processes involved, how they are being conducted and by whom. It will not be correct to merely identify the structural outcomes. Identifying struggles and the methods of resolving differences in a society are strong prerequisites for a successful approach. In this way actors could be identified in their specific roles and this could in turn enrich the general understanding of a community and its people (please refer to par. 2.2.2).

Deconstructing the proposed area of the intervention as well as the intervention itself, in order to find the appropriate actors for the purpose of the intervention (please also consult par. 2.2.2; and 7.2.2).

Taking note, from the first stages of ethnographic research, of heterogeneous factors that could manifest themselves in the course of an intervention and determining the best ways to prevent the heterogeneity of the community and its actors from derailing the plans (also consult paragraph 2.4.5 for a broader treatment of heterogeneous factors in development cooperation).

Determining the degree of agency that is to be found amongst the most eligible actors, and how and where it is manifested (agency is discussed in more detail in par. 2.4.1).

The lifeworld(s) of the targeted community on which the intervention will focus, should be understood, especially with regard to the way in which foreign ideas and initiatives could best be internalised (par. 2.4.4 deals with the concept of lifeworlds in detail). Ethnographic research is also required for this.

The concept of 'social interface' in a community can be understood by exploring how discrepancies in social interest, cultural interpenetration, knowledge and power are mediated and perpetuated or transformed at critical points of linkage or confrontation. The whole concept forms an important facet in the actor-oriented approach. Such interfaces could best be identified ethnographically (for further information on interface, please refer to par. 2.4.7).

Finally, after having considered all the above and even more factors, the identified actors are forged together in a team consisting of actors from both the donor as well as the beneficiary communities. This is the point at which the practical design and planning of a development intervention starts.

The above points are an overview of selected factors which are contained in the actor-oriented approach but should not be seen as a full treatment of what the approach entails. It is because of the interesting and wide-ranging effects that emerge from the contents of, for instance, the ethnographic survey, or the emphasis on the heterogeneous composition of any society, that a full-scale treatment of all the aspects of the actor-oriented approach is deemed absolutely necessary before any decision as to the viability of this approach could be presented. Please note that a more satisfactory treatment of the actor-oriented approach appears in Chapter IV.

As stated in the introduction, the main motivation for this research revolves around the assumption (based on the publications of a large number of post-impasse scholars), that development cooperation has had diminished returns on its efforts because it focused on other factors, in research and in practice, than those revolving around the people themselves. For

instance, according to Norman Long (1990: 3-24), this was done to such an extent that the perception was often created that people were hardly necessary in development. An important premise of this study is that an approach that targets the actors in development, should simultaneously be inclined to focus on human aspects in development as well. This premise is substantiated through many of the facts that have been presented in Chapter IV.

In order to lay a sound foundation for the study, thereby validating the reasons for this research, it was decided that the following should be done:

Relevant aspects of the history of development cooperation and development studies will be described. Thus, a certain focus will be placed on the influence which theories such as Marxism, neo-Marxism, modernisation theory, the dependency theory, post-modern thinking, globalisation and liberalisation have had, still have, and may have in future on development cooperation (please refer to Chapter III for a discussion of these points).

The allegation of a historical dehumanised approach to development will be substantiated, mostly in findings contained in the last chapter. Simultaneously, recent post-impasse trends which are nudging development practice into a more people-friendly approach will be identified (par. 3.2).

A wide-ranging explanation of what is meant by actor-oriented development will be dealt with in several ways in several chapters, but especially in Chapter IV. Endeavours will be made in Chapters V, VI and in the final chapter, to identify possible repercussions and benefits which could flow from the practical application of an actor-oriented methodology.

It was decided to explore the opinion of Wendt (2001: xv-xvii), namely that both empowerment and the participatory approach may contain a paradox. Therefore, some serious attention will be given to these aspects to determine their validity as development factors (for instance in par. 4.2.7.5).

The desire to make a contribution to the science of development (or development studies as it is commonly known), arose from the original assumption that the introduction of a more people-oriented approach in development, as has been said before, could have a significant role to play in development cooperation. This hypothesis was further refined after the actor-oriented approach was noted and the latter will subsequently be used throughout the study as the main factor through which development cooperation agencies can be convinced to start adopting a more people-related approach.

The following procedures were subsequently decided on and have been applied:

1. Definitions, descriptions, key concepts and related terminology that were used in the study have been entered and explained (Chapter II).
2. An attempt was made to present the fullest possible description of 'an actor-oriented approach' and to explain its connections to post-modern thinking. In this regard, special attention has been given to the question whether the deconstruction method should be regarded as the best medium to identify actors (Paragraphs 2.2.2 and 4.2.6.1). Other contingencies which should be heeded in the design of an actor-oriented development project or programme have also been explained (Chapter IV).

3. Basic indications, such as the possible and often numerous unexpected strategy changes that could ensue from a people-driven approach, as well as the heterogeneity among the wide range of actors that are involved in an actor-oriented approach, were identified as part of a series of important and often innovative factors that have been discussed in the study (Paragraphs 4.2.8.5 and 4.2.6.8).

4. The Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium have been analysed to assess people-oriented development in that area (Chapter V). As will be further explained in par. 5.1, research in this regard also triggered a special recommendation regarding the Cotonou Agreement (2000) and its Compendium. As already stated before, both should be used as possible conduits through which the guidelines for the introduction of the actor-oriented approach to development cooperation could be applied in future.

5. Relevant multilateral development cooperation agreements have been looked into in order to assess contemporary approaches to development cooperation. The results thereof would then serve as a framework within which the Cotonou Agreement could be interpreted. This was done in practice but the results were not included in this study. It has been decided that only the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium are to be discussed, because it became clear that the draft guidelines for the actor-oriented approach would still suffice, even if they are only based on the above mentioned instruments (Chapters V and VI).

6. In conclusion, the abovementioned possible guidelines have been identified, discussed and written down in Chapter VI. This has been followed up by a final chapter, containing

findings and conclusions which refer to a whole series of notable issues which have been encountered during the study (Chapter VII).

It has been said before, and will be repeated again: this study will prove that the actor-oriented approach may be one of the best approaches for achieving effective development cooperation, but the approach will definitely not be the easiest one. With this fact in mind, the intricate web of possibilities that could result in any community in reaction to any form of intervention, was sketched as widely as possible. This was done with the intention of enlightening the reader and preparing him or her for a wide and unexpected range of possibilities, numerous problems and kaleidoscopic reactions that may present themselves in the wake of applying the actor-oriented approach. In fact, the wide discussion of the holistic reach of the actor-oriented approach, was undertaken to prepare the reader for the prerequisite of a special kind of planning approach (these matters are mainly dealt with in Chapters IV and VI).

## Chapter II

### Basic definitions and terminology

#### **2.1 Introduction**

To avoid ambiguity and the possibility of wrong interpretations, a selection of notions and phrases which usually form part of literature and discussions in the field of development cooperation were selected for discussion and interpretation for the purpose of this study. In addition to a historical overview, the more contemporary concepts most likely to be used in this work were included for discussion.

Special attention to contemporary development semantics was deemed necessary, because of:

The different interpretations that are often accorded to the same phenomena, such as civil society: some regard civil society to be represented mainly by NGOs; others see civil society as the usual groups of ‘rabble rousers’, whereas civil society could generally be described as the area which is filled by those individuals and organisations who are not involved with the state nor with private enterprise.

Different perceptions of development factors: interpretations of concepts such as education, capacity building, enablement and empowerment are not always analogous. Such basic differences could lead to great misunderstandings.

The tendency to bring reified notions into play and blow them up beyond proportions should be identified at an early stage in order to bring distorted perceptions back to normal. For example, ‘education’ has become a reified term which can mean anything. Reified terms



usually have a populist flavour because they are used to influence the views of the general population. Very little is said about how a reified notion should be brought about - it is regarded as being safer and of greater value if not too much is said about its implementation. The frequent use of the same basic words to describe very different policies - just prefixes are changed, for instance the terms 'Marxism' and 'neomarxism', which should each be interpreted differently.

Another reason for the decision to insert a special chapter dealing with relevant development terminology, is to address the new vocabulary of the actor-oriented approach, as it is made applicable to development. It has been alluded to before that the actor-oriented approach is a combination of a number of disciplines. It is also rooted to some extent in post-modern thinking. Therefore, the various segments of the actor-oriented approach have to be brought together and explained at an early stage. This should facilitate better understanding of the various concepts (which mostly derive from the actor-oriented approach) and arguments, that are to be employed later on in this study.

## **2.2 Post-modern thinking and procedures**

Because of the statement above, which connects the actor-oriented approach to post-modern thinking, it is deemed necessary to discuss postmodernism and to point to those post-modern factors which have a direct influence on the actor-oriented approach.

Postmodernism as concept has no definite date or place of origin. One fact, however, stands out: post-modern thinking had (and still has) a visible influence on a variety of sectors of society and development studies are no exception. As such, concepts that are to be discussed below, such as deconstruction; the focus on agency; ethnographic research; the heterogeneity of society; the disadvantages of reification, and the knowledge/power relationship, are all results of, and part of post-modern thinking. In this particular study, all the above factors and more have been taken into consideration and utilised. So, for instance, is the post-modern method of deconstruction, which was initially devised by Jacques Derrida (Appignanesi and Garratt 1995: 77). Deconstruction has been taken further by a series of development scholars and some of the latest views on it can be found, for instance, in Nederveen Pieterse:

Presently the development field is bifurcating into a managerial stream - managing development as part of development bureaucracies - and an interpretative stream whose major concern is to deconstruct development, to unpack its claims and discourses, and once that is done, to deconstruct the deconstruction, for deconstruction is a never-ending task (2001: 164).

He goes one step further, bringing reconstruction also into play. In accordance with the title of his book (*Development theory: Deconstructions/reconstructions*) Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 33) proposes that deconstruction should be regarded as the prerequisite for reconstruction. In explaining reconstruction he remarks that it should not be a single reconstruction but rather a multifaceted 'polycentric reconstruction, given varying itineraries and circumstances in different countries.'

Deconstruction of a target area for development has a role to play. In addition to a possible avenue to identify the actors in an intervention by dismantling the structures, deconstruction

should also reveal hidden metaphors prevalent in the area which could stand in the way of an intervention, and be able to reveal modernisation theses which should be addressed in the course of the intervention.

There is a real doubt whether the deconstruction method should be seen as the only or the better option to find the actors. After all, a combination of deconstruction and ethnographic research and even more recent methods, should be utilised together wherever possible in order to obtain the best results.

### **2.2.1 The actor-oriented approach**

The idea behind the actor-oriented approach is natural because it originates from the understanding that, whatever the structural circumstances may be, the approach will give rise to the development of different social forms. It can therefore be accepted that there will be a vast difference in the ways in which actors will handle situations that confront them. Their cognitive, emotional and organisational skills will be determined by their social circumstances, which could include the multiple realities of social life, like heterogeneity of the society, cultural or power struggles within the society as well as a host of additional factors (also see par. 4.2.7.5 for further information on 'multiple realities'). Norman Long sees the actor-oriented approach as an issue which is being driven from the constructionist perspective, which entails:

... remaking of society through the ongoing self-transforming actions and perceptions of a diverse and interlocked world of actors (Long 2001: 5).

Because development cooperation is often described as a process of ‘remaking’ a society, there should be an automatic affinity and general compatibility between the actor-oriented approach and development cooperation. Chapter IV contains a comprehensive discussion of the actor-oriented approach that will substantiate this point, whereas Chapter VI will analyse how the actor-oriented approach can become involved in standard development procedures as stipulated in the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium.

### **2.2.2 Deconstruction**

Appignanesi (1995: 78) focuses on the views of Derrida when explaining the gist of the deconstruction theory. Derrida has found that reason, as portrayed by the Western tradition of rationalist thought, has many flaws and will never be able to present the pure truth. His thinking militated against the ‘essentialist notion of certainty of meaning’.

(Appignanesi 1995: 79). Derrida further makes the point that the structures of meaning implicate the observers, which means that any action of observation is equal to interaction and therefore not detached. Rather, the structures of meaning are, as a concept, scientifically untenable. Therefore, it is suggested that anything reasoned cannot be universal, timeless or stable (Appignanesi 1995: 79-81). Meaning or identity can be compared to the image one has of oneself when looking at oneself in two opposing mirrors, the image of oneself is replicated infinitely. It can be traced back, if not in practice then theoretically, into the mists of time. Such a process of peeling back facts and images, just to reveal new facts and images, is deconstructive in nature. It entails the peeling away of meanings, one after the other, like when peeling an onion.

A critical view of development cooperation theories tends to reveal a specific and unique kind of reasoning which gives a single meaning to each separate development principle, each theory and each concept. The fact that the method of deconstruction could throw new light on the traditional meanings ingrained in the theories, concepts and principles encompassed in the development paradigm, makes the method worthwhile experimenting with, especially when researching ways to open up the largely unclaimed territory of people-oriented development. Some benefit has accrued from the introduction of the deconstruction theory to this study, for instance, because the reason why the concept of an actor-oriented approach was opened up into so many different layers, could be better understood. In essence, Chapter IV represents some form of deconstruction of the actor-oriented approach and its principles. For the same reasons, Long (1990: 3-24), found it logical to recommend deconstruction as an initial step to prepare the ground for an actor-oriented approach. In explaining his actor-oriented approach, Norman Long (1990: 3-24), maintains that, after having deconstructed applicable structures, one would be able to identify the actors, and Schuurman (1996: 26) elaborates further on this statement, as will be noted in the following paragraph.

He supports the above approach of Long and agrees that deconstruction should also be utilised as a possible instrument to identify the dynamic processes of development.

Schuurman (1996: 26) emphasises that the method of deconstruction has, *inter alia*, a viable role to play during the initiation of an actor-oriented approach and proposes that the

following steps, as have been alluded to above, should be included in the deconstruction process:

the dismantling of structures to find the actors;

performing a search for modernisation theses, deconstructing each one in turn and

assessing its validity;

establishing which hidden metaphors that appear in concepts that are central to a

project, do not correspond with the general aim of the project, in order to correct

them.

To clarify the utilisation of the deconstruction process further, the following should be noted as well:

During the process of dismantling structures, one should endeavour to find all the actors. Structures are usually of an abstract nature, like the world system, for instance. Such structures usually have merely an apparent value. The process of deconstruction should, after the removal of the first constructed meaning or two, start to reveal possible actor(s). It would be wise to start with the deconstruction of all the relevant structures to get to the crux of the matter. The deconstruction process should lead one to the identification of the relevant substructures, which should all, in turn, be deconstructed in order to cover the whole field that has been targeted.

Deconstruction also requires the deligitimisation or adaptation of modernisation theses. One would look here at theses such as liberalism, socialism, globalisation and liberalisation, for instance. It would therefore be necessary to scrutinise each for its validity as a thesis in the particular study for which the deconstruction is done. To

deligitimise or adapt such theses will often require extensive research to ensure the highest measure of integrity.

Deconstruction should also entail a quest for the hidden metaphors in relevant concepts. Therefore, development cooperation notions such as 'growth' and 'agricultural development' could, although they are generally regarded as redeeming factors in development, could be distinguished as hidden metaphors, depending upon how they are utilised in the text. Such metaphors should be studied and accepted, adapted or rejected, considering their continued validity in a contemporary role.

Reification (refer to par. 2.4.3) can also be classified under this item and should be identified in exactly the same way as is the case with hidden metaphors.

Because of its importance, deconstruction will be referred to quite regularly throughout this study.

### **2.2.3 Ethnographic procedures**

Ethnographic studies (please also refer to par. 4.2.1 in Chapter IV), could be an alternative way of assessing a target area. These procedures are devised to look at a community from within. The observer's findings will therefore have a subjective flavour but will also facilitate a wide view of the target area. One could expect a fair coverage of at least the sociological, the psychological, the cultural, the economic, the religious, and the agricultural viewpoints.

Ethnographic surveys should be ongoing - from the beginning to the end of a project - to comment about interactions, reactions to interventions, power struggles, and other

responses and lived experiences of the widest possible group of actors relevant to the project. Systematic ethnographic inputs into the actor-oriented approach are important because they serve to create a basis for greater understanding of the ‘social life’ of development projects and are handy tools in the frequent and continual evaluation of the impact of an intervention. Ethnographic studies could, for example, focus on portraying internally generated strategies (either cooperative or defensive) and processes of change among targeted beneficiaries. They could also observe ‘diverse and often conflicting forms of human action and social consciousness’ (Wendt 2001: 16-17), to be found in the donor group of actors, as well as among the beneficiaries.

Ethnography begins with a social constructionist view because reality is continuously created and recreated through social interaction and dialogue. In fact, it entails the study of a community, for instance, and interprets a culture, from the inside out. Ethnographic methodology can include, amongst others, structured or semistructured interviews, participant observation, and/or autobiographical narrative as long as it leads to ‘an insider’s perspective on how symbols are used and meaning is created within a particular culture’ (Long 2001: 16-17).

Ethnographic research forms one of the cornerstones of the actor-oriented approach and will therefore be dealt with in theory and practice in several successive chapters.

#### **2.2.4 Changing the *explanandum***



Buttel and McMichael (1991) found it necessary to shed some new light on development concepts that landed researchers in dead-ends. They came up with a quite simple and yet revolutionary theory regarding the respective views that should be held about that which needs to be explained (the *explanandum*) as against the explaining framework (the *explanans*). It was found in many cases that to help clarify a situation or policy with the intention, for instance, to adapt it to post-impasse development theory, that which requires an explanation should be changed. Their argument is based on the notion that, in the diagnosis of the impasse in development theory (please see par. 3.2.1), undue unilateral attention was paid to the explaining framework or *explanans*. They further elaborated on this idea by looking at the way in which functionalistic, reductionistic and teleological approaches regarding the framework of development studies have led researchers into blind alleys. The problem with the *explanans*, they found, originated from the rigid way in which the *explanandum* was employed. For example, it was traditionally argued that it is important to understand the homogeneity within the Third World (the *explanandum*), which is generally assumed. Schuurman (1996: 29-30), became interested in the above-mentioned system and observed that one's perception can be changed radically by altering the *explanandum* - in other words, not 'the Third World' only, but the 'diversity' within the Third World, should become the new research theme. This means that once one has looked, for instance, at the heterogeneity of the Third World, one is bound to gain totally new insights into this phenomenon. Suddenly the framework becomes clear. Diversity within the Third World stands out and new concepts begin to crystallise. It is easier to

explain the diversity than the homogeneity and the established Third World concepts suddenly start to crumble and make way for new perceptions.

Schuurman (1996:30), has two points of criticism, however:

1. The changed explanandum (diversity in the Third World) suggests a contradiction in terms. The name conveys the idea that this group of countries has many features in common. Therefore, one should establish the common features of the Third World countries before studying the diversity among them. In a way this *explanandum* therefore has to be deconstructed to find the actors in the Third World. This process will eliminate the modernisation theses (of which the Third World as description may be one) and enable the researcher to start the quest for hidden metaphors. The question then arises as to whether a change of the term 'Third World' would have resolved this issue. If the term 'developing world' is used instead, one would still need to analyse the term developing, because it also indicates commonality. The general perception of this group of countries (whether Third World or Developing) is that various diversities, for example, the terms 'Developed Countries' or 'Island States', are accommodated in the popular terminology. The acknowledgment of the diversity between the developing and the least developing countries is important, but the necessity also to analyse the commonalities present in each of these strata should not be overlooked.
2. The term 'diversity', is being used rather voluntarily. Schuurman (1996: 30), proposes that the diversity concept should accommodate inequality as an additional factor. Analytical development studies should not be restricted to diversity. The

subject matter will be enriched if various forms of inequality are included: inequality of access to power, to resources, to a humane existence - in short, inequality in emancipation. In addition, it is worthwhile noting that inequality is a relevant concept, not only on a micro-level (the household) or meso-level (social categories), but also on a supranational level.

Notwithstanding the above notes, this tool could, as explained above, render valuable assistance in getting new insights into conundrums that may appear in development research. It has also been applied to a certain number of questions that needed interpretation during this study (see for instance par. 3.3).

### **2.3 Some terms of the actor-oriented approach**

Norman Long introduced the actor-oriented approach and argued that one way out of the impasse in development research will be:

to adopt an actor-oriented perspective that explored how social actors (both 'local' and 'external' to particular arenas) are locked into a series of intertwined battles over resources, meanings and institutional legitimacy and control (Long 2001: 1-5).

For the purposes of this study, the actor-oriented approach will mean:

... any approach in which the actors in development are given definite roles, some as givers and others as receivers and some even as administrators on the sideline, but always in such a way that there is no sign of a top-down approach and that the whole process becomes actor-driven (Long 2001: 16)

#### **2.3.1 Agency**

Norman Long (2001:16) describes agency as something which we may recognise when particular actions make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events. It is embodied in social relations and can only be effective through them.

It has become part of the post-modern approach to use the word 'agency' where one refers to the capability of actors to fulfil a specific task. The concept includes knowledgeability, capability and social acceptability as reference points. Long (2001: 240-243) mentions that agency is usually recognised *ex post facto*. This makes it rather difficult to anticipate the form of the concept or to structure agency in advance to conform to specific guidelines or circumstances. Nevertheless, it is by way of ethnographic research that one establishes whether persons or networks of persons have agency. Dynamics of agency are identified in cases, for instance, in which actors attribute agency to various objects and ideas, which in turn lead to the creation of general perceptions of what is viable or possible. Agency is complex because it represents a mix of social, cultural and material elements and some of these elements could be rather volatile at times. In addition, agency could become even more complex should it be utilised in a strategic role, for instance, where actors are enrolled or canvassed to support the project or scheme of a third person or group of persons.

#### **2.4.2 Discourse**

A selection of views on discourse are discussed and further elaborated on in Coetzee et al (2001: 145 - 150). The value of discourse as an instrument to define those aspects on

which a certain amount of agreement/consensus exists, is acknowledged. At the same time, however, a warning is sounded that, where Habermas (1993: 94, 158) 'insists that people engaged in discourse are, ideally, oriented to reaching consensus' others disagree and purport that such a statement is rather contentious and difficult to uphold (Coetzee et al. 2001: 150). In effect, the idea has been widely mooted that 'the quality of conversation between those engaged in social discourse may indeed be enhanced in so far as they do not strive to reach consensus' (Ibid.) As some of the subscribers to this notion, the names of Denzin (1997), Foucault (1984), Jackson and Carter (1991), Lather (1991) and Lyotard (1990) are mentioned.

Norman Long (2001:16) explains that:

Discursive means or types of discourse (i.e. cultural constructions implied in expressing, either verbally or through social practice, points of view or value perspectives) vary and are not simply inherent features of the actors themselves: they form a part of the differentiated stocks of knowledge and resources available to actors of different types. Since social life is never so unitary as to be built upon one single type of discourse, it follows that, however restricted their choices, actors always face some alternative ways of formulating their objectives, deploying specific modes of action and giving reasons for their behaviour.

Discourse is a post-modern concept developed by Foucault (Gordon 1980: 78-108) which, according to Long (2001: 51), refers to sets of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, narratives and statements that advance a particular version of 'the truth' about specific objects, persons and events. Discourses produce 'texts' - written and spoken, or even non-verbal such as the meanings embodied in architectural styles (i.e., buildings such as the town halls that 'speak' of civic pride, and factories that 'represent' a bygone

industrial age) or dress fashions (e.g., styles associated with class, status, gender, age or ethnicity).

### **2.3.3 Social Actors**

Long (2001: 241-243) regards 'social actors' as entities (individuals or groups) that can be regarded as having agency. As such they would possess the knowledgeability and capability to assess problematic situations and organise 'appropriate' responses. Actors can be distinguished in several forms. They could be individuals, informal groups or interpersonal networks, organisations and collective groupings.

Care should be taken to avoid reification. This means that one should not accord a separate personality to an organisation or a collectivity such as a social movement, when one is convinced that these cannot act in unison or speak with one voice - they can never have agency. Making a commodity of something like love or religion is also a form of reification. There is, for instance, the tendency among people that should know better, to reify 'knowledge'. Please see paragraph 2.5.1 in this regard.

### **2.3.4 Lifeworlds**

The term 'lifeworld' is explained by Schutz and Luckmann (1973). This explanation is referred to by Leeuwis and Long (1990) who quote the following regarding lifeworlds:

... constituted of various forms of social knowledge, intentions, and evaluative models, and types of discourse and social action, through which actors attempt to order their worlds. Such life-worlds are products of past

experiences and personal and shared understandings, and are reshaped continuously by new encounters with people and things (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973).

Long (2001: 240-243) describes lifeworlds almost thirty years later as 'lived-in' and largely 'taken-for-granted' social worlds centring on certain individuals more than others. Such worlds should not be viewed as a fixed set of cultural stimulants that determine how individuals in that lifeworld act and interact. The lifeworld should instead be seen as a fluid process in which each individual is constantly self-assembling and re-evaluating his/her relationships and experiences, thereby determining the composition of the lifeworld. Lifeworlds should be seen as actions, interactions and meanings which are being performed in specific socio-geographical spaces and which have an effect on life histories.

When translating all this to the practical field of development cooperation, one realises that the particulars of peoples' 'lived-in worlds' (lifeworlds) (Long 2001: 240-243), should be obtained in order to get behind the myths, models and poses of development policy and institutions. Reifications which affect local culture and knowledge, should be observed to help researchers to uncover the particulars of peoples' "lived-in worlds". That is, we need to document 'the ways in which people steer or muddle their ways through difficult scenarios, turning "bad" into "less bad" circumstances' (Long 2001:14). Long adds that the lifeworlds of individuals are not preordained for them by the logic of capital or by the intervention of the state. (Long 2001: 22).

### **2.3.5 Social fields**

According to Long (2001: 241-243), social fields are composed of a variety of elements such as material resources, information, technologies, institutional components, discourses and sets of social relationships of various kinds. There is no single factor which orders this heterogeneous composition in society. Any order that is observed in a social field comes about as a result of the struggles, negotiations, and accommodations taking place between the competing parties. In certain instances, especially in socio-ecological scenarios, the competing parties must also include such abstracts as, for instance, animal and plant populations.

### **2.3.6 Interface**

Although the word 'interface' is generally perceived as a two-sided discussion or confrontation, the complexity and multiplicity of interface situations should not be underestimated. One could say that:

Social interface is a critical point of intersection between lifeworlds, social fields or levels of social organisation where social discontinuities, based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power, are most likely not to be located (Long 2001: 240-243).

In introducing a development project or programme into a society, one would concentrate on creating the most efficient social interface possible in order to avoid encountering social discontinuities and other possible obstacles. A discontinuity means that actors are in a process of 'devising ways of bridging, accommodating to, or struggling against each others' different social and cognitive worlds.' (Long 2001: 240-243) Interface analysis aims at



dealing with the social discontinuities and works at characterising the different organisational and cultural forms that may have an influence on the reproduction or transformation of social discontinuities. To ensure a certain continuity in social interface, interface must be analysed as an integral part of the processes of negotiation, adaptation and transformation of meaning; in other words, it should cover the whole span of an intervention.

### **2.3.7 Interventions**

From what has been said above, one could possibly deduct that preference is given to the term ‘intervention’ in the actor-oriented approach, when reference is made to donors’ involvement in development cooperation earmarked for developing countries. The word describes exactly what this action between donors and developing countries entails and fits into the framework of contemporary development thinking because it is a contemporary concept as well. The linchpin position of interventions in development cooperation presents the reason why considerable information and discussions on the subject are included in Chapter IV, par. 4.2.6.

## **2.4 Various manifestations of knowledge**

Knowledge should not be reified although it is a subject which is difficult to define. Instead of attempting to define the concept it was decided rather to select and discuss those manifestations of knowledge which form part of the development cooperation paradigm. Subjects like self-knowledge, intuitive knowledge and similar ones have been omitted because they do not play a significant role in development.

### **2.4.1 The knowledge paradigm**

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1961:658), says knowledge is ‘a theoretical or practical understanding of for instance a subject or language’. In ‘*Knowledge for Development*’ (World Bank 1998/99:16), it is made clear that knowledge should be regarded as being critical for development. Everything one does, seems to depend on knowledge.

Transferring resources into things we need requires knowledge. Improvement of a lifestyle takes more than simply transforming more resources, for resources are scarce. Using resources to obtain better and ever-increasing returns, takes knowledge and in ever-increasing proportions to the resources. Developed countries can vouch for the fact that the relation between resources and knowledge has changed extensively, with knowledge having become the more important factor of the two. It is knowledge that determines the standard of living today - much more than land, tools and labour do (World Bank 1998/99: 16).

Knowledge is one of those subjects that was extensively scrutinised in terms of this study, because it is undeniably an important factor in contemporary development. One of the important post-modern changes which were made to the general perception of knowledge as a concept, was the link that was made between knowledge and power. As post-modern theorist, the historian Michel Foucault (1926 - 1984), was directly concerned with power and legitimation. He analysed power by first looking at knowledge, thus establishing that knowledge was a system of thought that could become controlling. Its controls became socially legitimated and were therefore institutionalised (Appignanesi 1995: 82).

Foucault expanded on his original formulation of the concept regarding the power/knowledge interaction in the mid-1970s. He started to focus on the ways in which power moulds everyone involved in its exercise, also the victims of power, into various forms. Important for the discussion of the role of power and knowledge in the actor-oriented approach, one should note that Foucault showed:

how power and knowledge fundamentally depend on each other, so that the extension of one is simultaneously the extension of the other (Appignanesi 1995: 83).

True to form, Foucault, who often used the organisation of mental hospitals, gaols and other similar institutions as subjects for his studies, states further (1980) that the results of interdependence of power and knowledge will require - even create - for the sake of rationalism, social categories of the mad, criminal and deviant against which to define themselves (Appignanesi 1995: 82-83). However, these simplified references to the knowledge/power discourse as it is seen today, should not be accepted as the final word on either knowledge or power, or on the perceived relationship between the two. This is because both these concepts viz. power and knowledge, should never be reified: they should be accepted as factors that regularly adapt to circumstances and that they change as communities change. For the sake of this study, it is important to note that there is an undeniable and scientifically accepted relationship between knowledge and power. It could even be said that, in view of the perceived link between power and knowledge, there should be a correlation between the way in which knowledge/power relationships manifest themselves and the sort of influence that each unique knowledge/power relationship would have on any given social, political, economic or development issue to which it may be

aligned. It could be expected that any given power/knowledge combination will have its own unique sort of influence on the course of a given development cooperation intervention.

*Knowledge for Development* (World Bank 1998/99: 1) is in effect, to a large extent, covering the knowledge for development conundrum, seen from the World Bank's point of view. In doing so, the knowledge/power relationship is not mentioned but the focus falls on two types of knowledge instead, namely knowledge about technology and knowledge about attributes. However, it recognises, the fact that many other types of knowledge do exist as well.

Furthermore, two types of problem that are critical for development are also identified by the World Bank. These are 'how to narrow the knowledge gap' and 'how to address the information problems'. Where the Report deals with this, it recommends externally sourced or 'cargo' procedures (please refer to paragraph 4.2.5.6 for a discussion of the 'cargo approach' in development) to make knowledge available to developing countries.

According to the Report, knowledge thus transferred should be utilised in development, thereby creating a corps of actors to fulfil a specific role in future development cooperation projects and programmes. This projection seems to be acceptable but does not conform with the principles of the actor-oriented approach because the 'corps of actors' is supposed to be 'created' instead of being selected from the target communities. The concept of 'creating actors' remains a top-down approach. As will be explained in paragraph 4.2.5.6, the cargo approach is not compatible with the actor-oriented approach. This way of

transferring knowledge would therefore not be in line with the proposed approach. Such a concerted effort by the World Bank to focus on the people of developing countries came as an innovation but would possibly be more effective if undertaken along the lines of the actor-oriented approach.

The Report, nevertheless, contains many positive and worthwhile contributions that could be compatible with or informative for the actor-oriented approach. It also contains several references to the latest changes in the development paradigm and incorporates many new, although apparently untested, ideas in its discussions on the application of knowledge as a factor in development (World Bank 1998/99: Overview and Part One).

The validity of knowledge as an important factor in development cannot be denied, especially when one looks at it from the angle of an actor-oriented approach. This latter perspective will receive further attention in Chapter IV, sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9.

#### **2.4.2 Knowledge construction**

According to Long (2001: 240-243), knowledge construction takes place when new bases for understanding are generated. These are established at that stage where people or groups come to grips with the world around them through cognitive, emotional and organisational processes. They do this either on their own, or they integrate others' experiences and understandings into their lifeworlds or cultural repertoires in the process of knowledge construction. The results of knowledge construction can be constructive in the

sense that it brings about the combination of many decisions and selective incorporations of previous ideas, beliefs and values. However, it can, also be destructive in the sense that it may transform, disassemble or ignore other existing frames of conceptualisation and understanding (more specific information is available under section 4.2.8, especially par. 4.2.6.8).

From the above, it becomes clear that knowledge construction should be a much more endogenous approach to ensure the absorption of new understanding, than the ways suggested by the World Bank through which knowledge is brought as ‘cargo’ to a developing community, as explained in the previous paragraph.

### **2.4.3 Knowledge encounters**

Long (2001: 16) discusses the interesting phenomenon of knowledge encounters. In his view, they involve struggles in which actors or others aim to enrol people in their discourses or ‘projects’, trying to get them to accept their particular frames of meaning and attempting to win those people over to their points of view. He draws the conclusion that, if they succeed, the targeted group ‘delegates’ power to those that have come over. These struggles focus around the fixing of key points that have a controlling influence over the exchanges and attributions of meaning (including the acceptance or not, of reified notions such as authority).

### **2.4.4 Education as part of the knowledge paradigm**

The main reason why there is a need to look at education as part of the knowledge paradigm, is that there are different ways in which the transfer of knowledge is manifested within the development cooperation processes. According to the Compendium, compiled according to the instructions in Art. 20 of the Cotonou Agreement (2000), education and training are to be regarded as the most basic methods for knowledge transfer. Education and training is not the only substructure of knowledge transfer that will be dealt with, but is rather important. For the purpose of this discussion, training will be included where education is discussed. They will be regarded as being very similar branches of the same thing.

The premise that education of the people is a prerequisite for proper self-sustaining development is widely accepted, for instance, by scholars and practitioners of development cooperation and by the Compendium (2000: section 3.1, par. 82). Confirmation of this premise can also be gleaned from assessments, planning reports and evaluations made over the years by multilateral fora involved in development cooperation programmes, for instance, United Nations Development Programmes, World Bank Reports, OECD-DAC Reports, and European Union assessments of development in ACP countries. Whatever the reason may have been, formal education has not always been regarded as being sufficient and effective enough. This shortcoming was compensated for in development cooperation, by the (reified) concept of capacity building, which will be dealt with in more detail in the following paragraph. Education is not the only element that was applied in development cooperation in an attempt to transfer knowledge to people. Several other avenues, in

addition to capacity building, were explored in order to find the perfect way of getting a community completely prepared for changes that were about to come. The premise that an educational system can best be adapted to changed circumstances through the application of the actor-oriented approach, will be dealt with further in Chapters IV, VI and VII.

#### **2.4.5 Social learning**

In the period 1997 to 1999, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD (OECD - DAC 1997: 13) and the World Bank (World Development Report 1998/99) were jointly investigating 'knowledge' as a possible factor to improve development cooperation programmes. The DAC decided in 1997 on 'social learning' as a way to describe its newly developed methodology, whereas the World Bank concentrated on 'Knowledge about technology' and 'Knowledge about attributes' (World Bank 1998/99:1). The DAC's proposed method was seen as the channel through which countries that are not prepared to accept the responsibilities of partnership, could be placed in a situation in which some form of education could be made available to them for their more effective development: this is clearly a 'cargo' approach as discussed in par. 4.2.5.6. The DAC recommendation was that 'social learning' should be conveyed from the developed world to targeted groups: a confirmation of the 'cargo' approach mentioned earlier. The intention was to give support to participatory practices and capacity development, which should in turn be instrumental in fostering 'social learning' (OECD - DAC 1997: 13). The question arises immediately as to why this proposed method should be seen as being different from any other of the 'top-



down' approaches. It would be reasonable to expect something more in line with contemporary thinking to emanate from the DAC think tank in due course. The DAC recommendation to apply development in such a high-handed way originated in 1997 and since then, was probably put into practice in the majority of development schemes initiated by DAC countries. In other words, only a few years ago, the majority of developers still approached development by way of a 'top-down' and a 'cargo' approach, because the DAC recommended it. .

Fortunately, another and much more important approach, which is described by DAC as a 'paradigm shift' was also identified. According to their following rather positive observation:

The concept of 'people-centered participatory development' signals an important paradigm shift with some radical implications for the practice of development co-operation (OECD - DAC 1997: 17).

The paradigm shift became noticed around 1995 and was concretised in the DAC Development Co-operation Report of 1995. Apparently, the recognition of 'human capital and social capital as fundamental explanatory factors in the development process .....' (OECD - DAC 1997: 18), opened the way for the acceptance of 'social learning' as a way to help foster the emergence of competent societies through capacity building approaches. It went even further by identifying the following three inter-linked areas that should be concentrated on, namely:

- improving the functioning of the state;
- improving the functioning of the private sector;

improving the functioning of civil society.

The way in which the above three points have been phrased, tends to boil down to a list of things that have to be done by the developed nations, in other words, one could assume that each of the recommendations once again implies a top-down approach.

The DAC report goes one important step further. It focuses on the development agencies and institutions and intimates that there is a lot of learning and adaptation ahead for them because of the new focus on 'people-centered participatory development'. It criticises so-called designed solutions, often appearing in the form of blueprints. There was also reference to entrenched aid that caused constriction of the intellectual space available to local actors and which resulted in a disappointing show of initiative by them. The need was thus identified for active and overall stimulation of local performance, coupled with the generation of human capital and knowledge dissemination, as a possible turning point. At last, towards the end of the 20th century, the DAC was giving some attention to the benefits that could derive from a more pertinent focus on the human capital in developing countries. The actor-oriented approach definitely falls within this category.

Albert Hirschman explained his views on social learning some fifty years ago. These views were rejuvenated during the 1990s and put into a modern day context. The new version states that:

... social learning occurs when local actors adopt new ways of proceeding that generate a series of decision requirements, leading to 'instructive doing' and an improvement in performance over time (Rodwin, Lloyd and Schon, Donald A [eds.] 1994).

Whichever way one may look at the system of 'social learning', it has not become widely accepted. It has apparently not been put into extensive practice by multilateral development institutions or by the European Union. One does not want to denigrate the system of social learning. The question arises here whether sufficient attention was given, during the design of this new approach, to the needs for actor-orientation before its practical application. It would appear that this was not the case. Therefore, the feeling is that social education may well work if it is applied according to the broad designs of the actor-oriented approach.

#### **2.4.6 Capacity building**

Van Rooy (1998: 64) sees capacity building as a support mechanism for all sorts of development activities, and quotes a Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Report (1995) which gives a description of capacity building in a specific sector. It mentions capacity building for independent social, economic, and political analysis. However, the more interesting part of its description refers to the proposed methods for capacity building. It foresees that this will take place through training, technical assistance, participation in conferences and international networking. There does not seem to be much of a difference between capacity building and training or technical assistance (CIDA 1995). This blurring of definition usually happens when a concept becomes reified.

With regard to capacity building relating to civil society organisations, Robinson explains that:

... donor efforts aim to enhance the capacity of recipient organisations to mobilise resources, strengthen internal management and financial accountability, deliver services more efficiently, influence policy and network more effectively (Robinson 1996:10).

For the purpose of this discussion of capacity building, it has been decided to treat education, capacity building and all the other substructures as part of the overarching concept of knowledge transfer. If this is accepted as a viable statement, then one should also accept that empowerment can be generically related to the transfer of knowledge, because both education and capacity building have elements which could be aligned with the concept of empowerment, as it is being used in today's development discussions. The difference between them and empowerment is that they do not bring 'power' into the equation. More will be said about empowerment in par. 2.4.8.

Capacity building can also be a way to prepare people to play an efficient and able role in some or other trade or occupation, but this does not differ from 'training'. Such procedures carry a certain connotation of patronisation and convey the image of being a cut above education and training, purporting to be something more specific. It could also be said that capacity building has been invented as a descriptive (or populist) term, meant to add glitter to the concept of education and training. It was popularised and became one of the most common ways to describe the preparation of human resources for specific tasks in the

labour market. However, it basically still conveys the idea that capacity building is brought by the donor countries to a developing world - in other words a 'cargo' approach.

From own experience the author can vouch for the general perception that capacity building as the purported panacea for development is less effective than originally expected because the targeted people, whose capacity is supposed to be built, do not always respond in the expected way. Admittedly, however, it has happened that narrowly focused capacity building projects in some instances did help candidates to become proficient or competent in specific careers or jobs, even though this was undertaken by way of a top-down process.

Capacity building could not always be assimilated by the target communities in the way it was supposed to happen. Looking at a generalised capacity building, it boils down to a system of transferring new proficiencies to target communities in the developing world.

Why it did not remain 'training' is not easy to explain.

To summarise, capacity building appears to be something that superior people as a rule did for a group of inferiors, who did not have much to fall back on. It may therefore be argued that concepts such as enablement and empowerment have been introduced to development cooperation because of the failure of 'capacity building' to live up to the expectations of the time. Moreover, these alternative terms do not convey the image of handouts that are blatantly being given by the donor community to people in poor developing communities.

#### **2.4.7 Enablement**

The best way to explain enablement is to compare it to what is meant by empowerment.

Robert Barner (1994: 34), does not only describe enablement in this way, but he elaborates his explanation with a graphic illustration of what he calls the “*Empowerment Matrix*” in which enablement is given a succinct role. His definitions of empowerment and enablement are respectively as follows:

Empowering people typically refers to the process of shifting power and authority or helping people get in touch with their own personal power: and  
enabling people involves helping them develop the competencies they need to manage additional power and autonomy (Barner 1994: 34).

(Note the patronising approach and the similarity with capacity building, especially in the definition of enablement.)

Barner sees enablement as the position in which a person may find himself just before he has been introduced to his own personal power (empowered in one way or another). In other words, according to the matrix, he will be in number three of the following three possible positions:

Entrenched in a bunker;

A loose cannon; or

A caged eagle.

When entrenched in a bunker, a person will be in a position where he lacks both power and competence. He becomes a loose cannon because he has become empowered without having been properly enabled. The third position, that of the caged eagle, is the one in

which the person has had maximum enablement but has not been given the chance (been empowered) to utilise his abilities fully. The fourth block in the matrix is full empowerment. This means that a person has reached the optimum level of competency in managing power and autonomy, and has also reached a high level in utilising his personal and organisational powers. Barner (1994), uses this matrix to substantiate his views that enablement should be regarded as an important prerequisite for empowerment.

Enablement is not mentioned as often as empowerment in development literature and one can therefore assume that Barner's theory of enablement as a stepping stone to get to empowerment is not widely accepted in practical development processes.

#### **2.4.8 Empowerment**

Barner's definition of empowerment, which defines empowerment as a process of shifting power and authority or of helping people to get in touch with their own personal powers, and other aspects of empowerment, have already been dealt with in the previous section under 'Enablement' (par. 2.4.7). In another discussion, Friedmann (1996), tackles an explanation of the term 'empowerment' by separating the concept 'power' from the rest of the word. He explains that power in the sense of empowerment does not refer to the oppression of others or the infliction of pain. It should be seen as a benign form of power. It refers to the capacity (power) of a person, such as being able to read and write, which in turn can contribute to the person's ability to be and to act empowered. Friedmann (1996) states that he uses the term 'empowerment' mainly to focus on the power that enables

people to help themselves. Presently it seems as if empowerment is accepted in development cooperation programmes and designs, as a factor which is of importance for success. Should the actor-oriented approach be accepted as a factor which can be used in development cooperation projects, the position of empowerment as a solution could be contested. Reasons for this statement will follow. But because of this, it will be necessary to pursue the investigation into empowerment into more detail than was the case with the other elements of knowledge discussed above.

As a point of departure, one will have to establish whether there is a generic relation between empowerment and knowledge, as was accepted in the case of education and capacity building. Then it will be necessary to make an in-depth analysis of the meaning of empowerment.

The recently identified paradox which could encumber the empowerment concept (Wendt 2001: 124-126), is the first aspect which deserves attention because, if this paradox can be substantiated, then development cooperation bodies would do well to reassess the continued value of empowerment for development issues. To return to Wendt's rather critical observations about empowerment as a phenomenon in the developed world (2001: 124-126), two of his examples are quoted:

Firstly, he mentions that teachers are generally being empowered by their institutions to build teams, to become proficient in newly designed assessment tools and to make solid contributions to improve the educational system. All these functions seem to be relevant



and laudable until one asks the question whether the same teachers should not primarily be empowered to teach and research. The mere fact that such a question arises, offers sufficient reason to doubt the purported value of this vague concept, popularly described as 'empowerment'.

Secondly, on a more practical level, one should agree that it often occurs that teachers, lecturers and professors lack the time to deal with the special needs of their disempowered students. The system tends to demand that they should rather deal with other so-called priorities, such as a new image and philosophy on campus, or a new administrative assessment tool called continuous quality improvement (Wendt 2001: 124-126).

In the first example, the empowerment of teaching staff seems to miss the actual target of education. One could therefore easily empower whole groups into wrong directions. Seen from another angle, empowerment (along with enablement and capacity building), conveys the feeling that it is being driven from external sources which makes it, from its inception, an exogenous initiative with less chance of success than endogenously designed initiatives.

The second example reveals an illusion that is often created in educational bodies, namely that every teacher is actively involved with, and prioritises empowerment of his/her students, especially the disempowered ones.

As shown by the above examples, the paradox of empowerment exists, *inter alia*, in the fact that, contrary to the generally accepted need for the encouragement of endogenous development processes, it is frequently being applied by way of an external or top-down approach. Empowerment as a concept signifies that people are being empowered by external forces - this is the perception that is conveyed by the majority of places where the concept is used. In addition, even though empowerment may be well-intentioned, it often misses the mark and creates skewed or disappointing results, as is made clear in the second example above. Finally, empowerment seems to have become a reified term and is used as a populist cliché. It is often seen as a commodity because of its inclusion in agreements, programmes and projects, which appear to be an attempt to prove that the donor organisation is in favour of a people-oriented approach. A description of how empowerment should be undertaken could not be found in any of the related books, publications, reports or planning documents that were consulted. Apparently, the question of how empowerment should be brought into effect has not really been answered by all those organisations who purport to be in favour of empowerment..

In spite of the criticism above, there still appears to be some merit in such concepts as empowerment, enablement, capacity building and social learning. However, a condition should be that each concept is explained in terms of how it should be achieved and what it should actually entail. A definite effort should also be made to assess the description of such a concept in terms of the possible reified image thereof. Taking note of the versatile solutions offered by the actor-oriented approach could also be a consideration in assessing

the validity of these concepts. The possibility exists that each one of these concepts could be used fruitfully in a specific role whilst the actor-oriented approach is being practised.

## **2.5 Civil society**

Civil society is regarded as potentially important, depending on the outcome of this research. It will therefore be discussed again in relation to its role during an actor-oriented approach in the chapter that deals with findings and conclusions (Chapter VII). Meanwhile, it should suffice to describe civil society briefly as follows:

It could be seen as a highly heterogeneous collective of people which fills the void between the State and the private sector. Whilst civil society is a concept which is difficult to define, it would perhaps be helpful to state for the purpose of this study that civil society could also be described as a composite of non-State and non-profit groups including people or groups with agency. It could also be seen as a social interface, existing in the void between the private sector and the State. For a more detailed discussion of civil society in its many forms, please also refer to Van Rooy (1998: 6-30).

Civil society should be considered as a possible point of departure from where the actor-oriented approach could be launched, but it would never be able to act as an actor in its own right. In fact, Hindness observes that one should refrain from identifying,

... collectivities, agglomerates or social categories that have no discernible way of formulating or carrying out decisions... (1986:115).

with the concept of actor. Civil society as an amorphous body, will not be able to have agency, although many institutions or organisations and other groups within it will have agency in their own right. These then, are also the most likely places where proper actors will be found. Civil society as a concept has the additional advantage of fast establishing a global network with ever-increasing and global improvement of coordination and cooperation, mostly due to the fast-growing communications and linkage systems based on technological progress. Civil society exists, but whether it is capable of playing the big role that contemporary development agencies expect of civil society participation, still remains to be seen.

## **2.6 Does “sustainability” convey the right meaning when applied to development cooperation?**

It is a widely accepted fact that the word “sustainability” is predominantly used when dealing with matters pertaining to environmental conservation (Adams 1993:207). It is often stated that environmental programmes must be sustainable because future generations also have a right to the environment as we know it today. Sustainability means that all the attributes of a particular environment should be preserved for future generations. It tends to refer to the resources that are at our disposal and the conservation thereof to ensure that they are sustained as far as possible and not ruthlessly destroyed.

The perpetuation of development programmes must also be considered in the same sense. It is true that they can not be sustained, because they have been created by man and have not been handed down to man as natural resources. One should rather see their perpetuation as a self-

sustaining issue, in that those involved are expected to prevent the demise of the project or programme or whatever has been built up by way of development cooperation or otherwise. Should the responsible people therefore not be able to sustain the relevant acquisition, development cooperation donors will gradually lose their enthusiasm regarding the provision of development funds. Reference to self-sustainability of development projects becomes even more relevant because it tends to put the onus for sustaining them on the human resources that are driving the relevant programmes or projects. At this level, self-sustaining principles will have to be engendered to ensure the perpetuation of the efforts. Because the human factor is involved here, matters revolving around ways in which self-sustenance can be achieved are relevant to the general theme of this study.

In this study and in view of the above, preference is given to the term 'self-sustaining development', where it refers to the perpetuation of development cooperation in some way or another.

## **2.7 Conclusions**

Instruments devised in the post-impasse era, and which will be utilised in this study, are discussed because each one of them will be applied during the course of this study. Therefore, explanatory notes of what is meant by deconstruction, ethnographic procedures and the changing of the explanandum, have been included.

The actor-oriented approach forms the most important section of this chapter. Without discussing the ramifications of an actor-oriented approach, endeavours were made to lay a sound foundation consisting of definitions and/or discussions of core concepts that will be encountered in the in-depth discussion of the actor-oriented approach. Some concepts may be standard and self-explanatory, but others are derived from post-modern thinking. Agency is one example that should be studied carefully because of its special role *vis-à-vis* the actor-oriented approach. The same applies to the concept of discourse that became part of the post-modern vocabulary towards the end of the previous century and which will be used extensively regarding actor-oriented proposals.

A discussion of some of the various generic forms of knowledge form a separate section of this chapter, because all these configurations of knowledge are important to note in a study dealing with development in general and with the actor-oriented approach in particular. It is surprising to note in how many real as well as assumed ways, or objective as well as reified ways, knowledge can be presented. This will be proved in Chapter IV, sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9, which elaborate even further on the topic of knowledge.

Civil society is dealt with because it is felt that civil society could have some form of compatibility with the actor-oriented approach, which will be dealt with in later chapters of this study. It also receives attention because civil society participation is frequently used on occasions like compiling development cooperation documents, addressing meetings and conferences, and planning conferences. The analysis of the Cotonou Agreement in Chapter V

will give ample illustration of this phenomenon.

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## CHAPTER III

### A broad overview of development theory

#### **3.1 What is development?**

The most satisfactory answer to this question would be one that is the least patronising. For instance, one could say that development is the purposeful application by a group of people (or an individual for that matter) of newly available knowledge to improve their lifestyle and personal abilities.

Arthur Lewis (1977), who assessed development from the angle of the modernisation school, is quite close to the above description when he sees development as “a transition to modern forms of production and economic behaviour”. He could, however, have laid more emphasis on the role of the people and the role of knowledge acquisition as factors in development.

Singer (1975: 36), also from the modernisation school, defines development as “growth plus change”. Seen separately, the concepts growth and change can both be classified as modernisation theses. The omission of the human element in this definition reflects the way in which the modernisation theorists were inclined to think and deflects from contemporary theories. It is also impossible to have growth without change. Seen in this context the definition, in effect, explains nothing.



Herschlag (1984:34), discusses economic growth and refers to cases in which an organic link is made between growth and change. In this context, he refers to Loehr and Powelson who find that:

economic growth also implies changes in social structure, income redistribution, a redistribution of political power and a certain degree of political stability, formation of human capital, institutional and cultural transformation, and all this is a dialectical process, full of conflict (1977: 33-34).

This quotation is not only published here because it is in conformance with the statement in paragraph one, but also because it mentions the direct reference to ‘the dialectical process, full of conflict’ that may result from development initiatives or, as they put it, from ‘economic growth’. The same reactions could be expected from development approaches, such as the actor-oriented method or an intensive drive to improve knowledge in a community. For once, the actors in development have received some indirect attention. One refers here to the fact that the foreseen conflict could sprout from a resistance to change; from power shuffles; or from leadership struggles of some sorts. These are aspects in which people play the major role and therefore the assumption that the above reference to the ‘dialectical process, full of conflict’ could indirectly be referring to the people’s role in development.

Schuurman (1993: 26), explains that, according to Lummis (1991: 31-66), the term ‘development’ contains a number of metaphors, some of which could lead to evolutionary, universal and/or reductionist interpretations. The first metaphor refers to making something visible which is latently present, as if a positive print is made of a negative. The existing system that came about as a result of economic development in industrialised societies is the positive print. In

developing countries this image of a developed system could be latently present (as a negative).

This latent image can only be turned into reality through a number of actions, such as a successful development policy.

This explanation may seem interesting but is far off the mark when it comes to the inclusion of the human factor in development. Lummis prefers to talk about systems and images, which leave the people who are part of systems and images completely out of the discussion.

Another semantic metaphor presented by Lummis, is the interpretation of a literal process.

When something, for instance a flower, develops, it unfurls and becomes visible piece by piece.

Meanwhile, what is slowly becoming visible has, however, already been embedded in the structure (the 'genes'). Lummis believes that the development process could therefore be regarded as genetically fixed. The speed of unfurling is seen as the determining factor.

In this second metaphor, Lummis compares the development process to a genetic one. When reading between the lines, one can only assume that the genes mentioned by him, are seated in the development process and not in any living structure. He repeats in his explanation the regular pre-impasse mistake of leaving the actual people who stand to be developed, out of the equation (Schuurman 1993: 26-27).

These two metaphorical presentations of development are nonetheless included here because of their graphic explanations of development.

Spiritual and cultural renewal could, according to Paul Ekins (1995: 194), also be seen as cornerstones of progress and development. Ekins perceives economic development as a cultural rather than a technical process and mentions two examples: one relating to village life and community sustainability (a cultural objective) and the other to divine service (a spiritual activity). The statement that economic development should be perceived as a cultural, rather than a technical process conveys a typical post-impasse notion which is similar to the actor-oriented approach in that it acknowledges the role of the human being in development. Furthermore, the reference to community stability and divine service by Ekins is in some form or another picked up and elaborated on by Norman Long where he deals with the actor-oriented approach.

Then again, the UN defined development for the purposes of the *Agenda for Development* and stated that development entails:

the improvement of the quality of life, the eradication of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, the provision of adequate shelter, securing employment for all, and protecting the integrity and sustainable use of the environment (1996:1).

This is a handy definition constructed by people who are less theoretical and more directly involved in development work. Unfortunately, the slant of the above list of what should be attended to, is mainly a summary of the people's state of disempowerment. A more direct and a lesser implied top-down approach to the various aspects of development, would have aligned the definition much more with contemporary thinking on development.

The actor-oriented approach may prove, once this study is completed, that there is no reason why one should define development in such a negative way. The actors in development will possibly be impressed by a more positive approach. More attention will be given to this statement in the last chapter, dealing with findings and conclusions.

The predominantly exogenous angle of incidence of practical and theoretical development inputs has caused - and still causes - the theory of development and its underlying philosophy of some thirty years, to remain rather subjective in the exogenous direction. Herschlag (1984: 9), describes this phenomenon by pointing out that those who are involved in the improvement of the lot of disempowered people, are usually living in comfort far away from the places where the need for development is identified. This gives rise to a sort of 'armchair' development strategy that is often more ideological than practical. Often, where leaders in developing countries have achieved a degree of success in endogenous development, recognition of their importance was either short-lived or was confined to their own country.

### **3.2 Modernisation: an important factor in development theory**

Modernisation is a rather broad term which, for example, includes Marxism, neomarxism, the dependency theory and others, according to Schuurman (1993: 6). Postmodernism will also be dealt with later, but at this stage it should already be stated that modernism, modernisation or modernity, did not stop where postmodernism started. Cross-fertilisation between all these thought patterns results in ongoing change, inter alia, of development thinking. Information society, globalisation and similar factors cause elements of all these thought patterns and more, to bring great influence to bear on one another. The resulting changes can obviously not be overlooked. For greater clarity on terminology that is used in this study, Frans Schuurman's

briefing on 'modernity' and how it differs from 'modernism', is discussed in his contribution to *'Beyond the Impasse'*. Schuurman makes use of the work of Boyne and Rattansi (1990) to address the differences between the concept of modernity as against that of modernism. In short, modernity is described by them as an adventurous transformation of oneself and the world which has the risk of destroying traditions. They add that modernity:

... unites by cutting across class, region, and ideology and yet disintegrates through incessant change, contradiction and ambiguity (Boyne and Rattansi 1990:2).

It is also maintained that modernity can either be a 'progressive union of scientific objectivity' or 'politico-economic rationality ... ' (Boyne & Rattansi 1990:5)

Modernism, on the other hand, is:

[preoccupied] with highlighting the means of representation, the disruption of narrative, and the contradiction and fragmentation in subjectivity and identity ... (Boyne & Rattansi 1990: 8)

Modernism is further known for its constant critique of modernity. It could, for instance, never subscribe to:

... any simplistic beliefs in the progressive capacity of science and technology ... nor did it hold with positivism and the idea of the integrated individual subject ... (Boyne & Rattansi 1990: 8)

These distinctive substructures of the modernisation theory are mentioned to illustrate how broad the parameters are in which modernisation is moving. Cases are quoted by Schuurman of instances in which, for example:

... post-modern inspired scientific interpretations of new social movements on the one hand and the [modernisation] discourses of new social movements themselves on the other hand (1993: 190-191),

manifest a disjunctive discourse. The crosscutting influences of postmodernism on modernity, modernism and/or the modernisation theory (and vice versa) are demonstrated, and serves to confirm that the transition from the modernisation theory to postmodernism is gradual and the one is strongly influencing the other.

To say that the modernisation theory is wholly responsible for the woes of development cooperation, would be a blatant exaggeration. However, aspects of the modernisation theory have had a definite influence on policies such as structuralisation and the application of the systems theory, as well as the inability to observe important developmental factors such as heterogeneity, gender and environmental degradation.

### **3.3 Development theory in historical perspective**

The Report of the 1995 World Summit of the United Nations (1999: 3) on “*Participatory Approaches to Poverty Alleviation in Rural Community Development*” starts off its introduction by referring to the necessity of a review of the policy literature from the 1960s onwards. This review reveals a clear evolution in the definition of development, and, hence, in the direction and content of standard approaches to development. A sequence of gradual steps is presented, which makes it clear that the concept of development is becoming increasingly inclusive and is moving progressively closer to the poorest of the poor. According to this research, the 1960s view of development was mainly seated in the acceleration of economic growth. Infrastructural improvement became the focus of the 1970s although some social structures were gradually included. The need to utilise ‘appropriate technology’, adapted to the needs and abilities of every individual country, was also mooted in this period. It states that the

aim should be to go beyond simply labour intensive development and to involve equipment and methods which have a technical level commensurate with the resource/skill context of the people in the target country (United Nations World Summit 1999:3). Maintaining a healthy balance between environmental care and development was becoming a major concern during the 1980s. The concept of 'sustainability' became popular in environmental discussions and should rather not be utilised in development discussions as well (see para. 2.6 above). To distinguish between the environmental use of sustainability and the attempts by development practitioners to ensure that a project will be maintained by the beneficiaries, it is recommended that such actions should be described as self-sustaining. This expression is descriptive of the process in which the donor withdraws from a project and leaves the responsibility of maintaining it to the local beneficiaries. Locals will take full responsibility for sustaining the project, in other words it will become self-sustaining.

Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 7) gave a graphic illustration of the different meanings which were given to development over time (see table on page 2 above). This table could also serve well as an illustration of the progress in development thinking over the years. It could therefore serve as a concise and useful historical backgrounder because it renders a portrait of the perspectives and meanings that were accorded to development in specific periods of history since the 1850s. The more relevant history of development is that of the years after World War II - say from 1950 onwards. This is where the modernisation theory kicks in and takes root to such an extent that it still, to a large extent, dominates development thinking. The prevailing tendency was to have everything modernised and, more often than not, according to the American

example. Therefore, any improvement or development in developing countries just had to be aligned with modern trends. These changes, usually applauded as being real development, were often to the detriment of indigenous cultures and religions. The following decade did not give rise to much more on the development front than the dependency theory with its Marxist and neomarxist inclinations. It was developed in - and stayed in - the geographical area of the Latin Americas. It emphasised the importance of accumulation to ensure the independence of developing countries from the industrial giants. It was in favour of self-help of the smaller nations in order to make them less dependent on the leaders of the industrialised world. The dependency theory is, in actual fact, out and out in favour of independence for developing countries and establishing an autocentric economy for each of them. Alternative development was the next step which brought a rather radical change to the development theory and came to fruition from the 1970s onwards. In this period, more attention was given to 'people in development' and a clear severance of ties with the modernisation theory became visible. It was further enhanced in the following decade with a welcome search for human related solutions; inter alia capacity building, empowerment and enlargement of people's choices. Human development became an acceptable developmental theory but had difficulties in its practical applications, as will be demonstrated in several chapters below. The 1980s were also influenced by neoliberal thinking and fresh attention was given to purported solutions such as structural adjustment, deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation on the economic and financial fronts.



Where the progressive stages of the development theory have reached the cynical stage of 'post-development', some degree of understanding will be required before one could acknowledge that even this way of thinking does have some merit. Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 99) states that "along with 'anti-development' and 'beyond development', post-development is a radical reaction to the dilemmas of development". Post-development could be described as a negative reaction to the series of failures and the lack of real dramatic progress of development cooperation since its inception. The following viewpoints explain post- development thinking:

Development is rejected because it is the 'new religion of the West' (Rist 1990a), it is the 'imposition of science as power' (Nandy 1988), 'it does not work' (Kothari 1988), it means 'cultural Westernisation and homogenisation' (Constantino 1985), and brings environmental destruction (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 99)

To compound the negativism of the post-developmentalists, Dasgupta (1985) purports that post-development starts out from a basic realisation, namely that attaining a middle-class lifestyle for the majority of the world population is impossible, and that in his view, this has led in time to a position of total rejection of development.

Nederveen Pieterse further refers to the term 'creative destruction' which was coined by Marx and then later used by Schumpeter. His notion is that in post-development, all that is left of 'creative destruction' is destruction. 'What remains of the power of development is only the destructive power of social engineering' (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 110) He regrets, together with Goulet (cf. Goulet 1992), the disappearance of the recognition that should be given to 'the creativity of developmental change'.

Post-development exists, but in the research for this study no proof could thus far be found of any positive contribution which post-development thinking had made to contemporary development thinking.

In accordance with post-development the influence of post-structuralism, and especially post-modern perspectives on development, deserve some serious scrutiny. So, as far as postmodernism in development is concerned, the following deserves to be mentioned:

In different ways, orientations such as existensialism; new institutional economics and rational choice; public choice and capability; and feminism, imply a shift in emphasis away from structuralist views. Institutional and agency-oriented views have become predominant, or put differently, a change took place from deterministic to interpretative thinking (cf. Bauman 1992 on the changing role of the intellectual from legislator to interpreter) and 'from materialist and reductionist views to multidimensional and holistic views' (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 11). In the same sense, the shift from structuralism to constructivism, is noteworthy in the investigation of the origins of post-modern thinking. Nederveen Pieterse (ibid.) explains that it could also mean that an account of social realities as determined and patterned by macro-structures, could then become an account of social realities as being socially constructed. He goes one step further in explaining postmodernism:

Out of the implosion of linear, futurist discourses postmodernism has emerged. Initially a movement in art, architecture and literature, postmodernism stresses ambiguity, indeterminacy, irreverence and deconstruction. It

indicates historical and semantic instability. As a social philosophy it may be regarded as the cultural expression of post-industrial or information society (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 32).

The influence of post-modern thinking on developmentalism (or development per sé) is that it tends towards mere recapitulation of the inherent factors, instead of exploding them as they are usually to be found, namely in a sequence of preindustrial, industrial and post-industrial stages. In reality, all that has happened was that recapitulation took place on a different plane. What is actually required is that postmodernism involves itself also in areas outside the Western framework. The relevance of post-modern considerations of developing countries and the non-Western world, will only become serious when perceptions of these areas will no longer contain the belief that the countries of the South are generally still in the throes of modernisation, as either industrialising or preindustrial entities. When utilising post-modern theories in developmental questions, one should keep in mind that:

Postmodernism is a Western deconstruction of Western modernism and to address the problem of developmentalism more is required. What matters most and comes across least in many analyses of development discourse is the complexity and 'holism' of Western developmentalism. Developmentalism is not merely a policy of economic and social change, or a philosophy of history. It reflects the ethos of Western culture and is intimately intertwined with Western history and culture (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 32)

Furthermore, the effects of poststructuralism on development thinking also deserve some attention, especially because of the link between poststructuralism and discourses, and the important role of discourses and their analyses in the application of the actor-oriented approach. Under the influence of poststructuralism, the tendency to treat matters such as development as

story, narrative or text has become part and parcel of methodology (cf. Wendt 2001: 142 - 144). This method is being used in discourse analysis as well. In addition, the value of ethnography in social research and establishing intervention methods can not be over stressed. This methodology also carries elements of poststructuralism, especially where it is used to get the best possible 'narrative' of a community. Ethnographic methods are also based on obtaining narratives from individuals, groups or organisations about their views on matters. This culminates in a compound narrative which is, as a rule, not far removed from the objective picture. Whether ethnographic research is done by economists, psychologists, engineers or bureaucrats, is of academic importance because, if the right procedures are followed - which should emphasise the narrative method - the results should be such that an actor-oriented approach could be partially based on them (also see section 4.2 below). Poststructuralism tends to be 'anti-political' at times. Norman Long makes an important point regarding poststructuralism, which, according to him, was partially manifested in the 'explosion of postmodernist writing and the emergence of less doctrinaire "post-structuralist" forms of political economy' (2001: 16). His footnote to this statement is of importance because it sheds light on poststructuralist thinking, as seen from the economists' angle. He refers to the *Editorial Policy Statement* in the first edition (1996) of a new journal called *New Political Economy*. In this piece, a clear line is drawn between 'old style' political economy and the 'new style' political economy. The first refers to a general concern with analysis of the relationship between state and market spheres, whereas the second 'aims at a more integrated and global analysis of variations in the wealth and poverty of regions, sectors, classes and states' (Long 2001: 246-47) Change in policy direction already becomes noticeable when one studies the above quote

only. To assess the real contribution of poststructural thinking, for instance, to economic, social and development thinking, recent publications such as *New Political Economy* could be consulted.

An example of poststructural influences on development thinking and policy is the report of the Social Summit of 1995, which focused on the fact that poverty alleviation can only succeed if the poorest of the poor are also drawn into development programmes: not only as targets or beneficiaries, but importantly also as full participants in the process of development design and delivery as well as in the process of political decision making. Although it was limited and narrowly focused, the concept of actor-orientation was mooted here in a limited way, but its relevancy was never denied. In another way, a specific group of potential actors was defined and gradually became integrated into development policies as potential actors who deserved special attention. This refers to gender issues, when gender became intricately interwoven with the general development theories and the focus started to fall on the potential role of women in development. The publication further purports that, since the Social Summit of 1995:

development policies and projects that address urban needs without addressing rural needs or that include capital projects but fail to recognize the importance of people-centred, income- and employment-generating projects are not considered to be sound, nor are those that do not specifically address the special needs of women, that create economic wealth at the cost of environmental damage, or that exclude the poorest of the rural poor as full participants - regardless of how much GDP per capita is increased or how many miles of roadway are built.”

(United Nations World Summit 1999:3)

It is now incumbent upon the development institutions to ensure that substantial guidelines on how the above-mentioned objectives should be put into practice are made available to the practitioners. The actor-oriented approach is a possible instrument to use to realise this aim.

### **3.3.1 The impasse**

Mention has been made in previous pages of the impasse in research work regarding the theory of development. The occurrence of the impasse is placed by Schuurman (1993: 2) and others in a period somewhere between 1980 and 1992. In most of the reference works that were consulted during this study, the impasse is mentioned, and often discussed by a large number of post-impasse authors, who seem to agree on the period mentioned above. On the other hand, the post-impasse publications, conference reports, minutes of discussions and research works of the EU and UN/Bretton Woods institutions, strangely enough, very seldom referred to this phenomenon.

According to Johann Graaff (Coetzee and Graaff (eds.)1996: 246), the debate surrounding the impasse was triggered by an article by David Booth, followed by his contribution in Schuurman (1993) and the book which he edited himself in 1994 (Booth 1994). Graaff maintains that:

much of the debate around “the impasse” has not been so much about the virtues or mistakes of particular theories, but rather about the way in which these theories conduct argument (ibid.).

Graaff concludes the paragraph by stating that the purported crisis in development theory is not what it seems to be. It should rather be seen as a reflection ‘of a long-standing and widespread debate in the social sciences (247). Whatever the case may be, there is a distinct difference in development thinking as it was practised during the 1980s and that of

the following decade. Furthermore, Graaff makes the point that post-modern logic does not allow for the concept of an 'impasse'. Therefore, there would also be no possibility of going 'beyond' the impasse.

Herschlag (1984: 3) commented on the impasse in 1984, while it was still continuing, and included facts which were indicative of his particular insight into the academic mood of the time regarding development theory. Even at this early stage, he identified the impasse as the period during which researchers were putting an unhealthy emphasis on their respective efforts to shatter images and concepts. His finding is that the energy thus expended should rather be used to undertake diverse studies of the practical issues. Long (2001:1-5), confirms this broad early view on the impasse where he states that some scholars busied themselves excessively during the impasse with developing and analysing structural and generic theories of development. Others focused on the construction of various forms of determinism, linearity, and institutional hegemony which they tried to integrate into conclusions. Long also remarks that it was not unusual to find structural and generic theories that ignored the human factor. Instead, more external factors such as conditions, contexts and 'driving forces' of social life were being developed and defended at length. He therefore supports Herschlag's observation, in which the latter mentions that the academic time and effort could be put to better use if the scholars would concentrate more on the practical side of development. So both saw a more practical approach as a possible route which should have been followed to get the researchers out of the doldrums of an impasse. Norman Long is also in agreement with Schuurman (1993:10), in that he contends that such a practical approach could, in fact, have provided the world with analyses that would have

facilitated the ongoing development processes much better, and would possibly have rendered more tangible results at a crucial time (please see the next paragraph for a more detailed discussion of Schuurman's comments on the impasse). It is as if the constant debating and criticism levelled at one another by ideological counterparts did not inaugurate any new thinking and consequently not much new or constructive came from this era. The general field of research seemed to be hovering in a theoretical vacuum (the impasse), with very few useful findings emanating from it.

Finally, in his discussion of the impasse, Long (2001:1-5) gives an interesting perspective to the ways in which theoretical and methodological issues were studied at the time. Self-help and endogenous initiatives which were practised by people from all backgrounds and the transforming effects of these actions on the social landscape were comfortably ignored. Looking at this comment as well as Schuurman's, one could safely conclude that people-oriented development theory was not frequently considered in the pre-impasse era, neither during the impasse itself. On the other hand, Nederveen Pieterse (2001), places the start of alternative development in the 1970s, and calculates the time when it was succeeded by 'human development', as being somewhere in the following decade. This becomes clear when one studies table 1.1 on p. 2 above.

During this study a few exceptions were found where early identification of human development necessities was possible, such as in the publications of Bertha Turner (1988),



Paul Ekins (1986), Turner (1977) and Bosman (1972). Most of these are discussed below where they are duly signposted as being exceptional.

Whereas the previous descriptions of the impasse mainly centre on the theoretical aspects, Schuurman (1993:10) identified a number of issues which were proof of practical neglect which occurred during the impasse. He felt that the theoretical vacuum (the impasse), could be blamed for the fact that several practical applications of development strategies were hampered over a period of more than one decade. Herschlag (1984) and Long (2001) would agree because they both mention the high theoretical content of the impasse debates. Herschlag even mentions that the same energy and time could have been better used if more attention had been paid to the practical problems of development. Unlike Herschlag and Long, Schuurman (1993:10) concentrates more on the practical examples of what should have been given more attention by the development scholars in those years. He mentions several examples such as the increasing gap between rich and poor; the inability of developing countries to keep up with global development; the world-wide environmental damage caused by economic growth; the demise of socialist doctrines as the redeemers of the developing world, and how to handle globalisation.

Because the impasse is history, the references to it in this study mainly point at the cross-roads where a global paradigm shift shocked the development scholars into reality and forced them to face up to the increasing challenges of an involuntarily renewed development paradigm. The post-impasse era is also marked by increasing post-modern influences on

development thinking which, in turn, led to a considerable renewal in the basic approach to the development theory. The actor-oriented approach is but one example where a host of post-modern notions and techniques such as discourse analysis, ethnography, heterogeneity, agency, deconstruction and others, could be fruitfully applied.

### **3.3.2 Pre-impasse development theory**

If it is true that the post-impasse era can be distinguished by a host of post-modern influences on the development paradigm, then the converse should also hold water. This is namely that the early pre-impasse era was mainly subjected to modernisation and related theories, which it clearly reflects in many policy structures and practical approaches. A certain amount of post-modern theories did, however, have an influence on pre-impasse development thinking, for instance that of Laclau (1971), whose contribution will be discussed below.

The modernisation theory has been touched on under par. 3.2 above, where it was mentioned that it, as such, is difficult to define. However, it can be broadly explained as the thrust behind all innovation that emerged where a technologically less advanced community came into contact with a technologically more advanced culture. Appignanesi (1995:11), mentions that new technology, like internal combustion engines, electric power and energy and air travel, are distinctive features of modernism. On the terrain of the mass media and entertainment, issues such as advertising, radio and TV, cinema and the printed media were also signposts of modernism. In the scientific era contributions such as genetics,

psychology, radioactivity, the quantum theory, splitting of the atom and Einstein's theory of relativity were all in their own way contributing factors to modernism. Post-modern thinking was, broadly seen, either built upon the foundations of some parts of the modernisation theory, or found its rationale in the total rejection of other modernisation theories. For this reason, a discussion of modernisation theories is important. Development cooperation, as we know it today, originated in the period of modernism. Therefore all the theories that will be discussed under this section that is dealing with the pre-impasse era, are effectively influenced by, or derived from modernisation thinking. It is further also useful to remember that postmodernist thinking, in the same way, is basically carrying the genes of the modernisation theory.

Schuurman (1993) states that the early development theory (1950s onward), in this case formulated by the eurocentrically based Marxist approach, conveyed the notion that, according to capitalist countries (the core), their reason for imperialism's existence was manifested in the capitalist countries' search for markets where cheap resources would ensure the profits of the core. This Marxist notion reflects a very naive but thoroughly political approach. The human factor is once again neglected and, in common with the general practice of the pre-impasse period, the notion was built around abstracts like 'the core'. Political designs, such as denigrating capitalism and accusing the core countries of using cheap labour for their own selfish gain, were part of the politics of the time.

In contrast to this, the neo-Marxist development theory:

... looks at imperialism from the perspective of the peripheral countries, studying the consequences on the periphery of imperialist penetration (Schuurman 1993:10).

It is important to note here that the 'core' is no longer the point of departure. The periphery now attracts the attention and broad attention is focused on the developmental problems of the 'periphery' - also known as the developing world. Some credit should be given to this innovative and objective endeavour to focus on the developing countries for a change. Seen from the contemporary perspective, the actual value of this theory lies in its objective to study the problems of the developing countries from their own perspective. It is an almost ethnographic approach.

Apart from the above, the neo-Marxist development theory is known for having initiated studies into the import substitution strategy. This line of thought became popular because of several historical events of the time, such as consistent crises in Latin America. The origins of these studies are interesting because they were primarily initiated by South American scholars, for instance Cardoso (1970) and Frank (1969), who were of the neo-Marxist conviction. Import substitution thus developed into the dependency theory and the theory held sway, especially in South America, for several years. The developers of the dependency theory had a sympathetic ear among Latin American developmentalists or the *dependentistas*, as the supporters of the dependency theory called themselves. The strategy formulated in this respect, was based on the self-help concept for developing countries (the periphery), which were encouraged to limit their imports and to become self-sufficient in their domestic production. The theory was eventually dropped, although the proponents of "Another Development", supported by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation,

still maintain that each society should primarily rely on its own strength and its own natural and cultural environment. This form of self-reliance may work because it acquires its full meaning only if rooted at local level, in the praxis of each community. From there it should, according to 'another development' be extended to the national and international (collective self-reliance) levels.

The *dependentistas* were, however, soon criticised by some modernisation theorists. One group (Ray 1973: 4-21; von Albertini 1980: 42-52; and Bairoch 1980:29-41), maintained that the dependency theory did not contain sufficient empirical evidence to support the dependency thesis, namely that 'differences in degree of dependency were causally related to differences in economic development (Schuurman 1993: 6).

In tandem with the gradually accepted post-modern lines of thought, Laclau (1971: 19-38), came out against the *dependentistas*. He started to concentrate on production methods, a line of approach which was focused on all the possible lines of production, even in the domestic situation, which Friedmann (1996) explored further. Before Friedmann, Laclau's cue was taken up by French anthropologists, Philippe Rey (1971) and Claude Meillassoux (1981: vii, x, 39-40, 87-88), who identified the necessity for dependency theorists to pay more attention to spontaneous endogenous and externally initiated developments at the local level. This was in itself a large step towards lateral thinking in development in that the rural communities now also got the researchers' attention. This led to a new look at the 'modes of production' theory, which initially was a point of debate between Frank (1969) and Laclau (1971). The above-mentioned anthropologists, Rey and Meillassoux, described the

existence of diverse modes of production in a community, i.e., employment, manufacturing and services, and emphasised the relationship that binds all together in an articulated whole. It was also postulated that the capitalist involvement in modes of production in a non-capitalist environment, meant that benefits would accrue to the capitalist environment at the cost of the non-capitalists.

The following comment, that is related to the 'modes of production' theory, but is actually referring to principles that were formulated in the post-impasse era, is so interesting that it is mentioned in this sector for the sake of continuity. Friedmann (1996: 165-167), used the 'modes of production' theory several years later to compile his framework for an empowerment model. Instead of applying the theories of the modes of production to the broad economic field, he no longer regarded the household as a consumption unit, but preferred to define the household (more specifically the household economy) as the centre for the production of livelihood. He explains that the production of livelihood is manifested by such activities as growing and preparing food, obtaining water, cleaning up after the meal, and earning enough money to buy whatever is required for food preparation and running the general household.

This unique view puts the production of livelihood in a category which falls outside profit-seeking or capitalist accumulation. It does, however, rely extensively on the concept of a moral economy, a form of mutual trust in a society and of social obligations that form part of the interaction in any community. In his view the moral economy and the market economy

are apart but interdependent. Furthermore, the moral economy contains the concept of voluntary work, which one finds in every community in a variety of forms and which cannot be taken out of a social system without creating serious problems. Disempowered households are dependent on social relations to survive. The extended family, friends and neighbours as well as community-based organisations all play a role in contributing to the survival of the poor. The moral economy is often not about giving only. It expects from the beneficiaries some form of return, albeit by way of reciprocal affections, committing time to a social cause, and/or doing community work. The concept of a moral economy implies in some ways that those who are dependent on this economic form for their basic existence, find themselves in a precarious position. Friedmann (1996) emphasises it further by sketching a worst case scenario in more detail. He says that, because disempowered people lack job security, they may wind up working in obscure and insecure places in the informal sector. Should they lose these jobs, they would stand a good chance of becoming dependent on charity and welfare and find themselves without the traditional support of the moral economy. He goes one step further by stating that, once social workers and bureaucrats enter the equation, it is only a small step before such households slip into the underground economy of crime (Friedmann 1996: 165-167).

Still, as an extension of the dependency theory, Wallerstein (1974, 1979), built his world system theory around the concept of a global market. He found that underdevelopment was due to the subjugation of developing countries to an unequal trade regime that they have to produce for, because of its global nature. Although some aspects of this theory do

make sense, even at this moment the main criticism against the Wallerstein theory is that it is too general. In addition, it overlooks the fact that there is a host of different production modes, each relating in its own unique way to the broad trade regime. Furthermore, the world system approach, as in the case of the dependency theories, neglected to take cognisance of the fact that the so-called Third World is very diverse in nature and cannot be generalised easily. This theory is also flawed in the same way that the dependency theory is. It neglects to recognise the diversity of the Third World and assumes unworkable political options, such as total self-reliance and a socialist world government, notions that are difficult to reconcile with the concrete realities of developing countries. The world systems theory fell into disrepute in the early 1980s (Schuurman 1993: 8-9).

The early development theory encompasses much more than the few selected examples mentioned above. A few clear illustrations of pre-impasse thinking follow after a discussion of Alex Duncan's contribution to the Lewis and Kallab (1986:15) study for the Overseas Development Council. His views are commented on by Lewis and Kallab and he is given credit for a fresh approach which focuses more on the people involved in development. They remark on the fact that his work reflects a definite movement to a different, albeit closely related, quadrant of development strategy. Duncan identified that, whereas the mainstream growth theory, and therefore development strategy, was heavily capital-centred after the 1950s, increasing emphasis on other contributions to the development process followed in more recent years. The editors made the remark that at that stage in particular (1985 - '86), other contributions such as training of personnel, management skills and the



ability to utilise appropriate technology, were being mooted as possible initiatives that could make a difference to development processes. They continue by stating that Duncan unfortunately tends to concentrate on realising the above initiatives in the context of foreign assistance. His approach remains predominantly external or top-down. An important question is therefore asked by the editors, namely, how - or how well - can aid help build institutions, develop human resources, and facilitate technological transfer and improvement? They then discuss the general tendency of people to interpret 'development strategy' as being the same as 'aid'. They feel that this misinterpretation could be excused, because aid, which admittedly is a minor determinant of development outcomes, should still be regarded as an important one. If the editors had focused on the ways of reinforcing and then utilising human capital, they would have been *ad idem* with contemporary thinking, which increasingly emphasises the importance of according a specific and major role to the human factor in development strategies. However, the time was not quite ripe for this stage of development thinking

The following examples are indicative of the thinking at the time of the impasse and before:

Irma Adelman, in her contribution to the Lewis and Kallab (1986:69) study, disappoints the post-impasse reader because she does not acknowledge the importance of the people and their institutions in achieving successful development. She prefers to ignore the human element in development and prefers to direct poverty alleviation towards unrealisable targets such as increasing the assets of the poor; improving their sales, and increasing the payment for their respective services. This approach is astounding, to say

the least, especially because she is not alone in this way of thinking. She bases some of her findings on the World Bank/Sussex study of the middle 1970s. Lewis and Kallab (1986:57) have included the World Bank study in which Hollis Chenery and his colleagues emphasise the strategy of giving asset increments to the poor based on grounds of political feasibility.

Irma Adelman's second point deals with demand-generating strategies. Here she moves closer to the people themselves and describes the assets of the poor as largely being unskilled labour. She comes to the conclusion that development strategies should give priority to increasing the demand for unskilled labour. In conjunction with this manipulative policy, institutions should be created that enhance labour mobility and access to jobs by the poor. The application of these two proposals in a combined effort should purportedly benefit the poor. This is a typical pre-impasse statement and neglects to observe the inherent assets of the rural people (the poor), such as their knowledge of the environment; their traditional skills, which include knowledge of the weather; herbal medicines and what they should be used for; basic farming principles; building basic houses, and political skills. In view of these unacknowledged qualifications, their assets are far more than only unskilled labour. She does not even try to speculate on the hidden potential that could be made available among the poor if sufficient and professional attention is given to their basic education and training. The possible benefits of utilising the unique knowledge of the environment and other forms of skills as mentioned above for development purposes became noticed, inter alia, during

the 1995 United Nations World Summit for Social Development. The implication was that such factors could make a valid contribution towards development cooperation.

In “*Development Strategies Reconsidered*” (Lewis and Kallab 1986:69), John W. Mellor sees agricultural growth as a necessary priority to achieve development but then only when combined with employment growth. He bases his theory on two key features:

- 1) Continuous, institutionalised technological change provides the basic engine of cumulative growth.
- 2) Growth in domestic demand provides the basic incentives for increasing agricultural output; and for the activities that create rapid growth in employment.

Clearly, to bring both these proposals more in line with contemporary thinking, the *explanandum* should rather be changed to something relating to, or providing for, a more direct actor-oriented approach. Once this is done, both statements will make more sense. So, for instance, point 1 could be altered by replacing ‘continuous, institutionalised technological change ...’ with ‘people with the necessary knowledge, abilities and combined will to make a change ...’. In the same vein, the second point should rather refer to ‘increasing the dynamics within a community’ instead of ‘growth in domestic demand’. The above should suffice to take us into a discussion of the contemporary scene which is all part of the post-impasse era.

### **3.4 Development theory since the early days of globalisation and liberalisation**

Contemporary theory conveys the notion that active participation of developing countries in globalisation and liberalisation will be beneficial to their further development. This notion will have to be substantiated scientifically, mainly because 'active participation' has not been defined sufficiently. It is necessary to describe how, where, and when such participation is envisaged, and, most importantly, who should be participating with whom.

Aims and objectives for the most impressive break-away from impasse theories and practice is to be found in the new generation Cotonou Agreement (2000: Preamble) which succeeded the Lomé IV (bis) Convention. It aims at providing effective channels for ACP countries to step into a liberalised world and states, as another one of its aims, that the EU wishes to provide continuous guidance to the ACP countries to enter smoothly into a globalised environment. However, the negative side of the new relationship, as reflected by the Cotonou Agreement is that the compilers of this agreement were still in many ways adhering to pre-impasse theories and notions. Even among experienced European Commission and ACP negotiators, who have concluded this so-called new generation agreement, there was apparently a very real resistance to change. Further confirmation of these statements will be forthcoming in Chapter V, which will deal more particularly with the Cotonou Agreement.

A relevant force in contemporary development is neo-liberalism, a pattern of thought that became increasingly popular in certain circles and contentious in others since the mid-1970s. It is relevant because it extends the inevitability of ever-increasing globalisation and liberalisation. The tendency for leaders in developing countries to be suspicious of neo-liberalism is widely

demonstrated. At World Trade Organisation and International Monetary Fund meetings, for instance, the almost militant demonstrations were clearly demonstrating the amount of ill-will in developing countries and left-wing organisations against those institutions that apply neo-liberal principles in practice. The opposing forces tend to see neo-liberalism as a threat and it should be noted that fear still remains a forceful and dangerous emotion in their ranks. The possibility exists that full adaptation of the actor-oriented approach may offer a possible method to alleviate this fear by getting the widest possible spread of actors involved in planning and decision making. Neo-liberalism often failed because its proposed measures were very seldom accepted by the governments and the people of developing countries as being sincere. The author's experience has been that these countries were seldom given the opportunity to consider such proposals at leisure and to put the matters to their respective electorates. Neo-liberalism became suspect because it was seen by many developing countries as the framework within which many unpopular, and often unsuccessful, measures were introduced to them without giving them the right to opt out of the top-down multilateral initiatives such as:

- the structural adjustment packages of the International Monetary Fund (IMF);

- the WTO's emphasis on privatisation and its pressure on developing countries in this regard, and

- the introduction of liberalisation into world trade, which, according to Stevens (1998) prevented developing countries from extending their special trade benefits under Lomé, which were severely diminished, with some even being brought to an end by the signing of Cotonou. (Cotonou Agreement: 2000) Meanwhile the developed countries still maintained

their excessive subsidies, for instance, on agricultural produce, which prevented open competition in the so-called 'free market'.

Although the European Union has never seen these steps, taken to replace Lomé with a contemporary agreement and a totally new form of partnership agreement, as being in line with neo-liberalism, the ACP countries have often, during negotiations attended by the author, referred to the new proposals as being in the spirit of neo-liberalism. It was a matter of totally different perceptions. Schuurman (1993: 11), refers to neo-liberalism as an ideology and not as a theory. This is significant. It becomes clear from this perspective that there are not many scientific reasons for skepticism. However, because neo-liberalism is often veiled in an ideological cloak, developing countries have every reason to treat it with suspicion. One must admit that in past decades most of the developing countries have had their fair share of disappointments with internationally propagated ideologies.

The regulation school, the actor oriented approach and post-imperialism present three new directions that were devised around the time of the impasse. In the early 1980s, the French regulation school was led by Lipietz, who stated that 'regularities in development trajectories are observable through historical comparative research' (Lipietz 1984:81-109). Lipietz also defined regularities as a sequence of contradictions that create crises which then culminate in some form of transformation. To clarify his thesis, he warned against the deduction of a concrete reality from supposed regularities, which could in turn be deduced from universal concepts such as imperialism or dependency, and advised that these should best be avoided. Lipietz indicated

that one could divide regularities in development trajectories into two separate concepts. The two concepts are described as:

1. a regime of accumulation which describes the way in which an economic product is allocated between consumption and accumulation; and
2. a mode of regulation, which regulates norms and values and acts as a set of internalised rules and procedures, that integrate social elements with individual behaviour.

Lipietz further refers to Fordism (which is a system characterised by mass production, consumption of standardised goods, a significant growth of labour productivity, thus forming an important part of the welfare-state) as an example of a regime of accumulation and a mode of regulation. He warns, on the one hand, against an approach in which it is assumed that a certain capitalist structure would automatically produce a particular consecutive combination of accumulation regime and mode of regulation. On the other hand, he accepts that a regime of accumulation combined with a particular mode of regulation can reproduce itself for a period without collapsing.

Schuurman believes that Lipietz's approach could serve to cast historical comparative research into a more precise form. He takes the Frenchman's following valuable observation as an example, where he states that:

... development strategies cannot be seen out of the context of the position the countries ['social formations' in Lipietz's terms] take in the international circuit, ... (as quoted in Schuurman 1993:17),

and sees this as a statement which was not in keeping with impasse theories and as such, made a significant contribution to development theory.

The actor-oriented approach, initiated by Long (1990:3-24), is both focused (on the human factor) and holistic (encompassing even more than social science, development studies and the economy entail) and differs widely from the premises of the regulation school. The basic premise of Long's approach is that human (re)action and consciousness should play a central role, as against the general tendency among modernists and neo-Marxists to see social change as deriving from external sources, thereby ignoring the central figures of social dynamics, namely the individuals themselves. An attempt will be made, commensurate with the first objective of this study (par.1.4), to prove that contemporary development will not succeed unless the tendency to dehumanise the symbols of development is turned around and the individual, the person, the human face, is made the focal point of practical development. It is also important that, reading between the lines, Long succeeded in moving away from the Marxist vision of class as the central actor. He contends that class is an abstract concept and is therefore not able to influence social changes. Chapter IV will focus in much more detail on various aspects of the actor-oriented approach.

According to Schuurman (1993:19) post-imperialism is more a set of ideas about political and social organisation of international capitalism than an effective theory. It does not actually qualify as theory, although the identification of a new class - the 'managerial' bourgeoisie - by Becker and Sklar (1987:19) does necessitate a closer look at what it entails. The identification of the new class and discussions around it, made a contribution to the better understanding of contemporary relations between the transnational corporations (TNCs) and developing



countries. The managerial bourgeoisie is portrayed as consisting of a corporate wing and a local wing, with members of both groups having common interests. It was found that this dual format serves as an insurance for stability for the foreign investor in that it could act to ensure a stable relationship between the countries' elite and the TNCs. However, once the local wing starts to express overly nationalistic rhetoric, leaving the corporate wing behind, the relationship could become endangered. The theory that TNCs are effecting only one-way communications towards developing countries is also addressed by the authors. They contend that locals in developing countries often interact with the TNC representatives and have in some cases even succeeded in taking over power from former oligarchies.

The work of Becker and Sklar (1987: 179-193) included an article by Frieden (1987) in which commends the post-imperialists for pointing to the assertive pragmatism that could be applied more widely by developing countries in response to foreign capital investment. On the other hand, Frieden warns that the economic levers available to transnational corporations (TNCs) to gain entry to the economic base of developing countries, should not be underestimated.

Frieden also does not see post-imperialism as development theory. In his opinion it would, at most, be a theory regarding a recently arisen international oligarchy: a managerial bourgeoisie (a new class) defending its interests against the proletariat and the old oligarchic classes.

According to Schuurman (1993: 20), this phenomenon could have the result that great diversity is created in relations between the state and (international) capital in developing countries.

The latest in this series of theories is postmodernism. Wendt explains it as follows:

Post-modern philosophy, or generally an incredulity toward master narratives and a search to understand alternative ways of knowing [see Lyotard (1984); Schrag (1992)], brings a slightly different agenda to a critical project. In addition to ferreting out hidden meanings and agendas, in addition to arguing for social change, postmodernism presents the argument that we attempt to understand knowledge, discourse, and power as a less-than-rational dynamic (Wendt 2001:16-17).

One of the post-modern school's contributions to contemporary development theory is seen by Schuurman (1993: 23) as the reaction they have had against the modernists' belief in the emancipation of humankind, for example through liberation from poverty, slavery and ignorance. Fact is that the emancipation of humankind does not necessarily come through scientific endeavours, but rather by way of humankind's own efforts to acquire greater and better abilities to perform in specific careers or to play a significant role in the community. This new line of thought contains an important concept, as confirmed by Wendt (2001:16-17) above, namely that people should become enabled and effective at the same time as they are assisted by outsiders to become emancipated. Three important avenues of post-modern manifestation or applications can be identified, namely art, literature and language, and social sciences, with development probably included in the latter. As determined above, post-modern thinking was conducive in putting the individual in the centre - a more people-directed approach. A politically oriented and widely accepted generalisation, for instance, which refers to socialism and capitalism as the main factors for successful development, was exposed as being fallacious. To paraphrase Wendt (2001:144), post-modern thought and expression are known for the special premium that is put on creative insight, narrative knowledge, tactical resistance and nomadic writing. By this time it would have become noticeable that this whole study is

permeated by post-modern theories, principles, applications and thought. Therefore, not much more is to be said in this section about postmodernism.

### **3.5 Globalisation: a real factor in development theory**

One could argue that globalisation was already a factor at the stage of early colonialism. It could be described as a long-term process, except that contemporary globalisation is an accelerated globalisation (cf. Nederveen Pieterse 1995). Then again, according to Castells (1993), globalisation today, should not be interpreted as some international economic manifestation. Recognition should rather be given to the strong link that exists between a changing economic front and a dynamic information society, as well as totally new and much more flexible production systems.

Coetzee *et al.* (2001: 80), in turn, define globalisation as the ‘process whereby the various parts of the globe become integrated across a number of dimensions, like political, economic, cultural, information and military dimensions. All the above-mentioned factors, when brought together, do give substance to what we observe as being contemporary globalisation.

The development situation today is such that numerous observers do not perceive the state to be the central point around which development revolves. According to Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 47), ‘crossborder transactions and micro- or macro-regionalisation may well become major avenues of development’.

Trends such as 'world development' and 'global development' were topics of discussion over the past decade or more. Should these trends be real, then there should be some relevance to the concept of 'globalisation in development' too. To explore the matter further, one should firstly accept that all communities are in some or other process of development. The US or the European Union and its members are certainly not marking time - they, as much as many other countries, are involved in real development across all possible frontiers. The same applies to the newly industrialised nations. Development is not the prerogative of the developing countries only - it affects all. So the world is experiencing development; the global society is constantly developing and new tools such as electronics in information, efficient global communications (travel, media, internet and such) and a new flexibility in inter-state and economic relations, for instance, are all part and parcel of globalisation as it manifests itself today amongst us. The rate at which transformations and transitions occur these days, the fact that it is happening everywhere - on micro- and on macro-levels - makes the interwoven connections between globalisation and development an undeniable matter of fact. What remains, is not only the practical and efficient application of globalisation's advantages to development, but also the establishment of ways and means to overcome the pitfalls that globalisation also presents to communities - especially developing communities with less experience than their better-off neighbours. The fact that transition is being experienced by the great majority of countries, communities or societies, should be of some consolation to those that struggle to overcome the hindrances which globalisation has laid in their way.

An important point is made by Nederveen Pieterse where he refers to global reform as a mainstay for the eventual reinvention of development. Important signs of this linkage can be clearly observed:

Virtually all development approaches now engage the global level. In dependency thinking, this takes the form of criticising uneven globalisation. Neoliberalism involves the project of neoliberal globalisation. Alternative development envisages alternative globalisation and human development seeks global reform, while anti-development converges on anti-globalisation. The global horizon is a compelling rendezvous, a prism in which all angles on development are refracted. This illustrates the dramatic salience of globalisation as well as the diversity in development thinking (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 168)

From the above, it becomes clear that there is a constantly increasing interaction between globalisation and development. This was identified at an early stage by the European Union. The Cotonou Agreement, which had been negotiated between 1998 and 2000, is evidence of the serious way in which the EU (and later the ACP as well) are considering the respective roles of globalisation and liberalisation in development as, for instance, stated in Annexure II, third paragraph:

ASSERTING their resolve to make, through their cooperation, a significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of the ACP States and to the greater well-being of their population, helping them facing the challenges of globalisation and strengthening the ACP-EU Partnership in the effort to give the process of globalisation a stronger social dimension (Cotonou Agreement 2000: Preamble).

Nederveen Pieterse, in his conclusive remarks, subscribes to the position taken by the EU-ACP in the Cotonou Agreement where he states that:

(t)he challenge for a global development approach is to bring separate and opposing interests and constituencies together as part of a world-wide bargaining and process approach (2001: 168).

He adds that the global dimensions purported in his statement will possibly have a reconstituting effect on the multilateral institutions as we know them, thus creating a worldwide reform platform, which is, after all not far removed from a global approach to development. The concept of development as we know it today could predictably undergo radical change in the process and the sooner development thinking is geared to cope with it, the better for the future application of new development concepts.

Just to confirm that there exists a wide range of viewpoints regarding globalisation in development and that approaches can differ radically within a time-span of five years, a reference to Coetzee would be sufficient, because five years before Nederveen Pieterse, Coetzee commented as follows on the subject:

The process of globalisation is not in itself a good or bad phenomenon. While it currently serves the interests of the rich and powerful, it also creates conditions for counter-mobilisation on behalf of the poor and marginalised on a global scale. In this respect Brecher *et al.* (1993) make a useful distinction between globalisation-from-above and globalisation-from-below (1996: 327).

Coetzee further explains the above views on globalisation-from-above as being a contest between multinational and transnational companies, which could have an adverse effect on the developing world, as well as on some people of the industrialised world as well. In other words, he acknowledges at that stage already that globalisation brings its influence (good and bad) to bear on a global scale.

Globalisation-from-below could be the emergence of a regional and global 'civil society' which evolves to counteract the 'global state', which takes hold, inter alia, with improved information

and communications technology (cf. Coetzee 1996: 351-2). This reaction could be called 'globalisation-from-below', where organisations around the world 'share experiences and develop tactics and strategies that undermine the power of existing international elites' (ibid.). It could also mean the creation of a true 'civil democracy that combines both participatory and representative forms of democratic rule' (see Brecher et al. 1993).

Finally, Coetzee (1996: 352) states that: 'Globalisation-from-below, in all its variations, and with all its limitations, does at least offer an alternative to the New World Order.' This may be a solution, but a less confrontational solution could perhaps be devised by the serious and extensive application of the actor-oriented approach, as will be explained in later chapters.

### **3.6 Developing a post-impasse development praxis**

Studies that have been undertaken recently, especially after the impasse period, have one thing in common: they are positive and have moved beyond the stage of futile criticism. In addition, some normative guidelines have been woven into the fabric of the new policies, such as gender issues, self-sustaining (sustainable) development, empowerment, participatory development, civil society participation and the environment. The involvement of civil society and the private sector as participating partners in development, have been receiving special attention. Both factors were increasingly integrated into development agendas and agreements in recent years, but these actions were not as well documented as the cross-cutting gender issues or the environment. So, civil society and private sector involvement - or participation - in development, are subjects now that have already been mentioned and incorporated into many

contemporary agreements, agendas, conventions and similar documents. The Cotonou Agreement, which will be discussed in Chapter V, presents a number of examples of the point under discussion, and a large number of multilateral development documents that were studied in this process, such as World Bank Reports, UNCTAD Conference Reports, UNDP Policy Documents, the UN Agenda for Development, and similar documents, were also found to contain some or other reference to civil society and private sector involvement. A general fault line was encountered in this respect, namely that these forms of participatory development were generally mentioned without explicit advice on how this involvement should be undertaken. The tendency in development publications, conference documents, reports and other contributions, to talk about processes that should be followed, but which at the same time, neglect to give any advice on how they should be put into practice, will be pointed out where found, especially in the discussion of the Cotonou Agreement. An attempt will be made in Chapters VI to propose ways in which more practical guidelines could in future be integrated into development planning. By focusing on how things should be done, the methodology will gradually be shaped. Once the actor-oriented approach has been accepted as an integral part of the development process, the next step would be the eventual integration of the methodology into development planning

Some practitioners of specialised development schemes were far ahead of their time and made statements that were later confirmed or expanded on by post-impasse researchers. The following example illustrates how a successful and effective combination of participation, supported by actor-orientation, can be put together. Paul Ekins (1995:186), quotes John F.Charlewood Turner and Fichter (1972) who discuss one of the many ways in which



individuals and communities (the actual fabric of civil society) should be allowed to participate in development programmes. Talking about a housing development scheme, Turner and Fichter point out that when locals are able to take major decisions regarding design, construction or management of their housing, the process of involvement of the beneficiaries works in favour of the general well-being of the community. This statement appears to describe some form of actor-oriented process which, interestingly, took place 1972, almost a decade before the impasse. Turner elaborates his point by also stating a converse side. He implies that, when people have no control over, nor responsibility for key decisions in development processes, development cooperation programmes and projects may become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden to the economy. In other words, processes lacking an actor-oriented approach can be a burden to the economy and prevent personal fulfilment.

The above notions can be used to make a plea for a more people-oriented approach in development and that, in turn, could lead to a recommendation that close consideration should be given to the introduction of an actor-oriented approach to development. The quote from post-impasse commentator, Schuurman serves a specific purpose, as he states that:

.. social movements (new and old) in the Third World are not expressions of resistance against modernity; rather, they are demands for access to it (Schuurman 1993: 27).

The majority of civil society organisations in developing countries would argue similarly. It becomes obvious then that the people of developing countries should be enabled to gain access to modernism. To establish the best way to achieve the above and to satisfy that particular demand poses a challenge for development agencies.

Because of the integral role of knowledge in development, the whole knowledge paradigm with its different forms and subdivisions will receive special attention in several chapters, but especially in par. 4.2.8 and 4.2.9 in Chapter IV. Knowledge remains a fascinating subject and is still being studied with great interest, even by development institutions such as the World Bank. Post-modern initiatives by people like Bell (1973) and Touraine (1974), and Michel Foucault (1980), took the lead in exploring the knowledge paradigm which later became the Foucaultian 'knowledge/power' paradigm (Foucault 1980). The views of Bell and Touraine deserve mention because they portray the post-industrialist society as:

... a 'knowledge' society, in which a growing part of the labour force is used for the production of technical know-how (Schuurman 1993:27).

Foucault, as stated above, is known for his views about the relationship between knowledge and power. Norman Long (2001), was paying a lot of attention to knowledge, and later elaborated on it by considering knowledge more from the position of the various possible manifestations of the power/knowledge relationship identified by Foucault (1980). For instance, according to Long, knowledge encounters could involve struggles in which the more knowledgeable tend to:

enrol others in their 'projects', getting them to accept particular frames of meaning and winning them over to their points of view (Long 2001: 16).

This is but one example where specific knowledge advantages give actors the 'power' to enrol others to accept and execute their points of view.

The World Bank Report (1998/99), dealing with '*Knowledge for Development*' has been discussed in paragraph 2.5.1 of the previous chapter. The broadly accepted relationship between the lack of knowledge and the lack of development was embroidered on by the World Bank and they recommended that knowledge should be researched in more detail. According to the World Bank, the developing world is experiencing information (knowledge) problems and shows signs of suffering from a lack of technical skills as well as knowledge concerning attributes. Both these factors are real and the World Bank deals in its report with ways in which these two factors can be remedied.

The above are to serve as examples to prove that since 1973/4, when Bell and Touraine began referring to the 'knowledge society', a lot of extensive work has been done to gain a better understanding of knowledge and its utilisation.

It would be practical to end this part of the discussion with Norman Long's description of knowledge processes. He sees them as:

... constituting the ways in which actors come to grips with the world around them cognitively, emotionally, and organisationally (Long 2001:240-243).

The identification of the multilevel presence of diversity and inequality has received some attention earlier on, (par. 2.3.4) but it was not mentioned that inequality, in particular, poses a central question to post-impasse development theorists. To study the matter in depth, would require the construction of a theoretical framework that would link the multitude of levels to analytical issues. Schuurman makes an important deduction in this regard and states that:

... while the micro- and the meso-levels are primarily defined using socio-cultural variables, and the spatial dimension is present only implicitly, analyses of diversity and inequality on a national and supranational level have an explicit spatial dimension which, in turn, does not tell us very much about the actors involved.”

(Schuurman 1993:31)

If this should be the case and if the standard forms of analysis do not tell us much about the actors, then the actor-orientated approach devised by Norman Long could prove to be a medium by which all the requirements for analysing diversity and inequality can be achieved. Even at the national and supranational levels, the actor-oriented approach would still be effective in assessing inequality and diversity, because the actors figure at every level of all communities, even of the global community.

Schuurman (1993:29-30), deals with this notion in a different way and states that the interrelationship between actors such as:

- the different sections of the state bureaucracy;
- the national, the regional and/or the international bourgeoisie;
- political parties according to their international affiliations, and
- international financial institutions amongst themselves -

should first be identified and categorised. He concludes with the remark that the analytical framework of post-impasse development theory would have to include the relationship between power, actors and structure, which subsequently would have to be proved at the various analytical levels using historical comparative research. He purports that, in this way, diversity and inequality would become part of what needs to be explained and will therefore be the

*explanandum*. It is strange that Schuurman does not mention ethnography as a method to achieve the above analysis, because that would be the best way to assess the relationship between power, actors and structures, utilising historical comparative research at the various analytical levels. It could be that ethnography has not been recognised as an effective research medium at that time.

To make his views on inequality and the incorporated notion of emancipation clear, Schuurman concludes by stressing that inequality can be interpreted in two ways. It can either be:

the narrowly defined situations where large parts of the human population suffer from substantial inequalities in emancipation

or it can have a more dynamic meaning --

in terms of a process whereby social actors try to liberate themselves from structurally defined hierarchical relations which are discriminatory and as such give unequal access to material (e.g., land, housing, services) and immaterial resources (e.g. ideology, political power, etc.) (Schuurman 1993: 29-30).

Finally, Schuurman concludes that, based on the above, the following aspects should be regarded as the key concepts in the construction of post-impasse development theories, viz.

power (knowledge?);

actors;

multi-leveled structures;

inequality, and

diversity.

It is surprising that Schuurman did not include knowledge in this list. From what has been mentioned before about the relationship between power and knowledge, one would expect that

he would have either grouped these two factors together, or that he would have added knowledge to the other factors on the list.

### **3.7 Conclusions**

When looking at the above views, development is still a rather amorphous concept that is seen from a host of different perspectives, each focusing on a different facet from the other. A valid *caveat* on how one should guard against a too theoretical approach to development questions, concludes the discussion on what development is perceived to be.

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It becomes clear that, as Karl Marx once said:

Mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve ... we will always find that the problem itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation (Marx 1859).

The author has the firm belief that the actor-oriented approach, which encompasses a wide range of post-modern tools and principles, is one of the new ‘material conditions’ for the solution of the development problems of the day.

The various forms of pre-impasse development theory offer a sound basis for analysing trends, even today, in assessing to what extent real positions in contemporary development have broken away from older forms such as Marxism, neo-Marxism, the dependency theory, etc. Residues of the old theories in contemporary approaches could cause serious mental blocks in innovative thinking and should be identified and removed. This is where post-modern approaches, especially deconstruction, come in handy. It is impossible to explain each one of

the old theories without causing the reader to think that they all form separate compartments and that thinking was clinically moved, through the decades, from the one compartment to the next without the one influencing the other. This perception should be put right immediately.

Contemporary theory may still contain many of the 'genes' of the older generation theories, but is substantially different from the historical approaches of its predecessors. Totally new concepts have emanated from many of the same building blocks that were used before. As long as new thinking about development is generated, this tendency will continue.

Therefore, all the theories of both the pre-impasse and the post-impasse periods are of importance. Remarkably, several conclusions drawn in the pre-impasse era were proven to be valid and became integrated in even the most contemporary development theories - Ekins (1995) and Turner (1977), for instance, as mentioned in par. 3.5. The gradual acceptance of the human factor in development, especially after the impasse, is interesting. Certainly, there is a new tendency to focus more on the human factor or the actors, such as the regular reference to 'empowerment' and the 'participatory approach' reveals. This has been confirmed in several discussions by Nederveen Pieterse (2001). Although these are frequently and repetitively embodied in new documents on development cooperation, both the participatory approach and empowerment have not yet proved, beyond doubt, to be positive contributors to development.

The way forward would now be to establish whether the contemporary theories of development that have been dealt with above have been, or will soon be, utilised by multilateral development institutions, especially in regard to the EU-ACP application of the progressive Cotonou Agreement (2000) and its Article 20 Compendium. This will be done in Chapter V.





## CHAPTER IV

### Bringing the actor-oriented approach into context

#### **4.1 Introduction**

After years of impasse in development studies a new interest in fresh approaches was triggered in academic circles towards the end of the previous millennium, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and other events. The new objective was to do away with the various forms of determinism, linearity and institutional hegemony that were part of the theories and methods of the old times. The cry for a more people-oriented approach became louder and instead of conditions, contexts and 'driving forces' of social life, the propagation of self-organising practices of communities and their people were encouraged with the objective of influencing and improving the lifeworlds of people in developing countries. Long (2001:1) adopted an actor-oriented perspective during the 1980s and in this process moved away from the impasse. This initially meant exploring how social actors struggle over resources, meanings and control. His concept of social actors covered both the 'local' and the 'external' actors, pertaining to a particular geographic or target area. From this can be gathered that in a development cooperation scenario, the local actors would originate from the target community and the external actors would be those representing the donors and that both groups would eventually be forged together as an interventionist team. A more pragmatic point of view was adopted by Pottier (1993) as well as Nelson and Wright (1995) who focused on the importance of ethnographic methods to achieve the aforementioned team building exercise.

In more or less the same period the theoretical views of Schuurman (1993), Booth (1994) and Preston (1996), who all individually reflected on actor-oriented analyses, concluded that the approach is an important new direction which could be usefully applied in future development research. Although each of the three authors pursued a different line regarding the actor-oriented approach, they were eventually all *ad idem* on the merits of the system. They identified actor-oriented modes of analysis as a significant step in the right direction and agreed that one of the strongest points in favour of the modes of analysis was, that these modes moved away from the old structural ways of research (Long 2001:1-5). Referring to analysis, he adds that, in the application of the actor-oriented approach:

[a] main task for analysis ..... is to identify and characterise differing actor practices, strategies and rationales, the conditions under which they arise, how they interlock, their viability or effectiveness for solving specific problems, and their wider social ramifications (Long 2001:20).

Norman Long (2001: 5) even mentions that, at the time of his book, the actor-oriented approach had already made an impression on national and international development organisations such as the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), the Nordic and Dutch aid programmes, the World Bank, UNESCO, and several development NGOs, but this author's research could not in any way determine whether the initial enthusiasm with which the process had been received by the above institutions, was ever translated into practice.

Three interpretations that could be given to 'actors' within the framework of the actor-oriented approach should be noted. 'Actors in development' could mean one of three things:

It could refer to those actors that are beneficiaries of development (people in developing countries);

it could mean those people who are involved in development in a donor capacity (people mainly in or from developed countries); or

it could mean a group of actors from both categories, people from the developing as well as the developed countries, working together as a team.

Because there would be no sense in concentrating on either of the first interpretations alone, the clear indication is that a holistic view should take precedence in this study, when identifying or working with a corps of actors that has been selected to perform the execution of a specific programme or project. One would recommend that, to ensure the widest possible participation and identification with a programme or project, even the least capable or least involved actor should be included in such a group

When looking at other views and applications of the actor-oriented approach, Drinkwater (1992), for instance, commented on the early notes by Long (1989) on the actor-oriented approach. These comments are about 'interface' and Drinkwater contends that there is too much focus on the "what" of research rather than on the "how". Drinkwater proceeds by commenting on the fact that the:

.. key distinction between agency and structure should be one of the perspectives rather than of structural levels (Drinkwater 1992).

He contributes to the actor-oriented approach by critically suggesting :

... how an actor-oriented perspective can be strengthened as a theory to inform social science method and practice in developing countries (Drinkwater 1992:371).

These comments were duly noted by Long and were heeded by him in later works (cf. Long 2001:69).

A paper by Jones (1997), which deals with an analysis of the strengths and limitations of utilising the actor-oriented approach for understanding decision-making in land management, was unfortunately only available in summary form (GEOBASE). Because it was written before the comprehensive book of Norman Long on the actor-oriented approach was published (Long 2001), it is presumed that several remarks by Jones could have been resolved or clarified in the 2001 publication on the subject. The paper deals with factors that may affect:

farmers' decision- making about technology adoption and land management. The framework is set in the context of an actor-oriented approach which moves away from deterministic or voluntaristic conceptions of social action." (GEOBASE 1997/12 - 2001/11)

Several searches for publications, articles, theses and other discussions on the actor-oriented approach - mainly after 2001 - were made, especially with the assistance of the UNISA Library, but the results were rather disappointing. This means that this particular study will not be able to furnish the reader with many comments from other scholars, but that it will, on the other hand, offer a timely contribution to an important field in development theory which is apparently being neglected in development studies today.

This chapter intends to deal with the latest available facts on the actor-oriented approach, which include the identification of actors. The list of concepts that are contained in Chapter II under sections 2.3 and 2.4, will be elaborated on and endeavours will be made to present, by these means, a much clearer concept of what the actor-oriented approach entails. Because of the current lack of practical applications of the actor-oriented approach in development cooperation programmes, the content of this discussion will unfortunately have to remain rather theoretical and is, for reasons mentioned in the paragraph above, mainly based on Norman Long's (2001) expositions of the actor-oriented approach.

Greater attention will also be paid to the recommended tools of deconstruction (par. 2.2.2) and ethnography (par. 2.3.3) by further elaborating on these subjects from a more practical point of departure.

## **4.2 Crucial actor-oriented concepts from a more practical viewpoint**

Because any intervention in a community could have a radical effect on the lifeworld in which that community finds itself, the concept is often referred to in later chapters and therefore needs to be well-understood (please consult par. 2.4.4 and 4.2.2 which both explain lifeworlds).

In a jointly written article, Leeuwis and Long (1990) deal with the difference between knowledge systems and knowledge processes. They give preference to the latter (knowledge processes) because they are much more compatible with the actor-oriented approach (Leeuwis and Long 1990:1). This fact is important for the ethnographer to note when he analyses the lifeworld of a community, for instance. The same authors then deal with the issue of 'agency' as

well (see par. 4.2.3), look at the problem it has with teleology and reification, and conclude by relating their findings to the concept of the actor-oriented approach. They end with comments on the methodological implications of an actor-oriented perspective. Under this heading they specifically refer to the dangers of researchers entering 'into a situation with strongly preconceived ideas ...' (Leeuwis and Long 1990:5). They quote Torres (1990) who gave the following graphic comment on how an ethnographer should tackle his job. He uses a Mexican saying stating that one should:

'plunge oneself into the garlic', so that one might savour the taste, digest it, carry it, and eventually come to understand specific actor's life-worlds, interests, and representations of the world around them (ibid.).

Finally the authors note that lifeworlds are essentially actor, instead of observer, defined. The fact that they are actor-defined emphasises the value of ethnographic research. Ethnographic research goes beyond the observation of a community from outside, but needs the researcher rather to become part thereof, in order for him/her to become an actor, as far as is possible and as far as she/he is allowed to by the community.

#### **4.2.1 Ethnography**

This subject has been mentioned before, but because of its important role in the actor-oriented approach, a deeper study of various important facts regarding ethnography will be made here. Norman Long (2001: 22) makes it clear that the following three points should be noted during any form of research in humanitarian sciences, namely:

- (1) the ways in which new elements in people's lifeworlds are managed and interpreted by different social actors;

(2) how members of a community, or groups within it, create space for themselves to pursue their own 'projects', especially because such projects could either be equal to, or even be the direct opposite of the interests of other intervening parties or government programmes; and

(3) how the broader context of power and social action can influence these organisational, strategic and interpretative processes.

Long maintains that particulars regarding the interaction between social groups, norms and modes of application by individuals, observation of cooperation, and conflict within various communities, tend to be better pointers regarding the:

...dynamics and complexity of power relations and idioms of subordination than any form of 'aggregated' structural analysis could achieve (Long 2001:22).

Ethnography can be portrayed as a scientific way by which an observer or researcher, representing any relevant discipline, blends with a community in its general daily chores, thus becoming an insider, thus obtaining perspectives on how symbols are used and meaning is created within a particular community or culture, and establishing the driving forces behind these actions. These perspectives are obtained by any combination of methods such as structured or semi-structured interviews, participant observation, autobiographical narrative and others. Ethnography can therefore best be performed by a person (or persons) who has been accepted in the subject community and who has won the community's general trust.

According to Goodall (1994: xxiv), a successful ethnographic project would be one that has succeeded in 'making the strange familiar and the familiar strange'. The point of departure is the social constructionist assumption that social interaction and dialogue have a profound influence upon our lifeworlds, in which incessant changes are constantly taking place.

Ethnography could be portrayed as an investigation of a culture from the inside-out.

Effective ethnography will mean, for instance, that a way has been established to determine how, in a particular culture:

... symbols function to create and sustain social order, [how they] unite and divide individuals, and [how they] stand as emblems to the everyday penetrations that the public sphere makes on the private life (Hindness 1986).

Moreover, one should distinguish between two forms of ethnography. The first is the conventional or descriptive form and the second is critical ethnography which seeks to evaluate power dynamics in terms of freedom, equity, and a sense of justice, enabling one to argue for social change that will enact equity. Both forms should probably be applied in the quest for an effective actor-oriented approach, because the practitioners would need an intimate description of a cultural entity, as well as an evaluation of power in terms of freedom, equity and a sense of justice. From such a comprehensive report a valuable assessment could be made regarding the sort of social change that would have to be planned for, in conjunction with development designs and programmes, as well as the reactions that could be provoked by the application of the proposed intervention.



An approach that links postmodernism and ethnography could render the latter even more versatile. Schrag, an important contributor to post-modern thinking, is quoted as saying that:

... an incredulity toward master narratives and a search to understand alternative ways of knowing brings a slightly different agenda to a critical project (Schrag 1992:98).

This means, inter alia, that with the use of post-modern tools such as deconstruction, critical ethnography can help detect hidden agendas and meanings and that new and more precise directions could thus be given to social change. In addition, however, critical ethnography presents, under the influence of postmodernism, an opportunity for looking at agency, knowledge, discourse, and power as a less-than-rational dynamic. Furthermore, the post-modern ethnographic project would lead to an inside-out approach to power relations in a community. This could facilitate interpretive participant methods to more easily understand and criticise those rather irrational communication practices that are believed to contribute towards empowering and disempowering political arrangements.

Ethnography benefits immensely from the telling of stories based on personal experiences (narrative). The alert ethnographer would be able to pick up, through these stories, numerous insights that would not otherwise have presented themselves. This method of gaining tacit narrative understanding should be practised in conjunction with the normal methods of obtaining representational knowledge, in order to gain the optimum benefit. (Also read about the 'deconstruction of master narratives' in par. 6.2.1).

#### **4.2.2 Lifeworlds**

Due to the central significance of the 'lifeworld' experiences of a community targeted for an actor-oriented approach, this concept is dealt with in detail in this chapter, although a few references to it have already been made. Because of its significance, a valuable description of lifeworlds by Norman Long is quoted here:

Lifeworlds are 'lived-in' and largely 'taken-for-granted' social worlds centring on particular individuals. Such worlds should not be viewed as cultural 'backcloths' that frame how individuals act, but instead as the product of an individual's own constant self-assembling and re-evaluating of relationships and experiences. Lifeworlds embrace actions, interactions and meanings, and are identified with specific socio-geographical spaces and life histories (Long 2001: 241).

In order to uncover the particulars of peoples' 'lived-in worlds' (lifeworlds), one would need to study a wide front of myths, theses, models and manifestations of government policy, overseas agents' policies, development policy and policies of other relevant institutions as they function in the area (or intended area) of operation. In addition, one should also endeavour to identify reified concepts in the relevant social and cultural fields, but especially in the application of knowledge in its various forms, such as technical or administrative capacity building, the whole field of education, conventional wisdom and others (Long 2001: 189). To achieve this, an ethnographic study could also be launched to fathom:

the ways in which people steer or muddle their ways through difficult scenarios, turning 'bad' into 'less bad' circumstances (Long 2001:9).

This is, after all, the way in which lifeworlds keep changing, hopefully improving in the process. To bring the actor-oriented approach and the concept of lifeworlds together, one should remember that the actor-oriented approach can only function well if it gets well

informed about the lifeworld of a subject community. Ethnography is the recommended medium to obtain systematic understanding of the 'social life' of communities (lifeworlds) in a target area aimed at for a development intervention. To reiterate, complete as possible picture is required of the lifeworlds of those communities. The picture should also contain special information on the subject matter of the proposed intervention with preliminary predictions of what would happen from conception to realisation of the intervention. The word 'preliminary' is used here, because expected responses (negative or positive) should be projected on an ongoing basis and the lived experiences of the variously located and affected social actors should be monitored throughout the intervention (Long 2001:31, 37). It is understandable that the lifeworld thus identified will keep on changing due to internal and external factors that influence it. Some actors will be part of this lifeworld whereas others on the same team will only be onlookers or 'temporary residents'. Some of them will even represent the benefactor. Whatever the case may be, the team of actors in an intervention (Note: NOT the intervention by itself) will have a definite effect on the lifeworld of the targeted community. Conversely, if the team is successful, it will also undergo change and the actors may find that they have improved and widened their knowledge in respect of what they used to be or know before the start of the intervention.

#### **4.2.3 Agency, knowledge and power**

Norman Long states that, in general terms, a person with agency has the capacity to:

process social experience and succeeds in devising ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion (Long 2001:9-29).

Hindness adds that:

[t]o suggest, for example, that 'society' in the global sense of the term, or classes and other social categories based on ethnicity or gender, make decisions and attempt to implement theories to attribute mistakenly to them the quality of agency (Hindness 1986: 119)

Hindness warns, furthermore, that one should refrain from identifying 'collectivities, agglomerates or social categories that have no discernible way of formulating or carrying out decisions ....' (ibid.), with the concept of actor (see for instance the discussion of civil society, par. 2.6).

Agency is a rather new concept and is difficult to identify in advance. One recognises it as a rule only with hindsight. The following are pointers to identify agency:

Agency can be recognised in cases where a specific course of events or an established state of affairs is changed by particular actions.

Agency can only be effective through the workings of the social system.

Agency does not sprout from charisma or persuasive powers. It is, rather, the ability to influence people or to take command of a situation.

Agency has to overcome the tendency of people to "translate" orders, requests and other communications in accordance with their own projects and perceptions.

Agency functioning properly is the place where power is composed by enrolling many actors in a given political and social scheme (cf. Latour 1986: 264)

Agency (and power) depend crucially upon the emergence of a network of actors who become partially, though hardly ever completely, enrolled in the 'project' of some other person or persons (Long 2001:16).

All the above can best be summarised in the words of Norman Long, who states that:

agency ... entails the generation and use or manipulation of networks of social relations and the channelling of specific items (such as claims, orders, goods, instruments and information) through certain nodal points of interpretation and interaction. Hence, it is essential to take account of the ways in which social actors engage in or are locked into struggles over the attribution of social meanings to particular events, actions and ideas (Long 2001:17).

With regard to knowledge, which has already been handled in Chapter II (2.6.6 above), it is important to note that any group of actors (or an individual, for that matter), is harbouring its own unique selection of knowledge and resources. This gives rise to the practice in which actors formulate their own objectives; deploy their own unique modes of action, and are able to give reasons for the steps taken. Simultaneously, all these actions are contributing factors which either improve or diminish the power of the actor. What has been described above is, after all, a manifestation of the knowledge of the relevant actors. These practices present one of the reasons why a completely homogeneous society will remain an illusion. The reason is that each society contains within its lifeworld a selection of different and ever changing lifestyles, cultural configurations and rationalities. Moreover, in a society's search (extension of knowledge) for order and meaning, community members sometimes play a contemplated, and at other times a spontaneous part in either affirming or restructuring lifestyles, cultural configurations and rationalities. Lifeworlds are constantly changing (Long 2001:13). The connection between agency, knowledge and actor should be becoming clearer. Please note that knowledge as a paradigm will be analysed separately and in much more detail in sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9 in Chapter IV.

When focusing on the individual or the actor, it is important to note that people's differing personalities, basic knowledge and respective driving forces should be studied with care. In such a way one could succeed in establishing a potential actor's capabilities and assessing where he or she fits into the power structure, assessing his/her ability to manage interpersonal relations and exercising the kinds of control that actors practice *vis-à-vis* each other. In the field of development, one should establish to what extent agency, in whichever form it may be encountered or required, can be entrusted to local actors or groups. Therefore, one could think, for example, of identifying established practices where agency can be demonstrated, such as who has agency for environmental care; who has agency for working among the poor, or who is practising progressive farming. Long suggests that whilst doing this, one could also try to assess how power, influence, knowledge and efficacy may shape the responses and strategies of the different groups of actors (e.g. peasants, development workers, landlords and local government officers). (Long 2001:16) All that is mentioned in the above three paragraphs, and much more, could benefit from an ethnographic study.

It should be pointed out, as has been done in par. 2.5.1, that there are clearly identifiable interweaving processes of knowledge and power, which constitute a central focus in development applications, including the actor-oriented approach, but also in a much wider field. Power and knowledge are not things that are simply possessed and accumulated, nor can their quantity or quality be measured. Both emerge from socially interactive processes that could, for instance, come about as a result of new concepts merging or causing

traditional perceptions to change. Both knowledge and power should be considered rationally and should not be treated as if they stop existing or become unavailable. Power and knowledge are universal and it would be wrong to believe that only certain people have these attributes. Nevertheless, one should remain aware of the tendency that these concepts could easily become reified in social life, for example, where we believe power and knowledge to be material things, possessed by the privileged and where they are generally regarded as unquestioned 'givens' (cf. Long 2001:16-19).

The dynamics of knowledge encounters should also be noted in preparing for an actor-oriented approach. They involve struggles between initiating actors and those actors to whom agency is being accorded in order to realise the initiatives of the initiators. Such a struggle entails mainly:

- those efforts aimed at getting the executive group to accept the framework in which the initiative has been planned;
- integrating such concepts with their own;
- convincing everyone on the team that particular frames of meanings should be accepted and will not be negotiable; and
- in general, winning all the actors over to the initiator's points of view.

In fact, through this process, one finds that power is being delegated by the executors to the initiators. Such struggles will eventually end with the joint identification of those factors which may control and influence a team's future exchanges and attributions of meaning (including the acceptance of reified notions such as authority). If any difference of opinion

should occur in a team regarding the meaning of a specific request or statement; the substance of a specific concept such as 'authority', or the applicability of a special method that is recommended, the objectives will not be easy to attain. (cf. Long 2001: 18 and 169)

The actor-oriented approach is based on the notion that different social forms develop under the same or similar structural circumstances (Long 2001:19). Cognisance is given to the fact that a huge variety of differing results will be obtained through the way in which people come to grips with situations with which they are confronted. Such procedures can be cognitive, organisational or emotional or even a combination of these. These processes are not brought about, as certain observers would believe, by forces such as resistance to change, market forces, or other socio-economic influences. In analysing a possible situation in which an actor-oriented approach is contemplated, one should identify and characterise (especially by way of ethnographic research):

differing actor practices;

strategies and rationales;

the conditions under which they arise;

how they interlock;

viability or effectiveness for solving specific problems, and

their wider social ramifications.

The above explanation should provide sufficient reasons why agency, knowledge and power would be better understood if they are considered within the framework of an actor-



oriented approach. Through this approach, it will become clear that agency, knowledge and power are of central importance in intervention planning (Long 2001:19).

#### **4.2.4 Cornerstones of an actor-oriented approach**

In studying the practical application of the actor-oriented approach, a search was conducted for a summarised comment that could throw some light on the procedures required when applying the actor-oriented approach.. The closest one could come to such a summary is probably the ‘Cornerstones of an actor-oriented approach’ (Long 2001: 240) described in Chapter I (1.1). In short, the ‘cornerstones’ recommend that one should attend to the following:

Begin by establishing actor-defined issues or critical events.

Identify issues of social heterogeneity so as to understand ‘multiple realities’.

Identify the actors in specific arenas of action and contestation, but note that actor categories and relevance are never uniformly defined. .

Undertake an ethnographic documentation of the social practices of actors, to determine lifeworld characteristics and interactions.

Establish the relevance of organising and ordering processes in the different arenas and institutional domains.

Trace the critical sets of social relationships and networks, and the meanings and values generated and negotiated within the different arenas and scenarios.

Explore critical interfaces depicting contradictions or discontinuities between actors’ (including ‘intervening’ institutional actors’) lifeworlds.

Identify processes of knowledge/power construction in arenas and interfaces of contestation and negotiation, also noting reconfigurations of authority and control.

Determine how matters of scale and complexity shape organising practices.

Analyse and identify which discourses and practices cause the emergence of new social forms and connectivities and how this happens.

A more comprehensive explanation, and draft guidelines for a practical approach to actor-oriented development, can be found in Chapter VI.

#### **4.2.5 Actors' cultural representations and discourses**

By 'discourse' is meant:

... a set of meanings embodied in metaphors, representations, images, narratives and statements that advance a particular version of 'the truth' about objects, persons, events and the relations between them. Discourses produce texts - written and spoken - and even non-verbal 'texts' such as the meanings embedded in architectural style or dress fashion (Long 2001: 242).

It has already been established ( par. 4.2.1) that due consideration should be given by the ethnographer to the way in which actors' perceptions, cultural representations and discourses unfold during the ethnographic processes. Attention should be given to how actors endeavour to:

... give meaning to their experiences through an array of representations, images, cognitive understandings and emotional responses (Long 2001: 50).

With the aim of understanding the ways in which heterogeneous cultural attributes come about and fathoming the results of interaction between different discourses and representations, the dynamics and intricacies of relations between differing lifeworlds and processes of cultural construction should be observed. Such observations should enable the ethnographer, for instance, to develop a clear picture of cultural differences, power and authority, as well as their interconnectivities.

Detailed ethnographic studies of everyday life events should isolate the huge array of 'realities' that primarily arise from experiences of all sorts. A simultaneous assessment should be made of how actors seek to grapple cognitively, emotionally and organisationally with the problematic situations they face. It would be wrong to see 'culture' as being homogeneous or unitary, and one should steer clear of the practice of describing certain behavioural patterns and sentiments as 'tradition' or 'modernity'. It would, however, be correct to perceive patterns of behaviour as issues of cultural repertoires, heterogeneity and hybridity. Please refer to paragraph 4.2.6.8 for a more in-depth discussion of the latter three concepts.

Discourse analysis offers a useful method to explore the significance of particular cultural repertoires and how they interact and interpenetrate situationally (Long 2001:50). Shifts in discourse are not simply prompted by the challenge of alternative discourses, but often by critical events that reveal the discrepancies between existing orthodox and actual social circumstances. There is a clear interrelationship between any particular discourse and other

discourses. In other words, one discourse can best be promoted by the situational use of other discourses, for instance where the policy which stresses that market factors should be left to their own devices, is often supported by discourses that have equity issues, participatory proposals and similar cases as their main thrust (Long 2001:52).

In order to tie the factors of discourse and actors together, attention is drawn to the fact that no discourse is the exclusive property of a government, a business, a bank, or even a local community. Actually, those actors who use the discourses, manipulate them and transform them, are the people who have a real claim to owning them. An actor-oriented approach enables one to understand the intricate processes that are part of peoples' involvement in social practice and provides a methodology for analysing discourses that are practically applied in development interface situations.

According to Escobar (1995: 216), actor-oriented analysis is especially appropriate for disentangling the complexities of exogenous influences, for example, the dominant discourse design by well-meaning outsiders such as economists, planners, demographers, and other actors. This leads to the question concerning how, if this is the case, interests can be defined endogenously in the terms and within the framework of the developing peoples' own lifeworlds? The tide is changing, however, and one regularly finds that the expert views of outsiders are being contested by the developing countries' actors, who, by their own actions, succeed in creating new lines for discourse as well as in extending political space.

## **4.2.6 Interventions**

Norman Long defines intervention as follows:

Intervention is an ongoing transformational process that is constantly re-shaped by its own internal organisational and political dynamic and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself creates, including the responses and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field (Long 2001:26).

Interventions, covering the vast field of interwoven and perpetual dynamics, will be covered in detail under several headings, because every development cooperation initiative is an intervention. This universality of interventions makes them very important.

### **4.2.6.1 Deconstructing 'planned intervention'**

Before looking at the need to deconstruct the concept of intervention, the following intricacies of planned intervention should be noted:

Before one can make successful interventions according to the actor-oriented approach, one should obtain clarity on the processes by which interventions (should and do) enter the lifeworlds of targeted communities.

One should also consider the direct influence interventions may have on the lifeworlds and the development of social strategies of those affected by them. For instance, in the face of planned intervention by government or other bodies, individuals and their households tend as a rule to organise themselves individually and collectively to face the imminent changes that are expected.

Observers of intervention processes in time became aware of a great variety of reactions to interventions in the targeted community. It was, for instance, found that strategies and the types of interaction evolving between targeted communities and the intervening parties, have a direct impact on the nature and outcomes of such intervention. This gives a clear reason for the importance of letting external factors become 'internalised' in a natural way.

All the above factors are subject to widely differing actions and reactions in response to an intervention.

The unavoidable heterogeneity in target communities as well as initiating instances can act as a catalyst for stress, disharmony, debates and struggles within a community, especially when it is being influenced by an intervention.

In addition, obvious differences could arise between the initiators of an intervention and the different individual actors involved on the side of the beneficiary community, whether they be implementers, clients or bystanders.

These stress factors can only be minimalised if all the actors are made part of the preceding sorting out process which intends to establish the full impact of a proposed intervention before it is launched.

The sorting out process starts with deconstruction of the whole field, followed by various ethnographic studies, and culminates in integrating all the acquired knowledge to expedite the planning of an intervention.

The intricate processes explained above support the notion that a proposed intervention needs to be deconstructed before the planning stage commences. In this way the eventual

‘intervention team’ will be supported in coming to grips with the finer details of the proposed intervention and recognise it for what it fundamentally is, namely, an ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process and not simply the execution of an already-specified plan of action with expected outcomes (cf. Long 2001: 25).

Deconstructing interventions should reveal hidden agendas, ‘cargo’ approaches, (please refer to par. 4.2.6.5 later in this chapter), patronising tendencies, impulsive actions, reifications and similar unwanted elements which are all too often sneaking into interventions, even from the earliest stages. So, for example, Palumbo and Nachmias give examples of the high road and the low road in interventions when pointing out that:

... policy-makers often are not looking for the best way or most efficient alternative for solving a problem. They are instead searching for support that serves the interests of various components of the policy shaping community’ (Palumbo & Nachmias 1983: 9-11).

Deconstructing intervention would lead to better understanding of the ‘high road’ requirements and will assist researchers and actors alike in, for instance, acquiring the ability first to identify and then to break with conventional models, images and reasoning.

Deconstruction of intervention could illuminate the fact that the ideal approach should entail much more than the three phases of formulation, implementation and evaluation. Deconstruction is a search for reality, amongst other things, but the imaginary straight line between policy design and outcomes purported by the linear approach, does not

reflect reality. Therefore deconstruction of an intervention will reveal what should really be done and which processes should be adhered to or prioritised. The implementation of policy interventions requires reinterpretation from time to time, as well as certain transformations during the process. The perception that all outcomes can be directly linked to the implementation of a certain development programme (intervention) is a fallacy, because such factors, unrelated to the programme design, often influence the outcome of an intervention in surprising ways. Keep in mind, for instance, that development projects are often pursued by local groups, who are not acting as a result of external influences (Long 2001:25).

Referring to practical intervention issues, Norman Long (2001:26), cites his experiences in Zambia and Peru, where he learnt that planned interventions by government and other outside bodies are accepted, rejected, internalised or debated by those who may be influenced by such interventions. This supports the fact that target communities often organise themselves beforehand by devising discursive and organisational strategies. It stands to reason that the spontaneity and variety of reactions to interventions will determine outcomes and even interim developments between the role players in surprising ways.

The following very important and relevant factors should be considered when a preparatory analysis (ethnographic and deconstructive) is done of a development field in anticipation of the planning of an intervention:



Interventions from outside a community must be introduced to the targeted individuals and groups in such a way that they form part of the resources and constraints of the social strategies and interpretive frames they intend to develop.

A targeted community should be enabled and encouraged to identify with an intervention, to make it its own, or to 'internalise' it.

One should ascertain whether the external factors introduced in this way become internalised although they may often be perceived in different ways by different interest groups or by different individual actors (Long 2001: 27).

To summarise, after all the preliminary discussions, one should consider the following when deconstructing an intervention:

Most importantly, one should focus upon styles of intervention that are concentrating on interaction between the targeted individuals, groups and other participants. It would be wrong to revert to the redundant method of focusing on artificial and preconceived, hypothetical intervention models which usually lose sight of the actors, but target government departments or similar instances instead. It is also important that deconstruction of an intervention will reveal which elements in the target area are to be included and which not.

From what has been mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, it should now be ascertained whether the proposed intervention will assist in the generation of development and other initiatives within the targeted community, even among the lower echelons thereof. This process will ensure a certain break with the old beliefs

that generally perceive development as something that is made available to communities mainly from outside (the 'cargo' approach) or from above (the top-down approach). Please refer to paragraph 4.2.6.5 for an explanation of these terms.

In deconstructing interventions, one is also forced to look at the practices that are followed with interventions in a selected field. Deconstructing this will lead one to identify the very wide field of emergent forms of interaction, procedures, practical strategies, types of discourse, cultural categories and sentiments present in specific contexts (Long 2001: 27).

The task obviously does not end with the deconstruction process. It is of vital importance that a reconstruction should follow, through which the whole intervention process could be put together again to reflect, as closely as possible, an ongoing, socially-constructed, negotiated, experiential and meaning-creating process (the whole definition is mentioned in par. 4.2.6).

In view of the above, interventions should be deconstructed and presented to the development programme designers in a new and revealing form, which should at that stage already identify all the actors from both sides. In this forum, the proposed intervention can be constructed to render it optimally effective.

The above rough guidelines on deconstruction of an intervention just skim the surface of the subject. A fuller, more complete exposition of interventions is not deemed necessary because it will be illuminated in successive paragraphs.

#### **4.2.6.2 Exploring intervention processes**

From the onset it should be noted that a due focus should be placed on intervention practices as they evolve and are shaped by the struggles between the various participants. The practice of giving preference to intervention models instead of practices will no longer satisfy the needs of contemporary research. Intervention models deal with ideal-typical proposals that planners, implementers or clients may have about the process, whereas intervention practice deals directly with the tensions and struggles within the target community, which can never be cast into a model. Focusing upon intervention practices allows one to take account of emergent forms of interaction, procedures, practical strategies, types of discourse, cultural categories and the:

... stakeholders involved in specific contexts, and to reformulate questions of state intervention and development from a more thoroughgoing actor perspective (Palumbo 1987: 32).

Understanding the routes followed by interventions entering the lifeworlds of target communities is of cardinal importance because once an intervention has penetrated a lifeworld, it becomes part of the resources and constraints of the social strategies it may trigger. This process is called internalisation and is not uncommon to any community or individual. In fact, one can internalise in a community, in a neighbourhood and even within a family. As external factors become 'internalised' they come to mean different things to different people. Therefore, the process can become rather involved and intricate (Long 2001: 32).

Palumbo and Nachmias point out that policy-makers:

... are often not looking for the best or most efficient way to solve a problem. What they are doing instead is to search for support that serves the interests of various components of the policy shaping community (Palumbo and Nachmias 1983: 9-11).

It is not enough, then, to modify or seek refinements of orthodox views on planned intervention. Instead one must break with conventional models, images and reasoning. Therefore, rather than eliminating social and normative struggles, intervention practices are likely to radicalise them, introducing new discontinuities and heightening confrontations between differing interests and values (Long 2001:40).

Some aspects of the actor-oriented methodology, such as ethnography and deconstruction, are well-suited for the advance exploration of intervention processes. For example, the focus could fall on the mode of organisation prevalent in the proposed field of study and both deconstruction and ethnographic procedures could be used to ascertain as much as possible about the subject.. Once this has been done, one should attempt (by means of ethnography) to identify the actors' strategies in the relative field and it could be necessary to determine outcomes such as social and other changes in the lifeworlds of the target community. This is done by noting the interaction and negotiations taking place between individuals and groups with differing and often conflicting social interests and experiences. In other words, one should assess how local actors and the rest of the community resolve their livelihood problems and organise their resources.

In the case of agriculture:

producers and householders actively construct, within the limits they face, their own patterns of farm and household organisation and their own ways of dealing with intervening agencies (Long 2001: 26).

These patterns are not limited to the agricultural sphere and can also be observed in civil service actions and in private enterprise. Agricultural and other sectors display the same tendency in the process of adapting to the changing world around them. They all utilise organisational and cognitive methods, thus devising plans and strategies to reach their goals. To avoid results that mainly focus on calculated and rational approaches, fieldwork has to entail the anchoring of questions, observing and analysing the full range of lifeworld experiences of actors. Care has to be taken not to impose one's own subjective interpretations on the study (Long 2001:26).

Only then can one begin to investigate planned intervention. Several forms of intervention can be found in any model. The formal sector, which would entail official interventions, comes to mind. In addition, one should determine to what extent interventions by authorities or bodies such as foreign countries, the World Bank or local private enterprise can be detected. This could be followed by establishing the rate of success which such authorities/bodies have had in their endeavours to organise and control production and commercialisation of the key products. It will then follow logically that interactions that will occur between locals and the intervening groups should also be identified and assessed.

Exploring interventions requires one to:

... identify the types of organising practices, socio-political interfaces and configurations of knowledge and power that developed out of the complex processes of negotiation (Long 2001: 26).

Wider structural phenomena should be clearly understood before one embarks on attempts to apply the list of factors regarding the analysis of a development field, as mentioned under paragraph 4.2.6.1 above. One could, for instance, start off by investigating how government would tackle the outcomes of local-level development. In this regard a study of ways in which production is organised, and how labour processes and related economic activities are manipulated by those bodies that create economic and political power relations, should also be undertaken by way of a modified political economic approach (Bates 1983: 134- 47).

According to Burawoy:

[s]uch an approach would also give attention to analysing the social, cultural and ideological mechanisms by which particular economic systems and types of 'production regime' are reproduced (Burawoy 1985:7-8).

To be successful with an actor-oriented analysis one will have to concentrate on handling the:

.. issues of 'structure' and 'structural constraints', while continuing to accord sufficient room to the central role played by the diverse forms of human action and social consciousness in the making of development (Long 2001:27).

Furthermore, one should realise that the combination of structural- and actor perspectives, and issues, will require one to reassess one's own attitudes. Key concepts of:

... political economy, such as commoditisation, state hegemony, 'subsumption' of the peasantry, the primacy of the 'laws' of capitalist development, and perhaps even the concept of the market itself ...

(Long 2001:27)

... are all to be looked at again from a new perspective.

#### **4.2.6.3 Demythologising planned intervention**

First, a clear distinction should be made between:

... theoretical models aimed at understanding processes of social change and development and policy models that set out the ways in which development should be promoted (Long 2001:30).

Intervention could, as an alternative, be viewed as:

... a 'multiple reality' made up of differing cultural perceptions and social interests, and constituted by the ongoing social and political struggles that take place between the various social actors involved (Long 2001: 30).

Because interrelations between theoretical and policy models are often left unexplained and therefore unclear, the evolution of intervention practices, as they are shaped by interactions between various actors, should become the focal point, rather than concentration on intervention models. The first is a practical and the second a theoretical approach.

Focusing upon intervention practices allows one to take account of emergent forms of interaction, procedures, practical strategies, types of discourse, cultural categories and the 'stakeholders' (Palumbo 1987: 32).

The above exposition could assist one to reformulate questions of state intervention and development from a more thoroughgoing actor perspective.

#### **4.2.6.4 Considering intervention in time and space: Two ways of looking at it**

Time, as used in the heading, should be interpreted as a temporal concept - something that has a beginning and an end. Space reminds one of something surrounded by visible, tangible or implied boundaries. Orthodox intervention models are inclined to use the time-space concept in such a way that historical factors, such as memory and learning, are made redundant. This is usually demonstrated by the application of the popular but outdated notion that, whatever the difficulties and successes may be that were experienced before, and regardless of how deep down the patterns of underdevelopment may reach, an exquisitely designed and well targeted intervention project can succeed in removing the ballast of 'traditional' modes of existence. Having thus shed the burden of traditional factors inherent in the targeted society, any form of development should be able to succeed. On the contrary, development interventions are undeniably part of a very intricate and unpredictable flow of events. These usually take place within the framework of government activities; the assistance rendered by international institutions, and the involvement of different interest groups operative in civil society. In addition, according to Long (2001: 31), linkages occurring between today's



interventions and preceding (historical) ones, could have consequences for future interventions. Such links often lead to inter-institutional arguments or cause disagreement and debates over perceived goals, administrative competencies, resource allocation, institutional boundaries, and many more issues that are concerned with space. As an alternative to the above-mentioned orthodox applications of the time-space concept, one should acknowledge planned intervention as being a complex set of evolving social practices and struggles into which time and space can be reintroduced as elements of specific historical processes, that become distorted when confined to the orthodox time-space grid of the project modalities.

Intervention then implies the confrontation or interpenetration of different lifeworlds and socio-political experiences, which may be significant for generating new forms of social practice and ideology (Long 2001: 32).

#### **4.2.6.5 The 'cargo' image of intervention**

The 'cargo' image conveys the picture of development which is being brought from abroad or outside into a country. In other words, it creates the image of a top-down process. Intervention practices are made up of different flows of events and interests that are, as a rule, mixed in any conceivable proportion. The 'cargo image' is the result of the belief that the traditional situations in a country, the general way of life, and the ways in which social life is organised, are all to be ignored, restructured or eliminated altogether. Only then will development be able to take place effectively.

Sithembiso Nyoni [Zimbabwean Director of Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress] pointed out that:

... no country in the world has ever developed itself through projects; development results from a long process of experiment and innovation through which people build up the skills, knowledge and self-confidence necessary to shape their environment in ways that foster progress toward goals such as economic growth, equity in income distribution, and political freedom (Edwards 1989: 116-35).

Contemporary documents dealing with development agreements, reporting on development conferences and forming the foundations for future development programmes, are all proclaiming the importance of all sorts of ‘participation’ and ‘participatory’ research. Please refer to paragraph 4.2.8.7 for a more extensive discussion of the ‘participatory approach’. One may be tempted to believe that the enthusiastic introduction of ‘participatory development’ is mainly motivated by the possibility of shared responsibility or even blame. In addition, it expects results such as the possible reduction of infrastructural costs, the alleviation of organisational burdens and the improvement of the accuracy of research. Suspicions regarding the active introduction of the participatory approach are strengthened when one is reminded of the fact that in most of the cases in which participation could have been introduced, the effective execution thereof tends to remain in the hands of the experts that form part of the ‘cargo’.

#### **4.2.6.6 Planning interventions**

To illustrate the various aspects that have to be considered in planning interventions properly, the model of agrarian development, as used by Norman Long (cf. 2001: 37 - 38), is used as reference point, which, however, does not mean that approximately the same situations are not applicable to other fields as well. Long mentions three essentials that have to be kept in mind in the process of developing a methodological and theoretical approach to interventions, which are as follows:

**Firstly**, intervention is not the key to agrarian development, but could be portrayed as part of the problem of development itself because of the general belief that development has to be induced. Agrarian development is not dependent on interventions because it is a relatively autonomous, diversified and dynamic process. The autonomy and dynamics could, however, be impeded even by way of an intervention itself. This could happen because intervention practices, more often than not, aim at controlling the pattern of local economic and political development. A case in point is one in which, in a high-handed way, policy interventions force local initiatives to come into line with the interests and perspectives of government authorities, thereby portraying government or its agencies as the ones holding the key to development. Obviously, top-down control actions would have a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of, and the meanings accorded to, local development activities. Norman Long mentions in this regard that:

much historical evidence documents the counterpart process; namely; that a reduction in control by central state authorities often stimulates a sudden revitalisation and proliferation of local development activities (Long 2001: 37).

**The second point** is that heterogeneity appears in most structural features and therefore also in the structures of agrarian development. It is spontaneous and cannot be engineered. Heterogeneity sprouts from a host of unpredictable, unforeseen but dynamic occurrences and actions that are experienced by a community, as well as changes that occur in communities caused by diverse local scenarios. Where interventions, often based on accepted, predetermined and standardised solutions, would come in as 'cargo' from external sources, they will have very little compatibility with highly diverse (heterogeneous) local situations, as well as very little compatibility with local knowledge and experience. Such interventions will therefore only have a limited chance for success.

**The third important point** is that specific interventions can be greeted with acclaim by one section of actors, organisations or individuals while a second group may feel threatened by the same. Therefore, good practice will be to base an assessment of the possible effects of a proposed intervention on the widest possible scope of civil society actors, people, organisations and institutions that could, within reason, be expected to be affected. Ethnographic research could be employed to delve into identifiable patterns of interaction and accommodation prevalent between different groups of actors. An analysis of how particular histories, collective memories, and time-space conceptions would probably shape the internalisation following an intervention, as well as expected outcomes of particular policy measures, will also be required.

From the above can be learnt that the basic research factors that are recommended for actor-oriented analysis can also be fruitfully utilised in intervention planning. In acknowledging that there are different responses to changing circumstances, it becomes obvious that there will always be variations within (agricultural and other) systems. A systems approach to plan an intervention would for these, and many reasons mentioned before, be less than satisfactory. For instance, it does not fit into the Norman Long definition cited under par. 4.2.6 above. If Long's definition is accepted, which has been done in this study because it is conducive to the application of the actor-oriented approach, the systems approach will not be compatible with intervention planning at all. One could also expect to come across a variety of patterns of response and change to each of these factors that were, and possibly are still not, always heeded in the assessment and planning of interventions. Some of these patterns are created by farmers (actors) because they are not simply passive recipients, but are actively involved in working out strategies for their own projects, even interacting with outside institutions in the process. Understanding (agrarian and other forms of) change is complex, as pointed out above. To overcome the complexities, one should, from the inception, acknowledge the fact that:

heterogeneity exists;

farmers and other local actors shape the outcomes of change;

change is not simply imposed on communities, and

different social patterns develop within the same structural circumstances.

Please note that the theories of planning interventions are wide-ranging and cannot be included here, because of the bulk of information on the subject and the fact that it is not all relevant to the main thrust of this study.

#### **4.2.6.7 Actor perspectives on state policy and intervention**

It becomes necessary now to look at an actor-oriented approach to questions of state-driven interventions because they would naturally differ markedly from mere theoretical approaches. The lifeworlds of individuals and groups are influenced differently by ‘cargo’ interventions, but also by those originating from endogenous sources. In the process of internalisation, all interventions are necessarily becoming part of the resources and constraints of the social strategies that the targeted communities may develop. In this way, through the processes of internalisation, the transferred ‘cargo’ factors may come to mean quite different things to different interest groups or actors - and will change in the eyes of the donors. They could be changed by exchanges and negotiations taking place between farmers or other local actors and intervening agents. This could either happen simultaneously or separately. So, for instance, technical staff operating on the local front often find themselves caught up between two widely differing knowledge systems (that of the administrator/technician and that of the peasant villager). This could make it impossible for local officers to please the people of the local community with their own interpretations, on the one hand, and the government and its employees which formulate their own rules from a distance, on the other hand.

In other words, agency could prove to be as crucial for the intervening parties as it is for the so-called 'target' groups (Long 2001: 48).

In applying theoretical questions to the state and its policy, one could gain further appreciation of the complexities that surround intervention practices and processes. It means that the importance of establishing which different responses and outcomes could be expected from a specific intervention, should be kept in mind. The results of this research can possibly expose the shortcomings of generalised models of intervention that are becoming outdated and are not at all compatible with the actor-oriented approach. Furthermore, the research in itself has the potential of offering a host of additional advantages. Moving closer to the core values of the proposed research, it needs to be said that:

... it points to the value of undertaking comparative studies of the social impact and dynamics of particular forms of state intervention at regional and local levels, and of the more 'autonomous' processes taking place off-stage or in the interstices of formal politico-administrative frameworks (Long 2001: 48).

All in all, the recommended form of research, with its special attributes as mentioned in the quote above, has the potential to lead one to a better understanding of intervention planning and practices and warns the keen observer and scholar to expect the process to be fluid, resulting in frequent unexpected outcomes (cf. Long 2001: 45-48).

#### **4.2.6.8 Actors' perceptions, cultural representations and discourses**

The need to know more about the fusion of the intricate and dynamic relations between differing lifeworlds and the attempts of actors to give meaning to the new concepts that

present themselves as a result of interventions, form a basis for another type of analysis. Actors' reactions to representations, images, cognitive understandings and emotional responses contribute to the fusion or 'internalisation'. Naturally, some cultural perceptions will be easier to assimilate, transform or reconstitute than others and the main problems arise from those issues that are foreign to the target community. Where different lifeworlds are therefore interacting, the intricacies and dynamics of the interrelationship should be addressed. The processes of cultural construction in the target community should emanate from a careful analysis. Thus, the ways in which heterogeneous cultural phenomena are produced, and the results of the interaction between different representational and discursive domains, should be clarified by an ethnographic study. From the ensuing results, one could continue to establish the presence, influence and dynamics of cultural differences, power and authority.

Social life with its 'multiple realities' becomes one of the focal points of ethnographers' studies and through ethnographic contributions a detailed and methodological study of everyday life could be constructed. On the basis of ongoing ethnographic reporting, the intervention team will be able to observe how actors seek to grapple cognitively, emotionally and organisationally with the problematic situations they face.

In no way should one succumb to the temptation to conceptualise culture as being homogeneous or unitary, by perceiving, for instance, certain cultural aspects as being traditional or modern. It is advisable rather to work on issues like cultural repertoires,



heterogeneity and hybridity. The concept of cultural repertoires has been mentioned but not explained before, but indicates the ways in which:

various cultural elements (value notions, types and fragments of discourses, organisational ideas, symbols and ritualised procedures) are used and recombined in social practice, consciously or otherwise (Long 2001: 37).

On the other hand, heterogeneity is indicated by:

... the generation and coexistence of multiple social forms within the same context or same scenario of problem solving, which offer alternative solutions to similar problems, thus underlining that living cultures are necessarily multiple in the way in which they are enacted (Long 2001: 50).

Hybridity refers to the mixed end-products that arise out of the combining of different cultural ingredients and repertoires (Long 2001: 50).

The term 'social mutation' can also serve to describe hybridity (Arce and Long 2000: 89).

In the actor-oriented approach, discourse analysis (see par. 2.2.2 above for a definition of discourse), is a recommended procedure to assess the significance of particular cultural repertoires and to establish how they interact in various situations.

#### **4.2.6.9 The concern for discourse and actor-oriented analysis**

Reference has already been made before to the fact that discourses do not belong to institutions or communities. To prevent reification of discourses, the individual actors should rather be seen as the driving forces from which discourses originate. These actors are people who bring to an institution or community their personal attributes

(knowledge, skills, cultural assets and burdens, personal likes and dislikes). At the same time they determine the 'culture ' of that institution or community in which they work or live through a combination of all their personal attributes. The way in which people's personal attributes are manipulated, plays an important role in establishing and transforming the discourses originating in the communities and institutions in which they work or live.

The actor-oriented approach facilitates the understanding of the processes of usage, manipulation and transformation and, conversely, these factors facilitate understanding of the actor-oriented approach. This process provides a methodology for analysing discursive practice and development interface situations and emphasises situated social practices (Long 2001: 53).

The domination of professionally developed discourses presents a good reason for paying attention to discourses and the actor. According to Escobar, the power of dominant representations of development is grounded in the way in which:

... Third World reality is inscribed with precision and persistence by the discourses and practices of economists, planners, nutritionists, demographers and the like, making it difficult for people to define their own interests in their own terms - in many cases actually disabling them from doing so (Escobar 1995: 216).

The other side of the coin is, however, that one finds an increasing tendency among local and global groups to contest expert views, especially about matters such as human

rights, gender issues and the environment, thereby creating new discourses and political space (Long 2001: 53).

Therefore, to understand the processes of usage, manipulation and transformation, the actor-oriented approach should be employed. This will lead to ensuring that a methodology for analysing discursive practice and development interface situations is applied. This can, in turn, simultaneously contribute to emphasising situated social practices.

#### **4.2.7 Key elements of an interface perspective**

Interface can briefly be described as an organised entity of interlocking relationships and intentionalities (Long 2001: 69). Interface comes about over time through the establishment of organised relations between groups, such as landlords and tenants or factory workers and management. It is recognised by existing rules, procedures, sanctions, and established ways of, for instance, conflict handling. The same ingredients will be found in interfaces involving government officials and civil society and its institutions, or between communities that have religious, ethnic or political differences.

In the process of analysing interfaces, the focus should fall on the linkages and networks that develop between individuals or parties rather than on individual or group strategies. With time, interface itself can be recognised by the presence of interlocking relationships and intentionalities. It should be noted that successful interface succeeds in creating normative

middle ground, that can come about, either by way of endogenous or through exogenous negotiations. Interface may also involve contests between government, private enterprise and civil society organisations.

The role of actors in interface becomes important as a result of what has been stated above.

Actors may either find some degree of common interest, or they could disagree with one another due to contradictory interests and objectives or unequal power relations.

Moreover, it is often found that actors are involved who represent different and differing constituencies, groups or organisations. The position of such actors must, naturally, be ambivalent since they must respond to the demands of their own groups as well as to the expectations of those with whom they must negotiate. Therefore, any actor who occupies a middle position between different social domains or hierarchical levels will find himself in a dilemma of having to please both sides. Actors who acquire the skills to manage such ambivalent positions tend to use them to their personal or political advantage, and are often selected to act as intermediaries or arbitrators.

While analysing an interface, one could be tempted to get a wrong perception of the prevalent contradictions and ambivalence demonstrated in practice. One should not assume forthwith that observed contradictions and ambivalence are proof that some actors' loyalties are more fundamental than those of others. Similarly, one should also not assume that, because an actor represents a specific group or institution, he or she necessarily acts purely in the interests or on behalf of that group or institution. The link between representatives

and constituencies (with their differentiated memberships) must be empirically established, not taken for granted.

Interfaces are often subjected to clashes of cultural paradigms. It can happen, for instance, that the dominance and legitimacy of particular socio-cultural paradigms or representations of modernity are contested. Simultaneously, however, credit should be given to the fact that actors could be committed in some or other way to specific ideologies or normative principles. The types of discourse and rhetoric emanating from such a contest are usually situation-specific and should not be generalised. The interplay of cultural and ideological oppositions should therefore be analysed within the perspective of actors' particular definitions of reality and visions of the future. This could lead to the effective mapping out of the ways in which actors either bridge or distance themselves from actions and ideologies, thus making it possible for certain types of interface to reproduce or transform themselves (cf. Long 2001: 238).

1The concept of interface helps us to focus on the production and transformation of differences in worldviews or cultural paradigms. Interface situations often provide the means by which individuals or groups come to define their own cultural or ideological positions *vis-à-vis* those espousing or typifying opposing views. The process is becoming more intricate as a result of several different cultural models or organising principles coexisting within a community or administration and creating room for manoeuvre in the interpretation and utilisation of these differing cultural values or standpoints (Long 2001: 69).

#### **4.2.7.1 Interface and knowledge processes**

The above links up with the importance of knowledge processes. Norman Long defines knowledge as :

... a cognitive and social construction that results from and is constantly shaped by the experiences, encounters and discontinuities that emerge at the points of intersection between different actors' lifeworlds (Long 2001: 70).

To a present more basic perspective, a definition of knowledge by Simon Burton is also quoted:

Knowledge: An asset or a capability of the human mind (although sometimes it only seems to exist in its practical manifestations: how to do something). (Coetzee et al. 2001: 434)

Therefore, all types of knowledge, including self-knowledge and knowledge about other people and their driving forces are important in understanding social interfaces.

Knowledge manifests itself, for instance, in social situations. It can also become a factor in power relations and the distribution of resources. In case of interventions, knowledge becomes even more significant because one finds that a certain confrontational interaction between expert and lay views, beliefs and values takes place. Then it becomes important to establish how the two sides go about to justify, segregate and communicate their differences.

Thus, interface could be interpreted as knowledge arising from 'an encounter of horizons' (Long 2001: 175). Through this encounter, the incorporation of new information and new discursive or cultural frames finds as a basis already-existing

knowledge frames and evaluative modes because they have already been re-shaped through communicative processes. This renders knowledge to present itself as a result of interaction, dialogue, reflexivity and contests of meaning, involving certain aspects of control, authority and power (Long 2001: 69-70).

#### **4.2.7.2 Interface and multiple discourses**

To understand how 'dominant' discourses are being endorsed, transformed or challenged, a thorough analysis of interface would come in handy. Reifications are often encountered in dominant discourses. This means that persons or abstract concepts are converted into things or commodities. Such a tendency is found among concepts that assume the existence and significance of certain social traits and groupings. So, for example, 'communities,' 'hierarchical' or 'egalitarian' structures, and cultural constructions of ethnicity, gender and class could be, and often are, given an identity that differs from the way they are normally perceived. Reified conversions often serve political aims and are used to promote particular, often emotive, cultural or moral standpoints or are utilised in debates, inter alia on social meanings and strategic resources.

Regarding discourse, one is enabled through interface to obtain more information about how discursive practices and competencies develop. Knowledge and power play a definite role in these processes and other influences are brought to bear through the blending or segregation of opposing discourses. Actors develop their discursive

practices and competencies primarily through their participation in everyday social life, especially when critical points of discontinuity between actors' lifeworlds occur (Long 2001: 70-71).

#### **4.2.7.3 Interface and planned intervention**

The dynamics of administrative action in policy implementation, have been researched by Batley (1983), whereas Handelman and Leyton, (1987) examined, as anthropologists, the social and cultural interfaces between bureaucratic agencies and their clients. These are depicting all sorts of interface which are being increasingly researched because interface is becoming more evident. One of the roles of the ethnographer is to utilise interface analysis to understand how processes of planned intervention are internalised and how they affect lifeworlds. With these facts at hand, intervention planners can determine how such processes are utilised by actors to become part of the resources and constraints of the social strategies they develop. These facts will, in turn, be of importance for utilisation in the actor-oriented approach. Fact finding on how internalised factors are digested by communities could become another possible ethnographic observation. In this regard, it is possible that some sections within communities or some individuals may interpret internalised factors in quite a different way from other interest groups or individual actors. Norman Long remarks that:

... in this way interface analysis helps to deconstruct the concept of planned intervention so that it is seen for what it is - namely, an ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process, not simply the execution of an already-specified plan of action with expected outcomes ( Long 2001: 72).



The above indicates that policy implementation is not, as is often implied, a mere top-down process. One understands now that initiatives may come as much from below as from above.

For the above mentioned reasons one should concentrate on intervention practices as they unfold as a result of interactions among various participants. The more 'rationally' perceived models of intervention, those designed by planners and implementers, do not rank equally. When studying the processes of practical interventions, the observer will be able to observe and determine interaction as it unfolds itself; procedures that are being applied; practical strategies as they are implemented, and a variety of discourse and cultural categories present in specific contexts. The 'multiple realities' of development projects (interventions) should be taken into full account. This means that one should assess the different meanings and interpretations of means and ends attributed by the different actors, and note the struggles that arise (or could arise) out of these differential perceptions and expectations.

Planned intervention can be visualised as a process of transformation, constantly being re-shaped in its own dynamics by such conditions it may meet or create. The process includes responses and strategies of local groups who may find it difficult to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field (Long 2001: 71).

Norman Long concludes that interface analysis is a difficult research subject. He explains his statement by referring to the fact that a generalised concept such as 'state-citizen relations' is difficult to understand within the context of government initiated or local organisations' interventions and it does not help to use normative concepts such as 'local participation' to describe such interactions. These interactions should be seen as an ongoing process that takes place between actors, in which they transform, negotiate and adapt meanings. Interface analysis requires proper analyses of differences occurring, that involve normative values. In doing this, one needs to understand the struggles and power differentials taking place between the parties involved. In addition, the dynamics of cultural accommodation that makes it possible for the various worldviews to interact, should be attended to as well (Long 2001: 72).

In view of all the above that forms part of interface analysis, one can agree that this will not be easy to accomplish.

#### **4.2.7.4 Actor-oriented interface perspectives**

From what has been said previously, the importance of determining an actor-oriented interface perspective stands out clearly. The aim should be, for instance, in the case of an intervention, to establish how actors' lifeworlds and projects interact and eventually how agreements are reached.

The analysis of interface opens up a vast field of interaction amongst actors aimed at, amongst others, sorting out different images, uncomfortable relationships and probable

contests about resources, plus the social transformations and other ramifications that may ensue. In other words, social discontinuity, ambiguity and cultural differences in a social structure can be identified analytically. The observer becomes sensitised to the importance of exploring how discrepancies on the social front, in cultural circles, and concerning knowledge and power are solved, perpetuated or transformed at critical points of confrontation and linkage (Long 2001: 89).

To facilitate the eventual understanding of the intricate processes mentioned above, an ethnographic approach, perhaps combined with deconstruction where necessary, is preferred to experimental methods and is therefore recommended. The ethnographic approach will enable one to better understand more fully the 'autonomous' settings in which people cope with their own problems, problems that may either arise from endogenous or external sources. As illustrated before (par. 4.2.1) the ethnographer should, to be successful, should join up with communities in which interaction such as problem-solving is taking place, and try to obtain a role in the community such as that of participating observer, adviser or co-worker. The objective of such work should be actor-oriented research on actor-defined issues. It should be done regarding issues defined by actors such as policy-makers, researchers, intervening private or public agents or local actors. Simultaneously, attention should be given to the spatial, cultural, institutional and power arenas involved. Especially the latter concepts such as spatial and power arenas would require deconstruction before the ethnographic details can be put into place.

As stated before, culture should not be regarded as a homogeneous concept and the concepts of cultural repertoires, heterogeneity and hybridity (as explained in par. 4.2.6.8) should rather be used as a basis for interface analysis.

#### **4.2.7.5 Issues of participation and empowerment**

The discussion of empowerment is included here because the implied relationship between power and empowerment as explained, inter alia, by Isaac E. Catt in his Foreword (Wendt 2001: xv), can be seen as a contentious subject in contemporary development cooperation. The question of empowerment is closely related to the central issue of the encounter between actors and their knowledge repertoires (Long 2001:187). As mentioned before, interface analysis deals with multiple realities consisting of potentially conflicting interests as well a variety of contested agglomerates of knowledge. In each development scenario that one encounters one will find a prevalence of various actors' interpretations and proposals. They may either be those of lesser actors and citizens, or of politicians, development practitioners and the like. Whatever the case may be, the main objective should be to establish whose inputs prevail and how and why they do, thus enabling one to assess the measure of power/knowledge that can be allocated to each actor. This is something quite different to looking at the degree of 'empowerment' of each actor.

It has been stated before that the concept of ‘empowerment’ of the people is strongly encouraged by contemporary development specialists as a goal to be attained in development practice. With regard to the high rank that has been accorded to ‘participatory development’ since the last decade, and the relationship between ‘empowerment’ and the ‘participatory approach’ in development discussions, this phenomenon will be discussed together with ‘empowerment’.

Although empowerment-related policies may emphasise that one should listen to the people and understand the reasoning that drives local knowledge, this could strengthen local capacities and promote alternative development strategies. All these policy aspects convey the view that power is being injected from outside to achieve local self-determination by shifting the balance of the internal forces. Initial views of empowerment as a factor in development, such as strategic intervention by ‘enlightened experts’ who make use of ‘people’s science’, have been discussed by Richards (1985), and ‘local intermediate organisations’ have in turn been identified by Esman & Uphoff (1984) and Korten (1987), all used as references in Long (2001: 85). These views, although valid and illuminative, were part of the impasse thinking of some twenty years ago. These were overtaken by post-impasse alternatives such as the actor-oriented approach, that does not agree with concepts such as using ‘enlightened experts’. In addition, Esman and Uphoff’s ‘local intermediate organisations’ would have either to become actors or produce them, instead of playing the role envisaged by the above authors.

Formulations such as the above-mentioned tend to reflect managerialist and interventionist undertones inherent in the idea of 'development'. The perception is created that more knowledgeable and powerful outsiders are helping the powerless and less discerning local folk. This patronising approach should be made redundant by its eradication from future interventions and other development aligned positions. One would not be surprised to find that many practitioners, working with the everyday problems of implementation, are very much aware of the paradox of empowerment, and by implication of participatory strategies too. And yet, the more distanced operators in the higher echelons seem to have very little consideration for it. Those that plan and design the means to engineer change through development, find the inability amongst development agents to avoid the exogenous approach, to be a real dilemma. However, the dilemma (and the paradox) will remain as long as the goals of participation and empowerment are being accepted as development policy. Simultaneously, the concepts of 'empowerment' and 'participation' should both be portrayed realistically and as they are, in order to remove the reified perceptions of those concepts, which are often deceptive in many ways. The question of empowerment, then, brings us back to the central issue of the encounter between actors and their knowledge repertoires. To display empowerment and the 'participatory approach' in a more realistic way, one would need to prove that both concepts are paradoxical. Empowerment, for instance, often contains some or other reference to 'participatory' approaches. This is construed in development circles as a recommendation 'to listen to the people', to understand the

‘reasoning behind local knowledge’, ‘strengthening local organisational capacity’ and developing ‘alternative development strategies from below’. Seen from a different angle, empowerment seems to imply the injection of power from external sources, whereas participation seems to mean working together (perhaps in an inferior role) with external forces, with the aim of letting such external forces impact on local interests.

From all this it can be concluded that contemporary development should rather make use of strategic intervention, for instance by way of the actor-oriented approach, rather than advocating ‘empowerment’ and ‘participatory development’ in the populist way it is being done presently. In terms of the actor-oriented approach, development projects can still be undertaken by actors or ‘enlightened experts’ who make use of endogenous discourses or ‘people’s science’; representatives from the lifeworlds involved, or ‘local intermediate organisations’. This would be concomitant with a process which aims at promoting development ‘from below’.

Empowerment therefore does entail taking account of solutions to problems offered by local people. In dealing with it, the stance is often adopted that success will be achieved if the standardised and accepted methods of the past are substituted by ‘learning approaches to the planning and management of projects’ (Korten 1987), or by introducing the new style of professionalism that is aimed at promoting participatory management and participatory research.

Intervention processes tend to reflect and exacerbate cultural differences and conflict between social groups and do not necessarily lead to the establishment of common perceptions and shared values. It would therefore be unrealistic for facilitators to believe that they can convince people and organisations to incline towards more 'participatory' and equitable modes of integration and co-ordination. Kronenburg's Kenyan project (Kronenburg 1986) illustrates the central importance of strategic agency by indicating the ways in which development practitioners as well as local participants, deal with and handle constraining and enabling elements when they canvass mutual assistance to help with their individual or group 'projects'. The Kenyan example also indicates the significance of social networks because they are ideal instruments for gathering information, forming opinions, legitimising one's standpoint, and thus for generating differential power relations. The idea of employing participatory strategies, which are based upon the effective use of local knowledge and organisations, seems to become reduced to fallacy because such a process will not assist one to avoid what Marglin and Marglin (1990) call 'the dominating knowledge of science and western "scientific" management' (as quoted in Long 2001: 188), a concept which is clearly untenable and which reveals the facetiousness of the interpretation which is presently being given to the concept of participatory development.

Whatever the formulations around empowerment and the participatory approach may be, they still contain managerialist and interventionist undertones and evoke the image of 'more knowledgeable and powerful outsiders' helping 'the powerless and less



discerning local folk'. It is not surprising that the paradox of participatory strategies is often experienced by field workers who face the everyday problems of project implementation, but is often shrugged off by the academic workers. Long (2001: 185)

#### **4.2.7.6 Concluding comments on policy practice**

The process of interface analysis covers different institutional domains that are all influenced in different ways by an involved selection of socially constructed and negotiated transformations, affecting a variety of actors in different ways. This makes it necessary to maintain an acute awareness of the dynamics of interface encounters and how they influence events and actors' interests and their identities. Throughout the process, one should take care not to accord too much weight to external expert systems thereby underestimating the practical knowledge and organising capacities of fieldwork's and local actors. It is the day-to-day decisions that actors devise, and the routines and strategies that they put into practice to cope with problems such as uncertainties, conflicting interests and cultural differences, that make or break policy. Lipsky (1980), as quoted by Norman Long (2001: 91), has argued that it is 'precisely at such implementation interfaces that *de facto* policy is created'.

The 'autonomous' fields of action and the forces that influence them are important fields of study for the ethnographer. He/she must find ways to enter the different lifeworlds of the frontline and local actors, to establish in what way these people deal with the complexities of implementer-client relationships in interface situations. To reiterate what

has been said in par. 4.2.1, this requires field strategies based on observing and understanding the way in which other people's lifeworlds are put together and function, as well as canvassing the willingness of practising actors to share their experiences and to put them to the test. To achieve this type of reflexive ethnography, a means should be developed to explore the relationship between everyday actors' and researchers' theoretical understandings of problematic situations. This procedure should lead to a situation in which all the practising actors are considered to be part of the web of powers, constraints, opportunities and potentialities of specific intervention situations.

The reification of cultural and other phenomena should be identified and avoided. For example, simplifications such as the division of people into 'ethnic' communities or 'class categories' tend to obscure the diversity and complexity of social and cultural arrangements. Care should therefore be taken that such reifications do not enter processes in which solutions are being sought for specific problems. If reified concepts are included by accident, they may hinder progress or perpetuate existing ideal-typical models of so-called 'normal' and 'pathological' conditions, amongst which the concepts of growth, investment, empowerment, participation and education are often classed.

From the preceding parts of this chapter, it becomes clear that social practice is considered to be heterogeneous as a result of the different social responses in a lifeworld or community to apparently similar structural conditions. Only by focusing on

these factors can one explain the significance of certain types of strategic agency and knowledge-power constructions.

It would be wrong to try and point at cultural polarity, organisational dualism or hierarchy by citing interface encounters. What should be done, is to visualise them as the means by which a methodological entry point could be established to examine the dynamics and transformation of intercultural and inter-institutional relationships and values (Long 2001: 93).

Development intervention interfaces provide a valuable opportunity for investigating issues such as dynamics and transformation of inter-cultural and inter-institutional relationships and values, since they tend to bring all the ambivalences and complexities of cultural diversity and conflict to light. They also make us aware of the paradoxical nature of planned intervention, for instance in 'participatory' programmes, as set out before (see par. 4.2.7.5). The fact remains that planned interventions could simultaneously open up space for negotiation and initiative for some groups while blocking the interests, ambitions and political agency of others. It is incumbent upon the contemporary development researcher and practitioner to convince policy-makers and even colleagues in development who may be searching for better project designs and management techniques, to share their firsthand experiences of 'interface wrangling' widely. In this way the conceptual and methodological framework about specific policy practices could be further developed (Long 2001: 91-94).

#### **4.2.8 Knowledge, networks and power** (Long 2001: 169-170).

The analysis of knowledge processes in the fields of development and social change have only become a matter of greater concern after the impasse, with Long (2001) in the forefront of research in this regard.. The first points under this heading endeavour to explain the significance of knowledge issues in the development paradigm.

##### **4.2.8.1 The significance of knowledge issues**

Transfer of technology and overcoming the obstacles presented by cultural and institutional factors, have always been an important part of development cooperation. Through the years it was inevitable for issues such as class struggles, traditional versus modern values, and the roles played by government, international institutions and the business world in promoting change, to undergo change. In time, development agents started to realise that externally provided knowledge should be ‘translated’ to become effective in local development. ‘Translation’ is used here, not in the narrow sense, but more as a matter of adaptation or clarification of knowledge for absorption by the targeted communities (Long 2001: 114, Thomas 1991: 9). Although the proposal is not acceptable today, it did serve to facilitate the introduction of an interconnection between the worlds of research and development practice through discussions on how

knowledge and science should be organised and utilised for the pursuit of effective development.

With regard to ethnographic research, the real issue of creation and transformation of knowledge can only be understood if one considers the way in which people from all layers of a community, build bridges and manage critical knowledge interfaces that constitute the points of intersection between their diverse lifeworlds (Arce and Long 1987: 5-30, Long 1989). An actor-oriented perspective on knowledge and knowledge encounters can assist one to go beyond dichotomised representations of differing forms of knowledge (i.e., in terms of 'modern science' versus 'people's science', 'external' versus 'local' knowledge).

Because the focus of analysis falls on the actors, one is destined to examine how socio-cultural practices are organised and enacted in everyday life. Socio-cultural practices are definitely not the product of authority. There are no reasons to distinguish between different kinds of knowledge on the basis of their origin, pedigree and so-called authority. On the contrary, knowledge is generated and transformed by everyday contingencies of social life, being the result of the interactions, negotiations, interfaces and accommodations that take place between different actors and their lifeworlds.

The contradictions, inconsistencies, ambiguities and negotiations that are prevalent in the knowledge paradigm are a result of the many different knowledge issues that intersect in

the construction of social arrangements and discursive practices. This leads to the perception of 'multiple realities' that may mean many things and entail different rationalities for the actors involved, although they are contained and interact within the same social context or arena. Such knowledge encounters and interactions create locally situated knowledge, for instance within the setting of an irrigation scheme, a rural development project, or in an urban neighbourhood where street children hang out.

The methodology that should be adapted for the research of knowledge processes, should refrain from the application of general epistemological debates on the nature of knowledge and knowledge universals, but should rather aim at understanding how knowledge impinges on the 'ordering' and 'reordering' processes of everyday life.

The processes of knowledge acquisition, utilisation and transformation leave one with only one way to examine social experiences and dilemmas of social life more closely but they form an important basis for programmes of planned intervention.

#### **4.2.8.2 Knowledge as an encounter of horizons**

The fusion of horizons comes about by way of the joint creation of knowledge by both disseminators and users:

... since the processing and absorption of new items of information and new discursive or cognitive frames can only take place on the basis of already existing modes of knowledge and evaluation, which themselves are reshaped by the communicative experience (Long 2001:175).

Knowledge is constructed through the accumulation of social experience, commitments and culturally-acquired dispositions of the actors involved, and it can therefore be said that processes by which knowledge is either disseminated or created contain several interconnected elements, such as actors' strategies and capacities. The latter procedure would enable actors to absorb new facts to accept or discard them, depending on whether they are useful or contested.

From various chapters of Long (2001), one can derive that the study of knowledge processes entails the observation of several factors such as occurrences of harmony and disharmony of ideas and beliefs, as well as the exploration of discontinuities rather than the continuity offered by linked lifeworlds or social domains. The importance of transformation should also be observed. Knowledge, as it emerges as a product of interaction and dialogue between specific actors and actors' lifeworlds, is also multi-layered, fragmentary and diffuse rather than unitary and systematised. Different groups of actors share the same priorities and parameters of knowledge, whereas epistemic communities display different knowledge repertoires (Long 2001).

Therefore, to obtain conditions under which a single integrated knowledge system (involving mutually beneficial exchanges and flows of information) could emerge, seems unattainable, unless one is willing to sacrifice innovativeness and adaptability to change, both of which depend upon the diversity and fluidity of knowledge rather than on integration and systematisation.

#### **4.2.8.3 Discontinuities and accommodations at knowledge interfaces**

To know exactly how newly emergent forms of organisation and understanding are formed, one has to recognise that there is a multiplicity of actors and perspectives involved in social interfaces, who merge, combine, accommodate and clash with one another. Social interfaces can therefore be defined as:

... critical points of intersection between different social fields, domains or lifeworlds, where social discontinuities based upon differences in values, social interests and power are found (Long 2001: 177).

Röling conveys a similar idea when he suggests that :

... interface is not simply a linkage mechanism but rather the 'force field' between two institutions (Röling 1988: 177).

According to Norman Long:

Interfaces typically occur ... at points where different, and often conflicting, lifeworlds or social fields intersect (Long 2001: 177).

In other words, interface studies are essentially concerned with the analysis of discontinuities in social life that are usually found to be discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power. One will, therefore, find that interfaces occur in situations in which different, and often conflicting, lifeworlds or social fields intersect - or to be more explicit - interactions between actors who are dealing with the questions of how bridging, accommodating to, or struggling against each others' different social and cognitive worlds, are to be handled (Long 2001: 177-178).



Interface analysis aims to elucidate the types of social discontinuities present in such situations and to characterise the different kinds of organisational and cultural forms that reproduce or transform them. To clarify the forms in which interface is operative, Hawkins gives a definition of interface networks in the agricultural field that is worthwhile noting and which reads as follows:

The interface networks are sites for the dynamics of agri-business, extending markets and technical control to farmers and [of] farmers reacting by adapting the offered technologies to suit themselves, shaping the networks and relating their actions perhaps to a slightly different logic to those of agribusiness (Hawkins 1991: 279).

#### **4.2.8.4 Knowledge networks and epistemic communities**

The nature and operation of knowledge networks within the same farming population or other group can differ considerably. Network analysis can help to identify the boundaries of epistemic communities and to describe the structure and contents of particular communicator networks. As a rule, an intensive study should be made of knowledge networks. The aim should be to discover reliable sources that could convey information on how the processes of knowledge dissemination and knowledge creation are exchanged and influenced. Information flows and exchanges between different types of social networks, as well as exchanges from within the network itself, could be ways in which knowledge dissemination and knowledge creation are exchanged and influenced.

#### **4.2.8.5 Knowledge heterogeneity and agency**

The aspects covered under this heading can best be explained by an example based on agricultural experiences and is based on Van der Ploeg's (1989) research, inter alia in this particular field. He mentions the example of small-scale producers in the Andes who are overruled by externally originating 'scientific' definitions of agricultural development in spite of their own perfectly good solutions to production problems. Notwithstanding this, their local knowledge gradually becomes marginalised by the 'well-meaning' imposition of scientific knowledge by extension workers. This leads to the farmer becoming superfluous to the imposed model of 'modern' production methods which is promoted by so-called experts. It could even happen that development projects become commodity monopolised and sold by experts who have constructed their own chain of command through which they exert 'authority' over their 'subjects'. In this way, negative applications of science and modern ideologies of development eventually come to have such a major influence on the outcomes of dealings with cultivators that they effectively prevent any exchange of knowledge and experience. This creates what Van Der Ploeg calls:

a sphere of ignorance in which cultivators are labelled 'invisible men' in contrast to the 'experts' who are visible and authoritative (Van Der Ploeg 1989).

The ability of external actors to change agricultural practice is dependent on the following two elements -

their ability and skills to handle interface encounters with actors from a different cultural background; and

the way in which legitimacy is given to their actions and conceptions, for instance by positive acceptance of their plans and strategies also by higher echelons of actors, who could thereby assist them by defining certain critical 'rules of the game'. At the same time, local actors are also involved in assimilating information from each other and from external sources, thereby gaining knowledge that is better in tune with the situations they face, which could enable them to deal with the interface more effectively and to their own advantage (Long 2001: 182).

#### **4.2.8.6 Power and the social construction of knowledge** (Foucault 1980, Collins translation: 78-108).

On the one hand, knowledge which is regarded as something that is possessed, accumulated and unproblematically imposed upon others, can be looked upon as having become reified. Knowledge is not a commodity and neither can quantity or quality be determined. Power emerges, on the other hand, out of processes of social interaction as a joint product of the encounter and fusion of horizons (Long 2001: 183).

Reification of both power and knowledge in social life occurs often. In looking at knowledge dissemination and knowledge creation as explained in various sections above, the arguments tendered are convincing of the fact that both concepts belong squarely within the social context. These processes are not made up of 'formal institutions', 'ideal-typical conceptions' or linkage mechanisms, but they involve specific

actors and interacting individuals who become interrelated through networks of interest and through the sharing of certain knowledge frames.

Power is used or wielded in different ways which are all significant. Significance can be measured according to how effectively it is used to subject people, for instance, and to press an order home where required. In the act of applying power, there are different ways in which people can be enrolled in projects; in which self-images are sold to people, and in which endeavours are made to impose self-images upon people. This takes place mainly through a process of negotiation by which actors attempt to change certain components or conditions, while striving to maintain others. Power therefore always implies struggle, negotiation and compromise. People who regard themselves, or are generally seen, as being the 'oppressed' often stand up and offer active resistance to improve their lot. These people are also wielding power. This proves that the 'powerful' are not in complete control. The extent to which their power is forged by the so-called powerless should not be underestimated.

Understanding knowledge processes demands that due recognition should be given to power differentials and struggles over social meaning, because knowledge is a social construction that emanates from and is constantly being reshaped by encounters and discontinuities that emerge at the points of intersection between actors' lifeworlds. As indicated before, one should avoid adopting a mere systems perspective. It fails to

recognise the theoretical significance of power differentials and struggles over social meaning (Long 2001: 183).

For another discussion on this topic, please consult par. 2.5.1.

#### **4.2.8.7 To summarise**

It is important to establish and recognise all forms of interaction between knowledge processes and development. What has been said above should only be regarded as a preliminary guide as to where to focus to determine how to utilise current empirical and theoretical interests in developing new theoretical challenges. This means that what is needed is a substantial link between theoretical understanding and social practice. This can be done, for example, by blending together a set of sensitising analytical concepts based on an actor and interface perspective, and a field methodology geared to realise developing theory 'from below'. This should link the theoretical with the social practice (Long 2001: 188).

A sociology of the everyday life of actors involved in shaping the processes and outcomes of rural development programmes should be made available to create understanding for the significance of human agency in given situations. Such a sociological study will need to take cognisance, inter alia, of how different bodies of knowledge, as well as systematic forms of ignorance, influence the strategies adopted by the participants.

#### **4.2.9 The dynamics of knowledge interfaces**

These dynamics are dealt with by illuminating the nature of knowledge and by describing the connection between lifeworlds and knowledge processes.

##### **4.2.9.1 The nature of knowledge**

First, to establish the ways in which knowledge comes about, one should note the ways in which people categorise, code, process and impute meaning to their experiences.

This applies to both 'scientific' and 'non-scientific' forms of knowledge. Knowledge is not some professional, specialised or esoteric set of data or idea but is something that everybody possesses (Long 2001: 189).

Social, situational, cultural and institutional factors are at the foundation of knowledge processes. Existing conceptual frameworks and procedures, affected by various social contingencies such as the skills, orientations, resources and patterns of social interaction, characteristic of the particular group of individuals, are forming the parameters within which the processes take place. Moreover, knowledge can result from a great number of decisions and selective incorporations of previous ideas, beliefs and images, which makes it constructive. It can, however, also be destructive where it affects other possible frames of conceptualisation and understanding. Thus it involves ways of construing the world and should not be regarded as a mere accumulation of facts. Knowledge is never integrated with an underlying cultural logic or system of

classification, but it is fragmentary, partial and provisional in nature. People, therefore, work with a multiplicity of understandings, beliefs and commitments.

#### **4.2.9.2 The connection between lifeworlds and knowledge processes**

“Knowledge of everyday life is organised in zones around a person’s ‘here and now’. The centre of his or her world is him/herself. Around this centre, knowledge is arranged in zones, both spatial and temporal, or different degrees of relevance: first, face-to-face situations, and then more distant zones where encounters are more typified and anonymous” (Schutz 1962, as quoted in Long 2001: 189).

To fathom the depth (or superficiality) of knowledge, the services of an ethnographer will be required to study the cognitive world of the individuals concerned, to unveil those features of objects and events that are regarded as significant for defining concepts, formulating propositions and making decisions.

To summarise, one should note that the production and transformation of knowledge will not necessarily be found in categorised systems or classified diagrams but in the processes by which social actors interact, negotiate and accommodate one another’s lifeworlds. The above-mentioned interactions, for instance, lead to reinforcement or transformation of existing types of knowledge and to the emergence of new forms. The sources of power, authority and legitimation available to the different actors involved will eventually lead to how knowledge processes are shaped and what their ultimate forms will be.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

The more important actor-oriented concepts that have been dealt with above, will hopefully serve as a foundation to facilitate a better understanding of this new, intricate, but also innovative subject. Compared to the exact sciences, the human sciences have much less of an advantage when it comes to proven rules and formula-based outcomes. The uncertainty of outcomes with development interventions, for instance, makes the paradigm shift from the old 'dehumanised' development approach (as discussed in par. 1.1), to a more people-oriented methodology, a tough matter to deal with. Yet, should the practical application of the actor-oriented approach be accepted as a future development factor, it will have the effect that, instead of continuing with structural development processes that appear easier to design and run, the actor-oriented approach may well prove to be a rather difficult methodology to put into practice. On the face of the foregoing analysis of what the actor-oriented approach entails, the view can be expressed that this approach at least has the potential to improve on previous methods. For example, new concepts, such as ethnography as a medium to facilitate development interventions and the recognition given to different interpretation of previous concepts such as agency, discourse, deconstruction, knowledge and power, all bring the development discourse within the ambit of post-modern thinking. This in itself points to the fact that changes should be made soon and without fear. Another important point is that all the actors that participate in an intervention (that is the actors from both sides of the action, benefactors and beneficiaries) will be subject to a set of new rules that will apply and new demands that will have to be met with the implementation of the actor-oriented approach.



The special attention that is, inter alia, being given to the processes and nature of interventions; the deconstruction of interventions; intervention in ‘time and space’, and the planning of interventions in line with the above, will hopefully have a positive influence on future interventionists and their products. In the same vein, one trusts that the actor-oriented approach will benefit from the closer look that is given to interface processes.

The new lines of policy that are being proclaimed as the way to improve development do not, for instance, accept the populist concepts of ‘empowerment’ and ‘participatory development’ in contemporary development as valuable factors which should remain (please refer back to par. 4.2.7.5). They are unfortunately still being emphasised widely and are still appearing in agreements on development, in official statements, and are still mentioned in the majority of conferences on the subject. This happens so often that ‘empowerment’ and ‘participatory development’ tend to become clichés. These purportedly important factors have no sound scientific base and have not, as yet, succeeded in making much of a breakthrough in practical development. The statement that “... ‘empowerment’ [is], culture’s newest tool for the subjugation of conscious experience” (Wendt 2001: xv-xvii, *Foreword* by Isaac E. Catt), gives a clear indication of the negative results that empowerment could have if it is given half a chance to be perpetuated as an important factor in development. Finally, knowledge has been recognised as one of the mainstays of development practice and receives the attention it deserves, although there is still a vast field that has not been covered in this study.

Anthony Giddens played a specific role in changing a variety of concepts for us. These deserve to be looked into in order to further substantiate the importance of an actor-oriented approach in development. In the first place, he gave a human face to the concept of 'structures', which were, as a rule, considered to be put together with bricks and mortar, wooden beams or nuts and bolts. The human role in structures was investigated in detail by Giddens after which he concluded, inter alia, that a 'structure is both the medium and the outcome of individual action' (Coetzee et al. 2001: 196). This notion forms the core of his structuration theory, in which he attempts to reconcile the structuralist with the voluntarist traditions. Putting a human face to structures means that structures are apt to change as the people involved in them change. The standard perception of a structure being a solid and lifeless thing, suddenly appears to be less so.

In reference to actors, Giddens mentions that:

it is a necessary feature of action that, at any point in time, the actors "could have acted otherwise": either positively in terms of attempted intervention in the process of "events of the world", or negatively in terms of forbearance' (Giddens 1979: 56 as quoted in Long 2001:18).

This statement contains an important *caveat* concerning the practical application of an actor-oriented development approach. Accordingly, the possibility will apparently always exist that actors could act in a different way than they expected although such 'other action than expected' could be either negative or positive. In the practical application of action, the aim should be to steer action towards the positive and to avoid the negative alternatives. Because of the particular considerations, methods and teamwork that the actor-oriented approach could

bring to development interventions, chances are that negative actions could well be eliminated in terms of this approach, long before they can be put into practice. The recommended sort of specialist approaches to agency and interface, as set out in this chapter, could by themselves, possibly, turn major negative actions into positive ones.

Then again, Long (2001: footnote 18, p. 247) reacts to the implied limitations accorded by Giddens to actors by citing Cohen, who states that:

Giddens 'treats society (rather than self) as an ontology, which somehow becomes independent of its own members, and assumes that the self is required continuously to adjust to it. It fails to see society adequately as informed by - created by - selves, and by implication, therefore, fails to accord creativity to selves. The "agency" which he allows to individuals gives them the power of reflexivity but not of motivation. They seem doomed to be perpetrators rather than architects of action: "agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place" (Giddens 1984: 9)' Cohen (1994: 21).

Giddens's misinterpretation of society reflected above also has an important bearing on how 'agency' should be perceived by development agents. Should one follow the views of Giddens in this respect, one would find oneself giving preference to what actors capabilities are at the expense of assessing actors' intentions in a given setting. Such an omission could eventually prove to be futile. Long (2001: 18) supports this notion and states that:

Turner and others (e.g. Wikan 1990) have persuasively argued, a theoretical interpretation of social action must go beyond a consideration of knowledgeability, consciousness and intentions to embrace also 'feelings, emotions, perceptions, identities and the continuity of agents [persons] across space and time' (Turner 1992: 91)

The application of the above-mentioned recommendations by Wikan and Turner, can improve the way in which actors in an intervention regard one another and work towards unlocking the inherent qualities in one another, thus creating optimal synergies in their mutual endeavours.

To take the volatility of social structures one step further, Long (2001: 24) adds that the logic of capital or the interventions of the state, are not sole determining factors when it comes to the formation of the lifeworlds of people. Thompson adds that:

the structures that render an action possible are, in the performance of that action, reproduced. Even action which disrupts the social order ... is mediated by structures which are reconstituted by the action, albeit in a modified form (Thompson 1990: 150-1).

From the above, it should become clear that there is a vast difference between the exact sciences and the human sciences which are now, at many scholars' recommendation, to receive preference in development interventions. The actor-oriented approach is one of the suggested conduits for this change, and may prove to be one of the most suitable and holistic ways to achieve the ideal of 'human development'.

The notion of 'reflexive development', recently developed by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2001) deserves attention because it contains references to development theories which interlink with the theories of the actor-oriented approach, such as the importance of discourse analysis. The above-mentioned notion was probably inspired by the thoughts on reflexive modernity, as explained by Ulrich Beck (1992). According to him, protagonists of the notion work reflexively in terms of a wide spectrum, including concepts such as 'the self, social theory, cultural studies,

political economy, financial markets, organisation studies and research methodology’

(Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 160). This means that, in terms of reflexive modernity, an increasing number of modernists are now concerning themselves with finding solutions to the problems caused by modernity. Some important qualities of development thinking and reflexivity are mentioned by Nederveen Pieterse. The following deserve further discussion within the context of the actor-oriented approach:

Fallibility and openness are necessary features of development thinking and what matters in relation to any other of these approaches is reflexivity; what matters is not merely what but how (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: xii). Although reflexivity could stem from philosophical or methodological considerations, it should not be regarded as a purely intellectual process because it is influenced by ongoing political changes. Reflexivity should be perceived as ‘a collective awareness that unfolds as part of a historical process of changing institutions and policies’ (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 163), in other words as a ‘collective reflexivity’. It is also true that distortion of facts could take place where reflexivity ‘arising from particular circumstances is institutionalised or abstracted as an ideology or theory and then applied out of context’ (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 163). With regard to the phrase ‘collective reflexivity’, Nederveen Pieterse (ibid.) has entered an end note which is quite illuminating. It states, inter alia, the definite distinction between self-reflexivity and uses reflexivity in a collective sense (cf. Taylor 1989, Habermas 1990 and Giddens 1991 with regard to self-reflexivity; and Beck 1992, Soros 1998 and Foley 1999, who use reflexivity in a collective sense). Furthermore, self-reflexivity and collective reflexivity can be combined to bring disparate concepts, such as the personal and the political, together.

Because the fallibility of development thinking cannot be denied, it is important that all the available instruments within the actor-oriented approach should be utilised to prevent failure. This is where the preliminary deconstruction of the target area; the ethnographic research into, for example, the societal, political and cultural intricacies; a thorough discourse analysis, and meticulous intervention planning, should be undertaken as preventive measures to avoid the eventual failure of an intervention. Then again, openness can be achieved through the actor-oriented approach, because the encouragement through the system of exceptional communication between all potential actors; understanding each others' discourses; taking care of heterogeneity, and concentrating on successful interface, will eventually take care of optimal open-ended communication.

Last, but not the least in this discussion, is the reference to successful reflexivity, in which Nederveen Pieterse states that 'what matters is not merely what but how'. With regard to several of the contemporary objectives in practical development, such as 'empowerment', 'participative development', 'civil society participation' and others, mention has been made or will be made below, of a most obvious shortcoming. The shortcoming is namely that the 'what' has been, and is still being used extensively in conferences, in UN bodies, in the EU, and in many other development fora, sometimes without any indication, and often only with very vague explanations, of 'how' these recommendations should be achieved. It is therefore necessary to point out at this stage, that reflexive development has a certain role to play, even if it is only to force those that initiate development, to reflect on 'how' recommendations should be put into practice and to write such recommendations down for the executive workers in development to give effect to.

Then also, a related consideration is mentioned by Nederveen Pieterse who he accords two different meanings to reflexivity. In the first place, he defines self-reflexivity, as a highly individualistic manner in which each person reflects on layer upon layer of previous development experience which he/she may have had with, 'each a reaction to and negotiation of previous development interventions, as an ongoing trial and error notion' (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 144). Secondly, he identifies the need to reflect on the subjective reactions to the development process and mentions that the reactions of individuals and communities (people's reflexivity) should be taken account of when drawing up the blueprints for a development intervention. The basic principles that are recommended for a successful actor-oriented approach, make provision for self-reflexive contemplation and for the incorporation of the more subjective peoples' reflexivity. Reflexivity in development could be portrayed as a study of communications and control within a future intervention. This will be based upon reflections of the team of actors, regarding their respective experiences in the development field in the past, with their emphasis on the size and scope of communications and control which will be required. However, reflexive development does not end there. An ongoing assessment of communications and control during the implementation of an intervention is of the utmost importance in order to make adjustments in the process wherever things move in a different direction to the one predicted by the planning team (cf. Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 144).

The former paragraph raises the importance of ongoing evaluation processes during the course of an intervention. In this regard, Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 160) stresses the fact that

'[e]valuation and impact studies have become a major industry alongside development programmes'. As a practical guideline to those that are, or will in future, be involved in evaluation of development interventions, he mentions the following four arguments:

- (1) Development thinking *is* reflexive. It is based on previous experiences and takes account of successes and failures there.
- (2) Over time, development thinking should be seen as a layer of reflections upon a following layer of reflections, upon further reflections on previous experiences.
- (3) 'Development thinking increasingly participates in the general trend towards reflexivity in and in relation to modernity' (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 161)
- (4) There is scope for greater consistency and for sufficient reflexivity in the future, and if reflexivity could be thematised it would add to its value.

Finally, there is a general reference to the value of reflexivity, both in modernity and in development thinking, which should be noted:

There are different stages and kinds of modernity and, short of rejection, reflexive development offers a critical negotiation of modernity and development (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 162).

This statement should be heeded because it sheds some light on the constant relevance of modernity in development and points at the need for a reflexive approach thereof in order to combine the two successfully. The actor-oriented approach does not shy away from modernity. On the contrary, modernity will be welcomed by any group of actors which is convinced that modernity indicates the road that should be followed to achieve a successful development intervention. Simultaneously, the benefit of reflexive considerations of such an indication will



either support such a decision or show up possible deficiencies, either as a result of self-reflection, or as a result of subjective negative reactions identified within the target community.

Whatever the case may be, it is important for those involved in the actor-oriented approach to take serious cognisance of the potential role of reflexive development in their deliberations regarding a proposed intervention as well as in the later evaluation thereof.

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## CHAPTER V

### Multilateral development institutions with special reference to

#### the Cotonou Agreement:

#### a recent development agreement attuned to liberalisation and globalisation

### 5.1 Introduction

Because the Cotonou Agreement (2000) succeeded the 1990 Lomé Convention, it is important to convey a few historical facts concerning it and to explain terms such as the 'EU-ACP partnership', the 'European Economic Commission' and from where these have originated. The brief description of the historical building blocks of the Partnership that is reproduced below, should act as a reasonable guide to intricacies such as those mentioned above and others.

#### **Four decades of EU-ACP Partnership** (ACP-EU Courier 1996: 2)

Although the ACP group only came into being at the time of the first Lomé Convention in 1975, cooperation between the European Community (now the Union), and countries with which they had special relations in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, dates back to 1957. This was when the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community was concluded. The evolution of the relationship is charted below.

<u>Year</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>Event</u>
									European Economic Community (EEC) Treaty. <i>Provision made under Articles 131 - 136 of the Treaty for association of non-European countries and territories with which EEC Member States have special relations.</i>
									Yaoundé I Convention AASM (Associated African States and Madagascar) - EEC
									Yaoundé II Convention AASM - EEC
									Lomé I Convention ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) - EEC
									Lomé II Convention ACP - EEC
									Lomé III Convention ACP - EEC
									Lomé IV Convention ACP -EEC
									Lomé IV mid-term review
									Revised text signed in Mauritius
									ACP members
									18 18 46 58 65
									68 70
									EU members
									6 6 9 9 10 12 15

Both the era of progress towards European unity and the era of decolonisation of former European colonies are covered in the above table which stretches from 1957 to 1995. It is a historical fact that the period during which the EU-ACP Partnership was turbulent, innovative and challenging on the economic, political and several other fronts. It is therefore not surprising

that the well-established Partnership under four successive Lomé Conventions had to be adapted to the end-of-millennium paradigm shift which was caused by a radical and global realignment of politics and economic relations. Globalisation and liberalisation, together with the fall of the Berlin Wall and its political consequences, were effectively demanding that a totally new agreement between the EU and the ACP be considered. The Lomé Convention was becoming a bone of contention in the World Trade Organisation and other similar multilateral institutions, as will be discussed in par. 5.1.1 below. The total reassessment and renegotiation of the ACP-EU Partnership became a necessity which culminated in 2000 in the acceptance of the Cotonou Agreement by all the involved parties, including South Africa as well.

Formally, one should, look at the Cotonou Agreement as a framework agreement which is being created, amongst other things, to provide a proper climate and guidelines for the ACP countries to effectuate a smoother entry into the 'global village'. To achieve this, it is foreseen that a variety of development cooperation interventions will be launched by the European Union, which will concentrate on assisting the ACP states, and more correctly, the communities within these countries to cope with a radically changed world, manifesting itself especially on the economic terrain. Cotonou is a framework agreement because it forms a wide basis for further negotiations regarding proposed regional economic partnership agreements (REPAs) which have been identified as the best avenue to open up opportunities for developing countries to become competitive in global politics and the economy. These negotiations were initiated directly after the signing of the Cotonou Agreement and will not be completed before 2005 at the earliest.

Dot Keet (1999) distinguishes three main phases of the pre-Cotonou deliberations between the EU and the ACP. These are:

1. ... the negotiation, in the period 1998-2000, of an overall Framework Agreement between the EU and the ACP, laying out the general principles and objectives for their post-LC [Lomé Convention] relations; followed by
2. ... a series of negotiations, between 2000 and 2005, by the EU with the respective ACP regions or sub-regions towards the formulation of separate, tailored REPAs; succeeded by
3. ... a transitional period for the implementation of the new arrangements, which is interpreted by various sources as requiring 5, 10, 15 or even 20 years (Keet 1999: 21).

The Agreement has amongst its objectives the introduction of wide-ranging assistance to help developing countries of the ACP to cope with the challenges of a fast changing world which has not yet adapted to the ever-increasing demands of globalisation and liberalisation. An undertaking by the EU in this regard, is to be found in the Cotonou Preamble (Annexure II), especially in the second and third clauses. The EU's intention is to concentrate on preparing the ACP countries to face the challenges of entering, and fully participating in, the global arena. The Agreement acknowledges that, from the developmental point of view, this objective can best be realised through professionally designed development cooperation projects, or as stated in the fourth clause of the Preamble, by way of a 'comprehensive and integrated approach' (Annexure II).

The Cotonou Agreement is also one of the most recent documents on how future development cooperation should be tackled. It has a history reaching back through all the preceding Lomé

Conventions, into an era in which development cooperation was still predominantly coupled to the processes and the aftermath of decolonisation. In view of its historical and experiential background, Cotonou has been chosen to form an important basis for this study. The choice also fell on the Cotonou Agreement as subject matter, because its Article 20 Compendium was assessed to be a very handy field, offering opportunities through which the findings emanating from this study could be made applicable, first theoretically and, hopefully, eventually also in practice. More information on the Compendium will be found in par. 5.1.2 and in even more detail under section 5.5.

The intention of the following paragraphs is to weigh up a selection of relevant aspects of the Cotonou Agreement and the closely related Compendium, against the essentials for an actor-oriented approach as explained in broad terms in the previous chapter.

### **5.1.1      Introductory notes on the Cotonou Agreement**

It becomes clear from what has been said above, that the Cotonou Agreement has gone one step further than the Lomé Agreement by presenting, at least, one extra benefit. This is its determined focus on assistance to the ACP countries with regard to the challenges that they will have to overcome because of increasing world-wide liberalisation and globalisation.

It will, however, be fallacious to regard the innovative contents of the Cotonou Agreement as a solely altruistic approach. Christopher Stevens of the Institute for Development Studies in Sussex, offers a premise regarding Lomé Convention that states:

that a continuation of the *status quo* in terms of *effective* as opposed to *nominal* access to the European market is not an option. This is because forces operating outside of the Convention will undermine Lomé preferences if the relationship is not put on a footing more relevant to the twenty-first century (Stevens et al. 1998: v).

Because of the radical changes envisaged by the EU for the new agreement, the fact is that the ACP increasingly started to believe that many EU proposals are motivated by neoliberal theory. This enhanced ACP scepticism caused several implications for the negotiations. The fact that the negotiations were conducted under the driving force of the European Commission (the EU civil service), also fired ACP suspicions because there were not many opportunities for the developing countries to rid themselves of the 'cargo' approach during negotiations.

Another factor which hampered the negotiations to some extent, was the active negotiations between the EU and its new member countries which were conducted parallel with the EU-ACP negotiations. On the one hand, ACP awareness of a considerable increase in membership and responsibilities on the side of the EU, inhibited the ACP countries to some extent, because they realised the effect which the growing power (economic and political) of the EU, could have on their long-lasting Partnership. On the other hand, the growing responsibilities of the EU regarding development assistance to the newly industrialised

countries which were now to enter the EU, caused some tension among the ACP countries, because they were well aware of the limits of the EU's treasury, especially in times in which the popularity of development aid had visibly diminished.

### **5.1.2 Introductory remarks on the Compendium**

It has been stated before (par. 1.3) that Article 20 of the Cotonou Agreement is of great significance to this study. This is because it provides for the Compendium in subsection (3), by stating the following:

The detailed texts as regards development cooperation objectives and strategies, in particular sectoral policies and strategies shall be incorporated in a compendium providing operational guidelines in specific areas or sectors of cooperation (Cotonou 2000: Article 20 [3]).

The above quote calls for further elaboration on aspects such as the reference to the 'operational guidelines', which clearly emphasises the practical approach of the Compendium. 'Operational guidelines', seen from a different angle, must also have a direct influence on the practical execution of the Cotonou Agreement. The Compendium is therefore a very important extension of the Cotonou Agreement. Briefly, the Compendium comprises a stipulation of principles, an appeal for adequate EC support for ACP's development strategies and it identifies focal points to help formulate future joint ACP-EC cooperation strategies. Job-creation, private sector development, increased employment and the respective promotion of institutional reforms and development, are amongst these focal points. In addition, some emphasis has been placed on the importance of thematic or

crosscutting themes, such as gender, environmental issues, institutional development and capacity building.

The principle of civil society and private sector participation in development programmes and projects has become universally accepted as an important development medium. These are not exclusively being promoted by the Agreement, but have been written into a great many documents regarding development over the past few years. They have become generally accepted concepts in development theory and have therefore also been included in Cotonou. References to these forms of participation have, for instance, been included in documents of international and regional multilateral organisations such as the UN and the OECD-DAC (Arizpe 1998: 21-24) long before the Cotonou Agreement was finalised.

The Compendium gives a number of practical guidelines to the Cotonou Agreement. It being a more practical document in essence, more emphasis will be put on the Compendium with regard to practical approaches, whereas the Agreement will be referred to for the more theoretical side of the discussion. Some duplications may therefore occur although endeavours were made to avoid them.

## **5.2 What else does the Cotonou Agreement provide for?**

### **5.2.1 Stated objectives contained in the Agreement**

The Cotonou Agreement undertakes in Part I, first paragraph, to:



... promote and expedite the economic, cultural and social development of the ACP States, with a view to contributing to peace and security and to promoting a stable and democratic political environment (Cotonou 2000: Article 1).

On the one hand, this article with its objectives offers a good example of a string of undertakings that are mentioned and are quite impressive, but which unfortunately lack a clear reference as to how the objectives should be reached. On the other hand, the article displays a blatant tendency to do things FOR the ACP countries. The Agreement itself cannot 'promote and expedite the economic, cultural and social development of the ACP States' by itself. Because the ACP is at the receiving end, the only logical deduction that can be made is that the EU itself is intending to follow this top-down procedure, even if it is to happen some five to ten years into the new millennium. These two standard approaches in contemporary development are also well represented in a large number of articles of the Cotonou Agreement. The totally different approach, as discussed in the previous chapter, where the actor-oriented approach encourages a consistent 'bottom-up' approach, and in which reflexive development insists upon explanations on "how" certain proposals by the benefactors should be executed, should have been integrated into the Cotonou Agreement. Signs, such as the above, wherein recognition is given to contemporary development thinking, especially to 'alternative development' with its emphasis on the 'human factor', should have been included in the Cotonou Agreement to ensure the most relevant approach possible where it comes to the practical execution of development interventions. After a thorough study of the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium, revealed that very few articles actually complied with the demands of contemporary theory. Seeing that the most

important parts of the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium will be discussed in this chapter, the above statement will be adequately substantiated in due course. In the course of these discussions, it will become clear that the actor-oriented approach should be given a chance in practical development interventions, because this approach, if applied meticulously, may well be instrumental in alleviating most of the latent shortcomings that will be revealed below.

The last paragraph of Article 1 comments further on the ‘coherent support framework for development strategies’, in other words, the ‘top-down’ approach mooted in the previous paragraph. This means that ‘sustained economic growth, developing the private sector, increasing employment and improving access to productive resources’ will form the mainstays within the general framework of the Agreement. Finally, Article 1 touches on a very important point, as seen from the angle of this study. It states that:

... support shall be given to the respect of the rights of the individual and meeting basic needs, the promotion of social development and the conditions for an equitable distribution of the fruits of growth (Cotonou 2000: Art.1).

Although the rest of the paragraph reverts to jargon which is still associated with an era in which no attention was given to an actor-oriented approach, where its mention of ‘capacity building’, ‘improving institutional frameworks’ and ‘the emergence of an active and organised civil society’ immediately catches the eye, one does appreciate the references to the ‘respect of the rights of the individual’ and the ‘promotion of social development’. However, the intention to lay down conditions for the ‘equitable distribution of the fruits of growth’ is so

redundant, so much older than neo-Marxist theory, that it should rather have been left out of the document. Such thinking does not, and could never be made to fit into the framework of alternative development thinking and even less into the actor-oriented approach.

### **5.2.2 Establishing Ownership of Projects among Beneficiary Communities**

This recommendation regarding ownership is covered in Article 2, which deals with *Fundamental Principles* (Cotonou 2000: Article 2). The important question of ‘ownership’ is mentioned here, and in several other articles as well, as will be indicated below. Within the context of this study, it is not important to determine how often ‘ownership’ is mentioned in the Agreement. What is important though, is to establish how ‘ownership’ is perceived and how it should be put into practice by the negotiating partners involved in finalising the Cotonou Agreement. It is true that the mention of ‘ownership’ is quite in line with alternative development thinking, but reflexive development, as explained in par. 4.3 above, insists on more than the mere mention of, for instance, ‘ownership’ which should be considered. On the contrary, reflexive development recommends that a full explanation should be given as to how, in this case ‘ownership’, should be achieved and what the end product should look like. So one can assume that both Parties are in support of the principle of establishing ownership. The matter will, however, only be compatible with contemporary development thinking and the actor-oriented approach, after the necessary has been done to spell out exactly HOW ownership should be achieved and what it should ultimately look like. In this way, one can break through the reified image that has

been accorded over the past decades to the concept of 'ownership' and its practical value could at long last be revealed.

The next step would then be to see how 'ownership' is being applied further on in the Cotonou context. In Article 11, for instance, ownership is seen as a method by which joint conflict prevention policies can be put into practice without the inhibiting perceptions of an apparent top-down EU involvement in intra-ACP squabbles. The Article goes some way in explaining how ownership should be applied in this case, although the way it is put indicates a paradox which should rather be rectified. It is, namely, explained that:

the Parties shall pursue an active, comprehensive and integrated policy of peace-building and conflict prevention and resolution within the framework of the Partnership (Cotonou 2000: Art. 11 [1])

It is envisaged in a following sentence that this peace-building policy and concomitant matters should be based on 'ownership' principles, thus giving the whole matter a paradoxical twist. First the 'Parties' or the 'Partnership' are supposed to cooperate in the matter and then, where 'ownership' is mentioned, responsibilities are delegated back, apparently to the ACP countries involved in the operation, unless the meaning of 'ownership' in this regard is something different. A following sentence in the same article waters down the concept of 'ownership' further, because it lifts peacekeeping and related affairs onto the plane of capacity building in respect of 'regional, sub-regional and national' bodies that may be responsible for peacekeeping and related affairs. There is not much fault to be found with the principle of such joint capacity building by specialist teams composed of selected instructors from both the EU and the ACP. It would appear that the reference to 'ownership' in this article has been done for mere cosmetic reasons, because

there is no way in which it can be made applicable to the specific set of undertakings contained in the rest of the article.

In Article 19, which deals with the principles and objectives of the Agreement, ownership is mentioned again. After mention is made of the central objectives of EU-ACP cooperation, the article proceeds by mentioning that, in the context of the said objectives:

... cooperation framework and orientations shall be tailored to the individual circumstances of each ACP country, shall promote local ownership of economic and social reforms and the integration of the private sector and civil society actors into the development process (Cotonou 2000: Art. 19[1]).

The reference above, to the promotion of ‘local ownership of economic and social reforms’, leaves one with the impression that the EU-ACP Partners in every development project or programme foresee a system of development cooperation in which a standard consideration will take care of the eventual manifestation of some form of ‘local ownership’, for instance, of ‘economic and social reforms’. Once again, one finds it difficult to establish how the achievement of this aim will be realised. It may be that the Compendium could contain a systematic explanation of the procedures that should be followed to ensure eventual ownership of interventions that are targeted at economic and social improvements. This question will be revisited in the paragraph in which the Compendium will be discussed. Finally, direct mention is made of ownership in the Cotonou Agreement (2000: Art. 56 [Principles]), but an indirect reference in the same Article also deserves some attention. The latter, or indirect case, insists that development shall be done in accordance with the ‘development objectives, strategies and priorities established by the ACP States’. This

means that ‘ownership’ of the decision making processes regarding the above-mentioned facets of development, rests with the ACP countries or even regions. The second, more direct reference to ‘ownership’, is towards the end of Article 56 which states that the respective geographical, social and cultural characteristics of the ACP states, as well as their specific potential, shall be taken into account, and that

(i)n addition, cooperation shall:

promote local ownership at all levels of the development process ... (Cotonou Agreement 2000: Art 56).

The above is another example of a dire lack of explanation as to ‘how’ ownership should be promoted at all levels of the development process. It should be stated here that the ways in which the term ‘ownership’ is included in the Cotonou Agreement largely serve to confirm suspicions that this term has become reified in development circles, and that it has thus become a populist term which is thrown into discussions and documents to give ‘ownership’ an acceptable face in development work.

To round off this discussion of ‘ownership’, it needs to be mentioned that no worthwhile reference to the ‘promotion of ownership’ in ACP countries could be found in the Compendium. This leads one to conclude that ‘ownership’ should either be removed from the texts, or serious guidelines on the promotion of ‘ownership’ should be added to the Compendium. Should one reflect on past EU-ACP cases in which ‘ownership’ was included as part of development objectives, one would probably get further confirmation of the above.

### **5.2.3 Actors in the Partnership**

Because the word ‘actor’ is so important in this study, and because the same word is mentioned in the Cotonou Agreement, the following reflections on the semantics around this word are necessary. In the first place, one should look at the Cotonou definition of the ‘actors in the partnership’. This states the following:

1. The actors of cooperation will include:

State (local, national and regional);

Non-State:

Private sector;

Economic and social partners, including trade union organisations;

Civil Society in all its forms according to national characteristics.

2. Recognition by the parties of non-governmental actors shall depend on the extent to which they address the needs of the population, on their specific competencies and whether they are organised and managed democratically and transparently (Cotonou 2000: Art.6)

The Agreement also defines and explains the proposed general approach to actors in the ACP/EU partnership in Article 4 by stating that:

The ACP States shall determine the development principles, strategies and models of their economies and societies in all sovereignty. They shall establish, with the Community, the cooperation programmes provided for under this Agreement. However, the parties recognise the complementary role of and potential for contributions by non-State actors to the development process (Cotonou 2000: Article 4).

Considering that the respective ACP States are all designated as ‘actors’ in Article 6, but that the EU and its subdivisions have not been mentioned, this oversight gives rise to certain questions:

1. What did the EU-ACP negotiating teams decide on as a proper definition, in their context, of the actors in development? No reference to any such jointly accepted definition could be found in the relevant literature. Furthermore, a great deficiency was detected in available literature concerning EU-ACP negotiations, namely that there was no mention of a possible link between ‘actors’ and ‘agency’. This is another reason why their perception of ‘actors in development’ does not make much sense.
2. What does the ACP-EU regard as the functions of the ‘actors in development’? This question will be addressed further on in this section. This will be in conjunction with further discussions on the important link between ‘actors’ and ‘agency’
3. Why are the actors also the biggest role players in the Partnership, and what would the smallest unit of actors consist of?  
  
Apparently, the perception of the ‘actors in development’, as seen by the ACP-EU negotiators, was clouded due to the lack of a solid definition of the actors and their expected role. In addition, the above-mentioned omission of a linkage between actors and agency could also have been responsible for faulty conclusions.

Attempts will be made below to give answers to the above questions. Such answers will also consider the views of Norman Long on the cases in point, for instance, the way in which he defines the actors in development and their potential roles. Then again, Hindness, as quoted in paragraph 4.2.3 above, suggests that it would be a serious mistake to accord the quality of agency to:



... 'society' in the global sense of the term, or classes and other social categories based on ethnicity or gender ... (Hindness 1986:119).

This confirms the fact that actors should not include large institutions or other large groupings that will find it difficult to handle agency because of their superstructural attributes.

To establish further relevance of this argument and the importance of assessing the 'agency' of a targeted actor or group of actors, it could be useful to refer back to par. 4.2.3 above, which is dedicated to a discussion of agency, knowledge and power.

Moreover, in the same context, discourse analysis should be taken into account in respect of the identified actors of development. Because of the inhibiting factors that are created when great institutions are nominated as actors in development, preference should be given to smaller entities to perform as actors. The possible inhibitions and problems that may be encountered by a group or institution which is nominated as actor, could arise from difficulties to come to terms with the heterogeneity within such a group; too large a selection of differing discourses within the same group; the inclusion in the nominated group of several subgroups - each one having its own particular form of agency; and members of such a group who may be totally disinterested in a particular project or programme, thereby becoming passengers and a burden for the duration of a specific intervention. Speculative thoughts, similar to those above, all indicate a preference for a smaller unit in which actors are appointed or selected in a specific role. Therefore, whilst the smallest unit of 'actor' could well be a single individual, one would suggest that 'a group of actors' should rather

be composed of a group which seems to be too small to take on the challenge, than one which is composed of a group of people including some who have no particular interest in the tasks to be done.

Finally, one should also decide whether the reference in Article 4 (Cotonou 2000: Article 4), to the complementary role of non-State actors and their potential for contributions to development, is viable. This aspect needs to be investigated and reinterpreted along the lines of the actor-oriented approach, and will be dealt with further in par. 5.3.

At this early stage, with respect to the large variety of relations between actors, attention should be drawn to the struggle factor, which emerges due to the dynamics of knowledge encounters. They frequently involve struggles between initiating actors, on the one hand, and, on the other, those actors to whom agency is being accorded to realise the initiatives of the first group. Schuurman (1993: 32), mentions that ‘power, actors, multi-leveled structures, inequality and diversity are key concepts’ in the construction of development cooperation structures. These key concepts have all received attention in the Agreement, although not always as completely as the case would have been, had the actor-oriented viewpoint been applied. Because the struggle concept indicates the unleashing of a certain amount of energy that has been bottled up, ways should be found by intervention planners to channel the energy thus released in positive and preconceived directions. For this reason, the close scrutiny of the expected reactions of each actor (or group of actors with a similar

set of discourses) in advance of a contemplated intervention, could become a valuable instrument to steer the intervention along the best and most rewarding routes.

#### **5.2.4 Civil Society Participation and the Focus on the Individual**

Article 9, dealing with the Essential Elements and Fundamental Element of the Partnership, focuses on human rights and acknowledges the importance of the “human person” or individual. Paragraph 1 of Article 9 mentions that:

Cooperation shall be directed towards sustainable development centered on the human person, who is the main protagonist and beneficiary of development; this entails respect for and promotion of all human rights (Cotonou 2000: Article 9[1]).

The recognition given to the ‘human person’ is a laudable innovation as far as previous development agreements are concerned, although the general reference to ‘human rights’ can be found in a number of previous Agreements or Conventions. Once the principles of the actor-oriented approach are applied to the whole of Article 9, it may well be that it could take on a quite different shape. Such an adaptation of Article 9 to the actor-oriented approach is recommended, because of the importance of the article. It governs the future relationship of the Partners and contains an important clause which determines the actual terms on which a Partner or one of its countries is eligible for membership. In other words, if a party is not following the stipulations of this Article, its membership could be terminated. That is the reason why ‘Essential Elements and Fundamental Element’ forms the heading of Article 9. Respect for human rights and the ‘human person’ is therefore regarded by Article

9 as the most important principle that should be adhered to by the EU-ACP Partnership, to ensure a successful relationship in future.

Because the actor-oriented approach sheds new light on practical ways in which human rights could be respected and better insured, it may well become necessary for the Partnership to adapt this Article 9, in order to get it to conform with the latest development thinking.

Article 10 deals with the 'Other elements of the political environment' and enumerates in paragraph 1 those elements that could contribute to the maintenance and consolidation of a stable and democratic political environment. It is noteworthy that one of these elements is 'greater involvement of an active and organised civil society and the private sector' (Cotonou 2000: Article 1 [1]). In view of what has been said before, (par. 4.2.6.6 - **Third important point**) on the involvement of entities such as civil society, one should regard this reference to civil society as a recommendation which could well be changed once the emphasis starts to fall on a different kind of actor, who is to be identified through actor-oriented processes. In the latter case, the emphasis falls much more on the appropriate actor for a specific job, instead of the tendency in the Agreement of enumerating a large amorphous body to function as actor in development.

Article 11 is interesting because it mentions several prerequisites for peace-building, conflict resolution and prevention, such as a healthy, active and organised civil society. It is assumed at this stage that the 'healthy active and organised civil society' mentioned here can

best be realised by way of the practical application of the prerequisites of the actor-oriented approach. Peace-building, conflict resolution and prevention of conflicts should, after all, also be tackled by the actor-oriented approach in order to ensure maximal results.

### **5.2.5 Poverty Reduction**

Development strategies as mooted in the Agreement (Cotonou 2000: Article 19), see poverty reduction and ultimately its eradication, as one of the three principal objectives of ACP-EC cooperation. The priorities of Article 19 seem to be right, because poverty reduction is given the highest ranking, even before sustainable (self-sustaining) development and progressive integration of the ACP countries into the world economy are mentioned. Some attention will be paid in the conclusion to the degree of viability of the actor-oriented approach as a medium to achieve poverty reduction.

### **5.2.6 Social and Human Development**

Social and Human Development is a whole new section in the Cotonou Agreement, starting with Article 25. The attention which, according to the heading, is given to 'people-related matters' is significant because it acknowledges alternative development thinking to some extent. Unfortunately, the real alternative development based innovations do not appear under this heading and it would therefore appear as if mere lip-service is being paid to 'human development'. This whole shortcoming, which is not only reflected in this case, will be dealt with in more detail in the chapter on findings and conclusions.

### **5.2.7 Institutional Development and Capacity Building**

Because of its particular relevance in explaining the shortcomings and, in general, the 'modernisation theory' approach of the Cotonou Agreement, Article 33, which deals with institutional development and capacity building, is appended to this study as Annexure V. It becomes obvious, when studying Article 33, that the negotiators of the Cotonou Agreement have not been able to distance themselves from the 'cargo' concept. They remind one, in almost every passage, of their desire to transfer the 'modernistic' way of life to the ACP developing countries. They also imply that, without the ACP countries and their institutions' willingness to become clones of their EU counterparts, there will be very little scope for a fruitful cooperative partnership. For example, one could take the following as a subject for further analysis:

Cooperation shall pay systematic attention to institutional aspects and in this context, shall support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen structures, institutions and procedures that help to: promote and sustain democracy, human dignity, social justice and pluralism, with full respect for diversity within and among societies;

promote and sustain universal and full respect for and observance and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

develop and strengthen the rule of law; and improve access to justice, while guaranteeing the professionalism and independence of the judicial systems; and ensure transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public institutions. (Cotonou Agreement 2000: subarticle 1 of Article 33).

The 'cooperation' which is referred to right at the beginning, actually means 'development cooperation' between the EU and the ACP, where the EU is, invariably, the benefactor and the ACP the beneficiary. This allocation of weights to the partners in the relationship makes it clear that the EU will be able to dictate policy to the ACP, and, to put it in a different way, will have to be very careful not to be tempted to dictate to the beneficiaries. Once this has

been established, one comes to the rest of the quotation especially where it mentions 'support (to) the efforts of the ACP States'. Does the EU actually mean 'support' or is it a diplomatic way of implying that they will see to it that things will be done? After all, the EU will pay the bills for whatever is decided on, on condition that they agree with the proposals. This then reverts to the EU being able to enforce principles which they understand and which they have tested before. Any deviation from this path will be rather difficult to support - something which, is very understandable for any person who has been asked to pay for something which, to him or her, was out of the ordinary and untested. In the same vein, one could expect that the references to those issues which the Partners undertake to 'promote and sustain' or to 'develop and strengthen', will be primarily for the account of the EU, and the ACP states will be on the receiving end of all the well-meaning actions to promote, sustain, develop or strengthen things for them.

Surely, after having read the basic principles on which the actor-oriented approach is meant to function, one can not agree with the sort of principles that are laid down in the Cotonou Agreement, Article 33, and many others. To achieve success in development, one should move away from the 'cargo' approach and either do planning of development interventions, the execution of such, and evaluation thereof according to an initiative which blends the views, discourses and reactions of the benefactors with those of the beneficiaries, or leave developing countries to their own devices. It stands to reason that the fundamentals of the actor-oriented approach, as explained in Chapter IV, could form a good launching pad for

a new and more human-directed approach to development cooperation, than the ones foreseen in the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium.

### **5.3 Practical Application of Private Sector and Civil Society Participation**

Where the actors in development are mentioned in the Agreement (Cotonou 2000: Article 6), one of the categories of actor is referred to as ‘the non-State actors’ (See 5.3.1 below).. This implies that civil society and private enterprise are grouped together with ‘... economic and social partners, including trade union organisations’ (Cotonou 2000: Article 6). Note that civil society and private enterprise are specified as separate entities. The question arises, however, as to whether all these actors should be participants along the lines envisaged by the Agreement, or whether in each case, some of them should rather become an integrated part of an intervention. This form of selectivity could ensure that potential actors are fused into a team consisting of actors from both sides of the intervention spectrum, as recommended by the actor-oriented approach. A close study of the Cotonou agreement and the Compendium in no way revealed any intention among the partners to interpret the role of the actors along those lines envisaged by the supporters of the actor-oriented approach. The views of the supporters of the role of actor and their composition of a proposed team of actors are unique and should therefore not be rejected without their having been tested thoroughly in practical intervention projects.

#### **5.3.1 The non-State actors**



Article 4 (Cotonou 2000: Article 4) deals with non-State actors, albeit in isolation, but nevertheless in more detail than was accorded to the other actors defined in Article 6. This Article refers to the fact that non-State actors shall, where appropriate, be informed and involved in consultation on cooperation policies and strategies; be provided with financial resources; be involved in the implementation of cooperation projects, and be provided with capacity-building support. One can glean from these undertakings a certain will among the partners to accord a special place to the non-State actors, as if they have in this Agreement gained a higher status than they had before. The actual reason for these considerations is the fact that, in line with alternative development, NGOs and various civil society representatives, as well as the more vocal spokesmen for civil society at home and on international platforms, have begun to demand closer links between the formal multilateral institutions and similar bodies such as the ACP-EU Partnership. The demands for at least a parallel NGO conference close to the respective venues for World Bank, World Trade Organisation, European Union and United Nations' conferences, were growing in number and in urgency. This phenomenon was possibly responsible for the special, often condescending considerations and tones, reflected in Article 4, as well as in several other articles in the Agreement in which non-State actors are involved.

### **5.3.2 The Private Sector**

Article 21 (Cotonou:2000: Article 21) deals with investment and private sector development and, inter alia, provides for special considerations where investment and private sector development are concerned. It alludes, for instance, to the provision of assistance to private sector development by giving active support to economic and institutional reforms.

However, true to a pre-impasse approach, it totally overlooks the actors (the people) who are the driving force behind the private sector. In addition, Article 21 shows a tendency to be patronising, for instance where it suggests that:

Cooperation shall support the necessary economic and institutional reforms and policies at national and/or regional level, aiming at creating a favourable environment for private investment, and the development of a dynamic, viable and competitive private sector. (Cotonou 2000: Article 21 [1])

These suggestions can be tolerated if they are to be instituted as part of an actor-oriented approach. If not, one can expect a predominantly top-down approach which could jeopardise the good intentions.

#### **5.4 Conclusions regarding the Cotonou Agreement**

In view of the challenges emanating from the REPA-negotiations that follow upon the conclusion of Cotonou (see par. 5.2.1), and which are becoming increasingly difficult, the Agreement has foreseen the need for the ACP Partners to become more proficient in the art of negotiation. Article 34 (Cotonou 2000: Article 34) provides for such enablement, especially in respect of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiations, which will encompass globalisation and a liberalising global economy. As the acquisition of these and other proficiencies will be dealt with in later chapters, it should suffice to mention here that the actor-oriented approach is based on methods that are set upon enabling all the selected actors for a specific intervention as a precautionary measure to ensure the eventual success of the project. This does not mean that the actors will be trained by a set of specialists, but rather that enablement occur informally during the process in which the intervention is planned in all its facets and during which actual team-building takes

place. Actors will learn through joint exercises and will request special advice, when needed. They will therefore not be subjected to special programmes for enablement, capacity building or empowerment as such.

The urgency with which the Cotonou Agreement regards its ultimate objectives is revealed in Article 37, which deals with proposed procedures for change. A tight schedule for the follow-up negotiations determines that:

Economic partnership agreements shall be negotiated during the preparatory period which shall end by 31 December 2007 at the latest. Formal negotiations of the new trading arrangements shall start in September 2002 and the new trading arrangements shall enter into force by 1 January 2008, unless earlier dates are agreed between the Parties (Cotonou Agreement 2000: Article 37 [1]).

In Article 37(3) there is also an agreement that a relatively short preparatory period shall be allowed for capacity building in the public and private sectors of ACP countries - a stipulation which underscores the EU's pressure on the ACP as demonstrated in the quote above with regard to the REPAs. The seriousness of the EU's commitment to get negotiations completed by the target date, is addressed in Art. 37 (4), which states that:

The Parties will regularly review the progress of the preparations and negotiations and will, in 2006, carry out a formal and comprehensive review of the arrangements planned for all countries to ensure that no further time is needed for preparations or negotiations (Cotonou 2000: Article 37[4]).

## **5.5 Discussion of the Compendium**

In the introduction, at the beginning of the Compendium, it is foreseen that:

... new areas which may prove of interest for co-operation strategies will be added. (Compendium: par. 3, p. 8).

This indicates that the Compendium is not static and can be amended or extended at any time if all parties agree. (A more complete discussion of this attribute of the Compendium can also be found in par. 1.2 above). The envisaged timetable mentioned in Article 37(1) and referred to above, stands in direct relation to a remark regarding the versatility of Article 20, which was also made in par. 1.2. It has been said before that the specific versatility embodied in the Compendium forms the main reason for this study's concentration on the Cotonou Agreement, and especially on the Compendium, and, as a result, for the author's intention to use both documents as the main focus of this study. The practical guidelines contained in the Compendium cover several fields, of which only the more relevant ones will be discussed here.

## **5.5.1 Economic Sector Development**

### **5.5.1.1 Agricultural and Rural Development**

The Compendium identifies rural development (Compendium 2000: section 2.1.1, p. 9), as an overarching concept in which most sectors of political, economic and social activity are reflected. The Compendium confirms that the EU-ACP partners are determined to aim at improving rural well-being as a contribution to sustained poverty reduction. Unfortunately, the prescribed practical method is based on an approach which suggests '... the promotion of sector policies and strategies to achieve economic growth ...' and '... equitable social development, based on sustainable natural resources management ...'. These, and similar factors, are presented as the solution in par. 5, which also refers to 'sector policies and strategies', 'economic growth', 'equitable social development' and 'sustainable natural resources management above

all'. Once again, one has to express disappointment at the repeated reference to systems and not to the actors within those systems. The actor-oriented approach is capable of changing this course, especially where 'equitable social development' is concerned (cf. Chapter IV above). This poses the question as to whether the proposed aims set out in par. 5 of the Compendium will be able to benefit from the actor-oriented approach. Where the Compendium further envisages the stimulation of the rural economy, and where this endeavour is linked to the national development efforts, it is suggested that a special actor-oriented focus will need to be put on the development of multi-sectoral rural strategies. This exercise should then attempt to establish a strategic framework for decentralised planning and resources allocation, and management, which could culminate in some draft guidelines. The whole exercise and its outcome could then be presented in Chapter VI, under 'guidelines'.

In paragraph 7 (Compendium 2000: par. 7, p. 9), reference is again made to the importance of 'civil society participation'. It is reiterated here that it is a suspect phrase and a concept that will fall away once the actor-oriented approach has been accepted. Another subject that often recurs in the Compendium and elsewhere in development related publications, is the question of 'gender discrimination' usually accompanied by proposals for the removal thereof. The Compendium refers in par. 7 to the ideal of ensuring the:

... availability and equal access to social and economic services (including extension) in rural areas, for both men and women (Compendium 2000: par. 7, p. 9).

The frequent reference to the necessity for gender equality is laudable and makes a specific point. However, the exclusion of other individuals such as the handicapped, the elderly, children and even those who have been ostracised from the community, is a matter that deserves further consideration and which should also be provided for, even in the application of the actor-oriented approach. If the concern for neglected people were to cover a wider group, the whole concept of ‘gender equality’ will become less tainted by reification.

#### **5.5.1.2 Agriculture**

The Compendium correctly observes that development of agriculture remains an essential component of economic development, as agriculture stimulates growth in other sectors and contributes substantially to poverty reduction in both rural and urban areas (Compendium 2000: par. 2.1.3, p. 11). It adds that agriculture shall remain the focal point of strategies aimed at improving rural well-being. However, a proviso is added stating that long-term sustainability should be addressed by adopting sustainable natural resource management practices.

This may all be well and good, but in terms of the actor-oriented approach, a vast difference can be distinguished between the method of targeting ‘agriculture’ as paradigm, and the actor-oriented methodology which would instead focus primarily on the ‘actors’ in the agricultural paradigm.

In a following paragraph of the Compendium, a recommendation is made for the encouragement of:

... the active participation and involvement of the rural population and in particular its most disadvantaged sections, in the allocation and management of financial resources at local level, inter alia, by assisting civil society to develop local associations and professional organisations ... (Compendium 2000: par. 15, third bullet)

The confusing way in which the proposed problem-solving should be undertaken is not encouraging any clear results. For instance, more or less according to the procedures of the actor-oriented approach, provision is made in this paragraph for the 'active participation and involvement of the rural population and in particular its most disadvantaged sections, in the allocation and management of financial resources at local level'. Some confusion is, however, foreseen when it comes to the proposal that civil society should assist in the development of various local institutions. The best way to achieve the establishment of an institutional framework, is to identify the actors who can take the lead in such a drive, and to combine them into a team of benefactors and beneficiaries which is tasked to produce specific results in a specific period. This is but one way in which the actor-oriented approach can be useful in bringing development to rural areas.

Land forms the basis of healthy agricultural practice. This fact is acknowledged in the Compendium where the following is proposed:

Cooperation in the agricultural sector shall be aimed at supporting:  
participatory land reforms and the establishment of land tenure systems ensuring an equitable and efficient allocation of land and allowing access to land to the most disadvantaged groups of population while protecting their existing rights (Compendium 2000: par. 15, fifth bullet).

However, the realisation of the above recommendation and guidelines is not as simple as it is made to appear in this paragraph. Just to effect land reform and establish an effective land tenure system could unleash a tenacious reaction of resistance to change. Such a reaction from the community could torpedo the whole effort, unless it is tackled along the lines proposed by Norman Long as discussed in the whole of Chapter IV of this study. There are very good reasons to caution the EU-ACP Partners, as soon as possible, to review this particular part of the Compendium. It does not inspire any confidence and should rather be left alone, unless the whole section could be dealt with in terms of the actor-oriented approach, which has a much greater chance of success than the present methods prescribed in the Compendium

### **5.5.1.3 Fisheries Development**

Considerable practical experience has been gained by the author over several years (1995 - 1999) concerning the European Union's particular approach to cooperation regarding fisheries in developing countries. As a matter of fact, during these years, the author was directly involved in very tough negotiations between the EU and South Africa regarding a mutual Fisheries Agreement. From the earliest stages of negotiations, the EU tenaciously insisted on the conclusion of a cooperation agreement, which turned out to be more along the lines of one-way cooperation, with little advantage for South Africa.



The EU has mastered the art of concealing real intentions in very attractive terminology. A cooperation agreement seems real and something that should lead to a win-win situation. The contents of section 2.1.6 (p.14 of the Compendium), for instance, purport that the:

... main fisheries priority in relations between the EC and the ACP States shall be the food security and income of local communities dependent on fishing for their livelihood, to be achieved by securing their access to fish stocks and providing opportunities for adding value (Compendium 2000: par. 22, p.14).

The author and a number of ACP countries can bear witness to the contrary. The agreements were mainly intended to open up new fishing waters for the EU fishing fleets because fisheries is an economic sector in which European countries have a special interest. Their own fishing waters are heavily exploited and they are keenly looking for alternative fish resources. Quite a number of Fishing Agreements have ensued and the relevant ACP countries can substantiate the above allegations. The EU-ACP Partnership Agreement has for some time now given an opportunity for European expansion in foreign waters. Namibia and Angola are two examples. The EU has not yet delivered any proof that 'food security and income of local communities dependent on fishing for their livelihood' have been made priorities in countries with which they have entered into a fisheries agreement (World Wildlife Fund 1996). Meanwhile, during the 1990s, there was a considerable depletion of available fish in the Atlantic ocean, from the Angolan coast right down to the Namibian coast and the South African western seaboard. There must surely be a link between the aggressive EU search for fishing partners in the Atlantic and the sudden and serious depletion of the resources.

The contents of section 2.1.6 on 'Fisheries' (Compendium pp. 14 and 15), are to be handled circumspectly by ACP countries with a fishing potential. Should this problematic and sensitive area be tackled by way of the actor-oriented approach, the EU's opportunities to dominate the respective negotiations with ACP partners will be markedly reduced. Along with the EU representatives, ACP negotiators will be able to decide on the actors in the negotiating process. In this way, a team of equals could be put together and balance of power could be assured.

#### **5.5.1.4 Transport Development**

The Compendium (2000: Section 2.2, pp. 15-17) deals with the development of a multitude of aspects concerning transport and refers to effective domestic transport as well as cross-border connections. Because transport can be considered as one of the main communication arteries, it is important to keep a well-run and well-maintained transport infrastructure going. The author's knowledge of the actor-oriented approach serves as a basis for a recommendation that, in order to enter the high road of transport development, the actor-oriented approach should be considered as the main vehicle for the project. This approach could well be the best way to achieve success with the establishment, extension and maintenance of the transport network. To substantiate this statement, certain guidelines on the application of the actor-oriented approach in improving a transport network, will be included in Chapter VI.

### **5.5.1.5 Mineral Resources Development**

The Compendium states (Compendium 2000: section 2.4, pp. 18-19) that the mineral resources sector has a real potential to become an important contributor to sustained (self-sustained) growth. It is seen as an activity within the private sector that should benefit the country by way of recognised methods of exploitation, thus preventing irresponsible use of irreplaceable natural resources. Since minerals are a key productive resource and are found, in some form or another, in every country, the importance of mineral resources should be respected by all ACP -EU Partners.

The development of the extraction and local refinement of the available mineral resources lies within the objectives of the Partnership Agreement. The importance of proper access to these resources applies to the general objective of achieving sustainable and equitable development (Compendium 2000: par. 33). The Compendium mentions that development of a competitive mining sector, accompanied by the active encouragement of private sector involvement and development, will eventually fulfil the objectives of the Partners. The objectives are to give proper access to these resources and to facilitate their sustainable exploitation (Compendium 2000: par. 35).

Unfortunately, the Compendium makes no mention of the importance of local ownership of mining ventures, or at least a sizeable share holding by the local population, that could ensure that some compensation is given to a community in exchange for the extraction of valuable minerals. Here again, the possible role of the actor-oriented approach in ensuring that local populations are duly compensated for minerals extracted from their

land, should not be ignored, but should rather be added to the Compendium to ensure that these aspects are considered in future programmes.

## **5.5.2 Social and Human Development**

### **5.5.2.1 Education and Training**

The importance of education and training is mentioned in both Article 25 of the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium (2000: section 3.1, pp. 29-30). Seeing that both education and training are methods for knowledge transfer, and because of the importance of 'knowledge' in development, special attention has been paid to knowledge in all its forms in several sections above. (Section 2.5 of Chapter II and par. 4.2.8 above, for example).

The Compendium elaborates on the subjects in paragraph 82, stating that:

... a well educated and skilled workforce contributes directly to raising overall productivity, enhancing economic growth, eradicating poverty and ultimately improving the living standard .. (Compendium 2000: 29).

In the above situation, the Compendium puts the importance of knowledge, and the need for properly planned and effective knowledge transfer to the disadvantaged, in perspective. Unless all the analyses and discussions above, regarding the knowledge discourse as well as the wide variety of factors involved in the knowledge discourse, are taken into consideration at least by those who work in terms of the Compendium, a well educated and skilled workforce will not be easily created.

The Compendium deals with 'Scientific, Technological and Research Cooperation' in Section 3.2 and mentions that the 'conservation and use of indigenous and local knowledge, in a world with (an) increasing exogenous information overload (Compendium 2000: par. 101, p.31), should become part of the fabric of every development project and programme. Some practical pointers are added, such as:

- ... the need to draw up and implement research and development projects and programmes established by the ACP States, in line with the needs and living conditions of the people concerned;
- ... the establishment and promotion of activities aimed at the consolidation of appropriate indigenous technology ... (Compendium 2000: par. 102, p. 31).

In the above regard, the Compendium also mentions the acquisition and adaptation of relevant foreign technology, in particular that of other developing countries, which is a good example of encouragement for South-South cooperation among ACP states.

#### **5.5.2.2 Cultural Development**

The cultural heritage of all countries, and in this case the ACP countries, should be preserved and promoted (Compendium 2000: Section 3.6, p.37. To achieve this, account should be taken of the cultural dimension (cultural repertoires, as discussed in par. 4.2.6.8) of the subject countries at the different levels of development cooperation, or in each of the relevant discourses, to use a clearer terminology. From the actor-oriented viewpoint it is contended that 'taking account' is not as difficult a task as it is made out to be. On the contrary, it is an ideal field for an ethnographer to study and 'to

take account' of the cultural repertoires existing in the proposed field at which a specific intervention is aimed.

Cultural formations are of great significance where the actor-oriented approach is being applied. They are manifested, as has been explained above, by a variety of compositions, shapes and forms which should be identified in the early stages of intervention planning. Closely related to the variety of cultural manifestations, is the subject of heterogeneity in a community, which should also be identified and closely observed, already in the early stages of an intervention.

### **5.5.3 Thematic and crosscutting issues**

#### **5.5.3.1 Environment**

With regard to ecological matters, the Compendium foresees the:

... protection and the enhancement of the environment and natural resources, the halting of the deterioration of land, forests and aquatic ecosystems, the restoration of ecological balances, the preservation of natural resources and their sustainable use .... (Compendium 2000: 40).

A valid point is made that the degradation of ecosystems in developing countries (such as the ACP) is leading to increased poverty, thus hindering the reduction thereof, thereby creating a vicious circle. This militates against the eventual realisation of the objectives contained in par. 135 of the Compendium and in Article 1 of the Cotonou Agreement. Curbing this negative development is of great importance and calls for the preparation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development that

have due regard for ecological balances. This is where an intervention analysis, consequent planning and execution, which will all correspond to the principles of the actor-oriented approach, should be considered.

## **5.6 Summary**

As one of its main objectives, the Agreement envisages making it possible for the ACP States to enter smoothly into the vast and challenging arena of globalisation and liberalisation. This will obviously require, from the developmental point of view, that professionally designed and most effective development cooperation interventions should be initiated. The ultimate recommendations of this study will ask that due consideration should be given to the implementation of the innovative actor-oriented approach. For an agreement that purports to assist countries and their people to move into the post-modern world, signs are that both the Agreement and the Compendium contain too many references to redundant methods and principles. Both Partners to the EU-ACP Partnership would do well to improve their knowledge about and incorporation of contemporary thought patterns, many of which, such as the actor-oriented approach, are to a large extent based upon post-modern thinking and methodology (Please consult section 3.3 for a more complete discussion of the contemporary schools of thought).

Then there is the definition of the actors, which in the Cotonou Agreement (Cotonou 2000: Article 6) specifically, leaves one with a perception that the definition of the actors is too

wide and concentrates too much on structures. A discussion of this possible shortcoming can be found in par. 5.2.3. As mentioned before, the description of ‘actors in development’ in the Agreement (Cotonou 2000: Article 6), can be critically compared to the description of ‘social actors’ in the actor-oriented approach (Long 2001: 240-243). The latter appears to be more appropriate and more effective to apply, and as mentioned above (par. 2.4.3), identifying the actors has been accepted by contemporary researchers (such as Long and Schuurman) as having first priority in the sequence of intervention planning. For this reason, the job of identifying them should be undertaken in the right way and according to the more recently established procedures.

The whole Chapter V analysis of the Cotonou Agreement is limited to a selection of articles. Covering all the Articles would have given rise to an unnecessary duplication of comments. In spite of the criticism of the selected Articles above, or perhaps as a result of the fault lines identified in the critique, the Cotonou Agreement is still considered as the best present-day vehicle for development cooperation. It would of course be improved if certain new and post-modern ideas could be grafted onto the existing texts. It can therefore be stated again (as in par. 5.1) that, because of the historical advantage of almost thirty years of development cooperation between the EU and the ACP, and the ongoing negotiations for an improved Partnership Agreement and the REPAs, the Cotonou set of documents has been chosen as the main subject for the possible application of new theories that may surface through this study.



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## Chapter VI

### **Proposed guidelines for the implementation of an actor-oriented approach**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Logically, the actor-oriented approach will remain the *leitmotif* throughout this study, whereas the Cotonou Agreement/Compendium will be the experimental field in which the practical application of the actor-oriented approach will be put to a theoretical test. Should a test result seem to be feasible, appropriate guidelines for practical application will be added. The guidelines in this chapter will endeavour to serve the purpose of presenting some form of a framework for the planning, initiating and running of an intervention according to the actor-oriented approach. It has been stated before that, as far as could be ascertained, no such practical guidelines have been constructed as yet (par. 1.3).

The main aim of this chapter is to ensure that the theoretically based guidelines proposed herewith are presented in such a user friendly way that they will encourage all the Parties to the Cotonou Agreement, as well as those other parties involved in development work, to give the actor-oriented approach at least a fair trial run.

#### **6.2 Theoretical guidelines for a practical actor-oriented approach, with special reference to the Cotonou Agreement and Compendium**

The actions required for initiating and driving a successful intervention along the lines of the actor-oriented approach should follow more or less the following sequence:

Institute ethnographic or another form of wide-ranging research and remember to include the benefactors in the evaluation. In other words, study the section of the European Commission (EC) which is directly involved and its relevant subsections, as well as the full spectrum of the targeted (beneficiary) area.

Deconstruct the field targeted for intervention as well as the relevant group of benefactors to identify modernisation theses. Deconstruct each thesis in turn and assess its validity in the envisaged intervention. Find hidden metaphors and reifications that may inhibit straight thinking and offer alternatives for discussion by the team. One could, in this process, make use of ethnographic data that may become available during the parallel research in that field.

Appoint a team of actors representing both sides. Use the results of deconstruction as well as ethnographic research to select the actors.

Identify discourses for the team that will blend with those of the target community and at the same time, satisfy both sides. Also find discourses that may be hostile to the proposed intervention.

Ensure that the interface practices within the team are effective and geared, as far as possible, towards a mutual goal. Ensure that the interface practices are successfully assisting in the transfer of discourses.

Ensure that all the involved actors are fully briefed on discourses such as those regarding knowledge and power, as identified in their midst as well as in the target communities.

Plan the proposed intervention to meet the rest of the requirements of the actor-oriented approach as well.

The following question arises now: “Who in the Partnership will be appointing the ethnographers and deconstructing agents, and who will pay for their work?”

Their work will have to start even before the intervention has been designed and it will be wrong to have the EC officials made wholly responsible for the selection process.

This task should be equally planned and shared. One consideration could be, to make the Joint ACP-EU Council of Ministers responsible for creating a ‘joint actor selecting board’, which will be the permanent structure for the identification and appointment of the actors. Once a team of actors has been appointed, further responsibility for planning and executing the particular intervention, will pass to the team. Further theoretical guidelines for a practical actor-oriented approach are covered in the following paragraphs..

### **6.2.1 The ethnographic survey**

In consulting the available data (referring to par. 2.3.3), one would understand that an ethnographic researcher(s) would have to be appointed for every proposed intervention. It will not be helpful to select this person(s) only from amongst the donors. To offer training opportunities as ethnographers, volunteers representative of beneficiary countries (ACP) should be encouraged, as early as possible, to assist appointed professional ethnographers and to study in that direction. It could also be argued that it would be easier for a member of a community to act as ethnographer than it would be for an outsider, unless one gives consideration to the negative results that could be obtained because of a local

ethnographer's subjectivity. The pros and cons of the local incumbent will depend to a degree on the person's personality and ability to look at his own community objectively. However, as a general rule, one should avoid the appointment of ethnographers to that particular community who derive from a specific area.

What is conveyed in this paragraph is not a blueprint or a fixed format for an ethnographic survey, but presents a number of guidelines only. It would be impossible to propose rigid and predetermined guidelines because the ethnographic survey falls within the ambit of the human sciences. It will never have exact results and can never be cast into a predetermined mould. Experience in ethnography will obviously be one of the most important qualifications for the job.

It is foreseen that, in practice, the team steering the actor-oriented approach will rely heavily on preparatory studies produced by ethnographer(s). Possibly it would be wise to complete at least the first phase of the ethnographic study, before deconstruction should begin. Only after completion of ethnographic research and deconstruction, should one begin with the further design and planning of the proposed intervention.

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To give a rough portrayal of the procedures that should form part of ethnographic research, some basic indicators have been extracted from available resources (for instance: [Long 2001: 16-17] as well as par. 2.3.3 and par. 4.2.1 above), which will be reflected below:

First and foremost, the ethnographic researcher should realise that allowances should be made for a whole range of scenarios that should be given attention, all differing, depending on the circumstances. The 'autonomous' fields of action in a community (Long 2001: 91), such as religion, cultures, peer groups, and traditionalists versus the enlightened, should be studied and the various forces that affect them, for example, cultural differences, power, authority, and the inter-connectivity of all the above, should be determined.

Simultaneously, one should, *inter alia*, establish ethnographically how social interaction and dialogue influence the lifeworld of the targeted community and make a point of identifying the people that are steering these actions. It should be reiterated that the above would apply to both sides of an intervention, therefore, a thorough knowledge of the same aspects applicable to the role players on the side of the benefactor will also need to be considered. For instance, in the case of this study where special reference is made to the Cotonou Agreement, one should, on the one hand, study the relevant sections of the European Commission. On the other hand, the targeted community(ies), institutions, groups and other instances that are part of the proposed beneficiary society should also be studied. It is possible that the 'ethnographic survey' of the donor group will be less intensive involve much less than will be the case regarding the beneficiary target, but it is advisable to have it done.

Seeing the lifeworlds (par. 4.2.2) of the target communities as constantly changing fields and never as being constant, opens the eyes of the researcher or observer to the vitality and constant movement in a lifeworld and the changes in it that never cease. By practising

ethnography, or by employing an ethnographer to distinguish all these points, the role players' perceptive abilities are constantly improving.. Whatever the case may be, one should take note of the two main methods of ethnography, namely the descriptive and the critical methods, as discussed in par. 4.2.1. Each one is relevant to a specific scenario or utilised to obtain specific results, and both should be utilised at the appropriate stages and as required.

The use of narratives ('... an insider's perspective on how symbols are used and meaning is created within a particular culture ...' as Long (2000:16) puts it), to gain first hand and unreserved information from local people, is encouraged. As a matter of fact, the use of narratives to establish facts is just as applicable to the donor agency, (in this case the EC) as it is applicable to the beneficiary community. From a number of narratives a master narrative will eventually present itself. This master narrative should then be deconstructed to get to the gist of the matter and to reveal hidden agendas, modernisation theses and hidden metaphors. This sort of study is vital regarding the proper assessment, adaptation or incorporation of master narratives that are in circulation in official (EC) circles.

Although the ethnographic research is meant to prepare the way for the actor-oriented approach, the researcher must always keep in mind that his research is also expected to help identify the actual team of actors that will need to be assembled before the intervention planning and execution can come on stream.

Although Schuurman (1996: 26) is convinced that deconstruction is the best way to find the actors for an intervention, the conclusion has been reached, after having studied the

detailed descriptions of ethnographic research by both Long (2001) and Wendt (2001), that ethnography and deconstruction should somehow be combined for more effectivity. Ethnographic research must consistently keep heterogeneity in mind, especially within the targeted community, and must attempt to describe concepts such as cultural repertoires, heterogeneity and hybridity in detail (see par. 4.2.6.8). The fact that the donor community's representatives could also be heterogeneous, must constantly be kept in mind and integrated with the bigger ethnographic survey.

The European Commission actors should take special note of the fact that, because of the importance of continual progress during an actor-oriented approach, ongoing ethnographic updates will be required while the programme(s) or project(s) that emanate from a specific intervention are still being put in place. Therefore it would be preferable for the ethnographer(s) to widen the parameters of the survey in order to get as complete a picture, and as intimate a portrayal of the community, as is possible. Ongoing ethnographic surveys of relevant sections of the EC will be beneficial for the intervention process as a whole, because this will ensure that equal treatment is meted out to both parties in the team, thus contributing to a balance whereby no favours are accorded to either side.

### **6.2.2 Deconstruction**

Schuurman (1993: 26), is of the opinion that deconstruction offers the most effective way to identify actors. In addition, it has already been decided that deconstruction is a useful tool that provides comprehensive, in-depth and good information to plan an intervention. For



instance, when dealing with the actor-oriented approach, questions could arise regarding the item that should be deconstructed and how it should be done. Therefore, in the case of a search for actors, it is the lifeworlds of a targeted community and all ancillary groups that are not strongly represented in the local lifeworld analysis, that will need to be deconstructed. (See two pages back, viz. the reference to ‘autonomous’ fields, to get a better understanding of the ‘ancillary groups’ mentioned above.) Similarly, the European Commission actors will also be found by deconstructing the various departments of the Commission that will be involved in the proposed intervention, and ancillary sectors that may be relevant to the cause. In the case of intervention deconstruction, the proposed framework of the intervention, its discourses and everything else that will go into it, should be deconstructed. This is the reason why deconstruction of all the facets of the proposed intervention (within both donor and beneficiary domains) should, as a rule, follow up on the initial ethnographic survey that covered the same fields. The ethnographic report will be of great value in the process of deconstruction and *vice versa*.

Some basic considerations regarding deconstruction, such as deconstructing a culture to determine the extent of, and interactions caused by heterogeneity, cultural repertoires and hybridity (see par. 4.2.6.8), whilst keeping an eye open for possible actors from the cultural field, are added here. The results obtained thus should eventually be correlated with the ethnographic findings. Other considerations are, that one should deconstruct the government field, the political field, religious groups and similar entities at all levels in the target area, not forgetting tribal structures that may still be in existence, nor the informal sector.

Potential actors searched for in all the above-mentioned categories, and each

deconstruction report, should convey as much additional information as possible.

Deconstruction is not only done to find the actors, it helps detect possible modernisation

theses, and helps to establish which hidden metaphors may have an influence on the

proposed intervention planning, as has been stated in par. 2.2.2 above.

Deconstruction will, for instance, be required in spheres such as economics (trade,

communications, agriculture, manufacture, and others) as well as in the informal sector.

1Then, one should determine and allocate weights, according to a simple scale, to

knowledge and power sources (people or groups that play a role due to a combination

of their knowledge and power) to establish each identified person's or group's rank in

society. Actors with the ability to combine their knowledge and power in aid of the

community, or some of its sectors, usually stand out in a community.

Furthermore, deconstruct and assess external influences - past, present and future. The

results should be indicative of the way in which one should proceed with an intervention

and what sort of general response one could expect from such. This sort of assessment

of the potential group of EC actors, will also come in handy when selecting role-players

for specific tasks and for other purposes and should not be left out of the planning stage

of the intervention.

Deconstruct and determine the boundaries of the target group and in what spaces it

operates most efficiently, but do not commit the intervention to a rigid time-frame.

List the actors who have been identified through the above procedures and include others

that may stand out. A combined ethnographic/deconstruction report on each of the

identified actors (on both sides) would be invaluable for future optimal utilisation of actors' skills.

List the hidden agendas (emanating from deconstruction as well as from ethnographically initiated narratives) that were identified. These can be found on both sides (EU as well as the beneficiary country) of the intervention. If deconstruction is done well, it should reveal certain structures that will have to be dismantled, modernisation theses that will have to be adapted to contemporary thinking, and could reveal those hidden metaphors and reifications that might lead a contemporary researcher astray.

Produce a first draft of a possible intervention strategy, built upon the foundations of the facts that were gleaned. This could, in effect, be described as a process of reconstruction.

### **6.2.3 Actors**

One could assume at this stage that a core group of actors has been appointed, mainly from people identified by way of ethnographic research and deconstruction, as explained above (par. 6.2.1 and 6.2.2). The next step should be to write at least two scenarios for the team of actors which they should follow to plan the intervention and how to achieve the best results. Because the team of actors will be operating according to actor-oriented principles, references that follow in this chapter will have to be made applicable in the whole process.

The following remarks have been taken from Long (2001: 50-52), who recommends that one should establish how the identified actors (individuals or groups from both sides) handle agency, in other words, one should determine how the actors go about processing social

experience and whether they will succeed in devising ways to cope with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion. (Agency is referred to in par. 2.4.1 and par. 4.2.1). In addition, one should keep in mind that average bureaucrats (and this applies, for example, to the EC and the ACP bureaucracies) do not have agency *ex officio* - they usually only do as they are told. Selecting the right official to deal with, as well as determining the strategy, in each case, to deal with the relevant officials, are both mechanisms which are very relevant to success. The more efficient official has somehow acquired agency and is applying it in practice, whether in the office or in the community. If he has obtained agency in one field, it should not be difficult for him to achieve agency in another. In an actor-oriented milieu it may be possible for officials who handle agency effectively to withstand the incidence of, and also contribute to, the reduction of the number of top-down or cargo approaches. (These approaches have been fully discussed, inter alia, in par. 4.2.6.5.)

Try to establish which of the identified actors can be considered to be the driving forces behind networking, that is, the generation and utilisation thereof. Those that fail this test should not be disqualified as actors in a team, but should be utilised in team-roles where they are accorded agency as individuals in specialist roles. It could be foreseen that the more individualistic group of actors could consist of people who prefer to operate as individuals and who tend to work perfectly well on their own. These too, have an important niche in interventions.

The nodal points at which interactions take place in a community (or in an EC Department) and where interpretations are being done, are the areas where the most dynamic and effective actors will be found. Ascertain, either in the process of deconstruction or through ethnographic research, whether all these nodal points and the actors playing a role in those sectors have been identified and integrated with the team,. One should simultaneously find out which people or groups are wielding most power and establish how they use their power - wisely or harshly. This assessment should not apply to the EC component only.

Analyse struggles to determine who the main protagonists and antagonists are, why they are involved in the struggle, and how they go about resolving a preliminary survey, and remain aware that it is almost impossible to compile a homogeneous team of actors. Heterogeneity must be accepted as a standard contingency and the body of actors will gradually come to accept that they can work more effectively as a unit in spite of their differences. Once heterogeneity is accepted as a positive fact by all the actors, team cohesion will become easier to forge. This acceptance and adaptation on the part of the team, will serve to unify them and to optimise their output.

Also establish the different actor practices that are in vogue in both the benefactor's area as well as among the beneficiaries involved. For instance, one could try to establish the most popular actor strategies and the rationales behind them. One could also try to determine who could be employed. Determine the viability and effectivity of existing actors' strategies for solving specific problems. Look for examples, if any, of wider social ramifications

within the target area, that have been caused by the application of any existing actors' strategies and rationales that may have been identified. Interaction among actors can assume various configurations that should be identified analytically by, for instance, looking into social discontinuities, ambiguities and cultural differences.

#### **6.2.4 Knowledge, networks and power**

The nature of knowledge, its many manifestations, the existence of knowledge networks and power/knowledge relationships (please also consult par. 2.5 and sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9), should be distinguished, especially by the ethnographer but also by the team during the course of the intervention. It is important that the vast differences in perceived knowledge, networks and power between the EC on the one hand, and the target (ACP) community on the other, be highlighted. This is where the trap of generalisation can easily ensnare the observer, because of the natural tendency to generalise, for instance, by making EC standards applicable to the ACP target areas. There are, quite often, radical differences of various sorts between benefactors' circumstances and those of the beneficiaries.

In the same vein, a picture can easily be blurred by reification of subjects such as knowledge or the economy. There will be a constant need to differentiate between real knowledge and the many reified versions thereof. Both Partners to the Cotonou Agreement should be made aware of all these points as well as the inherent dangers of generalisation and perpetuating reified images in their relationship. In order to give more substance to the observations above, the following examples, all to be found on page 9 of the Compendium, are cited:

Rural development is an overarching concept which encompasses most sectors of political, economic and social activity. The social and economic development of rural areas is at the heart of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Co-operation will, therefore, aim at improving rural well-being as a contribution to sustained poverty reduction. It shall promote sector policies and strategies to achieve economic growth and equitable social development based on sustainable natural resources management. (Compendium: 5, p. 9), (cf. Adams (1993: 207).

‘Sustainable development’, as described above, has become a fashionable, often populist term (par. 2.6 above). It is now being utilised by development instances as a commodity and is included for the sake of popularity and in sympathy with the ‘green’ movement in almost every publication about development.

To ensure meaningful participation of civil society in the strategic process and enhance the role of women, attention in the design and implementation of strategies shall be paid to ensure that adequate measures are included to promote inter alia :

- a) (Please see next bullet below).
- b) the full participation of women and the recognition of the active role they play as full partners in the rural production and economic development processes;
- c) the availability and equal access to social and economic services (including extension) in rural areas, for both men and women;
- d) the development of capacity in local and central administration including the training of staff;
- e) the sustainable participatory management of common natural resources; and
- f) the decentralisation of planning and implementation of sectoral budgets and the enhancement of local capacity to improve the effectiveness and transparency of financial and human resource management. (Compendium 7: 9)

‘Participation of civil society’, dealt with in the above quote, is another example of a populist term (please also see par. 2.6 above), which intends to convey the message that development is serious about the people, and that they are, at the same time, encouraged to participate in all sorts of projects. ‘Participation of civil society’ would not have become reified if guidelines about how it could be achieved had been added to every reference to civil society participation.

- a) the organization, empowerment and capacity building of producers and local communities in order for them to become active partners in the planning and implementation processes (Compendium 7(a): 9)

The above reference to ‘capacity building’ (please also consult par. 2.5.6), implies nothing more and nothing less than ‘training’, but probably became popularised because a term was required that sounded less mundane than ‘training’. At the same time, perhaps, it became reified because it originated from an artificial background. Nevertheless, the fact that it is reified and populist at the moment cannot be denied. This brings one to the conclusion that this terminology should rather be avoided, unless the exact way in which it should be used can be spelled out.

The following has been said about knowledge construction:

Knowledge is a cognitive and social construction that results from and is constantly shaped by the experiences, encounters and discontinuities that emerge at the points of intersection between different actors’ lifeworlds. To establish the ways in which knowledge comes about, note the way in which people categorise, code, process and impute meaning to their experiences (Long 2001: 70).



One could also follow the above lines and argue that social, situational, cultural and institutional factors are at the foundation of knowledge processes. Existing conceptual frameworks and procedures are constantly being affected by various social interactions within a community or a particular group of individuals. Such ever-changing conceptual frameworks and procedures in turn demarcate the ever-changing parameters within which the knowledge processes take place. The fluidity of, and constantly varying dynamics within the knowledge paradigm, should always be taken into account. Knowledge is constructive when it results from decisions and selective incorporation of previous ideas, beliefs and images. It can be destructive too - where it affects existing or other frames of conceptualisation and understanding. Knowledge is more than a mere accumulation of facts and is never integrated with an underlying cultural logic or system of classification, but is fragmentary, partial and provisional in nature (Long 2001: 70).

- People therefore work with a multiplicity of understandings, beliefs and commitments which give a good reason for looking at knowledge in the broadest possible sense when applying the actor-oriented approach.
- Knowledge, in all its manifestations, is one of the most significant factors in the development paradigm. In order to understand the real issue of creation and transformation of knowledge, one should consider the way in which people from all layers of a community build bridges and manage those critical knowledge interfaces that constitute the points of intersection between their diverse lifeworlds (please refer back to par. 4.2.9).

With regard to knowledge networks (as discussed in par. 4.2.8.4), one should establish how different combinations of social organisations contain, absorb and generate particular bodies of knowledge, and whether exploration of the above is encouraged and if so, how it is done. Identification of epistemic communities (communities with the same sources and types of knowledge), is important because they are conducive to networking.. The dynamic viability of each should be established according to a predetermined scale, in order to determine their effectivity in networking. Network analysis (ethnographic route) can help one to identify the boundaries of epistemic communities and to describe the structure and contents of particular communicator networks. Establishing the finer details of the very intricate EU networks, will hardly be possible. Therefore, only the directly applicable networks on the EC side should be tackled for identification and analysis.

- Since Foucault's (1980) determination in this respect, the power/knowledge relationship has been accepted as a valid argument which often manifests itself in society. In this respect, it should be noted that there is a real significance in the relations between knowledge, interface and power. Interface has been added to knowledge and power by Long (2001: 72). The matter seems to have been made more complex, but meanwhile this observation regarding interface is a valid translation of everyday occurrences. The balance of power between the EC and any ACP country is unbalanced. This does not mean that the ACP countries are powerless. They can, if forced into that position, even wield power (media and propaganda for instance) which could bring the EC to its knees. There should, for this and many other reasons, be a clear distinction between power in its

various natural forms and reified power, which is something quite different (please see par. 4.2.3 for further information).

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- The social construction of knowledge and power is a topic that could be of special importance to the ethnographer, one reason being that knowledge dissemination and the creation of knowledge fall squarely within the social context. Dissemination and creation of knowledge, also referred to as 'knowledge transfer', cannot be regarded as processes of 'formal institutions', 'ideal typical conceptions' or linkage mechanisms. These processes involve specific actors and interacting individuals who become interrelated through networks of interest and through the sharing of certain knowledge frames. It is important, therefore, to assess 'knowledge transfer' in general. In addition, it would be necessary to establish how effective and in what combination knowledge and power are utilised by actors to subject people, or to convince people, or to press an opinion home where so required.

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- Power always implies some or other form of struggle, negotiation, debate and compromise. In all these interactions some element of knowledge is required and the ratio between, and the manner of utilisation of power and knowledge respectively, often determine success or failure. People who are generally described as being 'powerless' sometimes stand up and make a stand. In this way they are also wielding power. Therefore, it should be obvious that the powerful are not, *ipso facto*, in complete control (please also refer to par. 4.2.8.6).

Should one wish to understand knowledge processes, one should give due recognition to power differentials as well as struggles about social meaning. As has been stated before, knowledge is a social construct that emanates from, and is constantly being reshaped by, encounters and discontinuities that emerge at the points of intersection between actors' lifeworlds.

'Multiple realities' (as explained in par. 4.2.7.5), present factors which are of special ethnographic interest:

... social life is composed of multiple realities which are constructed and confirmed primarily through experience ..... Hence social perceptions, values and classifications must be analysed in relation to interlocking experiences and social practices, not at the level of general cultural schema or value abstractions (Long 2001: 90).

- A great variety of knowledge issues intersect in the construction of social arrangements and discursive practices. Issues such as contradictions, inconsistencies, ambiguities and negotiations come about as a result of the above and are described as 'multiple realities' (please see par. 4.2 .7.5).
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- The connection between 'lifeworlds' and 'knowledge processes' manifests knowledge in yet a different way (Schutz 1962). Knowledge of everyday life is organised in zones around a 'person's here and now' and the centre of his or her world is him/herself. Around this centre, knowledge is arranged in zones, both spatial and temporal, or different degrees of relevances, first face to face situations and then more distant zones where encounters are

more typified and anonymous. A thorough study of the cognitive world of the individuals (actors) concerned is therefore important. Ethnography will come in handy when doing this study. To begin with, one may look for the cognitive world in processes by which social actors interact, negotiate and accommodate each others' lifeworlds.

Finally, all the interactions mentioned directly above lead to reinforcement of the transformation of existing types of knowledge and to the emergence of new forms of knowledge.

#### **6.2.5 Interface**

According to Long (2001: 69-72), interface is of special interest to ethnographers because this is where the struggles about, and shaping of new discourses take place. This does, however, not mean that interface does not have many other facets.

Interface perspectives culminate in an organised entity of interlocking relationships and intentionalities that comes about, in due course, through the establishment of organised relations between groups. It is recognised by certain rules and procedures, sanctions and established ways, as for instance conflict handling. During analysis the focus should be on linkages and networks between parties in which interlocking relationships and intentionalities are involved.

The role of actors in interface situations could either be mutually accommodating, or that of outright conflict, or anything in between. Long (2001: 69), points out that one should not just assume that an actor will automatically act in the interest of the group that he represents. The link between representatives and constituencies (with their different members) must be empirically established and not taken for granted. Interfaces are often subjected to clashes of cultural paradigms, i.e. traditions, religion, gender or similar discourses. Interplay of cultural and ideological oppositions should be analysed and actors' particular definition of reality and visions for the future should be considered.

The actor-oriented interface is a subdivision of interface which concentrates on how actors' lifeworlds and projects interact, as well as how agreements are reached. Actor-oriented interface becomes clearer as more relevant discourses are analysed and opened up. In other words, whereas the present relationship between the EU and the ACP is governed by the general type of interface established through the Lomé tradition, the picture stands a chance to alter, not only when the actor-oriented approach is instituted, but also when the full impact of the Cotonou Agreement becomes reality. What would probably emanate from a new system, would be concentrated interaction between actors' lifeworlds and projects. The actor-oriented approach will open up a different route by which agreements are reached. On the whole, less domestic tension and greater mutual understanding may result from the opening up of new discourses under the auspices of the actor-oriented approach.

Interface has a definite role in all stages of planned intervention. The whole team of actors should understand that planned intervention is not, like an injection, a ready-made instant plan or remedy. It is, instead, an ongoing process lasting as long as will be required. This is where it becomes important, even before the appointment of the team, to establish how an actor would utilise all the interface processes available to him. In other words, how he would go about becoming part of the resources and constraints of social strategy within an intervention.. Because an intervention presents influences from different sources, (opens up new interfaces), it will also be important to know how a society goes about internalising new or differing discourses (Long 2001:71).

- Full account should be taken of ‘multiple realities’ as described under ‘knowledge’ (par. 4.2.7.5) when dealing with development projects. It should also be noted that planned intervention is a process of transformation, constantly reshaped by its own dynamics, which necessitates information about how processes of planned intervention are being internalised by a beneficiary community. One could presume that the sooner this can be established, the better the intervention will eventually fare.

- Another problem area can be clarified partially in advance, by establishing (ethnographically) how conflict situations in interface are being handled. The reason for this is that interventions tend to cause tension and conflict such as, for instance, disputes about resources and social transformations (Long 2001: 69).

There are social discontinuities, ambiguities and cultural differences in any given social structure. Successful intervention planning and interface handling depend on the prior determination of how tensions are usually dealt with in a community. During the course of an intervention, it will also depend on a constant awareness of, and receiving updates on, how these tensions are being manifested in a target community. This is another point to illustrate the importance of having good ethnographic research done before any intervention is even planned, and of having ethnographic studies done on an ongoing basis to keep an eye open for any possible disturbances or conflict situations.

- Attention should be given to discrepancies on the social front; discrepancies in cultural circles, and discrepancies concerning utilisation of knowledge and power. An assessment should be made of how the discrepancies are solved, perpetuated or transformed, simultaneously accepting that this will be done by way of confrontation and linkage. During the course of interface, these aspects must be constantly monitored as well.
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- It would be sensible to remain alert about how the proposed interface planning would affect the relevant lifeworlds. This is a prerequisite to ensure a smooth ending for an intervention.

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Finally, interface consists of, and gives rise to, multiple discourses because it is an ongoing process of constant interaction that requires perpetual study, inter alia, of its ever-changing discourses. However, dominant discourses tend to include reifications, in other words,



where concepts such as communities, hierarchies, ethnicity, gender or class are given a status that is different from the normal (or previous) perceptions thereof, especially when these are tending to become a commodity of sorts. The occurrence of reification cannot be stressed too much, because actors develop their discursive practices and competencies through their participation in everyday social life, where reified perceptions abound. They must therefore be influenced in some way or another by reified concepts, resulting in muddled (or externally influenced) thinking which could contaminate an actor-oriented approach. In order to have issues resolved, actors, who find themselves in positions in which interface inclines towards struggle and conflict, also develop a variety of discursive practices.

### **6.2.6 Discourses**

At the peril of being repetitive, Long (2001: 240-243) is quoted again, where he states that discourse refers to:

... sets of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, narratives and statements that advance a particular version of 'the truth' about specific objects, persons and events. Discourses produce 'texts', - written and spoken, or even non-verbal such as the meanings embodied in architectural styles ... or dress fashions (Long 2001: 242 also quoted in par. 4.2.5).

Discourses belong to those people who are working with them, putting them into practice and changing them. They are definitely not owned by bodies such as governments, church denominations and cultural groups. Then there is a tendency for externally developed discourses (exogenous) to dominate the local ones due to the superior backing they receive,

not because they are, *per sé*, any better than the local ones. This tendency must be guarded against because it could happen that exogenous discourses are difficult to relate to or to internalise in a local community. After having noted previous paragraphs such as 2.4.2 and 2.4.7, the fact is recognised that it requires skills and energy to blend the exogenous discourses with the local perspectives (letting them become internalised) to facilitate their accommodation in peoples' own lifeworlds.

Another reference to ethnographic research is necessary where the need is expressed for the optimal establishment of discourses of those actors who are representing both the relevant parties in a development intervention. Deconstruction of the most important discourses constructed in this way will be necessary in order to obtain still better insight into the way in which an intervention should be steered into the operational field. In other words, the team members from the EC and those from the target community should agree on every discourse, and internalise it, before a successful intervention can begin.

On the one hand, discourse analysis (possibly assisted by ethnography and deconstruction) of the target community also offers insight into particular cultural repertoires, that is interaction and inter-penetration in a heterogeneous community (please also see par. 4.2.6.8). This refers to the discourses in the community and not to those that have already been taken on board by the team. Team members from the targeted community will, however, be in the best position to strategise on the handling of endogenous discourses. On the other hand, analyses of discourses in use by the benefactor should not be neglected.

Valuable information regarding the handling of discourses during interface will be obtained once the discourses of both parties have been noted in detail and integrated in the intervention planning.

Heterogeneous cultural attributes lead to interaction between different discourses, differing lifeworlds and different processes of cultural construction. This is true, especially within a team in which various groups will be represented and where heterogeneity will be a factor on either side of the spectrum with even some cross-sectoral affiliations (gender or religion) which can give rise to very interesting and/or very difficult scenarios.

### **6.2.7 Interventions**

As mentioned before in par. 4.2.7, intervention should be seen as a term which could and should replace the concept of ‘development cooperation projects’ or ‘programmes’. It does not mean that there will no longer be such a thing as a project or programme, but they could, for instance, be described as ‘intervention projects’ or ‘programmes’. For this reason, the reference to ‘interventions’, throughout this study, refers to projects or programmes, planned or executed, within the ambit of development cooperation. Therefore, although the term ‘intervention’ has been used in almost all the foregoing sections, some specific commentary on interventions will be needed to complete this discussion of possible guidelines. To begin with, it is necessary to deconstruct a planned intervention at an early stage. During the deconstruction process, consideration should be given to the ways in which the proposed intervention will enter the targeted lifeworlds and how this in turn could

affect the development of social strategies. Then one should try to find hidden agendas, cargo approaches, patronising attitudes and reifications, that may unknowingly have been included in the text of the plan during the planning stages of the intervention. Care should be taken not to follow the linear or systems approach, thereby portraying the process as a three-phased process with only a beginning, a middle and an end to take care of. An intervention in terms of the actor-oriented approach, does not have only three steps. It is an ongoing process which demands constant research to ensure that no harm is done to communities, that no unnecessary conflict is kindled and that the main targets are met. At the same time, the intervention should be steered with such flexibility that course deviations can be made along the route without much disruption and with instant reporting on the success or failure rate of the intervention as well as such deviations.

Moreover, it is important to use deconstruction (and ethnographic research) to determine the best contextual form for an intervention, in other words, how one should handle emergent forms of interaction, procedures, practical strategies, types of discourse, cultural categories and sentiments, as well as ongoing evaluation. The above points give a clear understanding of the reasons why a development intervention should be an ongoing activity with numerous assessments. Eventually, changes of course, or deviations from initial principles on the path to the final handing-over process, will take place. This will probably occur at a stage where the beneficiary community can take full responsibility for perpetuating whatever the intervention has brought into their midst.

Another way to facilitate the intervention is by exploring the proposed intervention processes. This could be done by focusing on the mode of organisation prevalent in the targeted field and identifying the actor-strategies in the relevant field, pre-empting outcomes such as social, economic, cultural, employment, political and others and noting interactions and negotiations between individuals and groups taking place to resolve livelihoods and to organise resources. This is but one side of the coin. It will be just as important to explore the proposed intervention strategies of the benefactors. Unless the whole team is agreed on the full range of proposed intervention processes, the team should refuse to proceed with the proposed intervention. For more background on the concept of 'livelihood', one could refer to Long (2001: 54-55) and note his definition below:

Livelihood therefore implies more than making a living ..... It encompasses ways and styles of life/living, and thus also value choice, status, and a sense of identity *vis-a-vis* other persons (Long 2001: 55).

In support of a successful intervention, one should also try to predetermine possible interactions between locals and the intervening groups by determining how the political economy, commoditisation, state hegemony, subsumption of the peasantry, the primacy of the 'laws' of capitalist development and the market in itself, are perceived from the perspective of the actor-oriented approach, i.e. as a result of deconstruction and ethnographic research.

All intervention planning should lead away from the 'cargo' approach. In spite of this guideline, it could easily happen that an intervention can be welcomed by one section of a

community and rejected by another group - whether it has a 'cargo' approach or not. The secret lies in the way in which the intervention is internalised by a community.

It could even happen that a 'cargo' approach will not prevent an intervention from being accepted, but, as a rule then, not without considerable resistance. There is a dichotomy in these possibilities that can only be turned to the intervention's advantage through pre-emptive planning. Wide ethnographic research plus deconstruction methods, done in advance and followed up during the course of the intervention, should show up tendencies towards a cargo approach in time for remedial steps to be taken..

- An intervention should be targeted, amongst others, at people, communities and interest groups. One should refrain from intervening in 'non-people' sectors such as 'agriculture', 'finance', 'poverty', 'health', and other abstracts. The correct procedure should be to identify the secondary actors (the people) beforehand, in order to find and utilise the actors on the home ground who are, right from the beginning, viable protagonists for items such as agriculture, finance, health, and others.

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The following extracts from all that has been said in previous chapters, can serve as summarised guidelines with regard to interventions. In other words, it is a brief collection of what has already been mentioned in various places before.

### **6.3 Application of the actor-oriented approach**

The stated prerequisites for the successful practical application of the actor-oriented approach to a proposed development issue, further emphasise that the actor-oriented approach represents an unusually difficult and demanding route to achieve an objective. Among the purposes of this study is the attempt to find out whether there is, in the end, a sufficient reward to warrant the effort demanded by the actor-oriented approach.

The new career opportunities that will be created by the actor-oriented approach, at least for ethnographers, but quite possibly also for a whole range of actors, is of special importance. It can be expected that even if only the preliminary phase of the actor-oriented approach is made effective by giving ethnographers secure jobs, some rewards will be gained from that limited step. Besides the technique of deconstruction, ethnography forms, one of the pillars of the actor-oriented approach. At the same time it is almost unthinkable to do a deconstruction in terms of the actor-oriented approach without, at least, having some part of an ethnographic report to work with. In view of the information contained in this study, the serious interventionists in development should, at least put the actor-oriented approach to the test. Ignoring this approach will be at the peril of the development paradigm as a whole.

### **6.3.1 Case study regarding the implementation of the actor-oriented approach**

An example of a regional transport programme, envisaged for the Southern African region, serves the purpose of demonstrating how the actor-oriented approach could be applied in practice. A lecture by Bruce Thompson, Acting Head of Unit, DG VIII, European

Commission, at a EU-SADC Transport Conference, held in Maputo on 15-17 October 1998, was selected to serve as background to the exercise.

### **6.3.1.1 Background to the intervention**

SADC (Southern African Development Community) is giving increasing emphasis to regional integration that advances economic cooperation and brings together the countries and the people of Southern Africa. This aim is reflected in the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) signed by SADC and the European Commission, which gives priority to cross-border investment and trade, and to the free movement of goods and services throughout the region and to overseas markets. Essential to this process is the integration of transport infrastructure and services, which is fully reflected in the SADC Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 109)

A closer look at the integration of transport infrastructure in the region is intended below, with the extra qualification, namely that the matter will be scrutinised through the lens of the actor-oriented approach.

### **6.3.1.2 The SADC foundation for integrated transport**

The above mentioned foundation provides for the following strategic goals, to be subscribed to by all the countries of the region. This Protocol was duly signed by all the SADC states in August 1996. The strategic goals are as follows:

Integrating transport networks by implementing compatible policies, legislation, rules, standards and procedures;

eliminating hindrances and impediments to the movement of persons, goods and services;



securing sufficient domestic finance for funding the maintenance of infrastructure and services, and eventually, financing their provision;

building strategic partnerships between governments and the private sector, and restructuring commercially viable state entities and utilities. (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 109).

The above goals form a framework for a series of aims, which have been compiled in respect of each transport subdivision, such as roads, rails and harbour. Already at the level of the strategic goals, some comments are warranted, regarding the differences that could be made should the actor-oriented approach be instituted. With reference to the first bullet above, for instance, the importance of networks, such as religious, cultural, knowledge and political networks, addressed in previous chapters, but especially in par. 4.2.8 above, should be noted. Therefore, the existence of a ‘transport network’ and its members; its discourses; its sources of agency, and other related aspects, should be established in terms of the strategic goals, before embarking on the integration of these as well as the infrastructural networks. The fact that priority is given in this recommendation to the human networks and not to the transport, or infrastructural networks, is an indication of where the real priorities of the actor-oriented approach lie. In reading the whole conference report, one comes to the conclusion that reference in the above-mentioned bullet point is to the infrastructural networks and ignores the networks of the people involved in transport or its subdivisions.

In the second point, mention is made of the need to overcome hindrances and impediments in the transport field. Because it would appear that the most important

aspects that should be overcome, are the present restrictions to the movement of 'persons, goods and services'. It is difficult to establish whether reference is made here to infrastructural hindrances or to political and administrative impediments. One could guess that in Southern Africa, both would be at stake, but for the purpose of this study, only the administrative and political impediments will be addressed. These are two aspects which can benefit from the actor-oriented approach, where it comes to effecting improvement to the transport paradigm. In both cases, where political and administrative interventions are foreseen, one would do deconstructions to identify the existing corps of actors in each; to establish their respective approaches to modernisation or other theses; and to detect the hidden metaphors in each of them, which could lead to adverse development thinking. Deconstruction and ethnographic research should be launched simultaneously and the findings of the one should influence the other.

The third bullet point also omits any reference to human contributions to transport infrastructure. On the contrary, it regards 'finance' as the driving force which will give effect to the goals and aims of the Transport Protocol, and to worsen the approach even further, finance is described as 'domestic finance', thereby implying that the people themselves are of no actual consequence. 'Social capital' is, as far as the Transport Protocol is concerned, a non-essential, whereas, acknowledgment of the importance of social capital, as would happen with the actor-oriented approach, could largely remedy the problem situation. 'Maintenance of infrastructure and services', as envisaged in this

goal, cannot be achieved satisfactorily by financial means only. People should be made part of this goal and the first aim should be to build a team of technical experts to secure the goal of good infrastructure maintenance and reliable services for the future. What better way to achieve this, than through the prescribed route of the actor-oriented approach. It is not so much the route that is important here, but more so the holistic way in which the route will give effect to even the minor or more neglected details of development procedures. Think here of agency, discourse analysis, knowledge transfer without a top-down flavour, and interface techniques between the various groups within the transport framework. If all these aspects are to be taken on board in the process of designing a 'maintenance of infrastructure and services' protocol, effectivity of the project will improve. This will occur because of the wide audience in which the procedures will be discussed and constructed, and therefore, the wide group of respondents who will keep a constant eye on 'their' project, either as a local project or as an initiative in which they can actively participate.

The last bullet refers to the need to build 'strategic partnerships between governments and the private sector'. On the one hand, as the goal is stated here above, it leaves one with the impression that each country is expected to go about reaching this goal in his own way. The necessary synergy between governments and countries of the regions is not addressed here and will not, if this goal is achieved, be an outcome of the efforts. On the other hand, a recommendation that the envisaged strategic partnerships between governments and the private sectors should be achieved along the lines laid down by the

actor-oriented approach, would ensure a more people-oriented partnership with a much wider impact, also on the level of restructuring commercially viable state entities and utilities. This is stated with confidence, because of the in-depth study that was made of the intrinsic methods implied by the actor-oriented approach for all forms of cooperation. Taking, for example, the value that can be added to the process when the intended partnerships are only forged after a thorough analysis of their respective discourses has been undertaken and considered by all the parties. Then again, matters of agency, identification of actors, composition of networks, and interface planning, are all forming part of the actor-oriented approach. The application of these, and other basic elements of the actor-oriented approach, will ensure that the process of partnership formation will run smoothly, and may well ensure that human interests will remain prominent and will be respected in such partnerships in future.

### **6.3.1.3 Overcoming encumbrances in the policy reform process**

The Report indicates the following regarding the identified encumbrances and possible ways of overcoming those. It is interesting to note that several aspects are mentioned in the quote below, which refer to matters in which the actor-oriented approach could give greater clarity or could help overcome obstacles:

There are indications that the limited progress in implementing policy reforms, particularly in integrating transport infrastructure and services, can be attributed to insufficient ownership of the reform process. This may well result from inadequate coordination between public authorities involved in transport, customs and immigration. Similarly, public-private sector cooperation often suffers from lack of confidence on one or both sides. This means that experience and expertise is not shared, resources are

not being used optimally, and users do not benefit from the seamless service integrated transport can deliver. To address such problems equitably demands improved capacity in policy analysis and planning. Thus, getting stakeholders working together should enhance motivation, ensure policies are translated into effective strategies and action plans, and lead to more uniform results from country to country (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 111)

In accordance with the standard development thinking in EU circles and most other fora, 'ownership', or a lack thereof was identified as a reason for limited progress. There is no reference in the whole Protocol to the form of ownership that would be desirable, or how ownership should be obtained or facilitated. Yet, according to the above quote, the lack of 'ownership of the reform process' is blamed for 'limited progress in implementing reforms, particularly in integrating transport infrastructure and services'. With the knowledge which emanates from this intensive study of the actor-oriented approach, it is now advisable to change the *explanandum* (ownership of the reform process) and replace it with 'the actor-oriented approach'. This approach offers much more to the SADC co-signatories of the Protocol, than 'ownership' could achieve. To define 'ownership' of any tangible or intangible thing in a region, will solicit a huge variety of explanations, perceptions or disagreements. To achieve tacit ownership by implementing the actor-oriented approach in the region, seems to be a much more effective route, because, at least the discourses on the regional table, will be analysed by all involved and a combined effort will be made to straighten out all the differences that may have been identified. In addition, actors will be identified professionally, and the teams that will be responsible for giving effect to the spirit of the SADC Protocol on Transport, will be appointed and will, during the planning stages,

learn to work together thus building much required synergy. In effect, the newly appointed team of actors and the people with whom they cooperate and share interests, will all start to develop a particular interest in the Regional Protocol. This presents a good route along which a real feeling of 'ownership' can develop in a community.

Then, there is the reference to 'a lack of confidence' in public-private sector cooperation. In the case of the actor-oriented approach, almost all the procedures that serve to achieve actor-oriented development, are based on confidence building. Note, there is hardly any reference to 'capacity building' where the methods for the actor-oriented approach are discussed, but in every step that is explained, one can detect the presence of subtle attention to confidence building. Take, for instance, the frequent emphasis on the handling of heterogeneity in target communities, or the preliminary attention that is recommended in dealing with discrepancies or clashes that may occur in discourses. The recommendation in this respect is that differences between groups should be sorted out by way of discourse analyses and discussions in this respect, in order to eventually ensure the optimal productivity of the appointed actors. The same principle could do wonders, at least for cooperation on a regional level, as envisaged by the Regional Indicative Programme.

The paragraph of the Report cited above, as a matter of fact, makes its own reference to a vague system akin to the actor-oriented approach, where it states that 'getting stakeholders working together should enhance motivation'. It is logical to assume that

the reference to this, could just as well have been a recommendation to use the actor-oriented approach to get 'stakeholders together'. Simultaneously, it would be correct, in view of the above background to the actor-oriented approach, to assume that cooperation policies could well be 'translated into effective strategies and action plans, (which could) lead to more uniform results from country to country' if the actor-oriented approach is to be applied. Just the mere fact that a consolidated team of actors, representing all the respective Parties to the Protocol plus the EC benefactors, will be working to achieve the goals and aims of the Regional Indicative Programme on transport for the region, instils faith in the project. It seems to be in good hands and as if it will be running on principles which cover a wide field of interest.

#### **6.3.1.4 The way forward - a focus for the EU-SADC partnership**

The Regional Indicative Programme concerning transport has many challenges to overcome. In the following quote from the 1998 Conference Report, it becomes clear that the EC Partners have targeted two areas which they will support. The first considers administrative changes and the second deals with improvements to the transport networks:

The Regional Indicative Programme forms the foundation of the EU-SADC partnership and focuses on two strategic areas for EC support to the transport sector. The first involves improving the regional legal and regulatory framework through deregulation, and where appropriate, harmonisation of regulations and standards. The second aims at improving transport networks, by restructuring railways, rehabilitating and maintaining regional roads, improving port operations and stimulating inland waterway

transport. In supporting these two strategic areas, EC will give priority to actions that are environmentally sound. (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 115)

Had the actor-oriented approach been followed from the onset, it would have been rather difficult for the EC to nominate two areas in which they will render support. Such actions would have been interpreted by the majority of actors as a 'top-down' approach. something that has been for some time now, quite acceptably, deemed as contrary to actor-oriented approach. Regarding the proposed 'improvement of transport networks', One should refer back to par. 6.3.1.2 above, where a distinction is made between transport networks, consisting, for instance, of railroads, roads, waterways, and the other type of network, that is formed between people with similar interests, who come from various countries and from all walks of life. Having focused on the difference between the two networks, it should also be noted that the one that is about people, would appear to be more important than the one that organises the physical networks for transport. Actually, it would be correct to say that the latter series of networks, will not be able to function without people. This argument could be taken one step further, by remarking on the possibility that the networks of people in transport would also be important to transport's physical networks.

What is even more important for the success on the way forward, is the financial arrangements in respect of the Regional Indicative Programme. The EU has namely committed itself for 54 million ECU, whereas the SADC countries have taken responsibility for 420 million ECU. Because of the distribution of financial



responsibility, the Report mentions that resources should be used as effectively as possible. It offers a solution too, recommending that, in the first place, stakeholders should be brought together ‘to ensure the best possible return on investment’ Once again, a problem is tackled by looking at the best possible return on investment funds, instead of effecting potential savings by investing in an actor-oriented approach. Several methods proposed for the actor-oriented approach could effect actual savings, because of the emphasis that will fall on ‘social capital’ and all this term entails, especially probable team building and cooperation that will be instilled in the SADC region .

#### **6.3.1.5 Bringing regional partners together to agree on common strategies**

The above reference to ‘regional partners’ could just as well have been to ‘actors in development’. On the one hand, the concept of ‘regional partners’ creates the perception that specific sectors in the region have been earmarked for partnership, a sort of spontaneous exclusivity. On the other hand, the knowledge of how the actors are selected and also about what is expected of them, as suggested in the actor-oriented approach, leads one to recommend the ‘bringing together of actors’ rather than the ‘bringing together of partners’ in the region. Should one therefore read the quote below as being written with the actor-oriented approach in mind, a new dimension of reaching common destinations or strategies will unfold:

While there is strong political commitment to the Protocol, these regional goals for integrated transport need to be implemented nationally. It is important that SADC member countries come together with the private sector to agree on common strategies on Protocol implementation. An important step in this

direction was taken under the “SATCC Transport and Communications Integration Study for Southern Africa”, financed by EDF (Economic Development Fund). During the process, SADC member states met in a series of workshops at which various common strategies were discussed and agreed. (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 116).

When analysing the above quote, it becomes clear that, from the angle of the actor-oriented approach, the most important statement refers to the ‘series of workshops’ between SADC member states, in which various strategies of common interest were discussed and agreed upon. Should the actor-oriented approach have been applied to these workshops, the benefits of several of the guidelines laid down by this approach would have been available to the workshop incumbents or ‘actors’. Therefore, one would probably have found a wider group of participants. The organisers of the above-mentioned ‘SATCC Transport and Communications Integration Study for Southern Africa’, would probably have selected the actors before the event, and after ethnographic research and deconstruction of the whole transport field. The organisers would then have compiled their team of actors, and would have prepared them for the conference by supplying them with the results and findings of the wide-ranging ethnographic research and deconstruction exercises which would have covered the whole region.. The respective teams for the workshops would then have been created and prepared for the best ways to achieve the goals of the study and the Protocol. Once again, elements of the process, such as discourse analysis; dealing with the implications and complications of heterogeneity; determining who has agency and how it is being allocated; intricate observations of knowledge transfer, knowledge systems and

networks, as well as the role of power in the whole transport paradigm, would all become part of the process of the study and the negotiations surrounding the Protocol. Because of the major financial contribution that is expected to be made by SADC countries in respect of the Regional Indicative Programme on transport, SADC should have the right to dictate the processes. They should decide on how the decisions should be derived at, by whom the decisions should be made and how and by which means the processes of establishing and running the Protocol, should be executed. The actor-oriented approach would have been an ideal instrument to achieve all this.

#### **6.3.1.6 Assessing the benefits of Protocol implementation**

The regular and ongoing evaluation of progress during an intervention is significant and forms an integral part of the actor-oriented approach. The Transport Conference agreed with the principle of regular assessments and monitoring of the programme, as cited below:

Measuring the impact of the Protocol means focusing more on results - the results achieved - rather than on monitoring progress of implementation activities. SATCC (*Southern African Transport and Communications Commission*) has a mandate to play a proactive role in monitoring. This involves identifying simple indicators and designing an inexpensive system for data collection at a regional and national level. This calls for periodic reviews with the Member States, SATCC, other regional bodies and donors supporting Protocol implementation. EU and other organisations can give support to SATCC in developing and implementing an appropriate monitoring system and applying the lessons learned. Such reviews must gradually assume means of providing incentives for good performance, and similarly, sanctions for poor performance. (EU-SADC Transport Development Report 1998: 117)

The main reason why reference is made here to the matter of assessments or monitoring of programmes, is because of the vast difference between the standard view of these procedures, as against the actor-oriented approach and its views on evaluation.

Mention has been made above, of the importance of ongoing evaluation whilst an intervention is being made. In addition, further important qualities and elements of the evaluation process in terms of the actor-oriented approach, deserve to be mentioned:

An intervention could have a dual effect on communities. Certain people or organisations may find the intervention to act as a catalyst and they will make dynamic use of the altering circumstances, whereas others may find their 'interests, strategies and livelihoods impeded or completely blocked' (Long 2001: 39). An ongoing evaluation of progress in a intervention is therefore, as dictated by the spirit of the actor-oriented approach, focused on the impact of the intervention of the people. Material progress is also of importance, but can best be interpreted within the framework of the people's response to an intervention.

In respect of the people's response, the evaluation of the people's reaction should also encompass the specific target groups; other defined stakeholders; actors that are on the periphery of the intervention's influence, as well as people's livelihoods and their institutions.

Patterns of interaction between the people affected by the intervention, ways in which various groups or communities accommodate one another in times of flux, and the particular ways in which their reception of particular policy measures, for instance, are shaped by their collective memory or their time-space concepts.

It should be clear from the above, that there is a difference between the standard procedures of evaluation and the above mentioned synopsis of what should be considered. The standard procedures implied in the quote, do not seem to cover the same wide field as those which form part of the actor-oriented approach. Therefore, some in-depth attention should be given to the merits of the approach which attends to the physical changes as well as to the interests of the people on the ground, namely the actor-oriented approach. (cf. Long 2001: 39).

Judging by the few examples above, of situations in which the actor-oriented approach would probably enhance effective development, it would appear as if a more thorough application of this approach on all facts of development, would be worth considering.

The guidelines identified above should be seen as basic indicators, which should, firstly, be adapted to specific situations, and secondly, should be further enhanced by additional studies and adaptations to the latest development thinking.

## Chapter VII

### **Findings and Conclusions**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

When referring back to Chapter I, paragraph 1.4, one again becomes aware of the fact that four objectives were chosen as framework for the study. Consequent research was directed towards studying and presenting relevant and substantive material to achieve each of these objectives. This Chapter VII, the 'Conclusion', will then serve to bring together all the results of the considerable research effort, each result connected to its own 'objective'. In practice, this chapter will therefore consist of four sections, each one covering an objective. Some general observations, findings and conclusions which are crosscutting issues for instance, will be collated in a fifth section and this will be followed by a generally conclusive summary. The four objectives are reiterated here, just to refresh the memory. They are as follows:

To prove that the actors in development have been - and are still to a lesser degree - ignored in development projects and programmes. For decades, the tendency was to concentrate on abstract principles as the real factors that stimulate development.

To present the latest research on the actor-oriented approach in a critical but constructive form, thereby laying a foundation to identify further empirical arguments in support of the practical application of the actor-oriented approach.

To establish the practicality or otherwise of the application of the ‘actor-oriented approach’ in future development cooperation programmes and projects and to test the findings against the stipulations of the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium.

To utilise the theoretical and practical data thus collected, to construct specific practical guidelines for possible future application of the actor-oriented approach, and to conclude with specific recommendations.

## **7.2 Bringing objectives, findings and conclusions together in practice**

The importance and relevance of the Compendium, as part of the Cotonou Agreement, have been dealt with at length in section 5.5. The final point in Article 20, which promises that detailed texts concerning development cooperation objectives and strategies, in particular sectorial policies and strategies, shall be incorporated in a Compendium that will provide operational guidelines in specific areas or sectors of cooperation, is particularly relevant within the context of this study. This undertaking promises effective continuity that is invaluable to ensure the flexibility of the Compendium as a development cooperation instrument. One could foresee that the Compendium could become the eventual conduit for transforming the actor-oriented approach into practical development cooperation between the EU and the ACP.

### **7.2.1 Proving that actors should play a role in development**

It has already been substantiated in several paragraphs above, that ‘the people’ have not, as yet, become full partners in development cooperation. Having dealt with this aspect, it now becomes necessary to see how people could effectively be integrated into development

cooperation, not as puppets, but as real shareholders, role players or actors. The following series of relevant findings and conclusions emanating from this study should serve to substantiate the statement that 'actors should play an active role in development'.

**Finding: Making people part of development**

Since the 1980s, the whole drive towards 'alternative development' has, pursued a course towards the realisation of positive ways in which the people (actors) could effectively be made part of development (See Table 1, p. 2 above). According to Long (2001:2), some adopted a more pragmatist point of view which focused on ethnographic methods and some critical analyses of 'participatory' development. Most important was the acknowledgment by, for example, Pottier (1993) and Nelson and Wright (1995), of the important contribution that local populations can make to the process of change by This was followed by Schuurman (1993), Booth (1994) and Preston (1996) who began to have a serious look at the degree of viability of the actor-oriented approach in social change and development. Where Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 119) discusses 'human development' (HD), he refers to the way in which East Asian countries have lately increased their competitiveness by way of concentrated HD. The remarks of ul Haq, regarding four ways of creating 'desirable links between economic growth and human development' (1995: 21-2) are also to be noted, namely, by way of 'an HD paradigm of equity, sustainability, productivity, and empowerment' (1995: 16) which indicates:



investment in education, health and skills, more equitable distribution of income, government social spending, and empowerment of people, especially women (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 120)

Nederveen Pieterse takes this proposal regarding a paradigm even further and adds that:

It is the element of productivity that that sets this paradigm apart from the alternative development paradigm. This refers to the supply-side factor as the nexus between equity and growth. (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 120).

In other words, the role of productivity in development is emphasised here to such an extent that it is accorded the position of main link between equity and growth. Both equity and growth are separate but important factors in development, which have, unfortunately, mostly been kept apart in two separate discourses

### **Conclusion:**

It is possible that the reconciliation between these two concepts that took place in East Asia, could have played a major role in the successes they had there in development, even without much foreign assistance. The fact that HD should become a greater consideration in development, has been accepted in most academic circles. What is important now, is to spell out ways in which HD should be employed in development programmes, projects and interventions. This is the niche in which this study is trying to make a valid contribution, by presenting the actor-oriented approach as a practical guideline for future development work.

### **Finding: Favouring a more people-oriented approach**

Almost two decades before Schuurman, an interesting point had been made by Turner (1977), namely, that when people have no control over, nor responsibility for, key decisions in development processes, development cooperation programmes and projects may become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden to the economy (cited by Ekins 1986: 241) In other words, development processes that lack a people-oriented (or actor-oriented) approach, could lack a certain dynamic element; trying to make them work could be a burden to the economy, and the personal fulfilment of the people affected by a development programme could be experienced at a very low scale.. These are but a few of the negative outcomes that could be expected when people-participation in development is neglected.

### **Conclusion:**

These, and many other similar statements in favour of a more people-oriented approach in development, did not fall on deaf ears. A gradual movement became visible, which nudged the larger development institutions such as those of the UN and the EU into a new direction. One probable result is the UNCTAD IX Declaration (1996), which acknowledges that the focus should in future be on the human aspect of development. It also emphasises that nobody can do for citizens what they will not do for themselves. The 'right to development' of all people, after it was added to the list of fundamental human rights, has now become as important as all other human rights and fundamental freedoms. This was an innovation that

was received with acclaim by the developing countries. One addition is required to give the 'right to development' actual viability: UNCTAD should consider spelling out, at a next conference, exactly how this right can be achieved. The actor-oriented approach would be a good option to be considered by them.

**Finding: Adjusting the course to include the people**

One should not deny the fact that several adjustments have been made, over the past decade or more, regarding the required new emphasis on the 'people in development'. In reports and documents of almost all the multilateral institutions and other organisations relevant to development, a variety of references to aspects in which the people should be considered, have been made. New strategies such as 'empowerment', 'participatory development' and 'civil society participation' were appearing in almost all documents relating to development. However, there was one difference, in this respect, between the contents of official documents and the views published by academics involved in development. This was that phrases such as 'participatory development' and 'empowerment' were becoming populist and reified, whereas the academic fraternity soon realised that any of these terms would only be useful to development if indications were given about how each of them should be achieved.

**Conclusion:**

For various reasons, these populist terms have become so widely accepted that it has become a major task to eradicate them from current development documents. The actor-oriented approach could serve a good purpose in changing the deeply ingrained perceptions

that still prevail in this regard and should be given a practical opportunity to deal with these old-fashioned perceptions.

## **7.2.2 Factual background on the actor-oriented approach**

### **Finding: The knowledge paradigm**

The tendency of organisations involved in development to reify all sorts of concepts, has been addressed before, inter alia, in par. 2.5.1 (The knowledge paradigm). 'Knowledge' is one of the concepts that is of late very frequently reified and more often used, in development documents, in reified form than in a realistic portrayal of what it actually is. So, when one reads the World Bank Report 1998/99, for instance, one realises that the knowledge concept has become reified in the document. To substantiate this statement, one should become aware of the many instances in which the World Bank portrays knowledge as a commodity that can be acquired, absorbed and communicated and which should, on the other hand, be made available to developing countries on a much bigger scale. The World Bank Report (1998/99: 2), for instance, states the following:

*Acquiring knowledge* involves tapping and adapting knowledge available elsewhere in the world - for example, through an open trading regime, foreign investment, and licensing agreements - as well as creating knowledge locally through research and development, and building indigenous knowledge.

*Absorbing knowledge* involves, for example, ensuring universal basic education, with special emphasis on extending education to girls and other traditionally disadvantaged groups; creating opportunities for lifelong learning; and supporting tertiary education, especially in science and engineering.

*Communicating knowledge* involves taking advantage of new information and communications technology - through increased competition, private sector provision, and appropriate regulation - and ensuring that the poor have access (World Bank Report 1998/99: 2).

The first bullet point leaves one with the impression that knowledge is a commodity which can be bought and sold. The second point talks of knowledge as something that can be absorbed once the right circumstances have been created. Finally, the third point talks of knowledge as a thing that can be reticulated like water, or some other essential commodity.

### **Conclusion:**

Counter to the images conjured up by the above three points, the actor-oriented approach sees knowledge as an attribute which has to be dealt with in conjunction with the actors in a given field. Decision-making on anything within the knowledge paradigm by outsiders, does not comply with the basic views of the actor-oriented approach, which expressly states that all actors in an intervention should cooperate in optimising all aspects of the intervention.

This is best done by way of thorough planning and preparations before the intervention is launched. In this way, when dealing with knowledge transfer and other important aspects of knowledge, the relationship between knowledge and power can be determined to some extent. It will also be possible to determine where the power will eventually be concentrated, how it will be utilised and by whom. Regarding power transfer, the actor-oriented approach recommends that decisions on all the aspects of this important subdivision of development should be taken by the intervention teams and by nobody else.

This is where the actors will have to prove that they understand the spirit of the actor-oriented approach and that they can take a holistic look at a problem before they come up

with possible solutions. Another safeguard is that regular evaluations of the intervention are required as part of the approach. This will ensure that any unexpected responses will be detected at an early stage and can be rectified thereafter without much ado.

**Finding: A case for change of *explanandum***

With further reference to par. 5.2.7, which deals with ‘Institutional Development and Capacity Building’, one cannot help but express amazement about the haphazard way in which the concepts of enablement and capacity building are intermingled with education and training throughout Article 33 of the Agreement.

**Conclusion:**

This approach cannot function with reified concepts such as ‘capacity building’, ‘empowerment’ or ‘enablement’, but will accept education and training on condition that it is based on the pure concept, without reified notions thereof. The whole Article 33 invites one to affect a few changes in the context thereof, by way of changes in the *explanandi*. So, for instance, it is stated that:

Cooperation shall pay systematic attention to institutional aspects and in this context, shall support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen structures, institutions and procedures ... (Cotonou Agreement 2000: Article 33[1]).

The above quotation will read quite differently if the words, ‘institutional aspects’, are replaced by ‘the people involved’. Should the whole article be treated similarly, an amazing result could ensue.

**Finding: Assisting the ACP to confront globalisation and liberalisation**

The Cotonou Agreement quite often mentions capacity building, and in Article 34 (Cotonou 2000: 34[1]), it takes on a special slant where reference is made to enhanced competitiveness; strengthening of regional organisations, and support of regional trade integration initiatives. All these are qualities which should, purportedly, make the ACP countries more proficient in the art of negotiation. In reading this, as well as several other articles in the Cotonou Agreement, it seems clear that the EU is forcefully moving towards reaching the ultimate aim of the negotiations, namely to ensure the painless, full-scale and effective integration of the ACP into the era of globalisation and liberalisation, at the earliest opportunity.

**Conclusion:**

The result of this intensive study of the advantages that are offered by the actor-oriented approach, is that a statement such as the above, which conveys a clear ‘cargo’ dimension, could change for the better if the principles of the approach are made applicable to it. Without dissecting the whole article, a reference to one point in the Agreement should suffice to substantiate this point.

This says that:

Economic and trade cooperation shall aim at fostering the smooth and gradual integration of the ACP States into the world economy, with due regard for their political choices and development priorities, thereby promoting their sustainable development and contributing to poverty eradication in the ACP countries  
(Cotonou agreement 2000: Article 34[1])

It should be stated, in respect of the designation of ‘economic and trade cooperation’ as the vehicle for ‘smooth and gradual integration ... into the world economy’, that unless the

people, (the actors) are portrayed here as the main factor in achieving the aim, positive results could remain elusive. 'Economic and trade cooperation' will never be able to achieve 'smooth and gradual integration' unless the people on both sides are able, willing and motivated to do what is expected. The people (actors) should rather be designated as the instruments through which these lofty goals can be reached.

**Finding: Poverty reduction through systems and not actors**

The Compendium (par. 5: 9) states that the EU-ACP partners are determined to aim at improving rural well-being as a contribution to sustained poverty reduction. In par. 5.5.1.1 of this study, in dealing with 'Agricultural and Rural Development', the above is discussed in some detail. The Compendium suggests that '... the promotion of sector policies and strategies to achieve economic growth ...' and '... equitable social development, based on sustainable natural resources management ...', could be a solution (Compendium 2000: par. 5, 9). This is regarded as being unfortunate because the references in this paragraph all refer to systems and not to the actors within those systems, as can be seen in the above quotations.

**Conclusion:**

Phrases in the Compendium (which is supposed to be a practical guide to Cotonou) refer to abstracts instead of the actors. It is bordering on the ridiculous when one purports to 'promote sector policies and strategies to achieve economic growth' or endeavours to obtain 'equitable social development, based on sustainable natural resources management', as the Compendium states its intentions. On the contrary, the way to achieve economic



growth will be by promoting people or actors and by leaving the sector policies and strategies alone. Actors with agency will anyhow alter sector policies to their own advantage and employ their own sector strategies to achieve progress. The actor-oriented approach is capable of changing this course by introducing much more effective and holistic procedures.

**Finding: Objectives without practical guidelines**

The tendency in development publications, conference documents, reports and other contributions, to talk about processes that should be followed, while they, at the same time, neglect to give practical advice on how they should be put into practice, reflects a general problem in practical development cooperation. Fieldworkers could find it difficult to execute specific policy statements when proper guidelines are missing. Empowerment, for instance, could have been mentioned with some practical guidelines on how it was to be achieved, thereby assisting the practitioners.

**Conclusion:**

The way in which the actor-oriented approach will probably unfold, will mean that the actors, who will be expected to execute the intervention on which they are working, will see to it that they compile effective guidelines for themselves. The chances of having plans on the table without specific guidelines on how they should be executed, seem to be rather remote under the actor-oriented approach. The practical procedures will best be sorted out in a situation in which the intervening team is fully prepared and briefed.

### **7.2.3 Assessing the practicality of the actor-oriented approach - with special reference to Cotonou**

#### **Finding: Who is to initiate the actor-oriented processes?**

An important question was raised in par. 6.2 above, as to who in the Partnership will be appointing the ethnographers and deconstructing agents, and who will pay for their work? Their work will have to start even before the intervention has been designed and it will be wrong and imbalanced to make the EC officials alone responsible for the initial tasks.

#### **Conclusion:**

As explained in par. 6.2, the tasks and expenditure should be equally shared by all parties involved in the intervention. It could become necessary to appoint a joint council, such as the Council of Ministers, which could appoint the incumbents, take responsibility for expenses from joint funds and which can do all that is necessary to get the advance party of researchers active.

#### **Finding: Civil society participation**

The author's study of development cooperation as practised by UN institutions and the EU, made the point clear that civil society is generally perceived as a substantial body, comparable in this respect to government or the private sector. This specially noticeable in the wide, contemporary and very popular use of 'civil society participation' which has (often in reified form) been accepted as one of the important factors in development cooperation. When looking at civil society participation from the actor-oriented approach angle, one

becomes worried about where and when the definitions of ‘actor’ and ‘agency’ should be brought into the picture. With these questions, the concept starts to appear shaky. One begins to wonder whether the rather clumsy concept of ‘civil society participation’ would be more successful if it is to become actor-, intervention-, discourse- and interface-driven, but on a small scale.

### **Conclusion:**

This exercise kindles suspicion about the tacit value of all these references in multilateral fora to ‘civil society participation’. Is it used for populist purposes to demonstrate some goodwill towards civil society in general, or is it because the term civil society can mean so many things? In publications such as that of Van Rooy (1998), civil society has been given six different interpretations, and in Bernard et al. (1998), civil society is also portrayed in various forms. It could be ‘the organisation that fills the void between the State and private enterprise’ or it could include all the CSOs and NGOs that are working in civil society, and exclude the man in the street or rural communities, for instance. The question thus arises whether civil society participation, as seen by the development institutions, would entail the optimal component or whether it basically refers to the most active and easiest component, namely the participation of the CSOs and NGOs. ‘Civil society participation’ as a concept is not acceptable to the author. The acceptance of the actor-oriented approach as a development tool is far more acceptable and understandable, because it is actor-driven and intervention bound. In addition, civil society will be difficult to accord agency to, as an organisation. It is far too amorphous for such a purpose. In view of the above, the

Cotonou Agreement and Compendium should get rid of the references to civil society participation as soon as possible and replace them with references to the actor-oriented approach.

**Finding: Cotonou definition of actors**

This finding elaborates on par. 5.2.3 above and revisits the fact that the Cotonou Agreement, in Article 6, designates all the respective ACP States as ‘actors’, but the EU and its subdivisions are not directly mentioned as such. That the EU’s or EC’s designation as actor(s) is only implied and not mentioned directly, is not acceptable to an approach in which the actors are taking most of the responsibilities. It may not be important at this stage, where the Agreement seems to be putting a lower premium on the actor-concept, than the case would have been, had the Agreement been formulated with the actor-oriented approach in mind. From the latter perspective, the definition of ‘actors in development’ in the Cotonou Agreement (2000: art. 6[1]) would in any case have been far off the mark.

**Conclusion:**

In view of the apparently minor importance of the definition of actors in the Agreement, one is inclined to recommend that the omission be left as it is until the new definition or a different approach to actors is formulated, in other words, until the actor-oriented approach is accepted and integrated in practice.

**Finding: Involving non-State actors**

The Cotonou Agreement states that non-State actors (consisting, according to Article 6, of the private sector; economic and social partners, including trade union organisations, and civil society in all its forms according to national characteristics), should be:

... informed and involved in consultation on cooperation policies and strategies, on priorities for cooperation especially in areas that concern or directly affect them, and on the political dialogue (Article 4)

### **Conclusion:**

The Article 4 procedures (laid down for consultations with this vast conglomeration of 'non-State actors'), state that non-State actors are expected to:

be informed and involved in consultation on cooperation policies and strategies, on priorities for cooperation especially in areas that concern or directly affect them, and on the political dialogue;

be provided with financial resources, under the conditions laid down in this Agreement in order to support local development processes;

be involved in the implementation of cooperation projects and programmes in areas that concern them or where these actors have a comparative advantage;

be provided with capacity-building support in critical areas in order to reinforce the capabilities of these actors, particularly as regards organisation and representation, and the establishment of consultation mechanisms including channels of communication and dialogue, and to promote strategic alliances (Cotonou 2000: Article 4).

All in all, it appears as if the European Community is serious about maximising the cooperation between their structures and the non-State actors, and to enlisting the ACP States also to take responsibility for the above. As a matter of fact, a few firm

fundamentals, such as ‘involving actors in consultation on cooperation policies’, have been included in these guidelines, which could, with a little adaptation, provide stepping stones for the introduction of the actor-oriented approach. At least there are signs now that the Partnership intends to move closer towards a people-oriented approach in development.

### **1 Finding: Limits to who can be actors**

Hindness has been quoted under paragraph 4.2.3 above, where he suggests that it would be a serious mistake to accord the quality of agency to:

... ‘society’ in the global sense of the term, or classes and other social categories based on ethnicity or gender (Hindness 1986:119).

This confirms the fact that the selected actors should not include large institutions or other large groupings that will find it difficult to handle agency because of their superstructural attributes.

### **Conclusion:**

The aim should be to identify those actors within the larger groups who undoubtedly have agency, most probably in institutions such as the church, local government, juridical circles, welfare and many others. The actor-oriented approach will improve on the relevant processes mentioned above and envisaged in the Cotonou Agreement, even though it is rather difficult to detect agency before a specific action has taken place. By way of the ethnographic survey, the organisers of an intervention will be furnished with some information about completed cases in which agency could be established in relation to a specific person, or group of persons. With an approximate identification of the places

where agency may be found, a full-scale process of discussions, consultations, planning and other preparations can be launched.

**Finding: How would deconstruction have affected the Cotonou designation of actors?**

With further reference to Article 6 of Cotonou, certain relevant issues emanating from the actor-oriented approach raise questions about what the results in the selection of actors would have been, had the EU-ACP Partners done an advance deconstruction of the extensive field which the Agreement covers. It could well be presumed that the group of actors in development would then have been composed quite differently.

**Conclusion:**

The question may be interesting, but, nevertheless, is not very relevant because the deconstruction of vast bodies such as the EU or the ACP, to find proper actors, is not recommended. The actor-oriented approach deals with every intervention on its own and recommends deconstruction in respect of areas such as the subdivisions of targeted terrains, proposed benefactors to be involved, and the community(ies) which is (are) to be targeted for an intervention, one at a time. Therefore, a Cotonou Agreement compiled to function according to the actor-oriented approach, would not have nominated any actors at its inception, but would rather have laid down, in the form of an article, the procedures by which actors could be identified and appointed for each separate intervention.

**Finding: Civil society as a source of actors**

The actor-oriented approach would cast civil society in the role of provider of actors - the source from which actors come - and the area in which they, in general, are being prepared for agency and other functions within the framework of interfaces and interventions. It has been stated before that civil society, as an entity, should never be regarded as a potential actor. The value of the actors in its midst should, however, also not be underestimated.

**Conclusion:**

It is logical to state that certain individual members of civil society and the private sector have a role to play in the development process, but then as part of the communities in which they live and work. That is why one identifies the best actors for a specific role in a community, by way of deconstruction and ethnographic research. It is not uncommon to start the process of deconstruction by looking at the larger units such as civil society and the private sector first. The logical way to go then, would be to subdivide the larger entities into smaller units, noting that those could even become subdivided again. Deconstruction is like peeling an onion, and the depth to which one would deconstruct, will depend on the sort of intervention for which the actors have to be identified. From the processes of deconstruction and ethnographic research, the actors should emerge clearly.

**Findings: Spelling out how objectives should be reached**

The objectives stated in Articles 1 and 19 of the Cotonou Agreement (2000) are not supported by clear instructions as to how they should be achieved. The remark in this



respect, namely that the actor-oriented approach lends itself to rectify such shortcomings, needs further discussion here.

The most important points within the purview of the actor-oriented approach are summarised in Chapter IV and the approach receives additional attention in all the other chapters. The question about how, by which methods, and through which approaches, the objectives should be achieved can be partially answered by referring to the proposed method of discourse analysis, which will have a direct effect on the subdivisions of all objectives, whether they fall within the range of economics, culture or social development, or in some other sphere. This proposed discourse analysis presents the point at which the viability of the actor-oriented approach can be put to the test. Discourse analysis should preferably be preceded by the above-mentioned ethnographic research as well as by deconstruction of the proposed target of the intervention. Being aware of the need for discourse analysis, the researchers that do the above-mentioned preliminary research, will remain alert as to the discourses they come across and even, preliminarily, what effect each discourse could have on either the acceptance of intervention incentives or the rejection thereof. The discourse analysis is, in turn, an important phase in the preparations for an actor-oriented approach and enables the people involved to start planning the proposed intervention and deciding on which methods should be followed to achieve the end result. It should be noted here, that every discourse will present the team of actors with its own unique problems as to how the planned changes should be tackled. Therefore, each of the larger objectives of the Cotonou Agreement will be subdivided into the discourse

categories. On the basis of the preliminary information at the team's disposal, plus the addition effect of a more complete picture regarding, for instance, networks in the target area; the heterogeneity there; the knowledge/power relationships and where they lie; by whom they are driven what their effects are, and interface possibilities, the objectives will be supplemented by a host of indications of a practical nature: the 'how' of the achievement of objectives will have been made available, not particularly in respect of the larger, Cotonou Agreement objectives, but, more importantly, by way of the actor-oriented approach, mainly in respect of any relevant subdivision of an objective, which may fall within the sphere of a particular intervention. . The achievement of the objectives (although now with a focus on their subdivisions) will be managed by an enabled team, whose actors have acquired a perfect understanding of the methods that should be employed to achieve the ultimate aims. This understanding was not brought to them by way of 'cargo' from outside, but originated in their midst through their intensive team-discussions of the whole field of the intervention, from the preliminary stages up to the final fine-tuning of the intervention. The fact should be reiterated here that, although reference to the economic, cultural and social development factors can also be found in the more practically oriented Compendium (sections 5.5.1 and 5.5.2 of Chapter V above), the references hardly allude to any 'people-oriented' methodology for development.

If it is true then, that the perceptions of the EU-ACP Partnership of development theory need to be brought up to date, the introduction of changed *explanandi* will help to effect some change. Paragraph 5 of the Compendium, for instance, starts with the words '[r]ural

development is an overarching concept ...' 'Rural development' in the above quotation, is the *explanandum*, but, should it be replaced by '...[t]he actors in development', quite a different meaning would be conveyed, because the 'overarching concept' will then apply to something quite different. This is what is meant by changing the *explanandum*.

### **Conclusion:**

The actor-oriented approach should be applied to the EU-ACP intervention policies because the objectives of the Cotonou Agreement could probably be achieved far more effectively in that way.

### **Findings: Right to development**

One article in the Cotonou Agreement covers such a wide field, that it can be regarded as the door through which the actor-oriented approach can possibly be introduced to the EU-ACP Partnership. The third paragraph of Art. 1 reads as follows:

These objectives and the Parties' international commitments shall inform all development strategies and shall be tackled through an integrated approach taking account at the same time of the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of development. The partnership shall provide a coherent support framework for the development strategies adopted by each ACP State (Cotonou Agreement 2000: Art. 1)

Where mention is made in the above of factors that should be included in the 'coherent support framework for the development strategies', one becomes aware of the fact that systems thinking is still predominant in the Agreement. Undertakings such as 'sustained economic growth', 'development of the private sector', 'increased employment' and

‘improved access to productive resources’ that are referred to in many places in the Agreement, fall in the category of theories that are rejected in the actor-oriented approach. This indicates that very little notice had been taken of the actor-oriented approach and other contemporary processes at the time when the contents of the Agreement were decided on. The ‘right to development’ of the ACP states should, preferably, be realised by the Partners by applying the actor-oriented approach.

**Conclusion:**

One way of achieving the introduction of the actor-oriented approach to the EU-ACP Partnership, is to refer, in Article 1 (Cotonou 2000), to the widely acknowledged ‘right to development’, as accepted by UNCTAD IX (1996). If this could become one of the objectives of the Agreement, and if it is acknowledged simultaneously in the same Agreement that the actor-oriented approach presents a fine medium to do development interventions, not only will this ‘right’, but many other objectives as well, become easier to achieve.

**Finding: Coherent support framework**

Further to the comments on Article 1 of Cotonou, one should also look at the integrated approach proposed in Cotonou (2000: Art. 1) that recommends that political, economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of development should be dealt with in jointly.

**Conclusion:**

On the one hand, the ‘coherent support framework for development strategies’, that has been discussed before in par. 5.2.6, seems to make an important contribution to the coordination of strategies that are focused on political, economic, social, cultural or environmental aspects of development. On the other hand, however, when the support framework and the development strategies are interpreted along the lines of the actor-oriented approach, the potentially wide-ranging effect of the ‘coherent support framework’, which is intended to cover all the ACP States, does not satisfy. To alter this situation, one recommendation could be to consider the subdivision of frameworks so that they are constructed for every single intervention instead of for the whole ACP. From various findings above, it would appear as if neither the macro-, nor the systems- approach will be able to make a constructive contribution to development.

**Finding: Actors’ capacity building**

Another objective, mentioned in the third paragraph of Article 1 of Cotonou, proposes that priority should be given to ‘building the capacity of the actors in development’. This implies a top-down approach and presupposes a dire lack of capabilities among the actors in development.

**Conclusion:**

Although one should appreciate the reference to the actors in development in this article, one should also take a critical view of the implications of what is stated. Capacity building, no matter how diplomatically it is put, usually tends to convey a feeling that one group is looking down upon another. The actor-oriented approach, on the contrary, tends to identify actors for their inherent qualities and, in the case of an intervention, proposes to use their skills from the onset of their appointment. Establishing and maintaining absolute equality between the actors in a given team, is a necessary precondition for successful actor-oriented approaches. This would make the actor-oriented approach far more acceptable to the person who is anxious to see fewer top-down approaches and a greater involvement of people in development cooperation.

**Finding: Gender issues**

The situation of women, or gender issues, receives due attention – political, economic and social - in many areas of both the Cotonou Agreement and the Compendium.

**Conclusion:**

The gender issue presents an area, not only in development, where a certain equilibrium will have to be maintained at all costs to ensure that the social structures are not negatively affected by wrong emphasis on gender issues, viz. the sort which does not maintain a healthy balance in the way in which representatives from both genders are being treated.

The actor-oriented approach also shows some theoretic promise with regard to the handling of gender issues. The broad spectrum in which the actor-oriented approach looks at a subject, automatically ensures that a similar broad spectrum view will also be directed at the

gender issues that may be part of an intervention or other forms of discourse. It is difficult to imagine in what sort of scenario isolated attention will be accorded to gender issues when working in terms of the actor-oriented approach. The actor-oriented approach is based on the principle that the most appropriate actors (men or women) are selected to help form the intervention team. If, for instance, an actor were to be excluded as a result of his or her gender, religion, political convictions, health or disabilities, the system will be prejudiced and open to criticism.

**Findings: Land reform and ownership**

Numerous examples exist in which development was purportedly assisted by 'land reform' which often entailed nothing but disowning successful farmers and settling untrained amateur farmers on that land. The matter was exacerbated because, usually, the disowned land was settled by too many people who, even with extensive farming, would not be able to make a good living. These cases are examples of attempts at prioritising 'ownership' in development - ownership which was interpreted in completely the wrong way.

The Cotonou Agreement (2000: Art. 2, first bullet) mentions 'equality of the partners and ownership of the development strategies' as a fundamental principle. The heading of Article 2, namely *Establishing Ownership of Projects among Beneficiary Communities*, has been jointly accepted by both negotiating parties involved in finalising the Cotonou Agreement. So, both Parties are in support of the principle of establishing ownership of the

development strategies. However, as explained in par. 5.2.2, the purported ownership of development strategies is not accommodated by the actor-oriented approach in the way indicated in the Agreement..

### **Conclusion:**

Success in establishing ownership of projects among beneficiary communities is an important part of an intervention, because it boils down to achieving effective internalisation of new discourses by the target population. It also means that the team of actors must succeed in getting the interfaces working amicably and in finding general agreement on the various discourses. The above illustrates that it is possible, although along a totally different route, to achieve ownership by way of the actor-oriented approach. However, it will be realised that ownership is no longer the *explanandum*. The target of ownership is reached by applying actor-oriented techniques. One big difference between this approach and the Article 2 proposals is, that ownership can now, in terms of the actor-oriented approach, no longer be the chief objective. Once the change in *explanandum* has been effected, one will realise that establishing 'ownership' is not as important to effective development processes as the more holistic results that can be obtained from a thorough actor-oriented approach. Chapter IV gives clear indications of the holistic properties that are part of the actor-oriented approach.



Moreover, actor-oriented procedures are designed to make actors, and their respective communities, part of an intervention which, if successful, should lead to internalisation of innovations, or in other words, to 'ownership'. To ensure that the above-mentioned path towards 'ownership' is followed the, general contents of Article 2 should be re-written and adapted to the actor-oriented approach.

**Finding: Fundamental principles**

Further elaboration on Article 2 (Cotonou 2000), is required because a number of fundamental principles are laid down in several bullet points that follow on the above mentioned one. In summary, these fundamental principles state that -

1. equality of the partners and ownership of the development strategies will be kept in mind;
2. the ACP States shall determine the development strategies in all sovereignty;
3. ownership of the development strategies by the countries and populations concerned will be encouraged through effective participation at all levels;
4. the concept of participation has central government as the main partner;
5. development cooperation will open up opportunities for participation by all kinds of actors;

6. encouraging the integration of all sections of society, including the private sector and civil society organisations, into the mainstream of political, economic and social life, will take place;
7. obligations assumed by the Parties in the framework of their dialogue shall be central to their Partnership and cooperation relations;
8. there will be differentiation between the more and the less developed countries and/or regions, and therefore
9. special treatment shall always be given to the least-developed countries and the vulnerability of landlocked and island countries shall be taken into account (cf. Cotonou 2000: Art. 2).

**Conclusion:**

Should the actor-oriented intervention processes, proposed in Chapter IV, be used as yardstick, many of the above principles seem rather hollow, without real substance. The ownership stipulation in the first principle has already been dealt with and should, with the adoption of the new procedures, fall away, whereas ‘equality of the Partners’ will become unnecessary, once the principles of the actor-oriented approach are adopted.

The same applies to the second bullet whereby ‘sovereignty over development strategies’ is being accorded to the ACP States. It too does not make sense in the actor-oriented approach. One would rather presume that actors, of whom many would be government representatives, are selected to deal with a specific intervention: actors form the whole spectrum in other words, sanctioned to design, plan, implement and assess the intervention

throughout its processes. Such actors should be given joint ‘sovereignty over the development cooperation strategy’ and its practical application. Any outside interference (political or otherwise) in this process would therefore be harmful and disruptive. It could even derail a very well planned, actor-oriented intervention and cause it to revert to redundant procedures, such as the ‘systems approach’. Once the project, the subject for intervention, is handed over to the beneficiary community, sovereignty for that project will naturally be transferred to them.

In the third principle, the reference to both ‘ownership’ and ‘participation’, renders the principle incompatible with contemporary thinking, as has been illustrated in findings and conclusions above, as well as in paragraphs 3.4, 4.2.7.5 and 5.2.4 above. This terminology can just as well be removed from the Agreement.

The fourth principle is untenable because ‘participation with central government as main partner’ becomes a fallacy after actor-oriented principles have been introduced.

The fifth principle again deals with ‘participation’ and as was mentioned before, and should be stressed again, there are other, less contentious and less patronising ways and means to ensure the involvement of actors.

The sixth principle believes that development cooperation will ensure the ‘integration of all sections of society, including the private sector and civil society organisations, into the

mainstream of political, economic and social life'. The actor-oriented approach offers a specifically designed, more focused and better, although a more difficult, cumbersome and intricate, solution.

The seventh principle insists that obligations assumed in the framework of EU-ACP dialogue should be taken seriously to preserve the Partnership and cooperation relations. This principle will remain valid after the actor-oriented approach has been put into practice.

The last principle deals with inequalities and diversities, and makes complete sense. It undertakes to differentiate between the more and the less developed countries and/or regions; and this will be done by extending special treatment to the least-developed countries as well as the landlocked and island countries. To alleviate poverty, interventions should follow the same strategy by first targeting the communities that are most in need of improvement of their lifeworlds.

**Finding: Similarities between Cotonou and actor-oriented approach**

It is natural to assume that the full complement of actors identified through the deconstruction of each intervention, would as a rule include non-State actors. Where Article 4 (Cotonou 2000) therefore enumerates a series of comments or guidelines on how the non-State actors should be incorporated in development, it would appear as if the envisaged processes generally correspond with the procedures laid down in the actor-

oriented approach. Article 4, for instance, envisages that non-State participation should follow guidelines which insist that non-State role players should:

be informed and involved in consultation on cooperation policies and strategies, on priorities for cooperation especially in areas that concern or directly affect them, and on the political dialogue; (Cotonou 2000: Art. 4, first bullet).

This is one example of Cotonou stipulations that will appear to be unnecessary once they all become natural outcomes of intervention processes according to the actor-oriented approach.

### **Conclusion:**

One understands that the necessity for improved communication with non-State actors is mentioned because of the persistent division between the State and civil society organisations that is still causing a lack of communication and cooperation between the two. It is known that NGOs have often been allowed and encouraged to arrange meetings parallel to EU-ACP conferences in a neighbouring venue, to facilitate the exchange of information. This leads to the open question whether similar periphery meetings will be required by the so-called non-State actors once the actor-oriented approach has been accepted in practice.

### **Finding: Sustainable versus self-sustaining**

The difference between sustainable development and self-sustaining development, as discussed earlier on in par. 2.7, should be analysed further. As explained, it is felt that the

term ‘self-sustaining’ development should rather be used (and has consistently been used in this study) to make a distinction between ‘sustainable’ when used in relation to the environment, and ‘sustainable’ relating to development practices.

**Conclusion:**

A recommendation is therefore made that this sentence in the Agreement should be changed accordingly. Self-sustaining development will convey a slightly different but more precise message to the developing countries and will be strongly supported by the principles embodied in the actor-oriented approach.

**Finding: Cooperation framework versus intervention**

The Article (Cotonou 2000: Article 19) that covers principles and objectives, mentions in its first paragraph that the:

central objective of ACP-EC cooperation is poverty reduction and ultimately its eradication; sustainable development; and progressive integration of the ACP countries into the world economy (Cotonou 2000: Art. 19[1]).

It proceeds in the same paragraph with general indications as to how the above will be achieved. The cooperation framework and orientations of the Partnership shall, for instance, be tailored to the individual circumstances of each ACP country.

**Conclusion:**

In this respect, the question arises whether, in acknowledgment of ‘diversity’ between countries, every intervention should not rather be ‘tailored to the individual circumstances of each ACP country’. The cooperation framework may still have a role and both it and its

orientations will, after all, be more effective if the cooperation frameworks and orientations are drawn up immediately before an intervention, taking the particular circumstances of that specific targeted country into consideration. However, time will tell whether there will be place and money for deconstructions, ethnographic surveys, plus cooperation frameworks and orientations regarding an intervention. They may overlap to such an extent that they could be grouped together into one preliminary research exercise.

**Finding:**

Attention should also be given to the sentence in the same Article, where it is stated that the aim shall be:

to promote local ownership of economic and social reforms and the integration of the private sector and civil society actors into the development process” (Cotonou 2000: Art.19[1]).

**Conclusion:**

The references to ‘local ownership’, ‘integration ... into the development process’ and ‘private sector and civil society actors’ are well understood in the present context of the Cotonou Agreement, but will certainly undergo changes once the actor-oriented approach has been applied. ‘Local ownership’ will only become an indirect aim of the actor-oriented approach. Instead of ‘integration’, ‘internalisation’ will now become the objective, to be brought about by way of an actor-oriented intervention.

**Finding: Cargo initiatives in Cotonou**

Social and Human Development (Cotonou 2000: Article 25), is significant because it offers another opportunity for the human factor to be attended to. It starts off by listing a number

of procedures that should be followed, which will - every single one of them - be influenced by the undertaking in the middle of paragraph 1, which states that:

Special attention shall be paid to ensuring adequate levels of public spending in the social sectors (Cotonou 2000: Art. 25[1]).

Moreover, where the relevant article begins with a ‘cargo’ undertaking to ‘support ACP States' efforts at developing general and sectoral policies’, it carries on with a number of ways in which this support will be forthcoming.

**Conclusion:**

Reading between the lines of the whole article, one cannot help feeling that the ‘cargo’ approach is predominant in every line. This perception is further substantiated by the EU (or is it the Partnership?) in stating that they will ensure ‘... adequate levels of public spending in the social sectors’. Therefore the whole Article needs to be rephrased to accommodate and reflect the spirit of the actor-oriented approach.

**Findings: ‘Interventions’ instead of ‘cooperation’**

Further to the above comments on Article 25, the list of sectors ‘cooperation shall aim at’, such as health and nutrition, education and training and skills development, also deserves discussion.

**Conclusion:**

It is recommended that the word ‘cooperation’ in Article 25 be replaced by ‘interventions’.

This means that the whole list will become a list of potential targets at which EU-ACP-



planned interventions can be aimed in future, once the actor-oriented approach has been realised.

**Finding: Knowledge transfer**

In the same vein as above, one should replace the concepts of ‘cooperation’, ‘support’ and ‘capacity building’ in Article 25 (2) with ‘actor-oriented interventions’. This will then convey the intentions of the Partnership to focus ‘actor-oriented interventions’ on:

social areas such as programmes for training in the design of social policies and modern methods for managing social projects and programmes; policies conducive to technological innovation and research; building local expertise and promoting partnerships; and roundtable discussions at national and/or regional level (Cotonou 2000: Art. 25 [2]).

**Conclusion:**

To explain the above finding, it should be clarified that expectations are that the suggested capacity building, training, enablement or even empowerment could be the natural outcomes of the practical application of an actor-oriented approach. This approach appears to be people-oriented to such an extent that most people who are involved in it or affected by it, will undergo some form of knowledge transfer and may be inspired to improve their capabilities even further.

**Finding: Changing the *explanandum***

Article 33 deals with Institutional Development and Capacity Building, and offers another opportunity in the first paragraph to replace the word ‘cooperation’ with ‘actor-oriented’ interventions. It will then read as follows:

[Actor-oriented interventions] ... shall pay systematic attention to institutional aspects and in this context, shall support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen structures, institutions and procedures ... (Cotonou 2000: Art. 33[1]).

**Conclusion:**

This procedure should be adhered to and applied wherever applicable. In Article 33 alone, there are four out of the five articles in which this exercise will be warranted.

**Finding: ‘Cargoes’ and ‘cloning’**

Where it is indicated in Article 33 that development cooperation should support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen civil society and other structures, institutions and procedures, the perception is created that a ‘cargo’ of principles is implied, in that the donor community envisages to transferring certain capacities to the beneficiaries. It could be further perceived that a sort of cloning is intended, of the developed countries’ institutional and structural models, on developing countries.

**Conclusion:**

Having studied the potential of the actor-oriented approach, one could expect, in theory, that a strong civil society, including all the attributes of effective and functional institutions

and structures, may be created by applying the actor-oriented approach in practice. The

Cotonou Agreement mentions objectives which make provision for a:

positive force for growth and development and to achieve major improvements in the efficiency of government services as they affect the lives of ordinary people (2000: Art. 33 [3]).

In effect, this article could just as well be referring to the actor-oriented approach as the medium through which the different objectives can be reached.

**Finding: Cotonou actors or real actors**

The word 'participation' is used frequently in the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium.

The participatory approach can be portrayed as being one of the mainstays in EU-ACP development practice: almost everything should be done by the donors in 'participation' with the beneficiary community. This, however, raises the question whether all the actors involved should be participants along the lines envisaged by the Agreement, or whether they should not rather become an integrated part of an intervention, as if fused into a group of actors from both sides of the intervention spectrum?

**Conclusion:**

The second option corresponds with the actor-oriented approach, and it would be advisable to give it an opportunity to prove itself. The more actor-oriented concept eliminates the temptation of development workers to regard the actors from the beneficiary community as people participating with a 'superior' donor group. The difference between the above-mentioned two perceptions should be well understood by, and presented to, the

development community to avoid the paradox and other disadvantages of ‘participatory’ development from becoming perpetuated.

**Finding: Actors in intervention**

It has been pointed out in several articles of the Agreement and in paragraph 5.6 above, that ‘capacity building’ and ‘education and training’ are regarded as important factors in the process of development. The question arises, however, as to whether actors should be participants along the lines envisaged by the Agreement, or whether they should become an integrated part of an intervention, almost fused into a group of actors from both sides of the intervention spectrum.

**Conclusion:**

The terms discussed above remind one of what is said about the knowledge paradigm in sections 4.2.8 and 4.2.9 above, specifically where mention is made of the wide scope of knowledge and the important alternative role that could be played by integrating the applicable sections of the ‘knowledge paradigm’ with each separate development process.

In other words, education and training, capacity building and all similar knowledge-related items form part of the greater knowledge paradigm and could well, if they are real and not in a reified form, be utilised by the actor-oriented approach to deliver the best results.

**Finding: Redundant concepts: participation and involvement of the rural population**

The Compendium of the Cotonou Agreement suggests:

the active participation and involvement of the rural population and in particular its most disadvantaged sections, in the allocation and management of financial resources at local level, inter alia, by assisting civil society to develop local associations and professional organisations; Compendium (Paragraph 15, third bullet:12),

**Conclusion:**

It is argued, in view of the findings of this study, that the point made in the above quotation will not be valid any longer. Once the actor-oriented approach has been instituted, the procedures specified by the latter approach will sort these matters out in quite a different way. For instance, the channels envisaged above for ‘the allocation of management and financial resources’ will no longer apply, but will be substituted by the intervention team.

**.Finding:**

The following statement in the Compendium touches a raw nerve, if one can go by the effects which ‘land reform’ in Zimbabwe, for instance, have had on that formerly prosperous country. The Compendium suggests:

participatory land reforms and the establishment of land tenure systems ensuring an equitable and efficient allocation of land and allowing access to land to the most disadvantaged groups of population while protecting their existing rights (Compendium 2000: par.15, fifth bullet).

The ideal of succeeding with an equitable and efficient allocation of land to the most disadvantaged groups, could well be jeopardised by the procedure mentioned above.

**Conclusion:**

One would rather suggest that ethnographic research, followed by a thorough intervention analysis, should be undertaken. Dealing with land should be governed by the procedures

laid down by the actor-oriented approach if serious complications are to be avoided. It is to be hoped that such an approach will lead the affected community(ies) to internalise proposed changes and new policies and procedures. Land matters are a serious case in point, for which the use of an ethnographic survey and the whole range of proposals mentioned in Chapter IV, can do wonders. Following the actor-oriented approach would lead to success without too much tension.

**Finding: Fisheries Agreements**

Through several years' experience in negotiations with the EU, the author has come to the conclusion that their negotiations regarding Fisheries Agreements count amongst their most aggressive ones. EU negotiating teams have a clear framework to work in, and have standard rules regarding the minimum requirements of their eventual outcome. Once the Fisheries Agreement has been settled according to their requirements, successive interventions have in the past often become a threat to resources and overall environmental sustainability.

**Conclusion:**

If the actor-oriented approach could become part of negotiations regarding this matter, it could mean that the negotiators would probably, and hopefully, be actors that have been identified on and by both sides as being sympathetic towards the global fishing industry and as having regard for natural resources. Through the specialised knowledge and underlying empathy of such a team of negotiators, the 'top-down' and other negative connotations of

previous interventions could be eliminated and a more acceptable approach to cooperation in fishing could be introduced to the benefit of all, especially to the fish resources.

**Finding: Transport can benefit from the actor-oriented approach**

In dealing in the Compendium with the section on Transport Development (Compendium 2000: par. 26, p.5), it became clear that some reference should be made to the special opportunities that could be created by way of the actor-oriented approach, and how it could ensure an improvement to the whole subject of transport development. This was undertaken in par. 6.3.1 above.

**Conclusion:**

The wide, even regional, sphere of influence of transport; its important role in communications, and the symbolism of progress effected by transport, all contribute to the feeling that the actor-oriented approach should be applied here, even if it is only to be in an experimental phase. Application of the actor-oriented approach in interventions in which regional transport matters are at stake, could render welcome assistance to the future bilateral or multilateral negotiations. The Cotonou Agreement is, as it stands, a framework for establishing regional cooperation, not only between the EU and the respective ACP regions, but also for encouraging regional cooperation between ACP countries and regions. Transport, being a means of communication, is one of the most important factors in regional cooperation. Good regional transportation means, inter alia, good economic exchanges. Any country will benefit greatly from a good transport network and so would any region benefit too. Transport is often seen as rails and roads and vehicles. The full impact of the actor-oriented approach will be felt once the people behind the rails and the roads and

vehicles are acknowledged, and are made to feel part of the transport structures. For this to happen, the actor-oriented approach should first be instituted and become effective in all sectors of transport and its development.

**Finding: Mineral resources and sustainable mining**

Paragraph 35 of the Compendium, which deals with Mineral Resources Development, investigates methods to exploit the mineral potential that is to be found in almost all the ACP countries. It suggests the strengthening of the State in its role as regulator, promoter, provider of geoscientific data at national and regional levels and, simultaneously, that the investors and entrepreneurs in the private sector should be drawn into the picture to ensure that exploitation of mineral resources occurs in a rational and responsible way. (cf. Compendium 2000: par. 35, 18).

**Conclusion:**

The fair and economically viable exploitation of mineral resources in ACP countries will only become possible once the informal sector, the private sector, and the general public in each country, have been made aware of the fact that the utilisation of the mineral riches of any country should be to the benefit of the whole country and not only for the personal gain of a few. It was found, also during the author's term of office in Foreign Affairs, that valuable large deposits, for instance, of semi-precious stones, are hacked to pieces just to enable a few individuals to smuggle such stones out of the country for limited personal gain.



This practice should be stopped - not only by rules, regulations and police methods - but also by interventions as proposed in the actor-oriented approach. The intervention should, amongst others, provide for an interface basis that explains the importance of proper and scientific extraction and utilisation of valuable minerals for everybody's benefit and the actors in the intervention should be selected from communities and bodies dealing directly with mineral extraction. Such interventions can either be launched by the relevant State, or could be initiated through the EU-ACP channels, in terms of the Cotonou Agreement.

**Finding: Conservation and where people should fit in**

In a broader context, where the Compendium (Paragraph 36: 18) perceives the land, vegetation and wild life as the main sectors that should be protected wherever mention is made of conservation and environmental considerations, it specifically refers to cases in which mineral exploitation gives reason for concern. There is unfortunately no reference in paragraph 36 to the protection of the local community against health, farming, industrialisation and other hazards, that could result from a mining venture.

**Conclusion:**

With the actor-oriented approach in mind, it is logical to speculate on how the occupants of the area where mineral exploitation is intended, should be consulted on a new mining operation. How would one, for instance, go about arranging for the whole community to get a share of the profits and to get the opportunity to obtain a first option to become participants in the operation from the first stages of its design and planning? The recommendations in paragraph 4.2.7.5 dealing with actor-oriented interface perspectives as

well as several other paragraphs in Chapter IV, can be applied in practice in this area for more effective results than the application of ‘participation’ or ‘empowerment’ models would ever have.

In the second place, an important interface discourse should be dealing with necessary safeguards and protective considerations for the local community. Considerations such as health, loss of farming land, contamination of the air or water resources, industrialisation and other hazards will form a natural part of an actor-oriented approach and could be dealt with amicably as part of the approach. Unless this is attended to, the whole project might find that tremendous resistance against the operation will be generated to the disadvantage of the general economy and the welfare of the people involved.

**Finding: The actor-oriented approach towards a workforce**

Today’s standard approach is more or less along the lines of ‘capacity building’, ‘empowerment’ of the workers, establishing where the workers can have ‘ownership’, or encouraging ‘workers’ participation’ in projects on the shop floor. Adoption of the actor-oriented approach to govern dealings between employers and the workforce, will render all the above approaches obsolete, because employers and workers will be encouraged to resolve their differences together and to plan interventions of any sort, jointly, as a team..

Because of the strong relationship between development and the whole knowledge paradigm, as confirmed by Norman Long (2001:16), the section of the Compendium dealing

directly with knowledge matters, such as education and training (Compendium 2000: Section 3.1, par. 82), deserves further discussion. In this regard, the initial feeling is that the objective of a well educated and skilled workforce will not be achieved, unless all the recommendations and the wide variety of factors involved in the knowledge discourse are taken into consideration. Efforts should be made by development planners to look past the reified portrayals of knowledge. Instead, they should make a distinct effort to demarcate the wide area in which knowledge transfer should be taking place. The workforce will surely be within the parameters of this area. Simultaneously, the actor-oriented approach should become the main instrument for dealings with the workforce, because it is based on theories which have introduced innovative lines to development, inter alia, a fresh awareness of the persisting reified concepts that cloud perceptions of items such as knowledge, empowerment, civil society and others. Knowledge, freed from the burden of reification, can be utilised much better in practice than knowledge as it is generally perceived today. This is but one example of how the workforce should be handled by the EU-ACP Partnership, including by those that drive general cooperation on many fronts..

**Conclusion:**

The statement made in the Compendium (Section 3.1, par. 82), namely that the more knowledge and skills a workforce has, the better it will be for the economy, the society and the country as a whole, can only be realised if full recognition is given to contributions which can be made by way of the actor-oriented approach. The full argument regarding the importance of a new look at knowledge transfer in development, are contained in the

discussions regarding knowledge and power in section 2.5 and paragraphs 4.2.8 and 4.2.9 above.

**Finding: Cultural heritage**

According to section 3.6 of the Compendium (Compendium 2000: 37), the cultural heritage of all countries, but in this case the ACP countries should be preserved and promoted. To achieve this, account should be taken of the cultural dimension (cultural repertoires, as discussed in par. 4.2.6.8) of the subject countries at the different levels of development cooperation, or in each of the relevant discourses, to use a clearer terminology. Cultural differences could either bond groups together or cause distancing. The positive qualities of culture should be used to their fullest extent to create better understanding in the world, especially between neighbours. The actor-oriented approach lends itself to a greater awareness of the importance of cultural attributes as well as cultural differences.

**Conclusion:**

The recognition and promotion of an inter-cultural dialogue and active safeguarding and development of the cultural heritage are recommended. The inter-cultural dialogue is envisaged, for instance, as a dialogue unfolding between any one or more of the ACP countries, on the one hand, and any one or more of the EU countries on the other, and the hope is that these communications would, inter alia, stimulate an awareness of the areas of interdependence that are to be found, also between people of different cultures. This recognition of fields of interdependence could trigger a greater drive towards peace and understanding among people.

The economic value of culture promises to grow in importance. Films, music, paintings, literature and sculpture are all possible fields that could become export markets and job providers. The above makes sense and needs to be enhanced by noting the various considerations that have been given to culture in the previous chapter (especially paragraph 4.2.6.8).

**Finding: Handling gender issues**

To avoid having to deal with the two extremes of the dilemma, it would be advisable to encourage each community to solve its own gender issues (in which there is a tacit advantage, namely bridging a specific form of heterogeneity), in its own way and through its own actors.

**Conclusion:**

The actor-oriented approach should make this possible if correctly applied.

**Finding: Gender and traditional customs**

The Compendium conveys the perception that gender problems occur where women and men in a society have different and interrelated roles, responsibilities and opportunities allocated to them. Many of these are culture specific and socially constructed but could be changed over time, inter alia, as a result of policy interventions. Traditional attitudes towards the different roles allocated to men or women still exist.

**Conclusion:**

Such attitudes have crucial implications for the achievement of all development objectives and, to open the door for successful development with a comprehensive workforce, these

will need to be addressed. Here too, the actor-oriented approach should serve the purpose.

**Finding: Ethnographic approach to gender issues**

Paragraph 128 (Compendium 2000: 39), sketches principal guidelines that should be followed in respect of gender matters. These need discussion because they generally assume that gender issues should be dealt with by superimposing specially devised methods and approaches wherever needed. In other words, gender issues should be mainstreamed over a broad front and should become a basic consideration in the design and implementation of every development intervention.

**Conclusion:**

A system of 'gender analysis at macro-, meso- and micro-levels' is envisaged in the Compendium (Section 4.1, par. 127), but the proposed methodology to achieve this remains vague. Maybe, as has been stated before, the advantages of an ethnographic approach had not come to the attention of the formulators of the Compendium when they were compiling it. The ethnographic approach seems to be the ideal way to deal with 'gender analysis at macro-, meso- and micro-levels'. To elaborate the point, the sooner all aspects of the actor-oriented approach, including the important role envisaged for the ethnographer in the processes, are made available to both the EU and the ACP representatives on official bodies that deal with the Compendium, the more benefits will accrue to development cooperation in future. It can be expected that the ethnographer's report will be able to point out that gender issues cannot be dealt with in isolation or separately, but should be

dealt with within the confines of the general discourse on social structures in a community. Regarding heterogeneity in a community, one should realise that part of this phenomenon in a community is displayed where women interpret community matters in a different way from men. These differences will be sorted out as part of the actor-oriented approach. Furthermore, one will also come across differences and displayed heterogeneity, in cases where the disabled in a community, or the elderly, or the youth of a community, give their views on a specific matter that affects them. In other words, mainstreaming of gender issues could be a futile and ineffective act, that could raise more problems than it solves. The more intricate approach, of recognising the benefits that the thorough application of the actor-oriented method would have, and applying these methods in practice, is therefore strongly recommended. Chapter IV contains a great deal of basic information on methods in which the actor-oriented approach could be utilised for these purposes.

**Finding: Degradation of ecosystems**

A valid point is made in the Compendium (par. 136), namely that the degradation of ecosystems in developing countries (such as the ACP) is leading to increased poverty, which in turn, plays a large role in the further deterioration of ecosystems. This whole vicious circle militates against the eventual realisation of the objectives contained in par. 135 of the Compendium and in Article 1 of the Cotonou Agreement. Curbing this negative development, is of great importance and calls for the preparation and implementation of national strategies for sustainable development that have due regard for ecological balances.

**Conclusion:**

Environmental matters will benefit from actions taken in terms of the actor-oriented approach. Intervention planning and execution, initiated in terms of the actor-oriented approach, should be considered here. Proper intervention analysis should be prioritised. It may happen that a ‘national strategy’ (consisting of a series of interventions aimed at the same objective) has already been devised for the specific purpose of the intervention, and if there is any possibility of a clash between several proposed strategies, it may have serious consequences for the lifeworlds of the relevant communities. One must therefore plan for the arrangement of a series of interfaces that will have to be undertaken before and during the intervention processes. Ongoing evaluation will, once again, be of the utmost importance to detect tensions arising from the full scale application of the actor-oriented approach in time, and to institute preventive measures.

#### **7.2.4 To construct guidelines applicable to future development cooperation in the EU-ACP Partnership and elsewhere.**

##### **Finding: Knowledge and the ordering and reordering processes of life**

The methodology that should be adopted for the research of knowledge processes, should refrain from the application of general epistemological debates on ‘the nature of knowledge’ and ‘knowledge universals’. The aim should be to try to understand how knowledge impinges on the ordering and reordering processes of life.

##### **Conclusion:**

With further reference to ethnography, the following is suggested as another guideline.



A methodology to establish how bodies of knowledge shape the struggles and negotiations between local groups and intervening parties should be developed, preferably by experienced ethnographers.

**Finding: Cost-effectiveness**

Right through the study the question kept arising, as to whether the actor-oriented approach would be more cost-effective than present methods. There was no way to establish whether this would be the case or not.

**Conclusion:**

Taking a figure representing relative costs involved in completing a development programme in terms of the old methods, and comparing it with the estimated costs of an actor-oriented intervention of similar scale, would be difficult and futile. What can be learnt from what has been said in previous chapters, is that actor-oriented methods would result in optimal cooperation over time. One reason could be that closer relations between the benefactor(s) and the beneficiaries will probably develop and result in better mutual understanding. This in itself will be an evolving benefit to which no price can be put. Having end-results that take longer to materialise, but which ensure one of better outcomes than before, could be an advantage of the actor-oriented approach. This question, in the end, can only be answered through practical application of the actor-oriented approach over a number of years.

**Findings: Ethnography as a new career opportunity**

It will not be helpful to select ethnographers only from the ranks of the donors. To offer training opportunities to aspirant ethnographers, volunteers from the side of beneficiary countries (ACP) should be encouraged to assist appointed ethnographers, or to study in that direction. Chances are that qualified ethnographers are already working as such in developing countries. Possible aspirant candidates for training as ethnographers could probably be located by means of ethnographic research.

**Conclusion:**

The new profession of ethnographer that will be created by the actor-oriented approach, should be brought about and established in such a way that people from the developing countries can get a particular share therein. The Compendium could devise a post-description for ethnographers as part of its preparatory information leading up to the utilisation of the actor-oriented approach. Such a description would make special provision for the profession and the role ethnographers are expected to play. In particular, opportunities should be created for understudies to learn the job as assistants to the professionals.

**Finding: Deconstruction + ethnographic research = effective results**

Although Schuurman (1996: 26), is convinced that deconstruction is the best way to identify the actors for an intervention, the conclusion has been reached, after having studied the detailed descriptions of ethnographic research by both Long (2001) and Wendt (2001), that the two systems should be combined for more effectivity.

**Conclusion:**

The above does not mean that the two aspects should be thrown together indiscriminately. On the contrary, they should remain separate and be undertaken separately, but on condition that these results will be shared between the respective research teams, in order to ensure that each group of researchers has a clear and holistic picture of the targeted field, warts and all.

**Finding: Knowledge, networks and power in EC differ from those of the ACP**

It is important that the respective differences in knowledge, networks and power between the EC on the one hand, and the target (ACP) community on the other, be highlighted. The differences are not tacit and no exact weight can be accorded to any of them. It will suffice, however, to keep intervention planners alert to the fact that these differences, and probably others as well, do exist.

**Conclusion:**

This is a field in which the trap of reification can easily ensnare the observer, because of the habit and natural tendency to make EC standards applicable to the ACP target areas. Quite often there are radical differences between the two and a picture can easily be blurred by reification of subjects such as knowledge or the economy. Furthermore, there will be a constant need to differentiate between real knowledge and the many reified versions thereof. Both Partners to the Cotonou Agreement should be made aware of all these points as well as the inherent dangers of perpetuating reified images in their relationship. The following examples are all to be found on page 9 of the Compendium:

Compendium - par. 5: 'Sustainable development': Adams (1993: 207) presents an interesting discussion and mentions that 'sustainable development' has, over the past decade, become a fashionable or even populist term. It is now being utilised by development organisations as a commodity, and is often included in comments on development such as speeches and relevant documents, for the sake of popularity and in sympathy with the 'green' movement.

Compendium - par. 7: 'Participation of civil society' (please also see par. 2.6): This phrase is used regularly and has earned itself a populist connotation, because so little is said about how it should actually be achieved. It may well be that it is used today to convey the message that development bodies are serious about a role for the people, and is therefore encouraging them to participate in all sorts of projects. 'Civil society participation' would not have become reified, if a method regarding its achievement, had been included in those documents in which it had been used. Such a practical reference in the Compendium would have made a big difference to the general perception that the term had become reified.

Compendium - par. 7(a): 'Capacity building' (please also consult par. 2.5.6): the term, 'capacity building', conveys nothing more than the standard concept of 'training'. One reason for the popular use of 'capacity building' in regard to development, is that a new term was required that sounded less mundane than 'training'. At the same time, perhaps, it became reified because it originated from an artificial background. Nevertheless, the fact that it is reified at the moment, cannot be denied.

### **7.3 Final conclusion**

#### **7.3.1 Involving the actor-oriented approach in the Cotonou Agreement and its Compendium**

All that has been mentioned in this study boils down to the general conclusion, that both the Agreement and the Compendium should be carefully studied again by all the co-signatories and their staff. The effect will be, at least, that these important and basic documents on development, will be brought in line with contemporary development theory.

In practice, it would be easier to change the paradigm by adapting the Compendium. The Agreement has to go through too many steps for any alteration to be made fast and efficiently, and would therefore not present the best way to take effective action.

#### **7.3.2 The actor-oriented approach and a few recent findings in development theory**

Two recent (2001) works on development, one by Jan Coetzee et al. and the other by Jan Nederveen Pieterse (Coetzee et al. 2001 and Nederveen Pieterse 2001), will be used as examples to illustrate how the actor-oriented approach can be fitted into even the latest trends in development theory. This is, presumably, because the actor-oriented approach offers a very wide-reaching methodology to come to the point where actual development is taking place, a methodology that is adaptable and can fit into almost every situation. The reason for this is, that the ACTORS are the central figures and after they have been convinced about the necessity for an intervention, they will influence other individuals,

communities and bodies of the same. This will happen, irrespective of whether the intervention target is in one of the Least Developed Countries (LDC) or, for that matter, in one of the Newly Industrialised Countries (NDCs). Equally, it has a role to play, whether in a minor attempt at regional cooperation in Africa or the Caribbean, or in an intervention which has a global dimension, in keeping with contemporary globalisation and/or liberalisation demands.

### **7.3.2.1 Coetzee et al. 2001. *Development: Theory, policy and practice*.**

In the introduction, the above authors expressed the need:

to change perspective, to take account of historical particularity, micro-perspectives and individual actors. This book fulfils this need. But it does so in a manner that appreciates both the context of broad social structures as well as the experiences of individual actors. It covers the structures and the struggles in the process of development, and it examines development as a contested concept. (Coetzee et al 2001:1).

According to the extract cited above, one would expect the work as a whole, to have several references to the actor-oriented approach and, at least, that the authors would have benefited from valuable theories, such as discourse analysis, intervention planning, ethnography and deconstruction, which all form part of the actor-oriented approach but originate, as a matter of fact, from post-modern thinking. There is a clear shortcoming in the book under discussion: although the role of the people in development is dealt with, some confusion is still apparent in most of the chapters, about how this could best be effected. The actor-oriented approach is never mentioned, which leads one to

believe that none of Norman Long's publications on development have been consulted by the team of authors. This is a pity, because they could have rendered a better defined result. They could have spelt out to the practitioners in the field, how people could be made part of development, for example, by way of the actor-oriented approach or any other proposal that gives special instructions about how it should be tackled.

### **7.3.2.2 Development theory: Deconstructions/reconstructions**

The following needs to be cited from a comprehensive and recent publication which does not refer directly to the actor-oriented approach. Nederveen Pieterse (2001) may in places allude to, but is never specific, about a closer union between the practical devices proposed by the actor-oriented approach and the variety of contemporary theories which are proposed in his book. The following is cited as a practical example of the direction in which Nederveen Pieterse moves in his concluding chapter:

Development involves different stakeholders and actors, who typically hold different perspectives and policy preferences. Yet these agents and their preferences should not be essentialised. Seen up close each position itself is a cluster of positions and an arena of different views and arguments (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 154).

With the background offered in this study, one should be able to note the resemblance between the emphases in the sentences above and the general trend of the actor-oriented approach. Firstly, the involvement of stakeholders and actors is acknowledged by both. Secondly, the fact is emphasised that there are different positions, perspectives, interests and policy positions among these groups. Thirdly, Nederveen

Pieterse mentions that neither the stakeholders (actors), nor their preferences, should be essentialised. This is where the two directions part ways. The actor-oriented approach is specific about the importance of the actors and that their preferences should be internalised by the intervention team, before any intervention could be launched. The reason for this is given in the cited paragraph, namely that ‘each position itself is a cluster of positions and an arena of different views and arguments’. This is exactly the terrain on which the actor-oriented approach should excel: it has been devised to take care of struggles and arguments between people with different views and interests on a subject.

Reconstruction is a concept which Nederveen Pieterse (2001: xii) derives from deconstruction: he portrays reconstruction as a combination of any of the following approaches and relevant keywords, used in his publication.

### **Approaches**

Globalisation and development  
Intercultural development  
Social development  
Critical holism  
Reflexive development

### **Keywords**

Critical globalism  
Cultural differences as catalyst  
Supply-side  
Tao\* of development  
Collective learning, reform platform

\* While the Tao of physics refers to a combination of physics and mysticism, the Tao of development is a more difficult combination because development is not merely a science or analytics (development theory) but also a politics. (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 145)

He adds that:

... The deconstruction of development can apply to development policies and take the form of the disaggregation of policy formulations, e.g. between those which are (a) inevitable, (b) necessary, (c)



desirable or acceptable under certain specified conditions, and (d) nonsensical and reflecting Western biases and ethnocentrism. Accordingly, the deconstruction of development is the prerequisite for its reconstruction. This cannot be a single reconstruction but should be polycentric reconstructions, given varying itineraries and circumstances in different countries (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 33).

The knowledge that has been obtained regarding the actor-oriented approach leads one to believe that this approach would be ideal to effect the 'polycentric reconstructions', cited above. Reconstruction is also recommended in this study, to be undertaken after the assessment of each process of deconstruction. This is where the 'team of actors', which will study each attempt at deconstruction, will have an important role to play. They will assess the results of deconstruction, evaluate each factor and then make recommendations regarding how the deconstructed model could benefit from a few altered discourses, role-players or initiatives. In this way, a 'reconstructed model' will ensue: a prepared target to direct the intervention initiatives that were planned by the team.

Reflexive development is dealt with by Nederveen Pieterse (2001) to some extent. He describes it as a development theory that is formulated through deliberate reflection on development, either by way of discourse analysis, or by avoiding the unreflective use of language, indicators and models. Reflexivity or self-questioning, falls within the domain of 'human development' and is perpetuated by way of social learning, social feedbacks and it culminates in reflexive development. He also contends that:

Understanding development as a politics of difference is a step toward making development practice self-conscious with regard to its political and cultural bias, a step toward a practice of reflexive development (Nederveen Pieterse 2001: 72).

To summarise, reference will be made to trends in recent times, through which reflexive views of more than one problem situation, in a wide variety of disciplines, has become a common medium for problem solving. So, for instance, Ulrich Beck (1992) and Melucci (1989) are cited by Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 160) and he states that:

Ulrich Beck (1992) contrasts simple modernity concerned with 'mastering nature' with *reflexive modernity*, the condition in which the moderns are increasingly concerned with managing the problems created by modernity. Reflexivity figures in relation to the self, social theory, cultural studies, political economy, financial markets, organization studies and research methodology. New social movements are said to be reflexive in the sense of information oriented, present oriented and concerned with feedback (Melucci1989).

The description in the paragraph cited above gives a clear indication of the excellent contribution that the actor-oriented approach could make to the enhancement of reflexive thinking among all that are involved in development. Moreover, where development happens by way of interventions, the encouragement of reflexive thinking among all the actors in an intervention cannot go wrong. On the contrary, this is exactly what the actor-oriented approach is encouraging: getting the actors to acquaint themselves with subjects such as 'social theory, cultural studies, political economy, financial markets, organization studies and research methodology'.

Where Nederveen Pieterse (2001: 168) envisages 'global reform' as a sound and necessary back-drop for contemporary development, he cites the following to make the point:

Globalization requires political adjustments for all development actors, while development actors seek political adjustment of globalization. The crossroads of globalization may be summed up as either neoliberal globalization or taking a developmental approach to globalization (Pronk 2000).

The above requirements for global development offer another venue for the actor-oriented approach to present itself in. The cross-fertilisation of development thinking cited above, is also part of the actor-oriented approach. By way of teamwork; interface sessions about all the inhibiting factors that may be encountered; the networking with people that may be affected, and several other dynamics which are part of the approach, requirements envisaged above can be faced and successfully dealt with by well-trained intervention teams. The main concern in this regard, is that 'global development', as envisaged above, be given the opportunity to benefit from the versatility of the actor-oriented approach. This plea is directed to the global development community in the hope that they will, at least, put the actor-oriented approach to the test.

#### **7.4 The versatility of the actor-oriented approach**

One specific conclusion, duly reinforced by all the above is that, whatever the prevailing development theory of the day may be, chances are that the actor-oriented approach will be adaptable to the requirements of its practical applications. As a matter of fact, the actors

will, without fail, determine the outcome of any intervention if the actor-oriented approach is followed. In other words, they will be guided by the proposals laid down for the practical application of the actor-oriented approach, to work within the framework of any given development theory. Whether all the theories will be equally successful in their practical applications, will have to be determined: one would expect that the approaches contained in one theory would be easier for the actors to internalise than those of another. In general, however, there should be no severe hindrances in the practical application of the actor-oriented approach to any possible scenario. It will, eventually, be the actors that give effect to an intervention, irrespective of what form or colour it may be presented in to the team, and not factors such as infrastructure, 'civil society participation' or 'capacity building', nor will the amount of money spent on a project be a determining factor for success.

In short, it is after a thorough study of the actor-oriented approach, the author's firm belief that this is, although a demanding approach, the most versatile and most adaptable process thus far constructed. It should, therefore, be given serious attention by everybody involved in development, whether in theoretical or in practical work.

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## Annexure 1

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED....

... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,  
in the dignity and worth of the human person,  
in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small,  
... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, and for these ends  
... to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social  
advancement of all peoples,  
have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims ....  
From the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations

### THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

#### Statement of Purpose

UNDP promotes human development.

We seek to create opportunities through which people's abilities, talents and creativity can find full expression. We aspire to a world where people can better their lives in a manner of their own choosing. We recognize that development today must safeguard the options of future generations.

UNDP invests in people. We help countries to develop the capacity to manage their economies, fight poverty, ignorance and disease, conserve the environment, stimulate technological innovation, and recognize and enhance the contributions of women to society. UNDP builds partnerships to foster human development. We forge alliances with the people and governments of developing countries, with the donor community, with the specialized agencies of the United Nations, and with private institutions and non-governmental organizations.

UNDP works in more than 150 developing countries and territories. Through our worldwide network of offices - and in dialogue with governments and other development partners - UNDP supports programmes for human development. These spring from national priorities and are shaped by local culture. Beyond this,

UNDP manages an increasingly diverse range of development services through its country offices,

UNDP plays a leading role in coordinating the development efforts of the United Nations system. In times of disaster - natural or human -

UNDP helps orchestrate the United Nations' response in the field.

UNDP operates across national boundaries. We sponsor programmes that are regional, interregional and global in scope. We promote the sharing of experience among developing countries and draw international attention to issues of global concern.

UNDP is universal and politically neutral. We receive voluntary contributions from nearly every country in the world. In allocating these resources,  
UNDP favours the poorest countries.

UNDP is people serving people. We are men and women, from all parts of the world, who value the qualities of professionalism, leadership and integrity. In the years ahead, UNDP will strive for excellence and prepare for change. We will advocate the full participation of all people in the pursuit of human progress. .

## **ANNEXURE II**

# **PREAMBLE**

HAVING REGARD TO the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the one hand, and the Georgetown Agreement establishing the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP), on the other;

AFFIRMING their commitment to work together towards the achievement of the objectives of poverty eradication, sustainable development and the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the world economy;

ASSERTING their resolve to make, through their cooperation, a significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of the ACP States and to the greater well-being of their population, helping them facing the challenges of globalisation and strengthening the ACP-EU Partnership in the effort to give the process of globalisation a stronger social dimension;

REAFFIRMING their willingness to revitalize their special relationship and to implement a comprehensive and integrated approach for a strengthened partnership based on political dialogue, development cooperation and economic and trade relations;

ACKNOWLEDGING that a political environment guaranteeing peace, security and stability, respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and good governance is part and parcel of long term development; acknowledging that responsibility for establishing such an environment rests primarily with the countries concerned;

ACKNOWLEDGING that sound and sustainable economic policies are prerequisites for development;

REFERRING to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the conclusions of the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights, the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the other instruments of international humanitarian law, the 1954 Convention relating to the status of stateless persons, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 New York Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees;

CONSIDERING the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the American Convention on Human Rights as positive regional contributions to the respect of human rights in the European Union and in the ACP States;

RECALLING the Libreville and Santo Domingo declarations of the Heads of State and Government of the ACP countries at their Summits in 1997 and 1999;

CONSIDERING that the development targets and principles agreed in United Nations Conferences and the target, set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee, to reduce by one half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015 provide a clear vision and must underpin ACP-EU cooperation within this Agreement;

PAYING particular attention to the pledges made at the Rio, Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen, Beijing, Istanbul and Rome UN conferences and acknowledging the need for further action to be taken in order to achieve the goals and implement the action programs which have been drawn up in those fro;

ANXIOUS to respect basic labour rights, taking account of the principles laid down in the relevant conventions of the International Labor Organization;

RECALLING the commitments within the framework of the World Trade Organization,

HAVE DECIDED TO CONCLUDE THIS AGREEMENT:

## Annexure III

Table 10.1 *Development perspectives and future options*

Nederveen Pieterse, Jan, 2001, *Development theory: Deconstructions/Reconstructions*, SAGE Publications, London.

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**Theories and definitions of development**

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**Modernisation**

Development and state-led growth. Keynotes: industrialisation, Western model, foreign aid, linear progress, convergence

**Dependencia**

Development is underdevelopment (or dependent development) by comprador bourgeoisie; or state-led autocentric development (associated dependent development) by national bourgeoisie

**Neoclassical economics, neoliberalism**

Development is market-led growth. Keynotes: overcome state failure through structural reform (deregulation, privatisation, liberalisation) and get prices right.

**Alternative development**

Development should be society-led, equitable, participatory and sustainable

**Human development**

Capacitation or human resource development is the means and end of development, measured in Human Development Index

**Anti-development**

Development is destructive, immiserising, authoritarian, past. Keynotes: discourse analysis, critique of science and modernity

**Current themes**

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Revaluation of 'tradition'.  
Neomodernisation.  
Triumphalism, 'end of history'

Critique of NICs, new international division of labour, social exclusion. New political economy: brings the state back in. International political economy: power and economics. Uneven global development

Market failure, safety net, human capital, infrastructure, good governance, sustainability. Debt reduction. New institutional economics: institutional analysis

Adopted in mainstream.  
Decentralisation.  
Professionalisation. Alternative globalisation

Gender DI, Freedom GI, human security, global reform

Local delinking. Connection with ecological movements.  
Resistance to globalisation

**Future options**

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Modernities plural.  
Postmodernism

Critique of uneven globalisation

Regulation of finance. Civic economy

Social economy, social development. Global reform

Localism

Social and cultural capital. Social development. Global reform

**Annexure IV**

Table 10.2 *Another outline of the development field*

<b><u>Agents</u></b>	<b><u>Perspectives</u></b>	<b><u>Policies</u></b>	<b><u>Conflict areas</u></b>
IMF and World Bank	Neoliberalism, monetarism, social liberalism	Structural reform, structural adjustment (SA)	Adjust SA. World Bank vs. IMF. Poverty alleviation.
WTO	Free trade	Multilateral agreement on investment, trad-related intellectual property rights	With regions, states, trade unions, INGOs
UN system	Human development	Capacity building, human resource development, safety net, human security	Conflicts in UN system and between UN and international financial institutions, OECD> 20/20 compact
States	Modernisation, human development, neoclassical economics, monetarism	SA. Capacity building, security, human development, innovation, competitiveness	SA, corporations, globalisation, regionalism, decentralisation, donors, social cohesion, poverty alleviation
(I)NGO's	Human and alternative development	Empowerment, humanitarian assistance, lobbying, poverty eradication	Revise SA. Conflict with GOs, among and within NGOs. Tension between relief and development.
Local actors	Alternative development and/or post-development	Autonomous development, democratisation	Conflicts among locals about participation, autonomy, values

## ANNEXURE V

### ARTICLE 33

#### Institutional development and capacity building

1. Cooperation shall pay systematic attention to institutional aspects and in this context, shall support the efforts of the ACP States to develop and strengthen structures, institutions and procedures that help to:
  - promote and sustain democracy, human dignity, social justice and pluralism, with full respect for diversity within and among societies;
  - promote and sustain universal and full respect for and observance and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
  - develop and strengthen the rule of law; and improve access to justice, while guaranteeing the professionalism and independence of the judicial systems; and ensure transparent and accountable governance and administration in all public institutions.
2. The Parties shall work together in the fight against bribery and corruption in all their societies.
3. Cooperation shall support ACP States' efforts to develop their public institutions into a positive force for growth and development and to achieve major improvements in the efficiency of government services as they affect the lives of ordinary people. In this context, cooperation shall assist the reform, rationalisation and the modernisation of the public sector. Specifically, cooperation support shall focus on:
  - the reform and modernisation of the civil service;
  - legal and judicial reforms and modernisation of justice systems;
  - improvement and strengthening of public finance management;
  - accelerating reforms of the banking and financial sector;
  - improvement of the management of public assets and reform of public procurement procedures; and
  - political, administrative, economic and financial decentralisation.
4. Cooperation shall also assist to restore and/or enhance critical public sector capacity and to support institutions needed to underpin a market economy, especially support for:
  - developing legal and regulatory capabilities needed to cope with the operation of a market economy, including competition policy and consumer policy;



improving capacity to analyse, plan, formulate and implement policies, in particular in the economic, social, environmental, research, science and technology and innovation fields; modernising, strengthening and reforming financial and monetary institutions and improving procedures;

building the capacity at the local and municipal levels which is required to implement decentralisation policy and to increase the participation of the population in the development process; and developing capacity in other critical areas such as:

international negotiations; and

management and coordination of external aid.

5. Cooperation shall span all areas and sectors of cooperation to foster the emergence of non-State actors and the development of their capacities; and to strengthen structures for information, dialogue and consultation between them and the national authorities, including at regional level.

