LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIDSCAP	-	AIDS Control and Prevention Project
CSSR	-	Council of Societies for the Study of Religion
FHI	-	Family Health International
HIV	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
LRA	-	Lord's Resistance Army
MGDs	-	Millennium Development Goals
MTSP	-	Medium Term Strategic Plan
OVC	-	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	-	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PMTCT	-	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
SAFAIDS	-	Southern Africa AIDS Information Dissemination Service
SIDA	-	Swedish International Development Authority
UK	-	United Kingdom
UN	-	United Nations
UNAIDS	-	Joint United Nations Program on HIVAIDS
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNGASS	-	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	-	United States of America
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	-	World Health Organization
WVI	-	World Vision International
ZOE	-	Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended hands

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This thesis addresses a study problem of ethical issues that arise from how identities of children are constructed using narratives and photographs in humanitarian discourse. Such a study is one that is of a sociological exposition in nature. A sociological exposition study is here described as a sociological enquiry that aims to reveal, uncover, expose or explain issues in ways that may not be as 'obvious' as those issues normally appear to people. Ethical issues exposed by this study may not be talked much about and even 'ignored' at times. Those issues tend to be 'ignored' because as this study reveals they could be 'classified' as 'sensitive' in nature. A critical interrogation of the issues thus questioned the very existence of an established practice. The researcher was aware that a revelation of such 'sensitive' issues would cause 'discomforts' to some readers whose works may identify them with the issues raised in this study. However the researcher chose to still engage in such a study as it gives some academic insights on how representations of realities about children can be sociologically explained within humanitarian discourse. A sociological exposition of the issues also influenced the researcher to come up with some guidelines on how the revealed ethical issues synonymous with the practice of representing children in narratives and photographs can be better managed.

1.2 Study justification

A certain rationale that justified this study arose as the researcher undertook the literature review process. From a review of literature on the subject, what was notably missing was

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a sociological exposition of children's representation as a specific cultural practice within the context of humanitarian discourse. In particular the researcher discovered that there was limited documentation of how representations of children in humanitarian contexts could be related to social processes of reality constructions (Posser 2000; Putman 2004; Korostelina 2007). That is why the researcher took up this gap as an 'unresolved' academic research issue that had to be explored from an angle of phenomenological sociology. The researcher aimed to make a sociological contribution by interrogating narratives and photographs of children using phenomenological sociology within humanitarian discourse. It was the researcher's view that this would be possible if he specifically explored narratives and photographs as social constructs that tell deeper stories or portray identities of children.

At this stage, the researcher briefly defines key conceptual terms contained in the thesis topic. Definitions of key terms are meant to explain the thesis topic and focus the reader's mind on the subject matter. The terms are representation, reality, identity, ethics and child.

1.3 Study conceptual terms

Representation refers to attempts to reproduce identities of people in 'like' manners (Putman 2000:1-7). Humanitarian professionals seek to achieve these using children's narratives and photographs. Aims of representing children include needs to construct and portray identities of children as 'real'. However, as the study reveals, claims to construct 'real' identities of children in narratives and photographs are sociologically questionable.

Reality is the correspondences of representations of things to their 'actual' appearances in 'real' lives (Putman 2004:4-15). In this study, such reality is expected to point to 'actual' rather than to 'imagined' identities of children. Contrary to this expectation, the study reveals that people imagine, construct and interpret realities of children. Realities are thus multiple, socially constructed and contestable.

Identity refers to sets of characteristics by which people get definitively recognizable or known (Korostelina 2007:1-3). In this study, identities arise from processes of assigning characteristics to children that create special categories such as that of 'vulnerable' children for instance. Presumably children must have 'naturally similar' identities in 'special' groups. The study though explains that children's identities are socially constructed, multiple, illusory and not permanent.

Ethics are about what is 'right' or 'wrong' based on certain principles, standards or conducts (Singer 2000:2-12). Ethical issues refer to concerns that arise when 'conducts' of humanitarian professionals render some aspects of their work questionable. In the study, ethical issues are revealed when the professionals represent children in ways that cause 'exaggerated', 'sensationalized', and 'manipulated' stereotypical identities of children.

A child in the context of this study refers to any person who is 18 years and below UNICEF (2004:12). According to this United Nations internationally recognized legalistic definition, one is a child because of limited capacity to take care of him/herself

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or make important life decisions. Children require duty bearers to look after them. Such dependence of children on adult care givers can render them vulnerable when adults take actions or make decisions not in children's best interest. However, as shall be discussed further in chapter 3, the notion of childhood should not be limited to biological maturity as children can be defined differently based on social maturity, cultural context and globalization (Nsamenang & Lamb 1998:250-252; Karen 2009).

The above terms on representation, reality, identity, ethics and child have been briefly introduced to guide the reader's understanding of the research topic. These will later be discussed in detail in chapter 3 under the conceptual framework section of the study.

For now it is suffice to say this study is a sociological exposition of ethical issues that arise from how children's identities are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse. In particular the study explains from an interpretive sociological perspective the role that humanitarian professionals play as 'motivated' social agents in the constructions of identities of children. The professionals operate in humanitarian institutions that exist within socio-cultural contexts which influence how a discourse that defines children's identities is shaped. Identities of children are constructed using narrative and photographic information from children. Narrative and photographic information that communicates identities of children is in the first instance collected for several reasons by humanitarian professionals. The reasons for collecting children's narrative and photographic information are various. They include; the need to design appropriate social programs for children, learning, engaging in child

rights advocacy, awareness raising, interventions monitoring and evaluations and profiling of children's issues (Scheink 2006:2). The professionals face the sorts of ethical issues revealed in this study when they design, implement, monitor and communicate different issues about children in humanitarian programs.

Humanitarian professionals are people who work in charitable organizations that are non-governmental or 'voluntary' in nature. They also work for international agencies like the United Nations and others of religious orientation. A range of humanitarian or charity services for children provided by such humanitarian agencies include; educational support, relief from disasters, building homes, agricultural support, income generation activities, food aid, health delivery, psychosocial support and many others (UNICEF 2007:10). Humanitarian professionals from such organizations use a language 'common' among them which is referred to in this study as humanitarian discourse. Such a 'common' language is contained in reports, magazines, conference papers and presentations, television and radio programs, newspapers, articles, journals and other sources. The term humanitarian discourse is thus used to refer to forms of children's representations including ways of communicating about children's identities among humanitarian professionals within the above literatures. This discourse and its communication produce socially located meanings and constructed 'realities' based on children's experiences that are open to diverse human interpretations. Constructions of children's realities by humanitarian professionals then result in portrayals of stereotypical identities of children. Such identities may at surface value appear 'real' or 'natural' when

in reality they can be described as illusory contestable social constructs. The researcher describes those social constructs as possible 'manipulated' representations of children.

In the process of using narratives and photographs to represent children, some ethical issues arise. These ethical issues include; possible inaccuracies of children's images in narratives and photographs, lack of sensitivity in methods used to collect narratives and photographs of children, prejudicial uses of narratives and photographs of children, possibilities of exaggerating children's identities and lack of informed consent from children to have their information used for certain purposes. These ethical issues that arise as humanitarian professionals engage in the practice of representing children in narratives and photographs were revealed and are explained in this study. Practical questions emerging from the above ethical issues are also posed and subjected to analysis in the study. Why despite the presence of the above ethical issues do humanitarian professionals continue representing children in ways that can be described as ethically questionable? What motivates humanitarian professionals to keep representing children in ethically questionable ways? Could it be that humanitarian professionals choose to overlook the ethical issues for the sake of protecting their humanitarian practice? These questions lead to the study's research question stated under section 1.4 below.

In the next and subsequent sections of this chapter, the researcher poses the research question, presents study assumptions, introduces the theoretical framework of the study, briefly describes the study methodology in relation to the theoretical framework and gives a short chapter outline of the entire thesis in relation to the study objectives.

1.4 Study/research question

The research question is; how are identities of children constructed using narratives and photographs in humanitarian discourse?

This question reflects a concern on the part of the researcher to reveal how representations of realities that emanate from children's experiences give rise to some ethical issues that can be explained from a certain sociological theoretical position. That is why the researcher describes his study in the thesis title as a 'sociological exposition'. Although the research question is concerned with how children's identities are constructed in narratives and photographs, it equally called for the researcher to also look into why such identities of children are constructed by humanitarian professionals in the first instance. To answer this question, the researcher had to analyze processes that are involved in the social constructions and portrayals of children's identities by starting from specific study assumptions. These study assumptions that appear on section 1.5 below are influenced by arguments from phenomenological sociology as highlighted under section 1.6 which introduces the sociological theoretical framework for this study.

1.5 Study assumptions

The researcher's assumptions linked to the above research question are that; the humanitarian discourse that represents children is a socially constructed one. This discourse portrays identities of children in particular ways. Such identities may not be 'accurate' nor 'natural' representations of children. Instead children's identities are socially constructed realities. This construction of children's identities reflects the active

role of humanitarian professionals as social engineers. These social engineers are active agents who consciously work for the advancement of a specific humanitarian agenda. Advancement of this agenda is achieved when humanitarian professionals intentionally construct 'preferred' identities of children. Construction of preferred identities of children is part of a strategy to justify the existence of the humanitarian agenda. The agenda is justified and promoted when identities of children paint pictures of 'desperate' children with a potential to induce pity, fear or panic in society. Children represented as being in 'desperate' need of humanitarian interventions normally come from underprivileged communities. Such communities present humanitarian situations characterized by the existence of people or families with no or limited capacities to take care of their 'desperate' children. As such, external humanitarian support is called for as a gesture of 'hope' towards 'desperate' children. This is how the humanitarian agenda gets 'justified' and humanitarian work rendered an 'urgent' or necessary venture among humanitarian professionals. These are the researcher's declared assumptions in this study.

To consolidate the above assumptions in relation to this study's research question, the following related question is also posed. Is it not possible that humanitarian professionals manipulate children's experiences in narratives and photographs to portray identities of children that advance a questionable humanitarian reality? The researcher commences an attempt to grapple with the study question and its related assumptions with explanations from an interpretative sociological theory. This phenomenological sociological theory to be introduced under section 1.6 below explains how individual motives or intentions influence people's social actions in society. The researcher states the position that it is out

of such influence from phenomenological sociology that the study's research question is deemed theoretically grounded. The study question is thus a sociologically grounded one because it is situated within a sociological theoretical framework explained below.

1.6 Study's sociological theoretical framework

The researcher confronts the study's research question or problem using a sociological theoretical framework that explains human actions based on motives and intentions. This sociological theory is known as phenomenology. It is for this reason that this study becomes one of an interpretative orientation as it is situated within phenomenological sociology. The sociological theory on phenomenology focuses on the roles individuals play as active agents involved in intentional constructions of ideas, interpretations of social realities and assigning of meanings to things (Schutz 1967:75). Phenomenology states that the distinction between surface appearances and realities is a product of the conscious mind (Husserl 1956:370; Natanson 1970:70-5). Consciousness is seen as the product of inter-subjective experiences communicated between individual actors. This means that sociologists should suspend belief in the existence of an objective world and desist from making judgments about whether such a world exists or not. Worlds are social constructs that are constructed and exist first in people' heads (Gergen 2003:12; Sibeon 2004:2). This way of explaining how people's intentional motives influence how people socially construct realities can be termed social constructivism.

According to phenomenology, there are no natural hard social facts that exist in the social world contrary to how some structural functionalists would argue. What exist are only

varied interpretations of the social that are inter-subjectively constructed and communicated among people. As argued by Sibeon (2004:7) people as conscious social agents know the sort of children's worlds they intent to create. The social worlds of children are constructed by individual actors with free will and who behave in spontaneous ways. People's behaviors cannot be conclusively predicted using an objective 'scientific model'. A sociological study such as this one that is informed by phenomenological assumptions needs to account for people's conscious motives or intentions as they engage in seemingly 'natural' social actions. This calls for the researcher to explain active roles of individuals in social constructions of attributes such as children's identities in humanitarian discourse. Identities of children are neither permanent nor given, do not emerge accidentally nor are they natural. Rather phenomenologically, children's identities are constructed by professionals who are motivated by what they intent to achieve. This is the researcher's view.

In specific reference to this study, assumptions of phenomenological sociology are applied to explain ways in which children's identities can be described as products of humanitarian professionals' intentional constructions and interpretations. Such a phenomenological position also influenced qualitative methods of research adopted by the researcher as chapter 2 will show. In his attempt to address the research question, the researcher also faced the additional following questions that were equally informed by assumptions from phenomenological sociology. How do humanitarian professionals construct and share perceptions on children's identities? In what ways are such perceptions shared and communicated in humanitarian discourse? How do such

perceptions advance a certain reality about identities of children? In what ways are identities of children represented?

While phenomenology constitutes the main theoretical framework of this study, the researcher is also aware that there is a relationship between individual/agency and structure in influencing how reality is socially constructed. This is because while individual actions are driven by motives and intentions, they exist within institutional frameworks that can determine how motives and intentions can be acted. Such an argument is supported by some writings of functionalist sociologists like Parsons (1951:5-10) & Durkheim (1964:1-30). These sociologists advance a view that says social institutions define the nature and structure of reality in society. The above view can be linked to ideas contained in some works of sociologists of knowledge such as Mannheim (1929) & Luckman (1996). These sociologists generally argue that reality is not necessarily a result of individual construction but rather a product of socio-cultural processes. These processes are in turn influenced by institutional and systematic arrangements that exist around the individual. As individuals exist within institutions, their actions alone cannot fully explain how reality is constructed and perceived. This view also makes sociology of knowledge an important perspective in the context of this study.

Therefore based on both phenomenological and sociology of knowledge views, it is reasonable to argue that reality construction is neither exclusively determined by agency nor structure. This further implies that social reality is neither limited to individuals'

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motives nor wishes but is a result of the interplay between individual motives and social structures. While phenomenology is the main theoretical framework of this study, the researcher acknowledges this relationship between agency and structure in the social construction of reality. He does so by demonstrating how individuals construct a humanitarian discourse while at the same time such a discourse is located within particular socio-cultural contexts. Those contexts within which the discourse is located also determine how individuals perceive realities of children within humanitarian discourse.

The researcher also refers to some assumptions of a theory on communication known as semiotics to compliment and critique phenomenology. Semiotics posits that reality is symbolically constructed and communicated. Other than just look at how people consciously construct identities of children in narratives and photographs for instance, semiotics advances an alternative view to phenomenology. Semiotics advocates that sociologists should go deeper to explicate symbolic constructions and communications of social realities. Such assumptions of semiotics are contained in the works of Barthes (1967:1-30) & Deely (2005:3-20). Semiotic and also sociology of knowledge approaches are later discussed in detail both as counter and complimentary theories to assumptions of phenomenological sociology in chapter 3. Chapter 3 will discuss in detail the theoretical background and conceptual framework within which this study is situated. At this stage the researcher merely wanted to introduce main assumptions of phenomenological sociology that provide a theoretical framework for this study. Differences between phenomenology, sociology of knowledge and semiotics in the explanations of reality

construction have also been stated as part of the study's theoretical framework. This has been done in order to link theoretical assumptions to the study question, study assumptions and qualitative research methods of this study. The next section outlines the study's objectives.

1.7 Study objectives

This study's objectives that arose from the research question presented under section 1.4 and were pursued by the researcher in his attempt to unpack the research problem seek to:

1. Evaluate the theory on phenomenology and apply it to analyze how children's identities are constructed and represented in humanitarian discourse.
2. Discuss humanitarian discourse and forms of children's narratives.
3. Examine photographic depictions of children's identities in humanitarian discourse.
4. Find out humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs.
5. Establish why humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs of children including uses of such narratives and photographs.
6. Expose some ethical issues that arise from collections and uses of children's narratives and photographs in humanitarian works.
7. Propose a knowledge or academic contribution of this research in the context of phenomenological sociological theory.

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A qualitative research methodology was adopted by the researcher to address the above outlined study objectives. The study methodology is briefly introduced below although it is later discussed at length in chapter 3 on methodology.

1.8 Study methodology

A qualitative methodology was adopted in pursuit of this study's objectives because of such a methodology's potential that allows for explorative ethnographic descriptions and interpretations of the subject matter on representation. It is the positioning of this research within an epistemological tradition of phenomenological sociology that caused the researcher to adopt qualitative methods of inquiry. Phenomenological sociology encourages researchers to engage in the interpretations of human actions, thoughts, texts and other cultural sources of data (Smith 1967:164; Sibeon 2004). For this reason, the researcher undertook ethnographic explorations and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs as sources of qualitative data. As Yates (2004:135) would argue, such a methodology is one that makes it possible for the researcher to engage in in-depth understanding and explanations of representation as a social phenomenon. The methodology also enables systematic ethnographic analysis of various sources of data.

To address study objectives stated under 1.7 above, reviews of secondary sources and qualitative interviews with humanitarian professionals were conducted. Secondary sources of information included; books, journal articles, magazines, newspaper clips and articles, radio and television programs, newsletters, photographs of children, children's written narratives, conference presentations and papers and website sources.

Humanitarian professionals interviewed included humanitarian program managers and program communicators. These were selected because they are a special group of humanitarian professionals who use and shape the sort of humanitarian discourse that was under study. It is also these professionals who normally collect information on children in forms of narratives and photographs for program designs, child rights advocacy activities and to facilitate community child focused development projects. By applying known sociological theoretical concepts to analyze a contemporary field of humanitarian programming, the researcher moved from mere academic sociological theorizing to interrogating a practical programming practice.

Therefore, the researcher hopes this study will be of significant contribution in terms of 'new' knowledge in addition to it also being one of practical use for child focused humanitarian programmers. It is out of such an attempt to bridge the gap between the academic and practical objectives that the study's purpose or rationale is articulated. The full study methodology, its limitations and ethical concerns are described in detail in chapter 2.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has; defined the research question, declared the researcher's assumptions, introduced assumptions of the theoretical framework on phenomenology, situated study assumptions within this theory, stated specific study objectives, briefly described the study methodology by linking it to the theoretical framework and mentioned the rationale of the study. The chapter now concludes by giving an outline of subsequent chapters for

the entire thesis. All thesis chapters are structured and sequenced in relation to the specific study objectives stated earlier in this chapter under section 1.7.

Chapter 2 discusses the qualitative methodology adopted to address the research question and study objectives. Chapter 3 presents and discusses the theoretical background and conceptual framework of the study within which the research question is situated. It is in chapter 3 that objective 1 of the study is addressed. Objective 1 sought to evaluate the theory on phenomenology and apply it to analyze how identities of children are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs. Chapter 4 addresses objective 2 of the study which aimed to discuss humanitarian discourse and various forms of children's narratives. In chapter 5 the researcher addresses objective 3 which aimed to examine photographic depictions of children's identities in humanitarian discourse. Chapter 6 deals with objectives 4, 5 and 6 of the study. Objective 4 intended to find out humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs. Objective 5 sought to establish why humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs of children including uses of the narratives and photographs in humanitarian works. Objective 6 aimed to expose some ethical issues that arise from collections and uses of children's narratives and photographs. Chapter 7 concludes by addressing objectives 7of the study. Objective 7 sought to propose an academic or knowledge contribution of this study in the context of a theory on phenomenological sociology. The researcher now moves on to describe the methodology of the study in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents qualitative methods of data collection and analysis adopted in an attempt to meet objectives of this study outlined in the previous chapter. It is the positioning of this research within an epistemological tradition of phenomenological sociology that caused the researcher to adopt qualitative methods of inquiry. Phenomenological sociology influenced the researcher to interrogate and interpret narratives and photographs of children as cultural sources of data. In the chapter, the researcher describes the linkages between the research problem, theoretical assumptions, study objectives and the selected study methodology. It is important to demonstrate such linkage as it seeks to make a case regarding the appropriateness of methods adopted in the study. In addition, the researcher discusses some strengths and limitations that arise from the qualitative sociological approach adopted for this study. Ways of managing limitations that arise from this methodology are also discussed. Ethical issues that arose from the process of carrying out the study are highlighted to show how the researcher managed some limitations of the study methodology. The qualitative methodological framework is discussed below.

2.2 Qualitative methodological framework

The methodological framework adopted for this study is a qualitative one. This was mainly shaped by assumptions from the sociological theory on phenomenology discussed in detail in chapter 3 on theory and concepts. Qualitative research methods were applicable to this study which sought to interrogate and interpret the practice of

representing children in humanitarian discourse. A qualitative methodological framework was adopted in pursuit of this study's objectives because of such a methodology's potential. The potential is that it enabled the researcher to do explorative ethnographic descriptions and interpretations of the subject matter on representation. Therefore a qualitative methodology was adopted as it allowed for discovery, in-depth understanding, detailed ethnographic descriptions, theoretical induction, explorative interpretation and thematic data analysis.

The qualitative methodology was used to; review the theoretical framework of this study, review and evaluate data collected from secondary and primary sources and analyze and interpret results of the study. Qualitative methods applied for this study consists of desk review of secondary sources, content analysis of texts and open ended questionnaires. A systematic qualitative analysis of children's narratives and photographs was also done through content analysis of various sources. The different tools that were used for data collection appear in the appendix section at the end of this thesis.

Therefore a qualitative methodology of social inquiry was adopted due to the nature of the subject under discussion. Understanding the subject of representation requires use of sociological imagination in the interpretations of language, cultural texts and symbols. Children's narratives and photographs are 'artefacts' of cultural representation that were studied from such an interpretative perspective. Narratives and photographs are not closed 'objects' so an open qualitative approach was meant to capture the richness of subjects' perspectives and interpretations of the different ways of representing children.

This required the researcher to come into face to face encounters with children's experiences in the form of written texts, spoken words and photographs. For this reason, a qualitative methodological framework was adopted as opposed to a quantitative methodological framework. A quantitative methodology would treat social phenomena as hard facts. As Yates (2003:5) & Smith (2003:6) state, a quantitative methodology further assumes that such facts can be measured using pure statistical methods just as in natural scientific subjects like physics and chemistry. To the contrary, qualitative research questions uses of quantitative methods to study social issues as if they were 'natural' ones. Qualitative research acknowledges that society is a complex open system that should not be studied using methods applicable to 'pure' or 'natural' sciences. Human actions are not entirely predictable while social behaviours are not the same as those of atoms or molecules that can be studied in closed environments such as scientific laboratories. That is why this research which focused on an open social issue of representation was grounded within a qualitative framework. This framework left room for the researcher's and the readers' own interpretations of the issues that arose from this sociological investigation. Qualitative research methods that were used in this study are outlined below.

2.3 Review of secondary sources and literature

Reviewed sources included; text books, journals, articles, newspaper and magazine articles, stories or narratives of children, written texts, phrases that explained children's photographs, relevant internet sites, television and radio clips and special reports on children's programs. This wide range of secondary sources was reviewed to provide the

background to the study as well as analyze various literatures on children's representations in humanitarian discourse. Some of the above sources can be described as 'popular' or non-academic although the researcher still reviewed them as he felt that they were important sources of data on the subject of this study.

In addition to the above sources, a review of other secondary academic sources enabled the researcher to situate the research subject within phenomenological theoretical assumptions. A secondary review of other theoretical assumptions and concepts related to phenomenology was also done as a way of giving both theoretical and conceptual depth to the study. These theoretical assumptions and concepts emerge from sociology of knowledge and semiotic approaches. A conceptual review of key terms that shaped this study was also done as part of the theoretical and literature review. The concepts were on representation, reality, identity children and ethics. These are discussed in detail in chapter 3 on theory and concepts. A combined secondary review of theories and key study concepts was thus meant to give the study its theoretical focus and specific conceptual clarity.

In relation to the theoretical and conceptual reviews, analysis of secondary literature and other sources of information like studies on children's narrative and photographic representations in humanitarian discourse were also carried out. This was done to; locate the study subject within existing literature, dialogue with other researchers in the subject area and identify some unresolved issues in the area of children's representation. It is some of those unresolved issues that this study attempts to address.

Apart from just situating the study within a broad theoretical, conceptual and literature framework, this review of secondary sources also enabled the researcher to evaluate key approaches that shaped the study. These approaches are on phenomenology, sociology of knowledge and semiotics. The evaluation was meant to establish how certain theoretical assumptions could be used to explicate the nature of relationships between representation, reality and social constructions of children's identities. The review of secondary sources was done to address study objectives 1, 2 and 3. Objective 1 sought to evaluate the theory on phenomenology and apply it to analyze how identities of children are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs. Objective 2 of the study aimed to discuss humanitarian discourse and various forms of children's narratives. Objective 3 intended to examine photographic depictions of children's identities in humanitarian discourse. Information from the theoretical and literature reviews is presented and discussed in detail in chapters 3, 4 and 5. A method of content analysis described below was the one used for reviewing secondary sources or literatures in this study.

2.4 Content analysis of texts and children's narratives

According to the Colorado State University's online writing Guide (2008);

"Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then make inferences about the messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of which these are a part. Texts can be defined broadly as books, book chapters, essays, interviews, discussions, newspaper headlines and articles, historical documents, speeches, conversations, advertising, theater, informal conversation, or really any occurrence of communicative language".
http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/content/pop2a.cfm (accessed on 12 August 2008).

In this study, the researcher was informed by the above understanding of content analysis as he reviewed secondary texts. He approached children's narratives and photographs found in various sources as forms of text or 'communicative language'. A content analysis of children's texts was done to classify issues and conceptual terms using a semiotic classification approach. This classification approach identified common 'terms' or words used to represent or describe children in different sources. These terms are referred to as 'descriptors' of children in this study. The classification system of content analysis broke down statements or phrases that describe children into words or key terms. The words or terms were then analysed to come up with ways in which children are described in humanitarian discourse. This method is based on an assumption of phenomenological inquiry that says texts or human sayings are ways that socially construct and reconstruct meanings (Schutz 1967). As supported by Yates (2004:157) such phenomenological assumption informs methods of inquiry that focus on the role of individual consciousness and intentions in the social constructions and interpretations of social realities. Tools used for this systematic content analysis are is presented as annex 1 and 2 in the appendix section.

Other than just examine children's narratives and identify common terms or descriptors of children's identities, the content analysis method was also applied to review and analyse texts that are used to describe children in photographs. This was meant to establish how perceptions of realities about children are interpreted and shared among humanitarian professionals. Such content analysis of children's texts was also done together with photographic analysis using a photographic analysis tool adapted from

Yotman (1984:2)'s work on photographic analysis. The photographic analysis tool is given as annex 3 under appendix section. This tool informed by Yotman's work was initially developed to interrogate visual images within semiotics of cinema. The tool was adapted for this study as it allowed the researcher to analyse children's photographs so as to come up with the sorts of messages communicated by such photographs of children at 4 different levels. These levels are literal, aesthetic, textual and mythical depictions. *Literal level depiction* refers to what the photograph physically says or portrays as seen and interpreted by the reader. *Aesthetic level depiction* is concerned with the types of feelings that the photograph evokes in the reader. *Textual level depiction* has to do with the linkages between the photograph, texts and words that accompany it. Texts aid one in the process of coming up with the 'deeper' meanings of the photograph. *Mythical level depiction* is concerned with how the meanings of a photograph are constructed in relation to existing prejudices or stereotypes of children. The above levels of depiction are further discussed in detail in chapter 5 which deals with levels of photographic depictions in humanitarian discourse.

In this study, photographs were reviewed and analyzed together with children's narratives using the levels of photographic depiction outlined above. The analysis was done to find out what and how photographs of children communicate. Such photographs appeared in texts and narratives contained in various humanitarian literatures. Review and analysis of information also involved systematic categorization of conceptual terms that were used by the researcher for data analysis. The data analysis classified perceptions and interpretations of terms used to describe and represent children in narratives and

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photographs by humanitarian professionals. The next section describes an additional photographic analysis tool used to collect primary data from humanitarian professionals.

2.5 Photograph analysis tools

The photographic analysis tool was informed by the method of interrogating an image that has been described under section 2.4 above. This photographic analysis tool appears as annex 5 in the appendix section. The tool was applied in this study to find out how program managers and communicators perceive and interpret children's photographs or images. The researcher did this by asking the following questions; what is the photograph communicating to you, how do children in the photographs look, what do the photographs say about children and how do the photographs make you feel? The researcher then analyzed the subjects' responses in relation to the different levels of interrogating or analyzing photographic images described previously under section 2.4 on content analysis. These levels of photographic analysis are literal, aesthetic, textual and mythical levels depictions.

To achieve this, the researcher undertook photographic analysis to explore how the different humanitarian program professionals experience and give meanings to children's photographic representations. This method of inquiry was shaped by the semiotic theoretical assumption that says symbols like children's photographs are powerful tools of representation. As found in Barthes (1967)'s writings, to know what symbols represent, one has to interrogate them not just at the surface level but at a deeper level of communication. Semiotic assumptions are discussed in detail in chapter 3 on theory.

Using this Photographic Analysis tool, the researcher also collected information that he used in an attempt to interpret the nature of the relationship between representation and reality.

Therefore, the review and analysis of children's photographs involved seeking different program managers and communicators' perceptions regarding; what they considered to be key messages from children' photographs, the ways children's identities are portrayed in photographs, perceived forms of children's representations and the aesthetic impacts that children's photographs have on humanitarian program managers and communicators. This tool is also linked to open ended questionnaires described under section 2.6 below.

2.6 Open ended questionnaires

Under this section, two forms of open questionnaires were administered on program managers and communicators. These are questionnaire 2.6.1 and questionnaire 2.6.2. Open ended questionnaire 2.6.1 was applied to capture program managers and communicators' perspectives and interpretations of terms or descriptors of children in narratives. Open ended questionnaire 2.6.2 was used to find out why program managers and communicators collect narratives and photographs of children including ethical issued that arise. These two forms of the open ended questionnaire described in turn below were used to collect information meant to addresses objectives 4, 5 and 6 of the study. Objective 4 intended to find out humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs. Objective 5 sought to establish why humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs of children including

uses of such narratives and photographs in humanitarian works. Objective 6 aimed to expose some ethical issues that arise from collections and uses of children's photographs. These objectives relate to a key assumption that influenced the study as was stated by the researcher in chapter 1. The assumption is that humanitarian professionals are active agents with specific motives. Such motives drive the professionals to selectively collect certain information about children. The information enables professionals to consciously construct certain identities of children. Constructed identities of children then tend to be used in support of a specific child focused humanitarian agenda. Such an agenda can portray children as objects of charity who are in endless need of humanitarian support. Therefore views on why humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs including their perceptions about how children are described in certain terms are at the centre of this study. This made the following two forms of open ended questionnaires important in the collection of information that sought to address the research question. The research question is; how are children's identities constructed in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse?

2.6.1 Open ended questionnaire 1

This first form of the open ended questionnaire presented 'common' terms or descriptors of children to program managers and communicators. It was used to find out such professionals' perceptions and interpretations of the presented terms. Those 'common' terms that were identified from children's narratives and texts in the literature review process are discussed to detail in chapters 4 and 5. Primarily the purpose of using this

questionnaire was to find out different perspectives of program managers and communicators regarding uses of the terms in their daily work.

Program managers and communicators were asked what they understood by the terms used to describe children in various humanitarian literatures. These terms or descriptors of children from literature sources are; 'African children', 'vulnerable children' and 'children of 'AIDS'. Responses from different humanitarian program managers and communicators were analyzed in relation to how the same terms were defined and used to describe children in reviewed humanitarian literatures. The researcher did a further analysis of the implications of the existence of similar or different perceptions and interpretations of those terms.

This form of analysis was guided by a phenomenological principle that posits that interpretations of the social are subject to conscious individual actions. According to this assumption, individuals play active roles in the social constructions and interpretations of meanings (Sibeon 2007:7). By extension such an assumption implies that those terms that described children in various literatures could be viewed as being subject to individual intentions, constructions and interpretations. This phenomenological assumption is discussed in detail in chapter 3 on theory and concepts. Through application of this tool, the researcher's also attempted to explicate the nature of the relationship between representation and reality which is also a key concern of this thesis. This open ended questionnaire appears as annex 4 in the appendix section.

2.6.2 Open ended questionnaire 2

This second form of the open questionnaire was used to interview program managers and communicators who collect and use narratives and photographs of children as part of their humanitarian work. Humanitarian program managers and communicators were particularly an important group of respondents in the context of this study. This is because the nature of their roles involves communicating with external audiences on matters to do with children's problems and programs. Views from program managers and communicators were also analyzed together with definitions of common terms and descriptors of children. Those terms emerged from secondary literature reviews and content analysis of children's narratives and photographs as discussions in chapters 4 and 5 will illustrate.

This tool collected information on; why managers and communicators collect narratives and photographs of children, which sort of children such information is collected from, how the information is collected, who the intended audiences for this information are and how information from children is used by program managers and communicators. The purpose of collecting such information was to compare the way children's information is used in programming contexts with how uses of such information is described in literature. Information collected using this tool was also for purposes of establishing whether or not humanitarian professionals' motives for using children's narratives and photographs are 'obvious' or 'hidden'. The questions on why narratives are collected, who the intended audiences for them are and how narratives and photographs are used

guided an analysis that unpacked ways in which identities of children are constructed. This tool appears in the appendix section as annex 6.

2.7 Sampling and research sites

The process of sampling program managers and communicators as respondents was a purposive and selective one that was based on convenience and the availability of such respondents to the researcher. Research sites were those organizations where respondents were working. Some of the respondents were interviewed during regional meetings and workshops attended by the researcher as part of his work. As the researcher works for an international humanitarian organization with an Africa wide presence, it became convenient for him to identify and select respondents during his regional program technical support visits. For this reason it became possible for the researcher to interview respondents from organizations found in West, East and Southern Africa. Countries from which respondents were conveniently selected included; Ghana, Sierra Leon, Liberia, Mali, Chad, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, South Africa and Uganda. All of the above countries fall under the direct program technical support function of the researcher as part of his job. A total of 127 respondents were interviewed from the above countries combined. Given the fact that the interviews aimed for in-depth ethnographic data, the number of participants were of a reasonable size that was meant to compliment data that was also collected from other secondary sources as described before.

It should however be noted that respondents from the above countries were not selected for comparison reasons as this was not meant to be a comparative study. Instead it was

because the researcher chose a research topic that squarely falls within his direct line of work that it became convenient and easy to identify respondents from those countries. The researcher could interview and even follow up some respondents where necessary as he did his routine program and technical support visits. This minimised the amount of time spent and costs incurred in collecting data. The researcher was only after a certain quality of respondents with a conceptual level of understanding that was appropriate for his study issue. Therefore entry or access to research sites and respondents was made easy by the researcher's prior contacts with most of the organizations were the respondents were working during the time of the study. Sites identification and respondent sampling was thus purposive and convenient. However names of organizations have been withheld to protect the respondents. It is the researcher's position that a lot of issues revealed in this study are sensitive while views of respondents do not reflect official positions of their organizations.

The diverse nationalities of respondents and the extensive humanitarian programming experiences of such respondents gave richness to the data. It is for this reason that the researcher feels the data base was reasonably 'broad' to inform this sociological study. Those respondents of diverse nationalities who were interviewed were working as program managers and communicators for the researcher's organization and also external ones. The interviewing of respondents from outside the researcher's organization was meant to minimize some personal biases of the researcher. It also enabled the researcher to collect experiences of professionals from other organizations. Respondents from other organizations were identified through regional networks that the researcher's

organization is part of. These regional networks include the African Civil Society Platform for Social Protection, the Regional Inter-Agency Taskforce on AIDS and the Africa Child Protection Network. These networks are made up of organizations involved in child focused humanitarian work. Professionals in these networks get to meet on a regular basis to discuss 'common' issues of interest. It was also during such meetings that the researcher seized opportunities to interview some of the professionals. Visits to individual organizations were also conducted.

It should be noted that the identification of respondents both within and outside the researcher's organization was targeted in that it focused only on selected program managers and program communicators. These were deemed appropriate respondents because they are the ones who play a critical part in the development and use of the humanitarian discourse under study. These professionals are the technocrats who are involved in program designs, implementation of communication strategies, development of marketing strategies and monitoring and evaluations of humanitarian programs. This was important as findings of this research were also meant to inform development of some ethical guidelines for improving humanitarian programming practice. It was thus appropriate for the researcher to interview some of those professionals with a direct role in designs, implementations and evaluations of humanitarian programs. The respondents were either interviewed directly or completed the open ended questionnaires as self administered before returning them to the researcher via e-mail.

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2.8 Data analysis and interpretation

Data was analyzed and interpreted using the phenomenological and semiotic theoretical framework. In particular the phenomenological reductionism approach was used to interpret perceptions of respondents. Phenomenological reductionism is a technical term that describes a method of inquiry which aims to understand social issues by coming into direct contact with people's words and experiences (Luckman 1978). When analyzing data, the researcher reflected on the data by suspending his everyday attitudes and letting the data speak for itself as it was given by the people or as contained in various texts.

The analysis of data or responses from humanitarian professionals was done using a qualitative data analysis package known as MXQ Data (www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=**MXQ).** This package organized qualitative data into specific themes or categories. Data was classified in the form of key words and phrases from respondents. The classification was based on the types of questions asked by the researcher. Each time additional data was entered, it got classified under the relevant thematic categories. This made it much easier for the researcher to organize and handle data before he analyzed it. After categorized data was entered into the computer, the researcher generated specific citations under the various themes and categories that informed the process of report writing. Direct citations from respondents were generated based on a systematic categorization of responses done by using this computer package. By using this package, the researcher hoped that data that he collected got analyzed and synthesised in a way that allowed for easier interpretations of such qualitative data.

Data collected directly from humanitarian professionals was interpreted around the following broad thematic questions; what do you understand by the term vulnerable children, what do you understand by the term children of AIDS, what do you understand by the term African children, how do children in the photographs look, what do the photographs communicate or say to you how do the photographs make you feel about the children, why do you collect narratives and photographs of children, what media do you use to communicate and what ethical issues arise? The above questions are the ones around which data was categorized, analyzed and presented in chapter 6.

Therefore objective 7 was addressed after data analysis, interpretation of findings and the processes of thinking through the data and writing by the researcher. Objective 7 sought to propose an academic or knowledge contribution of this study in the context of a theory on phenomenological sociology. Objective 7 is addressed in chapters 6 and 7 of the thesis respectively. Final implications of this research academically or knowledge wise are given in chapter 7. These were based on the reviewed secondary information, primary data, data analysis, data interpretation and an iterative write up process of the entire thesis by the researcher.

Before concluding this chapter, it is important that the researcher briefly discusses notable strengths and limitations of the adopted qualitative methodology. He will also state ways he adopted to manage some research limitations including ethical issues that arose from conducting this study. This is important to do as any form of sociological enquiry has its own strengths and limitations that the researcher should be aware of.

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2.9 Strengths of qualitative research methodology

A strength of this research is its adoption of a combination of qualitative research methods. This was done to get a deeper understanding of the subject of representation in humanitarian discourse. Selection of these methods was guided by a philosophical position of qualitative research that says people view, imagine and interpret social worlds differently and they constitute and are also constituted by the worlds they live in (Holstein & Gubrium 1994:1-20). Various qualitative methods were useful for finding out whether or not different perceptions of the same subject of children's representation exist. By using data from different secondary and primary sources, the researcher sought to widely interrogate and interpret data in order to address all study objectives outlined in chapter 1. Use of various qualitative methods also enabled triangulation and cross checking of data. This was important in the process of having wide data for this research. However some limitations or weaknesses of qualitative research exist as presented under section 2.10 below.

2.10 Limitations of qualitative research methodology

Some limitations or weaknesses of the adopted research approach exist. Qualitative methods in this research largely dealt with subjective views of respondents which are difficult to interpret. There is a challenge in generalizing results generated from such methods. Application of such qualitative methods gave rise to different meanings about the social issue in question. This is because representation means many different things to different people depending on who is involved in the interpretations of the social practice. Detachment of the researcher from the issues under investigation was also a challenge.

This was the case because personal experiences and orientations could potentially influence how the researcher viewed and made sense of the research issue. The classifications and interpretations of qualitative data using the content analysis methodology as informed by phenomenological theoretical assumptions was a challenging process. This was because the researcher at times got 'lost' in an attempt to grapple with dense data from many secondary and primary sources of information described earlier in this chapter. However, every form of sociological research is bound to have its limitations. Therefore the concern should be about how the researcher managed limitations so that results of the research could not be compromised. The next section shows how this was possible in the context of this research.

2.11 Managing research limitations

To manage the above limitations, the researcher had to stay at the 'margins' of the respondents' worlds. This required the researcher to learn by 'encountering' and by putting his personal prejudices aside. The researcher had to let the people 'speak' for themselves in the form of words, texts, photographs and narratives. The researcher had to present people's views first as they were spoken by them before doing any further analysis or personal interpretations of those views. For this reason, various sources of information were reviewed and people interviewed so that as much data as possible was available to the researcher for triangulation purposes. The researcher also attempted to manage biases that would arise from doing interviews with program managers and communicators from his own organization alone. This was done by also interviewing

other respondents from several external organizations in various countries across Africa. However, some ethical issues arose during the research process as described below.

2.12 Emerging ethical issues

Some of the encountered ethical issues included; the challenge of gaining access to respondents' worlds, getting respondents' informed consent to be part of the research, managing the sensitivity of using narratives and photographs of children as illustrations for this study, getting consent from organizations to use and refer to their documents and reports on child programming, using photographs and narratives of children who were unwell or HIV positive and applying the researcher's personal discretion to the interpretations of data from respondents. 'Adequate' representations of information collected using qualitative methods also posed ethical challenges given the complex nature of the subject on representation. Personal judgement of the researcher could potentially influence data interpretations as interpretation can be influenced by one's views.

However, the researcher attempted to manage these ethical issues by; getting consent from all respondents, treating all responses as confidential, sticking to existing guidelines and frameworks on the collection of data from children and vulnerable people and limiting intrusion into people's lives or documents when they felt threatened by such a move. The researcher did not use his own words to replace what respondents said in interviews or texts. When this happened, it was clearly stated that the views represented were those of the researcher and not of the respondents. In several instances, respondents'

views, ideas and comments had to be cited in direct verbatim to reflect that they were words from the respondents.

For reasons stated above, the researcher has confidence in the value of the research. This is so not withstanding the fact that any form of sociological study can be described as being 'limited' and prone to some form of falsification from other sociological angles. In any case, it is one of the major positions of this research that representation is a way of socially constructing realities. This means that even this research constitutes a particular form of reality with a potential of being influenced by the researcher's own experience, background and even personal interests. Therefore no sociological methodology is 'right' or 'wrong' on its own standing. What is of importance is how a chosen methodology becomes appropriate to investigate an identified sociological issue. This means any form of methodology is useful as long as it is appropriately applied to the subject matter in question. Herein lays the beauty and power of sociological enquiry!

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the methodology and different tools used in the study in an attempt to address the study objectives outlined in chapter 1. It was necessary for the researcher to do this as a way of showing the appropriateness of study methods that he adopted to pursue the research problem and its specific objectives. To this end the chapter has shown how different qualitative methods of sociological enquiry were applied to suit the research issue under investigation. This research issue required the researcher's active interpretations and usage of sociological imagination over the social practice of

representing children's identities. Methodological limitations including some that are of ethical nature have also been discussed in the chapter. The researcher has also shown how the methodology of the study was influenced at an epistemological level by some assumptions of phenomenological sociology. This made phenomenology the main sociological theory used as a launch pad of the study. Assumptions of this theory are further discussed in detail in chapter 3 on theory and concepts.

The next chapter focuses on the theoretical background and conceptual framework of the study. Apart from phenomenology, other related approaches from semiotics and the sociology of knowledge are also discussed in relation to assumptions of phenomenology. Specifically, the next chapter seeks to address objective 1 of this study. Objective 1 aims to review the theoretical perspective on phenomenology and apply it to analyze how identities of children are constructed and represented in humanitarian discourse. This objective is also partly addressed later in chapters 4 and 5. Those two chapters jointly discuss humanitarian discourse, forms of children's narratives and levels of photographic depictions of children within humanitarian discourse. The next chapter will as part of the literature review, also introduce and discuss study concepts on children, representation, reality, identity, and ethics which form the conceptual framework of this study. These key study concepts together with the sociological theoretical assumptions to be jointly discussed in the next chapter focus or shape this study which is mainly of an interpretative sociological orientation.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher addressed objective 1 of the study. Objective 1 sought to evaluate the theory on phenomenology and apply it to analyze how identities of children are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs. Therefore this chapter reviews and evaluates the sociological theory on phenomenology. It also applies some assumptions of phenomenological sociology to analyze how identities of children are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs. By doing so the chapter constitutes the theoretical background of the study. The theoretical framework on phenomenology is chosen by the researcher because of its emphasis on the active role of the individual in the social construction of reality. Such a phenomenological approach is appropriate for an exploration of how representations of the social and interpretations of meanings are possible among human actors (Schutz 1967). As stated in chapter 1, this study seeks to expose or reveal how humanitarian professionals get involved in the social constructions and representations of children's identities.

In relation to the interpretative sociological theory on phenomenology that shapes this study, two other sociological approaches that are also relevant to the analysis and interpretation of the subject on representation are discussed. These approaches are on sociology of knowledge and semiology. These approaches are articulated in sociological writings of Manheim (1929); Luckman (1978) & Barthes (1957) among others. They are selected as they are relevant sociological approaches that explicate social processes

involved in the constructions of knowledge. Both approaches also deal with the communications of knowledge including how the representations of realities are possible. Sociology of knowledge and semiology are also used by the researcher as alternatives to phenomenological explanations of how the social constructions and representations of children's identities are achieved by humanitarian professionals. The chapter also reviews key terms that constitute the conceptual framework of this study. These concepts are on representation, reality, identity and ethics. The researcher used these concepts to situate and focus this study. It is both the theoretical background and the conceptual framework that structure this study. Both also influenced qualitative methods of sociological enquiry and interpretations adopted by the researcher in this study.

The theoretical background and conceptual framework covered in the chapter also provide a basis for the organization and analysis of data in the study. This researcher commenced his study from a position that sociological research is impossible without some form of theorizing and conceptual focus. Therefore it was important to situate this study within a relevant theoretical framework. It was also appropriate to clarify concepts that were used by the researcher to shape and evaluate the study issue. Doing so enabled the researcher to theoretically situate the study before he applied theoretical assumptions to evaluate the subject on children's representation in humanitarian discourse. Therefore the use of associated theoretical expositions and concepts together with an adoption of research methods that are informed by such theories was important. It was important because it sought to give this study a firm theoretical grounding and methodological rigor. That is why the discussion on phenomenology in this chapter is done in a way that

illustrates how the theory influenced this study at both the epistemological and methodological levels.

Therefore the theory on phenomenology was chosen as a main launch pad for this study. This was so because as Schutz (1932:16) suggests, phenomenology is an agency based and interpretative approach that is suitable for the explanations of human intentions behind social actions. This approach was suitable for such a study that explored how individuals are actively involved in the social constructions and representations of children's identities using narratives and photographs within contexts of humanitarian discourse. The next section discusses the theory on phenomenology in detail. Approaches on the sociology of knowledge and semiology will also be discussed in relation to phenomenology later in the chapter. The chapter will then conclude by discussing key conceptual terms that framed the study in relation to the theoretical background. These terms are on representation, reality, identity and ethics.

3.2 Phenomenology

According to Schutz (1967:75-100) phenomenology is a sociological theory that focuses on how intentions influence individual thoughts and actions. People are individual agents who play active and conscious roles in the creation of ideas, interpretations of social realities and assigning of meanings to things and social events. Phenomenology further states that the distinction between surface appearances and reality is a product of the conscious mind. Consciousness is in turn a product of inter-subjective experiences communicated between individual actors. This means that sociologists should suspend

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belief in the existence of an objective world. They should desist from making judgments about whether the external world does exist or not. Also according to phenomenology, there are no hard social facts that exist contrary to how structural functionalists like Parsons (1996) & Durkheim (1964) would argue. For phenomenologists, the world does not consist of social facts that are external to the individual as suggested by these two sociologists. Rather in terms of phenomenology what exist are only subjective constructions and interpretations of things and events as driven by people's intentions. As Weber (1949) describes, the social world is constructed by rational individual actors with free will. Such individuals have the capacity to behave in spontaneous ways. It is people's internal intentions and perceptions of possible benefits out of social situations that drive them to behave or engage in certain social actions.

If one takes the above positions further, it is possible to conclude that any sociological study that is phenomenological in nature should account for people's motives and intentions when explaining human actions. In specific reference to this study, children's identities are termed social constructs that reflect humanitarian professionals' conscious intentions and their preferred interpretations of children's worlds. When such interpretations are communicated, they constitute socially constructed realities that are shared as inter-subjective perceptions and representations of children among the professionals. It is reasonable to further assume that humanitarian professionals may be conscious of the sorts of children's identities they intend to construct and represent in narratives and photographs. Such intentions then influence the types of children's

narratives and photographs that are created. A question arising from such practice is; how ethically 'proper' are such conducts of humanitarian professionals?

The researcher makes the above statement in agreement with yet another assumption of phenomenological theory contained in works of Weber (1949); Schutz (1979) & Sibeon (2004:16). According to that assumption, social structures such as humanitarian institutions for instance need not be seen as constraining to individual actions. Rather institutions are enabling because they are creations borne out of conscious human actions. That is why in this study humanitarian professionals are regarded as active individuals who are involved in conscious constructions of identities of children. Based on the above phenomenological assumption there is a possibility that humanitarian professionals can consciously construct experiences of children in narratives and photographs. The professionals can also intentionally come up with interpretations of children's narratives and photographs that support portrayals of certain identities. Such interpretations may not necessarily be constrained by social institutions to which the professionals belong. Rather the institutions can be enabling environments in which the professionals can collectively exercise free will in defining reality.

It is further evident from writings of Weber (1949:10-20); Sibeon (2004:20) & Schutz (1967:75) that phenomenology gives prominence to the role of individuals as active agents involved in the constructions of ideas or social realities. Active agency involvement is associated with human creativity and social action. Application of this agency or actor oriented assumption gave rise to a particular implication for this study.

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The implication was that attempts to understand how the representations of children's identities take place had to start from a certain academic position. Such a position is one that acknowledged that nothing is permanently real in social terms. As well articulated by James (1952:641) a long time philosopher, reality is illusory, always in a state of flux, is not universal and remains subject to social contestations. This implies that people are agents who actively construct reality but within certain socio-cultural contexts.

The above point can also be read in relation to Berger's argument regarding the social construction of reality. Berger (1966:5-10) argues that it is prudent to treat any form of sociological analysis that is concerned with the social origins and communications of reality as a complex social enterprise. The social enterprise of constructing reality is deeply embedded in intricate socio-cultural, historical and economic contexts. Therefore, while this study started from a position that treated representations as constructs of individual human actions, it also acknowledged that individual constructions takes place within broader socio-cultural contexts. This alternative sociological view is partly informed by Giddens' ideas contained within a sociological theory on structuration. Giddens (1981:10-30) attempted within the structuration theory to strike a balance between agency and structural determinants of human actions. He posited that it is out of an inter-play between social contexts and the individuals' perceptions and interpretations of such contexts that reality is actually constructed. Individuals construct reality in situations of co-presence and social interactions within certain socio-cultural contexts.

Giddens further explains the role of the agent or individual in the constructions of reality in relation to what is termed the micro. The term micro is in the most part employed to denote how situations of human co-presence or face to face interactions result in the social constructions of reality. Use of the micro level as a starting point to explain reality is widely applied in some anthropological studies. This is because some anthropological studies tend to adopt this method of upward conflation when they do social analysis of how micro level issues influence broader issues (Yates 2004:5-10).

In view of the above arguments, the researcher would like to suggest that within humanitarian discourse, micro level inter-subjective constructions of children's identities contribute to the overall form or structure of humanitarian discourse. It is individual humanitarian professionals as social agents who determine how organizational frameworks that define the discourse on children's representation would look like. This is a theme at the center of this study which is of an interpretative sociological orientation. The study's orientation gives theoretical and methodological focus to the analysis of individuals' contributions in the social constructions of a discourse on children's representation. Such an interpretative sociological approach acknowledges the significance of adopting agency based or micro oriented 'bottom up' approaches when studying social issues such as the one under focus here.

The above point is in some ways linked to the symbolic interactionist tradition in sociology that is associated with writings of Mead (1967: 1-15). Just like phenomenology symbolic interactionism also largely emphasizes the role that interactions between

individuals play in achieving inter-subjective social realities. Individuals have the capacity to assign meanings to situations as well as modify existing meanings of things. New meanings tend to emerge from processes of human interactions which are negotiated experiences. This gives rise to methodological individualism that is presented under symbolic interactionism as a special method of social inquiry. This method is suitable for the investigation of textual meanings. In this study, the researcher explored textual meanings in narratives and photographs of children as social constructs. The researcher was interested in determining the nature of actor oriented involvements in the social constructions and interpretations of children's identities.

Perhaps a notable proposition of phenomenological theory whether read in isolation or in relation to the symbolic interactionist perspective is how phenomenology became a suitable theory to guide this study. This study interrogated relevant textual sources of information in pursuit of study objectives. Various texts became important sources of information in the study because as Derrida (1982) puts it;

"Texts and, by implication, society are open to multiple readings and any interpretation or reading is never finished or final but is and should be subject to endless challenges and re-interpretations" [Source: *Rethinking Social Theory* by Sibeon (2004:39)].

This statement illustrates what this investigation had to focus on as it explored how texts were used to represent social identities of children in humanitarian discourse. The study adopted a phenomenological approach to evaluate how texts contain multiple readings of children's identities subject to many possible interpretations. The above view from Derrida (1982) cited in Sibeon (2004:39) also supports the adoption of phenomenology as

an appropriate sociological theory for this study. This is because children's narratives and photographs were treated as social constructs open to multiple readings, interpretations and prone to challenging by different individuals as actors in humanitarian situations. The researcher addressed how people subjectively experience social phenomena before sharing their experiences at in inter-subjective level. This is what Hegel termed dialectical phenomenology Hegel (1807:801). Dialectical phenomenology is also related to what Hursserl (1956:370) referred to as transcendental phenomenology. Transcendental phenomenology makes the point that people's intuitive experiences should be a starting point for knowing how people experience their social worlds.

This phenomenological theoretical framework adopted by the researcher acknowledges the complexity of constructing ideas and processes of representing the social. It critiques the naturalist view that says the social world can be studied objectively using natural scientific methods. Such speculative thinking it critiques is typical of 'natural' or positivist research approaches that simplify the complexity of social reality (Smith 2003:164-9). The 'natural' or positivist approach to the study of social systems and structures is associated with the works of sociologists like Durkheim (1964:1-30) & Parsons (1951:5). These structural functionalists argue that social facts exist in the world. They go on to say it is possible for social scientists to predict social behaviour by establishing the causes and effects of such social behaviours. Contrary to this naturalist or positivist view, Schutz (1967) makes an alternative argument to the effect that human beings and the way they behave cannot be treated as objects that can be broken down and studied like atoms in physics. The social is more complex than is assumed by a naturalist

or positivist view of the world. Phenomenology encourages social encountering which should focus on how imagination, memories and interpretations influence reality constructions, knowledge creations and systems of representations. When researchers pursue knowledge, they have to suspend belief in the existence of an objective external world (Sibeon 2004; Smith 2003). Out of a process of social encountering humanitarian professionals possibly end up constructing 'stereotypical' identities of children in narratives and photographs as this study explores. However, functional sociologists like Durkheim (1951:2-15) & Parsons (1951:2-3) would defend their position by counter arguing that social structure still determines individual actions since society is greater than its individual parts.

Other than just applying assumptions discussed above to situate this study theoretically, the researcher also adopted a phenomenological framework because it appropriately informed the methodology that was selected for this study. As mentioned before, phenomenology provides a firm theoretical grounding as well as the methodological alignment for this study. The following section focuses on the methodological contributions of phenomenological theory to this study. Phenomenological theory gave a methodological alignment to this study at three levels or domains of enquiry. These domains of phenomenological enquiry include phenomenological orientations, sources of meaning, empirical and reflexive methods (www.phenomenologicalonlinelibrary accessed on 26/07/2007). The three domains and how they relate to this study's methodology are discussed in turn below.

The first domain on phenomenological orientation refers to the rich, complex and multidisciplinary academic history that frames phenomenological enquiry. This orientation places phenomenological inquiry within a historical and philosophical framework that encompasses philosophical, hermeneutical, linguistic, ethical and sociological disciplines. This richness in orientation makes phenomenological enquiry a deep and imaginative one. Given its rich orientation, phenomenology is well positioned to provide a methodological framework for investigations and interpretations of issues on representation in the study.

A second domain of phenomenological enquiry deals with sources of meanings. In terms of the domain on sources of meanings, phenomenological enquiry searches for a wide variety of sources of meaning about a social issue in question. Such sources of meanings include photographs, texts and people's sayings. It was a key concern of the phenomenological enquiry under this study to explore and interpret the meaning of words as given in several sources that contained narratives and photographs of children. It was out of interrogations of such sources of meanings that children's identities became recognizable to the researcher. That is why in this study, the researcher analysed various texts that contained narratives, statements and photographs of children. He did so as part of his attempt to understand how children's identities were constructed and represented within various sources of humanitarian discourse. This was also done to find out if identities of children are portrayed or communicated in similar ways within different sources of meaning. Sources of meaning are thus an important domain of phenomenological enquiry that influenced methods of this research.

The third domain of phenomenological inquiry is on uses of empirical and reflective methods to know about social worlds. Empirical methods explore various lived experiences of people. This can be in the form of stories, narratives and presentations of people's experiences. Empirical methods seek to capture people's subjective experiences in order to reflect on the meanings inherent in those experiences. Such an empirical approach is also termed reflexivity or reflection in phenomenological inquiry. The aim of phenomenological reflection is to deeply grasp the meanings of social things. Reflection takes people away from their pre-reflective lived experiences by getting people to imagine and explicate the deeper meanings of social events. Phenomenological refection involves, appropriating, clarifying and making explicit the meanings of things within defined contexts. Both empirical and reflexive concepts shaped this study which explored reflexive processes involved in the constructions of children's identities including the interpretations of those identities in humanitarian discourse.

Again according to the phenomenology on line library (www.phenomenologicalonlinelibrary accessed on 26/07/2007), reflection is part and parcel of the practice of phenomenological writing. Domains on phenomenological orientations, sources of meaning and uses of empirical and reflexive methods all should inform phenomenological writings. Phenomenological writings should be the final culminations of phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenological writing involves what is termed reductio and vocation in phenomenological inquiry. Reductio is a technical term that refers to attempts to direct a researcher's encounters with the social world. This is

done by suspending the researcher's pre-judgements and assumptions about the issue under study. It involved deconstructions of value laden claims and use of an open mind. The production of text as written portrayals should be based on thoughtful attentiveness and imagination.

Vocatio on the other hand refers to the process of letting things speak for themselves. It also means that things should be heard by being brought closer to the researcher. This means the ways researchers write including the languages they use have great bearing on the sorts of realities portrayed about the subject. These phenomenological concepts of reduction and vocatio as part of the writing of phenomenological texts informed interpretative sociological methods of enquiry adopted by the researcher in this study. The researcher attempted to let children's narratives and photographs speak for 'themselves' by having the researcher engage in imaginative encounters and interpretations of children's identities. This is what informed the process of writing on the part of the researcher.

Having discussed the theoretical assumptions of phenomenology and shown the influence of those assumptions in shaping the methodology of this study, some limitations of phenomenology are identifiable and will now be noted in the next pages. An evaluation of the phenomenological theory shows that the main weaknesses of the theory can be understood mainly from a point of view on knowledge construction. As Smith (2003:165-70) discusses, such a weakness is reflected in the tension that exists between social constructivism and structural determinism. Social constructivism is a sociological

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approach associated with phenomenology on one hand while structural or macro determinist approach is associated with functionalist sociology on the other hand.

For Smith, social constructivism which is associated with phenomenology conjures that people are active agents who are not constructed by the social world. Rather, people construct the social world through their actions. Human beings have the capacity to transcend limitations that institutions attempt to impose on them. This means that institutions do not construct people. Concepts like, culture, religion, reality and race are all socially constructed by rational people and have no objective status of their own. This position is also jointly supported by some writings of Berger (1966); Schutz (1974) & Weber (1968). All these authors tend to be associated with social constructivism which is an important part of interpretative sociology.

This study adopts such as social constructivist approach as it starts from the assumption that children's representations can be seen as a form of social construction of reality. Such a social construction of reality is made possible through the conscious actions of humanitarian professionals as active agents. These agents work for a particular humanitarian system which has to be maintained. Maintenance of such a system is possible through intentional constructions of certain identities of children. However, assumptions of this social constructivist approach would be seen by sociologists like Parsons (1959) & Durkheim (1964) as being largely micro in nature and agent based in orientation. Those assumptions do not take into account macro or structure level

determinants in reality construction. This possible major opposing argument against phenomenology advances a counter macro or structuralist determinist perspective.

It is mainly the emphasis on the individual's role in the social construction approach that is seen by structural functionalists like Parsons and Durkheim as a major weakness of the phenomenological theory. Social constructivism is weak because it suggests a theory on knowledge construction that emphasises the central role of individual action. For the two structural sociologists or functionalists stated above, it is mainly external systems, institutions and social structures that determine human actions. These structural sociologists further argue that institutions like religion and culture exist 'outside' the individual. It is such institutions that determine human actions. For this reason, reality is defined as being greater than the individual. This is so because reality is seen as an objective phenomenon out there waiting to be discovered by the individual. As a result, consciousness is not intentional because human thoughts and behaviors result from external experiences.

In addition, arguments of the above sociologists imply that for them, phenomenology overlooks the point that social reality is structurally determined and thus constrained. Existences of macro systems or discourses reflect the dominance of a macro social order that is 'above' the individual. In this structural determinist sense, humanitarian discourse would be termed a macro discourse. Such a discourse is one that should be studied using a 'downward' and not an 'upward' social analysis advocated by phenomenology and as discussed by Sibeon (2004:2-20). Downward conflation or analysis of the humanitarian

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discourse on children's representation should start by treating that discourse as a large social system with institutionalized networks and patterned social relations. Such an analysis has to concentrate on how the humanitarian discourse emerges from contingently reproduced social conditions at the global or macro level.

Therefore, despite this study being mainly informed by a social constructivist orientation, the study still acknowledges the value of a structuralist argument. It also acknowledges that there is a link between agency and structure in reality construction. This is so because the researcher approached humanitarian organizations as macro structures or institutions with certain set rules. Such rules can determine how members within those organizations do 'business'. There are certain global humanitarian frameworks, blue prints and guidelines that articulate how the humanitarian business should be done. Such frameworks can be exemplified by The Framework for the Protection, Care and support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS of UNICEF (2007). In some ways this is constraining to individual humanitarian professionals working for such humanitarian organizations. This is so because such a framework guides what children's programs should focus on for instance. However, it is individuals who actively craft and contribute to the formation of those frameworks for humanitarian work. Therefore, the professionals speak to the humanitarian discourse in the same way that the discourse situated within specific socio-cultural contexts speaks to the professionals.

As mentioned earlier on, positivism can also be used to evaluate the phenomenological approach. As posited by Yates (2004:2-6), positivism is an approach to social inquiry that borrows from natural scientific methods. It seeks to discover causal laws or generalizations by describing the relationships between social phenomena. This approach treats social phenomena as that which can be studied using quantitative statistical methods that apply logical techniques to break down social issues into measurable 'things'. This means that scholars can come up with 'facts' that 'speak' for themselves to generalize and predict social phenomena. For instance, such a positive view sees it as possible to do a study that can predict ways in which children's identities are constructed using statistical packages and methods.

This positivist approach is associated with a quantitative research methodology that is a direct contrast to the qualitative research methodology of this study. This study's methodology is influenced by phenomenological sociology. From a knowledge construction point of view, positivism critiques phenomenology as a weaker or less rigorous method of enquiry. According to Smith (2003:150), phenomenological research can be described as not being as 'scientific' as positive research is. Results from a phenomenological study may not be generalized to the same extent as results from a positive approach for instance. This is because facts and values cannot be separated in phenomenological enquiry. There is also no clear separation of theory and observation in phenomenology. Broad generalizations of research results are not always easy to achieve.

Therefore, while phenomenology places a lot of emphasis on empirical analysis it is not easy to subject theoretical statements to repeated tests using empirical evidence. For this reason, theoretical statements arising from phenomenological enquiries may not apply to other social circumstances where the objects in question may exist. There is a limit to what can be achieved when using the agency, micro and individual determinist methods associated with phenomenology. This is arguably because phenomenology can be described as a theory that is not well 'positioned' methodologically for research on social phenomena that is macro in nature. Such is the case given phenomenology's focus on the individual or the agent to explain social action.

However, in defense, phenomenology would counter argue that positivism gives the illusion that values can be kept out of the quest for scientific knowledge. It is not desirable according to phenomenology, to aim for 'value free' social science. As aptly put forward by Smith (2003:10-11), social science is value laden and value freedom masquerades values as facts. This is because knowledge should be understood in the historical and social contexts of its construction. Humans construct knowledge as part of process of their social existence. The understandings of social meanings should be done in contexts of people's lived daily experiences. This as found in writings of Luckman (1983) & Berger (1966) suggest that reality is relatively fragile, contingent and local in many respects. Therefore, quantitative or statistical methods cannot achieve indisputable predictions or depictions of social realities. What is possible to achieve in sociological enquiry is identification of patterns of social acts or events as opposed to definite predictions of specific social outcomes.

However, as Popper (1999:10-45) describes it, what constitutes science is questionable and any theory on knowledge construction can be falsified from yet another angle. A plausible explanation of one sociological phenomenon from a particular theoretical view does not make it certain that the explanation remains plausible in sets of conditions elsewhere. A sense of doubt is a critical component for knowledge progression. The strength of any sociological theory like phenomenology for Popper is that it can always be falsified. This is because the falsifications of conjectures are the basis for any further or deeper sociological enquiries or imaginations.

In addition to the possibility that phenomenological conjectures can be falsified, it is worth asking whether or not it is possible to 'reflect' in the true phenomenological sense without one being overtaken by one's subjective views and experience? Even though humans tend to individually imagine their worlds, they still do so using some form of logic. Such logic according to Smith (2003:1-12) can structure people's imaginations in ways that make it possible for them to explain their worlds to others. This is in some ways similar to the process of 'breaking' down things into social units in order to relate or quantify, predict and explain complex social phenomena as argued by positivists.

However, despite these opposing theoretical views, the epistemological position of this thesis still remains one that is mainly informed by the agency based phenomenological theoretical assumptions. For the researcher, even if humanitarian institutions or organizations can shape or determine individual conformities, individuals still remain

active agents acting with intentions within those institutions. Institutions and their frameworks are not always constraining but they can be enabling. Human behavior is not always institutionalized and predictable. This argument is consistent with assumptions of the structuration theory as previously shown from Giddens (1981)'s writings.

It was the primary interest of this study to explore how humanitarian professionals construct identities of children in forms of narrative and photographic depictions. Individual interpretations of those representations of children were also sought in the context of this study which is of an interpretative sociological orientation.

While phenomenology constituted the main theoretical launch pad for this study, it was important to discuss this sociological theory in relation to other approaches that also explain how reality in constructed and represented in society. This was done to enrich the phenomenological theoretical assumptions of this study. It was also done to illustrate that apart from the phenomenological view, alternative approaches that explain the constructions and representations of realities in societies exist. In academic terms, it was desirable that different theoretical perspectives or approaches dialogue with one another in the explication of a social issue of 'common' interest. This hopefully gave a wide theoretical grounding to this sociological study. In this regard, two other approaches discussed in relation to the one on phenomenology are sociology of knowledge and semiology. These were selected because just like phenomenology, they also explain how social constructions of realities and their representations are possible. This made sociology of knowledge and semiology relevant approaches that could add 'value' in the

theoretical evaluation of the study's subject on representation. As already mentioned, the study was concerned with the constructions and representations of children's identities in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse. The next section will discuss the sociology of knowledge before a subsequent discussion on semiology follows.

3.3 Sociology of knowledge

As found in writings of Manheim (1929) & Luckman (1983:20-5), sociology of knowledge refers to the study of the relationship between human thoughts in relation to social contexts that give rise to knowledge. It seeks to achieve this by exploring how human knowledge is constructed, shared, represented and maintained. Sociology of knowledge is concerned with a social analysis of how reality is socially constructed. It is its significant statement that reality and knowledge are justified by their social relativity. Reality is socially constructed and not limited to a particular group of people or social context. This implies that each society has styles of thought based on prevailing socio-economic, cultural and political conditions. Therefore ways of approaching the world are related to unique conditions and contexts. Knowledge is socially relative. The social relativity of knowledge and contributions of individual contexts to knowledge constructions in a way acknowledges roles of individuals in the constructions of ideas. This view suggests that social contexts do not exist on their own but are made up of individuals who actively engage in the constructions and communications of ideas.

As Luckman (1983:25) further states, sociology of knowledge relates knowledge or realities to social contexts that give rise to such forms of knowledge or realities. It

principally seeks to explicate social processes by which people describe their social worlds. This point to some extent is linked to a social constructivist view raised before. Such a social constructivist view was discussed under the section on phenomenology. That view according to Gergen (2004:15) states that the world does not dictate ways in which it is understood by people. It further says that knowledge is not always a product of induction or the testing of general empirical hypotheses.

As Gergen argues;

> 'From the social constructionist position the process of understanding is not automatically driven by the forces of nature, but is the result of an active, cooperation enterprise of persons in relationships' (Gergen 2004:15).

Gergan's statement means that how the world is understood is a product of interchanges between people who are historically situated. This is also similar to a phenomenological assumption advanced by Schutz (1967:1-10). The assumption is that knowledge or social reality results from the sharing of people's inter-subjective experiences. For Gergen (2004:15) the extent to which a certain understanding prevails or is sustained over time is not primarily based on the validity of that understanding. Instead certain understandings or perspectives persist out of negotiated social processes of conflict, rhetoric and communication. Interpretations are suggested, maintained or abandoned as social situations change over time. This is possibly how perspectives contained in a major discourse such as the humanitarian one under focus in this study would get shaped or sustained over time. This researcher was interested in applying the above phenomenological assumption to the analysis of how humanitarian professionals construct identities of children based on narratives and photographs.

Berger (1983:2) makes another point that sociology of knowledge is also concerned with the effect that ideas have on society especially those that are normally taken for granted in everyday contexts. This is because things are not as simple as they appear. There are deeper meanings of things than what appears at surface values of tacit everyday language. For this researcher this means that children's narratives discussed in this study need not be taken at face value as they have deeper meanings beyond what can be easily read. When certain words or narratives are constantly used, this can possibly produce the effect of 'normalizing' ideas found in such narratives or words. For instance it is questionable whether uses of a term like 'children of AIDS' really point to the fact that such children exist in reality. Out of a constant use of such a term, people might eventually begin to believe that indeed 'children of AIDS' exist in their communities. Those children may begin to be seen as different and get socially excluded from other 'normal' children in their communities. Such a description is a label that might 'stick' on some children thereby giving those children some stereotypical identities.

Some of these ideas found within sociology of knowledge can also be used to inform some qualitative methods of enquiry applicable to a wide range of social sciences. Those qualitative methods that can also be used to study knowledge constructions in society are phenomenological in nature as discussed in chapter 2. Also as seen from Giddens (1981)'s writings earlier in this chapter, some of those methods call for the researcher to seek to know things through a process of social encountering. Social encountering involves the researcher allowing social things to speak for themselves. As discussed in

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chapter 2 on methodology, the researcher adopted qualitative methods of enquiry as they were relevant to this study situated within a tradition of interpretative sociology.

For the reasons stated above, the researcher suggests that Berger & Luckman (1983:3-15)'s ideas to some extent draw inspiration from the writings of a 19th century German scholar known as Max Weber (1958). Weber was concerned with rational actions of individuals. He focused on how idea systems emerge from people's rational actions or are used to understand meanings that people attach to their actions. According to Weber, people attach rational meanings to their behaviors since people know what they want to gain out of situations. These ideas of Weber have also contributed to the phenomenological debate within sociology. This is particularly so in relation to explanations of how people's intentions influence the ways people construct social realities. Weber (1958) describes such realities in his works by saying they first exist as mental constructs that in turn influence how people act in various social situations.

However, Weber's views described above differ from Marx & Engels (1846:20)'s materialist conception of history especially regarding their position on how history influences the emergence of social ideas and human thoughts. For Marx & Engels (ibid) material conditions of human existence give rise to certain ideas or perceptions of reality. These authors' views on the materialist conception of history also relate to an argument of political philosophy. That argument of political philosophy put forward by Manheim (1929:112) is that socio-economic and cultural factors influence types of political ideas and systems that arise from such factors. According to this argument, people's ideologies

are deeply imbedded in multiple factors and interests. People's social, political, cultural beliefs and opinions influence their perceptions of the word. Mannheim took this idea of knowledge as a product of socio-cultural and political factors further by introducing a notion called rationalism. Rationalism refers to the point that ideas hold true only within certain situations. Ideas can be contested as they are not permanent. In this study rationalism is interpreted to mean that certain ideas such as those regarding identities of children as portrayed in narratives and photographs are real only within some contexts. Therefore ideas on rational action and rationalism significantly influenced an important assumption of this study. The assumption is that the socio-cultural and historical contexts in which humanitarian professionals operate possibly influence constructions of a certain discourse on children's representation. Such constructions are intentional as they involve active participation of humanitarian professionals who are driven by conscious rational intentions.

As cited earlier own from Luckman (1983:3-15)'s works, sociology of knowledge is concerned with how knowledge is constructed in specific socio-cultural contexts. Sociology of knowledge emphasizes the view that knowledge is socially relative. This is because knowledge is produced in particular socio-cultural contexts which means no single knowledge systems exists. However Mills (1959:15) advances a somewhat different view of knowledge construction in comparison to Luckman. For Mills, knowledge can be constructed using a process that he terms 'sociological imagination'. Sociological imagination entails an understanding of people's lives from a different mental frame that is not 'obvious'. Mills further says that human lives are related to

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forces of historical occurrence and significance around them. This imaginative perception, as also supported by Giddens (2001) differs from the one that is usually informed by a simple explanation of people's daily lives and experiences. That is why Mills (1959:15, 217) writes that sociological imagination enables us *"to think ourselves away from the familiar routines of our daily lives in order to look at them anew"*. For this reason, sociology of knowledge has to focus on people' tacit everyday experiences including events that people usually take for granted or treat as 'normal' or 'natural' occurrences.

Applying assumptions of sociological imagination to this study for instance entailed the researcher to relate situations of children to local, national and global ideas that inform the overall discourse on children's representation. Children's representation had to be understood in relation to the history and social contexts of children. History and contexts had to, by the researcher's reasoning, shape the discourse on children's representations while those representations potentially shape children's contexts of existence. This meant that the social practice of representing children could be better explored in close reference to reality ideologies with a potential to influence identity constructions. Such an approach provoked this researcher to highlight some forms of children's identities that emerge from narrative and photographic representations of children. Some ethical issues arising from such practice were also revealed by the researcher as chapters 6 and 7 will illustrate.

The application of ideas from sociological imagination to this interpretative sociological study left the researcher battling with the following questions among many possible others; what is the structure, nature and form of discourse on children's representation, how are identities of children constructed and represented, what does it mean to portray children's identities using narratives and photographs, who is involved in such representations of children, why are children represented in these ways and what realities of children are constructed and portrayed using children's narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse? These questions summarize what was a complex sociological enterprise of this study.

Applying ideas from the sociology of knowledge in an attempt to address the above questions also meant that other than just interpret various possible meanings of things, the researcher had to also 'imagine' the following question. How do diverse social and cultural situations give rise to different ideas and perceptions of children's identities? An application of assumptions from the sociology of knowledge to address the above meant that the researcher had to 'imaginatively' explore the study problem. In addition, the researcher had to address some socio-cultural factors that shape a child focused humanitarian discourse. This is why the researcher also suggests that how the humanitarian discourse is shaped including its contents can emanate from an analysis of the interplay between individual/agency and structural factors. This analysis is one that explores how both agency and structural factors influence the way humanitarian professionals construct, portray and communicate identities of children. This view is influenced by Giddens (1981)'s work on the theory on structuration in which he suggests

that an intricate link exists between agency and structure. This link between agency and structure gives rise to certain ideas and perceptions of social issues within specific contexts. That is why the researcher applied the concept on sociological imagination raised above to an evaluation of a social practice that seeks to represent identities of children in humanitarian discourse. The researcher looked at the social practice of representation 'anew' and imaginatively away from its 'familiar' routine or appearance. It is this researcher's view that humanitarian professionals are agencies who intentionally construct some stereotypical identities of children. However, how those professionals construct identities of children is also influenced by a well structured humanitarian discourse. This position demonstrates a theoretical innovation that seeks to explain the interplay between agency and structural determinism in the social construction of reality. For this reason the researcher is of the view that this study in some limited way highlights that it is possible to bridge some theoretical assumptions of phenomenology with those of structural determinism in the articulations of reality constructions. This however remains a highly debated contemporary issue among sociologists of different theoretical orientations.

Therefore, the approach on the sociology of knowledge was especially important for this study as it directed the researcher's attention to ways in which professionals construct and seek to make sense of realities about children in certain socio-cultural contexts. Unlike phenomenology, we have seen how sociology of knowledge seeks to alternatively articulate how representation of the social is achieved. It does so by exploring how ideas produced in certain socio-cultural situations shape the discourse on children's

representation in humanitarian discourse. This provided a basis for an alternative argument to phenomenology. The alternative argument is that different ways of representing children in humanitarian discourse are influenced not only by conscious individual actions. Rather, ways of representing children are also influenced by the socio-cultural institutions, conditions and circumstances in which the discourse on children's representation is found. This is a major point of difference between how assumptions of phenomenology and those of the sociology of knowledge influenced the study. However, assumptions of both approaches still remained relevant to the sociological exposition of this study's subject matter.

From this discussion on sociology of knowledge, a strength of this theory is evident and the researcher proposes to state it. The strength of sociology of knowledge is that it moves away from the notion of universalism in the explanation of reality construction. Sociology of knowledge says that reality is socially constructed and relative since different socio-cultural contexts give rise to different perceptions and forms of realities.

The researcher also suggests another strength of sociology of knowledge. This strength is that sociology of knowledge does not draw a line that differentiates the role of the individual from that of the socio-cultural and historical processes in the constructions and representations of knowledge. As a result, sociology of knowledge approach contains assumptions that are both structural determinist at one level and those that can be deemed phenomenological in nature on another level. The structural determinist assumption is that socio-cultural and historical processes influence the contents or nature of knowledge

or reality at any given time. At another level an assumption that is phenomenological in nature is also implied within sociology of knowledge. This assumption as seen above says that individuals are involved in the social constructions of realities or knowledge. Those realities or knowledge are socially relative. This point on the social relativity of reality or knowledge can be interpreted to mean that individuals' intentions contribute to the shaping and articulations of certain ideas or perspectives within socio-cultural and historical contexts.

Still, from a different angle by the researcher, this perceived limitation of the approach on the sociology of knowledge can be seen as its major strength. The strength of sociology of knowledge as an approach is that it locates people within certain socio-cultural and historical processes that influence social constructions of realities. People also shape the same contexts that influence realities. Consequently, social constructions of realities then become possible when interplay between the individual and the social is present. This is how sociology of knowledge as an approach became relevant to this study. The study mainly adopted a phenomenological theoretical framework to evaluate the practice of representing children's identities within humanitarian discourse. However, socio-cultural explanations to the research problem were also considered as important by the researcher.

At another level, the sociology of knowledge approach might be described as being weak in terms of how it places more emphasis on the socio-cultural factors as opposed to intentional roles of individuals in reality construction. However, while at the level of its main assumptions the approach on the sociology of knowledge might differ from the

theory of phenomenology with regards to roles of individual versus socio-cultural determinants of reality construction, some linkages between the two approaches exist. This is evident in writings of Schutz (1974); Berger (1966); Gergen & Gergen (2004). For these authors, phenomenology says people are dependant on stocks of knowledge created by others. People also depend on prior understandings of everyday knowledge that is actively constructed by lay people. This assumption links well with the assumption of the sociology of knowledge that is well articulated by Manheim (1929) & Luckman (1983:20-5). This assumption is that knowledge is tacit and constructed everyday by people everywhere. Through everyday experiences, people construct and reconstruct realities of their social worlds.

At this point, the chapter turns to a third and final sociological approach that was also used together with phenomenology to interpret children's narratives and photographs in this study. This approach is known as semiology. Like phenomenology, semiology emphasizes the active role of individuals in the constructions, communications and interpretations of meanings using symbols. This approach was relevant to this study that treated children's narratives and photographs as symbolic forms of representations. The symbolic communications of realities through narratives and photographs is thus a subject of individual constructions and interpretations. This point links semiology well with an assumption of phenomenology discussed earlier in the chapter. The assumption states that the individual is an active agent involved in intentional social actions. It also echoes sociology of knowledge's assumption that says reality is historically and socio-

culturally constructed. The process of social construction of reality is made possible when individuals actively interact and negotiate ideas within various contexts.

3.4 Semiology

According to Barthes (1957:1-10), semiology is an approach to communication that focuses on how signs and symbols communicate ideas and meanings about social things. Semiology posits that the individual plays an active role in the assigning and interpretation of meanings that are communicated by signs and symbols. With its origin in Greek philosophical thinking, the semiological approach emerged as a descriptive theory concerned with the systematic identification, classification and interpretation of meanings of signs and symbols. Such signs and symbols can be in the form of words, texts, images or photographs. As Chandler (2002:3-9) mentions, symbols can be used as cultural artifacts of representation and communication. The term semiology is at times inter-changeably used with semiotics in various literatures on representation and this is how the researcher also used the term in this study.

Apart from its later application to the study of symbolic communication as suggested by Barthes (1957:20) & Chandler (2002:9), the semiotic approach is traditionally associated with studies on logic and linguistics. Such studies include the works of an American logician Peirce (1870) and a French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (2006). However, overtime semiotics also expanded as an approach applicable to examine issues of representation in a number of other fields. These fields include aesthetics, anthropology, visual sociology, communication, semantics and cultural communication. Irrespective of

where it is applied, it is a major assumption of semiology that the meanings of symbols such as children's photographs and narratives for instance, are arbitrary. This is so because symbols are subjected to individual constructions and interpretations. Liska (1996:7-25) suggests that symbols are 'pregnant' with meaning. People choose how to deduce such meanings based on their intentions. The relationship between such symbols and what they represent is not natural. Such a relationship is a product of individual creations in specific social contexts. This assumption is similar to the one put forward by Berger & Luckman (1983:1-10) under the approach on the sociology of knowledge discussed above. Sociology of knowledge emphasizes social relativity in constructions and representations of realities. Symbols are thus important sources of knowledge.

The above semiotic approach, just like the sociology of knowledge complements the phenomenological framework of this study by also influencing the study's assumptions and its methods of enquiry. Phenomenology, sociology of knowledge and semiotics thus shaped this sociological interrogation that entailed a critical engagement with representation processes. Such an engagement involved interpretations of deep meanings of things. The meanings can arise from evaluations of social practices on identity creation, reality construction, representation and communications about children's identities. In this study, children's narratives and photographs were regarded as symbols of cultural representation. The researcher was of the opinion that meanings of narratives and photographs could be established through incisive semiotic investigation as part of phenomenological inquiry. This is because just like phenomenology, semiotics makes a case for the adoption of an interpretative form of enquiry. This inquiry is most

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appropriate when in pursuit of complex sociological issues such as this one on reality constructions and representations. A major and specific contribution of the semiotic approach to this study is that it guided especially the researcher's interpretations of children's identities. Interpretations of those identities were based on the narrative and photographic depictions of children. Such interpretations focused on different levels of children's identities. The different identity levels of children were possible to depict when children's photographs or images were seen as forms of symbolic communication.

From the works of writers such as Chandler (2002); Liska (1996); Barthes (1964) & Saussure (2006) it appears that the semiotic approach is mainly applied when people attempt to deduce possible sorts of meanings that are contained in various texts and images. That is why this researcher also adopted use of certain semiotic elements to deduce possible meanings found in children's photographs. According to Danesi (2002:2) & Greimas (1987:2-10) in relation to cultural communication and representation, semiotics is used to analyze processes by which messages are constructed and communicated from a source to a receiver. This is the subject of cultural or literary semiotics. Cultural or literary semiotics focuses on possible different levels of meanings, hidden motivations, and intentions when people communicate in symbols like children's photographs for instance. That is why in this study, the researcher treated narratives and photographs of children as symbolic forms of communication. Humanitarian professionals were also seen as creators, communicators and consumers of information from these symbolic sources. How meanings from a symbolic source such as a child's photograph or narrative are constructed and communicated was an important subject of

this study. This situated the study well within cultural or literary semiotics. Such a point is also connected to Mills (1959:15)'s idea on sociological imagination described earlier. Sociological imagination influenced the researcher to explore what children's photographs and narratives portray from a rather unusual angle. The researcher did so by being skeptical about seemingly natural and obvious everyday appearances and meanings of things. This made children's narratives and photographs sources of deep symbolic meanings. What theses sources communicate would be impossible to comprehend merely at their face value or usual simple appearances.

Danesi (2002:3-8) goes on to say, semiotic communication also requires that the receiver of a communication imaginatively decodes data from the source of meaning. The reader then distinguishes data as salient and makes sense out of it through a process of semiotic reflection. Sources of data that can be used for semiotic reflection are in this instance children's narratives and photographs. Semiotic reflection is part of a process of revealing 'hidden' representations from symbolic sources. Hidden representations mean that photographs are not always as they appear. Spoken words also mean more than what they say. Messages from children's narratives for example, may not be as obvious as they are presented. At the same time, 'actual' identities of children may stay 'invisible' or 'concealed' from the way they are portrayed in photographs. Therefore communications and representations are based on individual interpretations. It is reasonable to argue that representations are also primarily concerned with the intentional assigning of meanings to things by people. For this reason, symbolic representations can be further described as

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'open' and 'concealed' at the same time. This implies that their corresponding meanings are a subject of constant social constructions and endless social contestations.

In addition to the point that hidden representations of things need to be explored, Barthes (1967:10-30) makes yet another important contribution. This contribution says that there are three critical elements that characterize semiology. These elements further articulate the idea that the researcher has to do a deeper level of interrogation when searching for meanings of social 'things'. The three semiotic elements Barthes raises are on; denotation and connotation, language and speech, and signified and signifier. These semiotic elements jointly with positions from phenomenology and sociology of knowledge influenced the theoretical framework and qualitative methods of this study. The three semiotic elements which borrow from structural linguistics are described in detail below.

The first semiotic element described by Barthes (1967:10-30) is on denotation and connotation. Denotative meaning refers to the agreed and simple meaning of words within a language. A language uses specific grammatical codes known to people who use it. Denotation refers to everyday shared meanings or appearances of things. However at a deeper level, codes within language also represent particular values of a people's shared culture. Such values or shared cultures are not visible from obvious everyday meanings of words within a language. This gives rise to connotative level meanings about aspects of people's lives. Barthes goes on to say that connotation refers to the deeper level meaning of things. To achieve a connotative level of meaning, one has to do a deeper interrogation of what appears as a simple language at face value. Based on this idea, the study adopted the view that to get to an 'actual' level of meaning of children's

representations in narratives and photographs, a thorough connotative analysis of these had to be done. The researcher preferred the view that it would not be possible to know what children's narratives and photographs portray if the researcher just focused on their 'obviously' taken for granted denotative meanings. That is why enquiry methods of this study are interpretative in nature. These were selected in attempts to reach a connotative level of understanding children's narratives and photographs.

A second semiotic element that can be used to analyze meaning according to Barthes (1967:10-30) is that of language and speech. Generally, this semiotic element treats language and speech as a social institution and system of values. However, Barthes goes on to say that language is not an act that an individual can create nor modify exclusively. It is a social contract to be accepted by all who use it for communication. Language has its rules that come through shared learning. It is shared by people who maybe defined by a common cultural community. Speech on the other hand is an individual act of selection and actualization. It can be used to express personal ideas, perceptions and thoughts. This study applied the semiotic element of language and speech to examine the types of language used among a 'cultural community' of humanitarian professionals. These humanitarian professionals construct and use a certain language to represent identities of children. The study explored how that language is constructed, describes, portrays and represents identities of children.

Barthes (1967:10-30) s' third semiotic element that was applied together with the two described above is that of signifier and signified. This semiotic element can also be used

to describe how reality is constructed and communicated in language. A signifier is that which points to 'something'. For example, a child's photograph or narrative is a signifier of a child. In this case, a signifier is something that points to the child. A signified on the other hand is a mental representation of that which is being signified. For instance a child's life or experience is the signified to which a narrative or photograph points. The signified is not something one can physically see. It requires a connotative level of analysis for one to know what the signified is. Therefore this researcher suggests that those children's experiences like poverty or vulnerable situations such as social exclusion can for instance be signified in forms of children's photographs and narratives. However, one cannot tell what those experiences mean to the children nor understand what is being communicated by just looking at the children's narratives or photographs. For this reason, the signified becomes a second and possibly main story behind children's narratives or photographs. This second story may not be easily discernible to the reader.

Therefore while the signifier generally appears simple and straightforward, the signified is usually a complex story that is a subject of connotative interpretation. This researcher applied the semiotic element of signifier and signified to describe the nature of relationship between children's photographs or narratives as signifiers and the sorts of identities being represented as the signified. A question that guided the researcher's analysis of such a relationship was whether or not it is easy to know what narratives and photographs signify at face value. Based on such a question, the researcher embarked on an exposition of how children's narratives and photographs as signifiers are used. Children's narratives and photographs are used to signify or portray stereotypical

identities of children. The researcher engaged in such a sociological exposition from a perspective that saw the process of representation as a reflexive one. Representation thus involves a constant shifting of ideas between points. For the researcher, the signifier and signified were not to be seen as exclusive terms. This is because they are part of the same social process. Such a social process has to do with the constructions and representations of stereotypical identities of children. The constructions and representations of such identities are based on humanitarian professionals' intentions including their personal perceptions of children's experiences.

Having looked at key assumptions of semiology and discussed semiology's application to this sociological study, the researcher now highlights some of semiology's limitations. Just as in the cases of phenomenology and sociology of knowledge, semiology also has its own weaknesses. As shown by the researcher before, semiology has associations to many disciplines such as aesthetics, sociology, anthropology and cultural communication. Although this makes semiology a rich multi-disciplinary theory on symbolic communication, it renders semiology too dense and a less specific approach. Semiology also outlines some elements like signifier and signified and suggests that applications of such elements can guide interpretative social enquiry in general. However, semiology does not clearly show how specific applications of such semiotic elements to diverse disciplines it seeks to explain are possible. Another arguable limitation of semiology is that it focuses more on the intentional roles of individuals in the constructions of realities and knowledge at the expense of structural factors. In this regard semiology can be criticized using some structural determinist views associated with Parsons (1996) &

Durkheim (1964). It can be argued that semiology undermines some structural determinist views which have been described before in this chapter.

However, a further evaluation of semiology shows its unique strength that emanates from the way semiotics treats language as a tool for reality articulation. For the researcher this is a strength that supports his earlier point that there is interplay between agency and structure when it comes to reality construction. On one hand, semiology like phenomenology describes the articulation of reality as an individual act. Yet on the other hand, semiology also makes the point that the same language that is used for individual articulation of reality must be 'common' and 'shared' among those who use the language to communicate. This is because in the structural determinist sense, language is a 'communal' cultural property. Language does not belong to an individual. This makes language a shared social institution. To say language is a shared social institution means that language has certain social rules. Such rules influence the way people use language to communicate. Processes of interrogating reality constructions including how realities get communicated are interrelated at agency and structure levels. This means reality construction processes are both individual and structural in nature. In this regard, semiology by implication gives acknowledgement to the significance of both agency and structural factors in the constructions and representations of realities. In this study such realities are portrayed in forms of children's identities within narratives and photographs. Therefore a process of semiotic inquiry just as that of phenomenological enquiry acknowledges links between individual and structural determinants of social actions. This

researcher appreciates how individual and structural factors influence processes of constructing and representing children's identities in humanitarian discourse.

In view of the above, the researcher was convinced that an understanding of children's representation thus called for deeper sociological exploration. That is why a combination of theoretical assumptions from phenomenology, sociology of knowledge and semiology have been discussed in intricate detail in this chapter. The researcher has done such cross theoretical discussions to give this study a firm grounding in sociological theory. In addition, the researcher was of the opinion that a firm theoretical background would provide a wide sociological framework for the evaluation of the practice of children's representation within humanitarian contexts. Such evaluation that started in this chapter will be continued in detail in chapters 4 and 5 that focus on humanitarian discourse, forms of children's narratives and levels of children's photographic depictions

This chapter has so far situated and evaluated children's representations within different sociological theories. In the next sections of this chapter, the researcher will review some literature on key conceptual terms of the study that were briefly introduced and defined in chapter 1. Those conceptual terms are on children, representation, reality, identity and ethics. It was necessary to discuss them within this theoretical chapter as these conceptual terms gave focus to the study. It is appropriate to present these concepts after the above theoretical discussion because they jointly constitute a specific conceptual framework that supports the above theoretical background of the study. Both the theoretical background and the conceptual framework give structure, focus and situate this study

within existing literature. In addition, such conceptual clarity aided the researcher in the exposition of the study's subject matter using relevant theoretical assumptions. It is important to start this discussion by reference to how the researcher defines the term 'children'. This is important as children constitute the subject matter of this study.

3.5 Children

As stated in the introductory section of chapter 1, in the context of this study, the term child refers to any person who is 18 years and below UNICEF (2004:12). This is mainly an internationally recognized legal definition of childhood closely linked to biological maturity of children. As such children need adult care givers who must act as duty bearers to ensure that children fully realize their rights to development, protection, participation and survival. When adults are unable to fulfill such obligation, this might render children vulnerable in ways discussed in this study which include social isolation, exclusion, physical or emotional abuse.

While the researcher adopts the above as a working definition in this study, he also appreciates that childhood should not be limited to a mere legalistic characterization of children. Children can be defined differently based on their social maturity and cultural context. According to Nsamenang & Lamb (1998:250-252), the development from childhood to adult life among the Nso people of Cameroon for instance is more than just a linear biological process of development. According to this society, people can remain being 'children' irrespective of age as long as they cannot well perform certain culturally defined duties of adulthood such as taking care of family or participating in communal

social events. One who does not fully appreciate the importance of obeying elders and superiors is still regarded as a child. As Wells (2009) argues, the notion of childhood should not be viewed as romantic, static or permanent because this notion is being radically re-shaped due to globalization. Childhood is not a legalistic thing as children can be constituted based on race, gender and class. The family, school and other cultural contexts or social institutions all have a role to play in shaping childhood in a global context. However, irrespective of different perceptions of childhood that exist, it is the researcher's view that children are at times represented in ways that may portray socially contested identities within humanitarian discourse. Therefore the next section discusses what this concept on representation is in the context of this study.

3.6 Representation

According to Putman (2004:2), representation refers to the actual presence or bearing of something. This involves the reproduction of things in a 'like manner'. This can be done using an image or a symbol like a photograph. The purpose of using an image to represent 'something' is to exhibit in some visible form a 'real' or 'true' state of the thing in question. For Prosser (2000:1-10), representation can also be the use of images to reproduce people's experiences. Photographs are examples of how children's experiences can be represented using images. Such photographs are meant to portray some form of 'reality' about the experiences of children who are being represented.

Representation was approached in this study from a phenomenological angle. Such an angle was informed by Schutz (1967)'s ideas that suggest that people intentionally

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construct various aspects of reality. However, people's actions to construct realities also take place within socio-cultural contexts. In this study, constructions of realities about children emanate from children's experiences and identities represented in narratives and photographs. This study treated photographic and narrative depictions of children as socially constructed forms of representations in humanitarian discourse. This view of representation was also informed by ideas from some authors in the fields of media representations, visual and image based researches. Those authors include Stanczak (2007); Hall (1997); Dyer (1993) & Putman (2004). For the above authors, media representations of children can be in forms of oral or written texts, visual moving and still images of children. Paintings, academic texts, novels, other literatures and journalistic writings are also important sources of information on children's representations in different contexts.

This researcher is of the view that photographic and narrative representations of children seek to achieve 'actual' portrayals of children's experiences or identities. This is done in ways akin to the semiotic approach discussed earlier on in the chapter. Based on Barthes (1967)'s articulations on semiotics, narrative texts and photographs can be seen as symbols that portray 'something'. In this study, children's narratives and photographs are symbols that portray children's identities. Such identities can be based on children's experiences. Children's experiences include poverty, different vulnerabilities, social exclusions, difficult life circumstances and other situations of deprivation. For the researcher, this constitutes forms of symbolic portrayals of children's identities. Such symbolic portrayals of children can influence humanitarian professionals' perceptions

about children, prevent or facilitate their actions towards children and affect how the professionals design social programs meant to benefit children UNICEF (2007:20). Yet this researcher is of the opinion that children's identities are not always as they are portrayed in narratives and photographs. This is because people make subjective interpretations of textual and imagery appearances. In this study, such people do so by looking at narratives and photographs as social constructs of children. Social constructs represent multiple identities of children. This researcher also thinks that there are certain not so obvious reality aspects in children's narratives and photographs. These reality aspects need to be discovered beyond the mere appearances of children in narratives and photographs. This idea on the existence of not so obvious reality aspects in representations is also supported by Seifert (1987:2) & Shpet (1991:20-30). These authors say that reality is a hidden social phenomenon. In addition, in the semiotic sense one must engage with the not so obvious reality aspects of children's narratives and photographs at a deeper level of connotative meaning.

As Barthes (1967:20-35) suggests, the connotative level of meaning is concerned with establishing deep symbolic meanings of representations. This is quite in line with the phenomenological assumption also discussed earlier on. The phenomenological assumptions advanced by Schutz (1973:2-8) & Gergen (2004:3-15) advocates that people intentionally seek to know about social 'things'. Giddens (2001) supports this assumption by describing how people seek to know things through inter-subjective experiences that emerge from face to face encountering. For the above interpretive sociologists, meaning is always a product of human intention, construction and interpretations.

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The above phenomenological assumption influenced the researcher's point of departure in this study. The point of departure was that, representations of children are forms of social constructions within humanitarian discourse. Such representations emerge when humanitarian professionals intentionally construct and portray identities of children based on specific agendas. Such agendas seek to represent identities of children in self fulfilling ways. Thus as Jovchelovitch (2007) describes, representation is a social construction that involves the denoting and expressions of preferred experiences. Such expressions, the researcher adds, is possible through symbolic exhibitions of humanitarian professionals' imaginations about children's worlds. These imaginations can be based on perceived experiences of children. Perceived experiences of children can be physical, social, psychological and emotional in nature.

The researcher is of the view that since diverse identities of children can potentially be represented in narratives and photographs, it is not that easy to represent permanent identities of children. This is because one cannot definitively state what a child's photograph or narrative really represents. That is why the use of sociological imagination, as Mills (1959:15) would argue, becomes an important way to find out how children's representations are constructed. The use of sociological imagination should reveal that no single and straight forward way to represent children's identities is possible. This is so because symbolic communication is a deep and complex process. Possible portrayals of multiple identities are to be expected from such symbolic forms of communication.

Symbolic communication should therefore not be taken at a mere surface level of representation. Since the practice of representing is not as obvious as it appears, it is reasonable for the researcher to assume that a second story exists behind the ways children are represented. A question that arises from such an assumption is; what is the nature of this second story and what does the story tell us about children's identities? The researcher grappled with this question through out the course of this thesis.

That is why this study explored the story behind constructions and representations of children's identities in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse. Children's narratives and photographs were jointly analyzed because they tend to appear together when used to represent children in various sources. This is evident from the works of Jovchelovitch (2007) & UNICEF (2007). Since representations are neither always clear nor factual, involve the conscious reproductions of people's experiences and events, it may be possible that portrayals of children's identities are selective processes of representation. Selective representations may misinform people. It does so by concealing children's actual identities when only certain aspects of children's lives are highlighted. Delivering the actual presence of children through narratives and photographs is not possible. This is a major ethical issue in this study. This is supported by Becker (2007:4-15) who argues that representation of the social raises moral questions of possible 'misrepresentation'. Misrepresentation is a form of moral 'wrong'.

Based on the above view, this researcher argues that the delivered presence of an 'actual' child is difficult to achieve by way of narratives or photographs. This is so because the

'actuality' or 'truthfulness' of a thing is not necessarily related to what is written about the thing or how it is seen by people. For this reason, the researcher reasonably suggests that people can lie in text and image. Photographic and narrative depictions of children are thus questionable forms of 're-presences' or 're-presentations' of children. For the researcher, such forms of re-presenting are based on a process of intentional social construction among humanitarian professionals. These professionals are regarded by the researcher as active agents who work for the advancement of a particular humanitarian agenda. This means it is possible for these agents to socially construct humanitarian pictures that advanced the humanitarian agenda in ethically questionable ways.

How social constructions of children's representations are done in practice within humanitarian discourse will be discussed in detail in chapters 4 and 5. At this point in the study, the researcher just wanted to mention that he interrogated children's representations in humanitarian discourse from a phenomenological reality orientation. Such a phenomenological reality orientation shaped this study. It also caused the researcher to constantly ponder with the following questions; who is involved in the constructions of children' narratives and photographs and why, why are children's narratives and photographs collected, how do humanitarian professionals seek to represent children using narratives and photographs, how do humanitarian professionals construct identities of children in narratives and photographs, how are representations of children in narratives and photographs perceived by different humanitarian professionals and what identities of children emerge from such ways of representing children? What ethical issues arise from such representations of children? However, this study also

acknowledges that humanitarian professionals' actions to represent children take place within socio-cultural contexts. The actions of individual agents are also influenced by the humanitarian discourse that speaks to the professionals. This illustrates interplay between agency and structure in processes of reality construction.

The above questions point to the possibility that representations portray questionable realities about the experiences of children being represented. This meant that as representations seek to portray certain realities about children, it was important for the researcher to also discuss the concept on reality in some detail. This was also important as it gave the researcher an opportunity to describe the nature of the relationship between representation and reality as part of the conceptual framework of this study. The concept on reality, just like representation, is also discussed in this study from a social constructivist view. Such a reality view is influenced by Lynch (2003:10-20)'s phenomenological conception of reality. Lynch conceives reality not as a single unit of external experience. Instead, reality is a multiple faceted social phenomenon. It is based on conscious constructions, negotiations and contestations among individual actors. This study treated reality as such. Therefore reality as discussed below is difficult to represent.

3.7 Reality

According to Lynch (2003:10-20) & Putman (2004:7-25), reality is experience about how the world appears to people. Ideally it is supposed to point to the 'actual' rather than to what people might want the world or things to look like. Reality is also the correspondence of representation to the actual state of things. Such correspondence can

be in terms of degree of 'truth', 'accuracy' or 'distortions' of things. For purposes of this study, the term reality was used in reference to the extent to which the representations of children's narratives and photographs correspond to 'accuracy'. Such correspondence has to do with how children's narratives and photographs appear to different people. It is also concerned with whether or not identities of children that arise from narratives and photographs should actually be regarded as 'natural' or unified representations.

Specific conditions on such a definition of reality are associated with Putman's idea about reality. This idea is that reality is that which can be jointly or commonly perceived and communicated to make up shared thoughts. Yet in terms of social perception, there is no reality beyond people's personal views and beliefs about that reality. This view of reality is aligned to the argument of phenomenological sociology that says reality is constructed by people as individual agents. Such agents also live within socio-cultural contexts influencing perceptions of realities. Agency and structure thus interplay to produce reality. For Berger & Luckman (1966:2) this also means that reality is varied social perception. People as social actors also have anti-realism attitudes within themselves. This reveals the point that nothing called 'objective' reality' exists. As also articulated by James (1952:640), reality refers to the correspondence of representations to things in terms of both 'accuracy' and 'distortion'. Such a view means that it is reasonable to say that social perceptions of reality include both the 'being' and 'nothingness' of things.

As found in Seifert (1987)'s articulations, reality is social communication. Reality as social communication means that shared views, perceptions or beliefs about things are important for the construction of particular reality systems. The accumulation of shared beliefs and perceptions leads to some kind of 'unified' or 'common' reality. Unified reality translates into a particular 'truth' about something. In one sense put forward by James (1952:630-40) 'truth' is a communicated representation of a 'unified' reality. The researcher suggests that communicated representations of children's identities for instance, reflect a certain condition of reality. That condition advances reality as that which makes up humanitarian professionals' 'shared' thoughts about children. Based on such 'shared' thoughts, identities of children are constructed by humanitarian professionals. Such identities portray children's experiences in stereotypical ways that may be regarded as 'unifying' among the humanitarian professionals. In this study, the researcher's prime concern with reality was over a number of issues. Those issues included; how humanitarian professionals share some beliefs and perceptions about children, how those perceptions in turn create a certain 'unified' or 'common' reality about children and how this 'common' reality becomes a communicated representation of children's identities. The researcher was also intrigued by how children's identities are communicated among humanitarian professionals using narratives and photographs.

The approach of this researcher questioned a structural or macro unitary assumption of reality. Such a macro assumption portrays reality in a number of questionable ways. Those ways include views of reality as that which exists out there in the world, is greater than the individual, can be described as being an 'actual' reflection of things and is seen

as a ‘common’ or ‘true’ reflection of the world. Rather the researcher adopted a contradictory phenomenological view of reality. This view is that reality is that which people want their worlds to appear like to themselves and others. Individuals are active agents involved in intentional constructions of reality (Schutz 1967). There is no unity of experienced reality. What exists is only the multiplicity of realities based on the experiences of the agent. This conception implies that reality exists in people’s heads, is socially constructed, remains multiple in natures and is constantly manipulated by people to suit different situations. As James (1952:641) a long time philosopher additionally argues, each world while it is attended to should be regarded as real only after its own social fashion. As people’s concerns with that social world shift, so also does the reality of that social world. Reality is neither fixed nor permanent and as James goes on to say;

> ‘…there are many categories of illusion and reality….there is the world of collective error, there are the worlds of abstract reality, of relative or practical reality, of ideal relations, and there is the supernatural world. The popular mind conceives of all these sub-worlds more or less disconnectedly; and when dealing with one of them, forgets for the time being its relations to the rest (James 1952: 641).

The researcher cites the above statement to show that many forms of reality worlds exist. Even within ‘similar’ worlds, people further have different perceptions and understandings of reality. In the context of humanitarian professionals’ worlds for instance, attempts to represent children’s identities as a single unity of reality is a ‘myth’. How realities of children’s identities are represented in the world of humanitarian professionals should not blind one to the point that other social worlds elsewhere can represent children’s realities differently. This means that it is still further possible to have

conflicting sub-worlds that represent children differently within a seemingly 'single' reality world of humanitarian professionals.

In addition, while one group of people may have its 'agreed truths' about reality, it is possible that another group can also have different 'agreed truths' over the same reality. As posited by Berger (1967:2-16), this possibility is illustrated in different ways in which believers in Christ from different denominations demonstrate divergent views on how to worship. This means there is no 'truth' or reality beyond that which is socially accepted as consensus within those Christian contexts. Such inter-subjective views, individual experiences and their selective involvements in the imaginations of social issues constitute what Natanson (1970) described as phenomenological reality. This means reality is only phenomenally real. In addition, it means that individual perceptions and styles of attribution cause people to see or hear that which they want to see or hear. Possibilities of individual biases or fallibilities challenge the assumption on the existence of a 'common' or 'unified' reality. This questions the idea that humanitarian professionals can communicate a 'shared' reality about children for instance, while the rest of the people are expected to accept such a reality as objective and universal.

Applying the above principle on the existence of multiple realities to this study prompted the researcher to advance a certain assumption. The assumption is that children's narratives and photographs portray neither 'natural' nor 'unified' realities about children. Narratives and photographs cannot portray 'real' identities of children. Instead, children's narratives and photographs are reflections of what humanitarian professionals who

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construct and interpret them want the identities of children to appear as to others. This assumption was influenced by some phenomenological perceptions of reality expressed in sociological writings of Berger (1967); Luckman, (1978) & Schutz (1974). As discussed earlier in this chapter, these interpretative sociologists posit that reality is socially constructed by intentional individuals. According to these sociologists, processes of thoughts, perceptions and representations are all part and parcel of the enterprise of reality construction. As Mills (1959:15) would add on to such an argument, constitutions of reality including how it is constructed should be a subject of sociological imagination. Social experiences determine how things appear to people. This means that people's different experiences render it impossible for them to have a single, shared and unified perception of reality.

The above means that James (1952:630)'s earlier assumption on the existence of a unified and coherent reality is problematic. Subsequently, the researcher is of the view that people should rather talk of the existence of multiple constructions and representations of realities of children within humanitarian discourse. Attempts to construct and portray a single representation of children's identities in humanitarian discourse reflect processes of careful social constructions. Such social constructions are done by humanitarian professionals. It is also reasonable based on the above sociologists' views for the researcher to further state that humanitarian professionals' attempts to advance a single reality about children is meant to support a particular humanitarian agenda. This is a reflection of how use of specialists' ideas or knowledge can become a controlling tool. However, a question that arises from this form of control is, why if

reality is socially constructed do humanitarian professionals advance images of children that portray questionable identities of those children in humanitarian discourse?

Borrowing from Gramsci (1971)'s ideas, the above question can be partly answered at the level of ideological domination. Gramsci says that there is an assumption that those with power always attempt and succeed to ideologically dominate the powerless in society. Such attempts would be meant to ideologically dominate the powerless into 'accepting' the dominant forms of ideologies as 'best' world order realities. Any divergent views from the 'world order' reality [this researcher adds], can possibly be described by dominant groups as behavior that is 'out of touch' with reality. However as Gramsci (1971) further argues, attempts to ideologically dominate other groups in society do not always succeed. This is because for Gramsci, power is negotiated as it does not solely belong to one group in society. People who are 'dominated' have independent or their own common sense knowledge which comes from daily experiences of their worlds. No group in society should therefore be described as totally powerful or powerless. This is because centers of power and forms of domination are in constant states of shifts.

The above idea by Gramsci suggests that the discourse on children's representation should be questioned. It is possible to come up with counter discourses that resist dominant ways of representing identities of children in society. Such counter discourses could focus on the active roles children can play as participants who can shape their own identities. This is because by inference to Gramsci's ideas, children are not always powerless or vulnerable as the 'dominant' discourse that represents them suggests. The

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researcher suggests that counter discourses can be powerful ways to resist 'dominant' forms of representing children under discussion here. Notwithstanding the above point on counter discourses and resistance to domination, the researcher would like to discuss a bit further the point he briefly suggested above. The point is that when people do not agree with a dominant perception of reality, they may be regarded as being out of touch with reality. The researcher would like to mention that those who describe other groups as being out of touch with reality might themselves be the ones who are out of touch with reality worlds of those groups they describe. Humanitarian professionals might represent children in ways that do not actually reflect realities of those children's worlds. In this regard, humanitarian professionals could be described as the ones who are out of touch with realities of children.

The term 'being of touch with reality' can be best articulated in psychological terms. In psychiatry for instance, this idea of being out of touch with reality is described as an integral part of a psychotic condition of schizophrenia. This condition describes people who are schizophrenic. A schizophrenic is a mentally disturbed person who displays hallucinations and delusions about events and people. Such hallucinations and delusions are not 'realistic' or can be described as behavior of one who is out of touch with reality www.healthline.com (2007). A question the researcher raises in relation to the above analogy is; is it not possible that humanitarian professionals who seek to advance a shared or unified reality about children are themselves out of touch with realities of children's worlds? In this regard, their views might reflect some kind of illusion or delusion about what children's 'real' identities are.

However, the researcher counters his own argument above. He does so by stating a counter view to say, it is not necessarily the case that humanitarian professionals may be out of touch with realities of children they seek to represent. Instead, humanitarian professionals are agents who work for the advancement of a particular humanitarian agenda. Advancing such an agenda might entail or require those professionals to intentionally construct and portray 'misleading' representations of children's identities. The researcher goes on to say that humanitarian professionals may still proceed with 'misleading' representations even if the plausibility and accuracies of the represented realities are in question. As Weber (1968) would possibly argue, humanitarian professionals are capable of doing this as rational actors who are conscious of the sorts of identities of children they want to construct and portray. By way of extension, Weber's point on rational human action implies that humanitarian professionals are people who know what is required of them by the system they work for. When they act, they do so out of intentions to keep jobs or maintain a system that looks after them. Their behaviors can thus be described as reasonable human actions to be expected in such situations.

In addition to the above and from a sociological perspective on cultural representation, systems of representation constitute means through which concerns of ideology are framed, reality is created and social subjects positioned. As Putman (2004) & Lynch (2003) describe, representation always involves the social construction of reality. Reality becomes a conscious construction that is mediated through cultural symbols, concepts and selective perceptual codes within narratives and photographs for instance. Attempts to understand the relationship between representation and reality call for a deeper

analysis of the interplay between cultural representation, discourse, symbols and language in the social construction of reality.

However realistic children's photographs and narratives might seem or not, this study remains based on the assumption that children's narratives and photographs are socially constructed realities of children. Such construction is possible because of the relationship between actions of individuals or agents and socio-structural factors played out in the form of a humanitarian discourse that speaks to individual agents. Realities about children are thus neither straightforward nor accurate representations of children's identities. Therefore the relationship between representation and reality in this study is that, the practice of representing children is done in order to portray certain realities about children's identities. Realities are what are described in this study as identities of children. This researcher now moves his conceptual discussion to present the concept on identity. Such a presentation will also show how identity was jointly used with concepts on representation, reality and ethics as they all constitute the conceptual framework of this study.

3.8 Identity

According to Korostelina (2007:1-5), identity refers to a set of characteristics by which a person or thing is definitively recognizable or known. Identity can also be viewed as a feeling of belonging to a social group or a sense of connectedness to a social category. This means identity is an aspect of people's lives that affects their perceptions and behaviors towards others. A phenomenological perception of identity is the one which

this researcher adopts in extension of the above definition. Phenomenologically, identity is socially constructed, perpetually contested and always in an evolving state of flux. This means children's identities for instance are neither naturally intrinsic nor inherent. Social boundaries that are set aside by identities only contribute to create a sense of 'common' space among some people. This implies that certain socio-cultural factors also play a part in determining identity boundaries. In this study for instance, boundaries to do with children's identities are set aside by a humanitarian discourse that represents children in stereotypical ways. As in instances of representation and reality discussed above, agency and structure also interplay in the constructions of identities of children in this study.

However, as Korostelina (2007:5-15) goes on to say, identities within 'common spaces' are still loose and open to individual manipulations. Other than have identities imposed on them, individuals have free will to choose and define their preferred identities. Individuals should also be ready to change their identities when identities become ineffective in certain socio-cultural circumstances. This phenomenological conception of identity weighs heavily in the shaping of assumptions of this study that the researcher again raises as follows. Children's identities are socially constructed by humanitarian professionals using children's narratives and photographs. Constructing and assigning stereotypical identities to children possibly affect humanitarian professionals' perceptions and behaviors towards children. Such constructions might also be both agency and structure driven. Social constructions also determine ways in which identities of children are represented as social realities within a certain humanitarian discourse.

Based on the above social constructionist view that also partly acknowledges structural determinants of identity constructions, issues that the researcher battled with in this study are summarized in the following questions. Why if identity is constructed by individuals are identities of children then represented as almost 'natural', 'permanent' and universal' within humanitarian discourse? How do narratives and photographs of children get presented in ways that 'loosely' portray identities of children as, 'African', 'vulnerable' and 'children of AIDS? Do humanitarian professionals have a role to play in constructing children's identities? What are the implications for children when stereotypical identities are constructed and used to describe children? The researcher started an attempt to deal with some of the above questions by stating that portrayals of children as exhibiting similar characteristics suggest that those children belong to 'exclusive' groups that share 'special' experiences. By classifying children based on special circumstances, 'unique' identities of children are constructed. However, the researcher questions if children should be classified into groups simply because they all come from Africa, have lost their parents due to HIV & AIDS or experience similar situations?

The researcher is of the view that assigning 'similar' characteristics or identities to children constitute managed representations of children. Such representations of children assume that there are certain characteristics that differentiate certain children from others. In humanitarian discourse, such characteristics tend to center on various classifications of children's vulnerabilities. Examples of some factors defined by UNICEF (2006:12-30) as leading to children's vulnerabilities include; deaths of parents, being abused, sickness,

social exclusion, coerced child labor and commercial sexual exploitation. However, such factors cannot exclusively belong to some children and not others. This is because social factors that lead to child vulnerabilities are many, change with time, remain context specific and subject to human constructions and interpretations.

Further to the above, the researcher suggests that nothing like a single identity of children exists. Rather we should talk of multiple identities and individualities of children. This is because identities and individualities of children are social constructs that can be manipulated by humanitarian professionals. This view is informed by phenomenological arguments of Schutz (1974) stated earlier on. That is the reason why this study treated children's identities as socially constructed and manipulated realities of children. This understanding interested the researcher to deal with the question of motives of humanitarian professionals when they seek to portray unitary or 'natural' states of children's identities.

Therefore the researcher treated children's identities as not static. This position was also influenced by ideas of Korostelina (2007:5-15). This author says that identities are multifaceted forms of mental constructs or social representations. No single identity exists as there are many possible social identities. The many possible identities are based on the social positions and interests of people who assign those identities to people. By implication, identities of children like 'vulnerable children', 'African children' and 'children of AIDS' reflect socially constructed labels of children. These labels are not to be taken as natural nor permanent identities of children. This is because the researcher is

of the view that such identities could be social 'illusions' about children. Further the researcher suggests that it may be possible for humanitarian professionals to lie about children's identities in narratives and photographs. This point is explored in detail in chapters 4 and 5.

For now the researcher suggests that children can lose their 'real' identities when descriptive labels like 'African children, 'vulnerable children and 'children of AIDS' are imposed on them. These labels or descriptors may tend to be portrayed as children's 'permanent' identities by humanitarian professionals. However, based on theoretical ideas discussed in this chapter, those identities can be described as illusory and fluid social constructs. The point that children are not the ones who come up with terms to describe themselves undermine the roles children should actively play to determine their own identities. This might further mean that some of the ways used to portray identities of children could be seen as 'alienating' to children. The researcher suggests that when humanitarian professionals construct and use a certain discourse to describe children, such a discourse potentially alienates or excludes children from their 'real' selves.

The researcher's above views borrow from Korostelina (2007:10)'s idea that assigning identities to people is a calculated process of social representation. In the case of children's identities, such a process is shaped by how humanitarian professionals perceive and make sense of children's experiences. This is a form of social interaction. Such social interaction results in constructed identities of children based on possibly biased adults' interpretations and imaginations of children's worlds. However, the

researcher questions if it is ethically 'proper' to construct and assign identities to children based solely on appearances of children that may be limited to origin or race for instance. This question is important because the researcher thinks that identities of children should mean much more than just those aspects of children that are physically identifiable.

It is because of the above point that the researcher further proposes that there should be a second or 'real' story beyond one that just physically depicts identities of children in narrative and photographs. Such a second story calls for deeper interpretations and sociological imaginations about children's identities if one is to 'know' more about identities of children than what is just portrayed in narratives and photographs. That is why the researcher again suggests that interpretations and imaginations of identities of children are subjective. This is because humanitarian professionals might refer to their pre-existing stereotypes or mythical perceptions of children. Such stereotypes of children are reflected in uses of terms that describe children like 'African children, 'vulnerable children and 'children of AIDS' for instance. The above terms appear in some writings of UNICEF (2007:20) & UNAIDS (2007:40-6). As the researcher will argue in chapters 4 and 5, identities of children portrayed in narratives and photographs illustrate how humanitarian professionals engineer social constructions of those identities to promote stereotypes.

However for the researcher, stereotypical attributes to children should not be taken as natural reflections of children's identities. This is because as suggested in Korostelina (2007)'s writing, people can self present even at a personal level. People self present in

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ways that are not direct indications of what their identities are in reality. In this regard, humanitarian professionals who intend to portray stereotypical identities of children can construct and manipulate only those identities that suit situations for instance. By implication, humanitarian professionals may manipulate certain identities of children to create impressions that induce desired emotional responses among their target audiences. Such social constructions of emotions constitute 'calculated' social deceptions that tell part truths about children. What the represented identities of children are, why they are constructed and how they are constructed were thus issues of particular interest to the researcher.

As stated before in the chapter, the above issue on identity together with earlier discussed concepts on representation and reality were discussed by the researcher using a phenomenological sociological approach. Such a sociological approach, as stated before, regards the constructions and representations of social identities of children as being driven by individual intentions and personal actions. This is because people firstly know what they want before they also scheme out plans to achieve what they intent to achieve out of situations. This might for instance include, knowing the sorts of children's identities humanitarian professionals want to construct and portray in narratives and photographs. Humanitarian professionals might also analyze their audiences' expectations before portraying certain identities. They then go on to construct anticipated identities of children that can favorably be accepted or 'consumed' by their audiences. This is the focus of chapters 4 and 5 of the thesis. However, the researcher also acknowledges that the above behaviors of humanitarian professionals as agents can also

be influenced by socio-culturally by a humanitarian discourse that speaks to the professionals. It is also one of this study's assumptions that constructions and representations of children's identities give rise to some ethical issues. That is why it is appropriate to briefly discuss ethics to allow for a clearer conceptual understanding of this term in the context of the study.

3.9 A definition of ethics

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that encompasses issues of what is right or wrong. According to Singer (2000:3), ethics are about standards that define what is 'right' conduct based on certain principles. Ethics are thus meant to give people a sense of that which is morally 'appropriate' and should be upheld. Views of Singer (2000:3) are further supported by Lyon (1999) whose ideas suggest that ethics are about what is 'good' conduct based on certain moral duties such as justice, honesty, truthfulness, transparency, fairness, equality, 'trust' and accountability. These moral duties though desirable are to some extent 'idealist' in nature and difficult to achieve in 'real' life. Issues of 'right' and 'wrong' and moral 'standards' are debatable. For the researcher this is even more so especially when approached from interpretative sociological assumptions that influenced this study.

From assumptions of phenomenological sociology, what constitutes 'right' or 'wrong' should be a subject of human constructions and interpretations. For the researcher this means that the issue of ethics becomes an observation of 'moral' choices that people make as conscious social beings. An understanding of ethics has to be socially situated

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since ethics are a subject of social contestation. This is also because people's perceptions of what is 'right' or 'wrong' are influenced by their backgrounds, experiences, social groups and intentions. Therefore what is morally 'right' or 'wrong' becomes questionable as it is hard to come up with standards that measure levels of morality (Lyon 1999; Singer 2000).

However in relation to this study, the researcher was of the view that at the very least, it had to be possible to expose some ethical implications of how humanitarian professionals construct and represent children's identities in narratives and photographs. This had to be done as an examination of a particular humanitarian practice and not necessarily as an intention to pass moral 'judgment' over that practice. Therefore the researcher was interested in exposing or revealing some ethical implications of representing children's identities in ways that are discussed at length in this study.

Based on the above statement, a particular understanding of ethical issues was adopted for this study. The understanding is that ethical issues refer to those concerns that arise when 'conducts' of humanitarian professionals render certain aspects of their work questionable. In this study, ethical issues arose when ways in which the professionals represented children resulted in 'exaggerated', 'sensationalized', and 'manipulated' stereotypical identities of children. The above became ethical issues in that such depictions could actually cause 'misrepresentations' of children's identities. Therefore misrepresentation of children's identities is seen as morally questionable thing in this context. A sociological exposition of those ethical issues also required of the researcher

to ask a question of motives on the part of humanitarian professionals. This question is; what motivates humanitarian professionals to construct and represent children's identities in ways that are discussed in this study? Such a way of questioning demonstrates how this study was situated within the theory on phenomenological sociology. It was an assumption of this study that people's actions are largely driven by their conscious intentions. However, people as individual agents still exist within socio-cultural contexts that also influence how they construct social realities. Chapter 6 will address the above question on humanitarian professionals' motives behind the way they represent children in some detail.

Therefore the researcher chose to engage in this sociological exposition of ethical issues arising from narrative and photographic representations of children's identities for two practical reasons. Firstly, the researcher intended to uncover or reveal the sorts of ethical issues that arise when humanitarian professionals represent children including implications of those issues to children. Secondly, the researcher intended to demonstrate a programming need or gap before coming up with possible guidelines those humanitarian professionals can use to address or manage the gap. The researcher gives these two reasons to clarify to the reader that this study was neither a moral judgment nor a condemnation of certain works of humanitarian professionals. Rather the researcher hopes that a sociological exposition of this nature generated some evidence that enabled the researcher to address the above two reasons including other objectives of this study. The researcher now concludes this chapter in the next section.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the theory on phenomenology that forms the main theoretical background for this study. Other approaches that seek to explain reality construction, its representations and interpretations have also been discussed. These have been discussed both as counter and complimentary approaches to phenomenology. These approaches are on sociology of knowledge and semiology. They were also selected to support the view that says at times agency and structure interplay in the determination of how children's identities are constructed and represented among humanitarian professionals. A conceptual discussion of key terms used in this study has also been done as part of the literature review process. These conceptual terms are on children, representation, reality, identity and ethics. Concepts played two major roles in this study. Firstly, the concepts were used as part of the researcher's explication of propositions and assumptions of the theory on phenomenology and approaches on sociology of knowledge and semiolgy. Secondly, the concepts were the ones the researcher also used to organize his ideas, focus the presentation and discussions of his research data. The researcher did so to also relate his study to existing literature on the subject matter. For these reasons, the conceptual framework should thus be read as an integral part of both the theoretical background and literature review of this study. That is why it has been presented and intricately discussed in relation to the theoretical background of the study.

The next chapter focuses on humanitarian discourse and forms of children's narratives. The theoretical ideas and concepts discussed in this chapter are applied in the next chapter as the researcher seeks to evaluate humanitarian discourse and the practice of

representing children in narratives. Such an evaluation of humanitarian discourse and the practice of constructing and representing children's identities in narratives is based on a review of a wide range of secondary literatures and sources. The researcher now gives a sequence of the thesis's remaining chapters to show the coherence of the entire thesis.

Chapter 5 will later discuss photographic depictions of children in humanitarian discourse while chapter 6 will follow with a presentation of field humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs. Chapter 7 is a conclusion of the study. It is now appropriate to present and discuss detailed research findings in the next as well as in other subsequent chapters. This is because the research problem has been introduced and defined in chapter 1. The study methodology was outlined in chapter 2 while the research subject has been theoretically and conceptually grounded within this concluding chapter on theory and concepts.

CHAPTER 4: HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE AND FORMS OF NARRATIVES OF CHILDREN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses humanitarian discourse and forms of children's narratives. As discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher regarded children's narratives and photographs as social constructs. This was informed by the phenomenological theoretical assumption advanced by Schutz (1976). The assumption is that individuals are social beings whose actions are driven by their conscious motives. However, individual actions of constructing realities are also influenced and shaped by a well structured humanitarian discourse. While humanitarian professionals can construct narratives that are deliberately meant to portray particular identities of children, how they do so is influenced by what the humanitarian discourse speaks to them. The researcher thus aimed to illustrate in this chapter how such narratives of children result in the constructions of certain identities of children. In doing so, the researcher addressed objectives 2 of the study in this chapter. Objective 2 aimed to discuss humanitarian discourse and various forms of children's narratives. Addressing this objective entailed that researcher had to explore various forms of narrative representations of children identified within humanitarian discourse. An issue at the back of the researcher's mind as he engaged in this discussion in the chapter was how children's identities were constructed and portrayed in those various narrative forms.

However, the chapter firstly discusses the term humanitarian discourse and how it is used in this study. The chapter then goes on to present a brief history of children's representation in humanitarian discourse. Following that brief history, the researcher then

states his point of departure in this study which is concerned with forms of children's representations in humanitarian discourse. The researcher does so as a way of linking his study assumptions to actual forms in which children are represented in humanitarian discourse.

Three forms of narrative representations of children are then discussed in detail by the researcher. Those forms of narrative representations are narrative of 'vulnerable' children, narrative of 'children of AIDS' and narrative of 'African children'. Forms of children's narratives were based on the researcher's review of many contemporary secondary sources or literatures on humanitarian practice. Such sources include; internet sites, newspapers, magazines, journal articles, books, television and radio programs, special reports on children's programs, conference papers, presentations, strategy documents and program frameworks of several humanitarian organizations. As stated in chapter 2 on methodology, reference to such a wide range of sources was meant to provide a comprehensive evidence base for this study.

Forms of children's narratives are discussed in this chapter only as one level of children's representation in humanitarian discourse. A second equally important level of children's representation to be discussed in chapter 5 is that of photographic depictions of children. Although narrative and photographic representations were presented separately by the researcher, both are used within reviewed literatures to achieve a similar end. Such an end, the researcher argues, is concerned with a portrayal of stereotypical identities of children by humanitarian professionals. In fact, as the researcher shall later illustrate,

narratives and photographs of children tend to be simultaneously featured or applied when representing children in humanitarian discourse. The next section will discuss the term humanitarian discourse. By discussing humanitarian discourse before presenting forms of children's narratives, the researcher seeks to give clarity on the term. Understanding this term is also useful when the researcher comes to the point of situating children's narratives within the overall history of humanitarian discourse. This is important since the researcher considered the whole subject on children's representation as a special and yet integral component of humanitarian discourse. For this reason, the researcher thought that the subject on children's representation was such an important one worthy of an imaginative sociological exposition. So what is humanitarian discourse? The researcher attempts to answer this question below.

4.2 An understanding of humanitarian discourse

According to Foucault (1972:70-90), discourse refers to forms of representations, codes, habits, conventions and languages that produce particular culturally and historically located meanings or realities of things. For Foucault, it is possible to have many discourses in different contexts or situations. Every discourse has a 'language' or 'codes' that set it apart from other discourses. This means a discourse can be inclusive to those who use it while it excludes those who do not belong to it. For one to appreciate how a language can be used or characterizes a discourse, one has to do a discourse analysis. As Foucault goes on to say, discourse analysis entails a critical engagement with existing 'discursive practices'. Discursive practices have to do with how discourses are produced, why they get produced and how discourses are used in practice. Any discourse analysis

should be concerned with an interrogation of certain cultural institutions and how those institutions influence the establishing of 'shared' meanings or orders of truths. Such meanings then get advanced as 'realities' in given social contexts.

The researcher applied the above understanding of discourse to this study on children's representation. It is the researcher's view that children's narrative representations and photographic depictions are part of a broad discursive formation. This is supported by evidence from a study on child sponsorship in Zimbabwe done by Bornstein (2001). Child sponsorship is an approach to community development whereby children who are seen as 'vulnerable' get financial and material support from sponsors mainly from the western world. Such children have to be first identified before they can then belong to a sponsorship program. This arrangement is based on perceived humanitarian needs of vulnerable children and as such child sponsorship then becomes a discursive formation or vehicle by which humanitarian aid is channeled. This discursive formation is an example of what is termed humanitarian discourse in this study. Humanitarian discourse is characterized by uses of a 'common' language that describes children in certain ways within narratives and photographs. This language consists of certain words, descriptive codes, frameworks and symbols that humanitarian professionals use to describe identities of children. Humanitarian professionals are people working for charitable organizations, non government organizations and other agencies involved in humanitarian work such as the United Nations. The researcher goes on to state that identities of children are constructed by humanitarian professionals as individual agents who work for a humanitarian system. This humanitarian system is a form of socio-cultural context that

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gives rise to a humanitarian discourse that in turn speaks to individuals or agents by influencing their views of children. Humanitarian discourse informs how 'calculated' constructions of children's identities in narratives and photographs are possible to achieve among humanitarian professionals. At the same time, humanitarian professionals as individuals also contribute towards formation of this discourse. Therefore the professionals speak to the discourse in the same way that the discourse also speaks to them. This illustrates a point the researcher raised in chapter 3 regarding theoretical interplay between agency and structure in the social construction of realities.

The researcher suggests that the portrayal of children's identities in humanitarian discourse is achieved when humanitarian professionals construct and use a 'common' language to describe children. This language in the form of narratives and photographs of children becomes a unique one to their humanitarian discourse. Humanitarian professionals support their discourse through systems they create, institutional frameworks, programming guidelines and media messages. This point will be illustrated in detail later by the researcher in this and the next chapter. At this point the researcher wants to mention that he explored constructions of children's identities within humanitarian discourse from an angle of phenomenological sociology.

As described by Schutz (1967:1-10), phenomenological sociology acknowledges that human beings construct realities they want based on conscious intentions. Using this phenomenological assumption, the researcher suggests that humanitarian professionals are conscious of the sorts of identities of children they want to portray. These

professionals then construct a particular discourse which they use to achieve desired identities. Such a discourse is what the researcher terms humanitarian discourse in this study. This discourse the researcher posits is a complex and powerful one that provoked this sociological inquiry which is largely of a phenomenological nature. In relation to the above, the term humanitarian discourse was used in the study to refer to words, language, images and cultural symbols used to represent and describe children. Such culturally symbolic descriptions of children can lead to certain 'shared' perceptions about children's identities based on their narratives and photographs. This in turn shapes a particular way of communicating about children among humanitarian professionals. Such communication becomes a form of 'unified' perception of realities of children's worlds among these professionals. This 'unified' perception of reality reflects on conditions of reality advanced by James (1952:450-61) and discussed by the researcher earlier in chapter 3. For James, those conditions are ones that treat reality as 'shared' perception and communications of 'common' thoughts, ideas and world views among people.

James' perception of reality influenced the researcher's interrogation of humanitarian discourse within the confines of this study. Such an interrogation approached humanitarian discourse as a term that describes thoughts, ideas, institutional arrangements and practices that influence representations of children. That discourse has to do with constructed forms of representing children and conventional practices of humanitarian professionals as they engage in humanitarian work. For the researcher, such practice produces culturally and socially located perceptions and descriptions of children's identities. Identities of children are thus communicated by use of a socially

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constructed humanitarian language. It is mainly because in this study such a language is associated with humanitarian professionals as a specific social group that the researcher chose to describe it as a humanitarian discourse.

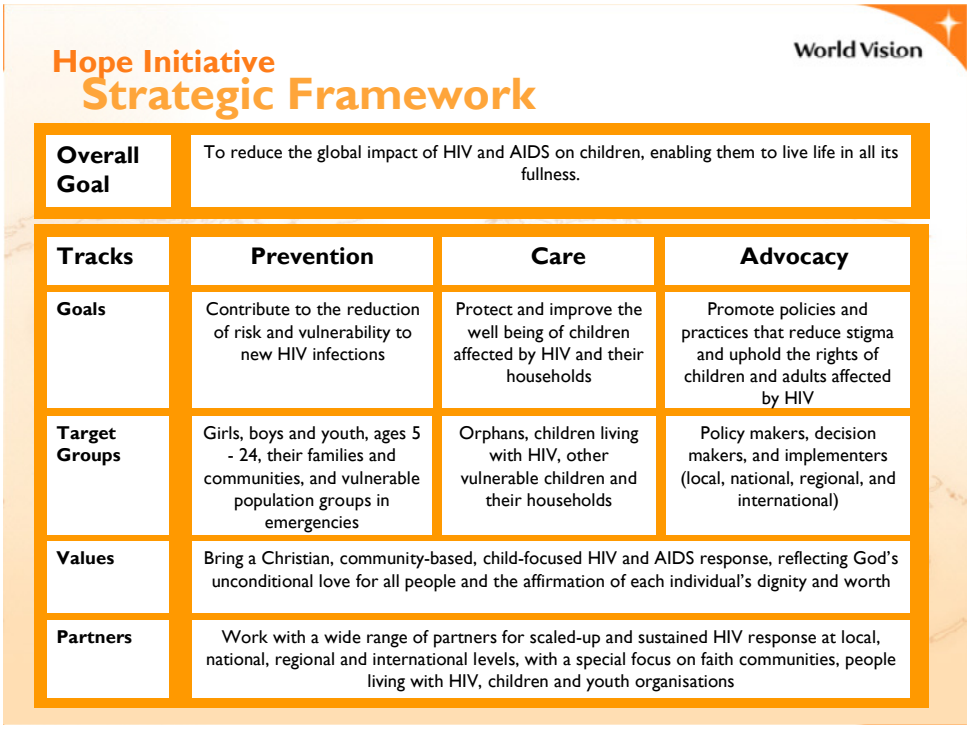
The researcher's understanding of humanitarian discourse also acknowledges what he saw as a relevant possibility for this study. The possibility is that such a discourse can be reinforced by the existence of certain institutional and policy frameworks, program strategies, guidelines and values. Such a view is supported by the works of Bornstein (2005) who discusses how some non-governmental organizations with a protestant background influenced a particular type of humanitarian discourse in Zimbabwe. That discourse emphasizes a dimension of spirituality as an integral component of social development. As a result such organizations will have frameworks or guidelines on humanitarian development that have indicators on how it is possible to influence the spiritual development or formations of communities for instance. Those frameworks and guidelines can construct a humanitarian programming approach that sees children as beings not only with social but spiritual identities as well.

Therefore the researcher defines humanitarian discourse as a special language used by humanitarian professionals. Those professionals work in development, relief and community based social programs. Such programs are meant to deliver special services to children. This discourse consists of specific words, or terms that describe children's experiences or situations. Such words and terms are used to communicate 'common' or 'shared' perceptions of children's identities among humanitarian professionals. The terms

are also referred to by the researcher as descriptors of children within this study. Examples of such descriptors of children are terms like 'orphans', 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS,' 'children of war', 'children of poverty', 'children of Africa' and 'destitute children'. These descriptors appeared in various sources that narrate experiences of children in humanitarian contexts. The sources included writings of UNICEF (2007:27); World Vision (2008:14) & Wagt (2006:10-20).

The above descriptors are mainly used by humanitarian professionals. They are used to show how professionals construct and describe identities of children. As Wagt (2006:10-20) states, those terms are also contained in global frameworks, strategies and program documents of humanitarian agencies. As shown in World Vision (2008:2) & United Nations (2005:7)'s global framework documents below, global humanitarian organizations can contribute to the development of a humanitarian discourse on children. As mentioned by the researcher earlier, the discourse is reinforced by the existence of such institutional and policy frameworks, program strategies and guidelines of humanitarian organizations. Those frameworks, program and strategy guidelines can influence child focused humanitarian programming practice. They do so for example, by defining how programming for children should take place. This, the researcher argues, is part of the broader process on the social construction of the humanitarian discourse. Humanitarian professionals thus construct frameworks and guidelines as World Vision's global policy framework on HIV & AIDS programming below illustrates.

World Vision International's Global Hope Initiative Strategic Framework



Hope Initiative
Strategic Framework

World Vision

Overall Goal	To reduce the global impact of HIV and AIDS on children, enabling them to live life in all its fullness.		
Tracks	**Prevention**	**Care**	**Advocacy**
Goals	Contribute to the reduction of risk and vulnerability to new HIV infections	Protect and improve the well being of children affected by HIV and their households	Promote policies and practices that reduce stigma and uphold the rights of children and adults affected by HIV
Target Groups	Girls, boys and youth, ages 5 - 24, their families and communities, and vulnerable population groups in emergencies	Orphans, children living with HIV, other vulnerable children and their households	Policy makers, decision makers, and implementers (local, national, regional, and international)
Values	Bring a Christian, community-based, child-focused HIV and AIDS response, reflecting God's unconditional love for all people and the affirmation of each individual's dignity and worth		
Partners	Work with a wide range of partners for scaled-up and sustained HIV response at local, national, regional and international levels, with a special focus on faith communities, people living with HIV, children and youth organisations		

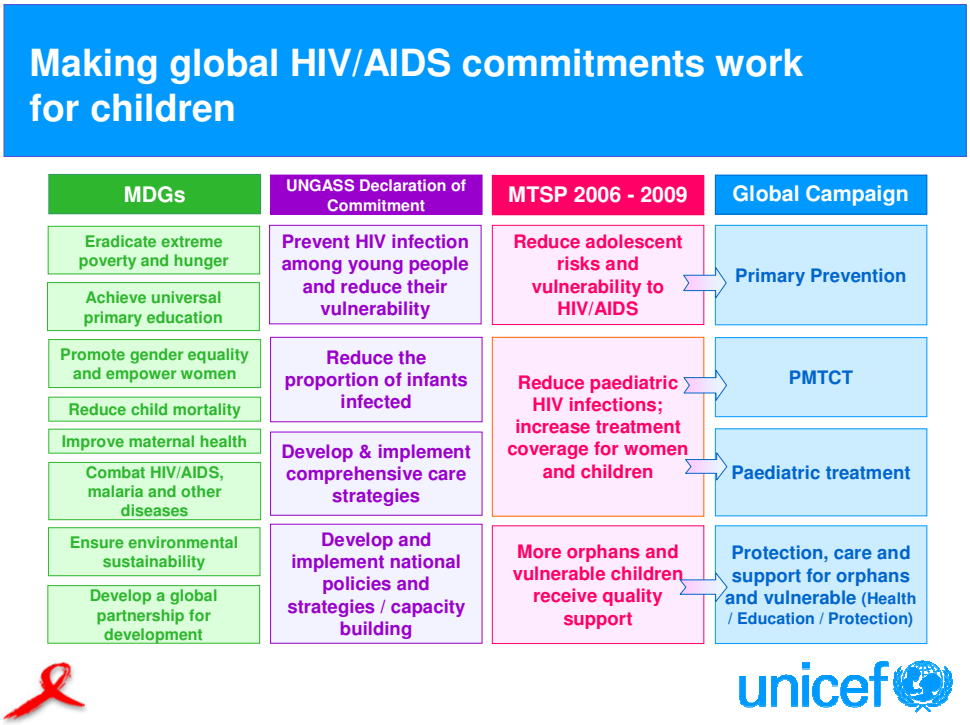
[Source: World Vision Global Hope Initiative online resources (2008), www.wvi.org.]

As the above example illustrates, World Vision International has its HIV & AIDS programming framework known as the HOPE Initiative. It is in this framework that the organizations' humanitarian discourse on children in the context of HIV & AIDS programming is articulated. The framework outlines the goal, outcomes and target groups for the organizations' child focused HIV & AIDS programs. This means that all project proposals, designs, implementations, monitoring and evaluations must follow and use a language that is in line with the organization's global framework. The framework influences a humanitarian discourse that characterizes World Vision's HIV and AIDS response globally. This example illustrates how a particular global strategic policy framework of a humanitarian institution shapes and reinforces that institution's

humanitarian discourse and programming approach. The example further illustrates how an institution's discourse becomes unique and distinct. In the above case, World Vision's discourse is informed by the organization's 'distinctly' Christian values and its community based orientation. The discourse is also informed by a child focus approach that the organization adopts for all its humanitarian programs. This also illustrates how a discourse can be both inclusive and exclusive. It means this organization's discourse is likely to be different from that of another organization that may not be Christian or community based in its approach to doing humanitarian work.

Another example of a global framework that defines a discourse on humanitarian work is the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals Framework documented by UNICEF (2005:7). That framework defines a number of priority humanitarian sector interventions that all countries that are members of the United Nations need to program for. Each sector goal is aligned to a global commitment, strategic plan and the global campaign work that specific programs have to do to ensure achievement of specific humanitarian goals. The table below spells out areas that country programs have to focus on in the area of HIV and AIDS programming as spelt out in the global HIV & AIDS framework. Those areas include prevention of HIV infection among children, reduction of rates of infant infections, development of care strategies and design of national policies, strategies and capacity building interventions. Therefore the table contains global guidelines and strategies that shape or influence a discourse on humanitarian work. Such humanitarian work is specific to child focused HIV and AIDS programming.

United Nations Millennium Development Goals Framework



[Source: Presentation by Peter Mc Dermott, Chief HIV/AIDS Section, UNICEF, New York (2005), www.unicef.mdg.org].

What the above example illustrates is how the United Nations' as a global humanitarian agency can shape and influence a global discourse on child focused HIV and AIDS humanitarian work. The United Nations is a powerful global institution involved in such humanitarian work. Its above framework is likely to have a global influence on the sort of humanitarian discourse and approaches adopted in the area of HIV and AIDS. Given the global power and influence that the United Nations has, it is possible that a humanitarian discourse it frames and articulates could easily appear 'credible'. This makes a discourse from such an organization a powerful blue print on how humanitarian programming should take place globally. Such a framework also makes a statement about what is or is

not ‘appropriate’ language and approaches to be used by professionals who design HIV and AIDS programs across countries.

Based on the above examples of frameworks from two humanitarian organizations, the researcher makes a certain point. The point is that when a discourse is framed within such global strategic frameworks, it potentially becomes a preferred way to articulate and guide approaches of doing humanitarian work. Terms or words within such frameworks tend to be referred to by humanitarian professionals as they do their work. For the researcher, this can happen until those terms like ‘vulnerable children’ for instance get internalized as ‘normal’ ways to describe children when doing humanitarian work. The resultant identities of children from such a discourse could possibly be interpreted as ‘universal’ since they emerge from global articulations or frameworks on child vulnerabilities. However as the researcher agues in chapters 6 and 7, such perceptions of children’s identities can misrepresent children and so they can be seen as ‘unethical’.

This leads the researcher to raise an issue on the nature of children’s identities that are constructed when a humanitarian discourse is used. This issue is an important one for this research as it prompted the researcher to think of possible outcomes of describing children in certain ways. The term humanitarian discourse was used in this study because of the researcher’s particular view of the term. This view is that such a humanitarian discourse advances narratives of pitying children as objects of charity. Children as objects of charity mean that they are in ‘constant’ need of ‘humanitarian assistance’. As the researcher will later argue in chapters 5, 6 and 7, this discourse that constructs

'sorrowful' identities of children can be termed paternalistic and 'unethical'. That paternalistic discourse, the researcher feels, is opposed to one that would alternatively describe children as active subjects of rights. An alternative discourse would view children as people with potential to think and act in ways that improve their situations.

The perception of children as objects of charity which this researcher is against, again led the researcher to ask a crucial question which this study explored. The question is; can narrations of children's identities in ways contained within humanitarian discourse not result in 'calculated' representations of children's identities by humanitarian workers? An attempt to answer this question started with an articulation of what constitutes forms of children's narratives within humanitarian discourse including the sorts of identities that emerge from such narratives. The researcher discusses this point later in the chapter, but now he concludes this section on humanitarian discourse by making a further significant point about discourses in general. Such a point borrowed from Foucault (1972) is that discourses are by nature multivalent. As described by Foucault (1972), to say discourses are multivalent means that people are implicated in discourses in different ways and for different reasons. People select particular discourses based on personal intentions. Discourses also shape power relations between people and institutions. People can compete for and with discourses. This means that discourses are neither permanent nor natural. For the researcher, the humanitarian discourse defined in this study in particular is socially constructed. That is why this researcher critically engaged with that humanitarian discourse as one that constructs and portrays ethically questionable identities of children. The researcher suggests that representations of children's identities

are contestable cultural constructions worthy of a phenomenological sociological exposition. The researcher does so later in the chapter by discussing some narrative forms of children's representation within humanitarian discourse. However, first he presents the next section as a brief overview of children's representation in humanitarian discourse. The next section is presented in order to historically situate the practice of representing children in humanitarian discourse as this adds to an articulation of the study's subject matter.

4.3 Brief history of children's representation in humanitarian discourse

A history of children's representation in humanitarian discourse is one that links children's representation to the process of participation in general within community development practice. According to a Save the Children UK publication (2007:2-15), participation is an approach to community development which states that people should be at the center of development projects. People have to be involved in the identification of development needs, planning of development processes and implementation of planned activities. According to Chambers (2005:3-12), participation is generally meant to bring on board marginalized community members into the main arena of development. Those marginalized community members can consist of the poor, women and children. In a specific sense, child participation means that children must be granted the opportunity to get involved in activities that impact on their lives. As stated in Alliance Publication (2005:2), child participation also means that children must make decisions that affect them as they are capable of representing themselves. This means that children can represent themselves in words and appearances.

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However historically, the issue of having children represent themselves through their own participation used not to be part of some Africa societies' traditions. This was because as Hofstede (1984:20) & Hollowat (2000:5) point out, in some societies, especially in Africa, children and women were seen as legal minors. Participation of children and women was limited by some cultural practices. As a result, the representations and involvements of children in matters of public interest were the preserve of men. Children had to be represented by adults so that their views, problems and interests could be known, heard or taken into account. This was because as argued by Hosftede (1984), in some African societies, it was expected that children had to pass through several stages of social development before becoming adults. At each of such levels, the children would acquire certain social competencies. Adults would then assign limited responsibilities to children based on those social competencies. The following citation about how a certain Nso community from Cameroon gradually assigned responsibilities to children based on age illustrates this point. As Nsamenang and Lamb (1998) put it across;

> "Children are progressively assigned different roles at different life stages, depending on their perceived level of social competence rather than biological maturation. This emphasis reflects the fear that some people who are mature in chronological terms may behave irresponsibly. Thus, the notion of social intelligence changes according to ontogenetic status, as children are systematically incorporated into different roles at different stages in life" (1998:250).

Based on the above example, it is reasonable in some instances to assume that it was necessary for adults to represent children in complex issues affecting children. Such issues for instance include the design of appropriate projects to meet children's humanitarian needs. Children did not need to be available or present in order to have their issues represented. As such humanitarian programs tended to have less focus on issues to

do with the direct participation of children in general. However, as an approach known as the human rights approach to programming came into perspective, some of the above historical perceptions on the limited participation of children shifted within humanitarian discourse. As described by Lansdown (2005:1), this approach started to acknowledge that children were a special group of people with specific rights just like adults. Due to this shift in understanding, it meant that approaches to children's representations had to change. As Lansdown states;

> "Childhood is also to be recognized as a period of entitlement to additional protection in consequence of children's evolving capacities. Both these aspects of childhood status lead to the necessity for significant adaptations to the concept of rights-based approaches to programming… It has become known as "child rights programming", and is now the approach adopted in the field by an increasing number of members…" (2005:1).

As result of the shift in humanitarian discourse to include children's rights, humanitarian professionals started designing child focused interventions. Those interventions addressed children's participation, representations, empowerment, local ownership and recognition as social actors among adults. This meant that in human rights terms, children's representations began being seen as synonymous with child participation. According to Alliance (2005:8), allowing children and young people to represent themselves meant that the adults and especially men had to learn to listen and to move away from the habit of deciding everything for children. This human rights approach has also been articulated in global enactments or frameworks on children's rights. Examples of such frameworks are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989/1990); Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1995) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999). It is in these frameworks

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that the discourse on children's representation got constructed and framed at a global level. For the researcher, what is common in these global frameworks is the point that children are recognized as agents with rights that must be respected. For UNICEF (2005:2-17) such rights are rights to survival, development, protection and participation. As mentioned by the researcher earlier in the chapter, global frameworks constitute blue prints for shaping a discourse on children's representation. This is an important insight from the history of children's representation in humanitarian discourse.

Therefore based on the above, it appears that from a human rights angle, developments on children's representations in humanitarian discourse sought to achieve several things. Those things included allowing children to be represented in processes of decision making, enabling an environment that is conducive to children's participation and giving space and chance for children to express themselves. The above view is also supported by writings of Richter & Rama (2006) and Save the Children UK (2007). Such an understanding of children's representation encourages professionals to; design programs based on the views of children, accept that children are subjects of rights who know what they want, acknowledge that children can represent themselves and that children can contribute to their own development. This is the strength of current approaches and practices on children's representation within humanitarian work as articulated by several authors who include Hofstede (1984); Hollowat (2000); Connolly (2006) & Kim (2001).

However, the researcher is of the view that a contradiction emerges within this humanitarian discourse on children's representation. On one hand and as seen from the

above arguments, there is a strong position that says children can represent themselves well. This can be made possible by allowing children to actively participate on matters affecting them. On the other hand, there is another view that seems to say children are not always capable of representing themselves. Children's participation should thus be seen within the limits of children's evolving social capacities. This for the researcher means that there are times when it is expected that adults can presumably represent children by reproducing what the children say or by stating what children want. Adults can still do this without children's active involvement or consent although the absence of consent raises some ethical questions.

According to the researcher, above views reflect some weaknesses or gaps in literatures that discuss children's representations in humanitarian discourse. Literatures on children's representation seem to define and discuss children's representations largely in terms of children's involvements in program assessments and designs. In some cases, children's representations in the context of participation are limited to children providing some information and giving opinions over issues affecting them. This is evident from the writings of the International HIV & AIDS Alliance (2004); Hofstede (1984); Hollowat (2000); Connolly (2006) & Kim (2001). Therefore for the researcher, there is one dimension to children's representations that is not well articulated within reviewed literatures. Such a dimension has to do with how above representations of children can be explained from a sociological angle called phenomenology. This angle adopted in this study is one that is concerned with the social constructions of children's identities within narrative and photographic representations. This study's view of representation thus goes

beyond mere child participation activities as revealed by the above historical account of children's representations in humanitarian discourse.

This phenomenological angle sought to articulate how the representations of children's identities within humanitarian discourse constitute a form of sociological construction. This took the researcher to a deeper sociological level of looking at children's representations. Such a level is one that considered children's representations as more than just the number based physical participation or contributions of children to decisions or social processes. For the researcher, children's representation became a social practice that could be explained from a certain sociological angle. Phenomenological sociological representation which the researcher explored was concerned with how adults intentionally seek to represent children's identities in narratives and photographs. That became an interesting academic level at which to explore children's representations. That level was interesting because for the researcher it is a level of representing children that claims to deliver 'actual' presences of children in their 'absences'. Yet such a level of representing children is a cultural one

The above meant that the researcher had to also explore the matter of social reality since narrative and photographic representations of children are done to portray certain realities about children's experiences. It was this sort of interest to achieve a social constructivist level of understanding that exposes intentions behind representations of children that influenced this study. It is the above academic interest that sought to advance

interpretative sociological explanations to constructions and representations of children's identities that gave this study its 'unique' academic niche or contribution.

The decision to focus on this level of children's representation was also historically influenced by what the researcher saw as a programmatic shift among some humanitarian organizations involved in designing children's programs. The programmatic shift seems to support the view that the best way to represent or let the world know about children's plight is by having the children 'speak' for themselves. As found in writings of UNICEF (2006); Save the Children UK (2007) & International HIV & AIDS Alliance (2004), children must be 'seen' so that their appearances are not misrepresented by the adults. Children must also tell their own stories to make the world 'aware' or conscious of the circumstances under which such children live. Therefore based on the above view, it can be assumed to be quite possible to achieve 'actual' or 'real' representations of children's identities using their narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse.

The researcher's review of literatures on children's representations revealed that notable works in this area tend to focus mainly on media representations, semiotic advertising, communications and cultural representations. This was reflected in works of UNICEF (2006); UNICEF, UNAIDS & USAID (2004). There is limited documented academic work that articulates how children's representations in narratives and photographs constitute a special type of reality construction within the context of humanitarian work. Instead, messages which mainly come out from various forms of children's representations within reviewed humanitarian discourse literatures were those of; the

prevalence of vulnerable children from 'resource' constrained settings, children who are suffering, children with a lack of adequate material and emotional support, children in need of special protection and children whose future is bleak.

What was notably missing from the above depictions of children was a sociological exposition of children's representation as a specific cultural practice within the context of humanitarian discourse. In particular the researcher discovered that there was limited documentation of how representations of children in above contexts could be related to social processes of reality constructions as discussed in chapter 3. That is why the researcher took up this gap as an 'unresolved' academic research issue that had to be explored from an angle of phenomenological sociology. The researcher thus aimed to make a sociological contribution by interrogating selected narratives and photographs of children using phenomenological sociology within humanitarian discourse. It was the researcher's view that this would be possible if he specifically explored narratives and photographs as social constructs that tell deeper stories about identities of children.

This is because for the researcher, children's narratives and photographs have become such important forms of children's representations in humanitarian discourse worthy of such sociological inquiry. For the researcher, such forms of representations go beyond just the traditional involvement or participation of children in program design as has been historically the case. Having presented a history of children's representation and also situated such children's representation within the practice of humanitarian programming, the researcher moves to state his point of departure in the study. This point is one the

researcher adopted to commence his exposition of various forms of children's narrative representations in humanitarian discourse to be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

4.4 Understanding children's representation: a point of departure

The researcher's point of departure in this study was one that was informed by a phenomenological conceptual understanding of reality. Such a conceptual understanding of reality states that reality is socially constructed. People construct reality based on their personal intentions, conscious actions and preferred social outcomes. This view is associated with Berger & Luckman (1966); Weber (1947) & Sibeon (2004). By applying the above understanding, the researcher states that in the context of humanitarian discourse, children's narratives and photographs are socially constructed. They are constructed by humanitarian professionals who seek to communicate certain identities of children. Such communications might for instance depict identities of children as 'vulnerable', 'abused', 'street children', 'orphans', children of poverty', 'children of Africa' and 'children of HIV & AIDS'. These descriptions appear in writings of Boyden (2000) & Friedman (1991) among others.

The researcher suggests that children's identities are constructed in the above and other ways in narratives and photographs. Such terms that assign identities to children are what the researcher refers to as descriptors of children in this study. The researcher understands the term descriptors to mean ways in which identities of children are constructed and attributed to them. Furthermore he suggests that constructions and attributions of identities to children are based on humanitarian professionals' perceptions

of children's circumstances. When humanitarian professionals simultaneously feature narratives and photographs of children, they do so with an intention to represent certain identities of children. Those representations claims are usually based on evidence that is purportedly collected by the professionals from children in forms of 'voices' and 'appearances' of children.

The researcher commenced his exposition from a point that says the process of assigning identities to children using certain descriptors can be understood in relation to a concept known as 'the gaze'. This concept which is also called 'the look' is a technical term that was widely used in film theory in the 1970s. As Chandler (2002:10-30) states, the term is now broadly used by media theorists in reference to ways in which viewers look at people's images in visual medium and other textual forms. Forms of gaze can be photographic or textual. The gaze is a process of looking at an object in a way that the object is not conscious or aware that it is being viewed. As Schroeder (1998:6-9) concurs, the gaze is a process of exerting psychological power or intrusion that gives the gazer or viewer superiority over the object of the gaze.

For instance, while children may be aware that they are giving narratives or getting photographed, they do not know how their narratives or photographs will be gazed at. They also cannot control those who gaze at them. Since children are 'objects' of the 'gaze' in this study, it is important to know which humanitarian professionals gaze at children including why and how they gaze at children. That is why the researcher was also interested in forms of identities that professionals seek to construct from 'gazing' at

children's narratives and photographs. Schroeder (1998:6-9) states that in a feminist sexist sense the term 'gaze' implies a form of men's intrusive 'lustful' look at women. This idea caused the researcher to ask whether or not humanitarian professionals 'lustfully' look at children's narratives and photographs? The researcher further adapted Schroeder's idea to suggest that when humanitarian professionals gaze at children's narratives and photographs, they intrude into children's lives. Such intrusions, the researcher feels, can violate children's privacies. Those violations by humanitarian professionals can also render children 'vulnerable' together with other causes of children' vulnerabilities. This means how humanitarian work is practiced can in itself be a cause of harm to children. For instance, violations of children's privacies constitute ethically questionable conducts of the professionals.

The researcher goes on to say how children's identities are constructed in narratives and photographs are determined by the professionals who do the 'gazing' or 'looking'. Humanitarian professionals who 'look' or 'gaze' may choose to direct or concentrate their 'gazing' on specific aspects of children's narratives or photographs. This is influenced by the sorts of identities of children that the professionals would want to see advanced by the narratives and photographs. The researcher, following Schroeder (1998)'s idea, refers to such a selective process of gazing as the 'editorial gaze' or 'look'. Editorial gaze is an institutional process by which an aspect of a textual narrative or photograph is selected to emphasize a preferred reality view by the 'editorial gazer'. This means preferred reality views result in calculated representations of children. For the researcher, calculated representations construct and communicate only some desired

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identities of children. When only desired identities of children are highlighted, it means that other non preferred identities of the same children are either potentially ignored or concealed. Therefore the researcher is of the view that editorial 'gazing' is a way of socially constructing reality. It can also be described as a conscious way of manipulating or crafting identities of children. This means that reality construction potentially involves both the highlighting and concealing of things. That is why reality can mean both the being and nothingness of things. In a sense of phenomenological sociology, when humanitarian professionals do the above to construct or manipulate realities about children, they are acting their intentions as rational beings. As found in the work of Weber (1949), people are rational social beings who act out of intentions.

It is the above phenomenological assumption regarding the influence of individual intentions on social action that the researcher wants to highlight as a starting point for understanding forms of children's representations. The researcher treated such forms of children's narrative and photographic representations to be discussed in this and the next chapter as social constructs born out of the intentions of humanitarian professionals. It would also be useful for the readers if this point is kept at the back of their minds as it is the study's main assumption and starting point. The researcher constantly referred to this point as he grappled with this subject on children's representations in humanitarian discourse. In addition to this point, the researcher also wants to mention that, just as he discussed in chapter 3, children's representation is approached as a complex social issue. This is because representation is a subject that is situated and mediated within a dense cultural discourse. As such exploring issues that arose in relation to children's

representations had to be concerned with a few things. These include the language used to represent children, how language constructs certain identities of children and how cultural institutions also influence and regulate language uses.

As the researcher discusses children's representations, he remains aware of the point that children's identities cannot be adequately represented merely in forms of narratives and photographs. Although humanitarian professionals make use of these forms of representing children, what is represented remains tentative and much open to question than can be usually supposed. This is because as forms of representing children are social constructs, they cannot constitute conclusive statements on children's identities. Perhaps what the different forms of representing children do is that they reflect more on humanitarian professionals' own perceptions of children's identities and less on what such identities of children are in reality. The researcher will now briefly explain what is meant by children's narratives and forms of children's narratives before he goes into a detailed discussion of those forms of children's narratives.

4.5 Children's narratives in humanitarian discourse

According to Vetere & Dowling (2005:4-10), a narrative often involves a retelling, usually in words of something that happened in the past life of a child. It can also be told to give information on what is currently ongoing in a child's life. A child's narrative can therefore be about the past or present experiences of the child. Vetere and Dowling further say narratives can also be generally described as stories about children. Stories of children can be told orally or in written forms. Children's narratives or stories account or

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recount events usually to give a vivid or 'actual' picture of how something happened or is happening in a child's life. Narratives tell both positive and negative stories about children's lives. Forms of narratives discussed in this chapter mainly tell paternalistic stories about children. This is because those narratives account or recount children's experiences and feelings that include suffering, destitution, isolation, illness, forced labor and exploitation. Examples of those narratives appear in articles by Family Health International (2004); Vetere & Dowling (2005); Dunn (2005); UNAIDS, UNICEF & USAID (2004).

In this study, children' narratives are understood as stories of children that are told by different people at three levels. The levels include the narrative as told directly by the child, the narrative as given by the child's parent or care giver and the narrative as recounted by a humanitarian professional. The researcher describes these three levels of children's narratives in turn. The first level is when such narratives are given as stories by the children themselves. Children tell stories as accounts of experiences that have already happened or are ongoing in their lives. After the children tell such stories, they normally get published in different humanitarian sources. Such sources include humanitarian magazines, newspapers, books, journal articles, internet and special reports. A question the researcher poses is why humanitarian professionals are interested in collecting such narratives from children and how do they make use of them? The researcher will answer this question in chapter 6. Several examples of narratives told by children will be presented in detail under a later section in this chapter. That section will focus on forms of children's narratives in humanitarian discourse. However, at this point, the researcher

cites the following two narratives to illustrate how stories narrated by children look like. The two narratives appear in a special report on children's narratives produced by World Vision International. The report was first published in Germany but later translated into English. It is known as Trotz AIDS (2008). The first story is of a girl who narrates the death of her father due to HIV and AIDS. She and her siblings face a lot of trouble looking after their ill mother. This girl from Kenya is called Maureen and is 10 years old;

"Since my father died, we are in trouble. Most of the time, we go to bed hungry. We don't have money for new clothes or medicine. I would love to go to school. But this isn't possible, because I need to care for my mother. She is very weak and needs help. My brothers and sisters work on the fields. I don't remember when I last played with my friends or read a book. My life is very sad. I hope that I will get better one day" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008 :2).

A second illustration of a narrative told directly by a child is given by a girl known as Janet from Uganda who is 8 years of age. Janet's parents were killed by the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group during a civil war in the northern parts of Uganda. She recounts her terrible experience and feelings as follows;

"I'm afraid of the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army. They shot my father. And hurt my mother very very much. She died a year ago. Nobody could help her. She got weaker every day. At the end, she did not recognize me anymore. My grandmother thinks the rebels made my mother ill. Many of my girl friends were kidnapped by the rebels. I never saw them again. I hope the rebels will not return and make me ill too"
(*Trotz AIDS* 2008: 4).

What the above two narratives told by the children illustrate is that children are at times asked by humanitarian professionals to tell such stories as first order constructs or accounts about children's lives. As Gibbs (2002) suggests, children are also allowed to tell their own stories as a way of giving a vivid narration of their experiences. Some of

the messages communicated by children's narratives such as the two above have to do with; how it feels like living as a child who is vulnerable due to poverty, children's experiences about losing a parent and living as orphans, how it feels to be a child who is out of school and is heading a household, the experiences of being a child who is infected or affected by HIV & AIDS and what it means being a child affected by armed conflict, genocide and natural disasters.

However, the researcher questions how much of such stories of children that appear in different sources are 'truly' children's. This is because such sources are usually neither written nor produced directly by children themselves. Rather it is humanitarian professionals who go about collecting and writing such stories from children. These professionals should have their reasons for collecting such stories. The researcher argues that such reasons may not necessarily be about giving 'true' accounts of children's lives. Since humanitarian professionals have the capacity to edit stories of children before publishing them, the researcher reasonably argues that such stories cannot be entirely be regarded as 'real' stories of children. This is because the process of controlled 'editorial gazing' described before potentially influences the sorts of narratives colleted by humanitarian professionals including how they get to represent them. Potential misrepresentations of children raise an ethical concern. The researcher will explore this issue further in chapter 6 when he discusses reasons given by humanitarian professionals for collecting the above narratives from children. Ethical issues arising from such practice will also be presented in detail in chapters 6 and 7.

A second level of children's narratives is when a parent or guardian gives a narration as a recount of a child's life. A child's guardian can be an auntie, sibling, or other close relative. Parents can tell stories of their children usually when the children are still minors, when children are too sick to give accounts of their own lives and when the children may be dead or simply not present to speak for themselves. Since this level of the narrative involves the recounting of a story by a second party, it is again questionable if such narratives should be termed 'children's narratives in the true sense of the word. Just as in the case of stories narrated directly by the children themselves, parents or care givers also narrate stories to communicate children's experiences, feelings and life accounts in general. Again, it is humanitarian professionals who collect such narratives from children's parents or care givers. The following illustration is of a narrative that is told by a guardian who is recounting the story of a child who grew up in a situation of domestic dispute. The person narrating the story is not the parent but has acted as care giver to the child. This story was told in the context of family therapy, a process that is meant to help people come to terms with the social challenge of conflictual family relationships. As Vetere and Dowling (2005:133) state;

"In the Little family, there was a very hostile and conflictual relationship between 13 year old Martine and her mother which centered around whether Martine was prepared to accept her mother's authority or not. Martine had a very powerful narrative about being the only one who held things together when her mother had a breakdown after her father left. It seemed essential for her that this story should be acknowledged and yet her mother always accused her of lying when she relayed information to the therapist". (*Narrative Therapies with Children and their Families* 2005: 133-134).

A second illustration of a narrative told by a care giver comes from a community care giver who narrates experiences of children living with sick parents;

"When a parent is sick, life becomes difficult for children – there's nothing to laugh or smile about because in the whole house everything is serious and sad. Giving children the opportunity to be in an environment where they can just be children and play and laugh helps them cope at home" (Siphelile Kaseke, Masiye Camp, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, 12/ 03/2008).

A third and related illustration on how care givers can narrate stories of children that are then collected by humanitarian professionals come from a community church worker who takes care of orphans in a project from Zimbabwe. This community church worker narrates the story of how grieving children require spiritual support as follows;

"Faith, prayer, and fellowship offer comfort to children whose lives are filled with sorrow…When they join in prayer with others facing similar hardships, their spirits are uplifted, helping to reduce anxiety and depression. When you add prayer, faith, and social support in equal measures, you restore hope!"(*Zimbabwe Orphans through Extended Hands Magazine* 2006: 4).

The above three citations illustrate that children's narratives can also be told as stories by guardians and other care givers of children in communities. When guardians or care givers tell such stories, they recount them based on their representations of stories children will have told them before. As such narratives are told at a level above the child, the researcher thinks such narratives may not always reflect the first level experiences of children. However, irrespective of whether it is children, parents or other care givers who tell such narratives, it seems narratives have a main function. For the researcher, that main function seems to be an attempt to communicate particular stereotypical or paternalistic experiences and identities of children. Paternalistic experiences include suffering and social isolations. Again this is ethically questionable.

A third level of children's narratives is when stories of children's lives and experiences are reconstructed and recounted by humanitarian professionals. Such professionals can be

community project workers, journalists, program managers, communicators and media experts. These professionals seek to highlight the plight of children in one way or another. As such they collect narratives from the children or children's parents, guardians and other care givers. After they collect narratives from children or care givers, humanitarian professionals then 'reproduce' or publish such stories of children in different media sources. Reproduction takes place when humanitarian professionals narrate experiences of children by not necessarily citing the children's words verbatim. Instead humanitarian professionals recount narratives of children as theirs but at a second or third part level. One can say the story of the humanitarian professional is a grand one that seeks to give a summary or overall picture of children's experiences. Such a picture is ideally based on the humanitarian professional's encounters with several narratives or stories of children. The following two examples illustrate how humanitarian professionals can reconstruct or give second level narrations based on particular experiences or circumstances of children they will have come across in their daily work. The first is a narrative given by a humanitarian professional working for the International Rescue Committee in Africa. The professional recounts the experiences of Sudanese children who ran away from a civil war as follows;

> "No more than six or seven years old, they fled to Ethiopia to escape death or induction into slavery and the northern army. They walked a thousand miles through lion and crocodile country, eating mud to stave thirst and starvation. Wandering for years, half of them died before reaching the Kenyan refugee camp, Kakuma". (*Forced Migration Review, Issue* 27, 2007: 27).

A second related example of this sort of narrative is told by a humanitarian professional who works for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in the Middle East.

This professional narrates the situation and experiences of children who are smuggled at sea and forced to migrate to Europe to provide forced free labor;

> "What is happening in the Gulf of Aden is tantamount to murder at sea. Unlike Europe- where migration is the topic of the day, - the Gulf of Eden seems to be off the radar. It is sheer tragedy that not more is being done by the international community and local governments to turn the tide and prevent more young people from dying or leaving their homes in despair". (*Forced Migration Review, Issue* 27, 2007: 27).

The above citations illustrate how narrations and publications of such stories in different sources by humanitarian professionals seek to communicate children's experiences and problems for a wider audience. Such narratives are meant to portray experiences of children in terms of what they are facing, their feelings, emotions, hopes and fears for the future. The researcher argues that humanitarian professionals publish such narratives collected from children to achieve a number of things. These can include; informing donors and other actors about the plight of children and raising awareness on the problems faced by children in different contexts. This view echoes with Schenk (2006:2) who says that narratives aim to influence people's opinions and policy decisions related to children's matters. Children's narratives can also be used to advocate children's rights and raise resources for financing social protection and other related child focused interventions. In addition, the researcher suggests that humanitarian professionals also collect the above types of narratives and can recount them to advance their own humanitarian agenda. This and other reasons on what humanitarian professionals seek to achieve by narrating children's experiences will be a subject of detailed discussion in chapter 6. At this point the researcher just wants to illustrate that humanitarian professionals collect narratives from children and their care givers. The professionals

then consolidate such narratives before they publish or communicate them. Children's narratives can be communicated as if they are professionals' narratives. Those further narrations of children's experiences reflect what the researcher suggests to be a reconstruction of children's experiences that is meant to suit certain requirements of humanitarian work such as the marketing of social problems.

Based on the above view, the researcher was thus interested in how humanitarian professionals represent children's narratives that they collect from children and care givers. In other words the researcher explored how narratives collected at the child, parent and care giver levels as discussed above are utilized to shape humanitarian discourse and practice. The researcher's view is that utilization of children's narratives by humanitarian professionals can result in the constructions or reconstructions of certain identities of children. Once the narratives are collected from the children, the researcher thinks, such narratives no longer 'belong' to children. This is because the professionals can manipulate children's narratives and shape them to support or suit an 'acceptable' humanitarian understanding. Such an understanding can be one that for instance advances a view of children as vulnerable objects of charity. A question arising is, how ethically 'proper' is it to represent children in ways described above?

In addition, the researcher suggests, professionals can 'play' around with children's narratives to communicate what the professionals want. In fact the researcher goes on to suggest that forms of children's narratives that are to be discussed in detail in the next section can arguably be regarded as narratives of humanitarian professionals. For this

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reason, they are not fully 'children's narratives. This position of the researcher is informed by the phenomenological theoretical assumption that shapes this study as discussed in chapters 1 and 3. That theoretical assumption states that individuals construct types of social realities that they want based on personal intentions. Those intentions the researcher adds, potentially influence how humanitarian professionals collect and utilize narratives of children.

Having outlined an understanding of what constitutes children's narratives in the context of this study, the researcher now moves on to discuss three forms of children's narratives found in humanitarian discourse. These forms are the narrative of vulnerable children, the narrative of children of AIDS and the narrative of African children. The researcher came up with these three forms of children's narratives based on a thematic categorization of children's narratives he reviewed in various sources. The researcher also intends to illustrate how forms of narratives can be used to explain different ways in which humanitarian professionals seek to construct and portray identities of children.

4.6 Forms of children's narratives

The researcher uses the term 'forms of children's narratives' to refer to 'common' ways in which children are described in stories reviewed from literature sources. To come up with these forms of narratives, the researcher grouped or categorized common descriptors of children as found in literature sources. The researcher understands forms of children's narratives to mean broad ways that subsume individual descriptions of children. Those broad ways of describing children make up narratives that tell 'similar' stories about

children. A form of children's narrative also constructs and portrays particular identities of children it describes. Three forms of children's narratives to be discussed in this chapter are narrative of vulnerable children, narrative of children of AIDS and narrative of African children. The researcher mentions that these three forms of narratives tell different but reinforcing stories of children within humanitarian discourse. In addition the three forms of narratives also construct stereotypical identities of children that appear intentional on the part of humanitarian professionals. The researcher also states that the forms of children's narratives represent more than just collections of stories of children brought together. This is because the researcher is of the view that these forms of children's narratives shape and are also shaped by a particular humanitarian discourse. That discourse is in turn influenced by an institutional framework within which the same humanitarian discourse is situated.

The researcher further suggests that humanitarian professionals ideally collect children's narratives they can utilize in the process of doing their humanitarian work. For this reason, forms of children's narratives contribute to the formation and shaping of a child focused humanitarian discourse. Within such a discourse, the researcher suggests, forms of children's narratives get framed in ways that result in the constructions of certain identities of children. Such constructions are the intentional works of humanitarian professionals. Therefore to come up with the three forms of children's narratives discussed in detail below, the researcher did so based on his own readings of children's narratives. He also did his own interpretations of how humanitarian professionals use those narratives to communicate about children's identities. Forms of children's

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narratives do not distinctly appear within reviewed sources, as they are presented in this chapter by the researcher. The narrative forms are how the researcher coined them and chose to categorize different descriptions of children in stories and articles that he reviewed specifically for this study. Several secondary sources were reviewed by the researcher to come up with the three forms of children's narratives. They include magazines, newspaper articles, books, journal articles, internet sites, special reports on children and presentations by international non-governmental organizations.

To come up with the three forms of children's narratives, content analysis tools attached as annexes 1 and 2 were used to structure and focus the process of literature review. Those tools were used to; identify and review different articles and stories that described children in particular ways, identify common words used to describe children in the articles and come up with themes that emerged from common categorization of terms or descriptors of children. The thematic categorizations resulted in the coining of broad phrases that subsumed several identified common descriptors of children. It is those broad phrases that make 'forms of children's narratives' in this chapter. The table below illustrates what the researcher means by a thematic categorization of common descriptors of children that make up forms of children's narratives. The 'common' descriptors of children that jointly make up a form of children's narrative were categorized based on the researcher's review of different terms describing children in several articles and stories. The descriptors given below are not exhaustive, but only a few deliberately chosen by the researcher to illustrate how he came up with the three forms of children's narratives in this study.

Categorization of descriptors that make up forms of children's narratives

Category or form of Narrative:	Narrative of the Vulnerable Children	Narrative of the Children of AIDS	Narrative on the African Children
Common Descriptors that make up the narrative:	✓ Destitute children ✓ Child soldiers ✓ Children in forced labor ✓ Orphans ✓ Children out of school ✓ Street children ✓ Poor children ✓ Sick children ✓ Child parents ✓ Children of sex workers	✓ HIV infected Children ✓ Children and AIDS ✓ Children in a world of AIDS ✓ AIDS orphans ✓ Children of parents with AIDS ✓ Children of a pandemic ✓ Children as victims of AIDS ✓ Young AIDS generation	✓ African children ✓ Children of Africa ✓ Poverty in Africa ✓ African children's needs ✓ African diseases ✓ African children's literature ✓ War & children of Africa ✓ Africa's children of genocide

Therefore the above classification of forms of children's narratives by the researcher came out of a systematic process of thematic categorization of common terms that describe children's experiences. The researcher preferred to use the above categories of forms of narratives of children as he viewed them to be quite appropriate categories for organizing and presenting wide data he collected from various secondary sources. In addition to use of the above categorizations, subheadings on 'narrative of vulnerable children', 'narrative of children of AIDS' and 'narrative of the African children' were also chosen by the researcher based on their frequencies of occurrence in reviewed sources and internet searches. For instance out of 45 reviewed secondary sources, the term 'African children' appeared 35 times, 'vulnerable children' 35 times and 'children of 'AIDS' 41 times. In addition, an internet search http:/www.google.com/search (extracted on 3/20/2008) also revealed that the term 'vulnerable children' appeared 1,

380,000 times, the term 'children of AIDS' appeared 10,900,000 times while the term 'African children' appeared 4,430,000 times.

The table below contains 45 selected sources that the researcher did a content analysis of to identify terms on 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children'. Sources analyzed for their contents include journals, books, magazines, special reports, articles and internet websites among others. These sources which appear in the following table were not the only ones reviewed or analyzed by the researcher in this study. The researcher has selected these ones to illustrate the sorts of secondary sources he reviewed and in which the above terms can be found. The following sources are also listed together with other sources under a full reference section at the end of the thesis.

Selected sources reviewed for children's narratives

Reviewed article or document	Source of article	Author	Date of publication
Acting on what we know about children and HIV & AIDS: the role of the global fund	Global Future World Vision Journal on Human Development No: 1;16-17	Benn, C.	2006
Conducting research with war affected and displaced children	Cultural Survival Quarterly Journal 24	Boyden, J.	2000
Children in focus: A manual for Participatory Research with Children	Book, Stockholm	Boyden, J. & Ennew, J	1997
HIV and AIDS prevention and care for children in emergency settings	World Vision Journal on Human Development, No: 1;22-23	Cepe, M.	2006
Telling our stories: Children deal with loss, grief and transition	Family Health International Paper on online website	Family Health	2004
Psychosocial support services for children and young people with cancer and their families	Research works: Social Policy Review, No:1, 1-10	Clark, C. et al	2005
HIV and AIDS: What about very young children?	Ben Van Leer Early Childhood Development working Paper No.35	Dunn, A.	2005

The promise of a future: Strengthening family and community care for orphans and vulnerable children in sub-Saharan Africa	Firelight Foundation Special report on online website	Firelight Foundation	2007
Perceptions of children and community members concerning the circumstances of orphans in rural Zimbabwe	AIDS Care Journal, No: 9,391-405	Foster, G. & Makufa, C.	1997
A review of the current literature on the impact of HIV and AIDS on children in sub-Saharan Africa	Book; The Orphan Project, New York	Fosters, G & Williamson, J.	2000
Who speaks for the child? The problems of Proxy Consent	Book, New York	Gaylin, W. & Macklin R.	1982
Building a future for families and children affected by HIV and AIDS: Report on a two-year project for care and protection programs for children affected by HIV and AIDS	Special report for UNICEF Child Protection Division, New York	Hunter, S.	1999
A Parrot on your shoulder: A guide for people starting to work with orphans and vulnerable children	Special Resource Book; Brighton, UK	International HIV/ AIDS Alliance	2004
AIDS Africa: Continent in Crisis	Book; SAfAIDS, Sida, UNESCO & UNFPA, Harare	Jackson, H.	2002
The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children living in a world with HIV and AIDS	UNICEF Inter-agency Special Paper, New York	Miller, C. et al	2004
Childhood in African Literature: a review	Book; Africa World Press	Jones, E. & Jones, M.	1998
Providing hope for children affected by AIDS	World Vision Journal Human Development No, 1, 20-21	Kim, Y.	2006
What's the difference? Implications of a child focus in rights based programming	Save the Children Discussion Paper on Online website, UK	Lansdown, G.	2005
Out of Africa: misrepresenting Sudan's 'Lost Boys'	Forced Migration Review Journal No:1.27, 65-66	Witthoft, B.	2007
Violence against children affected by HIV& AIDS: A case study of Uganda	World Vision Africa Office Paper, Nairobi	McGaw, L. & Wameyo, A	2005
Children's Literature: progress and problems	Book; Children and literature in Africa, Ibadan: Heinemann	Meniru, T.	1992
Orphanhood and child care patterns in sub-Saharan Africa: an analysis of national surveys from 40 countries	AIDS Journal, volume18 (suppl.2),	Monasch, R. et, al.	2004
Impact of HIV & AIDS on African children	Social Science and Medicine Journal No: 31, 671-80	Preble, E.A.	1990
Strengthening national responses to children affected HIV and AIDS: What is the role of the state and social welfare in Africa?	Special Report on the Wilton Park/UNICEF Conference, WPS 05/30, Sussex, UK	Purcell, J.	2005
Building resilience: A rights based approach to children and HIV and AIDS in Africa	Save the Children Sweden Briefing Paper. Available on website online	Richter, L. & Rama, S.	2006

Assisting children born of sexual exploitation and abuse	Forced Migration Review Journal, No:27,1	Rumble, L. & Mehta, S.	2007
Another song begins: Children orphaned by AIDS	In FHI/AIDSCAP by Forsythe, S. & Rau, B. (eds)	Saoke, P., Mutemi, R. & Blair, C.	1996
Children at the centre: A guide to supporting community groups caring for vulnerable children	Save the Children UK publication	Save the Children UK	2007
So you want to consult with children?	Save the Children UK publication	Save the Children UK	1997
Children and social protection: Towards a package that works	Save the Children UK publication	Save the Children UK	2006
Children's participation in OVC programming: A resource kit of materials for increasing children's participation	Save the Children UK publication	Save the Children UK	2004
Protecting children's rights in the collection of health and welfare data	Health and Human Rights Journal, Vol, 9, No. 1. Harvard College, USA	Schenk, K. Murove, T. and Williamson, J.	2006
Ethical approaches to gathering information from children and adolescents in international settings: guidelines and resources	Book by Population Council, Washington DC, USA	Schenk, K. and Williamson, J.	2005
The psychosocial effect of orphanhood: a study of orphans in Raika district	Health Transit Review Journal, 7 (suppl.): 105-124	Sengendo, J. and Nambi, J.	1997
Towards a definition of orphaned and vulnerable children	AIDS and Behavior Journal, 10(6):619-26	Skinner, D. & Tsheko, N.	2006
Children for health: Children as partners in health promotion	Book; Macmillan, Oxford	Child to Child Trust	2005
Children orphaned by AIDS: frontline responses from Eastern and Southern Africa	A UNAIDS publication, Geneva	UNAIDS	1999
United Nations Charter on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women	UNITED NATIONS online website: www.un.org/esa	United Nations	1995
Neighborhood care points: An advocacy and action strategy for realizing the rights of orphans and other vulnerable children in Swaziland	UNICEF Website: www.unicef.org	UNICEF	2003
Africa's orphan crisis: Worst is yet to come	UNICEF New York publication on: www.unicef.org	UNICEF	2003
Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children affected by AIDS	UNICEF New York publication on: www.unicef.org	UNICEF	2006
State of the World's Children	UNICEF New York publication on: www.unicef.org	UNICEF	2007
Children on the Brink: A joint report on new orphan estimates and a framework for action	UNICEF New York www.unicef.org	UNICEF USAID, UNAIDS	2004
Sorrow makes children of us all: A literature review of the psychosocial impact of HIV &	CSSR Working Paper No. 47	Stein, J.	2003

AIDS on children			
Narrative therapies with children and their families	Book; Routledge, Taylor & Francis, New York	Vetere, A. & Dowling, E.	2005

Based on the above illustrations, the researcher is of the view that the three forms of children's narratives he coined for this study are broad enough as they subsume different descriptions of children from the above reviewed secondary sources. In addition, review of the above sources and internet search results illustrated that there are a lot of ongoing discussions and writings about such forms of representing children globally. For this reason, the researcher is confident that his chosen research subject on children's representations is part of an interesting and contemporary global humanitarian discourse. However, such an active global humanitarian discourse on children the researcher suggests, called for a deep phenomenological sociological exposition. It was also along the lines of the three forms of children's narratives that tools for qualitative interviews with humanitarian professionals were structured in this study. As the three forms of children's narratives are discussed in detail in the next sections, the following questions that are informed by phenomenological sociology are worth keeping in the reader's mind. Who constructs these forms of children's narratives, how are the narratives constructed and what identities of children are constructed and portrayed in such narratives? The researcher will attempt to answer these questions as he now discusses the three narratives on 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children' in turn.

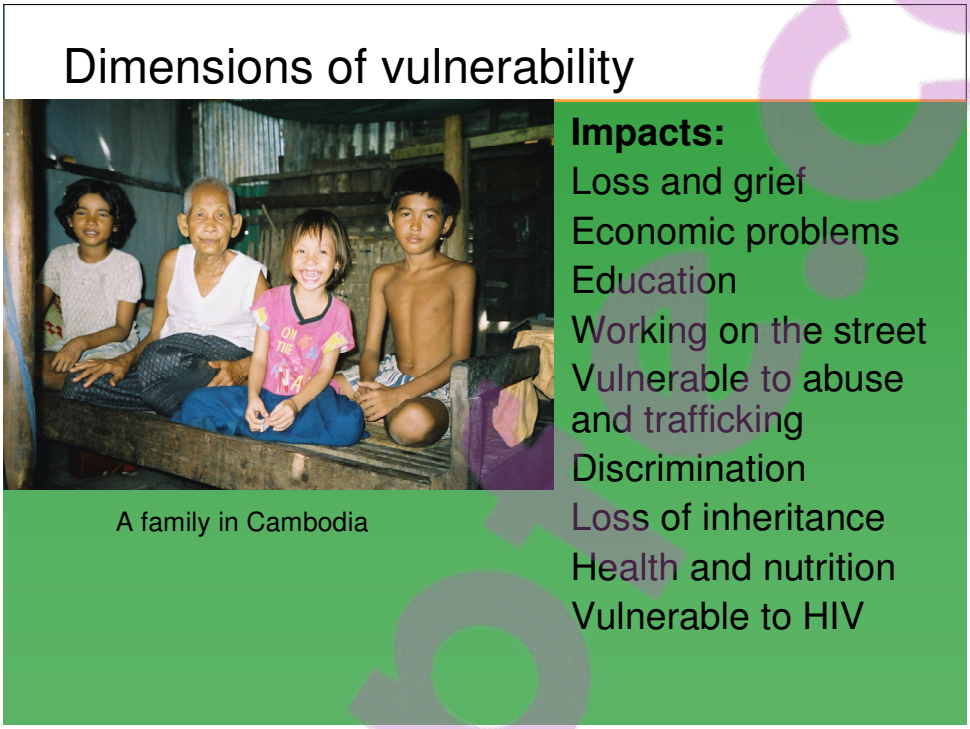
4.6.1 Narrative of vulnerable children

The researcher is of the view that the narrative of 'vulnerable children' is based on how children are described in stories collected by humanitarian professionals. As we shall see

in a number of narratives to be presented later in the chapter, such narratives construct and portray identities of children who are 'vulnerable' from various situations. Most of the narratives to be discussed in this section were collected from 'vulnerable children' by humanitarian professionals. In addition, other narratives were given as stories by the professionals based on their encounters with experiences of 'vulnerable' children.

However, before presenting such narratives of 'vulnerable children', the researcher would like to define and unpack the term vulnerable children for the reader's benefit. While there is no single definition of 'vulnerable children', use of the term 'vulnerable children' in humanitarian literature seems to advance identities given to children who lack basic needs or face tough life situations. According to Skinner & Tsheko (2006:8-20) any child who can be described by the following indicators can be regarded as a 'vulnerable' child. A 'vulnerable child' is; a child who has experienced death or desertion of parents, a child who lives with chronically ill parents due to any cause, a child who is ill, a mentally or physically disabled child, an abandoned child, a child who lives in poverty, a child who lacks access to education, health, and other social services, a child with inadequate clothing, a child who faces emotional and psychological problems, an abused child, a child who lives with a caregiver who abuses drugs, a child living in a context of armed conflict or a child infected or affected by HIV & AIDS. These descriptions of vulnerable children are also echoed by other authors like Stein (2003); Foster (2004) and Kim (2006). These authors jointly suggest descriptors of children within this form of narrative. Such descriptors are the ones identified by the researcher to constitute a form of narrative of 'vulnerable children' in this study.

The following is an additional illustration of how some humanitarian organizations define children's vulnerabilities for purposes of targeting such children in special programs. This illustration of some dimensions of children's vulnerabilities comes from the International HIV and AIDS Alliance (2006). This humanitarian organization supports community based projects that aim to provide various forms of care and support to vulnerable children within developing countries.



[International HIV and AIDS Presentation (2006:3), Brighton, UK].

A point the researcher also wants to make is that, a 'vulnerable child' is not an 'object' that one can go out there and easily identify. While the researcher views 'vulnerable children' as socially constructed realities, he notes that such socially constructed realities need to be seen as humanitarian discourse determined realities. This means such realities may only hold 'true' for those humanitarian professionals who construct them but not

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necessarily for other people in different contexts. Reality is relative as it can be questioned from another social stand point. In addition, it is important to highlight that children's vulnerabilities are not only social in nature as children's biological vulnerabilities also exist. Two points need to be made in relation to this argument. Firstly, a distinction exists between social and biological vulnerabilities of children. Secondly, although such a distinction exists, biological vulnerabilities can reinforce social vulnerabilities of children. These points stem from Mayall (1994)'s argument on natural or biological vulnerabilities of children which can be seen in the form of rape, amputation by rebels or recruitment as child soldiers. Social vulnerabilities of children tend to be constructed and portrayed in ways that the researcher highlights through children's narratives in humanitarian discourse. A concern only with social vulnerabilities of children can displace or overshadow biological vulnerabilities of children that can exist even if no one has constructed them. On the other hand biological vulnerabilities can reinforce social vulnerabilities as it is possible to construct social vulnerabilities of children by using natural or biological vulnerabilities of children. For instance it is possible to socially construct realities of children who are made vulnerable through rape and amputation. However, despite the distinction that exists between biological and social vulnerabilities of children, the researcher in this study chose to focus on socially constructed vulnerabilities of children as this is in line with his theoretical framework that explains reality as socially constructed phenomena.

Different narratives on 'vulnerable children' collected by humanitarian professionals will now be presented. Narratives on 'vulnerable children' in this section are stories collected

directly from the children by humanitarian professionals. However, a few of these are narrated by the professionals themselves. The stories are contained in a special collection of such narratives prepared by World Vision Germany as part of its advocacy work on orphans and other vulnerable children in Africa known as *Trotz AIDS* (2008). The first narrative is from David, a boy of 8 years from Kenya;

> "I miss my mother. She was beautiful and very kind. Before I went to sleep, she used to stroke my hands and sing me a song. I still remember the tunes very well. Sometimes, I dream about my mother. We walk to the well together hand in hand to fetch water. She says: "You will not die, David, you will live and become a strong man". I don't believe it. I am ill and will not live to see my ninth birthday. Because my brother doesn't have money for medicine" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:2).

This narrative portrays identities of a 'vulnerable child' as a sick child, an orphan and poor child, an insecure and lonely child. A second illustration of the narrative of 'vulnerable children' is given by Nkosingiphile, a girl from Swaziland;

> "Since my parents died because of AIDS, it is my job to take care of my two brothers. That's why I quit school. That's why I won't marry. I am their older sister and am responsible for them. I am a father and mother in one person. They don't have anybody else. Our relatives are either too poor in order to help or dead. In our country, AIDS is like a bush fire. I can only hope that it will spare me. At least until my brothers are finished with school" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:5).

Nkosingiphile's story portrays identities of a 'vulnerable child' as a child with parental responsibilities, a child out of school, a poor child, an AIDS orphan, a child with an uncertain future, a child with no care giver, a fearful child and a socially excluded child.

The next is a third illustration of the narrative of 'vulnerable children' which was collected by a certain humanitarian worker from an Ethiopian girl of 7 years known as Merinne;

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"I feel sorry for my eldest sister. All her friends have already finished school, while she can hardly read or write properly. Since our mother died, she looks after us. My father is too weak. We have to care for him. Only he gets regular meals, otherwise he would probably die as well. Then we would have nobody to look after us. The neighbors would probably drive us out, and we would have to live on the street. That would be terrible for us" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:9).

Identities of 'vulnerable children' constructed within Merinne's narrative include; children with no mother, children living with sick parents, insecure children, children doing adult care roles and emotionally unstable children. A fourth citation to further illustrate the narrative of 'vulnerable children' was collected from a street boy of 11 years in Burundi called Niyongabo;

"For about three years, I live on the street. Since my parents died, it's a hard life. I have to beg for everything. When I am lucky, I find some leftovers in the thrash can. Mostly I have to fight over it with other street kids. That does not always end up well for me. I am not so strong. I sleep under this carpenter bench. This is my home. What I dream about? I would like to learn how to read and write. So I don't have to live on the street for the rest of my life. Do you think that one day I am allowed to go to school?" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:16).

This narrative constructs and portrays identities of a 'vulnerable child' as a street child or kid, a child who begs, a scavenging child, a destitute child, a child without shelter, a 'thuggish' child and an 'illiterate' child. The researcher's fifth illustration of a narrative of 'vulnerable children' that was also collected by a humanitarian professional comes from Adisse, an Ethiopian girl. She is 10 years old and lives with her mother who is 22;

"My mother is only 22. She had me when she was twelve. This is not unusual here. Men like young girls. One of our neighbours wants to marry me. He is already over 60. His wife died. My mother likes the idea, because then she wouldn't have to worry about my future anymore. My mother will die soon. Before she does, she wants to see us taken care of. I hope the man will be nice to me. Will he also look after my sister?" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:14).

Identities that are constructed in the narrative portray a 'vulnerable child' as; a child who is born of a young parent, a child at risk of early marriage, a child victim of harmful cultural practices, a child at risk of forced marriage and a child at risk of HIV infection. It is important that such a narrative of the vulnerable child be situated within socio-cultural contexts that especially make girl children victims of older men who prey on them. The narrative also exposes some cultural and gender dimensions of child vulnerabilities.

What the above five narratives of 'vulnerable children' illustrate is that humanitarian professionals collect narratives directly from children in diverse humanitarian contexts. Such narratives appear to be selectively collected to construct and portray certain identities of 'vulnerable children'. Based on those identities, perceptions of children's vulnerabilities are informed, constructed and reinforced. This can become a basis for professionals to advocate children's rights and seek funding for children's special programs. As the citation below illustrates, it seems to be a 'usual' expectation that once narratives of 'vulnerable children' in humanitarian situations are communicated, responses from the international community are anticipated. This form of response can be material of financial support. The citation is a call for support to war refugees including children, who fled the Iraq war;

"More than four million Iraqi civilians including children are estimated to be uprooted by horrific violence and in dire need of help, according to a report issued this week by the International Rescue Committee's Commission on Iraqi Refugees. Neither the U.S. nor the rest of the world is paying sufficient heed to the crisis," the report states, adding that American efforts to help Iraqi refugees have been "grossly inadequate." On a recent trip to Syria and Jordan, the International Rescue Committee's Commission found that already bleak conditions for hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan are growing worse by the day. Most live in dilapidated and congested apartments in poor urban areas. They can no longer afford the basics, like rent, heat

and food. They are severely traumatized by the violence they witnessed, endured and fled. What can be done?" (*International Rescue Committee Advocacy Update Report* 2008:1).

A result of representing children in bleak 'humanitarian' ways within this narrative is that identities of children that are mainly stereotypical arise. If not explained within context, such portrayals of children's identities can result in misrepresentations of children in general. It is reasonable to conclude that humanitarian professionals know what they want to portray from children's narratives so they selectively collect those narratives which make them achieve what they intent to portray. Such intentions the researcher suggests, might be about the packaging and marketing of children's social problems as raw materials for doing humanitarian business. If this be the case, then narratives of children that tell positive stories of children would not be 'juicy' ones that easily 'sell' or grab the reader's attention. For this reason, the researcher further argues that portrayals of children's identities in the narrative of 'vulnerable children' is part of a broad social construction strategy that 'markets' children's poverty or social problems.

Apart from the above narratives collected by humanitarian professionals to portray different identities of 'vulnerable children', there is another interesting dimension of this form of narrative of 'vulnerable children'. This dimension has to do with how humanitarian professionals actually encourage 'vulnerable children' to tell stories of their lives as a form of narrative therapy. For the researcher, this is a more useful form of the 'vulnerable children's narratives compared to when narratives are merely collected from children for purposes of no direct benefit to them. Stories for therapy are told when the professionals let children narrate their own stories regarding their experiences as a form

of debriefing that lets out some bottled psycho-emotional feelings. A publication by Family Health International entitled *Telling our Stories: Children Deal with Loss, Grief and Transition* (2004) articulates this way of representing children's experiences in narratives for therapeutic reasons. This publication is based on a project that was meant to help selected 'vulnerable children' in Zambia deal with their psychosocial problems through psychosocial support interventions. According to Clark (2005:1) psychosocial support refers to a process of helping children so that they can meet their emotional, psychological and practical needs. In this case children's own narrations of their experiences with grief and loss were used as a method to provide some form of psychosocial narrative therapy for the vulnerable children. Such an intervention was informed by a community based psychotherapy approach broadly known as child narrative therapy.

Child narrative therapy refers to particular ways of understanding children's problems and how such problems affect children emotionally. www.dulwichcentre.com.au/alicearticle.html (accessed on 12/08/2007). It is a non blaming community based form of counseling that is child centered and respects children as experts in their own lives. This means children have the capacities and competencies for dealing with their emotional problems of grief, loss and trauma. Two cases of vulnerable children from Zambia who tell their stories as part of narrative therapy are presented below. The first case is of a child who narrates his experience and feelings of becoming a 'vulnerable child' after being abandoned by the father;

"A short while after my mother died, my father and I left Livingstone. My father did not tell me where we were going; he just told me that we were leaving. We went on the train all the way to Mbeya in Tanzania. In Mbeya we got off the train and went to the bus station. Then my father said to me, 'Wait here, I will be back'. I waited till dark, but my father did not come back. A boy who had seen me waiting started to talk to me in a language that I did not understand….When it got dark; he took me to his home. His mother and father looked after me for four months….When I think of my father I feel very sad because of the way he left me at the bus station. I feel sad about my mother's death". (*Family Health International Report* 2004:9).

The next narrative is of a 'vulnerable child' who recounts her experience when first, her mother died before her father became mentally deranged. The child now lives with her old grandmother;

"I was a baby when my mother died. I don't remember her. After my mother died, my father married another wife. I remember my father. He was short, dark and a bit fat. He lived in Ng'ombe compound. My father was self employed and repaired radios. I don't think my father was sick. They say that my father went mad and left the house. He never came back and has never been found. I think he died. After my father died, I came to live with my grandmother….When I think about my father I want to cry. He used to look after me well and we ate well. He used to buy me clothes and everything. He paid for me to go to school".
(*Family Health International Report* 2004:35).

According to the FHI Report (2004:35) after narrating their experiences and feelings in the above ways, the children later reported that they felt a lot of emotional relief. Narrating their stories enabled children to externalize 'bottled up' emotions and deal with depressions that arose from traumatic life experiences. As mentioned earlier, the interest of this study was not just the mere repetition of such narratives from children. Rather it was also a need to attain a sociological understanding of how narrations of such stories by children result in constructions of children's identities. What also seemed to be the trend in the above stories is that children were emotionally vulnerable and required specialized humanitarian care. The narratives also implicitly make an appeal for further support so that the 'vulnerable children' can get specialized humanitarian care.

Having presented some narratives given by 'vulnerable children' themselves, the researcher now presents few examples of narratives of 'vulnerable children' that are recounted by humanitarian professionals. Such narratives are based on the professionals' encounters with 'vulnerable children' in different circumstances. As the researcher mentioned earlier own, humanitarian professionals can construct identities of children by recounting narratives they will have collected from the children. The following narratives are found in a journal article by Witthoft (2007) entitled *"Out of Africa: misrepresenting Sudan's 'Lost Boys'"*. This is a media narration of the collective experiences of a group of boys who were affected by the war in Sudan. Those 'vulnerable boys' walked from South Sudan to Ethiopia. They spent sometime at Kakuma Refugee camp in Kenya before finally being re-settled in the USA in 2001. The story of the 'vulnerable Lost Boys of Sudan' was recounted and narrated by a certain humanitarian professional as follows;

"A group of 20,000 young boys formed, wandering the desert seeking safety. They became known as the 'Lost Boys of Sudan'. The boys crossed hundreds of miles of desert. They faced enemy fire, lion attack and hunger. Thousands died along the way. The survivors found safe haven in the UN refugee camp in Ethiopia and then Kenya. With peace in the Sudan unforeseeable and without family or opportunity in the camp, the US government decided to bring the 'Lost Boys of Sudan' to America'. [Witthoft (2007:66) at www.lostboysfilm.com (accessed on 27/10/2007)].

A related narration also from Witthoft's article says;

"Named after Peter Pan's cadre of orphans, some 26,000 Sudanese boys were forced by violence from their Southern Sudan villages….thousands died along the way-they drowned, were eaten by wild animals, shot by military forces or overcome by hunger, dehydration or fatigue….Older boys some just nine or ten-looked after the youngest ones and small cliques of boys formed their own family groups. Their only relief came when Red Cross helicopters dropped them food or water". [Witthoft (2006:66) at www.redcross.org/news/in/africa/0108lostboyspage (accessed on 27/10/2007)].

The two narratives above show how some American media professionals re-constructed the story of the 'lost' boys of Sudan by recounting the experiences of children at a second party level. They did so based on their personal encounters and interpretations of children's stories. Such professionals' reconstructions of children's experiences were done through the use of certain stereotypical descriptions of children. Those descriptions construct and reinforce negative identities of 'vulnerable children'. In a statement, the above re-constructions and narrations of children's experiences by humanitarian professionals result in the telling of a story that portrays a bleak picture or future of 'doom' for Sudan's 'vulnerable children'. It is interesting to note how both narrations end by showing the timely interventions by humanitarian professionals who saved the day for the 'vulnerable children'. The next two 'sensational' statements taken from Witthoft (2006:66)'s citations given above illustrate this point;

"…without family or opportunity in the camp, the US government decided to bring the 'Lost Boys of Sudan' to America" (2006:66) and;

"….their only relief came when Red Cross helicopters dropped them food or water" (2006:66).

From those two narratives from Witthoft (2006:66) it is the humanitarian actors from the Red Cross and people from the America government who brought 'relief' and hope to the 'vulnerable' children. It seems the story of 'doom' had to be narrated first to prepare the ground that justifies 'much needed' humanitarian interventions. When the 'doom' story is not there, then there would be no need for humanitarian assistance. For this reason, the researcher further argues that constructions of stereotypical identities of children in narratives are also part of the crafting of a humanitarian agenda.

However, stereotypical ways of narrating children's experiences are one sided. What the narratives about Sudan boys do not say is how the boys managed to organize themselves and still came out of their 'vulnerable situations' despite the odds against them. The capacities and resilience of those boys to deal with psychologically devastating experiences is not mentioned in the story. The researcher sees this as a major weakness of the narrative of 'vulnerable children'. It appears that it is not the aim of this narrative to present positive identities or attributes of children who face 'vulnerable experiences'. For example the narratives do not point to attributes of the boys as brave and resilient children full of determination to survive. Other than just have the children and humanitarian professionals narrate stories on children's vulnerabilities, the researcher additionally argues that the telling of this form of narrative has come to be associated with some big names of notable people in society. The researcher posits that such a narrative is at times also told by people of political significance globally. For the researcher, this is meant to give high profile to the narrative of 'vulnerable children'. This is also done to raise resources for children's projects and give high profile to child rights advocacy issues so that many actors can get involved in addressing the plight of 'vulnerable children'.

Examples of such notables include Kenneth Kaunda a former Zambian President, Nelson Mandela former South African President and South Africa Bishop Desmond Tutu. Some of these notable people run child focused charity foundations like the South Africa based Nelson Mandela Children's Fund engaged in child rights advocacy work. A major part of that advocacy works includes an objective to raise financial resources for humanitarian

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projects that address the needs of 'vulnerable children' mainly in Africa. Those children are mainly made 'vulnerable' due to the HIV & AIDS pandemic. The following citation from Kenneth Kaunda, a former President of Zambia shows how the narrative of 'vulnerable children' is told by notable figures in society;

'Dealing with the astronomic number of orphans is a new phenomenon for which we have no evident solution. A new society is emerging absent of parents and the love and nurturing they provide to their children. Our children are crying for our assistance. They need not only material support and education but love. Of equal importance they need an opportunity to grieve and to tell the memories of their parents…One Africa. One hope. One Zambia. One Nation'.
(*Family Health International Report* 2004:5).

A related citation also comes from Nelson Mandela the former South African President who gave the following statement on the impact of HIV and AIDS in Africa;

"HIV/AIDS is having a devastating impact on families, communities, societies, and economies. Decades have been chopped from life expectancy and young child mortality is expected to more than double in the most severely affected countries of Africa. AIDS is clearly a disaster, effectively wiping out the development gains of the past decades and sabotaging the future….we need to move from rhetoric to action, and action at an unprecedented scale.' [http://www.twnside.org.sg/title/2132.htm (accessed on 23/10/2008)].

Another statement similar to the two above comes from Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa who is also one of the world's notable leaders. He states that;

"For millions of children across Africa who have been made orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, the promise of the future lies in the compassionate response of families and community members taking action on their behalf…we must never forget the importance of family and community in the life of a child" (*Firelight Foundation Report* 2005: 11).

The researcher argues that associating the narrative of 'vulnerable children' with such 'notables' or 'big' people is a well constructed move on the part of humanitarian professionals. This move is meant to influence people's minds so that they become aware of the plight of 'vulnerable children'. It can also be a method of attracting resources for

humanitarian business. This is possible when big names and even institutions are 'manipulated' to speak in favor of a narrative that paints situations of extreme vulnerability among children. One can argue that the 'big' people's names can be 'manipulated' as a front to represent the situation of children even if such 'big' people may do so not from within communities where the children are based. It is possible for the notables to give passionate appeal speeches for help from the worlds of the rich and famous or in global halls of fame where money should come from. Therefore notable people are influential 'resources' that humanitarian professionals can tap into as they seek to access financial or political support in addition to doing child rights advocacy works. The next narrative is on 'children of AIDS' who constitute a special group of vulnerable in Africa.

4.6.2 Narrative of children of AIDS

Although the researcher made reference to 'children of AIDS' within the narrative of 'vulnerable children', he decided to have a specific focus on the narrative of 'children of AIDS' because they are a special group of vulnerable children in the African context. This is evidenced by humanitarian programs that focus only on 'children of AIDS' since such children normally have needs that are different from other 'vulnerable' children such as treatment and special nutrition (UNICEF 2007). While 'vulnerable children' may include children affected by war, street children, trafficked children and others, 'children of AIDS' are vulnerable due to HIV/AIDS infection, by caring for adults affected by AIDS or out of being orphans due to the HIV pandemic. As such if the researcher treated them just like any other children, their special type of narrative specific to AIDS would

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have been missed. The researcher commences this discussion on the narrative of 'children of AIDS' with a following statement from a Children's Programs Manager that he interviewed in Ghana in February 2008. The Manager said the following after the researcher asked for his views regarding the situation of children affected by AIDS in Ghana;

> "When I think of these children of AIDS, my heart bleeds. Where is their future can you tell me? The parents will die and nobody wants to look after these children. Sometimes people want but they have no money. Our governments too are not keen about their plight. So I ask myself, what will happen to these children of AIDS in life? What is their future? Some of these children of AIDS will become street children, beggars and thieves or even other terrible people you can think of. It is such a sad story of these children of AIDS I tell you". (John, Ghana, February 2008).

The above statement left the researcher wondering. Who are these 'children of AIDS' and do they really exist? It did not seem right for the researcher that children should be named or described after a pandemic like HIV and AIDS. However, the researcher notes that this is how such children are at times described in some humanitarian literatures while some program managers like the one from Ghana confirm this view. Further views on uses of this term to describe children will be presented in chapter 6. For the researcher, the narrative of 'children of AIDS' is a specific narrative that describes or tells the story of a special group of children made vulnerable because of HIV & AIDS. 'Children of AIDS' are mainly presented in reviewed literatures as children who are either infected or affected by HIV & AIDS. These appear in writings of UNICEF (2004); UNAIDS (2004) & World Vision (2002). Infected children are those living with the HIV virus while the affected are those children who have lost parents or guardians to HIV & AIDS. Affected children may also be living in families that have inherited orphans whose parents have died due to HIV & AIDS. Some humanitarian organizations have defined such children

as; children who live in households in which a person or more are infected by HIV, children who are chronically ill, children who live in households that have inherited orphans and children living with very young or very old people who cannot take good care of these children (World Vision 2002:2-10).

Descriptors identified by the researcher as portraying identities of children within this form of narrative include; HIV infected children, children with AIDS, children of a world with AIDS, AIDS orphans, children of parents with AIDS, children of the pandemic, young AIDS generation and child victims of AIDS. These descriptions are contained in some articles by UNICEF (2004); UNAIDS (2004); World Vision (2002) & Trotz AIDS (2008). What the narrative of 'children of AIDS' represents are identities of a special group of children whose lives are made difficult due to HIV & AIDS. Such children might also live in conditions that predispose them to the likelihood of HIV infection at a personal level. Those conditions in which children of AIDS find themselves are several. As seen from Lewis (2006); Benn (2006) & Cepe (2006) such conditions include; environments that pose risks of sexual abuse and exploitation, child trafficking, forced child labor, sexual violence, child marriage and culturally induced gender inequalities.

Although for the researcher, the narrative of 'children of AIDS' can be part of the narrative of 'vulnerable children' discussed in the previous section, a difference between the two exits The difference is that the narrative of 'vulnerable children' tells a story of children who are vulnerable out of a broad range of causes. Such causes of children's vulnerabilities include; disability, war, forced migration, abandonment, poverty and

others. The narrative of 'children of AIDS' on the other hand narrate child vulnerability from a specific cause of the HIV & AIDS pandemic. For this reason, the researcher argues that the narrative of 'children of AIDS' is a special form of the previous narrative of 'vulnerable children'. However, as the researcher will soon illustrate, the narrative of 'children of AIDS' is so explicit or unique in contemporary humanitarian discourse. That is why the researcher chose to discuss it as a special form of children's narratives.

The researcher gives the next five narratives from such children to illustrate how this narrative is collected from children by humanitarian professionals in order to portray certain identities. The first narrative is given by a 14 year old youth from Tanzania who narrates her experience in the form of a letter addressed to a humanitarian organization known as the Firelight Foundation. The youth wrote;

"I lost my parents to AIDS and then my auntie followed. I was then taken and adopted by an [orphanage] where I have lived for the last 5 years. I hate this place. It is an institution not a home. I wish I was left with my poor grandmother with just assistance for care. Today I have lost touch with most of my relatives. We live in homes named by numbers and the so called house mothers…We as children need real love from our relatives not people paid to love us…How can a child be adopted by just an organization?".(*From Faith to Action Report* 2006:3).

A second illustration of the narrative of 'children of AIDS' was collected by a certain humanitarian worker from a 9 year old Kenyan boy called Ryan. Ryan narrated his story as follows;

"My mother is HIV- positive and is often ill. Since my father died a few months ago, I have to take care of everything. We are allowed to stay in our hut only for another few weeks. Then we will have to disappear, my grandfather says. He believes that my mother is possessed by the devil and that she killed my father. Its all lies. Our neighbours keep breaking in and stealing food.

Nobody respects us. Nobody speaks to us. Nobody wants us any longer. I am very very sad" (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:8).

Interpreted identities of this 'child of AIDS' portrayed in Ryan's narrative include; a child who lives with an HIV positive mother, a stigmatized child, a shunned child, a child at risk of attack, a sad child and a socially neglected child due to AIDS. A third illustration of a narrative given by a 'child of AIDS' is told by one Tesfaye from Ethiopia who is 10 years old. Tesfaye narrated his experience as follows;

"My father was the richest man in the village. He owned a huge coffee plantation. We had employees. We visited good schools. Then my father died of AIDS. His business partner pinched the plantation. We had to spend our savings on lawyers and medical bills. My mother is HIV positive. Without medication, she would die. We quit going to school a long time ago. When my father lived, he promised me the coffee plantation. It's all over!"(*Trotz AIDS* 2008:6).

In the narrative above, several depictions of 'children of AIDS' can be interpreted. These are; children out of school, non- secure children, children without inheritance and impoverished children. All these have the potential of influencing people's perceptions of who the 'children of AIDS' are including how they can be identified in communities. Another narrative from a 'child of AIDS' is of a boy named Charles from Kenya. Charles is 8 years old, his parents died of AIDS and now he lives with his siblings under the care of old grandparents. This is how Charles told his story;

"I've got six brothers and sisters. My parents are dead. They died of AIDS. Now we have only got our grandparents. They are old, weak and poor. But they look after us. They are our parents now. What I miss most about our parents? Their care. That they paid our school fees and made sure we got an education. This was their responsibility, but died. But we live on. I wonder if ever they thought about what would come of us." (*Trotz AIDS* 2008:9).

Identities of 'children of AIDS' that the researcher interprets from Charles' story include; children under grandparents' care, children out of school, children with a 'bleak' future, depressed children and children of unstable emotions. One would almost think that 'children of AIDS' are not 'normal' children. A final narrative related to the ones above is of a boy named James from Uganda. James is 13 years old and lives with his mother in a refugee camp. His father died of AIDS. This story tells a double tragedy in that it's a story of a child affected by AIDS who is also a child affected by armed conflict in Uganda. This is the story of James;

"My brothers and my sisters and myself were born in this refugee camp. We do not know any other life. The war is going on, and the Lord's Resistance Army snatches children and forces them to murder. Everybody here says so. My father did not die in the war, but from AIDS, my mother says. Relief organizations bring us food, sometimes clothes and soap. I try to be a good boy and help my mother. We share a small hut. My mother cries every night. So do I.
(*Trotz AIDS* 2008:11).

Interpretations of the above narrative lead the researcher to suggest that some of the identities constructed by descriptions in this narrative portray 'children of AIDS' as children of war, sad children, children in pain, children in insecure environments, children at risk and children of poverty.

After presenting the five narratives above collected from 'children of AIDS', the researchers make the conclusion that the narrative of 'children of AIDS' is a 'powerful' one in relation to a special group of children. This is because the narrative evokes the reader's feelings in some ways. Those feelings may include sadness, fear, pity and anger. The researcher argues that such might be the actual purpose of constructing this kind of narrative in the first place. Humanitarian professionals seem to select and package those

narratives from 'children of AIDS' that are meant to evoke desired feelings and reactions on the part of targeted audiences. Targeted audiences include fellow humanitarian workers, community members, child right advocates, donors and policy makers. The researcher describes this use of selected narratives of children as a move meant to achieve a social construction of emotional reactions. Emotional reactions can be propelled by panic and fear on the part of targeted audiences. It is reasonable to further argue that social constructions of emotional reactions using children's narratives are not an end in itself. Rather the researcher is of the view that what matters is the sorts of actions people take after being emotionally touched by children's narratives. People can act by donating money, clothes, food, time and other forms of support to help the children of AIDS.

The researcher thus suggests that the social construction of emotional reactions is a strategy that humanitarian professionals use to market children's social problems and illnesses in order to raise resources for humanitarian business. Therefore the narrative of 'children of AIDS' may not be entirely about the children. Humanitarian professionals have the potential of selecting narratives that support the existence of a humanitarian agenda upon which the professionals also survive. This practice raises an ethical concern to do with the 'selling' of children's social problems to raise money. Chapter 6 will explain this point further.

Apart from narratives on 'children of AIDS' that are collected directly from the children, humanitarian professionals also reconstruct and recount narrations from 'children of AIDS' based on their perceptions and understandings of situations of those children. For

the researcher, this is still done as an extension of what has been described above. Narratives on 'children of AIDS' that are reconstructed and communicated by humanitarian professionals are still meant to induce certain emotional reactions from different audiences. This point is illustrated by the two citations below. The first citation is a narration recounted by a humanitarian professional known as Kim (2006:20) who tells the story of millions of children that are at risk as a result of HIV and AIDS. It is clear from Kim's narration that 'something' needs to be urgently done to ensure protection and a stable future life for the millions of 'children of AIDS'. Kim states;

'The ripple effect of HIV/AIDS on children threatens the fabric and future of whole societies….efforts must not only reach children living with HIV, but the millions more at risk due to the impact of AIDS on their parents, families and communities. Family and community structures are being stretched to breaking point…The impacts are immediate but also have serious long- term repercussions. For example many vulnerable children are forced to forego educational opportunities that are their very hope for the future. Young girls are at particular risk. What do these millions of vulnerable children need?' (Kim 2006:20).

A related narration that also tells the story of a bleak future for 'children of AIDS' is given by Benn (2006:16). His narration goes as follows;

'Increased HIV/AIDS funding over the past decade has not halted the growth of the pandemic…New infections are increasing for children and young people…In the rapidly growing epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 75% of new infections are being diagnosed in young people' (Benn 2006:16).

What the two narratives recounted by humanitarian professionals in addition to ones collected directly from children presented before illustrate is an intentional construction of identities of 'children of AIDS' as children whose suffering is endless. This constitutes what the researcher calls the social marketing of disease or illness for the advancement of

'humanitarian businesses'. The researcher argues that the AIDS problem can be figuratively seen as a 'raw material' which if well packaged, branded and marketed can translate into money as an 'end product'. In other instances, research findings and 'scientific illustrations are used by humanitarian professionals to come up with 'evidence' that support the construction of a 'bleak' future for children within the narrative of 'children of AIDS'. For the researcher, this is also part of constructing identities of children in narratives. Figures, statistics and graphs are at times used to demonstrate scenarios and trends that predict huge increases in the numbers of 'orphans of HIV & AIDS'. Those increases are predicted to occur as more parents are expected to die due to the AIDS pandemic. For Kim (2006:20), this is expected to be the case especially in Africa where there is high poverty levels, poor social services and inadequate social protection programs for children. This idea is also reflected in writings of Benn (2006); Foster & Williamson (2000); Hunter (1990); Foster & Makufa (1997); Monasch & Boerma (2004) and Bicego & Rustein (2003). Below is an illustration that shows how statistics and figures are used in support of the constructions of the narrative of 'children of AIDS'. The table gives a summary of statistics that project increases in future orphan trends due to the rise in rates of HIV infections in selected African countries. This gives some 'scientific' sophistication to the process of constructing children's realities within the narrative of 'children of AIDS'.

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Projections of AIDS orphans in African countries by year 2010

Country	Total orphans	% of children who are orphans	No. of orphans due to AIDS	Children orphaned by AIDS as % of all orphans	Projected orphans by 2010	Orphans as a % of all children by 2010
Kenya	2,300,000	13	1,100,000	46	2,500,000	13
Tanzania	2,400,000	12	1,100,00	44	2,500,000	12
Malawi	950,000	15	550,000	57	1,100,000	15
Swaziland	95,000	17	63,000	66	120,000	22
Zimbabwe	1,400,000	21	1,100,000	77	1,300,000	20
Ethiopia	4,800,000	11	-	-	5,100,000	11
Total	**48,300,000**	**12**	**12,000,000**	**25**	**53,100,000**	**30**

[Source: Extracted from UNICEF (2007) *Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children Affected by AIDS*. Quoting from UNAIDS and UNICEF 2006:12].

This is an example of how social 'scientific' studies can be used to support certain forms of representing children within the narrative on children of AIDS. For the researcher, saying that something is scientifically valid or sound usually requires that there be statistics or hard figures like the ones presented above to support such a position. Even the title of the source of the statistics given as; '*Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations: Children Affected by AIDS'* seems to be coined in a way that coveys a message of a 'bleak' future for a particular generation of African children. Those children's existence is under some form of threat of extinction. Another publication by UNICEF (2001) titled *'Children on the Brink'* also portrays the future situation of children of AIDS in Africa as precarious. A related publication that portrays the same picture of gloom is by Jackson (2002) and is called, *"AIDS Africa: Continent in Crisis"*. The researcher argues that such titles are intentionally constructed to 'vividly' paint pictures of terrible situations of children who are on the verge of 'extinction' due to an extreme catastrophe which is HIV & AIDS. All this constitute the construction and reconstruction of a narrative of 'children of AIDS'. The researcher adds that such ways of representing children potentially border on 'unethical' exaggerations and sensationalism.

In addition, the researcher further posits that humanitarian professionals know what they are doing as they engage in such a form of social engineering.

A related illustration in support of the above constructions of children as victims of HIV and AIDS can also be seen from another UNICEF (2003) report entitled "*Africa's orphan crisis: worst yet to come"*. This report which is also backed by research 'evidence' makes a point that the numbers of 'African AIDS orphans' as of year 2003 was just a start of a worst crisis. The report's key message is that the worst impacts of HIV and AIDS on children in Africa are yet to be felt. With an AIDS orphan population of more than 11 million in Africa, half of whom by 2003 were aged between 10 and 14 years, this report graphically projects that countries like Botswana, Zimbabwe and Swaziland are yet to see huge numbers of AIDS orphans. This point is statistically illustrated in the report by the following graphical depiction of projected growth and trends in the AIDS orphan population in Africa between 1980 and 2010.

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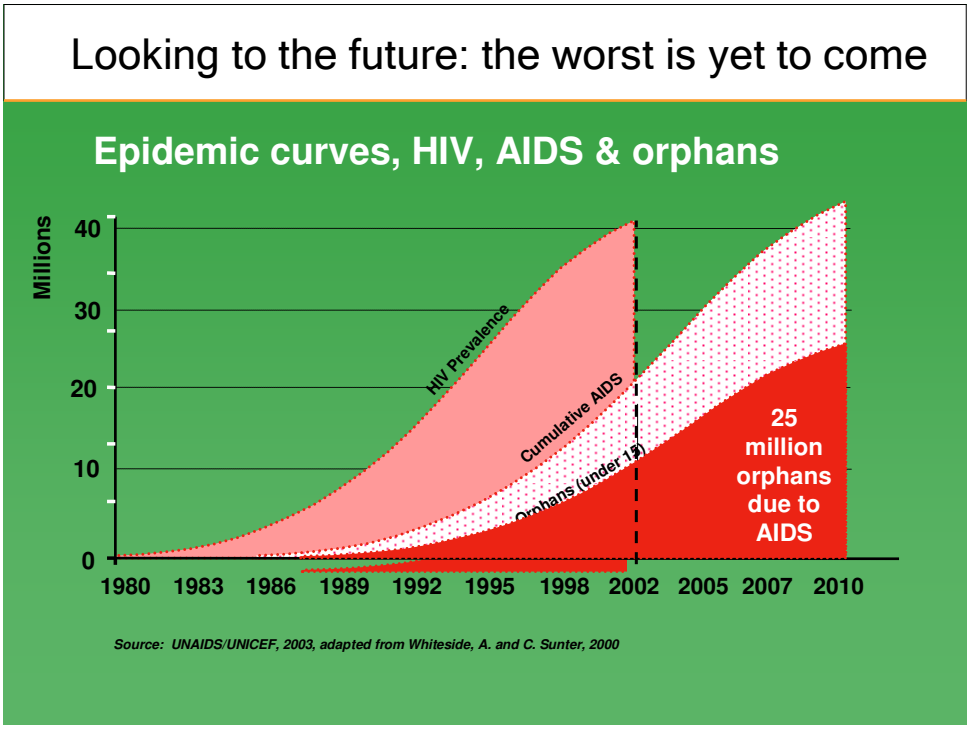
AIDS orphan trends in Africa



[Source: UNICEF Report (2003:12) "*Africa's orphan crisis: worst yet to come"*].

The above graph makes the point that the cumulative growth in numbers of 'AIDS orphans' in Africa lags behind the actual numbers of HIV prevalence among adults. This is because 'children of AIDS' will continue to live long after their parents have died. As a result a 'boom' in 'AIDS orphans' is expected to reach a peak by 2010 when the population of AIDS orphans is projected to touch a 25 million mark. Such a graphical projection paints a picture of 'gloom' in Africa as it aids in the social construction of a huge child centered humanitarian disaster. It is such figures that humanitarian professionals refer to as 'solid' background data when they build up cases for requesting more money to support current and future programs that target 'children of AIDS' in Africa. Such cases are then packaged, represented and marketed in forms of project

proposal documents. For the researcher, this is how the discourse on children's representation in humanitarian practice becomes a specialized and complex one. One has to refer to appropriate narratives, statistics and research evidence to support the point that the existence of 'children of AIDS' is a real and demonstrable problem in Africa requiring global financial support. The researcher argues that the use of statistics as research 'evidence' to support a position can be an important and integral component in the social construction and representation of reality. Such a method of representing reality is influenced by a positivist methodological approach in social science research. For Yates (2004:2-8), a positive research approach treats social phenomena as objective facts. Use of figures to support a position as shown above thus paints a picture that ideas being presented have come out of a rigorous process of 'scientific' inquiry. Any counter position or ideas should also be equally based on more rigorous counter social investigative processes.

The above sort of data can be used to show that the argument being supported by such data is a 'serious' one as it is based on a 'scientific' process of social enquiry. However, the researcher counter argues that such a perception conceals the point that all forms of ideas are socially constructed. Reality is socially relative and not natural. For the researcher, it is possible that 'science' can be used to deceive people. Such is an 'unethical' dimension of social science practice.

In relation to this study the researcher argues, the use of scientific arguments is meant to support the representations of children in ways that depict socially constructed identities

of children as natural and unquestionable. This is because such representations of children can be statistically aided by way of data or 'research' evidence. Research evidence is referred to in order to give 'weight' or 'credibility' to socially constructed identities of children in narratives. Since science is normally associated with rigor objectivity and even 'truth', it becomes a difficult if not intimidating thing for one to dispute such a form of a narrative representation of children. Use of the word science can be intimidating to some people. This is because science tends to be associated with 'objectivity'. This is more so especially when one does not have 'solid' disproving data or alternative 'scientific' evidence to support alternative or counter narrative representations of children. For this reason, the telling of children's narratives in humanitarian discourse becomes such a complex social undertaking.

However the researcher argues, not all research figures are 'true' because 'truth', like reality is also socially constructed and relative. It is the central position of this research that representation is possible only from a certain social point of view. Such a position is influenced by writings of Berger & Luckman (1966). These sociologists argue that ideas that seem factual and presented as unquestionable truths are in fact socially constructed realities. Social evidence is subject to people's manipulations. This causes some personal or subjective ideas to be represented as objective facts. The process of research or the generation of 'evidence' is a social one. At times such a process can be structured to construct ideas that conform to or support existing perceptions and prejudicial notions that are contained in dominant discourses (Smith 2003; Yates 2004). What is 'objective' or 'scientific remains open to social contestation. The links between the generation of

social ideas and a desire for ideological domination or control cannot be disputed in society. This means that ideas that oppose widely held representations of children in current children's narratives may be dismissed and trivialized as 'non scientific' and therefore unconvincing.

However the researcher argues that the use of statistical or scientific arguments to naturalize socially constructed representations of children in narratives is questionable. This is because as Popper (1976) describes, the strength of any research evidence should be that it is capable of falsifying existing conjectures or commonly held ideas that are normally regarded as 'natural' in society. This is how knowledge develops in society. In this case, research that can for instance, shape a counter discourse that represents different identities of children from the current ones of endless suffering and 'misery' should be encouraged. It is for this reason that the researcher argues that constructions and portrayals of children's identities in this narrative of 'children of AIDS' should be questioned. Such a narrative just like the one of 'vulnerable children' seems obsessed with the construction and advancement of mainly steriotypical identities of children which presents some 'ethical challenges as chapters 6 and 7 will further reveal.

Having discussed how identities of children are constructed within the narrative of 'children of AIDS', the researcher now move to present what he calls the narrative of 'African children'. For the researcher, this form of narrative is a grand or ultimate one that emerges when the narrative of 'vulnerable children' and the narrative of 'children of AIDS' are brought together. As the following discussion will illustrate, a grand identity

that is jointly constructed by the two narratives discussed above seem to be that of 'African children' that are vulnerable due to HIV and AIDS. The two narratives as shown above portray those 'African children' as unique children due to their many sufferings.

4.6.3 Narrative of African children

The researcher would like to start by making the point that the narrative of 'vulnerable children' and the narrative of 'children of AIDS' discussed above, jointly tell a story mainly about 'African children'. This narrative is about children who are vulnerable due to HIV & AIDS including other causes and who come from Africa. Therefore for the researcher, the narrative of 'African children' is a grand or ultimate narrative emerging from the previous two forms of narratives combined. The researcher posits that when humanitarian professionals give narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS', they are actually constructing a special story about 'African children' in general. Humanitarian professionals narrate the story of 'African children' based on their perceptions, assumptions and stereotypical prejudices about what it means to be 'African children' in general. As such the researcher posits that one cannot point to objective or scientific evidence to justify perceptions that influence constructions of children's identities within this sort of narrative.

Due to the above, the researcher argues that the narrative of 'African children' is actually the humanitarian professional's story about 'African children'. This is because unlike in the cases of the other two forms of narratives discussed above, the researcher could not find in reviewed sources instances whereby children personally narrated their experiences

and feelings of being 'African children'. In the case of the narrative of 'vulnerable children' for example, there were instances of children who actually narrated their experiences and feelings of being 'vulnerable children'. This was also the case in the instance of the narrative of 'children of AIDS' where children narrated stories about how HIV and AIDS affected their lives. Such examples have been given in detail above.

In reviewed literatures, an 'African child' is described as a child with special and multiple stereotypical identities. Those identities include; Africa's orphans, Africa's children of war, African AIDS orphans, suffering children of Africa and Africa's orphan generation among others (UNICEF 2007; FHI 2004; Orphans of Rwanda Home Page 2007; UNAIDS 2003; the World Bank 2004; William 2007). Children's identities were further reflected in the different narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' discussed before. For the researcher, this narrative of 'African children' is well placed within a broad humanitarian discourse that seems designed for Africa. Such a discourse is one that is shaped by several conditions. The conditions include poverty, deprivation, diseases, HIV & AIDS, genocide, refugee inflows, ethnic conflict, brutal civil wars, corruption, undemocratic institutions and repressive political regimes. These problems 'wrongly' appear or are presented as if they are confined only to Africa. So the above become conditions or environments in which 'African children' exist. This is how the narrative of 'African children' is located. Such a narrative is one that portrays unique identities that characterize 'African children' as living in conditions of poverty, disease and sufferings.

In addition to the above, the researcher further notes that there is an image of 'African children' that is implied in some ways humanitarian professionals talk about children of Africa within narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'. It is out of the crafting of such narratives that the researcher seemed to notice the emergence of an overall special narrative about 'African children'. This special narrative which the researcher termed the narrative of 'African children' seems to emerge out of a conscious process of social construction on the part of humanitarian professionals. The researcher suggests that the narrative of 'African children' appears to be informed by situations in which narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' are located. As such the narrative of 'African children' could actually be less of a 'real' reflection of the identities of being 'African children' but more of stereotypical constructions by professionals. This sort of argument by the researcher arises from a question he poses regarding how humanitarian professionals represent children. Such a question is based on the view that narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' discussed above generally present children with many problems as mainly 'African children'. The question is; why does the humanitarian discourse on children seem to give a special focus on 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' mainly from Africa? As the researcher shows below, statistics and figures are even presented by some humanitarian professionals in support of this exclusive way of representing children. Such a representation portrays a picture that a high prevalence or concentration of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' is in Africa. This sort of representation seems to suggest that narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' are mainly narratives about 'African children'. These narratives appear not to represent children from elsewhere. It is as if children's

vulnerabilities in general and HIV & AIDS in particular are 'exclusive' problems of 'African children'. The following illustration supports this point. It paints a picture that portrays impacts of HIV & AIDS as severest among children in Sub-Saharan Africa.

"The Impact of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa;

- Home to 12% of the world's population, Sub-Saharan Africa is home to over 60% of people living with HIV.
- In 2005, nearly 25 million men, women and children in the region were HIV positive.
- Nearly 9 out of 10 children who are HIV positive today are from African countries.
- Of the children currently under the age of 18 orphaned by HIV/AIDS worldwide, close to 80% live in Sub-Saharan Africa."

[*From Faith to Action* (2006:2)].

The above citation illustrates the point that the narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' are narratives about 'African children'. 'African children' are identified in the above citation as children who are infected with HIV, orphans and 'vulnerable children'. Even if the above picture is a correct one, the researcher poses yet other questions regarding such a way of representing children that associates child vulnerability and AIDS mainly with 'African children'. Although the questions are not answered in this discussion, the researcher still poses them. Why is it that such high numbers of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' are found in Africa? Are such high concentrations of 'vulnerable children' and the prevalence of AIDS in Africa a result of natural causes or other possible social explanations to such phenomena exist? Is HIV and AIDS an 'African problem'? These questions are left open for the reader.

The researcher gives a second citation that also illustrates the association of the narratives on 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' with 'African children'. This citation gives what is described as a landscape of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Africa.

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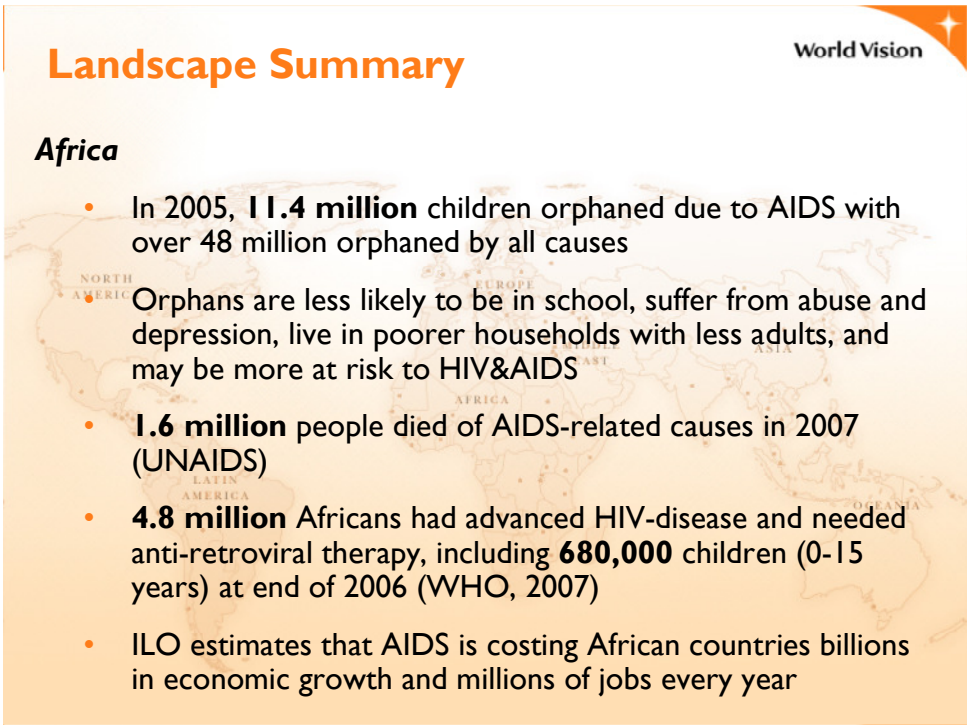
According to the researcher, when humanitarian professionals come up with the sort of social landscape analysis below, they are engaged in a process of social construction. This social landscape analysis describes the environment in which 'African children' exist. It also gives rise to identities ascribed to those 'African children' by humanitarian professionals who paint a socio-economic and demographic landscape as shown below.

Africa HIV and AIDS landscape



[World Vision Africa: A Hope Initiative Annual Presentation (2008), Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania].

The above illustrates how the humanitarian discourse constructs the narrative of 'African children' based on the painting of a 'terrible' humanitarian landscape in which 'African children' exist. From the above example, the narrative identifies 'African children' as HIV and AIDS orphans, abused, poor, at risk of HIV infection, psychologically depressed and whose future prospects are 'bleak'. While it is real that the problems described

above are experienced by some children in Africa, it does not mean that all 'African children' are affected by those problems in similar ways. It also does not mean that such problems do not affect other children's lives elsewhere in the world. The above illustration should also not be interpreted to mean that there is nothing to celebrate about being 'African children'.

A third example that illustrates how humanitarian professionals construct identities of 'African children' based on a high prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Africa is given below. Unlike in the two illustrations of the same argument above, this particular illustration makes a point by way of comparing the existence of HIV and AIDS orphans between the continents on Africa, Latin America and Asia. A point to note is that the numbers of HIV and AIDS orphans was extremely higher for Africa in comparison to the other two continents as of year 2001. This map was extracted from a conference Report by the International HIV & AIDS Alliance (2006:7), Brighton in the United Kingdom.

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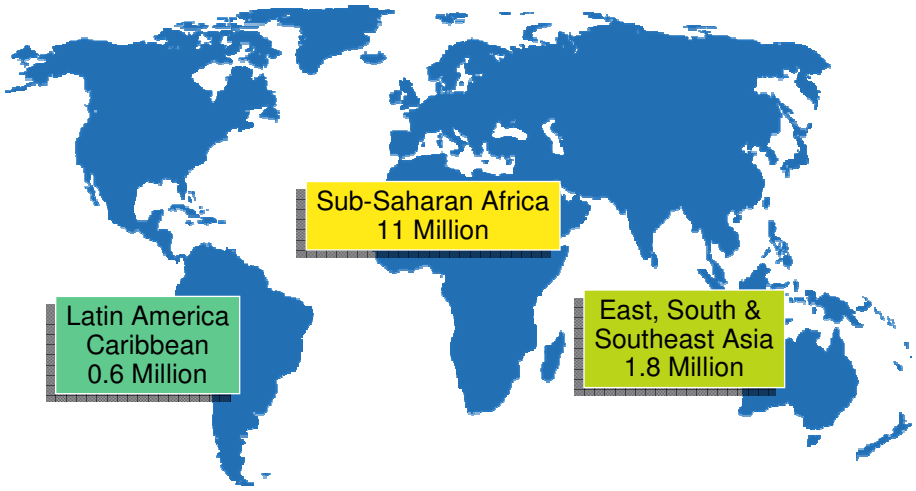
Populations of HIV and AIDS orphans by continent



Total of 13.4 millions orphans due to AIDS in the areas most severely affected by HIV, end of 2001

For the researcher, the above three illustrations support the argument that humanitarian professionals construct narratives that portray stereotypical identities of children from Africa. This leads to the emergence of a special narrative of 'African children'. This narrative constructs identities of 'African children' as children of AIDS, children of the pandemic, HIV and AIDS orphans, and children with a 'bleak' future. These identities though presented by humanitarian professionals as being synonymous with being 'African', are socially constructed realities about children. The researcher posits that identities of children that arise from such forms of narrative representations need not be taken as neither 'natural' nor 'obvious' ones. However, to the extent that such narrative representations get accepted as 'real' portrayals of 'African children', then the representations might get internalized as actual 'realities'. That is why the researcher

argues that the narrative of 'African children' is constructed to portray identities of 'African children' that tend to highlight paternalistic perceptions of those children's lives.

In addition to the above argument, the researcher also states that narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' jointly constitute a narrative of 'African children' which tells a 'special' story about these 'special' children. Therefore the narrative of 'African children' needs not be seen as different from narratives on 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'. In fact the researcher clarifies that the narrative of 'African children' is a grand narrative which is the ultimate sum total of the above two forms of narratives combined. The narrative of 'African children' thus tells a story of 'African children' as those children with 'unique' identities. These identities of 'African children' were also jointly constructed and portrayed within the narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'.

Humanitarian professionals seem to construct such identities based on the contemporary and historical circumstances of 'African children's lives. For the researcher, contemporary circumstances are the ones well articulated in the narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'. The researcher has also given illustrations on how humanitarian professionals' construct and perceive these two forms of narratives as being mainly confined to Africa. Such illustrations have been given by the researcher to also show how different contemporary circumstances of children contribute to articulations of the above forms of children's narratives.

The researcher describes contemporary circumstances of 'African children' as those contexts of poverty, sickness, HIV & AIDS, armed conflict and deprivation that children experience. Such contemporary circumstances as we have seen above seem to set Africa and its children as being different from other continents and their children. It is from these contemporary circumstances the researcher argues, that a grand and special narrative of 'African children' is situated and shaped. However, it is yet another of the researcher's views that the narration of 'African children's story is not only based on the contemporary circumstances of 'African children's lives. Instead, how history led to the creation of some of the contemporary circumstances of 'African children's lives is also part to the explanations on the existence of this narrative of 'African children'. Such a historical explanation can also shed light into why the narrative of 'African children', including identities of children it portrays exist within humanitarian discourse.

The researcher suggests that an understanding of how history influenced some contemporary circumstances of 'African children's lives potentially starts when the narrative of 'African children' is linked to historical perceptions of Africa in general. A story of Africa should be told. According to ideas found on Servant@hyperhistory.net (accessed on 12/10/2007), Africa was historically perceived and described by some colonialists, early missionaries and traders as a 'dark' and mysterious continent. The website however states that the term 'dark' had nothing to do with the color of the skin of the people of Africa. Rather, use of the term 'dark' reflected the lack of understanding about the 'real' Africa and its people among those colonialists, early traders and missionaries. This was because some early traders and missionaries' initial contacts with

Africa were limited to different ports and coasts along oceans navigated by those people. As such, those people were ignorant or had no clue about what was beyond what their eyes could see.

Based on the above, it was thus convenient for those people to refer to everything unknown to them about Africa as 'dark' or 'mysterious'. The term 'dark' then became associated with African people's perceived 'illiteracies', 'superstitious' beliefs and their 'heathen' behaviors. Such prejudicial and mythical perceptions of Africa resulted from ignorance and lack of proper understandings of African people's cultures, beliefs and ways of life. For this reason, the researcher adds, the traders and missionaries either out of ignorance or conscious intentions constructed their own forms of identities about Africa and its people including 'African children'.

The researcher further argues that it is the above historical story about Africans that potentially influenced how some perceptions of contemporary circumstances of Africans by some people from the west came about. Such perceptions are reflected in the links that are assumed to exist between the perceived historical 'primitiveness' and inferiority' of Africans and their contemporary conditions of poverty. Based on such conditions, people of Africa tend to be generally represented as people who experience endless sufferings, are victims of poverty and diseases and face deprivation due to their 'ignorance' and 'backwardness'. This view appears on Servant@hyperhistory.net (accessed on 12/10/2007). The above issues are what get generally described within humanitarian

discourse as ‘problems’ of Africa. Those problems partly define Africa’s socio-economic and demographic landscape and give Africans their ‘unique’ identities.

Therefore such a story of Africa can be taken to be one that also aids in the constructions and portrayals of steriotypical identities of Africans including their children as is the case in this study. For this reason the researcher argues, a narrative of ‘African children’ that portrays identities of suffering among ‘African children’ is historically located and at times appears ‘logical’. This is the case because the narrative is supported by documented problems of regular occurrences that frequently affect ‘African children’s lives. Those problems get narrated by some humanitarian professionals including journalists in ways that seem to suggest that the narrative of ‘African children’ is a historically justified one. This seems to be the case since Africa is constantly portrayed as a continent faced with ‘endless’ problems. This way of reasoning though questionable is supported by an argument of an African Journalist C. Williams in his article that appears on ‘African Essays and Articles at e Notes of (2007). Williams gave this narration about Africa;

“The next time you read about Africa in the news, it will most likely to be in a story about a military coup d’etat, political corruption, [or] a catastrophe of major proportions”. [www.soc.enotes.com/Africa.article (accessed on 12/07/2007)].

This argument is also echoed by an American Journalist, Richburg (1997) in a related article who gives the following negative narrative about ‘African children’;

“Africa’s children are the most likely on earth to die before the age of five. Its adults are least likely to live beyond the age of fifty. African children are, on average, more malnourished, less educated, and more likely to be infected by fatal diseases than the inhabitants of any other place”. [www.soc.enotes.com/Africa.article (accessed on 12/07/2007)].

The above citations reflect how the narrative of 'African children' is told as part of an overall negative story of Africa in general within humanitarian discourse. They also illustrate how interplay of historical perceptions of Africans and contemporary circumstances of their existence contribute to social constructions of this narrative of 'African children'. This narrative constructs and ascribes identities to 'African children' based on children's historical and contemporary circumstances. Those identities are reflected in descriptions of 'African children' as children of war, children prone to natural disasters, children of genocide and children of failed political states or crumbling economies.

It is the researcher's argument that such steriotypical identities of children constructed within the narrative of 'African children' are potentially disempowering and psychologically damaging to children. That is why the researcher suggests that it might be the deliberate intentions of some humanitarian professionals to describe 'African children' in ways that 'dampen' such children's confidence. This might mean that when children internalize such socially constructed inferiority complexes, their participation in the bigger world issues is constrained. As a result such children may be molded into second class citizens of the world. In this regard, the researcher further argues that the representations of children's identities in the above steriotypical ways can reinforce past and present forms of social inequalities in ways that may be quite subtle for one to notice.

The researcher also wants to point out that in literatures, the narrative of 'African children' tells a story of children who carry their identity everywhere they go. This is

evident in articles available at www.theafricanchild.org.uk, www.africanchildfoundation.org & www.hopeforafricanchildren.org/ (accessed on 12/07/2007). It appears from these sources that discuss 'African children' that such children are defined not just by geographical origins but also by their special needs or requirements. Needs of 'African children' are presented as similar irrespective of where such children are located. This is for example reflected by the emergence of various institutions or organizations that are set up to meet the special 'needs' or 'requirements' of 'African children' both in Africa and in the Western world. Examples of such organizations include; The 'African Child' UK, the 'African Child' Foundation in Uganda, Hope for the 'African Child' Initiative in Africa and the 'African Child' Forum in Africa. What is common among all these organizations seems to be that; all are formed to meet 'African children's special needs, seek to ensure protection of 'African children', design projects that are meant to bring 'African children' out of poverty, aim to provide basic services like health, education, nutrition and provide 'culturally appropriate' information to 'African children'. This is evident from some writings of Meniru (1992) and Jones E. & Jones M (1998). The above further reinforces the researcher's earlier point that identities assigned to 'African children' in narratives seem to be constructed in exclusive terms that are not necessarily cross culturally integrating. While the researcher acknowledges the importance of giving 'culturally relevant' socialization to children, what is 'culturally relevant' for children of this 'global village' is contestable. Therefore an identity of being 'African children' should not be associated with limited possibilities for children nor should it be portrayed as a presentation of only negative identities of such children.

The researcher now intends to conclude this section on the narrative of 'African children' by asking a question on whether or not it is possible to come up with a form of narrative about 'African children' that counters existing steriotypical portrayals of children's identities? It is an important question to ask because the researcher thinks that all forms of narratives discussed in this chapter rarely tell 'positive' stories about 'African children'. By making this suggestion, the researcher is advocating the construction of an 'African' narrative that tells the story of 'African children' from an 'African' perspective. The researcher thinks this might be possible if humanitarian institutions and social interventions for children emerge from within Africa. Such institutions and social interventions would then narrate the story of 'African children' from an 'African' perspective and not from a 'foreign' eye. This, the researcher suggests, would result in a construction of a counter narrative discourse on the representation of 'African children'. Further, the researcher suggests, it has to be an assumption of such a counter narrative discourse that it is preferred for 'Africans' to narrate their own stories as outsiders may not be well informed to do so. This counter narrative discourse would challenge some traditionally steriotypical ways that describe 'African children' as we have seen in this chapter. Traditionally steriotypical ways tend to construct identities of 'African children' based on 'ethically' questionable historical perceptions that attribute endless sufferings and poverty to 'Africans'. An alternative narrative would counter such views by telling a story of hope and a future full of possibilities for 'African children'.

The researcher notes that some organizations have already emerged in Africa with the intention to narrate such an alternative story about 'African children'. These

organizations include; The 'African Child' Policy Forum (www.africanchildforum.org) & Hope for the 'African Child' Initiative (www.hopeforafricanchildren.org) (accessed on 14/07/2007). The researcher feels that these two humanitarian organizations among others represent the emergence of 'African institutions' that can initiate and drive a counter or alternative narrative discourse on the representation of 'African children'. This will be a discourse of resistance. Such institutions would for instance seek to resist certain forms of representing 'African children that emanate from externally driven ideas and agendas as shown in this chapter. The mission and vision of The 'African Child' Policy Forum for instance, illustrates this point being suggested by the researcher. The mission that calls for a counter narrative of representing 'African children' says;

"The African Child Policy Forum envisages that one day, not far away, every child in Africa will lead a healthy life and contribute to the emergence of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Africa that can overcome marginalization in the globalizing world". [www.africanchildforum.org/mission.asp (accessed on 14/07/2007)].

This form of counter narrative is obviously contrary to the previous 'African children's narrative as presented earlier in this chapter. The previous narrative of 'African children' is externally driven by humanitarian professionals. It predicts and tells a story of a future of endless poverty, misery, HIV and AIDS and marginalization for the 'vulnerable African children'.

However, it is questionable how the emergence of a counter narrative discourse about the 'African children' would be regarded as being truly 'African'. An example of the African Charter on the Rights of the Children (1999) which seeks to model such a counter narrative illustrates this point. Formulations of this African Charter constitute an

'African' blue print and commitment to ensure that 'African children's social, economic and cultural rights are advanced. However, provisions of this African Charter largely reflect provisions contained in an earlier global United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (1989). The United Nations Charter's principles are largely western in nature. Those principles center around economic, social, cultural, civic and political rights of children as promulgated under one binding international legal instrument. And yet the United Nations' Charter can be criticized for coming up with broad global provisions on child rights that do not take into account the cultural uniqueness of the African continent. Sadly this is the same trap the African Charter also falls into. The African charter should ideally shape a counter narrative of 'African children's rights. However to the contrary it can be described as a replication of the United Nations Charter. The African charter does not 'frame' the discourse on children's rights as an 'African' story. The researcher argues that children's rights in Africa are intertwined with local cultural beliefs and perceptions of childhood. Attempts to legally enforce provisions of the African charter following confrontational litigation approaches that are synonymous with western legal systems can result in conflict at the frontiers of cultural practices. So conclusively the narrative of 'African children' reflects a particular way of representing children that is located within a strong historical and contemporary humanitarian discourse about Africa. From this narrative, identities of children are constructed and portrayed in ways that seem 'natural' or 'normal'. Yet this conceals the point that such representations constitute ways that socially construct identities of children. The researcher now gives concluding statements of this chapter.

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4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed humanitarian discourse, presented a brief history of children's representation in humanitarian discourse and explored three forms of children's narrative representations within humanitarian discourse. These forms are the narrative of 'vulnerable children', narrative of 'children of AIDS' and narrative of 'African children'. A phenomenological sociological understanding of children's narratives as social constructs has been adopted by the researcher. These social constructs are used by humanitarian professionals to package and market children's poverty and social problems like HIV and AIDS. The researcher has further suggested in the chapter that humanitarian professionals selectively collect narratives from children and their care givers. Using such narratives, the professionals construct, reconstruct and portray identities of children that they prefer. Children's identities are constructed and packaged in the narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'. Both narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' jointly make up a particular grand narrative. That grand narrative is about the identities of 'African children'. According to the researcher, this constitutes a form of conscious and intentional editorial gazing on the part of humanitarian professionals. Identities constructed in narratives of children are preferred identities that advance calculated realities of children. These identities of children are mainly steriotypical ones that support a humanitarian agenda. A humanitarian agenda depicts 'African children' as victims of poverty and objects of charity. This depiction is possible after children's experiences and feelings are collected, packaged and communicated in paternalistic narratives. While humanitarian professionals are agents who intentionally contribute towards the formation of a humanitarian discourse, the same discourse also

determines how the professionals construct and portray identities of children. However, this paternalistic discourse on children needs to be countered with a 'positive' one that communicates hope and a future of possibilities for children.

The researcher states that narrative representations discussed in this chapter reflect only one level at which children's identities are constructed and represented within humanitarian discourse. A second level at which it is also possible for humanitarian professionals to construct and represent identities of children is that of photographic depiction. That is what chapter 5 which follows focuses on. However, although narrative and photographic representations are discussed separately by the researcher, both levels of representing children are used in mutually reinforcing ways within humanitarian discourse. They are both used in ways with a similar effect of constructing stereotypical identities of children. Therefore children's narratives and photographs are only presented in different chapters for purposes of easier management and articulation of data.

CHAPTER 5: PHOTOGRAPHIC DEPICTIONS OF CHILDREN IN HUMANITARIAN DISCOURSE

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses a second level of representing children in humanitarian discourse. This is the level of photographic depiction. Photographs of children are normally featured simultaneously with children's narratives discussed in chapter 4. They tend to be also used to the same effect of constructing and portraying stereotypical or paternalistic identities of children in humanitarian discourse. While photographic depictions of children are discussed separately from narratives in this chapter, the two are not mutually exclusive, and in fact reinforce each other, sometimes photos operating as illustrative material for the narratives and vice versa. However, the researcher felt that a deeper analysis of photographic depiction is in order since as Rose (2007:70-74) states; images are complex sources of meaning while analyzing images is a difficult process that invites rich and complex responses or interpretations.

Humanitarian professionals use photographs to construct identities of children both in conjunction or isolation from some forms of children's narratives discussed in chapter 4. The researcher argues that both photographs and textual narratives are constructed to achieve certain levels of impacts among target audiences. As photographs are subject to individual interpretations, how they may be used to portray certain identities illustrate how individuals or agents play a part to construct reality in the phenomenological sense. It is in this chapter that study objective 3 is addressed. Objective 3 aimed to examine photographic depictions of children's identities in humanitarian discourse.

Therefore in this chapter, the researcher discusses photographic depiction as a second level of children's representation in humanitarian discourse. In doing so, the chapter addresses the study objective on how photographic depictions of children result in the constructions of identities of children. A main question that the reader should keep at the back of their mind is; what identities of children are possible to construct and portray using photographs? Such a question is in line with the main concern of the research which is to explore how identities of children are constructed in narratives and photographs. As mentioned in chapters 3 and 4, the researcher interrogated children's photographs just like narratives from a phenomenological angle. According to phenomenology, individual actors are consciously involved in the constructions of realities. Such constructions of realities are informed by individuals' intentions and rational expectations. These are views of Schutz (1967); Sibeon (2004 & Weber (1949).

Based on the above assumption from phenomenological sociology, the researcher also declares his own assumption. This assumption is that humanitarian professionals intentionally collect certain types of photographs from children in order to construct and communicate stereotypes of children. Such photographs become part of the narratives that tell stories of children experiencing different forms of vulnerabilities. Therefore in this chapter the researcher attempts to address an objective of the study which seeks to establish how humanitarian professionals construct identities of children in photographs. While the phenomenological view weighs heavily in situating this study theoretically, the researcher also acknowledges that agency and structural factors can interplay to determine how social realities are constructed. This is illustrated in this study by how

humanitarian professionals contribute to a humanitarian discourse that also at the same time influences ways in which the professionals construct identities of children. Agency and structure interplay in reality construction and this is a significant theoretical statement to acknowledge.

The researcher commences his discussion in this chapter by defining a photograph. This is followed by a discussion on image based research and how children' photographs can be treated as components of image based research. A description of a method used to interrogate photographs is done before discussion three levels of children's photographic depictions. These levels are literal photographic depiction, textual photographic depiction and mythical photographic depiction. The chapter will conclude by relating photographic depictions and forms of narratives presented in chapter 4 to the theoretical framework on phenomenology within which this study is situated. Although photographs are discussed separately in this chapter, the researcher acknowledges that their uses are closely related to those of children's narratives in the representations of children's identities. This means photographs of children are sources of information in themselves while such photographs can also be read in relation to texts that accompany them. For this reason the researcher argues that photographic depiction is part and parcel of narrative representations of children within humanitarian discourse. The researcher now moves to define photographs.

5.2 What is a photograph?

A photograph is a picture of a person or scene which can be in the form of print transparent slide. A photograph is recorded by camera on light sensitive material (World Reference.com English Dictionary 2007, sv photograph). For Schroeder (1998:12-19) a photograph is meant to reproduce the 'actual' appearance of people and events over time and space. According to Burgin (1982), photographs are deep sources of meaning while looking at photographs is an interactive complex social process of interpretation. In humanitarian discourse, children' photographs normally appear in forms of still pictures or moving images on television. At times children's photographs are featured together with narratives in ways that convey powerful communications of children's experiences and feelings. The researcher states that photographs seek to achieve a visual representation of children while narratives described in the previous chapter give verbal accounts of children's lives. People make impressions or develop ideas about children based on how children appear in photographs even if such people may not have adequate background information on children's photographs. So as Wagner (2007:23) states, children's photographs should provoke people to think about;

> "what it takes to 'see' culture and social life… and what it takes for photographs, films, and videotapes to provide empirically sound accounts of culture and social life".

Using Barthes (1957)'s semiotic views, a photograph is a cultural symbol that stands in for something. In this study, a photograph as a symbol stands for a child's life. This means that people can encounter children's experiences by reading children's photographs. The researcher argues that such encounters involve constructions and interpretations of identities of children in photographs. The process of encountering or

social construction involves perceptions and interpretations before coming up with phenomenal realities communicated by photographs. This implies that photographs should not just be taken at the level of their surface appearances in terms of what they represent. Just like narratives, they too are open and rich symbols of cultural representation. That is why the issues of what humanitarian professionals want people to see in children's photographs is central to this study. This is because as the researcher suggests, such professionals are capable of selecting those photographs that can communicate preferred identities of children. In this way, the social construction of realities about children's experiences becomes an intentional process driven by the conscious motives of humanitarian professionals. For this study, the researcher interrogated children's photographs found in newspapers, television programs, books, journals, special reports and articles, magazines, adverts and internet sources. These were also some of the sources that the researcher reviewed when looking at narratives of children discussed in the previous chapter. Such sources of children's photographs constitute cultural and ethnographic sources of meanings. In this study, the researcher suggests that these sources can be used to generate knowledge on cultural representations using 'visual' evidence as a form of data. This view is influenced by Wagner (2007:24) as shown above. Just as in the case of children's narratives discussed in chapter 4, the ways children's photographs are represented are meant to portray stereotypical identities of children. It is this process of constructing identities using visual images of children that this chapter dwells on.

As Rose (2007) discusses, images are complex sources of meaning. Analyzing images is a difficult process as it invites rich and complex responses. This is because understanding meanings contained in photographic images come from individual interpretations. Interpretation is an explanation that comes from the way people see things. And as Berger (1972) also argues, since there are different ways by which people see things, interpretations of mages are diverse and complex. This view resonates well with Rose (2007:70)'s explanation that says researching visual images or materials requires a critical interpretation methodology which involves the use of 'good eyes' that can look at things from an angle of compositional interpretation. Semiologically this means "*...laying bare the prejudices beneath the smooth surface of the beautiful"* (2007:74). Therefore visual images like children's photographs have a rich social life. Intepretation of an image is thus a process of social interaction between the image and its interpreter. Burgin (1982) concurs with the above views of Rose (2007) and Berger (1972) when he says as people look at photographs, they should be aware that many social interpretations of the same image are possible as there are many ways of looking at the social. This complexity of interpreting images also applies to the interpretation of narratives discussed in chapter 4 since narratives as social constructs also have a complex social life of their own.

Based on the above, there is no permanent interpretation of an image which means that realities of images are socially contestable interpretations. Borrowing from Shpet (1991:20-36)'s writings on reality and illusion, photographs can be regarded as both 'real' and 'illusory' representations. They are 'real' in the sense that they show 'actual' appearances of children at given moments. However they can give the illusion to one

who sees them that the photographs portray identities of children who always looks happy or sad for example. The researcher gives the following citation that supports such a skeptical view regarding the ways photographs can be manipulated to construct or portray illusory identities of children;

> "The photograph has an added realism of its own; it has an inherent attraction not found in other forms of illustration. For this reason, the average person believes implicitly that the photograph cannot falsify. Of course, you and I know that this unbounded faith in the integrity of the photograph is often rudely shaken, for, while photographs may not lie, liars my photograph." (Lewis Hime in Goldstein 2007:61-2).

The above citation prompted the researcher to ask the following questions. Can humanitarian professionals lie using children's photographs? Can they construct lies about children's identities using photographs? These questions are left open to the reader. The researcher gave the above citation to suggest that through photographic illustrations, stereo-typical depictions of children's identities are possible. Those depictions result from ways in which children's identities are constructed and tied to children's appearances in photographs. For the researcher, while children's photographs can be 'actual' portrayals at particular moments and times, photographs cannot continue to represent children's actual experiences and identities over time. Photographs cannot also deliver 'actual' presences of children forever. For this reason the researcher argues, portrayed identities of children in photographs are not permanent but transitory, illusory and dynamic realities. A child who is portrayed as sad at this moment could be happy a moment soon after the photograph was taken. Therefore photographs can neither permanently portray identities nor forever tell similar stories of vulnerable children for instance. This is so because as Goldstein (2007:10-20) suggests, photographs as forms of

images are subject to manipulations. The sorts of children's photographs we see in various humanitarian sources are based on the photographer's choices and intentions. For one to deduce possible meanings of photographs, one has to base that on ones' perceptions and interpretations of the photographer's intentions. This has to be done in relation to the context in which the photograph is taken.

Questions that guided the researcher's analysis of children's representations at this photographic level include; what visual appeals are children's photographs meant to achieve, what identities do different forms of photographs depict, what sorts of feelings are evoked among those who look at the photographs and what are the possible intentions of humanitarian professionals when they use certain types of children's photographs? These questions as stated before are aligned to a phenomenological sociological angle of inquiry regarding the issue of how representations of reality are achieved. The researcher now moves on to briefly describe how the practice of using children's photographs as sources of data is part of what is termed image based research. This is done based on the researcher's view that the interpretation of children's photographs is one way through which the observation of social and cultural life becomes sociologically possible.

5.3 Children's photographs in image based research

According to Stanczak (2007:2-10), image based research is a social science methodology that sociologists and anthropologists at times use to generate social knowledge. Such a form of research emphasizes the use of visual research methods to explore social issues like cultural representation. This position is echoed by Rose (2007:

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2-3) who highlights the significance of use of visual methodologies in the interpretation of visual images like children's photographs. Such a concern with image based research has partly contributed to the development of the subject of visual sociology. The development of visual sociology has also been influenced by visual ethnography in anthropology and by documentary photography. For Prosser (1998:1-2), the use of images in visual sociology seems to be influenced by the thinking that sometimes words alone are not adequate to explain social phenomenon such as representation for instance. It is for this reason that the researcher argues that children's photographs in humanitarian discourse can be a subject of image based research or visual sociology in particular.

The researcher posits that children's photographs become a subject of visual sociology because they are situated within a particular sociological context. It is such a context that influenced how the researcher analyzed the constructions and readings of children's photographs. In this study, the sociological context is that of a child focused humanitarian discourse. The context of humanitarian discourse gives rise to certain narratives that tell the story of children in difficult situations. Use of children's photographs is part of the telling of children's narratives as discussed in chapter 4. That is why the researcher considered children's narratives and photographic depictions as complimentary ways in which identities of children are constructed and portrayed in the context of humanitarian discourse. It is because this study treated children's photographs as sources of data on children's identities that this research to some extent was located within the field of image based research.

In this regard, images of children were interrogated as symbolic sources of data. On the other hand, the same images of children were also used to aid the process of data presentation and explication. Children's photographs thus became good examples of how children's representation is a subject that could be explored using methods of image based research. Thus children's photographs can be treated as both subjects of image based research and illustrations of evidence that can be obtained from image based research. In this study, the researcher treated children's photographs as images that are sources of data regarding how children's identities are represented in humanitarian discourse. Photographs are sources of data in that they communicate identities about children that can be phenomenologically interpreted. However, they can also be manipulated to say additional things about children when some textual narratives are given to accompany the photographs. The researcher will illustrate this later under the section on textual photographic depictions of children. One of the positive attributes of applying image based research is the potential of this methodology to explications and interpretations of how images communicate and represent 'feelings'. This is because as Prosser (1998:1) says, when images are used together with narratives, they enhance people's understandings of human feelings and related conditions. Prosser goes on to say;

"Images provide researchers with a different order of data and, more importantly, an alternative to the way we have perceived data in the past. (1998:1).

It is for the above reason that the researcher chose to consider children's photographs as a different order of data. Such order of data is an alternative but also a compliment to narrative or word based representations of children. The researcher also considers

photographs as important forms of data that seek to construct and portray emotional feelings of children within humanitarian discourse. However, the researcher does not consider images of children in isolation from their narratives. This is because both word and image based representations of children contribute to the constructions and telling of narratives that depict stereotypical identities of children in humanitarian discourse. The researcher now states levels of photographic depictions to be discussed later.

5.4 Levels of photographic depictions of children

The researcher states that photographs depict identities of children at several levels. This is because he understands children's photographs in the semiotic sense discussed under the theoretical section in chapter 3 (Barthes 1967). Children's photographs are symbols. This means they are rich in meanings. They can be interpreted to deduce diverse identities of children. Such identities can seem obvious and yet they can be deep and hidden. That is why it is important to analyze different possible levels that depict children's identities in photographic terms. A photograph is thus a sign with dense meanings. It also carries a lot of information at several levels. What people see during the presentation of a photograph potentially arouses certain feelings or reactions. People's reactions are based on the levels of depiction that the reader engages with a photograph.

The deeper one interrogates a photograph, the more one can see or read several possible things at different levels. To do so in this study, a method or approach known as 'interrogating an image' was applied. This approach was adapted from Yotman's works on semiotics of cinema (Yotman 1984). The researcher used those ideas to come up with three levels of photographic depictions in this study. The levels are literal photographic

depiction, textual photographic depiction and mythical photographic depiction. Literal photographic depiction is concerned with how a child's photograph literally appears or looks to the reader. Literal photographic depiction is normally not accompanied by any words or narrative. Textual photographic depiction is when a photograph is presented together with some form of text or words to explain the context or background of a photograph. Mythical photographic depiction is a stereotypical representation of 'half' stories or myths that is achieved from uses of literal and textual photographic depictions combined. Half stories advance 'mythical' identities of children constructed at the levels of literal and textual photographic depictions. These three levels will be discussed with illustrations after the next section that describes a tool used by the researcher to interrogate children's photographs at the three levels defined above.

5.5 Method of interrogating an image

This researcher argues that to say children's photographs should be interrogated is to admit that those who look at children's photographs interpret what such photographs portray. As looking is not indifferent, there can never be such a thing as just looking 'innocently' at a photograph without intentions. People selectively gaze at photographs. This implies that looking always entails some form of social interrogation. That is why the researcher interrogated children's photographs to determine the sorts of identities they potentially construct at different levels of depiction. So the researcher 'gazed' at children's photographs with a specific intention to find out levels of photographic depictions possible to attain. Children's photographs interrogated by the researcher were found in magazines, newspapers, journal articles, special reports and books. The

approach of interrogating images was based on the understanding that a photograph can be taken from a particular social frame that gives rise to a certain story. The photograph cannot be separated from such a story that socially locates the 'life' of the photograph. This means that any photographic depiction and interpretation becomes a form of social dialogue. The meaning arising from social dialoguing should be understood in relation to what may have happened before the photograph was taken. This includes understanding the feelings or experiences the photograph communicates. Social dialoguing can also predict what might happen after the photographic depiction is made. How a photograph may be later used is just as important as what led to the photograph being collected in the first instance. A description of the tool used to interrogate photographs in the study appears below.

Photographic analysis tool: interrogating an image

Levels of Photographic Depiction	**Characteristic of photograph: what to interrogate in the photograph**
1. <u>Literal Photographic Depiction</u>	✓ How the child looks ✓ Physical appearance of the child ✓ Child's facial look ✓ How child is dressed ✓ Child's hairstyle ✓ Sex of child ✓ Body language ✓ Aesthetic features ✓ Feelings induce by the photograph ✓ Physical background of the photograph
2. <u>Textual Photographic Depiction</u>	✓ What words describe the child ✓ What is the child's story in the text ✓ How text alludes to similar texts ✓ How text alludes to child's life ✓ What is the theme of text ✓ Child's identities portrayed in text ✓ Does text allude to other people ✓ Does text negatively or positively describe the child

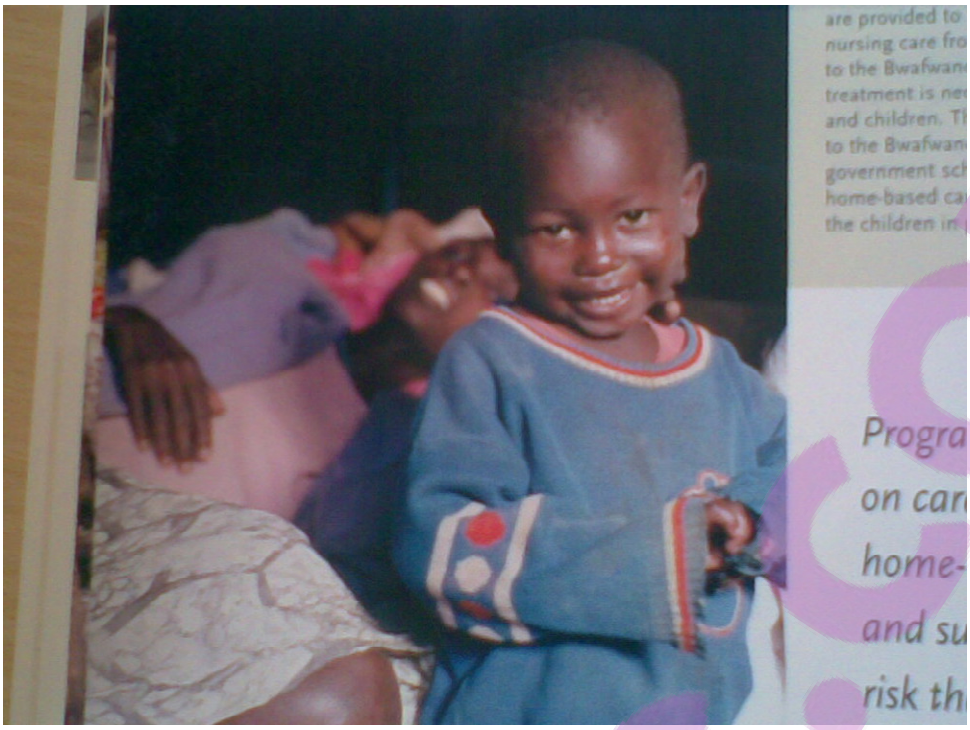
3. <u>Mythical Photographic Depiction</u>	✓ Does photograph depict mystery ✓ Does photograph create or reinforce stereotypes or stigma ✓ Does photograph and text refer to folk tales or stories ✓ Does the photograph tell half a story of a child's life ✓ Does photographic depiction reflect prejudicial ideas about children ✓ Is negative or positive perception of child influenced by the photograph ✓ Are there 'cultural' drivers of depiction

As the above illustrates, this tool of socially interrogating an image has three levels of analysis that were applied to come up with the three forms of children's photographic depictions to be discussed in detail below. These levels as mentioned earlier are literal photographic depiction, textual photographic depiction and mythical photographic depiction. There is an important point to keep in mind when doing such a social interrogation. This point is that it is the level of photographic depiction that determines the sort of identities of children that can be possibly constructed and portrayed in photographs. Such photographic analysis was also done together with a content analysis of children's narratives discussed in chapter 4. This was because children's photographs in reviewed humanitarian sources generally appeared together with narratives of children. Together they were sociologically analyzed to interpret 'identities' of children they jointly portrayed. The researcher would like to also mention that it is possible to achieve all the three levels of photographic depictions within a single photograph. Therefore the three levels need not be interpreted as totally exclusive since they are quite mutually reinforcing. The three levels of photographic depiction simply confirm that a photograph

is a symbol or 'cultural' source of multiple meanings. A first level of depiction to be discussed is that of literal photographic depiction.

5.5.1 Literal photographic depiction

This level of depiction refers to how a photograph appears or physically looks to the reader. Literal depiction assumes that by merely looking at a child's photograph, the reader is able to tell a number of things. These include who is represented in the photograph, what is obviously visible from the photograph, what feelings or messages easily come to mind by just looking at the photograph and what the clear features of the photograph are. It is the position of the researcher that literal level depiction seeks to portray identities of children that can 'easily' be noticed. It does not entail any deeper level of interrogation beyond what the eyes can see. This means the literal level of depiction encourages one to look at the photograph mainly at a surface level. As the next four photographs will illustrate, humanitarian professionals tend to represent children at this literal level. This is usually when the professionals use children's photographs as part of narrating stories of children. Such stories may be about 'children of AIDS' or 'vulnerable children' due to many causes for instance. Just as in the cases of children's narratives discussed in the previous chapter, literal photographic depictions of children also influence how humanitarian professionals construct identities of children. The first photograph that the researcher gives below seeks to achieve a literal photographic depiction of a 'child of AIDS'. In this photograph, a child stands next to her mother who is HIV positive and is bed ridden.



[Source: *From Faith to Action* (2006:10].

The above photograph is a literal depiction of a 'child of AIDS'. It is worth to note that the photograph is given in the context of a story on home based care and support for parents who are HIV positive. The photograph also depicts the social isolation of children who have to stay at home and look after their ailing parents. In this photograph, several things may be literally visible to the reader. By merely looking at the photograph, the reader can observe that the child is poorly dressed, the mother looks very sick and bed ridden, and the child looks lonely, impoverished and neglected. The researcher argues that the above ways of representing children result in the constructions and portrayals of stereotypical identities of children in HIV and AIDS contexts. Possible identities that one can interpret from such literal photographic depictions of 'children of AIDS' include neglected children, poor children, ill children, depressed children, abandoned children

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and malnourished children. These stereotypical identities are similar to the ones also portrayed about 'children of AIDS' within narratives discussed in chapter 4.

A second illustration of literal photographic depiction is about children who are vulnerable due to war. The next photograph presents a group of armed child rebels from north of a place known as Kaga in the Central African Republic. This photograph is a literal photographic depiction of vulnerable child soldiers.

[Source: *Forced Migration Review* (2007:8), 27]

The reader can interpret physical appearances of the child soldiers in the photograph based on how the children literally look. The boys are carrying guns, look angry, they are in a jungle some seem high on drugs and they look 'appropriately' dressed for combat in

the jungle. Possible identities of 'vulnerable children' constructed at this level of literal photographic depiction include violent children, rebels, armed gangsters, drug abusers, dangerous children or 'jungle boys'. Just as in the case of identities of children constructed in the narrative of 'vulnerable children', such identities of children arising from literal photographic depictions also portray children in the above stereotypical ways. The researcher argues that this appears intentional or as a well calculated form of representing children's vulnerabilities by humanitarian professionals.

A third illustration of literal photographic depiction is of a very young girl whose parents died due to HIV and AIDS. This child lives within an auntie in Mozambique. She was photographed at a feeding centre where food for 'AIDS orphans' was being distributed by a certain humanitarian organization. This photograph seeks to achieve a literal photographic depiction of an 'AIDS orphan'. The researcher collected the following photograph on 26 May 2008 in Mozambique.

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[Source: WV Health & HIV and AIDS Regional Office (2008)]

One cannot tell by merely looking at this photograph that the child above is an orphan. However several interpretations of this photograph are possible. For instance the child in the photograph has no parents, faces possible social exclusion and abuse, can experience malnutrition and maybe out of school once she is of age. For the researcher this is how literal photographic depiction becomes an open and powerful form of representation.

A last illustration of literal photographic depiction is of a group of children who can be described as 'vulnerable' due to conflict situations. The photograph is thus a literal depiction of 'vulnerable children' who lived in conditions of conflict and poverty. These children lived in a camp for internally displaced persons in Kenya following the December 2007 post election violence in that country.

[Source: WV Health & HIV and AIDS Regional Office (2008)]

The photograph literally depicts ‘traumatized’ children probably with no hope or unsure of their future. As the photograph illustrates some of the children look unkempt, sad and unsure of what is going on around them. Such literal photographic depiction of ‘vulnerable children’ constructs and portrays identities of children who are poor, out of

school, traumatized, depressed and without shelter. This photographic depiction of children is similar to how identities of children were also portrayed in the narratives of 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS and 'African children' discussed in chapter 4.

From the above illustrations of literal photographic depiction, it emerges that characteristics associated with literal photographic depictions of children are largely physical ones. The researcher had to ask the following questions to interpret such characteristics; are children looking happy or sad, what sorts of clothes are the children wearing, are the children's hairs well kept, do the children look healthy or sick, are the children boys or girls among many others. Based on such 'obvious' or literal characteristics, the researcher could reasonably tell a happy child from a sad one and a healthy child from one who looked sick for instance. The researcher argues that a result of such literal photographic depictions of children is that people who look at children's photographs can make subjective conclusions about the identities of children they see. For example one can conclude that a child is poor, sad and possibly sick because of the torn clothes the child is wearing. Such representation of children is a major ethical issue raised in this study.

Identities that can be interpreted from children's photographs emerge from focusing on the physical characteristics of children. Such characteristics constitute appearances of children. Those appearances as we have seen above include; sadness, depression, poor dressing, looking worried, looking unhealthy, malnourished and neglected. The researcher argues that such appearances of children in literal photographic depictions are

meant to produce or induce certain aesthetic feelings among readers. The term aesthetic derives from Greek Philosophy and means perception by means of senses. Sensual perception leads to certain thoughts and emotions about things that people see getting evoked or arising (Encyclopedia of Philosophy Online 2007, sv sensual perception). Those emotions or feelings are evoked when readers experience children's photographs in different ways for instance. This implies that photographs can be used to achieve aesthetic communication. Aesthetic communication can provoke feelings at two levels. Firstly, it communicates to the reader what the child in the photograph is supposed to be 'feeling'. This is not an easy thing to do as people tend mainly to focus on what they see without thinking about what the child who is in the photograph might be feeling about his or her situation. In this regard the researcher argues that attempts to understand feelings of children in photographs are mainly restricted by the ways children literally look. This is because the person reading the photograph cannot ask the children what they feel since photographs are 'objects'. Secondly, aesthetic communication is meant to induce certain feelings of the reader. This is in response to what the reader interprets to be children's feelings as communicated by the photograph. People can feel happy after seeing children who look happy or they can also feel sad when they see sad looking children. Therefore, the researcher argues that there is a process of communication or social dialoguing. This process is between the interpreted feelings of children in the photographs and induced feelings of readers who experience children's photographs.

The researcher further argues that when humanitarian professionals present children's photographs, they want people who look at the photographs to feel something for

children. Based on their feelings, people will then react in ways that are meant to be responsive to children's different situations. As discussed in the previous chapter, this is how the humanitarian agenda is marketed. Such is the social construction of emotional reactions using children's photographs. That is why the researcher is of the view that children's photographs, just like narratives discussed previously, are all part of socially constructing identities of children in different circumstances.

However, the researcher notes that literal photographic depictions of children seem to portray mainly stereotypical aspects of children's lives as highlighted in photographs showing children's poor physical appearances. This is similar to uses of children's narratives to also communicate stereotypical identities of children. As discussed in chapter 4, narratives also tend to focus on children's stereotypical identities related to poverty, illnesses and social exclusion. For the researcher, this is a major limitation of constructing and attaching identities to children based only on how children literally appear. The researcher relates this point to ideas found in Alley (2004)'s writings on social stratification by suggesting that literal photographic depictions reinforce questionable social stratifications. Social stratifications are created and reinforced when people come up with 'stereotypical' characteristics that identify a group of people as different from others. Those social stratifications are based on an erroneous assumption that there are some characteristics or appearances that belong only to certain groups of people in societies. In this instance, the characteristics of children literally depicted in photographs presented above can be seen as ones that identify and differentiate 'vulnerable children' or 'children of AIDS' from the rest of other children for example.

However, there is a problem of socially stratifying or identifying children based on their literal photographic appearances. This problem is that social stratification can wrongly present children as possessing typical or paternalistic characteristics or features. Such characteristics then get presented as distinct to these children when they are seen as a special social category different from others. This is regarded as such even if children may not necessarily interact or identify with one another. Children's life experiences and opportunities then depend on the social identities assigned to them even if their social categories tend to change over time. For example, children's experiences are not the same simply because they are all 'children of AIDS 'or 'African children'. Assigning identities to children in such ways constitutes what is termed labeling in sociology.

As found in works of Bercker & MacCall (1990) & Blumer (1986) labeling is a social process of arbitrary assigning identities to people. Such assigned identities are used to describe people in ways that appear as 'natural'. However, in reality labeling is a process of social construction during human interactions. Social labels are used as ways to recognize or identify one person from another. This makes labeling a social process of identifying people. It distinguishes people in forms that are usually prejudicial, stereotypical and discriminatory. Religion, race, ethnicity and gender are examples of some social labels that can be used to identify or define people. This researcher argues that when a label is widely shared by a group of people, it can become a stereotype. For example terms that widely describe children in narratives such as those on 'African children', 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' are stereotypical labels of children. Therefore one can argue that narratives and photographs are forms of

stereotypical depictions of children. Stereotypical depictions potentially construct and impose 'ethically' questionable identities on children. The problem of such socially constructed identities is that they tend to 'stick' and become 'permanent' ascribed forms of describing children.

However, children do not choose such ascribed identities. This process of ascribing identities based on children's physical or literal appearances can also be related to some early sociological writings on crime and deviance. These writings sought to explain why only some people ended up being identified as 'criminals' in society. Sociologists who studied crime and deviance looked at how people tended to be classified as criminal offenders based on social stereotypes. They sought to establish whether or not 'natural' or born criminals existed (Lombroso cited in Ferrero 1911). Criminals could be classified based on different biologically driven dispositions. Those dispositions included the born criminal, the criminal of irresistible passion, the feeble minded criminal and the insane criminal. Lombroso also claimed that criminals tended to be people with identifiable physical features like long faces, jaws, eyes and heads. That form of social classification was subjective and promoted prejudicial perceptions and stereotypical processes of identifying 'criminals' in society. Those perceptions suggested that only people of certain physical and mental dispositions were 'naturally' criminal. Such literal depictions of 'criminals' were racially motivated since it was mainly black people who exhibited those physical features outlined above. Such a classification method ignored other personal psychiatric, psychological and environmental determinants of criminality in society.

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The above example illustrates how literal photographic depictions of children can also be used to reinforce stereotypes of children, socially exclude children or support social inequalities based on people's subjective prejudices about children. As people generally tend to look at children's identities at the literal level, deeper meanings or identities being depicted by children's photographs can be missed. This researcher argues that children's photographs can be used as powerful tools of deception whose actual purposes can remain concealed if taken only at the level of literal depiction. Children should not be identified as 'children of AIDS' or 'vulnerable children' simply because of how they physically or literally appear in photographs. A question of an 'ethical' orientation was raised in earlier parts of this chapter. Do humanitarian professionals lie about children in photographs? Perhaps it is possible that humanitarian professionals can misrepresent or exaggerate children's experiences using children's photographs just like narratives. This raises ethical issues regarding uses of morally questionable ways to represent children. As physical appearances of children change between when photographs are taken and when they are read or interpreted, it means that those photographs can result in 'deceptive' representations. This is more so when photographs are interpreted in isolation from the contexts of where, when, why and how the photographs were taken in the first instance. Ethical issues arising from the above and other ways of representing children will be further discussed in chapter 6 and 7.

The researcher concludes this section on literal photographic depiction by arguing that literal photographic depictions of children are not static. There is no such thing as 'permanent' identities of children. Identities such as 'African children', 'vulnerable

children' are 'children of AIDS' are socially constructed by humanitarian professionals. Photographs that seek to literally depict or reinforce these stereotypical identities of children are also socially constructed just as children's narratives. One cannot conclusively define children's identities based only on their literal appearances in photographs. That is why within this study the researcher presented similar photographs of children to different professionals in order to find out what those children's photographs communicated to them. Those views of humanitarian professionals are discussed in chapter 6 in detail. The aim was to find out if interpretations of literal photographic depictions of children were 'common' or 'obvious' among different humanitarian professionals. The researcher now moves on to discuss a second form of photographic depiction of children which is a level higher than literal depiction. This level is textual photographic depiction.

5.5.2 Textual photographic depiction

In this study, textual photographic depiction refers the use words or written text in order to support the presentation of a photograph. At this level of photographic depiction, children's photographs are interpreted in relation to texts, words or phrases that normally accompany the photographs. We have seen under literal photographic depiction that photographs of children tend to be presented on their own without textual explanations. However, in the case of textual photographic depiction, the general trend seems to be that children's photographs are presented together with written texts. Written texts explain or shed more light about what the photograph is communicating or saying in terms of children's feelings or experiences. Therefore texts are in such instances used to position a

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photograph within a story or theme. As the photographs below illustrate such stories or themes can be about 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' or 'child labor' for instance. Therefore to some extent, textual depiction is a higher level to literal photographic depiction. This researcher argues that uses of texts together with photographs are meant to influence or guide constructions or interpretations of identities of children in certain directions. Uses of texts can also reinforce or add more to what the photographs of children might not fully portray on their own. Just like literal photographic depiction, textual photographic depiction is also a form of social construction of children's stereotypical identities. Humanitarian professionals seem to select those texts or narratives that are relevant to the ways they intend to portray identities of children.

The following are some examples of how textual photographic depictions of children are done within humanitarian discourse. From these examples the researcher intends to illustrate that textual photographic depictions of children normally tell stories that also construct identities of children in some ways similar to narratives of children. It is for this reason that the researcher concludes that children's narratives and photographs are used in mutually reinforcing ways to represent children's identities. The following is a textual photographic depiction of experiences of 'children of AIDS' living without parents. It also depicts some adult roles that those 'children of AIDS' play as they look after their siblings. This photograph is supported by a textual narrative given by Rebecca who is from Mozambique. It shows Rebecca bathing her brother.

Textual photographic depiction of 'children of AIDS'

Who is taking care?

Together with my older brother, we care for the younger ones. I wash all the clothes, do the housework and cook for them. When they cry and miss their mother I take them so they can play and forget about it. Sometimes I do hold them and comfort them.

Rebecca Araújo, 13, and Elias, 6 Mozambique

[Source: International HIV/AIDS Alliance Presentation (2005:2)].

This illustrates how a photograph can be supported by text to tell a particular narrative of 'children of AIDS'. Instead of just presenting the photograph on its own, words are used to aid the reader to place the photograph within a context or theme of HIV and AIDS. This is how identities of children are constructed using textual photographic depiction. Identities of children portrayed by the above textual photographic depiction presents 'children of AIDS' as children who are orphans, out of school, assuming some adult roles, emotionally distressed, socially isolated and 'vulnerable' to all sorts of abuses. This way of constructing children's identities is similar to what the researcher discussed under narratives of 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children'. Texts or words thus direct the reader's mind to the key message of the photograph. In this

example, the key message has to do with experiences of children who are affected by HIV and AIDS. This reflects a process of conscious reality construction on the part of humanitarian professionals who collect such photographs and narratives from 'children of AIDS'. Representations of selective aspects of children's experiences provoke an 'ethical' debate. This point will be taken up for further discussions in chapters 6 and 7.

The next photograph is another illustration of how textual photographic depiction is done still to communicate identities of 'children of AIDS'. This is a rather dramatic depiction of a grandmother from Mozambique who takes care of seventeen grandchildren from the Alfredo family. The parents of these children died due to HIV and AIDS. The photograph thus supports the narrative of 'children of AIDS'. It also portrays the plight of some grandparents who face the burden of providing care to such 'children of AIDS'.

Textual photographic depiction of vulnerable 'children of AIDS'

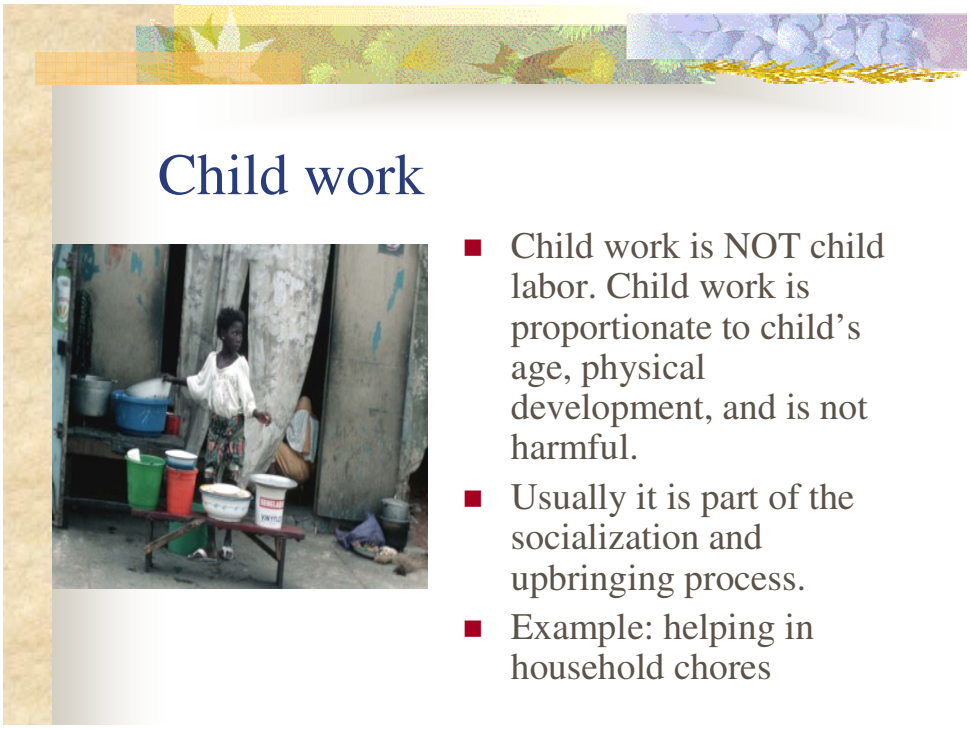
[Source: International HIV/AIDS Alliance Presentation (2005:2)].

The words in the photograph which say 'who is taking care?' are meant to direct the reader along a certain line of thinking about the photograph. The photograph can get one to think along the following lines for instance; where are the usual care takers of the children, how is the grandmother coping with parenting roles, are these children in school, what happens to the orphans when the grandparent dies and where does the grand parent currently get the income to look after these children? Such questions would not come to a reader's mind if the photograph was just presented without some textual narrative as background to explain the photograph. In an attempt to answer some of the above questions, the researcher interpreted that children in the photograph are represented as 'vulnerable children', AIDS orphans and desperate children, children without a certain future and possibly children out of school. The researcher also interprets that this photograph can be conveniently selected by humanitarian professionals as it tells a rather 'unique' or dramatic story. A story of seventeen 'AIDS orphans' living under the care of an old grandparent is quite an 'unusual' story. This story can grab the attention of readers as it highlights the gravity of the impacts of AIDS on some 'African' families. The story also communicates in some kind of mythical way, experiences of 'children of AIDS' in Africa who can be found in such 'big multitudes'. The researcher shall discuss this idea a bit more under section 5.5.3 on mythical photographic depiction.

The next five textual photographic depictions illustrate how children experiencing a special type of vulnerability can be portrayed. Those photographs were collected from a child labor project in Uganda known as KURET. They appear in a presentation made by the Country Project Manager at a workshop in Tanzania on 16th February (2008).The

photographs tell the story of children who are vulnerable to child labor and exploitation. They illustrate those children who are 'AIDS orphans' in Africa and may end involved in child labor as a way to earn a living since the parents will have died due to HIV and AIDS. Apart from just photographically depicting some common forms of child labor, the textual messages accompanying the next photographs help the reader to differentiate between child work and child labor. Such differences are well communicated through texts than when just a photograph was literally presented and left open for the reader to interpret. The first of the five photographs depicts the meaning of child work. It gives both a visual and textual account of what constitutes child work.

Textual photographic depiction of child work



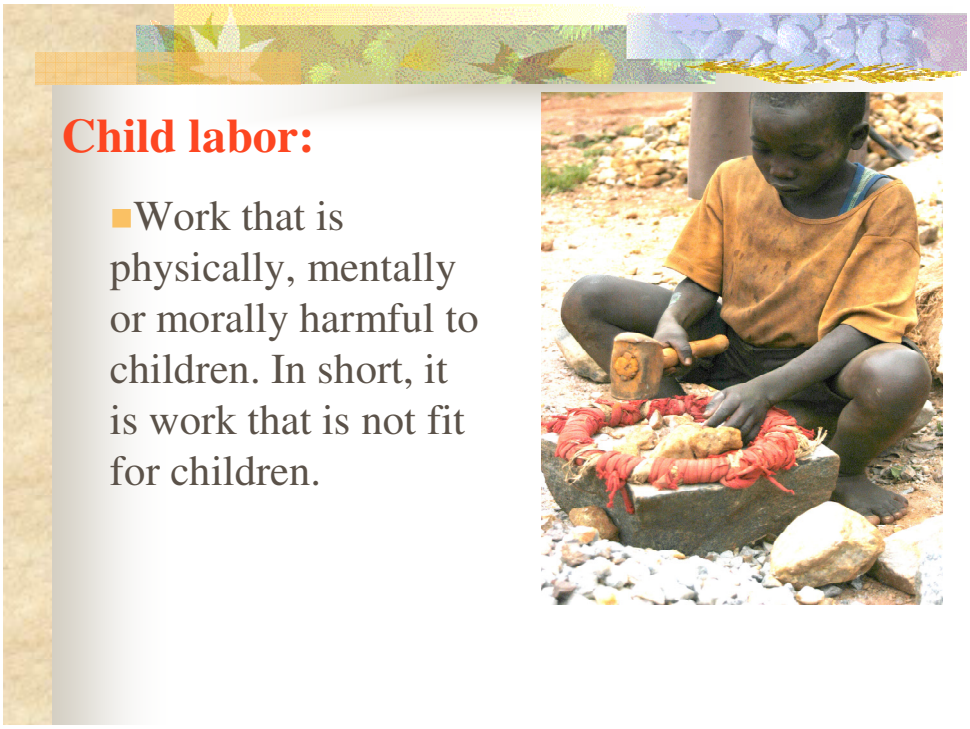
[Kuret Project Report Presentation, Tanzania 2007; 27]

Instead of just presenting a photograph of a working child, use of text helps the reader to both visualize and conceptualize child work. Without this kind of textual support, it may not be that easy for one to understand what is or not child work. The photograph shows a girl who is doing household chores. This photograph makes the point that children can be expected to do some work at home. Child work should not be mistaken for child labor. In addition, the following two textual photographs that depict child labor even help to make the distinction between child work and child labor clearer. It is this sort of child labor as explained in accompanying text below that 'vulnerable children' need protection from.

Textual photographic depiction of child labor 1

[Kuret Project Report Presentation, Tanzania 2008 27]

Textual photographic depiction of child labor 2

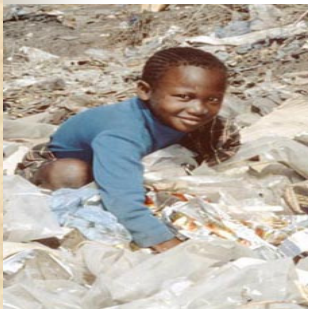


[Kuret Project Report Presentation, Tanzania 2008; 28]

Apart from just aiding the reader to differentiate between child work and child labor, the two photographs above enable the reader to both visualize and conceptualize child labor. This is a different way of telling the narrative of 'vulnerable children' compared to merely narrating experiences of children who are subjected to child labor. It is also different from just giving a photograph that is meant to literally depict child labor without directing a reader to key messages of the photograph. A key message of the above photographs is that work that is harmful to children should be avoided. The next two photographs go on to further illustrate cases of child labor, including some worst forms of child labor. Uses of such texts as part of photographs are meant to increase the reader's appreciation of the problem of child labor that is faced by some 'vulnerable children'.

Examples of child labor & worst forms of child labor

- **Examples:**
  - Carrying heavy loads,
  - Stone quarrying and mining,
  - Herding livestock in the wilderness,



  - Street begging,
  - fishing in deep waters,
  - scavenging

- **Worst forms of child labor**: usually associated with use of dangerous chemicals and tools, sexual exploitation and illicit activities.
- Examples:
  - Child soldiering,
  - Child trafficking,
  - Child prostitution,
  - Pornography,
  - Debt bondage,
  - Use of pesticides

[Kuret Project Report Presentation, Tanzania 2008:29]

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From the above examples, this researcher argues that the presentation of text to support a photograph entails that such photographic depiction should fit into the story or theme of the presenter. As noted earlier on, just as the background is part of the meaning of a photograph, in the same way, words or text are parts of a social process of depiction. Since photographs are cultural symbols in Barthes (1964)' semiotic sense, many diverse messages can be interpreted from them. Therefore when children's photographs are presented, usually there is some intended level of depiction that is being sought. By leaving a photograph open without any textual accompaniment, there is a risk that the intended level of depiction may be lost. The significance of written texts is that they direct or guide the reader towards intended interpretations of the photographs. Texts bias readers and limit or confine their interpretations of photographs. Examples of textual photographic depictions presented above for instance bias the reader towards a particular interpretation of what is being portrayed about the children. Such interpretations have to fit within a certain understanding of child vulnerabilities in relation to child work, child labor and child exploitation. The researcher argues that this is part of how humanitarian professionals seek to control social constructions and portrayals of children's identities using texts as part of photographs.

Furthermore, this researcher suggests, textual photographic depiction is also concerned with how a photograph fits into the overall story being advanced by the representation. Such representation which forms part of a bigger discourse might for instance be meant to reinforce the narrative of 'vulnerable children' or 'children of AIDS'. In this regard textual depictions link children's photographs to the overall narratives or stories of

'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS'. As illustrated before, 'child vulnerabilities' can also be in the form of child labor or exploitation for instance. The photograph has to relate to wider concepts or ideas on child vulnerability for it to achieve an effective portrayal or communication of children's experiences. While the power of photographic representation lays in the fact that images are open to various sorts of interpretations, textual photographic depiction can also focus the reader's interpretations of photographs presented to her or him. The researcher further argues that this is possible as illustrated in the above examples because textual photographic depiction provides some guidance regarding the key message or story of a photograph. This constitutes the process of what the researcher discussed as editorial or controlled gazing in chapter 4. Editorial gazing is when a reader's interpretations of narratives or photographs are deliberately confined only to certain aspects of children's experiences. This translates into some form of social control of readers by humanitarian professionals in constructions of children's realities that raise ethical issues.

It is a notable characteristic of textual depiction based on photographs reviewed above that it directs the reader to interpretations of children's identities that are in line with the narratives of 'children of AIDS' and 'vulnerable children' discussed in chapter 4. Therefore this makes both narratives and photographs of children powerful ways of portraying identities of children in humanitarian discourse. That is why this study focused on both narrative and photographic representations of children as they result in the constructions and portrayals of children's identities in similar ways within humanitarian discourse. When stereotypes of children are advanced through photographs in particular,

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they give rise to a form of depiction of children at a grand level which the researcher terms mythical photographic depiction. Mythical photographic depiction refers to how children's photographs at both literal and textual levels jointly construct and portray questionable stereotypical identities of children. Such questionable identities for instance arise from stereotypical perceptions and representations of who 'vulnerable' children are and how such children should look like. As the next section will illustrate, such mythical photographic depictions can reinforce identities of children associated with the narrative of 'African children'. The researcher now discusses mythical photographic depiction in the next section before concluding this chapter.

5.5.3 Mythical photographic depiction

A myth is a symbolic narrative that is widely used and believed but can be false. It is usually told as a story of events to unfold the worldview of certain people or to explain belief and practice (Encyclopedia Britannica Online 2007, sv myth). A myth can be told in the form of a narrative that hides part of the real story. This makes a myth a story of half-truth that forms part of an ideology. Myths can be deceptive as they are capable of misrepresenting things. In relation to this definition, it is interpreted that narrative and photographic depictions of children can be used to advance certain myths especially when they tell half-truths about experiences of children. Additionally, narratives of 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children' together with literal and textual photographic depictions of children are all part of representing children's identities in humanitarian discourse. During such representations, narratives and photographs that tell half truths about children can be used. For this researcher, such

representations can 'hide' the real stories behind the intentions of constructing and portraying children's identities in humanitarian discourse.

The following photographic depiction illustrates how certain myths about 'children of AIDS' can be constructed and portrayed. This is a photograph of a grandmother from Mozambique who looks after seventeen grandchildren. The photograph has been also discussed in the previous section on textual photographic depiction.

Mythical photographic depiction of 'children of AIDS'

[Source: International HIV and AIDS Alliance Presentation (2005), Brighton, UK].

The researcher interpreted that the above photographic depiction advances certain myths regarding 'children of AIDS' in Africa. The myths can be that 'children of AIDS' are

mainly from African countries such as Mozambique, there are 'multitudes' of 'children of AIDS' in Mozambique, people in Mozambique have many children (even if the above case of seventeen orphans may an exceptional one) and grandparents are the ones taking care of AIDS orphans in Mozambique (even if the above illustration reflects only an isolated case that has been selected because it is a dramatic one that exaggerates the extent of the problem).The presentation of such myths is a form of social construction of realities using children's photographs. Such myths are questionable as reality is socially constructed and relative. Myths reinforce social inequalities or social stratifications. They do so when they inform an arbitrary way of categorizing children and ascribing identities to them based on selected sorts of social problems and experiences. Representing only selected aspects of children's experiences creates an 'ethical' challenge in relation to the 'accuracies' of such selective portrayals.

The following two photographs also illustrate how mythical photographic depictions of children are possible to advance within humanitarian discourse. The photographs, also discussed under textual depiction illustrate the differences between child work and child labor. The researcher argues that the two photographs advance a myth that has the potential to reinforce certain cultural perceptions of gender based roles among children in African contexts. These photographs were collected from a child labor project in Uganda known as KURET. They appear in a presentation made by a Manager of this project at a workshop in Tanzania on 16th February (2008).

Mythical photographic depiction of child gender roles

Child work

- Child work is NOT child labor. Child work is proportionate to child's age, physical development, and is not harmful.
- Usually it is part of the socialization and upbringing process.
- Example: helping in household chores

Mythical photographic depiction of child labor

Child labor:

- Work that is physically, mentally or morally harmful to children. In short, it is work that is not fit for children.

The first photograph defines and depicts child work by presenting a girl doing household chores. The second photograph defines and depicts child labor by presenting a boy carrying bricks. Why is the child in the first photograph that depicts child work a girl while the child in the second photographs that depicts child labor a boy? One can interpret these two photographs by saying they advance a myth that associates domestic child work with girls and heavy child labor with boys. It is as if the photographs are saying girls belong to the domestic sphere while boys are for the harsh public sphere. Girls are seen as maybe 'weak' and 'soft' which is why they do child work in the house like washing dishes. Such work is deemed proportionate to their sex, age and other physical feminine attributes. Child work is thus presented as part of girls' 'acceptable' way of socialization since it is defined as work that is not harmful to children. It is also presented as 'acceptable' because it is work that is supposed to be 'proportionate' to a child's physical development.

On the other hand, it can be interpreted that the photographs are representing boys as the ones who are mainly vulnerable to child labor. Boys are portrayed as 'tough' and so they can handle work that is more physically and mentally demanding than girls. The public sphere is in this sense 'culturally' defined as belonging to boys. In addition such depictions seem to attach a feminine identity of 'softness' to girls and a masculine identity of 'toughness' to boys. While this may be arguably so in some cases, the researcher is of the view that boys can also do domestic household chores while girls can be victims of other forms of child labor such as commercial sexual exploitation or sexual bondage. This is an illustration of how social perceptions can be photographically

presented to construct, reinforce and portray stereotypes or myths about gender based roles among 'African children'. Such photographic ways of representing children can socially construct and portray myths as if they were 'real' reflections of children's situations, experiences and identities.

While at surface level the above mythical photographic depictive levels of representing children portray identities of children in ways that appear 'real', they tell part of the truth about children. This researcher argues that the actual purpose of representing children in the above ways is much deeper for simple mental explanation. Those mythical photographic depictions are silent about how they constitute deceptive and at times inaccurate portrayals of children's identities. This is how myths such as the one associated with the narrative of 'African children' for instance, get constructed and portrayed within a humanitarian discourse. Such myths are based on what may be 'traditionally' perceived as 'culturally' acceptable gender based roles for children in some 'African' contexts. However it can be further argued that what is 'culturally' acceptable is socially contestable while gender roles are socially constructed and subject to change with time.

Myths can thus be shaped through a combination of textual, narrative and photographic depictive dialoging. For this researcher, such is how children's representations in humanitarian discourse are achieved. As we have seen from the photograph of the grandmother from Mozambique, such myths for instance seek to communicate how 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' look like. The photograph also reinforces

myths on how the physical appearances and living conditions of 'children of AIDS 'typically' look like. For instance the children presented in the Mozambique photograph look unkempt, sad, depressed and some malnourished. This is a social construction of reality. Therefore uses of photographs to support certain myths are 'powerful' ways of representing realities about children in humanitarian contexts. Instead of advancing certain myths or stereotypes by word only, photographic depictions are equally effective ways that support word based mythical representations of children.

Therefore, when literal and textual photographic depictions of children are jointly used with children's narratives, they construct and advance mythical identities of children. This might arguably be part of the reason why humanitarian professionals choose to represent children using photographs in the first instance. All forms of photographic depictions of children discussed in this chapter result in what can be described as an 'ultimate' stereotypical representation of children's identities. As the discussion in chapter 4 has also shown, such mythical photographic representations of children are well situated within forms of children's narratives that mainly support stereotypical identities of children within humanitarian discourse. Those narratives, to which photographs presented in this chapter are a part, tell special stories of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' whose identities are constructed and represented as being exclusive to 'African children'.

It appears that when children's photographs are presented together with the above stated narratives of children, a special view on such children is constructed, reinforced and

portrayed. Such a special view according to this researcher is that there are some children whose life circumstances and experiences render them more vulnerable than others. Due to their experiences in life, such children 'acquire' stereotypical identities that point to the need to have special humanitarian support or aid services made accessible to them. Such acquired identities are reflected in ways that describe children in humanitarian discourse such as 'vulnerable children', AIDS orphans, children of the pandemic, children of Africa, child soldiers and child sexual workers. In addition, it also appears that narratives and photographs of children identify children with the above sorts of identities as children from mainly a particular location of the world. This location is Africa which is the reason why the researcher suggests that forms of narratives and photographs that represent children as discussed in this study are mainly about 'African children'.

This researcher proposes to restate his earlier point that narrative and photographic representations of children constitute a social process of constructing identities of children. Identities of children that are constructed during processes of narrative and photographic representations are neither permanent nor natural. This is because humanitarian professionals are capable of representing children in ways that suit personal agendas. Humanitarian professionals can do so since as discussed in chapter 3, they are rational agents who act based on their conscious intentions. It is thus not a surprise that narratives and photographic representations of children discussed in chapters 4 and 5 seem to construct and portray a 'grand' identity of 'vulnerable African children' in need of humanitarian support. This 'grand' identity is 'achieved' by uses of narratives and

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photographs of children in ways that appear ‘natural’ and yet such forms of representing children are contestable social constructs.

Therefore, narrative and photographic representations of children are not always done in order to portray ‘real’ identities of children. This poses an ethical issue. At the very least, it is reasonable to expect that identities of children represented in narratives and photographs are used to portray partial ‘realities’ about children based on certain interests. This is because it is arguably in some humanitarian professionals’ interests to construct, portray and maintain certain preferred identities of children. Coming up with an appropriate discourse that tells half the story about children is part of securing those interests. Therefore manipulations of forms of children’s representations are part of a social process that leads to social constructions and portrayals of children’s identities within humanitarian discourse. Having illustrated in the last two chapters how humanitarian professionals construct children’s identities in narratives and photographs, the researcher concludes this chapter again by situating such humanitarian practice within phenomenological sociology. This is being done to once more remind the reader that it was this phenomenological theoretical framework that the researcher adopted to evaluate how constructions of children’s identities are done within humanitarian discourse. The researcher also does this to again link his discussions in chapters 4 and 5 to the research problem and main theoretical framework of this study presented in chapters 1 and 3.

5.6 Children's representations and phenomenological sociology

This study focused on the issue of children's representations in the context of humanitarian discourse. Forms of children's representations discussed are narrative and photographic in nature. As stated in chapter 1, this research specifically sought to address the problem of how children's identities are constructed in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse. This research issue was influenced by the researcher's own assumption that partly prompted this study. The assumption is that the humanitarian discourse on children's representation which is a concern of this study is a socially constructed one. Such an assumption was influenced by a phenomenological theoretical framework upon which this study hinges. The researcher has discussed forms of children's narrative and photographic representations in chapters 4 and 5 using a theoretical framework and assumptions of phenomenological sociology.

As discussed in chapters 1 and 3, phenomenology is a sociological theory that explains ways in which human intentions influence social actions. It does so by focusing on the roles that individuals play as active agents in the constructions of ideas, interpretations of realities and ascribing of meanings to things. This view appears in the works of Schutz (1967); Gergen (2003); Hursel (1920) & Natanson (1970). These authors suggest that people's worlds including all sorts of realities are forms of social constructs. This means that identities of children under discussion in this thesis are actually socially constructed realities used to represent children's worlds. Worlds of children are constantly constructed and reconstructed by humanitarian professionals. Humanitarian professionals

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do so when they portray identities of children based on their own stereotypical perceptions and interpretations of children's experiences or situations.

The researcher attempted to explain different forms of children's narratives and levels of photographic depictions in chapters 4 and 5 using the above ideas that borrow from phenomenological sociology. An ethical concern that emerged from the researcher's interpretations of children's narratives and photographs is that it is humanitarian professionals and not children who collect these from children or their care givers. This process is a selective one since humanitarian professionals seem to prefer narratives and photographs of children that focus on stereotypical experiences of children. This constitutes a 'controlled' process of editorial gazing that results in selective social constructions of children's identities using narratives and photographs. This means that at times humanitarian professionals act as social engineers who work for the advancement of a particular humanitarian agenda. The construction of preferred identities of children is part of a strategy that promotes the existence of that child focused humanitarian agenda. As discussed in this and chapter 4, a humanitarian agenda is promoted when identities of children are constructed and portrayed in narratives and photographs to induce certain emotional reactions among people. Emotional reactions include expressions of panic, fear and pity among different audiences. This is how the researcher applied the interpretative phenomenological theory to evaluate how children's identities are constructed and portrayed in narratives and photographs in chapters 4 and 5.

Therefore, it is not accidental that humanitarian professionals construct identities of children in ethically questionable ways revealed in narratives and photographs discussed in chapters 4 and 5. Rather, humanitarian professionals act as social actors who are conscious about the sorts of identities of children that should be constructed to keep the humanitarian agenda in existence. As such, the professionals' actions are not only a result of their own intentions since they are also influenced by the dictates of the humanitarian system they work for. As already mentioned in chapters 3 and 4, humanitarian professionals speak to the humanitarian discourse in the same way that the discourse speaks to them. By constructing and portraying identities of children in response to the humanitarian agenda, the professionals act as rational social agents who know and do what is required of them by their humanitarian system. This academic argument was greatly influenced by theoretical discussions presented in detail in chapter 3. The researcher will again put forward this academic argument in some detail in chapter 7 as part of his knowledge or theoretical contribution in this thesis.

Having evaluated forms of children's narrative and photographic representations and how they result in constructions of children's identities, the researcher now shifts to discuss why humanitarian professionals collect such narrative narratives and photographs. The researcher will do so by presenting perceptions of humanitarian professionals regarding key terms that describe children in selected narratives and photographs. Humanitarian professionals consist of program managers and program communicators. These were selected as they are the professionals who are directly involved in the practice of representing children as discussed in chapters 4 and 5. The researcher engages in this

discussion in the next chapter for two reasons. Firstly, the researcher intends to understand some practical reasons why humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs in the first place. There must be practical reasons why humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs that construct and communicate identities of children as suggested in chapters 4 and 5. Secondly the researcher wants to expose some ethical issues that arise from the field when humanitarian professionals collect and use children's narratives and photographs discussed in the study. It is the researcher's objective to highlight those ethical issues that arise from the ways identities of children are constructed in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the study objective concerned with how different photographic depictions of children result in constructions and portrayals of identities of children. The researcher did so by discussing three levels of children's photographic depiction in humanitarian discourse. These levels are literal, textual and mythical photographic depictions. Photographic depictions of children were investigated using interpretative sociological research methods within a special form of social inquiry known as image based research. In addition, children's photographs were also discussed in relation to narrative forms of representing children presented in chapter 4. Those narrative forms included the narrative of 'vulnerable children', narrative of 'children of AIDS' and narrative of 'African children'. In this chapter, the researcher's main argument was that children's photographs, just like these narratives, are also used by

humanitarian professionals to construct identities of children that are stereotypical. Such photographs have to be interpreted in relation to children's narratives as they simultaneously construct and advance similar identities of 'African children' in need of humanitarian support. In the next chapter, the researcher presents perceptions of humanitarian professionals regarding collections and uses of narratives and photographs of children presented in chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 6 will therefore address study objectives on; why humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs and how humanitarian professionals interpret some narratives and photographs of children discussed in chapters 4 and 5. This will lead to a discussion on practical and ethical issues that arise from uses of children's narratives and photographs.

CHAPTER 6: HUMANITARIAN PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN'S NARRATIVES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses objectives 4, 5 and 6 of the study. Objective 4 intended to find out humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs. Objective 5 sought to establish why humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs of children including uses of such narratives and photographs in humanitarian works. Objective 6 aimed to expose some ethical issues that arise from collections and uses of children's narratives and photographs. Therefore this chapter discusses humanitarian professionals' perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs presented to them. Forms of such narratives and levels of photographic depictions have been discussed in chapters 4 and 5 respectively. This chapter just like the previous one illustrates how individuals or agents play a part in social constructions of realities. However how individual agents construct reality can also be influenced by a humanitarian discourse that exists and is shaped by certain socio-cultural factors. This as also discussed in chapters 3, 4, and 5 is a theoretical statement that further demonstrates the intricate relationship between agency and structure in processes of reality construction.

The focus of this chapter was based on the researcher's need to understand different uses of children's narratives and photographs by the professionals. The different uses reflect practical reasons why the professionals collect children's narratives and photographs. As stated in chapter 1, this study is situated within interpretative phenomenological

sociology. This sociological theory seeks to explain how people's perceptions and interpretations of things are influenced by people's conscious intentions. Therefore, seeking the professional's perceptions and interpretations of children's narratives and photographs was meant to illustrate how reality is socially constructed in the phenomenological sense. Ethical issues that arise from the practice of collecting and using children's narratives and photographs are also discussed by the researcher in the chapter. The chapter concludes by highlighting the tension between practical and ethical issues as a precursor to chapter 7.

6.2 Description of process

The process and methods used to collect data from humanitarian professionals have been discussed in detail in chapter 2 on Methodology. For now it is suffice for the researcher to state that qualitative key informant interviews with humanitarian professionals from different organizations were conducted. The interviews were meant to get those humanitarian professionals' perceptions of children's narrative and photographs. These professionals consist of program managers, program communicators, community development facilitators and coordinators who are the makers and users of children's narratives and photographs. Views of respondents cited in this chapter were given in personal capacity and are not a reflection of the official positions of respondents or that of their organizations. The names of the respondents and their organizations were also withheld to protect the respondents. Those professionals were deliberately targeted because they are actively involved in the collections and uses of narratives and photographs of children that have been discussed in chapters 4 and 5. It was also an

important chance to allow the professionals to reflect on their ways of representing children's identities as found and discussed in the literature review sections of the study.

Humanitarian professional's views were sought and are presented in this chapter at three levels. Firstly, the professionals were asked to say or state what they understood by the terms 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children'. Such terms emerge from forms of children's narratives discussed in chapter 4. The researcher was keen to find out if such terms mean the same things to different professionals. This would help in determining if ways in which identities of children are constructed in narratives discussed in chapter 4 can be described as similar or different among humanitarian professionals. If they are not similar, then how come such narratives of children are presented in literatures as 'natural'? Secondly, humanitarian professionals were also presented with selected photographs of children discussed in chapter 5. They were then asked to give feedback regarding; how the children in the photographs looked or appeared to the professional, what the photographs communicated to the professional and how the photographs made the professional feel. The researcher was keen to find out if social constructs in forms of children's photographs communicate similar messages to different people. He also sought to find out the sorts of feelings evoked by those photographs among humanitarian professionals. There was a question at the back of the researcher's mind as he presented the selected photographs to the professionals. The question was do photographic depictions communicate similar identities of children or induce feelings in similar ways among humanitarian professionals?

Thirdly, the researcher asked the professionals why they collect narratives and photographs of children such as the ones he presented to them, how they make use of such narratives and photographs, the types of media the professionals use to communicate children's narratives and photographs and some ethical issues or challenges that arise when professionals collect and use children's narratives and photographs. By asking these questions, the researcher was interested to find out practical reasons that cause the professionals to collect and use such information from children. Ethical issues faced by these professionals as they collect such information were also sought by the researcher. The researcher did so because it is a main concern of the study to explore ethical issues that arise from the ways identities of children are constructed and represented in narratives and photographs. The three different levels of humanitarian professionals' perceptions introduced above are now discussed in detail by the researcher.

6.3 Perceptions of humanitarian professionals on narrative terms

Under this section, humanitarian professionals' perceptions of terms on 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children' are presented. These three terms from children's narratives discussed in chapter 4 were presented to different humanitarian professionals in order to find out how they perceived and interpreted these terms. This is a concern of objective 5 of the study. The researcher was especially keen to find out whether or not the above terms mean similar things to different professionals. Based on perceptions of the professionals, the researcher interpreted possible identities of children that can arise from uses of such terms. The following table is a consolidated summary of key responses from interviewed participants regarding their perceptions or

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understandings of the three terms. The responses were thematically consolidated during data analysis based on the three questions that appear as column headings below.

Professionals' perceptions of terms that describe children in narratives

What do you understand by the term Vulnerable Children?	What do you understand by the term Children of AIDS?	What do you understand by the term 'African Children?
➢ Children at risk ➢ Children exposed to situations that may be harmful ➢ Children whose basic needs are not met ➢ Children living unsatisfactory lives ➢ Children without food, education & clothing ➢ Children living unsatisfactory life due to reasons beyond their powers ➢ Needy children ➢ Orphan children ➢ Poor children ➢ Children heading households or families ➢ Children caught up in difficult circumstances ➢ Children of dead parents ➢ Children of ill parents or guardians ➢ Children in countries that are in tribal wars ➢ Children who are victims of riotous situations ➢ Poor abused child ➢ Child affected by the economic status of parents ➢ A child who is prone to harmful things ➢ Disabled children ➢ Abandoned children ➢ Children not fortunate enough to enjoy life to the fullest ➢ Children who do not have stable life styles ➢ Children with no social security ➢ Neglected children	➢ Children at risk of HIV infection ➢ This is an insulting term ➢ There is nothing like a children of AIDS ➢ Children who are victims of the HIV virus ➢ Children already contaminated with the disease ➢ Children who are HIV positive due to rape ➢ Children infected by their parents from birth ➢ Children born during a period when many people suffer from AIDS ➢ Children living in 'this time of AIDS' ➢ Children born in this generation of HIV/AIDS ➢ Orphans due to AIDS ➢ These are children born in 'these days' ➢ Children living with AIDS ➢ This is a stigmatizing term ➢ This is a discriminatory term used by people not exposed to HIV issues ➢ Human beings must never be identified with diseases like AIDS ➢ Children born of parents infected with HIV ➢ Children who have been affected by HIV/AIDS ➢ Children of parents who died of AIDS related illnesses ➢ Children living in the days of HIV/AIDS ➢ Children who are victims of sexual abuse	➢ Children born in Africa ➢ Children of African parents ➢ Children born to African nationalists ➢ Children growing up in an African culture & style ➢ Citizens of Africa ➢ Children bred in Africa ➢ Children of the African continent ➢ Children born and registered in Africa ➢ Children of African biological parents ➢ Children with African 'identity' ➢ Children brought up by African parents ➢ Children socialized in 'African' culture ➢ Any children in Africa ➢ Usually these are abused children ➢ There is no African children ➢ This is name calling ➢ The term leads to discrimination & stigma ➢ Children born in the African region ➢ Children of parents born in Africa ➢ Children who grow up in an African style ➢ Children brought up in African laws and customs ➢ Black children ➢ Children who experience child labour ➢ Exploited children ➢ Children not free to express themselves

➢ Children who are prone to any kind of danger ➢ Children who are needy ➢ Children with parents who cannot afford things	➢ Children born already HIV positive	➢ Children on the streets or in poor living conditions ➢ These children tend to be out of school Married children

The above table is a summary that reflects consolidated key responses from some interviewed humanitarian professionals in the field. The researcher now describes some of the selected responses in detail. Selected citations are given to illustrate some specific perceptions of humanitarian professionals over the three terms as presented to them.

6.3.1 Vulnerable children

As illustrated in the above table, some humanitarian professionals perceived or understood the term 'vulnerable children' to mean a number of things. These ranged from children who are at risk, abused children, children who lack access to basic provisions, children from poor backgrounds, needy children, children exposed to all sorts of harm, disabled children and children living in unsatisfactory environments.

The researcher will give some citations to further illustrate and describe some of the above responses from the interviewed humanitarian professionals. Different humanitarian professionals' perceptions of the term 'vulnerable children' are reflected in such citations. The following citation is from a certain HIV and AIDS Program Coordinator in Swaziland;

"Vulnerable children are children who are at risk of exposure to situations that may be harmful to the children in question".

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In probing the respondent further, the researcher established that harmful situations include risks of HIV infection, exposure to poverty, lack of social security, care and protection from parents or adults. Harmful situations were thus interpreted by the researcher to mean circumstances that render children vulnerable by reducing or affecting children's life chances or 'adequate' development. Another response from an HIV and AIDS Program Manager also from Swaziland reflects a perception of the term 'vulnerable children' that is more specific than the one above. This response gives some specificity in terms of what those harmful or difficult circumstances faced by the children are. This Program Manager responded as follows;

"The term vulnerable children means children that find themselves caught up in difficult circumstances due either to the deaths of parents or illness of parents or guardian and lack of basic needs. It also means children in countries that are in war like the present day Zimbabwe. Children are victims of the riot that is going on there"

We can see from this citation that the perception of child vulnerability is specifically linked to illness of parents, deaths of parents or guardian and living in an environment of war. It is interesting that the respondent perceives the political tension in Zimbabwe following a disputed election outcome of March 2008 as a situation of 'war'. Such a 'war' situation refers to a presence of social conflicts or tensions that render children vulnerable. The citation also points out a dimension of 'lack of basic needs' as an indicator of child vulnerability. As the researcher found out, these basic needs include food, shelter, health and education. Children are vulnerable when they have no access to such basics in life. The literature review data presented in chapter 4 also pointed to the above as indicators of children's vulnerabilities.

Another interesting perception of 'vulnerable children' was given by an Area Development Program Manager from Mali, who said;

'Vulnerable children are disabled children, children from poor families, children living on streets, abandoned children, children living unstable lifestyles, children whose parents welcome other children into the family and orphan children who lost one or both parents'.

The researcher did a further probing of the above response in an attempt to get the Area Development Program Manager to give details or unpack her statements. It emerged from the respondent that children's disabilities include physical impairments and mental limitations that make it difficult for some children to live 'normal' lives. Children on the streets are those children who are forced to work on the streets to earn a living through begging, menial jobs like washing cars, mugging people and commercial sex work. Such children are normally out of school. The respondent described abandoned children as children 'thrown' away or left by their parents who could not look after them due to lack of means. Children of unstable lifestyles were described by the respondent as children with no family base, who lack support and come from financially insecure backgrounds. The Program Manager also explained that some parents adopt or take in abandoned or orphaned children to look after them. This means there will be more children in the household to take care of including their own. Family resources get compromised in the process and the quality of life for all the children gets compromised. This can make the biological children of those parents who take in other children vulnerable as well.

A Community Program Coordinator from Ghana also gave his perception of the term 'vulnerable children' as illustrated in the next citation;

"The term 'vulnerable children' refers to boys and girls in communities who are exposed to abuses. For example, children being used for fishing; young girls given in forced marriages. Children who use sharp objects like machetes for farming are seen to be vulnerable and could get hurt easily".

This citation is different from the others given before in that it highlights a perception of child vulnerability that has to do with some special forms of child abuses. These abuses are child labour and forced early marriage. The Program Coordinator was based in a farming region of Ghana in which fishing is one of the main economic activities. Some fish farmers in the area abuse young boys by making them fisher boys who catch fish to earn menial wages. This is a form of child labour. In the same community it is 'customarily' acceptable to have young girls given early in marriage. Such marriages are usually arranged against children's wishes. Some children are also engaged in cocoa farming. At times these children work in unsafe environments using sharp machetes which can hurt them. Therefore it is mainly the economic and socio-cultural background of the community in which the Ghana Program Coordinator was based that influenced his perception of the term 'vulnerable children'. This illustrates how perceptions of realities are socially situated and not necessarily universal.

Another citation to illustrate some perceptions of humanitarian professionals regarding the term 'vulnerable children' comes from a Community Development Program Officer from Sierra Leon. The Officer works for a program located in an area to the south of the country known as Jong district. This officer said;

"Vulnerable children are children in child labour, children at an orphanage and children with HIV and AIDS infected parents"

This officer's perception of children in child labour as children who are vulnerable is similar to that of the Program Coordinator from Ghana described above. Some children are forced by poverty or deaths of parents to work in the rubber plantations that are found in Sierra Leon. Rubber harvesting is a risky occupation due to harsh environments and nature of objects used for harvesting. Those objects like machetes can injure young children who work without any form of protective clothing. Due to the civil war that resulted in the deaths of some parents in Sierra Leon in the 1990s, some children became orphans who got placed into orphanages. Such orphanages are still in existence today but they now also take care of other children who become orphans as a result of deaths of parents due to HIV and AIDS. Some of the children are sexually abused or sodomised by fellow children or care givers in some of the orphanages. Children in orphanages are also socially isolated from usual community life as they tend to grow up not in touch with their family links. It is out of such an explanation that the term 'vulnerable children' can be understood in ways given above by the Program Officer from Sierra Leon.

From all the illustrations given above, the researcher suggests that there is a general similarity in terms of how the respondents perceived 'vulnerable children'. The similarity is that 'vulnerable children' were generally described among humanitarian professionals as children who live in difficult circumstances. Such circumstances limit children's access to basic services and adequate social development. However, it is the specific interpretations of what those 'difficult circumstances' or 'basic services' mean that gave differences to the perceptions of the professionals. While for some respondents a difficult circumstance entailed loss of parents, for others it meant child disability, illness or

exposure to war. In the same way perceptions of 'basic needs' ranged from the physical such as food and shelter to the social such as protection and educational development. These differences in interpretations of perceptions of child vulnerability factors given by the humanitarian professionals support a point on child vulnerability made by the researcher in chapters 4 and 5. The point is that the term 'vulnerable children' is a social construct. While this term seeks to advance a permanent or unified identity of certain children, that 'permanent' identity is not possible to achieve. As the above citations illustrate, the term 'vulnerable children' is read and interpreted differently among professionals working in the same field. Therefore the realities of what 'vulnerable children' are including how they can be identified are subject to contestations and diverse interpretations by people who are conscious social actors. The researcher suggests that it is possible to have as many indicators or factors on child vulnerabilities as there are people who seek to interpret those child vulnerabilities.

Therefore as discussed in chapter 4, the narrative of 'vulnerable children' should not be seen as a universal one. Identities of children constructed and advanced in this narrative cannot be permanent as they are only social constructs given by people who perceive children's vulnerabilities from different angles. This again supports the point highlighted in the theoretical chapter 3 that says reality is socially constructed and is not a uniform phenomenon. Therefore data in this chapter adds weight to some earlier arguments of the researcher. The researcher now moves to illustrate and describe participants' responses regarding their perceptions or understandings of the term 'children of AIDS'.

6.3.2 Children of AIDS

As illustrated in the summary table before, interviewed humanitarian professionals tended to perceive the term 'children of AIDS' as one that refers to children at risk of HIV infection, children who are victims of HIV and AIDS, children whose parents died from HIV infection, children born in a generation of AIDS or children born in days of AIDS. It is also interesting to note that some of the respondents stated that the term 'children of AIDS' is an insulting one as it stigmatizes children. Such a stigma they said is socially isolating as children should not be identified by any form of disease. These views echo a point made earlier by the researcher in chapter 4 when he discussed forms of children's narratives. The point is that the term 'children of AIDS' is a socially constructed one that isolates some children from their communities. Such a narrative attaches stereotypical identities to children in ways that are socially contestable. Just as the researcher stated in chapters 4 and 5, assigning stereotypical identities to children raises an ethical issue related to the 'accuracy' of such representations.

As in the case of the term 'vulnerable children' the researcher gives a few citations below to illustrate how some humanitarian professionals perceived the term 'children of AIDS'. The first citation came from an HIV and AIDS Program Director in Uganda who said;

"Children of AIDS are children born in this AIDS era. These are children born in an AIDS period".

The researcher interprets the above statement to say it means that there is a period which can be described as a time of AIDS. It follows from this that those children who are born during such a time can 'acquire' identities that derive from such a time. That is why the

respondent said such children are 'children born in this AIDS era'. A further interpretation of this statement can also reveal that all children born in a time of the HIV and AIDS pandemic 'automatically' become 'children of AIDS'. Based on such an understanding the researcher thinks, HIV and AIDS related identities of children arise. This is what arguably supports or influences the emergence of the narrative of 'children of AIDS' as discussed in detail in chapter 4. The following related illustration comes from a Project Manager in Ghana;

"Children of AIDS are children infected with AIDS either by birth or any other means. They can also be boys and girls whose parents die early or suspected to be off springs of infected parents".

On probing the Manager further, he said once children are infected by the HIV virus then they become 'children of AIDS'. From this, the researcher deduces that there is a social process of acquiring an identity of a 'child of AIDS'. Such a process the researcher feels entails the social labeling of children by adults. Social labeling as discussed in chapters 3 and 4 is not natural but intentional on the part of people who seek to identify children based on certain stereotypes. Another point that the researcher also deduces from the above statement is that children tend to be assigned a status or identity based on the circumstances of their parents. In this case, children get identified as 'children of AIDS' by virtue of the fact that their parents are 'suspected' of being infected with HIV or of actually having died from HIV and AIDS related illnesses. It is also of interest to note that such children were described by the Project Manager as 'off springs of infected parents'. The researcher thinks this phrase has some negative connotations that imply that such children are a 'condemned' special class of children. This is how as suggested in

chapter 4, identities of children within the narrative of 'children of AIDS' get constructed and portrayed within humanitarian discourse. The above views confirm such a position.

Another illustration of humanitarian professionals' perceptions of the term 'children of AIDS' is from a Public Health Program Manager from Niger who said;

"Children of AIDS are children affected by HIV and AIDS. Statistics show that there are around 11 million such children of AIDS of whom majority are from Africa. Children of AIDS become orphans and vulnerable children".

When asked to describe what she meant by 'children affected by HIV and AIDS', the Health Program Manager said it meant children who become orphans or face hardships when their parents die of AIDS. Those hardships include lack of food, shelter and education support. The above statement can also be interpreted to say it means that the term 'children of AIDS' is a description or an identity of children who mainly live in Africa. This is supported by the statistics given by the respondent although she did not give comparative figures of children affected by AIDS in other contents. But the point that she could easily associate 'children of AIDS' with 'African children' supports the researcher's argument presented in chapters 4 and 5. The argument is that identities of children in the narrative of 'children of AIDS' seem mainly to be portrayed as exclusive to 'African children'. This constitutes a prejudicial or stereotypical assigning of identities to children within this narrative. The researcher will illustrate this point further in section 6.4.3 when he describes responses to the term 'African children'.

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The next citation illustrates a different perception regarding the term 'children of AIDS'. This perception is that the term 'children of AIDS' stigmatizes children and should not be used at all. As a Community Development Facilitator from Liberia said;

"There is nothing like children of AIDS. That is stigmatizing. Why AIDS in the first place? There are other diseases".

The above statement was also echoed by a response given by an HIV and AIDS Community Program Facilitator from Swaziland. She said;

"For me there is nothing like children of AIDS. It's a term I consider to be insulting or degrading to the children".

The above two statements from professionals in Liberia and Swaziland respectively demonstrate the point that some of the humanitarian professionals are suspicious over uses of the term 'children of AIDS'. A common view from the two was that constructing or assigning identities to children using a 'disease' is not 'ethically' appropriate. This is because HIV and AIDS is not the only 'disease' in the world so the professionals were questioning the justification for assigning identities to children using the disease AIDS. The above two citations further support the researcher's view that the narrative of 'children of AIDS' is a paternalistic one. Identities of children constructed in this narrative have to be questioned as they can misrepresent who the children are in reality. Misrepresenting children is an 'ethically' questionable practice. From the above illustrations, the researcher wants to make the point that the term 'children of AIDS' just like that of 'vulnerable children' did not mean the same thing to different humanitarian professionals. It was subject to wide human interpretations. For some of the respondents, the term was described as stigmatizing as it portrays children in prejudicial stereotypical

ways. Indeed this is a point the researcher keeps referring to in this thesis as it brings out a major statement of this study. The statement is that the assigning and representations of children's identities in narratives such as the one on 'children of AIDS' constitute a process of social construction of reality. In the following section, the researcher presents and describes humanitarian professionals' perceptions regarding the term 'African children'.

6.3.3 African children

Some of the interviewed humanitarian professionals generally perceived the term 'African children' as one that describes children who are born in Africa, children born of mainly African parents, children with an African identity, children who are normally abused, children who experience many problems when they are growing up, exploited children, children who are not free to express themselves and children who tend to live in poor conditions or environments. Such views support an argument posited by the researcher in chapter 4. That argument is that the narrative of 'African children' tends to construct and portray identities of children in Africa that are largely confined to suffering, poverty, disease, abuses, war and social exclusion. This narrative combines identities found in the narratives of 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS' to form a grand image of suffering 'African children' who are 'poverty stricken'.

Just as in the cases of terms on 'vulnerable children' and 'children of AIDS, the researcher will give a few citations that illustrate and describe some of the perceptions of

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humanitarian professionals about the term 'African children'. The following citation comes from a Program Officer in Ghana;

"The term African child connotes a black boy, dirty with unkempt hair, torn clothes and is usually used by people black rich and whites to describe poor children from poor African families".

The above view was also supported by the following statement from an Area Development Program Manager in Niger who said;

"African children are children who live in a very typical village where there is lack off accessibility of things that make life enjoyable".

The above two statements reflect how identities of 'African children' tend to be portrayed. African children are described as 'black' children from very poor families whose looks are pathetic. These children usually live in remote or isolated communities that are synonymous with lack of 'civilization'. Such portrayals support an argument put forward by the researcher in chapter 4 when he described the narrative of 'African children'. The argument was that identities of 'African children' tend to be stereotypically constructed and portrayed in various humanitarian literatures that the researcher reviewed. To a large extent such literatures portray identities of 'African children' as impoverished second class citizens whose life chances are limited. These are prejudicial and stereotypical portrayals of identities of 'African children' that are synonymous with some biased colonial perceptions of Africa also discussed in chapter 4. Africa was described in some colonial literatures reviewed by the researcher as a dark continent characterized by poverty, ignorance and disease.

The following two citations are from a Community Development Worker in Ghana and a Program Manager from Niger respectively. They both further illustrate the above point on the stereotypical portrayals of children's identities in the narrative of 'African children';

"African children are born in African countries and are also unfortunate to lack so many things that can make them not grow up well, food, education, health, love, etc".

A Program Manager from Niger supported the above view by saying;

"African children are exposed to poverty, malnutrition, illness and absence of education. African children are exposed to HIV and AIDS, child labour, neglect and lack of respect for their rights".

The above illustrations seem to suggest that it is 'unfortunate' for a child to have an 'African' identity. It also appears from a further interpretation of the above statements that parents in Africa seem incapable of loving their children, protecting their children and providing for them. Not only are 'African children' constantly abused but they are also seen as being at risk of HIV infection in addition to having adults not respecting those children's rights. The above views reflect how the narrative of 'African children' has been internalized and told by some humanitarian professionals to advance stereotypical representations of 'African children'. This in a way confirms the researcher's assumption that he stated in chapter 1. The assumption was that some humanitarian professionals are responsible for the constructions and reinforcements of paternalistic identities of children. The professionals construct and portray paternalistic identities of children in narratives of the 'vulnerable children', 'children of AIDS' and 'African children'.

The following citation is a response given by an HIV and AIDS Project Manager from Liberia that further illustrates the researcher's point;

"African children are children born in Africa and who go through all kinds of suffering in order to survive. Sometimes they are abandoned and have to struggle for their survival".

A Program Manager from Mali also stated that;

"African children are black children who are exploited, provide child labour force, are not free to express themselves, face discrimination and some live on the streets or girls forced into early marriage".

The above two citations illustrate the point that identities of children in the narrative of 'African children' portray 'African children' as abandoned, suffering, struggling, exploited, victims of discrimination, experiencing child labour and living in unsafe environments. These ways of portraying identities of children are similar to the ones described by the researcher under forms of children's narrative and photographic representations in chapters 4 and 5. Narrative representations and photographic depictions of children that were discussed in the two chapters just as the ones in this chapter largely portrayed stereotypical or paternalistic identities of children. It is out of such representations or depictions of children's identities that some humanitarian professionals justify designs of certain child focused humanitarian programs.

However, it is worth to note a rather unique and interesting statement by one of the humanitarian professionals in response to the question of what the term 'African children' meant to him. The response was given by a Community Development Officer from Swaziland as follows;

"According to me there is no African child. I take the term African children as name calling. A child is a child there is no need to classify children because this may lead to discrimination and stigma".

This researcher agrees with the above statement because for him, classifying children implies that it is possible to come up with a common reality or perception about identities of children. Yet as we have seen from the several responses in the above sections, it is not possible to either achieve 'common' identities of children or realize the same interpretations of those identities of children in narratives. The researcher would like to conclude this section on humanitarian professionals' perceptions of narrative terms by stating a key point. This point is that children's identities were neither perceived nor interpreted the same way among interviewed humanitarian professionals. Although there were some general similarities in terms of what the different terms meant, specifically those terms did not always mean similar things to the different professionals. Children's identities are thus a subject of human constructions and interpretations. It is for this reason that the researcher reiterates his argument from chapters 4 and 5. The argument is that narrative forms of representing children constitute ways in which contestable realities about children's experiences are constructed and portrayed.

As the researcher mentioned in chapters 3, 4 and 5, humanitarian professionals are in a phenomenological sense social actors driven by conscious intentions. These professionals know identities of children that they prefer to advance. This affects how they perceive, construct, interpret and portray children's identities in narratives. What emerged from professionals' perceptions of different terms from children's narratives is that those terms did not mean same things to different people. The terms 'vulnerable children', 'children

of AIDS' and 'African children' communicated different things even among similar humanitarian professionals using those terms. This means the process of socially constructing identities is not uniform. It also means that identities constructed and portrayed in children's narratives are different to various people. As discussed in chapter 3 on the theoretical background, representations of children are a subject of individual interpretations and sociological imaginations in the phenomenological sense. The researcher now moves on to discuss responses of humanitarian professionals regarding their interpretations of selected photographs of children that he presented to them.

6.4 Humanitarian professionals' interpretations of children's photographs

Selected photographs of children discussed in detail in chapter 5 were presented to some humanitarian professionals. The aim was to find out different sorts of messages that those photographs communicated to their readers. By doing this the researcher aimed to address objective 4 of the study. Objective 4 was concerned with how humanitarian professionals interpret children's photographs. This also entailed establishing different ways of feeling that were induced when the photographs were presented to the professionals. The following is an example of three of such photographs presented to the participants. These photographs are of vulnerable children taking care of each other, a child engaged in forced child labour and a vulnerable child at a feeding center respectively. The three photographs have been used for illustration here but they were not the only ones presented to the participants to seek their interpretations. Other photographs from chapter 5 were also presented to the participants for their interpretations.

Photographic depiction of child care givers: Alliance (2005:2)

Who is taking care?

Together with my older brother, we care for the younger ones. I wash all the clothes, do the housework and cook for them. When they cry and miss their mother I take them so they can play and forget about it. Sometimes I do hold them and comfort them.

Rebecca Araújo, 13, and Elias, 6 Mozambique

The next 2 photographic depictions are from KURET (2008:28) & World Vision Report (2007:13)

Child labor:

- Work that is physically, mentally or morally harmful to children. In short, it is work that is not fit for children.

Key responses from some interviewed humanitarian professionals regarding their interpretations of the above photographs were consolidated in the summary table that follows. The responses were thematically categorized during data analysis based on the three questions presented to the professionals together with the photographs. These three questions that also appear on the summary table were; how do children in the photograph look, what do the photographs communicate or say to you and how do the photographs make you feel about the children? The rationale for asking these questions was to find out if the professionals interpreted similar messages from children's photographs. The researcher also aimed to determine how the professionals felt after being exposed to selected children's photographs.

Professionals' interpretations of photographic depictions of children

How do children in the photographs look?	What do the photographs communicate or say to you?	How do the photographs make you feel about the children?
➢ They are sad ➢ Look sick ➢ Poverty stricken ➢ Poorly dressed ➢ Vulnerable ➢ Appear to be in pain ➢ Miserable ➢ Malnourished ➢ Hungry ➢ Like orphans ➢ Look older than their ages due to problems ➢ Neglected ➢ They look bitter ➢ Lonely ➢ Disserted ➢ They look tough or hardened from suffering or poverty ➢ Like HIV positive ➢ They appear isolated ➢ Children are desperate ➢ They look so innocent ➢ Appear hopeless	➢ They depict poverty ➢ Communicate sickness ➢ They portray suffering ➢ Communicate the wickedness of people who hurt children ➢ Illustrate that vulnerable children need care ➢ Communicate the need to give food to children ➢ These children need support ➢ The children need psychosocial support ➢ Children lack family care and affection ➢ Such children are depressed ➢ Children are heading households ➢ Vulnerable children lack parental guidance ➢ Such children experience suffering ➢ Children of HIV positive	➢ Sad ➢ Angry ➢ Unhappy ➢ Touched ➢ Sorry ➢ Pained ➢ Like helping the poor children ➢ Feel so emotional ➢ I feel like adopting the child ➢ Sympathetic ➢ Like talking to the child ➢ Feel empathetic ➢ Compassionate ➢ Feel like praying for the child ➢ Makes me feel 'bad' ➢ It hurts me ➢ Like providing care ➢ Like giving spiritual support ➢ Advocating for children ➢ Feel like being generous to the child ➢ Feel like giving the child a future

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➢ Appear as baggers ➢ They look dirty ➢ They appear pathetic ➢ Children look worried ➢ Surprised ➢ Concerned ➢ Wondering ➢ Look poor ➢ Neglected ➢ Abandoned ➢ Helpless ➢ Unhappy ➢ Combatant [with guns] ➢ Rebellious [child soldiers] ➢ Traumatized ➢ Overburdened/loaded ➢ Frustrated ➢ They appear lonely ➢ Mentally disturbed ➢ They look distressed ➢ In deep thought ➢ Full of fear	parents are affected a lot ➢ Communicates financial needs of children ➢ Vulnerable children lack protection ➢ Children can be victims of irresponsible parents ➢ Girls from poor situations tend to be out of school ➢ Advocacy for children's rights is lacking ➢ The future of these children is dark, gloomy or uncertain ➢ Vulnerable children are worried about their future ➢ Children are exposed to dangerous situations ➢ Child labour makes children vulnerable – it is not good for children ➢ Communicates bad conditions that some children live in	➢ Like giving the children some protection ➢ I feel like asking all community members to help ➢ I feel children should be educated, fed, loved and protected ➢ Feel like having discussions with children about their situations ➢ I feel like punishing adults who abuse children ➢ Feel bad and reminds me of similar children from my community who need help ➢ I must do something to stop AIDS and prevent children's sufferings ➢ The photographs touch my heart ➢ Like holding the child ➢ I feel very angry

As stated before, the above table gives a consolidated picture of how some humanitarian professionals interpreted photographic depictions of children based on selected photographs of children presented to them by the researcher. This table is meant to give the reader an overall picture of how some of the interviewed professionals responded to the questions. However, in the following section, the researcher goes into some detail to describe selected specific responses that appear in the above table. A few citations of the selected respondents will also be given for illustration purposes. The descriptions of responses are based on the three broad categories of questions presented to the respondents together with the children's photographs. These broad questions appear as headings for the three columns of the above table. The three questions are also ones under which the following responses from participants are cited and described.

6.5.1 How do children in the photograph look?

As the above table illustrates, respondents stated that children in photographs looked sad, depressed, fearful, poverty stricken, lonely, tough or hardened, neglected, abandoned, unhappy, helpless, frustrated, traumatized, angry, dirty, isolated, pathetic and miserable. Such responses illustrate that generally, the interviewed humanitarian professionals did not see happy images or identities of children in the photographs presented to them. The researcher will give a few citations to illustrate some of the above views given by some humanitarian professionals regarding how the children in the photographs looked or appeared to them.

The following citation is from a Community Program Facilitator in Rwanda who said;

"The children in these photographs do not look happy because they have no affection from their parents".

The above response is similar to another one given by a fellow Community Development Coordinator also from Rwanda;

"The children look seemingly tough but really they are not happy, they look sad, lonely, disserted and bitter."

Based on the above responses, the researcher further probed the two respondents from Rwanda why they said the children looked sad, lonely and as lacking affection. Both went on to say it was because children in some of the photographs were not well dressed while others were doing work that is above children's physical capacities like carrying bricks. Texts that accompanied some of the photographs mentioned that the children had no parents and so that led respondents into interpreting that it was difficult for children

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without parents to stay happy. From the above responses, the researcher interprets that some humanitarian professionals saw children's photographs as depicting stereotypical identities of children who are unhappy because of circumstances they live in.

For further illustration, the researcher gives two other citations of responses given by a Health Project Officer from Rwanda and a Community Project Coordinator from Kenya respectively. The Officer from Rwanda said;

"These children look like they are from very poor families. They are poverty stricken and have to care for one another".

A Project Coordinator from Kenya gave a somewhat similar response below that also supports the interpretation that looks of children in photographs can depict poverty;

"Some of these children look like they come from poor backgrounds and lack parental care because they wear torn clothes which may not even be theirs".

It is interesting to note that the professionals seem to be actually saying poverty is literally depicted in children's photographs. In the process of interpreting such photographs of children, the professionals also further describe children's poverty based on personal perceptions of what it meant to come from a poor background. For instance the Coordinator from Kenya suggested that clothes that children were wearing 'may not even be theirs'. The photograph on its own does not tell us who the owners of the children's clothes are. However, the Coordinator's interpretation was probably based on his experiences of seeing some children from poor backgrounds borrowing clothes from others in order to pose for photographs. Such an interpretation means that the Coordinator

was illustrating that the children in the photographs were really poor so much that they even borrow torn clothes. The researcher adds that this might be the purpose why such types of photographs are collected in the first instance. Such a view echoes the researcher's earlier point on literal photographic depictions of children made in chapter 5. The point is that some photographs are intended to portray literal depictions of identities of children who are affected by poverty, misery, sickness and unhappiness. This is a view that the above responses from some humanitarian professionals seem to support. Such literal photographic depictions of children just like in the cases of narratives discussed above and also in chapter 4 equally construct and portray stereotypical identities of children.

The researcher gives two other citations that illustrate how some humanitarian professionals interpreted the looks of children in photographs. The two citations differ from the ones presented above in that these seek to demonstrate how some of the children's looks in photographs can portray emotional states of children. The first citation is from a Program Manager from Kenya who said;

"The children look traumatized, overburdened and mentally tired. Children's faces show they are depressed and overwhelmed with life".

A second but related citation to illustrate how children's looks in photographs portray certain emotional feelings is from a Health HIV and AIDS Manager also in Kenya who stated as follows;

"The children are unhappy and look disturbed in their minds. Children in the pictures look depressed, full of fear and in deep thoughts".

The above two citations from Kenyan professionals illustrate how some humanitarian professionals interpret the looks of children as depicting children's emotional, psychological or mental states. Such states can be described as direct results of the poor backgrounds or other difficult situations in which children find themselves. A message from such interpretations of photographic depictions seems to be that children who are vulnerable experience emotional and psychological problems which can be portrayed by their looks in photographs. Such is a social construction and communication of children's emotional and mental states in photographs. The researcher will now present responses to the question of what children's photographs communicated to the interviewed humanitarian professionals.

6.5.2 What do the photographs communicate or say to you?

Generally some interviewed humanitarian professionals responded that children's photographs presented to them communicated or said several things. Such communications should be understood to mean the same thing as what the photographs depict. Communications or depictions directly follow or are related to responses discussed under section 6.2.1 on how children look in photographs. Depictions of children arise from how children look in photographs. This section on what children's photographs communicate should thus not to be read in isolation from section 6.2.1 on how children look in photographs as the two are complimentary. Some interviewed humanitarian professionals said that children's photographs presented to them communicated or depicted children in poverty, suffering children, children with special

needs and various forms of children's 'unfortunate' experiences. The researcher will give four citations from some respondents to illustrate some of the above points. The first citation is from a Health HIV and AIDS Program Manager from Kenya. The citation illustrates how children's photographs were seen as communicating or depicting children's poverty;

"The photographs communicate children's poverty. Children in these photographs are miserable and in deep thought about the world and their miseries. These children are from poor backgrounds".

It shows from this citation that the Program Manager viewed the photographs as communicating identities of children in poverty. The second citation is from a Community Development Manager also in Kenya;

"Some of the photographs communicate the message that children are suffering as a result of HIV and AIDS. Children become orphans because of HIV and AIDS pandemic. Such children do not know what to do and they ask themselves many questions. Young children do not understand where their parents have gone to. They are suffering".

This response illustrates that at times photographs of children are interpreted as communicating children as victims of suffering. Such a view is in line with the researcher's argument that children's photographs can be described as symbols that portray identities of suffering among children. This view is described in detail in chapter 3 on theory and chapter 5 on photographic depictions of children. A third citation under this section comes from an HIV and AIDS Program Manager in Rwanda. It illustrates how children's photographs were interpreted by the Manager from Rwanda as communicating special experiences of children. The Manager said;

"Children's photographs communicate experiences of children living in difficult situations. The children experience loss, hunger, daily life struggles, deprivation and lack of protection".

It is worth noting that it is out of the communications of such experiences of children that special identities of children get constructed and portrayed. A fourth and related citation is a response from an HIV and AIDS Program Manager from Rwanda;

"The photographs of children communicate that orphans and other vulnerable children in general have special needs to be addressed. They want special care and support particularly affection from family, food, protection and psychosocial support".

This citation illustrates how the Manager from Rwanda interpreted children's photographs as communications of special needs of children. The researcher adds that to say that some children have those special needs is to acknowledge or reinforce the point that such children have identities that are 'unique' from other children. These 'unique' identities might be communicated as 'permanent' labels for children although they should change based on children's evolving circumstances.

Therefore from all the above illustrations and also those discussed under section 6.2.1, the researcher concludes that children's appearances in photographs are interpreted differently based on who is looking. Just as in the cases of children's narratives discussed earlier in the chapter, this shows that children's photographs are subject to human interpretations. Interpretations given by some humanitarian professionals support the view that photographs are stigmatising when they portray children's identities in stereotypical ways. This further confirms the researcher's assumption previously stated in chapters 1 and 5. The assumption is that children's photographs can be collected and used

to literally construct and portray stereotypical identities of children in humanitarian discourse.

The illustrations also support the position that photographic depictions of children communicate different things to those who see and interpret such photographs. This is in line with Schutz (1967)'s phenomenological view that says reality is inter-subjectively and socially constructed. There are as many possible manifestations of social realities as there are people who are capable of constructing such realities. In addition, intended messages from such ways of representing children can influence people's perceptions about children. Such perceptions can be based on how people read and interpret photographs of children as symbols of communication. This also means that people as intentional social beings can selectively collect photographs or choose to interpret them in ways that advance people's preferred perceptions of children's identities. The researcher now goes on to discuss responses under the question on how the photographs of children made the professional feel about the children.

6.5.3 How do the photographs make you feel about children?

Humanitarian professionals interviewed by the researcher responded that children's photographs presented to them made them feel sad, angry, unhappy, emotional, pity, pained, sorry, hurt, compassionate, empathetic, bad, touched and like helping the suffering children. The purpose of asking this question was to find out the sorts of emotional feelings induced by the ways children looked in photographs to some humanitarian professionals. It is the researcher's study assumption as stated in chapter 1

that children's photographs are collected and communicated in order to induce certain emotional reactions among target audiences. When emotions are induced this could lead to certain responses being taken by people to support children who are represented in the photographs. Responses can be in forms of finances, material donations, designs of special care and social welfare interventions for children. The designs of special care and social welfare interventions for children are what the researcher constantly refers to in this study as child focused humanitarian programming.

The researcher will give four citations to illustrate some of the feelings that children's photographs induced among humanitarian professionals. The citations are responses given by selected professionals engaged in field humanitarian programs. One of the four citations came from a District Program Manager based in Western Kenya;

"The photographs make me feel sympathetic, compassionate and at times bad. I feel like I have to talk to the child".

This citation illustrates how feelings of compassion and sympathy were induced by the photographs encountered by the Manager. She felt like she had a moral obligation to do something to help the children after just looking at children's photographs. A second illustration of the sorts of feelings induced by children's photographs is of a response given by a certain HIV and AIDS Program Facilitator for Kenya based Community Development Program. His response has some similarities to the above citation;

"Looking at these photographs of children makes me feel emotional, I am hurt. The photographs make me feel like I have to provide care to these children in difficult situations".

Just as in the previous citation, one can notice that this response also illustrates that certain emotional feelings are induced when children's photographs are presented to people. The respondent felt like he had to provide some form of care to the children in response to his feelings of being 'hurt'. The next illustration is from a Program Manager in Rwanda who stated that;

"I feel so sad to see all these children who come from poor families. I feel like I have a lot of things to do to support such children. I must be generous and help these children by advocating for help, education and all kinds of support for their good future".

Interestingly the Manager from Rwanda did not only describe his feelings but actually went a step further to define the sorts of actions that he thought had to be taken in response to his feelings about the children's situations. Those actions include advocacy and educational support for the children. This again confirms the researcher's argument that children's photographs can induce feelings that causes people to want to act in certain ways to help children. In a broader sense, humanitarian organizations act by designing special care and social welfare interventions for children in response to messages that come from children's photographs such as the ones under discussion here.

Another interesting response came from a Regional Program Manager also based in Rwanda who simply said;

"Seeing these pictures make me feel bad. I am asking myself if it was my own children, what would I do?"

From all the above illustrations, the researcher argues that children's photographs are meant to induce certain ways of feeling among those who see them. Such feelings range

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from sadness, bitterness, sympathy, panic, fear and sorrow. These feelings 'appeal' to some people's consciences in ways that may 'influence' people to think that they have a 'moral' obligation to help the children who are being depicted in photographs. This is what the researcher previously termed the social construction of emotional reactions using children's photographs. Such a social construction of emotional reactions is possible when children's poverty, illnesses and other miseries are marketed in photographs. We have also seen earlier in the chapter as well as in chapters 4 and 5 that children's narratives can also be used in similar ways that market children's poverty, illnesses and other miseries. The researcher then concludes that from such marketing, a special child focused humanitarian agenda is influenced, promoted and sustained.

The researcher further argues that the uses of children's photographs to induce emotional reactions such as ones described above to 'influence' people to respond in support of children can be described as a form of emotional 'blackmailing'. For the researcher, emotional blackmailing arises when action is morally 'compelled' through the 'whipping' up of people's emotions. People might feel morally obliged to do something for the children or 'guilty' for not acting after seeing photographs of suffering children. This raises an ethical issue of whether or not it is 'morally' appropriate to encourage such ways that construct, portray and represent identities of children as discussed in this study.

After a presentation of selected children's narratives and photographs to humanitarian professionals to get their perceptions, the researcher went on to find out why the same professionals collect those narratives and photographs in the first instance. It was not the

only intention of the researcher to just find out different perceptions and interpretations of the professionals regarding children's narratives and photographs presented above. Rather in addition, the researcher wanted to know why those professionals collect such narratives and photographs in their fields of work. The researcher did this to establish some practical reasons for collections of such information about children. In addition the researcher sought to find out some ethical issues or challenges that arise when humanitarian professionals collect and use children's narratives and photographs. This is an exact concern of objective 5 of the study as stated in chapter 1.

It will be based on responses to the questions to be discussed below that some guidelines and recommendations for humanitarian professionals will be suggested by the researcher in chapter 7. Those guidelines will constitute the practical contribution of this study to the practice of child focused humanitarian programming. Therefore at this stage the researcher moves on to present the remaining data that he collected from humanitarian professionals. The presentations is structured under the following question headings; why humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs, the media that they use to communicate such information and ethical issues that arise in the process of collecting and using children's narratives and photographs. The following table summarizes respondent's views as classified according to the question categories that were used for data analysis. Specific descriptions of some of the response will follow the summary table.

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6.7 Collections and uses of children's narratives and photographs

Why do you collect narratives and photographs?	Media used to communicate narratives and photographs	What ethical issues arise from collections and uses of narratives and photographs?
➢ Marketing ➢ Sharing information ➢ To create data bases ➢ Fundraising ➢ To inform programs ➢ For media use ➢ Program design ➢ For evaluation ➢ Monitoring projects ➢ Proposal development ➢ Marketing children's problems ➢ Fundraising ➢ Learning ➢ Publications ➢ Awareness raising ➢ Child rights advocacy ➢ To set up programs ➢ Define program frameworks	➢ Newspapers ➢ Magazines ➢ Flyers ➢ Pamphlets ➢ Electronic data bases ➢ Internet websites ➢ Special reports ➢ Publications ➢ Workshop presentation ➢ Radio ➢ Television ➢ CDs ➢ Power point slides	➢ Violations of children's privacies ➢ Intrusion into children's lives ➢ Lack of or inadequate informed consent ➢ How to use the information to the direct benefit of children ➢ Ways of collecting data from children can be abusive ➢ Use of information can prejudice or harm children ➢ Abuses of confidentiality ➢ Misrepresentations of children ➢ Forcing children to give information ➢ Sensationalism or exaggeration ➢ Publishing incorrect stories of children ➢ Uses of narratives that do not have direct benefit to children ➢ Lack of children's involvement in collections of narratives and photographs ➢ Uses of coercive or insensitive ways to get information from children ➢ Raising funds using children's narratives and photographs ➢ Dilemma of collecting narratives and photographs from HIV positive children ➢ Intentional misrepresentations of children ➢ Uses of enticements to induce children to give information against their wishes ➢ Sexual abuses of children during collections of narratives and photographs

Based on the above consolidated responses, the researcher now moves on to describe some specific responses as well as give a few citations from the professionals. The professionals gave practical reasons of why they collect children's narratives and

photographs in their daily work. The researcher will also present some ethical issues that arise when professionals collect and use children's narratives and photographs.

6.6.1 Why do you collect narratives and photographs of children?

As the above table shows, reasons given by some interviewed humanitarian professionals as to why they collect narratives and photographs of children confirm his earlier view stated in chapters 1, 4 and 5. The view is that professionals are rational social actors whose behaviors can be explained as being driven by the need to collect data that informs child focused humanitarian programming. The researcher gives a few citations to illustrate and explain some of the above practical reasons that humanitarian professionals gave for collecting narratives and photographs of children. An HIV and AIDS Regional Communications Adviser based in South Africa gave her reasons why her organization collects narratives and photographs of children as follows;

"We collect stories and photographs from children for marketing and sharing information with our development partners. We keep this information in a global electronic database where different users can go to get communication resources such as stories and pictures for programming, media and fundraising".

This citation illustrates how children's narratives and photographs are used as resources for communication. Such resources are meant for media usage and raising funds to support appropriate humanitarian interventions for children. Development partners that also use such information include donors, community members, the media and others.

The above reasons for collecting narratives and photographs of children are related to ones given below by another Communications Adviser also from South Africa;

"We send such narratives and photographs to marketers who use them for proposals, information sharing, learning best practices, for publications, for fundraising and for influencing different audiences through media".

It emerges from the above illustration that children's narratives and photographs are collected to be used for marketing. As the Adviser explained, such marketing can be done in project proposals. The proposals with children's narratives and photographs are submitted to different audiences who can possibly fund those proposals. This supports the researcher's earlier argument that narratives and photographs of children can be used to induce emotional feelings or reactions among different audiences. Feelings can prompt people to then respond in ways that include donating resources to support children.

A certain Global Operations Director gave the following reasons as to why his organization collects children's narratives and photographs. This Director's organization is involved in a program that raises funds to sponsor vulnerable children from poor communities. Sponsoring children involves paying school fees, health support and at times provision of shelter, food and psychosocial support or counseling services;

"We collect children's narratives and photographs to market our child sponsorship programs. We use children's narratives and photographs for various internal and external publications related to progress reporting and information".

This citation again supports the point that children's narratives and photographs are used for marketing and fund raising purposes. In chapters 4 and 5 that discussed forms of narratives and photographic depictions of children respectively, the researcher gave detailed examples of such narratives and photographs that are collected for marketing purposes. These include narratives that tell the stories of children who are infected or

affected by HIV and AIDS or who may be vulnerable from other reasons. In addition, the above citation illustrates how children's narratives and photographs are used for producing publications. Examples of such publications were also reviewed and presented in chapters 4 and 5. Such publications are meant to demonstrate program performances or impacts, program progress including challenges faced and provide monitoring data. Usually these publications are meant for donors and other development partners. The following citation is a bit different from the ones given above because it illustrates how some humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs in order to represent children or give children a 'voice'. As a certain Communications and Information Officer from Zimbabwe said;

"Collecting children' narratives and photographs is a way of enabling children to speak for themselves and tell their own stories from their own perspectives. It is a way of giving children a voice because no one is better placed to speak about children except the children themselves…..stories and photographs from children (plus with children) help to express and profile what my organization does in terms of fulfilling children's rights".

The above view was echoed by a fellow Communications Manager also from Zimbabwe who stated that;

" I believe that stories and photographs from children are useful in telling both the children's stories (experiences, likes, dislikes, hopes and aspirations and my organization's also i.e. what we do in our efforts to fulfill the rights of children".

From the above two citations three reasons emerge as to why narratives and photographs of children are at times collected by professionals. The first reason is that narratives and photographs are seen as a way of representing children by giving them a 'voice' or having children 'speak' for themselves. This point supports a position put forward by the researcher in chapter 4 when he said use of children's narratives and photographs arose in

humanitarian discourse as a way of representing children through delivered presences. A second reason given by the professionals is that children's narratives and photographs are collected in order to fulfil children's rights to participation. This point was also raised by the researcher in chapter 4 when he said having children speak in narratives and photographs is a form of facilitated child participation. Thirdly, the above citations illustrate that children's narratives and photographs are at times used for organizational profiling. This is done when an organization seeks to demonstrate to audiences such as donors and marketers how it is involved in 'successful' child rights advocacy or child focused humanitarian work for instance.

Based on all the above illustrations, the researcher makes the point that humanitarian professionals collect children's narratives and photographs because they want to make use of them. Those uses involve communications of stereotypical identities of children in ways that result in some resources being raised. This constitutes a social marketing of children's circumstances in order to access various forms of support including finances that can be used to advance a child focused humanitarian agenda. Therefore there are practical and 'rational' reasons as to why humanitarian professionals seek to represent children in narratives and photographs such as the ones also discussed in chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The researcher will now give a brief summary of the different forms of media used by humanitarian professionals to communicate children's narratives and photographs to various audiences.

6.6.2 What media do you use to communicate?

Interviewed humanitarian professionals indicated that forms of media they use to communicate about children include; newspapers, magazines, flyers, pamphlets, special reports, publications, power point presentations, workshop presentations, conference documents, radio and television, compact discs and the internet. The researcher agrees with these mentioned forms of media as they are similar to the ones that he interrogated when he did a content analysis of texts as part of the literature review for this study. This confirms that the above are indeed contemporary sources of humanitarian discourse on children. A detailed discussion of the literature review of the above sources was presented in chapters 3 and 4. When he probed the respondents further on why they use forms of media mentioned above, the researcher found out that the choice of media of communication depends on the intended audiences. For instance the internet is used for a global audience, special reports for donors and flyers or pamphlets for targeted audiences like children in schools. Workshop presentations or special documents are normally prepared for programming specialists at special meetings or conferences.

Irrespective of the type of media used, the aim is in most cases to achieve impacts that cause different audiences to appreciate communicated messages and take some form of action in support of children. This point is similar to the one the researcher made before in this chapter regarding how communications of children's experiences can cause inducements of emotional and other forms of social reactions among people.

The researcher proposes to conclude his presentation of data in this chapter by describing responses given by some humanitarian professionals regarding those ethical issues that arise when they collect and use children's narratives and photographs. Those ethical issues were constantly highlighted by the researcher through out the study although he now presents some specific responses on ethical issues given by few a professionals below.

6.6.3 What ethical challenges or issues arise?

A number of ethical issues arise from the practice of representing children in narratives and photographs. Those ethical issues given by some humanitarian professionals include; violations of children's privacies, intrusion into children's private lives, lack of or inadequate informed consent from children or their guardians, uses of children's narratives and photographs in ways that do not benefit children, collecting information from children using methods or ways that are insensitive to children, prejudicial uses of children's narratives and photographs that cause harm to children, misrepresenting children in narratives and sensationalizing or exaggerating children's experiences. A few citations below will illustrate and describe some of the ethical issues that were raised by selected respondents. The following citation is from a Communications Adviser from South Africa who stated that;

"There is an ethical challenge of protecting children's privacy and uncertainty whether a guardian's consent is really enough to go ahead and use information that may affect them (children) in later life. There is a problem in using children's stories for the general benefit of the community and not for them in particular. It is also a dilemma whether or not getting and using stories/information about children is not some kind of abuse".

This statement illustrates that some humanitarian professionals are aware that collections of information from children violets children's privacies while informed consent of adults may not be enough. Harm to the child still remains possible. At times professionals get stuck when faced with moral decisions of how to use sensitive information from children who may be HIV positive for instance. Another Communications Manager from Kenya gave the following as an ethical challenge faced by humanitarian professionals;

"Publishing narratives and photographs of children at times compromise children's protection especially if other identification details are attached".

The researcher found out from the respondent that identification details he referred to in the above statement include a child's name, date of birth, names of parents, location and residential address. He also mentioned that if one has to publish a story or photograph of an abused child for instance, the child's identity must be concealed because some abusers of children can get violent or vindictive. Abusers can also trail the child and inflict further harm. Identifying a child can further result in stigma or social isolation of the child if the story or photograph depicts a condition such as HIV infection or sexual abuse that may cause self blame or 'shame' to the child. This moral dilemma of 'unethical' use of information that identifies children was echoed by a certain Strategic Adviser and Media Specialist from Zimbabwe. She said;

"The ethical challenge of course is that you want to showcase real stories but since you are dealing with children, you don't want to infringe on their rights by disclosing their identities….you are also caught between not wanting to appear like you are abusing your authority or you are trying to raise funds using clandestine means and actually being genuine about focusing attention on the plight of children".

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From the above citation, an ethical dilemma that really points to the need to come up with some guidelines to help professionals who face such a dilemma is strengthened. This dilemma is about how to balance genuine interests of children with professionals' interests to access funds that may not be entirely used for children's interests. Possible ways of dealing with this ethical dilemma are suggested by the researcher in chapter 7. The last citation the researcher gives in this section illustrates an ethical challenge that arises from uses of narratives and photographs from sick children. It comes from a Program Manager in Zimbabwe who stated as follows;

"A major ethical issue is whether or not narratives and photographs of very sick children who maybe HIV positive should be published. Also there is an issue of how long narratives and photographs of such children should be kept".

The above statement illustrates the point that narratives and photographs of children are sources of sensitive data about children. However, professionals are not always sure how to deal with such sensitive details in view of a practical concern to let such details be still used for children's 'benefit'.

From all the data presented in this chapter, what emerges is that humanitarian professionals generally collect narratives and photographs of children for practical reasons. These reasons include; need to inform program design or re-design, advocacy, program marketing, fund raising and demonstrations of impacts. So there are rational practical intentions for collecting such narratives and photographs in the first instance. It also follows from this that professionals then have to collect certain types of narratives and photographs that help them achieve their intentions. However, ethical issues arise in

the process of collecting and using children's narratives and photographs. Despite those ethical issues seen above, the professionals still have to continue with their practice of designing and managing humanitarian interventions meant for children. This is because the professionals are conscious social agents whose work is sustained by the advancement of a specific agenda. The researcher argues that sometimes such an agenda might mean that professionals have to become 'blind' to some of the ethical issues revealed in this study. It thus becomes a necessary evil to continue with the practice for the 'benefit' of children. This then leads to an emergence of a tension of practical concerns to keep doing the work and ethical issues that arise from ways of doing such work. This tension of practical concerns and ethical issues is a key issue in this study to be specifically highlighted by the researcher in the next section before he concludes this chapter. The researcher feels compelled to do so as it was a major concern of this study to expose some ethical issues that arise from how identities of children are constructed and represented using narratives and photographs in humanitarian discourse.

6.7 A tension of practical concerns and ethical issues

It emerges from the data presented by the researcher that humanitarian professionals collect narratives and photographs of children for practical uses. Such uses are mainly concerned with an improvement of child focused humanitarian programming practice. However this process at times results in harm or prejudice to children thereby presenting ethical issues that need to be managed by the humanitarian professionals. This chapter has revealed that a constant tension between practical concerns and ethical issues presents a dilemma for humanitarian professionals as they seek to represent children. As such,

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humanitarian professionals have to constantly balance practical concerns with ethical issues as they engage in child focused humanitarian work. Practical concerns arise from the reasons given by those professionals as to why they have to collect children's narratives and photographs in the first instance. The practical concerns include the need to inform program designs or re-design, advocacy, program marketing and demonstrating impacts of interventions among others. These practical concerns seem to be the ones that at times influence how children's identities get represented. The main practical concern appears to be the need on the part of humanitarian professionals to understand situations and experiences of children before appropriate interventions can be designed. This concern is one that causes children's photographs and narratives to be collected and presented as 'evidence' about situations of children. Such 'evidence' then informs processes of program designs.

Humanitarian professionals are also at times faced with the need to provide researched data so as to come up with well articulated project frameworks with key deliverables and expected outcomes. This might require uses of children's narratives or photographs as supportive data. In addition, some donors of children's programs usually have certain requirements like requests for detailed information that has to be presented in support of certain project proposals. Such detail might have to be in the form of narratives and photographs of children. In other instances, information about children might have to be collected directly from the children. This is done for purposes of participatory program designs or redesigns, monitoring and evaluations. Narratives and photographs can thus be used in these instances to illustrate 'impacts' of ongoing humanitarian interventions on

children's lives and their communities. This then also make needs to conduct child focused researches and evaluations practical concerns why certain information should be collected from children in narratives and photographs. This is so despite the fact that such information might represent identities of children in 'ethically' questionable ways as revealed in this study.

It appears from this research that there are times when the practical concern of doing things that 'benefit' children such as delivery of social services takes precedence over ethical issues that usually arise during processes of service delivery for children. For the researcher this means that it is reasonable to say humanitarian professionals can at times seek 'justification' from a practical point of view to represent children in stereotypical ways. The professionals can argue that they are 'justified' for as long as the information that they collect is used to ensure children's continued access to much needed forms of support. This is so notwithstanding the fact that those forms of representing children may still be deemed 'unethical' as the researcher revealed in this study.

This researcher also argues that generally the practical programming concerns tend to have an upper hand over ethical issues that arise when humanitarian professionals take decisions about children in projects. It would also appear that at times it is not too 'bad' to ignore ethical issues as long as the outcome of the project in question is of perceived 'benefit' to the children. Such reasoning means that 'minor' ethical violations can be 'acceptable' if they arise during service delivery or collections of data that will be used in ways that benefit children in practical ways. However, it is debatable what constitutes

acceptable ‘minor’ violations of ethics as well as what sorts of outcomes can be said to be of practical ‘benefit’ to children. This is what leads to the emergence of notable ethical issues that put the practice of representing children as discussed in this thesis into question.

As discussed before in this and some previous chapters, some of those ethical issues that arise include; children’s non involvement in information collections, uses of information that do not accurately represent children, collections of narratives and photographs in ways that infringe on children’s privacies, giving of information by children under duress, manipulating children’s words so that sensational media images about children are constructed, publishing children’s photographs and narratives in public media in ways that render children vulnerable to outsiders, ignoring sensitivities related to getting information from HIV positive children, compromising confidentialities of children’s identities in photographs and narratives, lack of children’s control over uses of information that is collected from them and possibilities of intentional misrepresentations of children in order to construct and portray stereotypical identities of children. The above ethical issues go beyond a mere highlighting of concerns about the ‘accuracies’ of representing children in narratives and photographs. Rather, the issues were raised to challenge researchers to explore the question of how representations of identities of children in narratives and photographs can be explained. In this study, such explanations have commenced from a phenomenological theoretical angle to the social construction of reality although other socio-cultural and structural explanations of reality construction have also been acknowledge. The researcher argued that portraying children’s identities

in ways that possibly manipulate 'real' experiences of children constitutes an illusory representation of reality. However, it is because such representations of children are normally purportedly done to 'improve' humanitarian programs for children that this tension between practice and ethics is at times left silent or glossed over as a non issue.

Therefore the tension discussed in this thesis can be described as a conflict of ethical issues and practical concerns ever present in the context of representing children's identities for humanitarian purposes. The researcher acknowledges that this is a big challenge for humanitarian professionals who constantly have to balance those ethical issues with practical concerns as demonstrated in this study. This study revealed that depicting identities of children in narratives and photographs require professionals to be sensitive to several ethical issues. A point has also been made to the effect that such a concern with ethical issues need not necessarily undermine 'beneficial' uses of children's narratives and photographs. Rather humanitarian professionals should endeavor to balance practical concerns with arising ethical issues in order to improve their child focused humanitarian programming. However, the researcher is aware that this is a challenge as the ethical issues are ever present in humanitarian programming.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has been a presentation of humanitarian professional's perceptions of children's narratives and photographs. Their perceptions have been presented and described in relation to; their understandings of terms that describe children in narratives, interpretations that they make of children's photographs presented to them and reasons

why they collect and use children's narratives and photographs. Ethical issues that the professionals face when they seek to represent children have also been exposed. A tension of practical concerns and ethical issues has been highlighted. The researcher felt it was important to discuss professionals' views in this chapter as a way to illustrate how those views could support major positions of the researcher in this study. It is the view of the researcher that data presented in this chapter has supported three main positions he took in this thesis. These positions have been stated earlier own and illustrated in detail by theoretical expositions and case studies from literature sources as discussed in chapters 3, 4 and 5. Chapter 3 presented the study's theoretical framework while chapter 4 analyzed humanitarian discourse and forms of children's narratives. Chapter 5 discussed photographic depictions of children within humanitarian discourse.

The first position of the researcher from chapter 3 that has been supported by data in this chapter is that narratives and photographs of children are forms of representations that construct stereotypical identities of children. These forms of representations reflect how reality is socially constructed phenomena. Children's representations can be interpreted using the view that they intend to portray various phenomenal realities of children's identities. It has been illustrated in this chapter how various interpretations of children's narratives and photographs among some professionals are possible. Such illustration supports an assumption of phenomenological sociology that greatly influenced this study. The assumption is that no 'unified' reality exists since reality is a product of intentional inter-subjective human actions. However, while human actions are conscious, they exist or come into being in response to certain socio-cultural or structural contexts that also

shape those actions. In addition, multiple realities as opposed to 'unified' reality exist. Data in this study confirmed this assumption by showing how humanitarian professionals speak to a humanitarian discourse that in turn speaks to the same professionals thereby influencing their perceptions of reality.

A second position of the researcher from chapters 4 and 5 that was also supported by data presented in this chapter is that humanitarian professionals are social actors whose actions to collect children's narratives and photographs are driven by conscious intentions. Their intentions are to construct children's narratives and photographs that are capable of portraying identities in support of a specific humanitarian agenda. However, the professionals act in response to the expectations of a humanitarian system that they work for. Such a position has been supported in this chapter by how some professionals said they use children's narratives to market, fundraise, advocate, profile and design specific projects for children.

Thirdly, data in this chapter further supported another position of the researcher also raised in chapters 4 and 5. This third position is that uses of children's narratives and photographs raise some ethical issues. Such ethical issues have been confirmed by responses of professionals discussed in this chapter. The main ethical issue being a moral dilemma of how to ensure that humanitarian professionals do not manipulate, exaggerate or misrepresent identities of children in narratives and photographs. We have seen in this chapter how some professionals have confirmed their daily encounters with this dilemma. For the researcher this and other ethical dilemmas also revealed in this chapter mean that

humanitarian professionals need some reflection on how to improve their management of those ethical issues faced as they collect and use children's narratives and photographs. Therefore the three positions stated above and also as supported by theoretical arguments and data presented and discussed by the researcher in this and chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 summarize key arguments of the researcher's thesis. It was the application of sociological theoretical assumptions and expositions discussed in chapter 3 to analyze his research subject that gave the researcher some confidence to take the three positions as he has done above. For this reason the researcher argues his thesis to be reasonably 'well' grounded within sociological theory. Having posited this, the researcher feels that it is now appropriate for him to conclude his thesis in chapter 7.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This chapter constitutes a conclusion of the thesis which will be done at three levels. Firstly key arguments of the research will be made in relation to the study question and theoretical framework. Secondly the academic contribution of this study within the sociological theory on phenomenology is advanced. Thirdly, the researcher poses a few questions for potential future research on the subject matter of children's representation. It is in this chapter that objective 7 of the study is addressed. Objective 7 sought to propose an academic or knowledge contribution of the study in the context of a theory on phenomenological sociology. The knowledge contribution is informed by study findings discussed to lengths in chapters 4, 5 and 6. However, the researcher first gives key arguments of his thesis in relation to the study question and theoretical framework.

The study question was; how are identities of children represented in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse? In an attempt to answer this question, the researcher posits three main arguments. A first position or argument of the thesis is that narratives and photographs of children are social constructs that humanitarian professionals use to portray questionable identities of children. Those questionable identities of children can be interpreted as stereotypical, prejudicial or paternalistic depictions of children. From such depictions, a humanitarian based reality about children is constructed and advanced. This reality is one that 'uniformly' portrays children as objects of charity who are in need of special humanitarian support. However such a form of 'unified' reality is interpreted differently among different humanitarian professionals. For this reason the researcher argues in line with an assumption of phenomenological

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theory that says reality is relative and subjective to different social interpretations. As the study shows, it is not possible to achieve a 'unified' reality about children's identities since those identities are contestable social realities even among humanitarian workers.

A second position or argument of the thesis is that humanitarian professionals are social actors whose actions to collect and use children's narratives and photographs are driven by their conscious intentions. This argument is in line with a phenomenological theoretical proposition that says human beings act out of conscious and rational intentions. Those intentions in the case of humanitarian professionals are to construct specific forms of children's identities from narratives and photographs. Constructed identities of children are then used to influence or advance a child focused humanitarian discourse. At the same time this discourse also sets parameters for a humanitarian agenda that defines the scope or nature of humanitarian work for humanitarian professionals. Such a sociological analysis of humanitarian discourse to some extent also acknowledges a relationship between agency and structure when it comes to theoretical explanations of how reality is constructed in society. This theoretical argument which contributes to ongoing contemporary sociological debate regarding the roles of agency versus structure in the explanations of social phenomena has been supported by some illustrations given in the study. The illustrations were of how humanitarian professionals construct and portray stereotypical identities of children using narratives and photographs in response to definite humanitarian expectations. Those expectations are seen in the form of reasons given by the professionals as to why and how they use children's narratives and photographs that they collect. The study revealed that narratives and photographs are

used to market, advocate, fundraise, profile and design some child focused humanitarian interventions. This reflects some intended practical reasons of representing children in narratives and photographs. It also demonstrates how the humanitarian agenda itself influences the behaviors of humanitarian professionals discussed in this study.

The thesis's third position or argument is that representations of children's identities in narratives and photographs give rise to some ethical issues. Such issues at times render this practice of representing children within humanitarian discourse 'insensitive'. Key ethical issues that arise raise concerns of how portrayals of children's identities sometimes exaggerate, manipulate, sensationalize or misrepresent children. The researcher argues that the relationship between what narratives and photographs represent including realities that they portray is not a straight forward one. What humanitarian professionals seek to advance as 'real' representations of children's identities in narratives and photographs arguably constitute 'misrepresentations' of children. Claims to 'represent' children might be as good as acts of 'misinforming' that create 'illusions' about children in people's minds. This argument resonates well with a theoretical view from sociology of knowledge that says apart from its being socially constructed, the whole notion of reality can be a social illusion.

After highlighting key arguments of this thesis in relation to the study question and theoretical framework, the researcher briefly states what he proposes to be the study's knowledge or academic contribution to a broad theory on phenomenological sociology within which this study is situated.

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An understanding of the term knowledge contribution need not be parochially read to mean a proposal of totally 'new' or 'unknown' theoretical ideas. Rather, a knowledge contribution is in this instance proposed as a suggestion of ideas made possible from the evidence generated and presented by the researcher. That evidence supported some existing theoretical explanations of reality constructions from phenomenological sociology. Specifically a knowledge contribution of this study is suggested as an outcome of a sociological exposition of ethical issues arising from children's representations. The researcher thus suggests a knowledge contribution from an angle of how constructions of identities of children sociologically occur in the context of humanitarian discourse. The researcher has defined the term humanitarian discourse in this study to mean a special type of language or communication used among humanitarian professionals. This communication includes narrative and photographic representations of children's identities. From a knowledge point of view, what became 'unique' about this study is that it analyzed humanitarian discourse as a special type of cultural representation starting from a phenomenological perspective. The phenomenological perspective was adopted to articulate how representations of children's identities within humanitarian discourse constitute a form of sociological construction. This took the researcher to a deeper level of sociologically interrogating children's representations. Such a level is one that considered children's representations as more than just the number based physical participation or contributions of children to decisions or social processes.

For the researcher, children's representation became a social practice that could be explained from a certain sociological angle. Phenomenological sociological

representation which the researcher used to situate the study is concerned with how adults might intentionally seek to represent children's identities in narratives and photographs within specific socio-cultural contexts. That became an interesting academic level at which to analyze children's representations. The level was interesting because for the researcher it was a level seeking to represent children by claiming to deliver 'actual' presences of children in their 'absences'. Yet such a level of representing children is a culturally located one. Such cultural representation illustrates how realities of children's identities are socially constructed and portrayed. Constructions of children's identities are explicable from a sociological exposition of processes of 'manipulated' representations of children. Representations of children are 'manipulated' when they portray contestable or questionable identities of children. This is because identities of children are constructed by humanitarian professionals as conscious beings who act out of intentions to fulfill certain expectations of their work. Their intentions are to construct and portray those identities of children which paint images of children as objects of charity who are in constant need of humanitarian support.

Intentional constructions of children's identities in narratives and photographs are what the researcher described as editorial gazing or looking in this thesis. Editorial gazing is a process of controlling or influencing readings or interpretations of children's identities in narratives and photographs. The ethical 'appropriateness' of such editorial gazing is put into question as it potentially 'misrepresents' children. This is the suggested knowledge contribution of the study that adds to a social constructivist assumption within a theory on phenomenological sociology. That assumption associated with Schutz (1967) suggests

that individuals are social agents who act out of conscious intentions to construct ideas, assign meanings to things and interpret social realities. However, social agents act within specific socio-cultural contexts.

The above social constructivist argument was supported by evidence generated by the researcher. Evidence from this research has shown that constructions and representations of realities about children's experiences are not uniform since they depend on actions of different individuals as they respond to their contexts of existence. The relationship between representation and reality is not a straightforward one. Constructions of realities about children are shaped, influenced and at times controlled by the intentions of humanitarian professionals as social actors. However, those intentions can also be shaped by an existing humanitarian agenda that is articulated within a special type of discourse. It is such an argument that seeks to apply interpretative sociological explanations to constructions and representations of children's identities that give this study its 'unique' academic or theoretical contribution. As such the researcher argues that his study makes a 'notable' knowledge contribution within the broad theory on phenomenological sociology from a specific angle of humanitarian programming discourse. Therefore results of this study arguably bring out or sharpen certain sociological insights raised in detail in chapter 3. To an extent that this study has furthered some insights within a specific body of theoretical knowledge then it can be academically deemed as advancing a specific sociological knowledge contribution.

The researcher concludes this thesis by posing three questions for potential further research on the subject of children's representations. The researcher is of the view that a single study can never exhaust all possible questions that could be explored on this subject matter. Posing these questions might provoke fellow researchers with interests in this subject matter to do further sociological enquiries. Those enquiries could build on or critique some of the views advanced in this study. For it is out of the critiquing or refuting of existing conjectures that sociological knowledge should grow or develop. In this study, the researcher has just attempted to explore a certain aspect of the subject matter on children's representation. That aspect was about how children's identities are constructed and portrayed in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse. However from this study, three questions for possible further research in this subject area emerged. The researcher simply poses these questions without an attempt to answer them as doing so is out of the scope of this study. How do children perceive and interpret their own identities as represented in narratives and photographs? What sorts of alternative identities of children are possible to portray using a counter discourse on children's representation? Can children's own narrations of their stories empower children in the context of community development work? These questions are left for the reader's imagination as the researcher rests his case. Therefore, this sociological study has gone to some length as the researcher attempted to answer the question of how identities of children are represented in narratives and photographs within humanitarian discourse.

All good things come to an end!

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APPENDIX SECTION:

Annex 1: Content Analysis Tool – Narratives & Text Review:

Title of the article	Source, author and date	Key terms or descriptors used in the narrative	Frequency of occurrence of term or descriptor on narrative	Researchers' comments on emerging descriptor from narrative

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Annex 2: Tool for Ranking 'Common' terms or Descriptors of Children in Narratives & Texts

Emerging term or common descriptor	'Common' meaning in literature	Frequency of occurrence in texts/narrative	Ranking
African child			
Vulnerable child			
Children of 'AIDS'			
Children of 'poverty'			
Disadvantaged child			
Children of war			

<u>Annex 3</u>: Tool for Reviewing Photographs: Analysis of Levels of Photographic Depictions.

Source of Photograph:	
Description of photograph:	
Levels of Photographic Depiction:	**Characteristics to look out for when interpreting the photographs**
<u>1.Literal Level Depiction</u>	✓ How child looks ✓ What is the physical appearance ✓ Describe facial looks ✓ Type of dressing ✓ How hair style looks ✓ Gender of the child ✓ What does body language tell
<u>2.Textual Level Depiction</u>	✓ Any words that describe child ✓ What does text say? ✓ Does text allude to similar texts ✓ Does text allude to events ✓ Does text allude to other people ✓ Are words negative or positive ✓ Are they children's words ✓ Who is describing children in photographs
<u>3. Mythical Level Depiction</u>	✓ Does photograph depict mystery ✓ Does it reinforce stereotypes ✓ Does it refer to folk tales or stories ✓ Does photograph isolate the child ✓ Is it prejudicial depiction ✓ What story does the photograph tell

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Annex 4: Open Ended Questionnaire for Program Managers and Communicators

Instructions: please write down what the following terms mean to you.

Name: [optional]	
Sex:	
Organization	
Position:	
Date	
E-mail/phone:	
Term:	**Meaning (interpretation of the term)**
Vulnerable Children	
Children of AIDS	
African Children	

Annex 5: Photographic Analysis Tool for Program Managers and Program Communicators: Interpretations of children's photographs:

Instructions: please look at the attached photograph and write down what the photograph is communicating to you and how it makes you feel.

.

Name	
Sex of Respondent:	
Organization:	
Title:	
E-mail/phone:	
1. How does the child look or appear to you?	
2. What does the photograph communicate to you?	
3. How does the photograph make you feel about the child?	

Annex 6: Open Ended Questionnaire for Program Managers and Communicators

Name: [Optional]	
Sex	
Organization:	
Position:	
E-mail/phone	
#	**Question:**
1.	Why do you collect stories and photographs from children? [Practical Reasons & the sort of stories you collect].
2.	How do you use children's stories and photographs you collect?
3.	What media do you use to communicate stories & photographs of children?
4.	What ethical challenges do you face when you collect and use stories and photographs from children?